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HEAVEN'S LIGHT OUR GUIDE

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK

Northbrook

THOMAS GEORGE
EARL OF NORTHBROOK

G.C.S.I.

A MEMOIR

BY

BERNARD MALLET

WITH PORTRAITS
AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

A WORD or two seems necessary to authenticate the following record of the career and character of the late Earl of Northbrook. It has been undertaken at the request of the present Lord Northbrook and his sister Lady Emma Crichton. Much as I was honoured by this expression of their confidence I should not, with the limited amount of leisure at my disposal, have felt justified in acceding to it if I had not been assured not only of the utmost indulgence in the matter of time but also of their own active co-operation. This I have received in the fullest measure; not only has Lord Northbrook placed at my disposal his father's admirably arranged political correspondence and speeches his public and private papers and a series of useful newspaper extracts and appreciations, but both he and Lady Emma Crichton have been unwearied in supplying me with suggestions criticisms notes and recollections. Their cousin Sir Edward Grey, whose advice greatly influenced my decision to accept the task, has allowed me to consult him upon several points and to discuss with him the various aspects of the character I had to portray; and there is no one among Lord Northbrook's younger contemporaries who can speak on that subject with more insight and appreciation. I have had the further advantage, as readers will readily observe, of quite invaluable assistance from Lord Cromer in the most important of the chapters

book, assistance given without stint both in conversation and in writing; and finally Mr. Francis Baring, who has been so good as to read the proofs, has made many useful suggestions on points of family history and other matters. In addition to this help from members of Lord Northbrook's family I have been in communication, not only with the authorities at the India Office, but with most of those who still have any personal recollection of his political career or were associated with him in public or private life. Many of their names will be found with or without special acknowledgment in following pages, and they will perhaps forgive me if I only add that their willing courtesy has made the discussion of the political transactions in which Lord Northbrook was concerned a most agreeable incident of my work.

As to the form of the book I found at the outset that Lord Northbrook's family were strongly of opinion, in view of the recent publication of more than one important memoir covering the same political period, that a short study would be more appropriate in this case than an ordinary two-volume "Life and Letters." In this opinion, though it imposed a more difficult task upon myself, I fully concurred when I came to look at the available materials. Lord Northbrook was not a man who revealed himself in his correspondence; and his letters, excellent as they are for their immediate purpose and for the efficient discharge of the business on hand, have too little of personal or purely literary interest to justify their publication *in extenso*. The significance, moreover, of Lord Northbrook's career lies less in his actual achievement, considerable as that was in his day and in more than one sphere,

than in the example it affords of intellectual thoroughness and directness, of sound judgment, of competence in administration, of tact and sympathy in the business of governing men, of moral courage and elevation, of self-sacrificing devotion to public duty. It was to such qualities as these that Lord Northbrook owed his high place among contemporary statesmen ; and they are qualities which it was felt could best be commemorated by a record which, while making full use of his important political correspondence in dealing with the main points of Lord Northbrook's career, should yet have as its first object to give a faithful picture of the man, his way of looking at life, and the methods and spirit of his work. To accomplish this object however imperfectly it was essential to rely largely on the personal testimony which I here most gratefully acknowledge.

B. M.

38 Rutland Gate,
August 1908.

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THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK

CHAPTER I

FAMILY AND EARLY LIFE

THE annals of the Barings, of whom it was once observed that on whatever road you met them they were distinguished from the crowd, would yield some interesting material to the student of inherited characteristics intellectual and moral; and Lord Northbrook's career owed not a little to his membership of a family so noteworthy for continuous practical ability and success. It would not perhaps be difficult to find a parallel in other family records to the rapidity with which the Barings rose during the opening years of the last century to a leading position in English public and social life, but that the descendants of the remarkable man to whom the foundation of their fortunes was due should have maintained and even enhanced that position is a much more uncommon circumstance in family history. Some of the genealogical references which are never out of place at the commencement of a memoir are therefore more than usually justified in the present instance.

Lord Northbrook's great grandfather Sir Francis Baring, "the first merchant in Europe" as Lord Erskine called him, was the son of Johann or John Baring, who himself was the son of Dr. Franz Baring a professor and pastor of

the Lutheran Church of St. Ansgarius at Bremen, and who was sent to Exeter in 1717 to be apprenticed to a firm of manufacturers (the brothers Cock) of a sort of cloth called Long Ells, then a considerable branch of business in that town. In due time this John Baring succeeded to much of the business of the firm and married a Miss Elizabeth Vowler, daughter of an opulent citizen of Exeter. "Madam" Baring, as she was called, seems to have been a woman of considerable character—there is a very striking portrait of her at Stratton—and when she had become a widow in 1748 managed the business her husband had established at Larkbear with so much success that she was able to leave respectable fortunes to each of her five children, and give them a good start in life. She is stated to have been the only person in Exeter besides the Bishop who "kept her carriage." Her eldest son, Mr. John Baring of Mount Radford (1730–1816), at first succeeded to the Larkbear business and also established a bank, but afterwards engaged in business in London with his brother Francis. He acquired a large fortune, was member of Parliament for Exeter for many years, and is said to have spent something like £40,000 on his elections. Lady Ashburton, wife and afterwards widow of the celebrated Dunning, was the third child, and then came Francis (1740–1810). This son, afterwards Sir Francis Baring, was sent to London at an early age as clerk or apprentice in the house of Tucket or Touchet, a well-known and respectable mercantile firm, where he formed an intimacy with a Mr. Alexander Adair which proved of great advantage to him in his career. On the failure of Touchet's house, which seems to have had a stimulating effect upon him by rousing him to exertion on his own account, he took a small counting-house of his own where he

began business without any clerk and in the first year made £100.

"There are generally," to quote the words of the contemporary diary from which these particulars are taken,[1] "some accidental occurrences in a mercantile life which have laid the foundation of fortune eminence and wealth. . . . At an early period of his career Sir Francis Baring appears to have aimed at establishing a character for commercial regularity and industry with the house of Hope of Amsterdam, then one of the first in Europe. On some occasion the Hopes remitted to him bills to a small amount by way of experiment, with directions to remit the proceeds to them in bills upon some other commercial place in Europe. Baring executed the commission with zeal and success and transmitted returns at a rate of exchange a trifle higher than the course of the day. The Hopes, pleased with his attention, remitted him some time afterwards £15,000 with the same instructions. Baring had never had so large an order and determined not to lose so fine an opportunity; he went to Martin & Stone, the bankers and induced them to discount the bills with the proceeds of which he made remittances to the Hopes by return of post. The Hopes were exceedingly struck with this transaction which bespoke not only great zeal and activity, but what was still more important in the eyes of the mercantile men either good credit or great resources in their correspondent. From that day Baring became one of their principal 'friends,' and a constant intercourse of business and good offices was established between them which proved highly advantageous to our young merchant in the early part of his career, and greatly added to his power and

[1] From the unpublished Journals of Mr. John Lewis Mallet, whose first wife, Lucy Baring, had been one of several daughters (Lady Northcote and Lady Young among them) of Mr. Charles Baring, youngest brother of Sir Francis. Mr. Charles Baring's wife was the heiress of Mr. W. D. Gould of Lew Trenchard, and their son took the name of Baring-Gould and was the ancestor of this branch of the Baring family.

resources at a later period of his life. He was a well-bred agreeable man with a great fund of conversation, though he read little. During the last thirty years of his life he had taken a great lead in the City; he was consulted on all great occasions and his credit and opinion were equally resorted to. He was a great referee in the City and settled numberless differences between merchants which would have occupied years and cost thousands in the Court of Chancery. He seldom refused a reference and his decisions were seldom questioned. The old Lord Lansdowne," better known as Lord Shelburne, "had sought him as a City ally during his short administration, and the connection continued through life. It was probably advantageous to both. I take it that in business he was a very positive person, and did not bear contradiction patiently, but nevertheless listened with a trumpet.[1] He left a very large fortune, considering that it was all acquired; it must have been altogether nearly £700,000." [The Stratton papers show that his income had, before his retirement from the House, risen to the great sum of £80,000.] "Sir Francis Baring," the record continues, "had an excellent natural understanding which had been cultivated by intercourse with mankind both in the relation of business and society."

With all his talent for business on a great scale, he is stated to have had, "like Bonaparte, a great aptitude for details, and a great love of regulation," which showed itself among other things in the detailed superintendence he gave to the bringing up of his ten children. "Either from choice or necessity," it is recorded, "he became the mamma of the family; and at the same time that he conducted the firm, governed the India House, and took a share in public questions as a member of Parliament, he ordered shoes and frocks for his children, entered into

[1]He was deaf, and is accordingly depicted in the Lawrence group with his hand to his ear.

SIR FRANCIS BARING, First Baronet

From a Painting by Sir Benjamin West

the minutiæ of the nursery and sent his boys to school." It may be added that Sir Francis sat for many years in Parliament as member successively for Grampound, Chipping Wycombe, and Calne; that he married a niece and co-heiress of Archbishop Herring, who, according to the traditionary accounts, was a "vain, worldly fine woman, whose life was devoted to fashionable society"; and that, besides the Manor House and property at Lee near Blackheath, he purchased Stratton, which he embellished with a fine collection of Dutch pictures and other works of art chosen with admirable taste and judgment. He died in 1810.

Of the sons of Sir Francis Baring the eldest, Thomas (1772–1848), succeeded him in his landed estates and in the baronetcy conferred upon him as Chairman of the East India Company by Mr. Pitt in 1793, and was the father of the first Lord Northbrook; the second, Alexander, (1774–1848) was created Lord Ashburton; and the third, Henry, (1777–1848) by his second marriage with Miss Cecilia Windham was the father of the late Lord Revelstoke and the Earl of Cromer. A member of each of these three branches of the family held at different times the headship of the city house of Baring Brothers and Co.; Alexander Lord Ashburton, who was its leading member from his father's retirement in 1801 till 1829 when he himself practically retired, then the late Mr. Thomas Baring (Sir Thomas' second son) till 1873, when he was succeeded by the late Lord Revelstoke.

Of Sir Thomas Baring who, after ten years in India in the service of the East India Company, lived the rest of a long life as a country gentleman at Stratton there is not much to record. He too sat in the House of Commons for many years, took his share in county business and was

an active supporter of philanthropic and religious societies. He was a generous landlord taking great interest in the cottagers; and he had a considerable reputation as a connoisseur and purchaser of pictures. But the pictures he sold were good and those he bought inferior. He inherited none of his father's ability, least of all in the management of his pecuniary affairs, and he was distinguished for his pronounced evangelical opinions. In this matter he was much under the influence of his sister Mrs. Wall, and amusing stories are told of the manner in which he allowed himself to be victimised by clergymen and other zealots of this persuasion. He married Miss Sealy, a lady of Quaker origin with much quiet character, and is noteworthy in the story of the family chiefly as the father of three distinguished sons—Francis, first Lord Northbrook; Thomas, who, besides the great position he held in the City, sat in Parliament as a Conservative for the best part of forty years and twice (in 1852 and 1858) refused the offer of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer; and Charles, Bishop first of Gloucester and Bristol and then, for a long period, of Durham. The following account of Sir Thomas is worth quoting, as it gives some description of Stratton the Hampshire place which has been so real a home to succeeding generations of the senior branch of the family.

"A great revolution," the diarist notes at Christmas 1823, "has taken place in this house since the death of the first possessor, Sir Francis Baring. My friend Sir Thomas with the same generous hospitality as his father has a strong religious turn, and although enjoying all the blessings of life such as an amiable and interesting family, a beautiful house, valuable works of art and great personal consideration, he does not lose sight of

more lasting interests. I do not concur in some of his opinions but respect his sincerity and earnestness, and must do him the justice to say that he has the good sense and good taste not to bring religious topics into general conversation unless he is actually led to it. I do not know a more comfortable gentleman's house, and it has what few houses possess a valuable and beautiful collection of pictures chiefly of Italian masters, and collections of prints drawings etchings and portraits, both of the Italian and Flemish schools, and exhibiting the progress of these arts from their earliest beginnings to the best times. The estate was purchased from the Duke of Bedford by Sir Francis Baring in 1800 for the sum of £150,000. Sir Francis built the greater part of the present house and planted the grounds at the expense of not less than £40,000. There are 12,000 acres, including a wood of about 800 acres. The rental has been as high as £10,000 a year; now it may amount to £7,000 or £7,500. This was a favourite residence of Rachel, Lady Russell, who mentions it several times in her letters."

I cannot resist transcribing the account given by the same writer of the neighbouring Baring place, "The Grange." Mr. J. L. Mallet, who was on terms of intimacy with Sir Thomas, and still more with his brother Alexander, went on this occasion from the one house to the other, and writes as follows of The Grange:—

"I came yesterday to this place which is within two miles of Stratton. It was nearly sunset when we arrived; the effect of the last rays upon the portico was very striking. The history of this portico, at least that which is current, is this. When Stratton was built Sir Francis Baring's portico which is a commonplace sort of thing, very well for a gentleman's house, became a great subject of conversation among the resident gentry, and the praises be-

stowed upon its classical proportions having roused the ire and contempt of Mr. Henry Drummond, then proprietor of The Grange, he determined, *coûte que coûte*, to show the country a real portico. His house had been built by Inigo Jones and was of red brick and some four or five stories high, so he made his architect betake himself to pull down two of the stories and to fill up the basement story, and to case the remaining part of the premises in a Grecian Temple built upon the model of the Temple of Erectheus at Athens: perfect and beautiful in all its proportions and with a Doric portico such as is not to be seen anywhere else in England. The cost of this elegant fancy was about Thirty Thousand Pounds, and the effect of it was to turn a good family house into a very bad one, and to feast the eyes of men of taste with a model of chaste Grecian architecture surrounded by terraces and tufted groves. Mr. Drummond is not a man who loves anything long, Lady Emily excepted; and before many years had elapsed The Grange was to be sold, and the portico which was to shame the taste of the City merchant became the property of the second son of Sir Francis Baring, and probably went for one-tenth of its value in the estimation of the estate. Mr. Drummond has however entailed a great expense upon the present possessor by leaving him a Temple instead of a house for habitation. Every year the architect and the mason have been at work to contrive additions to this anomalous structure that might enlarge the accommodation of the family without destroying its general effect, and probably not less than another Thirty Thousand Pounds has been spent upon it. This is, however, no concern of mine, and I could only thank the good people who had spent so much money and taken so much trouble in procuring me the pleasure of enjoying so beautiful a place; for even at this season of the year, with a bright day, the portico and the broad terraces and the woods and the water were all striking and cheerful objects which engaged the mind in a most agreeable manner!"

Alexander Baring, the owner of the place thus described which, under his son Bingham the second Lord Ashburton and his wife the friend of Carlyle and other literary celebrities, became, with Bath House in London, well known as the scene of many notable social gatherings, was perhaps the most brilliant and successful of a distinguished race. He sat in the House of Commons from 1806 to 1831 for various pocket boroughs of his own, Taunton, Callington, Thetford and North Essex, where he spoke on matters of commerce finance and political economy with unquestioned knowledge and authority. He sat as a Whig up to 1831, but joined the Tories on the question of Reform and fought the Reform Bill at every stage. He was the hero of an exciting episode, described in Greville's Diaries on May 17, 1832, when he faced the House as the embryo Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Government which the Duke of Wellington was prepared to form during the crisis with the House of Lords. On this occasion after speaking four times he made the "astounding proposition, drawn from him by the state of the House, that the Ministers should resume their seats and carry the Bill." As he told the Duke at Apsley House the same evening he would "rather face ten thousand devils than such a House of Commons." In 1834 he sat in Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet as President of the Board of Trade, and in 1835 he became the recipient of the first of the four Baring peerages as Lord Ashburton.[1] In 1842 he acted as the English Commissioner in the boundary dispute between Great Britain and the United States, and negotiated the treaty which took its name from him. On this occasion Daniel Webster praised him as a

[1] Mr. J. L. Mallet states that a "patent for raising Sir Francis Baring to the peerage was actually ordered in 1807 when the Ministry of All the Talents went out of office." The late Lord Northbrook noted that "he had never heard of this."

"good man to deal with, who could see that there were two sides to a question." This peculiar faculty for seeing and stating the merits of the other side of a case probably hampered his career in party politics, and the impartiality and versatility of his mind made his political course less effective than it should have been in view of his great ability. He was opposed, for instance, to commercial restrictions between nations, and Sir Robert Peel had, as he owned, drawn his own Free Trade principles from Alexander Baring's speech on presenting the celebrated petition from the merchants of London in 1820; but, as Lord Ashburton, he shrank with alarm from the Free Trade measures of 1846. Many years after his death, Mr. Disraeli, when invoking his authority against the Income Tax, described him as "the greatest merchant England perhaps ever had," and hit off his character with his usual felicity when he added that "he was a man of singular ingenuity and of a prudence amounting to timidity."

As a "merchant" he attained the eminence which he failed to reach in politics. It was under his guidance that the house of Baring Brothers rose to its great place in the world of finance. In 1830 he told Mr. Greville that he "remembered his father with nearly nothing, and that out of the house which he founded not less than six or seven million must have been taken." The origin of his immense fortune was the French loan which he negotiated in 1817, the history of which, however interesting, is hardly germane to the subject of this memoir. Mr. J. L. Mallet notes (December 3, 1825): "Alexander Baring has," it is said, "invested nearly a million sterling in land; probably the largest purchase ever made by any one individual, and that individual not yet fifty. No one under such circumstances can be more perfectly unassuming and more entirely free

Alexander, Lord Ashburton
From the painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence
in the possession of Mr. Thomas Baring

from the pride of wealth and station. I do not know any man of a more easy and agreeable temper, more communicative, and with a better taste and better judgment in conversation."

A final quotation from the diarist brings us back to the elder branch of the family with which we are directly concerned. In the course of a walk he and Sir Thomas discussed the question of a political career for the latter's eldest son Francis, "for whom," he writes, "I have a particular regard, and who ought, I think, to come into Parliament as soon as a fair opportunity offers." After a course of education at home and at Winchester, Francis had highly distinguished himself at Oxford where as a gentleman commoner of Christchurch he took a double first (in 1817), a success only achieved by one gentleman commoner before him, Sir Robert Peel. "He is now at the bar and promises, from his character, understanding, and acquirements, to do credit to his family and country."

With the second Sir Francis Baring whose early promise was thus indicated we come upon a new stage in the family history, and upon a man the direction of whose activities must have had a marked effect both upon the character and career of his son, the subject of the present memoir. Two generations had given the family not only a solid basis of material prosperity, but a position of general consideration certain to open the door of official preferment to any one of its members who might wish to make politics a career. They had taken their place in the ranks of the landed aristocracy of the country from which statesmen in those days were largely if not exclusively recruited; and the third generation was now to be represented by one whose chief interests lay in the direction of public life. In the words of Sir Arthur Helps,

a close friend of his son's and a constant visitor at Stratton in his time, "Sir Francis Baring belonged to a class of Englishmen of whom we are justly proud. They are the men who, possessing large fortunes, having probably taken the highest University honours as Sir Francis Baring did, and having for a time made law their study, devote themselves thenceforward to what may be called professional statesmanship." Of this type which still exists, though the combination of wealth and station with high academic or intellectual distinction which was typical of the Whigs of this period is far less common in modern Cabinets, Sir Francis Baring was an eminent representative. From the time he entered Parliament in 1826 until he was in his seventieth year, his whole life was devoted to the public service. His family were Whigs, as most City magnates were at that date, and his own temper and convictions were such as we have come to associate with Whiggism in its purest form. But even if there had been no family reason at the outset of his career which inclined him towards liberal ideas, it must be noted that he came into public life at the precise moment when the Tory reaction due to the great war had outlived any possible usefulness, when the social and economic condition of the English people was at its lowest ebb, and when an able young man would naturally turn to the party whose programme of political reform offered a serious hope of national regeneration. So promising a recruit had not long to wait for preferment. His marriage to a niece of the leader of the Reform Party, Lord Grey, brought him into the inner circle of the governing families, and in 1831 he set his foot on the first rung of the Treasury ladder which led him to the Secretaryship in 1834, and in 1839 to its highest post as Lord Melbourne's Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It would be out of place to follow his subsequent political career in any detail. The confusion of parties which was one result of the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the inconvenient influx of able Peelite leaders into the Whig Party, no doubt interfered in some degree with Sir Francis Baring's political chances after this period. But his own independence of character had also something to do with this result. He had decidedly less of the opportunist in his composition than some of his Whig contemporaries, together with less personal ambition. Sir James Graham described him as a "man with a strong mind and will, very rigid and severe in his principles." "Throughout his prosperous career," wrote Sir Arthur Helps, "there was no fever of ambition, no courting of distinction, no compromise of his own conscientious convictions, no suppression of his independent judgment." He was of course a Free Trader and voted for the Repeal of the Corn Laws, but he was always opposed to the income tax to which he had a very strong objection as an ordinary source of revenue in time of peace. This feeling had possibly something to do with his refusal of the offer of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer on two occasions, in 1846 from Lord John Russell and in 1855 from Lord Palmerston, when that statesman was relying on the Whigs to form a Government ; but it is certain that after ten years' hard work at the Treasury he had a strong disinclination to return to it. In 1849 however he joined Lord John Russell as First Lord of the Admiralty, a post which he held till the fall of the Government in 1852. "He was a good Whig," wrote Sir Erskine May, "but superior to party. Every one knows that at the Admiralty he was the fairest First Lord who ever administered that department."

Sir Francis Baring's accession to the Cabinet is treated

by Lord John Russell's biographer,[1] the late Sir Spencer Walpole, as having increased the weight of Lord Grey in the Council Chamber as opposed to the Prime Minister. Sir Francis Baring was brother-in-law to Sir George Grey who was Lord Grey's first cousin, and Sir Charles Wood was Lord Grey's brother-in-law, so that out of a Cabinet of fourteen, "four were united by ties of closest relationship," and formed a compact family party within the Cabinet. Another Cabinet Minister, it may be added, Mr. Labouchere, was Sir Francis Baring's brother-in-law. The Northbrook papers, however, which deal specially with this point, show that there is no foundation for the idea thus suggested, whatever Lord John himself may have thought. Neither Sir George Grey nor Sir Francis were as a matter of fact under Lord Grey's influence, the latter was indeed throughout his career rather markedly attached politically to Lord John ; both Sir George Grey and he often differed from Lord Grey's views, and on two important occasions at least, on the questions of reform and papal aggression, they sided in the Cabinet with Lord John against him.

This was Sir Francis Baring's last experience of office. The rest of his political career, and not the least useful portion of it, was spent as a prominent and highly respected independent member of the House of Commons, in which he sat for thirty-nine years as the Liberal representative of a single constituency, that of Portsmouth. His opinions (and much of the following description of them applies equally well to his son) were always moderate and sensible ; he "heartily supported a considerable extension of the franchise feeling none of those apprehensions which are now current among many intellectual men" ; he was

[1] Walpole's "Life of Lord John Russell," ii. 80.

opposed to keeping up large establishments in time of peace and always threw his weight against a warlike or provocative policy in foreign affairs; he was a "fervent advocate of economy"[1] and a sound and well-informed financier of the administrative order, and it was largely to his initiative as Chairman of the Public Monies Committee in 1856–57 that the institution in 1861 of the Public Accounts Committee, of which he was the first Chairman, was due. "His manner was cold and his disposition reserved," says his friend, Sir Denis de Marchant, "so that he had few friends or even political followers, but no man was more respected and trusted by those who had to deal with him, as was shown when he came into high office. He had a clear head and considerable power of reasoning. . . . In the diligent performance of his official duties he had no superior." "A very shrewd, sagacious man, having much of that peculiar talent which belongs to his family," wrote Sir Arthur Helps. With all this he had "all the tastes and some of the indolence of a man of letters. He would rather be in his study with his books than take any active exercise." It should be added, however, that he took much pains with the management of his estate as his father had done, and as his son was also to do in his turn.

It cannot be doubted that the example and conversation of such a man had a very real effect in moulding the character of his son and his outlook upon public affairs, in spite of the fact that there was little similarity of temperament between them. The fact of Sir Francis Baring's public position must alone have had an important bearing on the future of the son to whom he was devoted. Sir Francis was familiar with all the

[1] Walpole's "Life of Lord John Russell," ii. 80.

aspects of official life and had been intimate with all the Whig and Liberal leaders of his generation. Lord Althorp in the early reformed Parliaments had spoken of him as "his conscience" and looked upon him as his eventual successor. He was a good deal in Lord John Russell's confidence at different periods, and his most intimate political and personal associates were his cousin, Henry Labouchere afterwards Lord Taunton, his brother-in-law Sir George Grey, and Sir Charles Wood afterwards Viscount Halifax, under all of whom, when the time came, his son was to serve his political apprenticeship.

That son, the subject of the present memoir, had thus some peculiar advantages in the way of political surroundings and traditions. Born on January 22, 1826, the year his father came into Parliament, Thomas George Baring afterwards Earl of Northbrook was nurtured in the air of Whig politics and high office. He was thirteen when his father was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer and twenty-three when he became First Lord of the Admiralty; and his earliest letters show an interest in, and familiarity with, at least the personal side of political life. But with all this the atmosphere of the boy's home was in a marked degree simple and unworldly. Sir Francis Baring (as I have called him in these pages though he did not succeed to the baronetcy till 1848 when his son had already left Oxford) was himself, as will have been seen from the foregoing observations, a conscientious rather than an ambitious politician, and he seems always to have had in view in his plans for his son's education the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake and the supreme importance of the formation of character. Moral and religious training certainly came in his eyes before intellectual acquirements though no one was less inclined to underrate the latter,

and the sincere piety and the habits of prayer and of Bible reading which had been the rule of Sir Thomas' household were transmitted by him to his son and grandson, divested of the narrowness and cant of the fashionable evangelicalism of that day. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the parents' insistence on these aspects of education in moulding the mind and character of the young man; and it must be added that all the influences of which I have spoken were powerfully reinforced in the person of his mother, whose early death was the great misfortune of his childhood.

Sir Francis had in 1825 at the age of twenty-nine married Miss Jane Grey, a daughter of Sir George Grey Commissioner of Portsmouth Dockyard, a brother of the second Earl Grey and father of the statesman whose character has been so admirably portrayed in Bishop Creighton's brief memoir.[1] This marriage with the daughter of an old English border family which had grown into a great Whig house naturally proved a leading factor in his own and his son's political and social relations, but it also confirmed the higher influences under which Sir Francis himself had been brought up. "Commissioner" Grey and his family were, like the owners of Stratton at that time, strongly evangelical and philanthropic in their leanings; and in estimating the influence of the Grey strain, which in other respects was very marked in Lord Northbrook, the effect of the training he received in his early childhood under the devoted care of his high-minded mother cannot be neglected. I shall have something to say later on of the similarity in character between Lord Northbrook and

[1] "Memoirs of Sir George Grey, Bart., G.C.B.," privately printed in 1883, and published, with a preface by Sir Edward Grey, Bart., M.P., by Messrs. Longmans in 1901.

his uncle Sir George Grey which became evident in the later lives of the two statesmen. But for the moment it is sufficient to observe that though Lord Northbrook inherited certain personal characteristics and a vivacity of temperament and mental quickness which distinguished him from his father and grandfather and may be attributed to his Grey ancestry, he yet retained to the full the energy sound judgment and practical grip of affairs characteristic of the Barings.

The death of his wife threw upon Sir Francis Baring the care of his son's welfare at a time when his own political avocations must have made this burden a serious addition to his work. But he never neglected the superintendence of that son's education whether at home or when he was placed with a tutor in the country, and the boy's earliest letters, with his accounts of his interest in his gardening operations in his entomological pursuits and his other occupations, show that the affectionate intimacy which had existed with his mother was preserved in his relations with his father. At thirteen he writes to his father (September 1839): "I saw you had the honour of kissing Her Majesty's hand on being sworn in to the Privy Council" (when appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer), and proceeds to ask for a Flaxman's Homer and some new clothes! "I think you might spend a little of your new salary on me." Next year when Sir Francis was spending a holiday with his daughters at Weymouth the boy wrote asking for some specimens of a certain butterfly which was to be found on Portland Island. "I am told," he wrote, "that there is no shop in Weymouth *where* you can get them, so I think the best thing I can do is to send you down one of my nets with which you can catch them; the season for them is just right now. They are large yellow butterflies with a large black spot at the end of each wing.

Mrs. Baring and Children.
1830
From a drawing by Sir William Ross.

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They are not hard to catch!" Sir Francis explored Weymouth with his daughters in vain, particularly an old curiosity shop kept by one whom they subsequently referred to as the "Dæmon," and thus writes: "I will see what I can do for the butterflies, but with every respect for your consideration I cannot adopt your plan of getting a net and setting out on a butterfly chase! In the first place, it is rather late in life for me to begin such pursuits, and possibly H. B. might consider that the Chancellor of the Exchequer catching butterflies would be a fit subject for his pencil. At least so say your sisters."

Sir Francis had himself till sixteen been educated at Winchester, but though he had sent his son at an early age to a private school he decided, in consultation with his wife, not to send him to a public school; a decision which was founded partly on a certain misconception as to the strength of the boy's character and partly on his unfavourable recollection of his own school days, and which was perhaps justified by the condition of the public schools at that time. He was at all events not singular in this course, for a public school education was not to men of Lord Northbrook's generation so universal a preliminary to a University career as it has since become, and in his case though he seems (to judge from one of his Christ Church letters) to have felt the want of it a certain disadvantage, it is not difficult to set on the other side some positive gain in the acquisition of early habits of application which bore fruit in later life, of artistic and scientific tastes and of a "general intelligence and knowledge considerably above the common run of his age." Such, at all events, was the verdict of his tutor, Mr. Bird, on his leaving his house for Christ Church in the autumn of 1843. Some two or three months of the previous summer he had spent with

another tutor Mr. Vaughan Johnson at Châlons-sur-Marne, working for Oxford and studying French with considerable diligence. It was not his first trip abroad, for in the previous year he had been with his father to Ostend, Liège, Spa and Treves, down the Moselle and back by the Rhine, on which occasion he made the first sketches (fine pen-and-ink drawings) which have been preserved, as have others, made on the Thames, of Hambledon Lock and Fawley Church, when his tutor, Mr. Bird, was living at Henley-on-Thames. At Châlons the drawings are more finished, and show the first touches of colour. Sketching, indeed, throughout his life remained with Lord Northbrook a favourite holiday occupation, and one in which he attained much more than average proficiency. He was already an excellent draughtsman, having studied under S. Palmer, and later on he learnt much from his friend Edward Lear with whom he often walked and sketched abroad and who left considerable traces upon his style. His many subsequent journeys abroad, unfortunately for the present purpose, can all be followed much more interestingly in his sketches, of which nineteen large volumes containing some hundreds of drawings are preserved at Stratton, than in the letters or scattered notes which remain. There are for this period some beautifully executed architectural drawings of 1850 on the Rhone, and in places like Malines and Antwerp. This stay abroad ended with a fortnight's tour in Switzerland which he reached by way of Valence and Avignon, and when he visited Geneva and Chamounix. His letters from these places show the interest in sightseeing and the love both of natural scenery and of architecture which always distinguished him. It was probably at this time that he became bitten with the love of mountain walks and climbing which took him next year on a more regular mountaineering

tour in Switzerland with his Oxford friend, Alfred Seymour, and which remained with him all his life. He could never see a hill but he wished to climb it, and even on his way back from India in 1876 he took some of the staff up the highest points at Aden.

Mr. Johnson, to return to my story, writing at the end of this journey to Sir Francis spoke of his pupil's aptitude for mathematics and his unusually large range of classical reading "which would lead one to suspect inaccuracy but for his prompt and business-like habits of despatching all things, whether in study or recreation. He has, moreover, a good memory, and in readiness is beyond his years. He ought to digest and classify rather than amass more knowledge, to think as well as to read." This Oxford would help him to do, as well as to correct a "tendency to lose his temper under cross circumstances, and proneness to contradiction!"

At Oxford then, in October 1843, Thomas George Baring (or "young Tom" as he was called to distinguish him from his uncle) was entered, as his father had been before him, a gentleman-commoner of Christ Church with his horse for exercise and hunting, and with his own servant, as the custom was, to attend upon him ; and found himself for the first time in his rooms in Canterbury Quad among young men of his own age and condition. A gentleman-commoner of a very different type, the late John Ruskin, has given in his own picturesque language his impressions of the Christ Church of that day. Perhaps it is worth quoting here, with the descriptions of the Dean and Tutor, and the general atmosphere of the society into which young Baring came fresh from his country tutor a very few years later :—

"On the whole," he writes ("Præterita," vol. i. p. 350), "of important places and services for the Christian souls

of England, the choir of Christ Church was at that epoch of English history virtually the navel, and seat of life. There remained in it the traditions of Saxon, Norman, Elizabethan religion unbroken,—the memory of loyalty, the reality of learning, and, in nominal obedience at least and in the heart of them with true docility, stood every morning, to be animated for the highest duties owed to their country, the noblest of English youth. . . . There, in his stall, sat the greatest divine of England (Dean Gaisford),—under his commandant niche, her greatest scholar,—among the tutors the present Dean Liddell, and a man of curious intellectual power and simple virtue, Osborne Gordon. The group of noblemen gave, in the Marquis of Kildare, Earl of Desart, Earl of Emlyn, and Francis Charteris, now Lord Wemyss,—the brightest types of high race and active power. Henry Acland and Charles Newton among the senior undergraduates, and I among the freshmen, showed, if one had known it, elements of curious possibilities in coming days. None of us then conscious of any need or chance of change; least of all the stern captain, who, with rounded brow and glittering dark eye, led in his old thunderous Latin the responses of the morning prayer. . . . In the cathedral," he adds, "however born or bred, I felt myself present by as good a right as its bishop. . . . But at the gentlemen-commoners' table in Cardinal Wolsey's dining-room, I was, in all sorts of ways at once, less than myself, and in all sorts of wrong places at once, out of my place."

Just as emphatically as Ruskin felt himself out of his place Baring seems quickly to have found himself in congenial surroundings, and he rapidly gained from them what to him at that stage in his life was more important than further classical learning, some lasting friendships and the habit of society. His high spirits, his sense of humour, and his straightforward and typically English character

made him a popular member of the College, and it is truer in his case than in many that his Oxford friendships were the most intimate of his long life. Whether owing to his naturally reserved disposition, his early marriage, or the pressure of official work which came upon him not very long afterwards, no later names superseded in the list of his friends those of his Christ Church contemporaries such as Charles and Henry Grenfell, Granville Somerset, Alfred Seymour, Henry West, Chichester Fortescue (afterwards Lord Carlingford), Henry Sturt (afterwards Lord Alington) and his brother Ashley (who died soon after leaving Oxford), and the late Lord Kimberley. Very soon after he went into residence his tutor, Mr. Osborne Gordon, who had also acted as tutor to Ruskin wrote : "I am more convinced than ever that at first I underrated his abilities which under a sufficient stimulus would enable him to do anything he liked. That stimulus, however, he has not got, either in the way of inclination of his own or of external circumstances. . He has very good taste and quick apprehension, but" (curiously unlike his character in later life) "very little application." To the temptations, not of dissipation, but of sport and social amusement he yielded all the more readily than if he had had the opportunity of encountering them at a public school. Sir Francis to whom every detail was interesting, particularly (as he wrote) "when you are treading the ground over which I have gone in my day," became, with the recollection of his own more strenuous youth at the University, somewhat uneasy before long and found it necessary to remind his son of the opportunities which he feared he was losing of fitting himself for future usefulness in life. It was not a little to the credit of Thomas Baring's strength of character and good sense that admonitions of this kind were taken in good part, and that

a father's advice and example should have supplied the necessary stimulus. "I quite agree with you," he wrote to Sir Francis in January 1845, "that this year of my life is a most important one, and shall endeavour to put my class before my eyes to the exclusion of the more amusing but idle pursuit of hunting, &c. There is nothing like beginning. I have begun to-day to read from nine to twelve in the evening, quite a novelty for me at Oxford!"

The result was that in the following year he took a second class, and "the only thing," as he wrote to his father, "that made me feel disappointed is that from what I hear I was disagreeably close to a first." The appropriate comment was that supplied by a well-known fellow of Oriel, Charles Neate, who had been Sir Francis Baring's private secretary at the Treasury and who wrote: "It is under all the circumstances a good class, considering (I mean by circumstances) that he has not allowed his studies to interfere very much with the other pursuits of a young gentleman of fortune." What measure of satisfaction it afforded to the young man there are no means of judging, but he must certainly be held to have passed through Oxford with credit and with considerable advantage to himself, although there is not much in his University career which foreshadowed the quite exceptional power of work he developed later on, and the sense of duty which growing with his growth enabled him, as happily for this country it has enabled many other men of adequate ability placed like himself above the necessity for exertion, to play a leading part in public life.

That he left Oxford, however, well fitted to take his place among his contemporaries is clear. A valuable piece of testimony to this effect is to be found in a letter from an

old friend of Sir Francis Baring, Mr. Edward Ellice, to whom "young Tom" had paid a few days' visit at Glenquoich in the course of a Scotch reading tour in his last long vacation with Grosvenor (the late Duke of Westminster), Charles Grenfell, and others, during which he "positively," as he says, "read very hard for eight weeks." "Bear" Ellice, "for his wiliness," says Carlyle, "rather than from any trace of ferocity,"[1] was, as Greville's half contemptuous half appreciative reference to him (December 1850) testifies, a considerable figure in Whig politics behind the scenes, and a competent man of affairs and judge of character. "I think," he wrote of Thomas Baring, "that you have every reason to be satisfied with and proud of him. So far as my observation went his disposition was most amiable, his manner engaging and popular, and his habits those which you desire to see in a young man in his circumstances; the mind equally active while engaged in business or occupation of interest or of amusement. There seemed nothing *neutral* about him, the greatest comfort in these days of apathy and self-indulgence. The only fault I found with him was the vile practice of cigar-smoking!" Mr. Ellice concluded by offering his help in finding a seat in the House of Commons for the young man.

By this time, indeed, it had evidently been settled between father and son that he should make a start in public life. Some years earlier, on his first entering the University and becoming comparatively his own master, he had received a letter from his father which Lord Northbrook placed on record at the close of his own career with "gratitude and affection" as being "worthy of a place among letters of advice which have been written by other

[1] Really from his connection with the Hudson Bay fur trade.

statesmen to their children." Some passages from it may therefore be given here :—

"Have you ever asked yourself the question," he wrote, "what you intend to do with yourself in life ? One portion of the question is answered for you. . . . Your position is fixed—that of an English country gentleman ; and it will be your business in life to do your duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call you. . . . Have the English country gentlemen, then, any business ? To my mind no one more. All men are not fitted for the performance of all these duties, but it is in the discharge of some that men of property in this country do their duty to their God, benefit their country, and contribute to their own happiness. For happiness any labour is better than idleness, but labour in the line of duty is the sweetest. . . . It is for you a little to think over what your inclination and talents lead you to in the different branches of your own condition of life. You may look to public life if your feelings turn that way, or you may lead a quieter life and still be a very useful and good man. As to public life I would say a word. I have never tried either directly or through your tutors to rouse your ambition or to turn your mind to such a course ; my own course and conversation no doubt indirectly may have had that effect ; but it has been my endeavour to leave you as much free to act according to your inclination as was possible under the circumstances. I don't wish to tempt you or to drive you into the career . . . I shall be as satisfied if you are a *worthy* country squire as if you were a leading Whig speaker. I don't wish to frighten you from it. It has its ups and downs, its cares and pleasures, like other lines of life. If, indeed, power or office or some wretched peerage is the object of a public man, of all men perhaps he is the most miserable ; but if his opinions are approved by his conscience and his course is honest he will find that labour in the line of duty has its blessings whether he be in office or

not. . . . I do not wish to control you in this, nor indeed has it ever been my course to strain too hard the tie of parental authority, but I trust you will do something to fit yourself for the duties of your after-life, and make up your mind to perform these duties when they fall upon you."

The letter contains an interesting presentation of an ideal of citizenship and public spirit not always to be found at the present day among the classes placed above the necessity of working for a livelihood, but the most interesting thing about it is the manner in which the advice was acted on by the son to whom it was addressed. For the lesson of the duty owed to the public by men of high position, inculcated and acted upon by men of the type of Sir Francis Baring, was never forgotten by Lord Northbrook whose activity was not confined to the choice of one of the alternatives presented to him, but embraced them both in the fullest possible manner. Both as a statesman and a country gentleman he made his mark and left a shining example of energy and capacity expended in the service of his fellow men. It will be the task of the remaining pages of this chapter to trace very briefly the steps by which he qualified himself for the fit performance of the first of the two parts which he was destined to play in life.

In 1846 when "young Tom" was leaving Oxford, his father, already a mature statesman, was still only in the position of an eldest son. But Sir Thomas Baring was approaching the close of his long reign at Stratton. In that year he lost his wife, and Mr. Francis Baring transferred his residence from the Manor House at Lee, then a charming old place, with cedar trees and good garden, where his children spent most of their early youth and from which he used to ride daily into London on his cob, to Stratton where Sir Thomas died two years later. By this time

young Tom Baring had fully made up his mind to follow in his father's footsteps and to enter public life, and immediately on leaving Christ Church when not yet twenty-two he began his long official career by going to Dublin as private secretary to his uncle, Henry Labouchere, then Chief Secretary for Ireland. A similar offer was made him by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Charles Wood, but "The Castle," wrote his father to the latter, "will tempt him at first into a life of business. When he is in he will go on, but Downing Street has little charm to tempt him on."

There remains little record save occasional notes from fellow private secretaries and officials and half-a-dozen lively letters to his particular friends—letters of political, social, and racing gossip, full of genial chaff and good fellowship—to show in what spirit the budding statesman took to his new duties. Here is one addressed to "Dear Wigs," the name by which Henry Grenfell went at this time among his friends :—

"From what I saw in the paper about Preston, the anti-Tory feelings of the population seem to have been pretty considerably violent, and to have very nearly physically demolished the opposition. I suppose your father is in by this time. If so, you can give him my congratulations. I hope there were enough men in town to regulate in the way we wished the Alfred elections, but I should fear that the snobs were left in possession of London and the Alfred too." (The "Alfred" was a club to which he and his Oxford friends seem to have belonged, as it is frequently mentioned in these letters.) "I have been at Goodwood all this week, and the racing on Thursday was the best I ever saw—five races neck and neck past the stand. I came to Chichester not knowing where to stop, and found Pemberton Ryder and some of our friends in a house in which they gave me a room. Ergo we played whist and vingt-et-un all night, and almost

every one except myself and Ryder got very drunk indeed on half-dozen of champagne and three bottles of Madeira, which the Bishop ! sent in,—which has left on me the impression that the Bishop is a brick. Portal gave up for Winchester, and as you will have seen Carter came in easy ; it would have been the same had Portal stood. I was there the polling day. There was no fun."

Probably his official duties sat lightly enough upon him, though he wrote to his father of the "rather hard work he had been doing" and of the preoccupation of the Irish Government with troubles connected with the prevailing distress ; and it is clear that society sport and foreign travel occupied his thoughts and energies for the next year or two, until his early marriage in 1848, to the exclusion of more serious pursuits. He was one of those, as he himself remarked, who find it difficult to work without some definite practical object in view, and it was only by degrees that he settled down to the steady grind of official life. In any case he enjoyed to the full this breathing space before the responsibilities of real life overtook him, living a good deal with his many friends, at home in the Whig houses, and made much of in society in London. There was nothing of the aimlessness which often besets a young man at such periods. He had too strong a grip on life to be bored ; he was energetic and business-like, as one of his tutors had observed, even in his pleasures. Travelling was perhaps his greatest resource then as ever, and his letters from abroad show him at his best. In the winter and spring of 1847–8 occurred a journey in Italy which must have been an epoch in his life, stimulating as it did his dormant artistic tastes. He began with a month in Florence where he took lodgings opposite the Duomo, read Italian, working as so many students of the language have done since at the *Promessi Sposi* ("rather

hard but uncommonly amusing!") and at Sismondi, and going to the galleries "to try and admire the old pictures which the purists rage after so much." Then he went on to Rome where he says he made "acquaintance with many people both agreeable and clever," among them Edward Lear to whom Chichester Fortescue had introduced him, and who wrote of him in his quaint manner "He is an extremely luminous and amiable brick, and I like him very much, and I suppose he likes me, or he would not take the trouble of knocking me up as he does considering the lot of people he might take to instead."[1] It was the beginning of a friendship which lasted till Lear's death. Needless to say he saw all the sights to his heart's content, though as he "hated writing descriptions" and generally referred his reader to Murray's handbooks there is little to record. Specially did he enjoy a "most delightful expedition" with his friend Grosvenor to Naples, Pompeii, Salerno, Castelamare, Pæstum, Amalfi, and Capri. The letters are naturally full of gossip and impressions of Italian politics; revolution was in the air, and in Rome during his visit a more or less liberal constitution was granted by the new Pope, Pio Nono, which was to be the prelude to the short-lived Roman Republic of 1849. A lively curiosity to see what was going on is more apparent in his comments than any philosophical interest in the causes of the ferment. "I would have given anything to have seen the revolution at Paris" he writes in March; "what madness the new Government undertaking to feed the poor." Again: "Talk of a revolution in Vienna not to speak of London, but I am not the least afraid of the last having an implicit confidence in the new police!"

[1] See letter of Edward Lear to Lord Carlingford, published by Lady Strachey, p. 5.

There is no sign in these early letters of any sympathy with the great popular movement which burst into flame in 1848 and which, abortive as it was in so many directions, yet marked a stage in the evolution of modern Europe and of democratic government. Lord Northbrook was born and bred a Whig and a Whig he remained, though his open and candid mind, his extremely practical outlook on all public affairs, and a fund of latent enthusiasm and warmth of character preserved him from the rigidity and narrowness which characterised some of the older members of that political school, and widened his sympathies until in his political views and ideals he became much more of a typical liberal-minded Englishman than a typical Whig.

The moment at which he began to take a practical interest in politics was one of far-reaching importance and interest, but not one which appealed, as the Reform struggle had done, to the constitutional instincts of Whig politicians. It was rather in its broader aspects the beginning of a period in which the distinction between the old Whig and Tory parties was becoming fainter, and the issues which divided them small in comparison with those which drew them together. Not that party strife or the struggle for office became less active, but the inspiration of a vital conflict of opinion seemed lacking; twenty years were to pass away before Lord Palmerston's death revealed a new political world; and meanwhile a young man so closely connected with the inner Whig circle and one of those who came into public life rather from a sense of what was owing to their position in life than from enthusiasm for any particular political ideals, must at first have seen little in the political situation to fire his imagination or call forth his highest powers. He was, however, in the coming years to

learn the highest lessons of statesmanship from his association with Whig statesmen.

Some years ago a eulogist of the historic Whiggery with which his family is identified, brought a severe indictment[1] against modern Whigs, on the ground that once they had ceased to lead the van of progress they had no longer any reason for existence. Either they must become "permeated" with liberalism and absorbed into the liberal or radical parties, or fall into the ranks of ordinary conservatism. It may perhaps be questioned whether amidst the feverish competition of two great democratic parties, there is not still place, if not for a party, at all events for a body of politicians inspired with the soundest of the Whig traditions, and representing that left centre position so characteristic of the English political mind. However this may be, the Whigs successfully maintained an independent existence for forty years after the passing of the Reform Bill, and by that very fact were enabled to perform an invaluable service to the country, a service which no party which was not at once aristocratic and popular in its sympathies as well as competent in administration could have successfully rendered. They not only tided over the critical period of transition from an oligarchal to a democratic form of government at home, but they relaid the foundations of the Empire both in India and in the Colonies on lines which have directly led to its present unrivalled development.

Sir Francis Baring "indulging," as he jestingly remarked, "in a bit of fustian" described their function not inaptly when he wrote of the Whig party as follows. "I mean, the existence of a body of men connected with

[1] "A Protest against Whiggery," by G. W. E. Russell, *Nineteenth Century*, June 1883.

high rank and property, bound together by hereditary feelings, party ties, as well as higher motives, who in bad times keep alive the sacred flame of freedom, and when the people are roused stand between the constitution and revolution and go with the people, but not to extremities."

"A Whig," writes the authority already quoted, "is like a poet, born not made. It is as difficult to become a Whig as to become a Jew." But like all ruling castes which have retained their vitality, the Whigs had the faculty of attracting young men of genius or talent, and some of the greatest of their number—Burke, Francis Horner, Macaulay—owed nothing to the accident of birth. "The sacred circle of the great-grandmotherhood" was a real aristocracy, but an aristocracy tempered by its appreciation of intellectual culture. The post-Reform Bill Whigs were mostly men of real personal superiority; they were adepts by long tradition in the art of government; they were serious students of constitutional science and of political economy before that science had been banished to Saturn; and they had, like their ancestors, a genuine love of liberty, civil political and religious, though with all this very little notion of social equality.

"It argues no political bias to maintain that in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, Toryism offered its neophytes no educational opportunities equal to those which a young Whig enjoyed at Chatsworth and Bowood and Woburn and Holland House. Here the best traditions of the preceding century were constantly reinforced by accessions of fresh intellect. The circle were indeed an aristocratic family party, but it paid a genuine homage to ability and culture. Genius held the key, and there was a *carrière ouverte aux talents*." [1]

[1] "Freddy Leveson," by G. W. E. Russell, *Cornhill Magazine*, August 1907.

This was still the tone of the society to which young Tom Baring had natural access. It was that in which many of his older contemporaries had been brought up, and the tradition of which lasted until long after his own youth. It certainly had a distinctly traceable influence on his own social outlook, though it would be rash to affirm that its "educational opportunities" presented much attraction to a young man, who though popular and fond of his friends had probably little partiality for conversational brilliancy, and whose early marriage soon withdrew him from the full influence of general society. But on its political side, the influence of the Whig statesmen with whom he was long and closely connected was very marked. I have already said something of his father's political friends and associates. The late Mr. Henry Grenfell, Lord Northbrook's friend from Christ Church days, was a considerable figure in the Whig society of his day and was intimately acquainted, first as a private secretary and then as a member of the House of Commons, with many of the Whig leaders. He has left on record some impressions of the two among them with whom young Baring was to serve his political apprenticeship—Sir George Grey, his uncle, and Sir Charles Wood, afterwards Lord Halifax.

"Of all the public men," Mr. Grenfell wrote, "with whom I was ever brought into association, I look on Sir George Grey as having served his country best, and as having been the greatest addition to every Cabinet of which he was a member. It is usually supposed that the success which was achieved on the 10th of April 1848 by the special constables over the Chartists under Feargus O'Connor was due to the Duke of Wellington and the cool determination which he displayed. I think that those who were behind the scenes must have known that much

was attributable to Sir George Grey, who was the Home Secretary responsible to Parliament for the whole affair. . . . During the time that I was at the War Office with Lord Panmure I used to see a good deal of Sir George, and had reason to appreciate the charm of his well-stored mind and gaiety of temper even under the most difficult circumstances."

On the occasion of his death Lord Granville observed [1] that Sir George Grey was "really Prime Minister in all internal affairs in Palmerston's Government" (1859–1865). It may be added that in later years Lord Northbrook himself used to say that Sir George Grey was the "quickest-minded man" he ever met, except Lord Halifax. Of Lord Halifax Mr. Grenfell wrote, in the course of an appreciation in the *Spectator*, (August 15, 1881) that

"his career was perhaps the most successful that the present century can show of any man who was not gifted with the power of speech. It is also singular that although his marriage with the daughter of the Prime Minister (Lord Grey) brought him into early notice, from the date of his resignation, with Lord Howick his brother-in-law, in 1839 he may be regarded rather as the leader of the Grey connection than as one of its dependents. From 1841 to 1874 he held all the principal offices of the highest class in the State, and most of them at the moment when they required the greatest capacity, labour and decision. More especially was this the case" (as Lord Northbrook himself afterwards observed) "with his management of the new India Department after the close of the Mutiny, during which period every Indian institution was thoroughly overhauled and reconstructed. . . . From the fact that he was not an eloquent man it must be evident that there were some great qualities of administration, or else some of those still rarer

[1] From Lord Northbrook's Diary, September 12, 1882

qualities which give weight in a Cabinet, to account for the very close connection between him and all the various leaders of the Liberal Party from 1830 to 1874. . . . He certainly never cultivated the arts of popularity. . . . On all occasions in which difficulties occurred between members of the various Cabinets in which he served, he was most eager and efficient to restore harmony by personal communication, and his well-known form could be seen going from one house to another in the most rapid manner."

It was from men of this type—men of sincere conviction, of complete independence, of great public spirit, and above all of the highest administrative capacity—that the subject of this memoir derived his early training in statesmanship. It is impossible to appreciate his political qualities and methods in later years without a reference to the character and example of those under whom his early manhood was passed.

The year 1848 was an important one in the family life. Sir Thomas Baring died in April, and Sir Francis, who had some years before (in 1841) married as his second wife Lady Arabella Howard,[1] a daughter of Lord Effingham, succeeded to the title and estates which he was to hold for eighteen years. In September of the same year (1848) "young" Tom Baring married Elizabeth Harriet, daughter of Mr. Henry Charles Sturt of Crichel and sister of his two Christ Church friends. From this time letters of domestic interest became even less common, and little record has been preserved except some letters between the father and son when either of them were abroad. Next year, when Sir Francis accepted an offer from Lord John Russell to join his government as First Lord of the

[1] Their son is the Hon. Francis Henry Baring, half brother to the late Lord Northbrook.

Emery Walker ph. sc.

T. G. Baring
1849
From a drawing by George Richmond. R.A.

Admiralty, the young couple went with him to the official residence which thirty years later Lord Northbrook was himself to occupy as First Lord. In 1850 the young man became a father, his eldest son being born at Florence. It was at this time that he read Dante through, and the following extract from a letter (November 3) to Chichester Fortescue shows that he thought for himself about the Venetian school of painting :—

"I can't understand Ruskin's admiration for Tintoret; to me he is most wonderful for the extraordinary quantity of yards of canvas he has painted. Anything more different than his treatment of sacred subjects from what I conceive to be the right mode I cannot imagine; no quietness, no feeling except the emblems which Ruskin admires so much, and everything in motion. Titian is wonderful but every now and then makes one wish that he drew better. Paul Veronese, a gorgeous scene painter. I am almost ashamed to confess that I like some of Gian Bellini's best pictures as well as anything I saw in Venice. But I won't bother you about pictures, though for months I have seen little else. I have been reading Vasari who is very amusing. How much better worth reading a contemporary writer is about any subject whatever." After some disjointed remarks about the condition of Italian politics he goes on: "I am trying to get a little political economy into my brain. It is much harder work than I fancied. I read Macculloch whom I think superficial and unsatisfactory. Mill I have nearly finished. He is much cleverer, but writes with an object, to make the landed interest pay nearly all the taxes and hold their property on the tenure of the will of the State. I expect to find Say or some of the French economists who cannot write for or against any English political party more satisfactory, but the beginning on which every argument must rest, seems to me still *sub judice*. *Bonne chasse*," he con-

cludes, "don't ruin the Whig party by breaking the neck of its most rising young man."

At the general election of 1852 Mr. Baring stood unsuccessfully for Penryn and Falmouth, an experience which he seems to have enjoyed and which was useful to him as an introduction to public speaking. "A curious purity experiment is being tried here" (wrote Miss Caroline Fox,[1] January 25), "which a good deal engages speculative minds just now. Our young candidate, T. G. Baring, the subject or object of this experiment, is very popular." Falmouth was a notoriously corrupt constituency, and Mr. Baring, who had been invited by the Quaker families of the place, the Foxes and Gurneys, to try and stem the corruption and who set his face against bribery in any form, was unsuccessful on this occasion ; but his election address is interesting as a strong affirmation of his belief in free trade, and his determination to oppose Lord Derby's proposals for the "reintroduction of protection or protection in disguise." It was not until 1857 that he came in for the same borough which he represented until his father's death in 1866 and where he made many friends. "I spent many of the happiest days of my life at Falmouth," he wrote to a friend when Governor-General of India. "A contested election is one of the things I have most enjoyed in life, and I should like to be at it again. Strange taste, is it not ?"

Before his election to Parliament he had passed through an almost unexampled experience of private secretaryships. He seems to have followed Mr. Labouchere to the Board of Trade in 1848, when he became immersed in legislation in regard to the sugar duties and other measures which were

[1] Caroline Fox's Journal, ii. 179.

the logical outcome of the repeal of the Corn Laws and which must have given him a useful insight into the larger issues just opening out before the country. In one of his letters at this time he writes characteristically about political economy and free trade :—

"I am working at political economy. It is a mystery more from the conceited phraseology and would-be wiseacredness of its professors than anything else—definitions assumed and nonsense of all kinds in alarming language. I often wish I had happened to be born a red-hot Tory, and to have been firmly convinced that a high price of corn was the only thing to save the country. The fallacies on that side are so much prettier. . . . But unfortunately free trade is true, and we must all use our efforts to give our manufacturers the power of underselling the world."

Then he went to his uncle, Sir George Grey, at the Home Office in Lord John Russell's Ministry, and in 1853 to his father's close friend, Sir Charles Wood, at the Board of Control (the then India Office) in Lord Aberdeen's Coalition Government which came into office on Lord Derby's defeat. In 1855 he served with the same chief in Lord Palmerston's Government at the Admiralty.

On his election to the House of Commons in 1857 he was appointed Civil Lord of the Admiralty in Lord Palmerston's Government. After the brief interlude of Lord Derby's second administration in the following year, Lord Palmerston returned as Prime Minister in 1859 (with Lord John Russell from 1861 in the House of Lords), and his Government lasted till his death in October 1865 when Lord Russell took up the reins and carried on until his defeat in June of the following year. It was in this Ministry which was, like the 1853 Government, almost equally composed of Whigs and Peelites and like it is now

memorable in domestic politics mainly for Mr. Gladstone's historic budgets that Mr. Baring first held important though subordinate office. He went as Under Secretary to the newly constituted India Office under Sir Charles Wood, where he remained till 1864 with a brief interval of a few months as Under Secretary at the War Office, a transfer to which the following words from a letter written by the Duke of Cambridge to Lord Herbert on January 2, 1861, seems to refer: "Mr. Baring has had a good deal of Parliamentary experience; he is clever and speaks well, at all events fairly, and I have always understood that he is a good man of business. I therefore strongly advocate him as successor to Lord de Grey, the more so as I think he is a very right-thinking and safe man."[1] The passage is of some interest as showing the current opinion of Lord Northbrook at this time. He returned to the India Office in July and remained there, as I have said, until 1864 when he went as Under Secretary to the Home Office under Sir George Grey, then at the height of his reputation and well in the running for the leadership of the House of Commons which, however, fell to Mr. Gladstone in 1866. But the tale of his official posts is not yet complete for in April 1866, after refusing the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Trade, he was appointed Secretary of the Admiralty, going out of office with Lord Russell's Government in June of the same year. It was probably at about this period that Lord Russell told the Queen that Mr. Baring was a man who in the future was likely to be prominent in Her Majesty's councils.

Not many people anticipated a long lease of life for the Ministry which came into office in 1859 under Lord Palmerston, least of all the Whigs of Sir Francis Baring's persuasion who again saw themselves reduced to a secondary

[1] Lord Stanmore's "Life of Sidney Herbert," p. 410.

position in a coalition between themselves and the Peelites. Sir Francis himself might well have expected that his services would have been required at the Admiralty or elsewhere, but if so he was consoled for his disappointment by his son's preferment. "He (Tom) is as well fitted," he wrote to a friend, "for the place (at the India Office) as any of the young or old men, and will work well with his old master. T. G. Baring answers for himself and decides for himself, but he is very odd if his ambition is not satisfied with helping to govern our Indian Empire and under great difficulties." Sir Francis, however, deplored what he considered as the practical extinction of the Whigs in a Government in which all the important offices had gone to Peelites, and doubted the permanence of the new arrangements. This was in a reply to a letter from his son who had observed :—

"The Ministry certainly contains a lot of celebrities, and if they pull together, which from mutual interest and from the feeling of the necessity cannot fail to be the case at first, they should be strong. But they have men amongst them who I should think would not like the interference of their colleagues, and they have some nasty questions to settle—finance, reform, and neutrality. All the City would rather have seen Cornewall Lewis or you at the Exchequer than Gladstone, but he will probably carry the House with him."

The concluding remark is not only natural in a son, but reflects the feeling of the Whig connection who never perhaps fully grasped the meaning of the economic revolution initiated by Cobden and Peel, and who in spite of their economic tastes were somewhat ineffectual as practical financiers. It would be interesting to know whether, as the young politician followed the financial duel between the veteran Prime Minister and his great lieutenant

at the Treasury, he learnt to appreciate Mr. Gladstone's efforts in the "battle for thrifty husbandry," and the "practical power and tenacity," in Lord Morley's words, "with which he opened new paths and forced the application of sound doctrines over long successions of countless obstacles." Lord Northbrook's subsequent administration of Indian finance shows that he had learnt at all events one lesson, the great lesson of resolute resistance to wasteful public expenditure, which Mr. Gladstone expressed in the words: "Economy is the first great article, economy such as I understand it, in my financial creed."

For comment, however, of almost any kind on the broader tendencies and events of the fifteen years during which Mr. Baring was behind the political scenes, the scanty records may be searched in vain. All he has left on the subject is to be found in an interesting volume of his father's journal and correspondence which he compiled in the last years of his own life, and in which is recorded (though only for private circulation) a good deal that is of importance to the political history of this tangled period. I have drawn upon it freely in the foregoing observations on Sir Francis Baring's career, but it would probably be tedious, and certainly out of place in these pages, to dilate further on the perplexing game of party politics and personal rivalries on much of which a remark to be found in an early letter of young Tom Baring's to Sir Francis is very much to the point. "It has been a silly, stupid business altogether," he writes with all the severity of youth about one of the recurring crises, "and makes one quite ashamed of our men of mature age and abilities, and experience enough to know better!" But it would have been interesting, at all events to a biographer, to have been able to record the impression made on his

mind by such events as the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, the American Civil War, or the struggle for Italian unity. As it is we must be content to assume that on these matters, as well as on the gradual evolution of new political and economic forces at home, the young politician's judgment retained the seemly balance befitting a scion of the Whig "family party," and that he turned his opportunities to the most practical use by devoting his attention, as he undoubtedly did, to the details of official business and to building up a reputation for loyalty, common sense, and administrative efficiency. Nor did he neglect the attempt to acquire proficiency in debate and public speaking, and a letter in which he asked for advice and described his own studies of Cicero and other models drew from Sir Francis an interesting reply which is quoted in Morley's "Life of Gladstone." On the whole, however, his correspondence with his father, while testifying to the pleasant and confidential relations between them, does not yield much material of general interest, confined as it is to brief comments on Parliamentary events to matters of domestic interest and to details of estate management yeomanry and other country business. At two or three different periods he occupied an official residence at the Admiralty, the first time when his father was First Lord, and he had a house for some years in Halkin Street. When in London he seems to have led the usual life of a young politician, going a good deal into society with his wife; and life in London was broken by holidays at Stratton, by visits to country houses, particularly to Lord Cardigan at Dene (Mrs. Baring's uncle) and to Lord Howe at Penn—on one occasion in 1865 he was lent a place (Seaton) in Devonshire by Louisa Lady Ashburton—by visits to his constituency which he always enjoyed, and by an occasional

sojourn abroad for his wife's health. His stay at Florence has already been mentioned; there was an expedition to Cauterets and Luchon in the Pyrenees in 1852, two winter visits at Mentone and one at Nice in the winter before her death in 1867. Here he drew, his sketches having now more colour, took long walks of twenty miles or more, made climbing expeditions with his eldest son and collected specimens of wild flowers, a taste inherited from his mother.

The year 1866, when Lord Russell's Government fell and he lost office, marks a great break in his life; and when he again came into public notice, it was as a man with his youth behind him, disciplined by sorrows which, as Lord Cromer observes, "had cast an additional shade of somewhat sombre mournfulness over a character which was by nature grave and reserved." On September 6 his father, who in the preceding December, after two previous refusals of a peerage, had accepted that honour at the hands of Lord Russell and been created Lord Northbrook, died at Stratton; and he succeeded to a position which, by removing him from the House of Commons, changed his life in a manner not altogether to his satisfaction. He wrote thus on the subject to Mr. Chichester Fortescue, October 20, 1866: "I confess I should have been better pleased if my father had left me in the House of Commons, but I daresay it is all right as it is, and that I should have failed if I had gone a step higher in politics. Now, I entertain hardly any idea that I shall be wanted again in office. We have plenty of young men—we call ourselves young still, I hope, —in the House of Lords, and I suppose I shall do for the future very much as you are now doing, act country gentleman."

On June 3 in the following year (1867) he lost the wife

SIR FRANCIS THORNHILL BARING

FIRST LORD NORTHBROOK

From a Drawing by George Richmond, R.A.

to whom he was devoted, an event which, as his diary shows, he felt with all the intensity of a deeply affectionate nature. Fortunately for him his three children were now of an age when their companionship was a real solace. There are many records of rides with them in the neighbourhood of Stratton, and entries of holiday occupations, of shooting, skating and so on, which the father shared with his two boys the elder of whom was now at Eton, and the second just entering on what seemed to be a career of brilliant promise as a sailor on the *Britannia*. The business of his estates and of local affairs, such as his guardianship of the poor at Winchester and his trusteeship of St. John's and of St. Cross Hospital--he had long been a leading spirit in the Hampshire Yeomanry —must have helped to fill his life; and in the summer of 1868 he was again taking some part in social life, dining with old friends such as Mr. Henry Grenfell, Lord Halifax, and the Granville Somersets, and visiting at Strawberry Hill. The following year found him again in office and in the full tide of social life; dinners are mentioned at Brooks's and the Travellers, with Lord Granville, Lord Halifax, the Aylesburys, St. George Foleys, Alfred Seymour, Dufferins, Beaumonts, Greys, Sir C. Trevelyan, Corks, Cheshams, Elchos; fishing a good deal in the spring, "riding with Emma" in London and at Stratton, and entertaining shooting parties in September. A charming writer who visited Stratton in company with the late Lord Eversley and other guests in September 1868, has left a record of his impressions which may be quoted here:[1]—

"It is possible that it may be worth while to record the time table of a country house in 1868. This is one day:

[1] "Letters and Journal of William Cory," p. 253.

We are called at eight, shutters unbarred (this is a detestable practice, shuttering, I rebel against it). Gong at nine. We meet in the Library. My Lord reads Job, chapter vii., without a word of comment. Job tells us we are not to rise from the grave, which is a doctrine decidedly out of harmony with the prayer which follows. We talk a few minutes ; then to breakfast, where the girl aged fifteen makes coffee and the servants hand round delicate morsels of hot meat ; not at all a coarse meal. Then we all rise together. I find myself soon in the Library. I rummage. Two ladies come in and *cause* over photographs, leaving me alone. When I calculate the housemaid has done her worst in my room, I go to it. Then with an open lattice letting in the bird voices and tempting me to look at a beloved cedar, I sit and scribble. Meanwhile all the males are shooting ; females writing letters, I hope. I stroll. I find the shrubbery and glades empty. I can look at every tree at leisure, squeeze the fragrant juice from berries and count the acorns on a spray. Then I go with F. to see the shooting people and share their very solid luncheon under a rick of sainfoin. The luncheon is plain but excellent. I eat more than I should indoors with the ladies, and our talk is more lively. I come back sooner than they and read again, but at six I go to the schoolroom and join the ladies at tea. My host comes too, and calls me off for a grave private talk in the adjoining small morning room which is the meeting place before dinner. Then I go back and get a feast of music. At eight punctually gong and dinner ; this punctuality is delightful and has a moral effect. . . . When we returned to the Library, we had too many things offered to us ; after coffee liqueur, then tea, then seltzer water, finally tobacco. Two ladies and two males played whist while the rest talked. No music, no general conversation. This is liberty, but not mutual improvement. All my host says about politics is genuine partisanship ; but sound liberalism, considerate patriotism, public spirit, prudence, generosity."

It was not long before a blow fell upon the host thus described, which saddened his life in a very notable degree. On September 7, 1870, the newly built turret-ship H.M.S. *Captain* went down off Finisterre with practically all on board, and among them his beloved second son Arthur. "Sir Henry Storks" (his friend and colleague at the War Office) "told me the dreadful news;" and he further notes about his last parting with the boy on August 1: "He went to the ship quite early, and then got leave to come back and have breakfast with us, and saw us off, as if he had a presentiment it was the last time." It was months, perhaps years, before he rallied from this loss, all the harder perhaps to bear from the very reserve of his character, and one pathetic little bit of evidence of this may be quoted from a private note in his diary headed "Call upon me in the day of trouble," on one of the never forgotten anniversaries of the calamity some years later when he was in India. "Spent an hour in reading Arthur's letters and thinking of the dear boy." Lord Northbrook was a man who never, or only on the rarest occasions, spoke to others of any private trouble which yet filled his thoughts. I have therefore only ventured to touch on a sorrow so intimate and sacred as that just recorded because of the light this mention throws on a side of his character which must have been quite unsuspected by the world. His love for his children, if it made this last blow the more crushing, was the source of the greatest happiness he knew in later life; and it was closely allied to the loyalty to old friends, the kindly thoughtfulness for newer ones, and the acute feeling for the sorrows and misfortunes of others which always distinguished him.

Whether a great pressure of public or other duties is helpful in the case of a bereavement of this nature only

those who have suffered know. For a strong reserved character like Lord Northbrook's it is at all events possible to return with undiminished energy to work, and the work he had in hand was the most important which had yet fallen to his lot. For he was at this time closely connected with what Lord Morley describes as the most marked administrative achievement of Mr. Gladstone's great Ministry, the reform and reorganisation of the army. With the name of Mr. Cardwell, Secretary of State for War, one of the most eminent of the Peelites and a "public servant of the first order," the whole series of reforms thus referred to is indissolubly connected; and when that statesman accepted the seals of the War Office in December 1868 he stipulated, as Sir Robert Biddulph tells us, "that he should be allowed to appoint Lord Northbrook to be his Under Secretary of State." After nearly ten years' experience in subordinate posts a man of Lord Northbrook's ability might well have looked to higher office, but there was no room for another peer in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet and he was the last man to press any claim of the kind. He therefore readily accepted the appointment, and threw himself with energy and with characteristic thoroughness into work which, as things turned out, proved more important and more arduous than that of many offices of higher nominal rank. It was an opportunity of distinction in a field which best suited his tastes, that of hard and sustained administrative effort; and Mr. Cardwell lost no time in utilising his services, appointing him Chairman of a small Committee to inquire into the arrangements in force for the conduct of business in the army departments including the Horse Guards. The Reports of this Committee dealing with different sections of the inquiry and covering the whole ground of the proposed reforms, formed

the basis of the War Office Act of 1870 completing the reconstruction which had been begun in 1855 in a tentative and incoherent fashion as a consequence of the Crimean War.

I do not propose in the present study to repeat the story of this reconstruction, nor of the great measures of army Reform, due primarily to Lord Cardwell's initiative and secondarily to the impetus given to public opinion by the stupendous events of the Franco-Prussian War, which served the country so well through the vicissitudes of nearly forty years. They have recently been authoritatively described in Sir Robert Biddulph's masterly work on the subject,[1] in the compilation of which, moreover, the author has made full use of Lord Northbrook's papers. It will be sufficient to quote Sir Robert's conclusion, drawn from the intimate knowledge which he derived from having held for part of this period the post of private secretary to Mr. Cardwell, that during the three years that Lord Northbrook was Under Secretary

"he had worked with unflagging industry collecting information, working out details, getting into touch with general military opinion, and acting on behalf of the Secretary of State in smoothing difficulties from whatever quarter they arose. His great abilities and unselfish co-operation had been of the greatest assistance to Mr. Cardwell. Lord Northbrook," he continues (p. 190), "had taken a leading part in the arrangements for the financial supervision and the co-ordination of the administrative work of the War Department; in the formation of an army reserve based on short service; in the unification of the dual government of the army; in the abolition of purchase and the details connected with future admission to the army; and lastly in

[1] "Lord Cardwell at the War Office, a history of his administration, 1868–1874." John Murray, 1904.

the localisation of the forces and the affiliation of the militia and volunteer to the regular army. The framework of organisation had been completed; it only remained to tend the machine, to remove causes of friction, and let it run smoothly. Nevertheless, by his departure in 1872, Mr. Cardwell lost a valued colleague and an experienced counsellor."

It was upon the question of the purchase system, to which the vigorous campaign of Mr. (now Sir George) Trevelyan both in the country and in the House of Commons had first drawn serious attention in the previous year, that the Parliamentary struggle of 1871 was mainly concentrated. The reformers were convinced that "the abolition of promotion by purchase" was, in Sir Robert Biddulph's words, "an indispensable preliminary to a re-organisation of our military service." All the forces of prejudice and hostility to change were brought to bear against this feature of the "Regulation of the Forces" Bill, which, however, was at last passed through the House of Commons, shorn of its less important provisions, in the teeth of an unprecedented opposition. Lord Northbrook introduced the second reading of the measure in the House of Lords with a "clear exposition" (as the Annual Register reports) of the ministerial policy, and was of course a deeply interested spectator of the exciting struggle which terminated in the defeat of the Government, and of their sudden decision, consequent upon it, to checkmate the House of Lords by cancelling the old warrant regulating purchase by the issue of a new royal warrant abolishing it. A chorus of disapproval was evoked from all quarters by this so-called exercise of the prerogative of the Crown, though the general public having made up their mind that purchase ought to cease regarded with indifference the manner in

which the object had been attained. The Lords had no alternative but to assent to the second reading of the Bill if the officers were to be secured indemnity for past violations of the law and for the payment of the "over-regulation" prices; and after a somewhat undignified adjournment for the Goodwood Races they accordingly did so, adding a vote of censure on the Government. With this "Pyrrhic victory" they had to be content. Seldom has a subordinate Minister in charge of a first-class measure in that assembly been associated with so dramatic a success as was Lord Northbrook on this occasion, a success moreover which was not confined to hard work behind the scenes. Lord Rosebery wrote to him with reference to his speech in the Lords to mention that "the man who to my opinion is the greatest authority on the other side of the House said that your speech was the best delivered on our side of the House in either House of Parliament." And Sir Arthur Helps, who listened to it as a friendly critic, his criticism being roused and sharpened by anxiety for the speaker's success, after finding fault with him for not always sustaining his voice at the end of a sentence and for one or two tautological expressions, pronounced the speech "excellent, clear business-like logical and occasionally eloquent. . . . Therefore please do not let me have any more modesty about your not being a good hand, or rather tongue, at speaking. Moreover, you looked terribly in earnest, and this is a most important element in the effectiveness of a speech. Mr. Cardwell, as I daresay you know, was greatly pleased. He said to me, 'It could not have been better done.'"

The violence of the opposition excited by the Cardwell reforms in the army and in society was such as to try both the firmness and tact of the ministers concerned in them.

In the army almost their only supporters were a few young officers, afterwards destined to high distinction, such as Garnet Wolseley, F. Maurice, George Colley, Evelyn Baring. The opposition to them was focussed in the Duke of Cambridge, and Lord Northbrook's most difficult task consisted in the negotiations which, with and on behalf of Mr. Cardwell, he had to carry on with His Royal Highness. It is no small tribute to them both that the Duke always remained on the most friendly personal terms with Lord Northbrook. "Our official intercourse," he wrote to him, on the occasion of his retirement from the post of Commander-in-Chief in 1895, "has been of very long standing, and there is no man, believe me, for whom I have always entertained more sincere respect and esteem both in public and in private life than yourself. Indeed I have long regarded you as my old and very valued friend." It is needless to add that between Lord North-brook and Mr. Cardwell there had grown up feelings of the most cordial mutual esteem to which both men gave expression when their official communications came to an end, the latter writing, "I shall hope to continue our most agreeable communications with the additional satisfaction of our letters being only friendly letters, with nothing of the mere official element, only perhaps sometimes great public affairs will enter into them and give them further zest." (March 1872.)

Lord Northbrook had now fairly won his spurs in political life, and was marked out for early advancement. But the particular direction of a man's career often turns on some accidental circumstance. Walking one day by the Duke of York's column with his friend, Mr. Henry West, he remarked—certainly without any *arrière pensée*—that he thought that the Viceroyalty of India was the greatest

position to which a British subject could aspire.[1] When the Governor-Generalship fell suddenly vacant by Lord Mayo's assassination, a suggestion which had occurred independently to more than one of his friends commended itself strongly to Lord Halifax, who on February 13, 1872, broached the question to Lord Northbrook, and mentioned that he had urged his appointment upon Mr. Gladstone. Lord Northbrook jotted down the pros and cons in his diary. "Not a case of duty. Qualifications very doubtful, no experience of managing men in such a position, great responsibility falling upon him. Emma, not right to leave her nor good to take her on account of risk to health and difficulty of position in all respects. No ambition for office or feeling that I am suited to it, or could do good in it." He accordingly wrote to Lord Halifax that "should very much prefer that the offer should not be made to him." On the 20th, however, the Duke of Argyll offered him the post, but by this time he had convinced himself that he "ought not to refuse," and the next day he accepted it.

Lord Northbrook's hesitation was largely due to the doubt whether the youth of his son and daughter would allow of their accompanying him to India, for he could not face the prospect of a long separation from them. The doctors, however, pronounced themselves favourable to the project, and it was at once decided that they should follow him as soon as the cold weather began. It was arranged that the former, who had just joined the Rifle Brigade, should be appointed aide-de-camp to his father; while upon Miss Baring fell at this very early age the responsible duty of acting as hostess for the Viceroy, a duty which she discharged with marked success.

[1] Mr. Henry West's brother, Sir Algernon West, who was at that time private secretary to Mr. Gladstone, is my authority for this recollection.

The tragic circumstances in which Lord Northbrook took up the Viceroyalty made the utmost despatch necessary, and in little more than a month he had made his preparations, taken leave at a public dinner at Winchester of his Hampshire friends, and started on his way to the East. He stopped for a day or two in the South of France to visit the places at which he had stayed with his wife, and to see, for the last time, his uncle Mr. Thomas Baring. From Marseilles he made the voyage to Alexandria, stopping at Malta for a few hours to interview Colonel Jervoise about the fortifications of Bombay, and passing thence to Cairo where he was received in great state by the Khedive Ismail Pasha. It was then that he obtained his first impressions of the East—always a memorable moment—of which he wrote a vivid account to his daughter :—

"It is a curious thing to be landed all at once in Africa, and see camels in the narrow streets mixed up with very small active donkeys with the biggest men sitting on their tails, and people of all nations colours and customs ; but Alexandria is nothing to Cairo, and I doubt if anything in the world can be more picturesque than to drive and walk through the streets here. The street architecture is very curious and sometimes beautiful—old latticed wood galleries and windows overhanging—curious carved stone mosques—glittering new gilded drinking fountains—streets so narrow that plants with bamboos put between them are thrown across to give shade—minarets, some new, some old, all graceful—domes, always with good outlines and often curiously carved—but after all the people, and the donkeys and the camels, that is what is most worth seeing, one always thinks of Parthians and Medes and Edomites, &c. &c.—and there are quite as many races here, women with all their faces covered up but their eyes and dressed in long blue or sometimes white or black gowns—Nubians,

black as jet, white turbans and white or blue jackets, Arabs in burnooses, like Carmelite friars' cloaks, fellahs, which is the people of the place, in turbans and every kind of garb—Copts, Persians, Abyssinians, Moors—and I daresay twenty more Eastern races more or less distinct, besides the occasional Englishman, Frenchman, or Italian."

He took ship again at Suez in the *Glasgow*, where he continued his studies of "blue and other books" about India. He describes in his diary his life on the Indian Ocean. "While at sea generally up before six, reading half-an-hour, cup of cocoa, work till half-past eight, nine breakfast, Hindustani exercises with Jackson or Biddulph, work till one, claret and soda for luncheon. Read Taine's Notes on England or draw. Work and sleep, an hour's walk on deck in evening, dinner 7.30, whist. Life of Mahommed. Bed about eleven!" Thus passed the last few days of leisure which he was to know for four years.

CHAPTER II

INDIA

1872–1876

THAT the new Government of India would be cautious and business-like might have been safely predicted by any observer of Lord Northbrook's career, for seldom has an incoming Viceroy served a longer official apprenticeship than that which, as we have seen, had fallen to his lot before 1872. In official circles at home there was indeed but one opinion of the choice which had been made:—"I never heard," wrote a friend of large administrative experience, "of any appointment here which seems so acceptable as yours:"—but the best informed of Lord Northbrook's contemporaries might well have wondered whether a man of forty-six who had held only subordinate political office would be likely to develop the qualities of decision and readiness to take responsibility for his action essential to a ruler of men on a great scale. From the first, however, there was no doubt on this point, and not many months had passed before a distinguished member of the Indian Council in London was writing: "I can say for ourselves that there is a feeling of stability and consistency in all that comes to us that has not been felt for many years." Lord Northbrook indeed was no stranger to Indian problems and Indian interests when he arrived in the country to whose service his best energies, not only during his term of office, but very largely also during the remainder of his life, were henceforth to be devoted.

His connection with India had been both hereditary and personal, and he took an early opportunity of referring to the fact in replying to addresses presented to him on his arrival at Calcutta. In one of these replies he said :—

"From my first entrance into public life I have taken a great interest in questions relating to the administration of H.M.'s Indian territories, both in consequence of the opportunities afforded me by my official duties, and from the circumstances that my family have for many years been connected with India. My great grandfather, Sir Francis Baring, was Chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company during an eventful period of Indian history. My grandfather, Sir Thomas Baring, was in the Civil Service of the Company in this Presidency, and my father was born in this city."

In other speeches he alluded to the opportunities he had had of becoming acquainted with the administration of India by his service under Lord Halifax, "one of the ablest statesmen of the present day and a man second to none in his knowledge of and attention to Indian affairs," both at the old Board of Control as Private Secretary and at the India Office as Under Secretary of State. It is recorded that at the latter period his whole existence was devoted to his office. "Never had an Indian Under Secretary with such an insatiable appetite for work been known. As a rule the Parliamentary Under Secretary does nothing more than represent more or less imperfectly Indian interests in the House of Commons. But Mr. Baring insisted on personally performing a multitude of purely official duties. . . . His influence upon the internal and technical business of the India Office survives visibly to this day."

The first Sir Francis Baring was stated by his no less

distinguished son Alexander (Lord Ashburton) to have been "of all men the one who most happily combined a capacity for distant and large views and for the detail of business." Lord Northbrook resembled his ancestor in this respect, and he brought with him to India not only an aptitude for detail, but certain broad conceptions of policy which inspired his administrative work throughout. He had firmly grasped the great principles of Indian policy laid down in the Proclamation issued by the Queen on assuming the direct government, the charter, as it has been described, of the civil and religious liberty of the princes and people of India. "That England," said Lord Northbrook, "desires no territorial aggrandisement; that equal justice shall be dealt to all; that any attempt at disorder will be promptly repressed; that religious liberty shall be maintained; and that the feelings of all classes and creeds shall be duly considered; to these principles, as it is my duty, so is it my desire, to adhere." I will not anticipate this summary record of Lord Northbrook's Indian career by an attempt to show how his practice conspicuously conformed to these ideals, but I may perhaps just point out that in two most important branches of administrative policy, education and finance, the principles on which he acted were the result of previous study and experience. Education was one of the subjects which had earliest engaged his attention; it was a satisfaction to him to find that the principles laid down nearly twenty years before had been adhered to, and that it was his duty to carry on the work which he had had no small share in inaugurating as Sir Charles Wood's private secretary in 1854. That he had had the privilege under the instructions of that statesman of drawing up the despatch which has been described as the charter of Indian education, was,

he observed, one of the "most gratifying recollections of his life." Lord Northbrook's satisfaction was not disturbed by misgivings, such as have arisen since his day, as to the result of pouring the new wine of western ideas into the old bottles of oriental civilisation ; he showed a lively and active interest in the University of Calcutta, and in Bengal especially he had several opportunities of reasserting and strengthening in its broad lines the policy of educating the natives of India in which he was so strong a believer. His interest was not wholly confined to the "cultivation of high English education," for he recommended to the local government measures for the education of the Mahommedans and Eurasians. But the criticism usually directed against the educational policy of Lord Halifax is founded on its comparative neglect of elementary education, with the result that, while it has bred up a large class of demagogic agitators, it has done little or nothing to temper the ignorance of the masses who are their natural prey. It cannot be said that Lord Northbrook did much to anticipate this danger by action in furtherance of elementary education in general ; such action indeed would have ill accorded with his cardinal principle of keeping down local taxation ; and it was therefore rather in the region of finance, as we shall presently see, that the new Viceroy took the initiative, with the most marked and beneficial results, on the lines described in many of his opening addresses.

Well equipped as Lord Northbrook clearly was for the work which lay before him, it was to personal qualities rather than to such opportunities as I have alluded to that he was to owe his unquestionable superiority as an Indian administrator. The record of his work will sufficiently support such a claim, but I am tempted to quote one or two

characteristic observations which give the keynote of his success, perhaps it is not too much to say the keynote of all success, in administrative work. "I think," he wrote, "that too much care cannot be given to all administrative measures in India; and if I make mistakes, it will not be for want of a desire to get to the bottom of all important questions." So thoroughly did he act on this resolve that he often surprised the local officials in his tours by his mastery of questions with which they were dealing. He could turn a junior officer inside out, as one of them expressed it, on some point of land revenue administration. A newspaper report of his visit to Shillong in the August of the famine year mentions how "he sent for such of the gentlemen as were supposed to possess local and departmental information upon subjects in which he was interested, and was pleased to grant them separate interviews; and his knowledge of principles and mastery of details astonished them not a little." A second remark reveals the temperament of the man of action. "You know me well enough," he wrote to Lord Halifax, "to know that whether from constitution or otherwise, I do not worry about anything after it is done; one can only do one's best in the time one has, and there is no time to spare to look back." It may be added that it was a leading trait in Lord Northbrook's character to make little fuss over minor matters. "Things are seldom so important as one thinks at the time," he once observed to a trusted member of his staff and personal friend, Captain (now Colonel) John Biddulph, who adds that he acted on this principle in all public affairs. "On really important matters, or matters involving a principle, he was immovable when he had once taken his stand."

Work, unremitting work, is the lot of an Indian Viceroy, the "ceaseless grind," as Lord Northbrook expressed it, "of

boxes and papers ;" [1] and few of them have ever put aside what would interfere with it more resolutely than he. On his first landing at Bombay, a member of his staff noted his impatience of the social functions which prevented his getting immediately to work, and how he waived aside, on the journey across India, a suggestion made that he should stop in order to shoot a tiger which had been marked down for his benefit. A sportsman himself, and as devoted at one time to hunting as he was throughout his life to fishing, he seems hardly ever to have found time in India to indulge in any form of sport. Tiger-shooting, indeed, he left to his son, and only on one occasion in the territories of the Nawab of Bahawalpur, during his first autumn tour down the Indus which ended in a great reception at Bombay and a Durbar of native princes, is it recorded that he spent a day in the pursuit of a tiger. On this occasion, according to an amusing recollection of his private secretary, Major Evelyn Baring,[2] "Lord Northbrook failed to get a shot at the tiger. We were all put in what are termed machans, *i.e.* elevated sheds where by no possibility could we come to any harm. The newspapers at this time said that the tiger turned back through the beaters because I went to sleep

[1] "I grind away at the mill, the subjects being strangely different," he writes to Mr. Henry Grenfell, June 1, 1873. "Last week for example:

"1. Slave Trade Law and the Zanzibar business.

"2. The alteration of the pay of the English soldiers. How Cardwell's new plan is to be adopted in India.

"3. Arrangements for a College for native chiefs' children at Ajmere.

"4. Central Asian affairs.

"5. Ordnance establishment.

"6. Treaty with Yarkand, and so on."

[2] Major Baring, now Earl of Cromer, is one of the sons (by his second marriage) of Mr. Henry Baring, younger brother of Sir Thomas Baring (Lord Northbrook's grandfather) and of the first Lord Ashburton. He accompanied his cousin to India as private secretary, and is therefore a first hand authority for this portion of Lord Northbrook's career. The opinions and recollections which he has been so good as to place at my disposal will be constantly quoted in the present chapter.

and snored. I believe this to be a calumny, but it is true that I thought the sport very tame, and was much bored." There is an account in a letter by Lord Northbrook to his son of an expedition from Simla in 1873 to catch the Indian fish named the Mahseer; but it is only at the close of his term of office that an allusion is to be found to another celebrated Indian sport. "As the Prince of Wales," he wrote to his sister, "wants to go out pigsticking from Calcutta, I think it my duty to explore the state of the country for him, and I shall see what the sport is like having at last a decent excuse." Always, however, a first-rate traveller and enthusiastic sightseer, he managed, as a serious part of his duties, to see with much satisfaction to himself and his subjects and advantage to the Government a very large part of the country. Scenery and especially mountain scenery delighted him; botany interested him (though not so engrossingly as it did another Indian ruler, his friend, Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff); and sketching was a resource which never failed him, whether at Simla or on his various tours. He had, like all visitors to India, been much impressed by Bombay, "its size, shipping, people, are remarkable, evidently quite English in feeling and I should say as loyal as Liverpool." Calcutta struck him less favourably. The following extract from a letter to his daughter who had remained for a few months longer with her brother at home, gives some of his early impressions of his new surroundings at the latter place:—

"I went to Barrackpore from Saturday to Monday; the place is very pretty, a large park with fine trees, and the Hooghly river running a few hundred yards off, a good garden, and a banyan tree close to the house to sit under in the shade. We went by the river and came back by the road, about twelve miles, all along a very fine broad road

with an avenue of trees and grass by the side. Country flat, small palm trees of different kinds. People very black. Children like the little bronze statues in the small dining-room at Stratton.

"I have been receiving all kinds of deputations and seeing all the sights and holding a levée—pity me! Such a number of bows to make. I send you the list—thermometer any height you like to suppose—and last of all, last night, a grand evening party with supper for five hundred people. The streets and lanes about Calcutta are very amusing. I like looking at the people and their habits. The most interesting sight I have seen is the schools and colleges. The little boys are quite charming like English boys, gentlemen, only of different shades of bronze, and so clever it must be a real pleasure to teach them. The bigger ones do not look so pleasant, but they work very hard and some of them are very clever. I am going to see a girls' school to-morrow. I have been still getting up early—five o'clock—and generally riding before breakfast and again in the evening, and am quite well."

Without dwelling further for the moment on the lighter side of Lord Northbrook's Indian existence, I will turn to his official labours and say something of the main questions with which he had to deal, with the object not only of describing the methods and ideas of the Viceroyalty but also of illustrating the character of the Viceroy himself.

Lord Mayo's vigorous rule, so tragically cut short, had touched with the hand of necessary reform many of the weak points of Indian administration. He had come as a new man to India, free, as one of his biographers observes, from the recollections which the Mutiny had graven into the souls of all who passed through it. The period of conquest or reconquest was over, and Lord Mayo inaugurated with tact and success the period of conciliation in

his dealings with the feudatory princes. Notably was this the case in his policy towards Afghanistan. In pursuance of arrangements made by his predecessor, Lord Lawrence, a meeting took place between the Viceroy (Lord Mayo) and Shere Ali at Umballa, in commenting on which in the House of Lords in later years Lord Northbrook observed that the "personal influence and the generous confidence inspired by Lord Mayo were of substantial public advantage in dealing with the native princes of India, and almost if not quite disarmed the suspicion of one who was the most suspicious of a suspicious race."

Lord Mayo's most serious preoccupation had perhaps been with the defects of the system of Indian finance which had been steadily going from bad to worse. The three years preceding Lord Mayo's appointment (1866–1869) had left behind deficits aggregating 5¾ millions sterling for ordinary expenditure alone, and in addition to this 4¼ millions were spent on extraordinary or "reproductive" works. This is not the place to recount the measures for the reorganisation of the budget estimates and accounts, the enforcement of measures of economy, and the arrangements for augmenting the control and responsibility of the several Provincial Governments of India (known as the scheme of Provincial services[1]) by which deficits were turned into surpluses and financial equilibrium restored, and to which Lord Northbrook himself attributed much of his own success in financial administration. But this decentralisation policy, sound as it was in principle, had undoubtedly given a great stimulus to the imposition of local taxes and rates, while the effort required to balance the budget and finance the development of the country by

[1] Originated by General Sir R. Strachey. See Sir J. Strachey's "India," p. 113.

canals and other public works had proved expensive, and had necessitated, among other measures, an increase in the rate of the income tax.

In legislation the pace, owing to the reforming energy of Sir Henry Maine and Sir James Stephen, had been no less severe. Under Lord Mayo, in short, the progressive policy inaugurated on the transfer of the Indian Government from the East India Company to the Crown, and due to the new and higher sense entertained as a result of the Mutiny by the British parliament and nation towards the people of India, reached its culminating point. The progress made during these fourteen years was an almost unmixed good, but there can be no doubt that it had at this time somewhat outstripped the actual requirements of the people; and it had been the cause of such very general and widespread discontent as to have attracted the attention of the Home Government and to have led to the appointment, on Mr. Gladstone's motion, of a select committee on Indian finance. A period of comparative rest was required, and it is no disparagement of the great work which had been accomplished to say that it was a fortunate circumstance that the political instincts and the personal character of the new Viceroy enabled him to recognise and act upon this truth.

Lord Northbrook had not been many weeks in India before he had convinced himself of the existence of what he described as an "uneasy and dissatisfied feeling" in the country. "Probably it has arisen," he wrote,[1] "from increase of taxation and certain improvements in the laws, &c., which have perhaps been pushed forward a little too fast. It is most unfortunate that the income tax was raised in 1870 and that local taxation was increased in

[1] To Sir George Grey, 2nd May 1872.

1871, and what is more, I do not believe that either was necessary."

The exhaustive investigations which he at once set on foot on these questions by means of inquiries addressed to the local government and administrations and to officers both English and native, the answers to which were subsequently published, afforded some very valuable information as regarded the feelings of the people. They fully confirmed both his impressions of the general state of the country and his resolution to attack the cause of the evil ; and he found himself at an early stage driven to decisions from which a weaker man might have shrunk, involving as they did on more than one occasion a conflict of opinion with the able and experienced Indian officials whom his predecessor had gathered around him. In January 1873 he wrote to Sir George Grey : "I have had to do the most important thing which has been done by me since I came out here." Sir George Campbell, a man of the most active mind and fiery energy who was at this time Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, had with much labour passed through his local legislature an ambitious and carefully elaborated scheme for rural municipalities, a measure to which he attached much importance. This bill Lord Northbrook, in pursuance of his determination to "stop the increase of local taxation as much as he could," decided to veto, having persuaded himself that the additional taxation involved was unnecessary and inadvisable and that the people were not yet fit for a compulsory rate for education or for the proposed reforms of village government. Close upon the heels of this very strong action came the much vexed question of the renewal of the income tax, upon which he found himself in opposition to his own Finance Minister, Sir Richard Temple, and to the Duke of Argyll, then Secretary of State for India

who with certain other authorities, Sir Philip Wodehouse and Sir John Strachey among them, strongly advocated the retention of the tax.

This controversy, like many of those which periodically form the subject of discussion either in India, or between the Government of India and the India Office, is full of interest for students of economics and finance, and interest of a very practical sort. Such discussions are often models of their kind, conducted as they are by experts responsible for the well-being of an empire but free to give their opinion with a point and directness not always attainable by the platform method of arriving at a decision. The part played by an income tax in adjusting more equitably the incidence of taxation as between the richer and poorer classes, and the fact that it was the only method of reaching the trading classes (native and European) and the wealthy landlords, were the arguments upon which its advocates relied; they were the arguments which had led the first great Indian Finance Minister, Mr. Wilson, to institute this tax and which were to appeal so strongly to those who in later years struggled successfully for its re-establishment. The Duke of Argyll reflected what must be considered the sound opinion of the school of practical fiscal reformers represented by Sir John Strachey and Sir Richard Temple when he wrote to Lord Northbrook: "In the contest between a reform of the salt tax and the abolition of the income tax, my feeling is that you have chosen to relieve the richer class, which is also the most powerful and the most clamorous."

It was, as we have seen, not without his usual careful and conscientious examination of all the evidence he could obtain by inquiry and observation that Lord Northbrook decided on the non-renewal of the income tax. His own

prepossessions, perhaps inherited from his father,[1] were opposed to an income tax as a source of revenue, and he agreed with Mr. Gladstone and with some of Sir Richard Temple's predecessors in the post of Financial Member of Council, whose opinions he quoted in his important and ably reasoned minute upon the question, that the income tax was unsuitable to Indian conditions. He felt strongly, as he told the Duke, "the inequalities the evils and the difficulties which attended a permanent income tax in India"; he considered with some justice that the real assessment of the commercial classes was "next to impossible"; and he pointed to the admitted evasion of the tax by the native traders, evasion which was not open to the landholder, the Government servant, and the holder of securities, as creating a "glaring inequality in the incidence of the tax upon the different classes." Taken alone, such considerations as these pointed rather to reform in the administration than to the abolition of the tax, but the essential and governing fact of the actual situation was, in Lord Northbrook's opinion, the discontent excited by the tax among certain classes of the population. "You know my opinion," he wrote to the Duke, "that undeniable discontent has been caused by certain measures of the last few years, be they right or wrong; and that it is important to do something to allay that feeling. . . . Few people will dispute that the cessation of the income tax" (which the surplus made it possible to spare without the imposition of fresh taxation) "is more likely to effect this than any other one act that can be done by the Government." Some act, in short, was required which would strike the imagination of the people and produce (in the words of the minute) a

[1] Sir Francis Baring had strongly objected to the tax in 1842 and to a proposal in 1848 to increase it.

"salutary political effect over the whole of India"; and if Lord Northbrook's decision is open to serious criticism on general economic grounds, it would be rash to assert that it was not justifiable on grounds of policy. It illustrates at all events a certain directness and simplicity in his point of view as a practical statesman. As he told Sir George Grey: "My duty seemed clear and I have done it." A little later he is writing: "I believe the effect has been good; certainly in Calcutta I have succeeded in bringing the leading men among the educated natives more into harmony with the Government than has been the case for many years." About the same time (April 1873) he wrote to Mr. Henry Grenfell:—

"My aim has been to take off taxes and stop unnecessary legislation, and I have so far succeeded tolerably well in reversing (for it comes to that) the policy of the last few years without the appearance of planning what has passed. Indeed from what I hear I believe Lord Mayo would have done just the same as I have, as he had become aware that his principles had been carried too far, and he never liked the income tax."

The repeal of the income tax, the abandonment of the non-agricultural cess in Bombay and of the house tax in Madras, the disallowance of the Bengal Municipalities Bill and the modification of the Pandhari tax (a sort of local income tax) in the Central Provinces, had, in the words of a leading native journal, "a most soothing effect on the popular mind." Lord Northbrook's critics may have thought that he showed, to quote a criticism by Sir George Campbell, "a sort of nervous dread of taxation," and that he exaggerated the political dangers of such causes of discontent; but if there is any truth in Lord Canning's

dictum (quoted by Lord Northbrook in his income-tax minute) "Danger for danger, I would rather risk governing India with an army of only 40,000 Europeans than I would risk having to impose unpopular taxation," Lord Northbrook must be held to have done much in his first three years to ensure the stability of British rule. The only way to avoid the imposition of taxation is to keep down expenditure, and Lord Northbrook's efforts were steadily directed to this object. "India is a poor country," he wrote to one of his successors (Lord Dufferin) in 1884, "and economy in expenditure is in my opinion the foundation of successful Indian administration. You will find, at any rate at first, plenty of pressure for increased expenditure, but if you resolutely say 'no' for a few times you will find the pressure gradually cease, and by the normal increase of the revenue you will find also, if you have no famines or wars, that much can be done."

The Public Works Department in his time was, as Sir Louis Mallet described it, with its "weary round of loans, railways, and irrigation schemes, a bottomless pit of expense and waste";[1] and Lord Northbrook soon found it necessary to say "no" to certain expenditures on canals which were going on faster than the State could afford, thus saving something like ten millions. An important Government Resolution of October 8, 1874 dealing with Bengal irrigation gave what it was hoped at the time would be a death-blow to elaborate and very costly schemes of irrigation devised by irrigation engineers alone, and inaugurated a system of cheap irrigation based on local requirements and local knowledge. Military works were similarly restrained. The result was, to quote from Lord Northbrook's speech on the Indian Tariff Bill of 1875, a clear and masterly

[1] Sir L. Mallet, "A Record, &c.," p. 112.

summary of his four years' administration of the finances of India, that during those four years there was a surplus of ordinary revenue over expenditure of not less than a million sterling, notwithstanding an expenditure of £6,306,673 for famine which had been charged against revenue.[1] There can be no question but that this remarkable result was primarily due to the exercise of strict economy in every department of the State, and the care with which expenditure, both imperial and provincial, was supervised by Lord Northbrook; for though the revenue naturally expanded under the influence of increasing prosperity and external peace, it must be remembered not only that no new taxes were imposed but that, besides the non-renewal of the income tax, other considerable remissions of taxation had been effected even before the revision of the tariff in 1875.

The essentially practical character of Lord Northbrook's financial administration is well brought out in his correspondence during the first two years of his Governor-Generalship. The India Office happened at this time to be unusually strong in economic knowledge, and the Viceroy had the great advantage of expert advice and support in the main lines of his financial policy and in his determination to enforce economy. In one of his last letters to the Duke of Argyll, Lord Northbrook speaks of the weight of the Duke's views on questions of Land Settlement and similar matters of discussion. Sir Louis Mallet, who had been appointed to the Indian Council in 1872 on account of his financial and commercial experience and who became Under Secretary of State in 1874, was a

[1] See House of Lords Return, East India Customs Tariff (10), 1876. An account of the matter a few months later showed an even better result. There was a surplus on the whole ordinary amount for the *five* years 1871 to 1875–76 (including famine relief to the amount of £6,758,533) of £2,924,990.

personal friend of the Viceroy, and constantly wrote letters to him on such topics as the land question (the "real question of India"), on tariff currency and revenue questions, on public works expenditure and the raising of loans. These letters clearly made Lord Northbrook think over his own views when they differed, as they sometimes did, from his correspondent's, and often drew from him long and interesting replies. But though he found the discussion of these questions by his friends "particularly valuable," and I suppose corresponded much more fully upon them than most Viceroys have done, their interest for him lay mainly in the practical application of the general principles and considerations urged upon him to the problems in hand, and he was little accessible to reasoning, even if he agreed with its tendency, which did not seem to him to touch the essential facts of an existing situation. He was not a man who took long views; he was inclined to limited, even official views, in actual practice. Being on the spot, he was of course better able to judge how inevitably the application of general principles must be limited by local considerations. Like many men who have the faculty of getting good administrative results, he was strongly optimistic in disposition. Understanding as he did the great but little practised art of adapting expenditure to income, he generally rebelled against gloomy opinions on Indian finance, and though he could not shut his eyes to their partial truth, he did not accept the pessimistic view of the extreme poverty, considered as subjects for taxation, of the people of India. Though a sound practical financier, he would probably have disclaimed any special interest in or knowledge of scientific economics. He was a statesman, not a professor. He was by nature inclined to take the political rather than the economic view of any particular

case. A correspondent would insist on the overmastering importance, from the point of view of the welfare of the Indian masses, of correct economic ideas on the land question or the population question. Lord Northbrook would answer, as he did on one such occasion : "The real insoluble problems of India to my mind lie far more deep than any with which political economy can deal, and consist in the effect of our rule on the social habits and religious belief of the millions over whom we have been entrusted, for better or for worse, with the government." He did not in his letters commit himself to either of the rival theories of land revenue, or seem to attach importance to the logical consequences of the adoption of one or the other. But his practical instinct came to the rescue, and he did his utmost to keep the assessments low. "For Bombay and the North-West Provinces," he wrote afterwards to Lord Ripon (September 7, 1881), "I have always had my suspicions that the land revenue has been over-assessed, and always treated with great suspicion the opinion of Sir John Strachey, who was for screwing up the land revenue." And he told the Indian Currency Committee in 1898 that in his opinion the "real safety of India depended on the land revenue being easy." Even when he was guided by abstract economic reasoning, he was careful to keep it in the background. Of his minute, for instance, on the prohibition of the export of rice during the famine, he wrote to a friend : "You will observe I have never once alluded to the laws of political economy, Adam Smith, or John Stuart Mill, from the beginning of all this business !"

His general standpoint on these matters is well illustrated by the line he took on the tariff question at the close of his administration, and generally on questions of Indian

taxation. Modern instructed opinion both in India and England would certainly be on the side of the Duke of Argyll in his criticism (quoted above) of Lord Northbrook's view of the income tax and the salt duty respectively, and would hold that fiscal equity required that the burden should be readjusted in the interest of the masses in India rather than in that of either the European settler or the native trader or landholder. It is likely enough that the argument based on the oppressiveness of the salt duty was overdone in England; Lord Northbrook certainly did not endorse it, and would probably have justified any reduction of this tax mainly on the ground that it was desirable to create a fiscal reserve for times of financial pressure by a judicious handling of the chief impost which directly affected the poorest classes. Lord Northbrook's language indeed did not favour the view that it was desirable either in a financial or a political point of view to attempt in India the same degree of simplification in the tariff as had been possible in England, and in England "only under the most favourable external circumstances after the lapse of many years and a great progress in education and wealth." It would be difficult to find an abler or clearer statement of the view that the maintenance of a low general tariff upon imports for revenue purposes (even if it might have some slight protective effect) was a fiscal and political necessity in the case of India, than that given in Lord Northbrook's speech on the Indian Tariff Bill on August 5, 1875, the speech, it may be observed, of a convinced free trader as regarded his own country. That his conviction of the necessity of free trade for India was quite as strong may be shown by a quotation from his evidence before the Indian Currency Committee of 1898–9, which expresses his considered and matured view on the whole matter. Ques-

tioned as to the possibilities of increased taxation in India against which he strongly protested, he said :—

"Customs duties are not a good thing in themselves, and I should very much have preferred that they had not needed to have been put on at all (in 1894). I approve of the policy for India of having as much free trade as you possibly can. It increases your imports and it increases your exports, and as the solvency of India depends mainly on her trade—that is to say, that the exports of India should be larger than the imports—the more you have free trade the more you are likely to benefit the country."[1]

It was in his opinion (at this earlier date) simply a question of the possibility of raising a sufficient revenue without having recourse to methods of taxation, such as direct taxes or new excise duties, which would be particularly liable to occasion popular discontent in India. It would, however, be a great mistake to assume either that his sympathies were confined to the wealthier class of Indian natives, or that his eminently practical handling of financial and economic questions was not effective in relieving the poorer taxpayer. He had, after all, that instinctive mastery of business methods, and especially of financial business, which is sometimes worth more than theoretical aptitude. Lord Northbrook, as we have seen, did not countenance extreme views of the poverty of the masses and the oppres-

[1] A good instance of Lord Northbrook's inveterate habit of judging questions on their merits was his action in regard to the imposition of countervailing duties on sugar by the Government of India in 1899. He strongly defended this decision in two letters to the *Times* (May 27 and June 11) in opposition to Lord Farrer. In this case he followed his usual course in taking the opinions of friends qualified to advise, and though he had some sound economic opinion on his side he did not carry many of his free trade friends with him in the course he took. He argued, of course, and with great force, that the question of the measures to be taken to put an end to the bounty system was one of expediency, and that such measures could not be identified with protection which they were designed to combat.

siveness of their taxation, nor did he share the wish of the more advanced school of Indian fiscal reformers to substitute direct taxation for customs revenue. He expressed an opposite opinion on more than one occasion, as for instance when he wrote to Lord Dufferin some years later (March 14, 1881), that the object of keeping our rule popular would be attained by making as few changes as possible, and "especially by avoiding fresh taxes, and of fresh taxes especially direct taxes, and of direct taxes especially the income tax." His practice, however, was a good deal more enlightened than would be gathered from such expressions as these. For it was he who made the first real inroad on the customs tariff which had been attempted since 1864 by his reduction of the general rate of import duties and the abolition of most of the export duties ; and although he held a less serious view of the oppressive incidence of the duty on salt than many Indian financiers have done, he yet took the first important step in cheapening that commodity by transferring to British management the extensive salt sources of the State of Jodhpur, and by the abolition, at a considerable sacrifice of the salt revenue, of the southern section, 800 miles in length, of the Inland Customs Line, that huge material barrier which stretched across the whole of British India from the Indus to the border of Madras. One further point may be alluded to.

"In connection with fiscal matters," writes Lord Cromer, "I may observe that one of the first acts performed by Lord Northbrook when he arrived in Bombay was to abolish the export duty then levied on Indian wheat. He also pushed on vigorously the completion of the Indus Valley Railway, and successfully resisted the pressure brought to bear on him by the Duke of Argyll and the India Office to construct a section of that line between Mooltan and Hyderabad

(Scinde) on the narrow gauge. These two measures taken together gave the first impulse to the Indian wheat trade, which has now assumed enormous proportions. The railway, though originally intended for strategical purposes, has proved of the greatest value for commercial purposes."

To reduce taxation and get value for expenditure are tasks which must always precede an attempt to adjust taxation with scientific nicety, for no taxation which is excessive can be just in its incidence; and they are tasks demanding that skilled and vigilant attention to detail which Lord Northbrook was eminently qualified to give. "I don't believe in clever budgets," he once remarked, "and shall try to have no financial dodges here." The budgets were his own particular care, and though of course he was served by very able men as financial members of his council, Sir Richard Temple and Sir William Muir, it may be truly said that he was to a large extent his own finance minister; and it is difficult to avoid the reflection that if it had not been for his father's acceptance of a peerage he might have crowned a career in the House of Commons by a successful term of office as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The incident of Lord Northbrook's administration which perhaps best illustrates his characteristic qualities of strength of character, devotion to duty, and financial competence, was his treatment of the famine in Behar and northern Bengal in 1874. In the year preceding this event (to which I shall presently recur) he had spent his second summer at Simla, this time, however, in the company of his son and daughter who had arrived from England in the autumn of 1872. Miss Baring's letters to her great-aunt, Lady Grey, give some glimpses of the life at Simla, the entertainments on the Queen's birthday

and other occasions, and the little expeditions on off days to places in the neighbourhood. "Directly tours began," she writes, "out came the sketch books, especially at Simla, where Lord Northbrook was less watched and also allowed his favourite exercise of walking. The competition to accompany him on his scrambling mountain walks was chiefly of the 'not my turn to be A.D.C.' sort, as few could really enjoy walking as he did." After the rains were over, Lord Northbrook, accompanied by his daughter and Sir Richard Temple went further afield (October 5, 1873), and the following letter describes this expedition. Sir Richard Temple was an untiring walker and a considerable artist.

"We have enjoyed ourselves very much and seen some very fine scenery. We went up two mountains, Maral which is about 12,500 feet high, and Jatsu which has not been measured but is some 1500 feet higher. We have all been in tents for a week; I have been over some difficult places; twice the ladies had to be tied with ropes, but with care there was no danger. Our weather has been fine but colder than usual at this time of year, frost several times, and just as we had finished our trip there came a heavy fall of snow over the mountains where we had been. Emma has enjoyed herself very much and done some very good sketches. . . . I have walked all the way (some 140 miles), and often very stiff walking, and it has done me a world of good. I find India has not yet destroyed my power of locomotion. . . . It is wonderful how easily all one's comforts follow one here in India; we have fed sumptuously, and excepting one or two cold nights have been through no hardships. The scenery we have passed through is very fine. The forests in the first place are worth going a long way to see for themselves. There are all sorts of fir, deodars, Smithiana and silver fir, with

JODHPORE (1875)

From a Water-Colour Drawing by Lord Northbrook

hill bamboo, a beautiful light green, plane, sycamore, horse-chestnut, yew, and several sorts of ilex and holly. High up the ilex trees are very tall and dark, and covered with long strings of white lichen which gives them a most weird appearance. Lower down the Virginian creeper abounds, and the red leaves on the dark fir are exceedingly lovely. Then there are magnificent rocks and precipices with rhododendrons and leaves of the brightest colour in the interstices.

"Last there are the snowy peaks in the distance and nearer. The range we went to see as the nearest in Simla is very fine, though not by any means a high one for the Himalayas—some 18,000 to 19,000 feet—but with the wildest outlines rather as if the mountain had been frozen from a stormy sea, their shape being not unlike waves. Further off we had magnificent views of the more distant peaks by the sources of the Ganges and Jumna, some 23,000 feet high, and towards the plains tier after tier took the eye sometimes to the broad purple line of mist which hangs on the plain, while once or twice we got peeps of the green thread of the Sutlej winding between the brown hills."

It was the last holiday which Lord Northbrook was to enjoy for many a long day. Hardly a month passed before he was writing to Mr. Grenfell: "One of the unpleasant surprises which occur from time to time in India came on me on Monday week, when I got an alarming letter and a more alarming telegram from Sir George Campbell about the crops in Behar and part of Bengal."

The news foreshadowed a famine worse than any which had occurred for at least a hundred years, and Lord Northbrook hurried at once to Calcutta, which he was hardly to leave again for eighteen months. For as time went on and things showed no improvement Lord Northbrook

made up his mind that no summer migration to Simla would be possible in 1874, and he then decided to send his son and daughter home for the summer to visit friends and relations in England. On April 1, 1874 he wrote from Barrackpore, the Viceroy's country house near Calcutta where he always went on Sunday for quiet and rest :— "It is rather a sad Sunday for me, the last with Frank and Emma before they go home, and it is as much as I can do to keep up my spirits. I am sure the plan is right, and that it would not have been good for them to stay here through the hot weather." So he stayed on alone, and had his reward in the sympathy and affection which he won from the people for his courage in remaining at his post during the trying hot season. Before touching on his conduct of the relief operations, it may be of interest to quote a description of his daily round during this time from a letter written to his sister, Miss Hannah Baring :—

"I don't think I ever described to you what my Calcutta life is like. Well, I get up pretty early, from 6 to 7, take a short turn in the garden with my little dog 'Quiz,' then come in to have a cup of tea, spend half-an-hour in reading a little of the Bible and a short sermon or something of the sort, and then set to work, read the daily papers and do such business as there may be till quarter past 8 when Evelyn (Captain Baring, private secretary) brings in his budget of the day's business ; then I dress, prayers at quarter past 9, and breakfast directly after takes up till 10 ; then I write to Frank or Emma or any other letters not on business for half-an-hour or so. Then secretaries to Government, council meetings, and other work goes on steadily. A little soup and a cigar break the day at 2, and work goes on till 6. Then I ride for an hour with an A.D.C. on the 'Maidan' or Hyde Park or perhaps go to see some institution or another till 7, an hour's work till 8,

then dress for dinner, dinner at 8.30, generally some people to dine, have only moderate parties. I leave at about half-past 10, excepting I get into any remarkably interesting talk. Once a week I have some mild whist; I never work after dinner, read some book of not a very heavy kind, Scott's novels I have nearly finished again, sometimes play a game of patience, smoke my cigar and get to bed between 11 and 12. Bed is not so comfortable in India as at home, one gets very hot and must not sleep in a draught, but I generally sleep very well.

"This is a true and complete account, and one day is very like another, except Sundays when I give myself a complete rest, often sleeping a good deal and (as now) writing letters to those I care about quietly up in my room. There never was so good a house for its purpose as this; I daresay the thermometer outside this morning is not far from 100, and I am sitting certainly somewhat thinly attired but quite—I won't say cool—but comfortable enough."

The "necessary isolation" of his position, though qualified by the companionship of a particularly able and agreeable staff, was accentuated by the absence of his family and was, as he said, its worst hardship. "One can't make intimate friends with any one for fear of forming a clique or courting jealousies or what not." It was a position from which his naturally friendly but essentially modest nature shrank. "Read Helps," he says in another letter, "about animals. You will observe he compares such public slaves as I am to goldfish in a glass bowl on a dinner-table without so much as a weed or a bit of mud to get under. However, I try and get my bit of mud occasionally; a railway carriage between the stations is one at any rate." The fact that owing to Lord Mayo's assassination Lord Northbrook was closely guarded in India was very irksome to him. He used to endeavour to

escape from his policemen and walk off to the Maidan by himself, and these escapes were extremely agitating to the A.D.C.'s.

The Bengal famine of 1874 is noteworthy not only as one of the most severe visitations of the kind which has been experienced in India in modern days, but as the first in which the duty of the State to maintain its suffering subjects was recognised by the vast and successful preparations adopted to meet it. "For the first time in Indian history," writes Sir George Campbell,[1] "a great failure of crops such as hitherto had produced famine was met in such a way as to save the lives of the public." Its progress was followed in England with an unprecedented degree of interest not always too judiciously expressed, it is true, but inspired by generous sympathy and active benevolence; and it is not too much to say that the safety of the unfortunate people overtaken by the disaster was for many months the one thought in the mind of the Viceroy. "Everything that can be done," he wrote to Mr. Grenfell on the first threatening reports, "will be done to save the people. This is a case where just as in war, everything must go to the winds." But throughout the crisis he remained cool and business-like, he was the one man, as was truly said, who never lost his head.

An idea of the general principles upon which he acted can best be given in Lord Cromer's words:—

"In 1866 a serious famine occurred in the Province of Orissa. The Bengal Government, basing themselves on the general economic principle that whenever there was a demand the supply would follow, remained inactive and did little or nothing towards the relief of the people. The result was that some two million persons died of starvation.

[1] Memoirs, ii. 731.

The theory adopted by the Bengal Government was perfectly sound, but they forgot that it was wholly inapplicable to the special case of Orissa because, although there was unquestionably a demand for food and although the supply was available in sufficient quantities and in the immediate neighbourhood, it was impossible for the food to reach those who stood in need of it. The reason was that when the rain set in the greater portion of the Province of Orissa is under water, and that no adequate means of communication existed at that time between the different parts of the province. When the opportunity of laying down sufficient supplies of food prior to the rains had been lost the occurrence of a disastrous famine was inevitable. The misapplication of a perfectly sound principle in 1866 produced a tendency to neglect economic principles unduly in 1874. The Indian Government was assailed by the press both in England and India, and many persons of high position and authority joined in advocating measures which may without exaggeration be called insane. They were implored to regulate prices, to stop the operations of private traders, to insist on the necessity of stopping the export of rice. Against this storm of entreaty and obloquy Lord Northbrook stood as firm as a rock. The facts of the case were not in the least understood by those who put forward these wild proposals. The famine was not one of food but of money. Food was always to be obtained, but at so high a price that the people in the congested districts, who in normal times lived on the verge of starvation, could not afford to buy it. I need not, however, expose at length all the fallacies involved in the remedial measures to which I have alluded above. It will be sufficient for me to state that what was mainly required was to provide work for adults in order that they might earn sufficient money to buy food. This is what was done. Purely eleemosynary assistance was confined to the sick the aged and infirm. The measures adopted under Lord Northbrook's auspices were fully successful. Very few deaths

occurred from starvation. The only result of the public outcry in favour of heterodox proceedings was that possibly relief in various forms was given somewhat too lavishly, and that therefore the cost of the operations was unduly increased."

Sir George Campbell, who was Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal at the outbreak of the distress and largely responsible, until his health obliged him to resign in April 1884, for the preparations made to meet it, seems to attribute the alleged over-expenditure to Lord Northbrook's refusal to prohibit the export of rice from Bengal which he had recommended, and to the consequent necessity for large purchases and importations of rice by the Government. Some argument indeed was required to justify to the public the "strange spectacle of fleets of ships taking rice out from the Hooghly and passing other ships bringing rice in," but though Sir George Campbell brings forward some considerations in support of his original proposal[1] he does not commit himself to a stronger opinion than that "to this day I am not convinced that the decision was right." Lord Northbrook published the reasons for his decision in a Minute (January 30, 1874) full of facts as to the conditions of the trade in rice, of which it is almost enough to say that its economic reasoning was so cogent that no attempt was ever made to answer it. His figures proved in the first place that the additions which might have been made to the supplies by the prohibition of exports would have been inconsiderable in comparison with the amount required by the population of Bengal. But suppose that such action of the Government might

[1] Memoirs, ii. p. 323.

have had the effect of considerably lowering the price of rice. Would this have been an advantage?

"One of the greatest safeguards," he wrote, "against a famine in India, as in any country, lies in the diminution of consumption which naturally results from the rise of prices which the anticipation of scarcity occasions; and I can conceive no interference by Government more unwise than the reduction of prices below their natural level at the beginning of a period of scarcity. This would have been the effect which would have probably followed a prohibition of exports. The addition which would have been made to the general supplies of the country would in that case have been soon absorbed by the increase of consumption which would have been the result of an undue lowering of prices."

Even if this anticipation had not been fulfilled and no undue reduction of prices been produced by the measure, Lord Northbrook held that the advantage which might have been derived for the time from the increased supply would "have been dearly purchased by the probable consequences for the future." For if the exportation had been stopped the trade might easily have been permanently injured. "If we refuse to supply our ordinary customers at any price we oblige them to have recourse to other markets, and it is impossible to assume that when we want them again they will return to us." He argued that the existence of an export trade was a great advantage to a country in the condition of Bengal, because it "ensures the production in ordinary years of more food than is required to meet the demands of the people. The natural rise of prices in times of scarcity must divert a portion of the ordinary export to home consumption, and thus a reserve easily and readily available is habitually maintained."

It would be tedious to follow in detail the special machinery which was set up under the charge of the best available government officers for the conduct of public works, the imposition of task work, the advances made to responsible cultivators and the charitable relief of people unable to work, measures which exhibit no special feature. It must be remembered however that the system of famine relief which has since been reduced almost to an exact science in India was then only in its experimental stage. The transport of the supplies of rice to the districts affected was the great difficulty as in the case of the Orissa famine, but this was overcome by "the energy and good sense" of Sir Richard Temple who was early in the day appointed by Lord Northbrook as "famine delegate" and who soon after succeeded Sir George Campbell as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. The Government imports, according to Sir George Campbell's own testimony, "by no means destroyed the private trade" which passed large quantities of food stuffs into the provinces, and the event proved that "the people were by no means pauperised or demoralised by the liberal relief given"; and these facts may be set against the charges of extravagance and abuse which were freely made after the event. That such charges have been greatly exaggerated may be safely affirmed. Sir George Campbell's interesting but critical account of the whole of the operations in no way supports them, and Lord Northbrook's own comment that half a million less might have been spent if the work had to be done over again, really disposes of the matter. Of his own part in the work two pieces of testimony may be quoted. Sir Richard Temple writes: "In all the complex business relating to the arrangements for combating the famine Lord Northbrook evinced an admirable mastery of finance, economic facts, and statistics such as I have

never seen surpassed in India, not even by such economists and financiers as Wilson or Laing."[1] Another of his executive officers, Mr. H. Bell, speaking some years later on a public occasion, bore his testimony to the "earnestness with which Lord Northbrook studied every detail, and the important personal part he took in the preliminary preparations. His intense earnestness in the matter and his determination that nothing that foresight could do to save life should be left undone was like an electric stimulus and had its influence all down the line of organisation."

Sensational or wrong-headed criticism in the press, such as that to which Lord Cromer alludes, left him very much unmoved when he felt he was right though like a wise man he did not ignore it. "I hold strongly to not noticing what is said in the papers, an old Whig tradition and I believe a wise one." Later on, during the Baroda business he wrote: "My back is getting very like a duck's in respect of the sprinkling of abuse which I have to bear from time to time from English and native newspapers, arising I believe with some few exceptions from ignorance rather than from malice." On this occasion, when success was assured, criticism took the form of suggesting that precautions had been overdone and the danger exaggerated. Such criticism came with a bad grace from those who had yielded, as he had not done, to unreasoning panic, and Lord Northbrook satisfied himself from a personal inspection in the autumn of 1874 of the districts where the distress had been most serious, that "the danger had been even greater than he had supposed" and that "half the people must have died had it not been for the measures taken by government."

Lord Northbrook's conduct of the famine operations

[1] "Men and Events of my Time in India," p. 396.

set the seal of success upon his Viceroyalty. The chorus of praise which arose not only from those who had supported his action in public and in private like Lord Halifax ("who has been a true friend to me as always before") but from those who had differed from him, testified to the anxiety which had been felt, and was sufficient to make amends for all the strictures which had been passed on him. "Lord Salisbury and Lord George Hamilton," he wrote to Sir Algernon West, "spoke of me (in Parliament) far too handsomely." The *Times* atoned for its earlier criticism by writing, "The Lieut.-Governor of Bengal may take all credit to himself for hard work faithfully done and so may district and famine officers the same, but to Lord Northbrook will belong the high honour of commanding one of the greatest and noblest campaigns ever fought in India." Lord Northbrook passed on the praise to his subordinates upon whom he lavished appreciation in a manner rather unusual with him. "The exertions of all the local officers, civil and military, have been above all praise." Nor did he yield to the temptation to retort upon his critics, the material for which, as the following passage from a letter to Sir George Grey shows, certainly existed.

"Considering that I would not do what the Duke pressed upon me, viz. to buy Indian corn from America, and call for tenders for supplies from all the world, and that I resisted Lord Salisbury's instructions to buy 200,000 tons more of rice, nothing could have been more frank and cordial than the support both Ministers have given me. What has moved Lord Lawrence and Lord Napier to criticise I cannot divine. They both failed themselves in dealing with famines and therefore they may be the more nervous, but they both of them, after their famines

were over, deliberated upon the proper course to take in future and the prohibition of exports found no place in their minds. So they are criticising us who have succeeded where they failed by urging a course which did not recommend itself to them when they were deliberately examining the reasons for their own failure. I attach no importance to what they say."

The change of government at home had occurred in the very midst of his famine preoccupations, but it was perhaps less of a surprise to Lord Northbrook, who followed political affairs pretty closely with the aid of his English correspondence, than to many observers at home. For some months he had detected in certain shufflings of official posts the beginning of the end. With the least possible delay after Mr. Gladstone's sudden dissolution of Parliament in March 1874 and his crushing defeat in the country, Lord Salisbury had replaced the Duke of Argyll at the India Office. Rumours of Lord Northbrook's resignation which became current in England had no foundation in fact—he always held that a change of government ought not to affect the position of a Viceroy—and the relations of the Home and Indian Governments remained, for the time at all events, no less cordial than before, Lord Northbrook even writing a few months later that Lord Salisbury seemed more inclined to agree with him than the Duke of Argyll. "Nothing can be more pleasant than all my business with Lord Salisbury; his private letters leave nothing to be desired in the way of frankness and cordiality." In spite of growing differences of opinion they remained of this character till the end. But it was not long before Lord Salisbury, then in the plenitude of his remarkable powers and an indefatigable worker, began to make himself felt in administration; and views and proposals soon emanated

from the India Office which caused the Viceroy to remark on his disposition to "rattle off orders from home." The Duke of Argyll had been a much less active administrator, and Lord Northbrook, while appreciating the guidance he had received upon broad questions of policy economic and other on which the Duke spoke with weight and authority, had found it no small advantage to be left comparatively unfettered in matters of detail. Harmony of ideas and of action between the two joint rulers of India has never been easy to maintain, and the fact that Lord Northbrook and Lord Salisbury should have been able to carry on without serious difficulty for nearly two years speaks well, not only for the character of those statesmen, but also for the honourable traditions of English public life. It cannot indeed be said that party politics played any part in creating such difficulties as arose between them. The two men belonged to essentially different types. Lord Salisbury's brilliant and subtle intellect, his contempt for precedent, and a certain proneness in him to impulsive decisions presented a striking contrast to Lord Northbrook's caution and common sense, his reliance upon ascertained fact and experience, his power of steady and effective action. Though neither could rightly be described as imperious, neither was in the least inclined to yield in matters of principle to the other, but Lord Salisbury could accept a situation with a humorous cynicism which was impossible to Lord Northbrook.

This difference of temperament brought to the front a question of vast importance in the administration of the Indian Empire.

"There can be no doubt," writes Lord Cromer, "that Lord Salisbury's idea was to conduct the government of

India to a very large extent by private correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy. He was disposed to neglect and, I also think, to underrate the value of the views of the Anglo-Indian officials. . . . This idea inevitably tended to bring the Viceroy into the same relation to the Secretary of State for India as that in which an Ambassador or Minister at a foreign court stands to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. . . . Lord Northbrook's general view was the exact opposite of all this, and I am strongly convinced that he was quite right. . . . He recognised the subordinate position of the Viceroy, but he held that Parliament had conferred certain rights not only on the Viceroy but on his Council which differentiated them in a very notable degree from subordinate officials such as those in the diplomatic service."—He remarked, I may note, in one of his letters to a friend: "I do not look upon myself as a departmental officer and must judge for myself."—"Lord Northbrook," continues Lord Cromer, "regarded the form of government in India as a very wise combination which enabled both purely English and Anglo-Indian experience to be brought to bear on the treatment of Indian questions. He did not by any means always follow the Indian official view; but he held strongly, in the first place, that to put aside that view and not to accord to the two Councils in London and Calcutta their full rights was unconstitutional in this sense that, though the form might be preserved, the spirit of the Act of Parliament regulating the government of India would be evaded. In the second place he held that for a Viceroy or Secretary of State without Indian experience to overrule those who possessed such experience was an extremely unwise proceeding, and savoured of an undue exercise of that autocratic power of which he himself was very unjustly accused."

It was accordingly not very long before some friction began to develop itself. On the question for instance of the addition of a Public Works member to the Governor-

General's Council, Lord Northbrook at first disagreed with Lord Salisbury, and his remark that "it is not easy for an able man to arrive at the conclusion that in a difficult matter it is better on the whole to leave the Government of India alone" shows his feelings about intervention from home. The difference of attitude which has been indicated was accentuated by the fact that in matters of Indian administration Lord Salisbury on the whole was the innovator, and that Lord Northbrook who made himself the mouthpiece of Indian public opinion, official and native, generally took the more conservative view; and this distinction between them is clearly observable in the important questions of frontier and of tariff policy in regard to which a serious cleavage of opinion was to show itself at a later stage.

Meanwhile an incident which falls under the head of foreign policy and which, with other political questions of the kind, he somewhere remarks that he found more difficult than the famine, preoccupied Lord Northbrook's attention for some months. The misdeeds and deposition of the Gaekwar of Baroda form a page of history, now almost forgotten, which aroused great excitement and much passionate controversy, both at home and in India.

"It would be difficult," wrote Lord Northbrook to the Secretary of State at the conclusion of this business (June 28, 1875), "to bring together so many concurrent circumstances of doubt and difficulty as were crowded together in the story. The incapacity of the residents at Baroda for many years, Phayre's conduct, the trouble with the Bombay Government, the poisoning case, the trial, the agitation which I am more and more convinced was mainly the result of money, the division of opinion in the Commission, the attitude of the English press, and

lastly the difficulty of finding a successor to Mulhar Rao, combined to bring a series of the most awkward questions for decision which for the most part admitted of no delay. I am not presumptuous enough to suppose that mistakes have not been made but I think the result on the whole has not been unsatisfactory."

For the course of events which led up to the alleged attempt on the part of the Gaekwar to poison the Resident, Colonel Phayre, and which brought to a head the whole question of the misgovernment of the State (a commission of inquiry into which had previously been ordered by the Viceroy), the Bombay Government were, as hinted above, primarily responsible. To deal with the crisis which then arose Lord Northbrook, in his anxiety to treat the Gaekwar fairly and to respect the rights of the feudatory princes, devised a wholly novel and as the event proved unfortunate procedure and appointed a Commission to investigate the charges, presided over by the Chief Justice of Bengal and composed of three English and three native members, the latter being the Maharajas of Gwalior (Scindia) and Jeypur, and a prominent native minister, Sir Dinkur Rao. The attempt to associate the native princes with the Government in a great act of justice performed upon one of their own hierarchy turned out a failure as regarded the immediate object in view. The English members declared in favour of all the charges against the Gaekwar including the attempted poisoning, while the native commissioners found them not proved, Jeypore even declaring Mulhar Rao to be "not guilty." This verdict naturally proved in the highest degree embarrassing to the Government, for, although the Commission had been appointed only to inquire and report, it was inevitable that it should have the appearance of a jury, and that the decision which

the Government were forced, both by their belief in the truth of the poisoning charge and by the Gaekwar's maladministration, to take in the teeth of a negative finding should be attributed in certain quarters to preconceived prejudice against a native prince. The solution adopted by the Cabinet at home to cut the knot by proclaiming the deposition of the Gaekwar "not based on the report of the Commissioners" nor assuming that the result of the inquiries proved the truth of the imputation against him; but on the grounds of his "notorious misconduct, gross misgovernment, and incapacity to introduce reform" was not in accordance with the view of Lord Northbrook and his advisers who had been convinced by the evidence of the truth of the specific charge and would have preferred to act upon it boldly; and it inevitably excited violent criticism in the native papers and some strong feeling among the natives. But once the decision was taken it was loyally accepted by Lord Northbrook and acted upon with the utmost despatch. Lord Cromer writes:—

"It was necessary that the deposition should be carried out rapidly. The town of Baroda was in a state of great excitement, neither was it occupied by any British garrison. The operation was therefore one of some delicacy. At that time Sir Lewis Pelly was the resident at Baroda. Acting under Lord Northbrook's instructions the telegraph wire from Baroda to Simla was joined up so that no necessity arose for any transfer of messages at intermediate stations. About 8 o'clock one evening I got into direct telegraphic communication with Sir Lewis Pelly. The result of a brief conversation between us was that a special train was prepared, and that Mulhar Rao was arrested and at once removed. When the people of Baroda awoke

next morning their former ruler was half-way on his journey to Madras."

The fear of any further unfortunate developments was removed by the immediate selection of a new ruler of Baroda in the person of a young boy from another branch of the Gaekwar's family, a decision which removed all suspicion that the Government were aiming at the annexation of the State. Lord Cromer continues :—

"An heir was adopted. Shortly afterwards Lord Northbrook visited Baroda when the young Gaekwar who was then a child of about 5 or 6 years of age was formally installed. . . . On this occasion the mother of the young Gaekwar asked to see Lord Northbrook after the Durbar, and requested that he should be accompanied by Sir Charles Aitchison, the foreign secretary, and myself. We accordingly entered the Zenana. In view of the fact that this lady had been throughout her life debarred from association with the outer world, I rather expected to find that she would be ignorant of political affairs and possibly shy and awkward in conversing with three Englishmen. To my great astonishment we were presented to a lady of singularly prepossessing appearance who in so far as her manners were concerned might have lived at a Court all her life, while she discussed the affairs of the Baroda state with singular intelligence and thorough knowledge of the facts. The East is full of these anomalies."

The choice proved a fortunate one. A long minority gave the opportunity of reform under the direction of able agents selected by the Viceroy, and the whole incident passed before long into the limbo of difficulties successfully surmounted. But it had given Lord Northbrook more moments of anxiety, stirring native public opinion on the

whole question of British rule as it did, than anything that occurred during his period of office.

The right thing was done but the manner of doing it was questionable, for it not only set an inconvenient precedent but went far to create the very difficulty as to popular feeling which it was designed to obviate. Lord Northbrook himself practically admitted this, but, as he said, "The real things that signified to my mind were that Mulhar Rao should be deposed and that no advantage should be reaped by us from the affair." To this satisfactory conclusion he carried the business with the twofold beneficial result, as was noted at the time, of asserting in a practical form not only that the rights of the feudatory princes would be strictly respected, but that those princes have duties both towards the British Government and towards their own people of the due performance of which the British Government is the final arbiter. As regards the first point Lord Cromer observed that by the restoration of the native administration in Baroda the "non-annexation policy had received a solid and practical confirmation. There is nothing new in that policy. All Lord Northbrook's predecessors since the time of Lord Canning adhered to it equally with Lord Northbrook." But only eighteen years had elapsed since the date of the Queen's proclamation, and natives educated in the days of annexation were slow to believe that the wise and statesmanlike policy of 1858 had really taken root. "It was well therefore that a fitting opportunity should have been taken to reassert and stereotype non-annexation principles." This incident therefore in one of its aspects illustrates a leading feature of Lord Northbrook's Indian administration, his scrupulous adherence to what he described as the "solemn assurances given to the Princes and People of India in the

Queen's proclamation of 1858 that we desire no extension of our present territorial possessions."

I must pass over certain difficulties with China and with Burmah which at about the same time occupied much of Lord Northbrook's attention, and the latter of which, owing to the provocative character of the King's action, might easily in other hands have afforded a pretext for war and precipitated the annexation which Lord Dufferin was to effect a dozen years later. "Here in India as usual in all such cases there has been a loud howl for what they call a spirited policy, which means that we should bully the King of Burmah who is unable to resist us. I need hardly say that I shall continue to treat him with all proper consideration." (To Lord Salisbury, August 2, 1875.) It is necessary however to dwell at greater length on a phase of Lord Northbrook's "foreign" policy which among other things gives another signal illustration of his principle of scrupulously respecting the rights of native rulers. I refer to the questions concerned with Afghanistan and the advancing power of Russia in Central Asia, questions which began in his term of office to cast shadows of coming events before them, and incidentally to embarrass the relations between his India Office chief and himself.

It would be erroneous to ascribe the departure from long settled policy, foreshadowed in the last two years of Lord Northbrook's Viceroyalty and strenuously resisted by him, wholly to the influence of the two or three active leading spirits who inspired it. Many circumstances combined to bring a revision of Indian frontier policy to the front and give it at least an air of plausibility. As the greatest of Asiatic powers India was vitally interested in the rapid expansion of Russia in Central Asia, and the possible effect of Russian interference in Persia and

Afghanistan might at any moment have made it necessary for the Indian Government to reconsider the strategical and military position on the North-West frontier of India. The relations between Great Britain and Russia remained indeed technically friendly till a later period of Mr. Disraeli's administration, but the Crimean War had left its inevitable legacy in a rooted distrust of Russian aims and ambitions, and a long period of peace had inclined the nation to follow new leaders in the paths of foreign adventure and imperial expansion. The ground was therefore prepared for the alarmist views which two able members of his Council, Sir Bartle Frere and Sir Henry Rawlinson, began at this time to instil into the mind of the Secretary of State. Lord Salisbury was no more naturally inclined than the Viceroy to exaggerated fears, and no one in later days, when he had succeeded to the post of Prime Minister, did more than he to hold in check the dangerous and impolitic Russophobia which Lord Beaconsfield's proceedings in the near East and in Asia had rekindled in England. On the present occasion indeed he went so far as to repudiate the liability to the influence of the advisers I have named which Lord Northbrook attributed to him. But his letters and despatches show that he was convinced of the necessity of a more active policy; he met the unanimous expression of opinion from the authorities in India with which he was opposed by the characteristic comment: "The disasters of 1842 have entered like iron into their souls;" and when Lord Northbrook expressed his fears that the publication of Sir Henry Rawlinson's work, "England and Russia in the Near East," in the spring of 1875, with its liberal use of confidential documents and official information, would have a very injurious effect upon our foreign re-

lations—("I have been more annoyed," he wrote, "by reading this (last) chapter than by anything that has occurred since I have been in India")—Lord Salisbury's disavowal of approval was of a very half-hearted character. Finally the unfortunate policy which as we are told[1] Sir Bartle Frere urged upon the Government, the appointment of British officers on the frontier of Afghanistan and the occupation of Quetta and other advanced positions, was precisely that which inspired Lord Salisbury's momentous despatch of January 22, 1875, and to which his endeavours were directed during the ensuing years.

Anxiety as to the expansion of Russia in Central Asia was in the beginning confined to Government and newspaper circles at home. As early as 1873 I find Lord Northbrook writing to Lord Halifax, "We are quite comfortable in India, but England is all in a flutter," and again in 1875 he writes to Sir Louis Mallet :—

"All the spirited foreign policy notions come from Frere & Co. at home. Here we are very quiet and steady people and see no reason to depart from the principles upon which our relations with Afghanistan &c. have been founded at least since 1804. The difficulty of the political situation is great in theory, practically I am so complete a disbeliever in Russia wishing to attack us that I am not afraid—I mean viâ Afghanistan. Persia is a different and more serious matter. . . . My fear up to the present time has been that we have not told Russia distinctly our position towards Afghanistan and the importance to us of any disturbance of the Afghan frontier. . . . *Complete frankness seems to me the best security for peace.*"

It is of some interest to inquire what were the motives which inspired Lord Northbrook's instinctive hostility to

[1] "Lord Lytton's Administration in India," p. 19.

the new policy which was beginning to assert itself, and his general attitude on this class of question which Lord Cromer in some notes upon his administration written many years later has thus described :—

"As an Indian politician Lord Northbrook belonged to the school of Lord Lawrence. He was a warm defender of the rights of the native princes and was very strongly convinced of the harm done by Lord Dalhousie in violating those rights. He was against all external aggression, more especially in the direction of Afghanistan. He abhorred the political and diplomatic school of those who held that Oriental intrigue should be met by counter intrigue. His weapons were plain spoken truth and unimpeachable honesty."

His political education had been gained among those who shared the liberal economic ideas of the mid-Victorian epoch, and as a practical financier he was keenly alive to the paramount need, in the interests of the social and economic development of the Empire, of the avoidance of unnecessary war. For India especially he was profoundly convinced of the necessity of peace and unalterably opposed to anything which might lead to military aggression upon native states, and some of his utterances show that this characteristic of his policy was largely inspired by a deep but unavowed humanitarian instinct of pity and sympathy for the poorer classes and for weaker peoples.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that Lord Northbrook's opposition to a forward or imperialistic policy was founded on a merely prejudiced view of the case, or that it was dictated by a utopian view of international relations. At the early period, indeed, of which I am writing the imperialistic influences which were to play so large a part in the history of succeeding years had not fully

declared themselves; Lord Northbrook was not one of those who are inclined to anticipate or speculate upon political tendencies; and his position and instincts alike precluded any inclination to underrate imperial interests. In this respect as in others, his position was that of the older Whigs rather than that of philosophic radicalism. He was a convinced adherent of the Whig ideas in which he had been brought up that responsible government should be conferred wherever possible on the Colonies, and that India should be ruled in the interest of its native inhabitants, but nothing that he ever said or did gave any handle to the notion that he could countenance a policy which its enemies have stigmatised as "little Englandism." On this very matter he wrote (to Sir L. Mallet, January 29, 1875), "I go heartily with Lord Lawrence and against fuss and interference, but there is a point upon which I would fight, and I should let the Russians understand this very clearly."

It is nevertheless certain that Lord Northbrook never entertained the least doubt of the unwisdom of the policy outlined in Lord Salisbury's despatch of January 1875. But his action on this occasion was highly characteristic of the man. When Lord Salisbury urged the placing of British agents at Herat and possibly at Kandahar with the very natural object of supplying Her Majesty's Government with "that more exact and constant information" which was "necessary to the conduct of a more circumspect policy at the present juncture," there was no indication on Lord Northbrook's part, either in his private letters or in his public despatches, of a desire to prejudge a suggestion which was reasonable in itself; and his first step, as in the case of the agitation against the income tax, was to fortify himself by an exhaustive and dispassionate inquiry

among those best qualified to give an opinion as to the point at issue. And when he had done so he showed the same faculty as on the earlier occasion for selecting and confining himself to the central fact of the situation, which in this case was the unwillingness of the Ameer to receive British officers into his country and the impolicy of forcing him to do so. He gave the result of his inquiry and consultation in the following private letter to Lord Salisbury (May 20, 1875), which foreshadowed the official reply to the India Office despatch :—

"We settled yesterday the opinion we have to give as to the agency at Herat. After a full examination of what took place at Umballa in 1869 we do not think it can be fairly said that the Ameer ever accepted the proposal of a British officer at Herat. We think moreover that he may have reasons for objecting to the proposition quite consistent with loyalty to the British Government. All those best qualified to form an opinion say that the Ameer would strongly object to the presence of British officers in Afghanistan, and this view is confirmed by his proceedings since I have been in India. We think it would be very desirable to place an officer at Herat if it can be arranged with the cordial consent of the Ameer, but that, if done against his will under pressure, the officer will have no real power of being of use and his presence is as likely as not to occasion a break some day between us and Afghanistan. Unless therefore it is the desire of the Government at home to change the policy with regard to Afghanistan, and to show less desire to keep on cordial terms than has hitherto been thought advisable, we cannot recommend a formal announcement to the Ameer that we desire the establishment of a British Agent at Herat."

The furthest Lord Northbrook was at this moment prepared to go was to send a native officer, Nawab Gholam

Hassein Khan, the late agent there, to sound the Ameer at Cabul on the subject. He afterwards described what had passed in the House of Lords in December 1878 in a speech which derived its crushing effectiveness at the time from his command of all the historical facts bearing on the case, and his straightforward manner of stating them.

"In 1875," he said, "I received a despatch from the noble Marquis pointing out the desirability of our having a British Resident at Herat. I should have liked to have had on that frontier a British officer. I was not against the measure. Do not suppose I had the least desire to oppose it, but I thought it well to consult the officers of the Government who knew most about the matter. I was on the point of proceeding to Delhi. When I arrived there I consulted the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and all the most experienced officers of the frontier. I also summoned the native gentlemen of high character who had been agents of the Government of India at Cabul and who knew the Ameer well. One of them was the Nawab Gholam Hassein Khan. I did not hold a formal conference, but I saw all these officers privately, one at a time, and asked them how the request was likely to be entertained by Shere Ali and what would be the best way of making it. They said that the admission of British Residents into Afghanistan was the one thing which the Ameer disliked more than another and which was most likely to get us into trouble with him, and I made them write down their opinions that I might send them home. After that I had all the papers on the subject looked out and examined to see if there was any information which would warrant us in assuming that Shere Ali would receive a British agent at Herat. The noble Marquis was under that impression."

The result of this examination was to establish beyond a doubt that, in Lord Mayo's own words, the only pledges

given at the Umballa Conference in 1869 were "that we would not interfere in his affairs and that we would support his independence, that we would not force European officers as Residents upon him against his wish."

"In June 1875," Lord Northbrook proceeded, "the Government of India gave their opinion that it would not be wise to force British Residents on the Ameer; we thought it our duty to point that out. There was no hurry about the matter, and having been told by every one whose opinion was of any value that the course proposed was likely to alienate the Ameer we stated our opinion to the Government, but the Government, notwithstanding the unanimous opinion of the Viceroy and his Council, replied that the course they had suggested must be followed. Again the Government of India in January 1876 pointed out the evil effects which in their opinion would follow from carrying out the instructions of the noble Marquis, in the hope that the matter might still be reconsidered by Her Majesty's Government."

This somewhat bald extract gives but a faint idea of the temperate but forcible arguments addressed to the Home Government by Lord Northbrook in the two despatches referred to.[1] It may suffice for the purpose of this story, which does not profess to survey in any detail the great historical controversy as to the Afghan War and its causes, to complete the record of Lord Northbrook's attitude at this point by a short extract from the first of these despatches which gives the keynote of his policy, and by one or two further quotations from his private letters to Lord Salisbury. Here is the first passage:

"We attach great importance to the moral and material advantages which are derived from maintaining friendly relations with Afghanistan, and we would impress upon

[1] See Blue Book Afghanistan, Cd. 2190, 1878, pp. 129, 149.

Her Majesty's Government our conviction that such relations will best be secured by a steady adherence to the patient and conciliatory policy which has been pursued by the Government of India for many years towards Afghanistan, and by making every reasonable allowance for the difficulties of the Ameer even if he should be reluctant to accede to the views which we may entertain as to the measures which may be advisable for their own interests and for those of the British Isles."

On September 30, 1875, he wrote to Lord Salisbury :—

"I have never believed in the alleged attack on Merv. . . . I cannot agree with your suspicions about the Ameer; they are not confirmed by any one of authority here. Of course I do not place much reliance on Afghans, but I cannot see what possible interest the Ameer can have in turning towards Russia. My firm opinion is that to do anything to force him to receive agents of ours in his country against his will is likely to have an opposite effect to that which you desire, and to subject us to the risk of another unnecessary and costly war in Afghanistan before many years are over."

He reiterated this opinion a few months later in the last words which he addressed to Lord Salisbury on this subject before leaving India. "By taking the initiative I feel certain you are throwing away your best card, and running the risk of great embarrassment for the future both political and financial."

When the authors of the forward policy had been committed by the course of events in Europe, and still more by the action of Lord Lytton's Government in India, to all the liabilities which sprang from the "dream of crumpling up the power of Russia in Central Asia by an advance from India," they may perhaps have regretted that they turned

a deaf ear to the prophetic warnings which had been so plainly addressed to them by Lord Northbrook. What they did however was to attribute the discontent of the Ameer, which in their opinion led him to intrigue with Russia, to certain supposed action or inaction of Lord Northbrook and the Duke of Argyll in connection with the Conference which took place at Simla in 1873 between the Viceroy and the Ameer's Foreign Minister, on the subject of the Seistan boundary negotiations. The gravamen of the charge was that the Indian Government had alienated Shere Ali by a refusal to give him the guarantee of protection which he had demanded, and it is certainly a very arguable question whether the reluctance of the British Government to move in the direction of giving the guarantees requested at an earlier period was not a mistake. But Lord Northbrook had little difficulty in showing that it did not lie in the mouths of conservative statesmen to reproach him with neglect of duty on this point. He reminded the House of Lords in 1878 that these negotiations had been thoroughly discussed at the time in that House which had approved of the assurances of support given by him in no ungrudging terms; that "the opinion of the present Conservative Government as expressed in that debate was that it was quite impossible to give Shere Ali what he wanted, viz. an unconditional guarantee of protection"; and that during the ensuing two years of his Viceroyalty he received from them "not one single despatch, not one single expression, not one single hint that additional assurances should be given to the Ameer." He proceeded in the same speech to indicate the real origin of the trouble in the request made by Lord Lytton, under the secret instructions with which he left England in February 1876, that Shere Ali should receive a British envoy, and in the despatch of

Sir Lewis Pelly to Cabul. On his declining to receive the envoy "he was warned in July 1876 that if he persisted he would isolate himself from the alliance and support of the British Government." This was in Lord Northbrook's opinion the "turning point of the negotiations with the Ameer," and the direct cause of the difficulties which subsequently arose with Afghanistan, and which, as will be seen, engaged so much of Lord Northbrook's anxious attention during the next few years.

It has been often asserted (*e.g.* in the *Times* obituary notice) that Lord Northbrook's premature resignation of his great office was due to his differences with the Home Government on this important question. That this was not the case the letter, as we shall see, in which he placed his resignation in the hands of the Queen conclusively proves, but the following passage shows that by the time his resignation took effect not only had these differences of opinion become accentuated, but another cause of dissension had arisen. "When I wrote to you last September," he observed on January 7, 1876 (to Lord Salisbury), "to say that I wished to be relieved of my office, there were no political questions upon which I felt serious anxiety. There are however now two questions which cause me much trouble, one is the tariff, the other our policy with Afghanistan."

Something must therefore now be said on the subject of the first of the two matters alluded to in this letter, the question of the cotton duties. Just as Lord Northbrook had begun his rule in India by one act of fiscal policy, the abolition of the Income Tax, which ran counter to the view of the Secretary of State and his chief advisers yet in which he had with him in so far as it was articulate the weight of Indian opinion, so he was destined to close

it by another which placed him even more conspicuously in the position of the champion of Indian as against British prepossessions and interests. In cases of this kind, and certainly in the last named, the economic principles to which Lord Northbrook was undoubtedly attached were constantly clashing with his political views, which led him to the conclusion that it was in the highest degree unwise and impolitic to adopt any measures that might have the appearance of sacrificing Indian to British interests. Lord Cromer brings out very forcibly this aspect of the controversy in the following passage, selecting it as an instance of the "courage with which Lord Northbrook was at times prepared to withstand public opinion."

"I dwell on it," he writes, "because I consider that in these democratic days courage of this sort is one of the most valuable qualities that any statesman can possess. In this instance strong pressure was exerted by the Government of Lord Beaconsfield (in February 1874) to remit the import duty of 5 per cent. which was levied on Manchester piece goods. Lord Northbrook stoutly refused to yield to this pressure. Though himself a strong free trader, he argued with unanswerable force that the duty was levied not for protection but for revenue purposes, that its abolition would involve the imposition of other taxation in a form very distasteful to the Indian people, and that it was politically most unwise to have the appearance of sacrificing the interests of India to those of Manchester. He won the day. It was reserved for myself as Financial Member of Council some years later to deal with this thorny question."

The fact that Lord Cromer himself at a later date dealt with the question in the extreme free trade sense urged by Lord Salisbury in 1875 indicates perhaps that the difference between the latter and Lord Northbrook was one rather

of method and opportunity than of principle. Lord Cromer's allusion to the matter clearly represents the attitude which the Indian Government came to adopt in the course of the dispute, but it does not on the one hand sufficiently emphasise the advances made by Lord Northbrook in a free trade direction, nor on the other does it quite do justice to the position of the Home Government. Some further reference to the subject is therefore necessary.

After the correspondence above referred to which took place in the spring of 1874, Lord Northbrook had set a Tariff Commission to work and had been gradually coming to the conclusion that the import duty itself, apart from its incidental effect in the way of some slight protection, was one of the most unobjectionable taxes in India, and that the Manchester case broke down under inquiry. A few months later having received the report of the Committee and having heard nothing further from London on the subject, he introduced and passed in the Legislative Council (August 5, 1875) a Tariff Bill getting rid of all export duties except those on rice, indigo, and shellac, and reducing the general scale of import duties from 7½ per cent. to 5 per cent. His important speech on this occasion contained the review of his financial administration and the defence of a revenue tariff for India, above referred to (p. 74). The only concession to Manchester cotton goods, the duty on which already stood at 5 per cent., was that given (to the extent of £88,000 per annum) by a reduction of the tariff valuation and the imposition of a duty of 5 per cent. upon imported raw cotton, from which alone the higher classes of cotton goods competing with the imports from Lancashire could be manufactured in India. Thus if similar goods to those imported from Lancashire (*i.e.* goods made from long-stapled cotton which could not be produced in India) should

be manufactured in India, they would pay the same rate of duty. Revenue considerations, it was declared, made it impossible to reduce the duty of 5 per cent. on cotton goods which brought in £800,000 per annum, and Lord Northbrook made it clear in letters written after the storm had arisen that he considered this "an excellent way of raising revenue, that it was in no degree really protective" and that the "Manchester demand was unreasonable and should be resisted."

These changes were communicated by telegraph to the India Office, and Lord Northbrook's letters home at this moment show a complete absence of any suspicion that proposals, which taken as a whole were undoubtedly a considerable step in the free trade direction, would not be acceptable at home. In sending home to Sir Louis Mallet a copy of his speech in Council he remarked (August 7, 1875): "I hope you will be satisfied with our little attempt at improving the tariff. If it is not original, it is safe enough. I am working on the lines of Gladstone, but at a very considerable distance." He clearly thought that the reduction of the general rate of import duty would be welcomed as a "financial speculation of the class of Mr. Gladstone's measures" by which "trade might in a small way be developed without a permanent sacrifice of revenue." But unfortunately Lord Salisbury in January of the same year had more than half committed himself at Manchester to a radical solution of the question of the cotton duties, and a despatch was actually on its way from London again urging the view of the Home Government in favour of their complete remission whenever the condition of the finances should make such a measure possible. Nothing therefore could have been more unintentionally embarrassing than Lord Northbrook's action, which at once called

forth a telegraphic reply qualifying some of the provisions of the new Act as objectionable, and insisting on the constitutional question of the right of the Secretary of State to be consulted about proposed legislation.

Lord Salisbury was on very strong ground on this latter point which was fraught with possibilities of discussion quite as serious as the main question. Here were all the elements of an ugly quarrel, but one in which the weight of opinion both on the ground of economic principle and of practical expediency was perhaps not so wholly on one side as Lord Cromer's words seem to imply. The India Office at all events were completely taken aback by the sudden introduction of a reform of the tariff upon which they had not been previously consulted and which they held, not without reason, to be almost as much an English as an Indian interest, and by a sacrifice of revenue which cut away their only ground of defence against Lancashire.

Lord Northbrook was both astonished and disappointed by the hostile reception of a measure which, without giving due consideration to the political difficulties of the Government in this matter, he had assumed would be accepted as sound and progressive. A difference due to misunderstanding and want of sufficient collaboration on both sides, developed, with the exchange of strong despatches, into a dispute in which the *amour-propre* of both parties was involved, and in which the Indian Government fastened on the largely imaginary subservience of the India Office to political pressure as the chief rock of offence. Lord Salisbury on his side vigorously impugned the fiscal orthodoxy of the Viceroy's proposals, a line of criticism peculiarly galling to one who had every reason to pride himself upon knowledge derived from exhaustive study of Indian conditions and upon his admitted success in the

administration of Indian finance. So serious was the deadlock that Lord Salisbury adopted the very unusual course of despatching the permanent Under Secretary, Sir Louis Mallet, who, as he said, was anxious for the removal of the cotton duties on economic grounds, but who would also be cordially welcomed by Lord Northbrook as a personal friend, to discuss the whole matter. Subsequent events, including Sir Louis's illness in India, prevented a settlement of the question, but the mission had the effect of removing some personal misconceptions, and Lord Northbrook admitted that he could "appreciate better than I did before the way in which the passing of the Tariff Act struck you at first" (to Lord Salisbury, January 7, 1878). By the time Sir Louis Mallet arrived at Calcutta, not only was the visit of the Prince of Wales in full swing and absorbing the full attention of the Viceroy and his advisers, but all reality had been taken out of the negotiations by the announcement, on January 4, 1876, of Lord Northbrook's resignation. It is therefore unnecessary to pursue a subject which, unlike the Afghan frontier question, had no further immediate consequences. But it is of very considerable interest both from a personal and a constitutional point of view. It illustrates the firmness almost amounting to obstinacy with which he adhered to his own carefully formed opinions.

"I have written to no one at home but Lord Salisbury and you" (he afterwards wrote on February 25, 1876, to Sir Louis Mallet) "on this question or upon the difference between us touching the Afghanistan policy. I have written my mind upon both to Lord Salisbury and I am afraid he will think me very disagreeable, but I can't help it. I take it a Governor-General gets a high salary for the sake of doing his duty, and a very important part of it seems to me

that he should tell the truth to the Secretary of State when he thinks a wrong thing is going to be done."

In its public aspect the incident has also some significance. The comment which occurs to a modern observer of Lord Northbrook's action—that it amounted to an assertion of independence of home control such as no recent Viceroy would dream of asserting—marks the change which has occurred since his time in the relationship between the India Office and the Government of India. In this change and in the friction which signalised it, the personal factor to which allusion has already been made no doubt had its influence, for Lord Salisbury, with his disregard for precedent and his preference for settling questions of policy by means of private communication to the Viceroy, was just the man to initiate a system of government from home which was as certain to be resisted by a Viceroy of Lord Northbrook's character and traditions. The tendency to the subordination of the Indian Government was assisted by another accidental circumstance, the fact that Lord Lytton went out primed with a policy conceived in London, for which he could not at the outset look for much support from Indian authorities and was obliged to rely to an exceptional extent upon support from home. Apart however from such special circumstances the situation was being revolutionised by the increasing use of the telegraph which in Lord Northbrook's day was a comparatively new institution. It brought Parliament and English opinion into close touch whether for good or evil with Indian affairs, and it placed in the hands of the Secretary of State the power of practically exercising his existing but partially dormant powers. Probably the effect it was destined to produce had not

up to this time been fully realised by those concerned. All this must be borne in mind by a critic of Lord Northbrook's attitude at this crisis. Lord Cromer writes:—

"Lord Northbrook's Viceroyalty constituted in fact an important turning point in the history of the method under which India was and is governed. He thought he saw in Lord Salisbury's proceedings a first step towards a far more complete subordination of India and Indian interests to England and British interests than had heretofore existed. To a certain extent he was probably right, although it may be urged with very great force that the establishment of the telegraph, coupled with the growing democratic tendency and the increasing interference of Parliament in all executive matters, would have resulted in producing the state of things which Lord Northbrook deplored, quite independently of the special issue as to which the collision of forces took place in 1875. However this may be, it can hardly I think be a matter for surprise that Lord Northbrook resisted what he deemed was an unprecedented exercise of home authority. Whether he was right or wrong, wise or unwise, in the course he adopted may be a matter of opinion, but there can be no manner of doubt that he was actuated by the highest motives, and that he held that his action was strictly constitutional and well within the terms of the Act of Parliament regulating the government of India."

On September 12, 1875, Lord Northbrook had written to Lord Salisbury asking him to lay before the Queen his request to be relieved of his office in the following spring, as he had satisfied himself that it was his duty to his family to go home at that time unless there was a clear public duty to keep him in India for the full term of five years. That there was no such paramount public duty he had satisfied himself by careful consideration of the political

conditions of the moment. Lord Salisbury received this announcement with "very great regret," stating his opinion that the Prime Minister would have "an extreme difficulty in finding a successor on whose judgment and firmness in emergencies anything like equal reliance could be placed" and asking that the matter might be kept a secret for the present. This was accordingly done; not even Lord Northbrook's relations and friends at home being informed of it till the public announcement in the early days of January, when it was also announced that an earldom had been conferred upon Lord Northbrook in recognition of his work in India.

One of the reasons which had influenced Lord Northbrook's decision was that the conclusion of the then impending visit of the Prince of Wales would be a fitting opportunity for a change of Viceroys. That visit was an event of far-reaching interest and importance, marking as it did the commencement of an era in which the personal loyalty of the Princes and people of India to the Reigning House was to play a new part in the history of the great dependency.

It was a patriotic mission which the gracious and genial personality of the Heir Apparent enabled him to turn to the fullest public advantage and in which Lord Northbrook's efforts largely co-operated to make it the success it was, but it does not call for special description in these pages. Lord Northbrook's energies were fully taxed in the arrangements for the comfort and safety of His Royal Highness; in settling, in concert with the Prince's suite, all the details of his travels, of the Durbar held by him for the investiture of the Star of India, of his reception at Bombay and his entertainment at Calcutta, where the Viceroy, ably seconded by his daughter, played his part in

a series of splendid festivities, and of which it is recorded that during the Royal visit the "quiet self-effacement of the Viceroy was as remarkable as it was admirable and becoming." His exertions were cordially recognised in various kindly letters and messages both from the Queen and the Prince of Wales.

This final year was also signalised by two interesting progresses. In April 1875, Lord Northbrook visited Delhi in state on his way to Simla, and held a public Durbar. "My father," wrote Miss Baring, "has gone through a great deal here in the way of what is called out here 'burra tamasha,' elephant processions, Durbar, Rajah's dinners, &c." Public functions, indeed, were not congenial to his nature, and I find a characteristic jotting in his diary on another occasion :—"Ball till one, the worst part of my business this is!"[1] But he never shirked the necessary ceremonials and played his part in them with cheerfulness and dignity if without any great enthusiasm. He was scrupulously lavish in the expenditure of his public and private income, and the Viceregal household arrangements were always conducted on a scale of ample splendour and comfort though without pompous formality except where native visitors were concerned. "Pray don't suppose," he wrote quaintly and characteristically about the preparation for some great function of the kind, "that I *enjoy* an elephant procession, I should be agreeably dis-

[1] The late Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman told me an anecdote which brings out this trait. He spoke as others have done of Lord Northbrook's absolute simplicity and dislike of ceremony, instancing a function at Portsmouth when both were serving at the Admiralty. Lord Northbrook went to the ball and looked "unutterably wretched," and when they returned on board the Admiralty yacht at night for a final smoke he observed that it was blowing hard and that they would have a nasty passage to Portland for which place they were to start at 3 A.M. "However," as he grimly remarked, "that is nothing to what we have been going through this evening!"

appointed if an entry on horseback or carriage turns out to be the most suitable thing. All I want to do is what is right and proper for the occasion, whether I like it or not, so you will understand that I am quite resigned." The visits to objects of historical interest or natural beauty which he accomplished on his tours were more to his taste, and at Delhi he writes in a rather unaccustomed vein :—

"The Khutab and the ruins near Delhi are more curious than beautiful, and the country reminds one strongly of the Campagna of Rome. 'Stop for thy foot is on an Empire's dust' might be truly said of half-a-dozen spots near Delhi, for there are memorials of the whole history of Mahomedan India from first to last. Whatever happens when our Raj ends we shall not leave so much useless bricks and mortar behind us! The vanity of human wishes is very clearly shown in hundreds of fine tombs built by men who thought to perpetuate their memories, but whose names are forgotten. Nothing remains but the inscription of the attributes of God which the Mahomedans, grand with all their faults, put on tomb and mosque."

Perhaps the most interesting of all his tours was that which he paid in the autumn of 1875, after attending in state to receive the Prince of Wales in Bombay, to Central India and Rajpootana. During this progress he visited the Maharajah Holkar at Indore, the first visit ever paid by a Viceroy to that State, as was the case with Oodeypore. Here he was received by the Maharana with a great processional display, and as the Native chronicler remarks, "seemed to enjoy this truly Oriental scene immensely" with the "calm and unassuming look characteristic of the English gentleman!" Jodhpore, Ajmere, Jeypore, were next visited, scenes of equally entrancing interest and

beauty, and at every place the Viceroy inspected many educational and charitable institutions, and even found time amid such occupations to make sketches, one or two of which have been reproduced in this volume. As he wrote later on, he never appreciated till he went to Rajpootana the power of the British Government for good in India or the advantage of leaving native states not annexed. Travelling was not easy, and he only took Major Baring and an A.D.C. to Jodhpore and Oodeypore. Luggage, as he noted, went by camels and got shaken to pieces. "In one of my tin boxes a lot of cheroots got ground into the finest dust by attrition with Tod's *History of Rajasthan*."

Of greater interest than such of his public utterances on this occasion as might be quoted is a description of Oodeypore which he wrote to his sister, Mrs. Bonham-Carter, and which shows at all events that the "calm and unassuming look" covered excellent powers of observation :—

"This is a remarkable place, it is quite out of the ordinary track and has never yet been visited by a Governor-General. It is the Capital of the oldest Rajpoot State of India, the Rulers of which boast that they never gave any of their daughters in marriage to the Mogul Emperors. They held their own for a time against Ackbar and Aurungzebe, but were beaten at last by the Moguls and afterwards by the Mahrattas. We saved the State from ruin and it remains a monument of the past, independent, but shorn of some of its old possessions.

"The City lies in the Aravalli Hills, a chain which terminates the Western Ghâts. I hardly know how to describe it, but take a lake about the size of Orta, with lower hills and of a lighter colour, put the walls of Verona on the lower hills with a fort or two, add islands smaller

AJMERE (1875)

From a Water-Colour Drawing by Lord Northbrook

than those on the Lago Maggiore covered with marble pleasure palaces and domes, with white kiosques relieved by dark green trees, with a palm or two feathering above. Pile up half a dozen of French Norman Châteaux on the side, and end with a piece of Venice and a bridge of the shape of the Rialto without its buildings, and you will have the various recollections which have come to my mind in gliding about the waters of the lake in a high barge which must be one of the old relics of times gone by.

"I have just come in from seeing this extraordinary spot illuminated and it was one of the most striking scenes I ever saw; the illuminations had nothing modern about them, there was nothing but lines of little Eastern oil lamps tracing out the old walls, marking the banks of the lake, lighting up the islands and the temples and just indicating the lines of the palaces behind. These and their reflections in the lake baffle any description I can give. Add to them crowds of people some with scarlet dresses, and all this seen from the high poop of the old State barge gliding along without any perceptible motion, and you may form some idea of an old Indian pageant.

"I only wish the Prince of Wales could have seen it.

"This tour of mine promises to be the most interesting I have yet made. Besides this place I have seen Mandhoo, one of the deserted Mahomedan Capitals which remain here and there over India, and Chittore, the celebrated Rajpoot fort, which was sacked three times, on each occasion the women all sacrificing themselves before its fall while the men draped in saffron robes fell fighting before its walls.

"I have seen several other small Native States, like Oodeypore, maintained by the British Government, and loyal and friendly to us; governed, not ill, by native Statesmen and with every appearance of prosperity.

"Altogether a satisfactory sight enough, and one that shows our rule in India is not fruitless. It is not seventy years ago that the whole country over which I have passed

was overrun by Mahrattas, Pindaris, Pathans, and ravaged by friend or foe with an almost equal vigour. Now, with the exception of a few wild robbers in places, life and property are as safe as they are in Hampshire."

Two recollections supplied by Lord Cromer illustrate Lord Northbrook's "dry humour" and his enjoyment of a joke especially if it was in any way connected with his official work.

"I remember his going into convulsions of laughter over an official report from a military officer who was the head of what is, or at all events was, known as the Thuggee and Dacoity department. This officer deprecated the law's delays in dealing with the suppression of highway robbery in the Province of Rajputana; what he urged was required, is a law 'like the Habeas Corpus Act in England, under which the Government can arrest a suspected person and keep him in prison for as long as they like without trial.' The gallant officer was manifestly ill informed of the nature of this special Act.

"On another occasion he was greatly amused by an incident which I relate as it is somewhat illustrative of Indian methods of government. We were having breakfast at a dâk bungalow on the road to Hazaribagh. A noisy crowd of some ninety or a hundred people collected outside. It seemed on inquiry that they had come to complain of some new regulation which had recently been issued. Their complaints were quite unreasonable. The collector of the district who was present therefore went out commanded silence and then said quietly: *Bus. Jao Hukum hai.* (Enough. Go away. There is an order.) Without uttering a further word the crowd instantly dispersed."

Lord Northbrook's Governor-Generalship, compared with many of those which preceded it and with some

which followed it, has usually been characterised as uneventful and is therefore very often passed over as unimportant. It is true that the period was distinguished by no war whether of aggression or for defence, and that it did not add a single acre to the unwieldy bulk of the Empire. Nor can it be said that in domestic affairs it was signalised by any new departure of far-reaching importance. It was lacking in many of the qualities which appeal to the popular imagination. But there is all the difference in the world between a policy of mere inaction or reaction and Lord Northbrook's policy of deliberate abstention from brilliant or sensational measures, inspired as it was by a statesmanlike perception of the requirements of the Indian population at that particular stage of its political progress. Such a line of policy, coupled with a vigorous supervision of the administrative machine in all its branches and especially in that of financial control, was precisely what India required; and it was a fortunate choice which placed the Government at that moment in the hands of a man who by disposition and temperament was eminently fitted to carry it out.

"If I were asked," said Sir Stewart Bayley in 1879 on the occasion of the unveiling at Calcutta of Sir Edgar Boehm's statue of Lord Northbrook, "to describe his policy, I should say it was the reflex of his own character. It was a genuine, quiet, unobtrusive, honest, straightforward policy. It was certainly a successful policy, for it gave peace and rest to the country and endeared him to every class of the community."

So strongly indeed did Lord Northbrook believe in what he called "steady government" for India, that he continued to enjoin upon succeeding Viceroys the maxims

which he had followed. On September 8, 1884, for instance, he wrote to Lord Dufferin :—

"The main object of my policy was to let things go quietly on—to give the land rest as some of the natives phrased it—and I believe the taking off the Income Tax, which I did in 1873, had a most beneficial effect on the country. The natives of India, in the main, whatever the small educated minority may say, are utterly incapable of understanding a financial scheme. They are averse to change and will be passively loyal to us—active loyalty we cannot expect—*if we govern them justly and do not increase their taxes*. . . . India is a poor country and economy in expenditure is, in my opinion, the foundation of successful Indian administration."

I do not know a more distinctive characterisation of Lord Northbrook's administration as it impressed outside observers in its personal aspect than that which was published by an Indian newspaper on his departure from India, although it contains a criticism on which I shall have something to say :—"An important element in all Indian administration is the personal character of the Viceroy. So much rests on his own will, the tone of public policy so faithfully reflects his idiosyncrasies, and the choice of instruments is so entirely his, that without some appreciation of the man it is impossible to understand his reign." So wrote the *Pioneer* on April 1, 1876, and all who have had any experience of Indian Government will agree in its truth. "The government of India," as one of these has expressed it, "is a personal matter and all depends on the person."

"In the high tone of much of the official life of the day," the writer continues, "and in its strict but

unostentatious performance of its duties, the manner and method of the master can be clearly felt. The men whom Lord Northbrook has selected, again, are of the same type as himself. Caution reserve experience, rather than brilliance or warmth have been the passports to his favour. It is of course invidious to mention instances, but it will scarcely be denied that Lord Northbrook, if he has called here and there an original man to his side, has not retained him long. In his selection of men we venture to think that the Viceroy has not shown that rare gift of insight which in truth is found in but few statesmen. It has been the day of safe men ; of men, that is, who are safe to do little or nothing. The Council is weak, the secretariat is no longer strong ; the only striking figure in the Government is that of the Viceroy himself. His stern conscientiousness, his love of justice and of truth, the strict impartiality, the faculty of labour, the devotion to the smallest no less than to the most important details of business, the thoroughness and hatred of sham, the great capacity of acquiring information, the unpretending and unassuming discharge of every duty which characterise Lord Northbrook, would indeed single him out in any group. But while these are the qualities with which we have all grown familiar they are not the whole man. Few can appreciate (because few see anything but the reserved and curt official), the simplicity and kindliness which lie but indifferently concealed behind the shy address. Fewer still, perhaps, are aware of the impulsive and generous element which is pent up within the frozen surface."

Looking at the list of the distinguished men whom Lord Northbrook either continued in or promoted to the Council or Secretariat—Sir Henry Norman, always one of his most trusted advisers and most intimate friends and the only Indian Statesman besides Lord Lawrence who ever had the offer of the Viceroyalty, Sir Richard Temple, Sir John

Strachey, Sir William Muir, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Hobhouse, Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Aitchison, Mr. (afterwards Sir) Alfred Lyall and Sir Ashley Eden—it is a little difficult to admit the force of the criticism that he kept ability at arm's length.

It is true that like the typical Englishman he was, he was rather inclined to distrust the judgment of very clever or brilliant men in administrative affairs, and one of those who knew him best, Lord Cromer, describes him as a faulty judge of men, a defect which he attributed to the genuine simplicity of Lord Northbrook's character. It may be therefore that in spite of the care he took his appointments were not always the best that could have been made; he was too apt to assume that others were actuated by the same lofty and unselfish ideals as those which inspired his own conduct, and it may have happened that his confidence in, and loyalty and forbearance towards, his colleagues and subordinates was carried too far and was sometimes abused. He afterwards indeed confessed as much when, in warning his successor of the danger of placing or leaving in high office any man whom he did not consider to be the best man for the office in India, he blamed himself for not having been harder in a particular instance in which, out of consideration for rank and past services, he had put a man in a place of importance where he had afterwards failed. He could speak and act with sufficient sternness on occasion, as when he referred for instance to a case of speculation in land by a Madras civilian. "I look upon such matters as this, not as a question of detail but as of the utmost consequence, for our rule in India is supported in the opinion of those who think among the natives very much by the high tone of integrity among our civil servants, which has

been happily maintained since the days of Cornwallis." (To Lord Hobart.) But when it is said that Lord Northbrook's supposed failure to gather the ablest men around him in India was due to a "dislike of criticism and contradiction" and that he "preferred those who were likely to acquiesce in his decisions," I can only suppose that such an impression must have been derived from his brusque and somewhat formidable manner, or that his commendably business-like manner of getting through work in council may not have been acceptable to the argumentative capacity of brilliant colleagues. The fact, upon which Lord Northbrook sometimes congratulated himself, that after 1872 there were no budget discussions in the Legislative Council has sometimes been represented as a change introduced by him. This was not the case, for, in the then state of the law, no discussion was possible unless some measure consequent upon the budget of the year had to be introduced. Neither in 1873 nor in 1874 was there any such measure, and the tariff changes of 1875 were too late for a budget discussion and were therefore debated on their introduction later in the year. Lord Northbrook did not himself, oftener than he could help, write "great" minutes, because as he quite simply said: "It is a labour and trouble to do so to my own satisfaction, and I am quite content if what I want to do is silently done so long as it is done effectually." In discussing with Lord Hobart the practice of their respective Councils, he wrote (February 1875):—

"You are constantly writing minutes one in answer to the other. In the Education-road discussion there were no less than nineteen minutes. I don't think nineteen minutes have been put on record by the members of my Council

and myself since I have been in India upon all the questions we have had to discuss. I almost always settle in *vivâ voce* discussion, if I can, matters of difficulty upon which a difference of opinion is likely to exist."

It may be added that Lord Northbrook avoided letter-writing, either with persons at home or in India, which was "likely to lead to or intensify a controversy"; and that on more than one occasion he used his influence with his own Council to tone down the expression of a despatch on some subject of difference with the Secretary of State, and refused to join in any violence of language though he shared the irritation which prompted it. (To Lord Ripon, February 4, 1881.)

Lord Northbrook in short disliked controversy and disliked unnecessary writing or talking; his chief pre-occupation was to get his work done in a thorough and business-like manner, and it is possible that these characteristics may have given rise to the impression, which appears to have existed in some quarters, that he was a person of autocratic temper impatient of advice or criticism, and to a suggestion which has been made that he returned home with ideas which in some degree unfitted him for English politics. Nothing in reality can be further from the truth. No one ever took more pains to inform himself on any point on which he had to make a decision by consultation with the men who were likely to assist him, and those whom he thus consulted must have been impressed by the straightforward modesty with which he would submit his opinions for criticism, and endeavour to place himself in the position of those who might differ from him in opinion. He was fully imbued, much more so than statesmen of the type of Lord Salisbury, with

a belief in the usefulness of constitutional checks and forms.

"One does not appreciate the House of Commons," he wrote to Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, "till one leaves it and England. The advantage to a government of sound criticism in the preparation and consideration of measures of legislation is enormous, as also is the constant check which the great Court for all grievances puts upon the bureaucratic tendencies of all permanent officials. Add also the sense of responsibility which being in Parliament and subject to cross-questioning there gives to public men."

His Indian experience did not weaken these convictions, and he would sometimes himself half jestingly reprove returned Anglo-Indian officials for their impatience with English methods of transacting public business. On this point Lord Cromer has written to me as follows:—

"The charge of being autocratic is the stock accusation which is always brought, more especially by the glib newspaper scribe who delights in generalities, against any one who in any degree stands prominently before the public. . . . As regards the particular case of Lord Northbrook I had the very best possible opportunities of judging whether his tendencies were autocratic or the reverse. It depends rather on what is meant by the word 'autocrat.' If by this term it is intended to convey that the individual concerned is a man of strong character, that he is obliged by the nature of his office to form definite opinions on certain points, to act on these opinions when formed and neither to shirk the reasonable exercise of the powers conferred on him by law nor to exceed the limits which the law assigns to those powers, then Lord Northbrook was an autocrat, and any one in his position would be failing in his duty if he did not incur a similar charge.

"But if by an autocrat is meant a self-willed man possessed of large powers who obstinately exercises those powers, not only without consultation with qualified councillors, but at times in direct and unreasonable opposition to their views, then all I can say is that no man was ever less of an autocrat than Lord Northbrook. His frame of mind is accurately represented in his letter to Grant Duff which you quote. He was very deeply convinced of the dangers inherent in any bureaucratic form of government. He did whatever he could to minimise them. I well remember his speaking to me on this subject when I was appointed to be his private secretary. His idea as he expressed it to me was that when it came to the moment of public action unfriendly critics would not be wanting. He therefore dwelt very strongly on the necessity of inviting the utmost freedom of friendly criticism before the moment for public action arrived. He positively ordered me to tell him whenever I thought he was making a mistake, whether in great things or small. I may indeed go so far as to say that the point to which I am now alluding constituted the main lesson which I derived from my association with Lord Northbrook in public affairs. In subsequent years when I was myself in a position of greater responsibility I invariably adopted Lord Northbrook's practice, and I may add that I profited enormously by doing so. Lord Northbrook's habit in this respect was probably the origin of the wholly erroneous view to which public allusion has occasionally been made that I exercised an undue influence in the formation of his opinions.

"The real truth is that the course which Lord Northbrook adopted in his relations with me was precisely similar to that which he uniformly pursued in his relations with all public officials, especially in the case of those with whom he was on a confidential footing. He invariably invited them to speak out freely and although it would be quite ridiculous to say that he was mainly guided by the opinions held by myself or by any other individual, he always listened

attentively to what we had to say, and when he rejected our opinions it was not because he was obstinately attached to his own view but because he had reasons which he held to be sufficient for thinking we were in the wrong."

If then the general tenor of Lord Northbrook's policy was unfavourable to the display of original talents or bold ideas in legislation and foreign policy, and if certain of those who had been all powerful with Lord Mayo failed to acquire the same influence with Lord Northbrook, the fact was not due to the overbearing disposition or autocratic temper which has been attributed to him in some quarters. The difference which undoubtedly existed between him and some of the more progressive spirits both at home and in India on some matters of Indian policy had, I believe, a quite different origin, and one which is indicated in an illuminating passage in one of Lord Northbrook's letters about the income tax. On "some fundamental points" he wrote to Sir George Grey that he did not agree with certain very able Anglo-Indian statesmen, "mainly as to the wisdom of governing India in accordance with the best judgment of a few men at the seat of Government, *which is their view;* or in accordance with the views of the local officers, and so far as we can ascertain them of the people themselves, *which is mine.*" If Lord Northbrook seemed to set aside, sometimes almost roughly, the maxims of abstract political or economic wisdom which came to him from the India Office on the one hand, and on the other the too ambitious schemes of able bureaucrats in India, he did so in obedience to principles which were not only at bottom liberal and even democratic, but which were also essential to the safe government, by a handful of Europeans, of hundreds of millions of Asiatics. In this constant endeavour to govern in sympathy with native public opinion, he showed a

degree of political imagination and even originality with which he is not usually credited. For it must be remembered that National Congresses and the whole political movement implied in their existence were the growth of a later day, and that he anticipated in some degree the coming developments by his attempts to supply himself, by personal consultation with leading natives and by careful observation of public opinion, with the checks which representative Government supplies at home. He won the confidence of the natives by going to the fountain head for his information and thinking for himself. His novel action in inquiring as to the discontent which he found in India in 1872 is a case in point. He was struck by the prevailing ignorance of native opinion and sentiment.

"I think," he wrote in 1872, "that we know very little about the feelings of the natives. There seems to be no way of getting at the real public opinion, if there is one at all. It is most likely that the way native public opinion is formed is from above, *e.g.* a head man in a village, the principal man of a caste, he who gives the tone to the rest below him. This would explain the reason why the income tax has created such discontent all over India, for it touched up all the people who had influence."

That a man of Lord Northbrook's somewhat unbending exterior should have succeeded in so fully winning the confidence of the natives is no small tribute to their power of perception. Men of Indian experience however will not be surprised by it. Strict impartiality and justice is probably the quality which the natives most respect, and "the just Northbrook" was the title he left behind in India. But they must also have felt the real kindliness which shone through his austere address. For he was in truth singularly devoid of that pride of race which leads

Europeans as a rule to look on natives as inferiors. The secret of his influence with them was that he was able to meet them, honestly and naturally, on the ground of common humanity and common citizenship.

"His social influence," wrote the *Hindoo Patriot* on the occasion of his resignation, "has been of the highest value in narrowing the gulf between the European and the native. . . . No Governor-General since the days of Lord William Bentinck showed a more generous desire to mix with the natives and raise them to the level of European society. Lord Northbrook felt that the ruler was also a man and a brother, and though naturally of a somewhat reserved temperament he knew how to mix with the people without compromising his dignity. He stretched his hand, with a kindness and grace which were deeply appreciated, to all whom he deemed worthy of it. There is no pride in him, no duplicity, no humbugging. As he thinks so he acts. His kindly feeling towards the people has as a matter of course had a most healthy influence upon the governing class. Even the most aristocratic and stiff-necked civilian does not now consider it *infra dig.* to speak to a native or to treat him as a fellow-man. Could there be a greater moral triumph than this? . . . We do not exaggerate when we say that the people who watch the springs of government feel as if they are going to lose a personal friend."

The Hon. W. Inglis, at a meeting held in Calcutta in April 1876 in honour of Lord Northbrook, said that the people of India had given their trust and confidence to him as they had never done before to any Governor-General or Viceroy.

"I have had many opportunities in conversation with natives from all parts of India of ascertaining the feelings

with which the people of India regard Lord Northbrook, and I have no hesitation in saying that no Governor-General or Viceroy, not even Lord Canning, has ever gained the confidence and the attachment of the people of this country to a greater degree than he has ; they believe firmly that in all that he has done, in all the measures he has carried through, he has been actuated solely by desire to promote the true interests of India and to secure the welfare the happiness and the prosperity of the people of this country."

Finally the *Times* in the obituary notice of November 16, 1904, summed up the evidence on this point in words which are well worth reproducing :—

"Though the acts of Lord Northbrook do not fill many pages in Indian history probably few Viceroys have left behind them kinder memories. The people knew by their strange oriental intuition that he was their friend. The masses knew of his efforts to save Bengal from the miseries of famine : the chiefs recognised in him a frank sincere Englishman who respected their privileges and dealt generously by their class. A monument placed by him at Lucknow in honour of the brave Indian soldiers who had stood firm against overwhelming odds and loyal against their own countrymen in the splendid defence of the Residency is for ever a monument to Lord Northbrook, who never failed to see the good and noble qualities of the Indians."

To the "caution, reserve and experience" which are said to have been the passports to Lord Northbrook's favour must therefore certainly be added sympathy with the natives. Take for instance his eulogy of Lord Hobart on his death as Governor of Madras : "A great loss to me for I felt great reliance upon him upon all big questions,

and he had great sympathy with the natives." I may quote also a passage from a letter to Lord Dufferin in 1884 which (though it rather anticipates matters) fully illustrates Lord Northbrook's attitude on native questions,—an attitude which secured for him a more legitimate popular regard and affection than that enjoyed by most Indian Viceroys, and which also, I venture to think, accounts in some degree for depreciatory comments in other quarters.

"The very troublesome Ilbert Bill has put Ripon out of touch with the non-official Anglo-Indians, and to some extent, I fear, with the Civil Service. You will not find it difficult to re-establish relations with both. But you will soon see that the Anglo-Indians know little or nothing of what is really India; and that the Civil Service with all their magnificent qualities have strongly ingrained in their minds, except some of the very best of them like Mountstuart Elphinstone and George Clerk of old, and Aitchison, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjaub now, that no one but an Englishman can do anything. So that, unless I am mistaken, you will find a good deal of quiet opposition to any efforts you may make to employ largely educated natives.

"This however is an absolute necessity as Natives acquire an education nearly equal to ours, go to our Universities and are called to our Bar; there must be serious discontent if we do not manage to satisfy their legitimate ambitions by giving them a fair share in the Government of their own country. Ripon's main lines of policy in these respects have my cordial support."

Lord Northbrook's genuine feeling for the natives of India, and his determination to guide himself by the wishes, so far as he could ascertain them, of the population at large, was the distinguishing mark of his administration; and one which both explains some paradoxes in his action

and raises his Viceroyalty far above the commonplace level which has sometimes been assigned to it. It was characteristic of him that he should have chosen for the most elaborate address he ever delivered upon India on a public occasion in England the subject of the Natives of India. This address, given in the Town Hall of Birmingham on October 29, 1880, which had for its object to place before his audience "some of the many traits of Indian character which would be likely to interest them, some of his own impressions of the Native Princes of India and of the different classes of Her Majesty's subjects, with whom he had been brought in contact," breathes throughout, whether in its historical touches, in its account of the native armies and of the agricultural and commercial classes, or in its description of individuals whom he had known, a spirit which he himself feared might sound like one of "monotonous panegyric." There are many passages in this address which I should like to quote ; his observations for instance on the qualifying and tempering influence of the people and Parliament of England on the despotic Government of India, but his summary of the conditions of sound Indian administration must suffice, describing as they do the principles upon which he endeavoured to act.

"Our dealings with the native princes must be strictly governed by the treaties and agreements which we have made with them ; we must show our sympathy with the nobler and educated classes and associate them with us as much as we can in the government of their country ; we must cherish and reward our native soldiers and officers ; we must rule the people with patience, remembering how far they are removed from ourselves in education ; and we must be cautious and deliberate in the introduction of

changes in their institutions and habits. Above all, we must keep India at peace."

There is nothing it will be said very original in all this, and when he added, "Never forget that it is our duty to govern India not for our own profit and advantage but for the benefit of the natives of India," Lord Northbrook was only enunciating a principle, the consistent application of which has made the administration of India perhaps the most splendid page in English history.

But Lord Northbrook's service to his country and to the Empire consisted not in enunciating principles, but in acting on them with whole-hearted devotion and enthusiasm. It is due to the belief and action of men like Lord Northbrook that these principles have come to seem like platitudes, and to no one more than to Lord Northbrook, to his practical example and to his influence with more than one generation of ruling Englishmen, is it due that they have been maintained as a living reality in the British government of subject races.

Lord Northbrook's ardent sympathy with natives, it may be added, conflicted in no way with his position as a great official or his belief in the beneficial character of the British rule. Englishmen who served him trusted him no less fully than the natives, and for the same reasons based on his qualities of common sense, devotion to duty, generosity and straightforwardness. His loyalty to all connected with the Government of India, from the Viceroy downwards, remained as strongly characteristic of his attitude in later years as his readiness to come forward on every occasion on which the interests of the native population required an advocate in this country. An amusing anecdote is told of the impatience with which on one occasion

at Chatsworth he listened to the diatribes of Mr. Bright on the supposed delinquencies of Indian officialism. There was probably no succeeding Viceroy with whom, as long as his life lasted, Lord Northbrook did not maintain a close correspondence, and when he died Lord Curzon, in whose Indian career he had always felt and shown the greatest interest, took occasion in the Legislative Council at Calcutta (December 16, 1904) to refer to his own obligations in this respect. His fine tribute to Lord Northbrook's memory may fitly close the present chapter. Atter referring to Lord Northbrook's unselfish devotion "to the administration of a great famine which kept him down in the plains of Bengal through an entire hot weather season" to "his uncommon financial ability" and to "his sympathy with the people of the country," Lord Curzon continued :—

"When he went back to England he filled a high office there for a period, but during the latter part of his life, although he was concerned with no great administrative charge, he always exercised no inconsiderable influence over the minds of his countrymen by reason of his high character and of his administrative capacity. Of all ex-Viceroys of India whom we have been fortunate enough to retain after they have left the service of India in India itself, Lord Northbrook struck me as the one who followed with the most active and insistent interest the progress of events in India. He was always ready to serve upon Royal Commissions or other inquiries, he was always ready to lift his voice in the House of Lords, and on both sets of occasions he interpreted his responsibilities as laying upon him the duty of defending the rights of India, and of seeing that no derogation was made from her position in the imperial partnership to which she had been committed. During my first term of office as Viceroy, I was honoured with Lord Northbrook's friendship and correspondence

throughout. It was a source of extreme gratification to me that he gave his approval to all the main acts of administration of the Government of India during that period. Indeed had he failed to do so, I should have felt doubtful of their propriety, so high was the conviction I had of his sagacity and prudence. The last time that I saw him was in the course of the summer when I was lying ill in London myself, and when he came into my room looking somewhat frail and shrunken but at the same time as alert and keen as ever, and when he strongly urged upon me the duty of coming back to India in order to carry out the remainder of the programme which I had set before myself. The last time I heard from him was only a few days before his death. I do not think that amid many distinguished Englishmen who have given their services to India, there has ever been a more chivalrous or high-minded champion of Indian rights than Lord Northbrook was."

CHAPTER III

AFGHANISTAN, EGYPT, NAVY

1876–1885

LORD NORTHBROOK remained in India for three months after the announcement of his resignation, occupied not only with much routine and ceremonial business but with the important questions on which controversy had arisen with the home government. On the 6th and 7th of March he journeyed to Allahabad to take leave of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, on which occasion a Chapter of the Star of India was held. A little later when the heat in Calcutta was becoming uncomfortable he wrote to Sir Algernon West that he was "going through the old business of sweeping up the rubbish before leaving," a process painfully familiar to former private secretaries like the writer and his friend. It then only remained to make arrangements for the reception and for the comfort of the incoming Viceroy, arrangements which Lord Lytton described as "perfect" and which included a thoughtful bequest, that of his French cook! The transfer of office was performed with the traditional formalities, and at one of the two banquets at which Lord Northbrook and Lord Lytton entertained one another, the latter took occasion to deliver a graceful and perspicacious eulogy of his predecessor, and of the "strength of purpose, the sobriety of judgment, the quick and strong grasp of detail, the straightforwardness, the unflinching firmness, the undeviating honesty of mind, the high superiority of character which have conspicuously

marked his public acts."[1] Lord Northbrook on his side wrote to the Duke of Argyll: "Lytton seems to me to be a very able man, and his speech on taking his seat has created a good impression." His confidence in the immediate future, however, was not increased by what he had gleaned in conversation of the probable tendencies of Lord Lytton's administration.

On the 15th of April Lord Northbrook accompanied by his family and by Major Evelyn Baring, Captain (now Colonel) Farmer (one of his A.D.C.'s) and Colonel Earle, embarked on the Indian troop-ship *Tenasserim* which had been placed at his disposal for his journey home.

"We had a very comfortable voyage to Brindisi," he wrote to Sir Algernon West (May 25, 1876). "No sea to speak of, and an agreeable run up to Candy to see Gregory. A charming little place to govern, Ceylon, which he does very well and is evidently popular with his subjects and enjoys making improvements everywhere. . . . I expect to have thoroughly shaken off the cares and dignities of office before I get many miles further on the way home, if I have not already. It is a great change to have nothing of greater consequence to settle than when to dine and what to go and see, a very good change too it must be for the strain was very great, especially at last."

To Sir George Grey he wrote about the same time from Brindisi :—

"I am going to spend a few days at Florence, Genoa and San Remo (where my friend Lear lives) on my way home, and expect to be in London on the 5th or 6th of June. I have written to the Heralds College to say that I wish to take the title of Northbrook and that if a second title is allowed it should be Viscount Baring. This seems to be the settle-

[1] I am indebted to the Dowager Lady Lytton for the notes of this speech.

ment of the question most agreeable to those most concerned. I suppose all the trouble about the Indian Tariff will be forgotten before I get home. The essential thing is already gained, viz. that Lord Salisbury has distinctly said he does not wish to put on fresh taxes for the purpose of reducing the customs duties. . . . If the order requiring a consultation by telegraph is withdrawn in cases of urgency, and it is made evident that no greater interference in financial questions is contemplated than has heretofore been the case, I shall be satisfied. . . . It is exceedingly annoying to be forced into these controversies, but I have done everything a man could honestly do to avoid them, and therefore I have nothing on my conscience in this matter. On looking back upon the last four years I am happy to feel satisfied that whatever defects there may have been in the administration of affairs, the state of feeling in India is decidedly more satisfactory than it was at the beginning of the time, and the object I had in view from the first by steady government to attain has been realised far more completely than I deserve or could have anticipated."

Lord Northbrook was fortunate in returning home when his political friends were out of office and when therefore no immediate call of a political character was likely to be made upon him. The strain of the last few years had been severe, and his private interests and the duties connected with his property and his position in the country had been long perforce neglected. Something will be said later on these points, but it may here be noted that it was not until his return from India that Lord Northbrook can properly be described as having entered on a continuous residence at Stratton, or as having had either the leisure or the means to attend fully to the duties and occupations of a country gentleman. He was now a much richer man than when he had left England owing to the inheritance which had come

THOMAS BARING, Esq., M.P.

(1862)

From a Drawing by George Richmond, R.A.

to him on the death of his uncle, Mr Thomas Baring, in 1873. He had succeeded not only to a share of Mr. Baring's large fortune, but also to a house in Hamilton Place, Piccadilly, and to what he probably valued more than anything else a great collection of pictures and *objets d'arts*. He was therefore able to organise his life both in London and at Stratton on the generous and dignified lines which his friends remember, and which accorded with the very considerable position he had now attained as a public man. The first thing he had to do was, in a very literal sense, to "set his house in order." Stratton was much in need of repair and several months had to be devoted to renovating it, to decorating it with many Indian trophies and treasures and with a number of the pictures from Norman Court—most of them of the English School, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Hogarth, Mulready, Landseer, Stanfield, Wilkie, Linnell, Bonnington, Crome, and D. Roberts—which had belonged to Mr. Thomas Baring.

The house had always contained some interesting family portraits and groups, notably the fine picture, painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence for the first Sir Francis, of himself his brother Mr. John Baring and his son-in-law Mr. Wall, as a pendant to the Reynolds group of his brother-in-law Dunning Lord Ashburton, Colonel Barré and Lord Shelburne, which hung in the dining-room at Stratton. Lord Northbrook added several pictures and later on the two noble Vandycks, the Earl of Newport and Henrietta Maria with her dwarf, Sir Jeffrey Hudson.[1]

While all this work was in progress, which was to stamp the house with the personality of its owner and make it a much more comfortable and attractive place than it had

[1] For some further account of Stratton and of the collection of pictures in London, see pp. 265-270.

been for very many years, Lord Northbrook and his daughter spent the autumn in country visits mostly in Scotland, where they stayed at Guisachan, at Invergarry with Mr. Ellice, and at other places. They also paid a visit to Sir George Grey at Falloden, and ended before Christmas with one to Sandringham, which the kindness of their Royal hosts made, as Lady Emma noted, especially pleasant and whence they returned as she said to go into "strict seclusion at Stratton for two months, hoping that the house would have advanced."

The chief public event of the autumn was a great banquet and reception organised in Lord Northbrook's honour by his old constituents at Falmouth, a rather remarkable testimony to his popularity considering that it was ten years since he had ceased to represent them in the House of Commons. He spoke on this occasion for an hour and a half mostly on the subject of India, an important speech foreshadowing similar attempts to interest the English people in their Eastern dependency. "You are the first Governor-General who has returned,"[1] Sir Louis Mallet wrote to him on his resignation of the Viceroyalty, "to take an active part in home affairs, and it is a happy thing for India that we shall henceforth have in our imperial councils a man of your authority and experience in the government of this great dependency." Lord Northbrook did not belie the expectation conveyed in these words. Many Viceroys have since returned to take a part in English public life, but none have displayed that constant and active interest in the welfare of India which was the most distinctive feature of Lord Northbrook's subsequent career. The immediate future was to be marked by much public controversy on

[1] Lords Cornwallis, Wellesley and Auckland however in earlier days had all held office at home after retiring from the Governor-Generalship.

Indian questions in which as we shall see he bore his part, and when he addressed another audience at Falmouth just three years later in a speech which reads like a very effective platform effort, it was to make a vigorous attack on the Afghan policy of the Conservative Government. In the same year in June (1879) he took the chair at a Cobden Club dinner, when he spoke of the "vitality of Cobden's opinions" and identified himself very clearly with the Liberal policy of the day, not only as regards free trade which meant, as he said, "the interests of the whole people as against any particular class," but also on the question of foreign and Indian affairs which so largely occupied the public mind.

For more than two years after Lord Northbrook's return home no considerable change took place in the position of the Afghan question, although the failure of Sir Lewis Pelly's mission and the break-up of the Peshawur conferences in 1876 had left the relations between the Amir and the Indian Government much more strained than before. Lord Northbrook did not disguise his opinion that this was the turning point in the negotiations, and that the action of the Indian Government, in withdrawing at this time the promises of protection which had been given to Shere Ali by Lord Lawrence, Lord Mayo and himself, completed his alienation and made it inevitable that he should begin to look to Russia for assistance against the threatened attempt of the Indian Government to carry out their policy of stationing British officers in Afghanistan by force.[1]

During this period Lord Northbrook exchanged friendly letters with Lord Lytton on various matters of Indian policy, some of which gave expression to the anxiety which

[1] See Lord Northbrook's Speech in the House of Lords, December 10, 1878.

he felt about Afghanistan. On October 25, 1877, Lord Lytton wrote :—

"I have no idea what are Lord Salisbury's present opinions upon frontier questions, but I am inclined to think that in all probability my own are not so different from yours as they have probably appeared to you. I am not responsible for all the absurd intentions with which I believe I am commonly credited in England, although I certainly cannot deny that the so-called masterly inactivity policy seems to me a triple misnomer, and open to the threefold objection that it has been neither masterly, inactive, or politic."

This was in answer to a letter in which Lord Northbrook had remarked that all he had heard of what had occurred since he had left India had "confirmed him in his strong adherence to the 'masterly inactivity' principles," and that, "hoping Lord Salisbury had modified his opinions, he had done all he could to avoid even the appearance of any attack upon him." . . .

"Nothing" he continued "can be further from my wish and intention than to make Indian questions party questions. I should act towards the present Government just as I should act if my own side was in office. . . . It will depend on what occurs whether there will be discussions on the meeting of Parliament next year. The active policy has some strong supporters, and your opinion will probably carry great weight, but on the other hand Lord Halifax, Lord Lawrence and the Duke of Argyll are strong the other way, and there will be considerable weight of authority in favour of the old lines. Unless I am much mistaken public opinion in England if it is roused at all will be that way, but it takes a good deal to rouse public opinion on such a matter."

A year later when the Afghan drama was visibly developing towards its appointed end Lord Northbrook's tone changes to one of active remonstrance on the "present most unfortunate position of affairs."

"I cannot," he wrote on October 17, 1878, "assent to the proposition that the present frontier of India is unsafe, or that it would be improved by the occupation of the extended line which you propose. But if I should be wrong on the theoretical question, I am satisfied that no such plea of urgent necessity for the safety of India can be established as would alone justify our establishing ourselves by force in Afghanistan."

This was the last of his letters to Lord Lytton, but it was not till two years later that a study of the Viceroy's Minutes led him to say: "I am beginning to believe that Salisbury was more sinned against than sinning, and that the Government of India pulled the Government at home into the Afghan scrape."

However this may be, the opportunity for carrying out the readjustment of the frontier desired by Lord Lytton and his advisers was furnished by the anti-Russian policy of Lord Beaconsfield's government in Europe. For it was the reception by the Amir of the Russian mission to Cabul in 1878 which led directly to the despatch of Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission and its repulse, and then to the successful military expedition ending in the flight of the Amir Shere Ali from his capital, and indirectly to the whole series of subsequent events. And the primary cause of the Russian mission was the desire to embarrass the British Government by creating a diversion on the Indian frontier as a reply to the despatch of Indian troops to Malta, and to British preparations for a possible war with Russia.

So great was Lord Northbrook's loyalty to what he once called the "most difficult government in the world," and so strong his conviction of the "injury that is done by treating the Government of India in the same spirit as that with which an opposition is apt to criticise a government at home" that in spite of his growing uneasiness he refrained from any public comment on Afghan affairs until the above-mentioned crisis had arisen and the outbreak of the war was imminent. He then spoke out, and in a closely reasoned speech at Winchester on November 11, 1878 he dealt with every aspect of the question, the action of Russia, the attitude of the Amir, the rectification of the North-West frontier and the obligation to respect the rights of Native Princes, in a spirit of serious protest against the doctrines which were about to be applied to the case of Afghanistan; scrupulously refraining however from criticism of the proceedings of Lord Lytton himself or of the other agents of the policy of the British Government. Next month came the publication of the despatches which involved Lord Northbrook in a controversy with the Secretary of State for India, Lord Cranbrook, respecting the conduct of the negotiations with the Amir (see above p. 106) in 1873.

Then followed the debate in the House of Lords on December 10, 1878 in which Lord Northbrook reviewed the transactions which had led up to the existing situation treating the Amirs' case with sympathy and insight; and declared that the war which had now begun "was unnecessary and might with the exercise of a little common prudence have been avoided."

It was a courageous declaration which even the oratory of Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury failed to traverse with any effect, and it does not seem to have brought

upon his head the accusation so familiar in similar circumstances that he was abetting the enemies of his country. Perhaps his dignified rebuke a few days earlier to the Duke of Somerset, who had ventured to suggest that the action of Lord Lawrence (of all men) in having joined the Afghan Committee was "unpatriotic," coupled with the fact that he spoke with an authority and knowledge to which none of his fellow peers could lay claim on this subject and with the courtesy and moderation which were habitual to him, inspired a wholesome respect. Later on indeed he referred to the criticism which had been made on the conduct of the liberal leaders in Parliament in a letter to Sir Ashley Eden (1880) :—

"Just look back," he wrote, "to what happened. A steady line of policy right or wrong had been followed for nearly forty years under successive administrations on both sides. All of a sudden my Lords Salisbury and Beaconsfield determine to change it altogether and despatch Lord Lytton loaded and primed to carry out their views. This brings them into trouble and war, and instead of taking their line boldly as they ought, they garble facts for the purpose of throwing the blame upon their predecessors and especially upon your humble servant. I was absolutely forced to expose them; and would you have had me, and those who thought with me, to have been silent when we thought the safety of India risked by a policy which for years we had always opposed?"

For the moment the operations of the Indian Government appeared to be fully successful, and when the occupation of Kandahar was effected and the Treaty of Gundamuk, which established the "rectification of the frontier" and provided for the appointment of a British resident at Cabul, had been concluded with Yakub Khan, the new Amir, the

prognostications of the opposition were for the time forgotten. Lord Northbrook however retained his own opinion of what had passed. He remained convinced of the extreme improbability of Russian intrigues having any effect on the people of Afghanistan. Nor was he reconciled to the new frontier policy. Speaking in the autumn of 1879 to his old constituents at Falmouth he gave a highly effective description of the Afghan mountains and proceeded :—

"If this is a scientific frontier, I fear the science upon which it rests is science falsely so called. We are told indeed by Lord Salisbury that we have strengthened, so that it is impregnable, the only assailable frontier of India. But Sir Henry Rawlinson expects we shall have to occupy Kandahar and urges the Government to watch steadily the advance of Russia towards a place in Persia called Alivard. In fact the acquisition of the new scientific frontier seems to have left us very much where we were before. Depend upon it the real security of India does not depend upon extension of territory but upon the good government of our Indian Empire, upon satisfying so far as we can the people of India that we have their welfare at heart, upon wise administration of the finances, and upon avoiding such unnecessary military expenditure as I fear must be occasioned by the recent policy of Her Majesty's Government."

It is impossible to imagine a greater contrast of ideals than that which is presented by these concluding words and the "fancy prospect" which Lord Lytton avowed to his friend Sir James Stephen that he had "painted on the blank wall of the Future, of bequeathing to India the supremacy of Central Asia and the revenues of a first-class Power."

It is equally impossible to imagine a more dramatic

vindication of the soundness of Lord Northbrook's ideal of "steady government" for India than was to be afforded in the next few months by the cruelly complete failure of the ambitious policy of his brilliant successor. On the 6th of September 1879 the news reached England of the massacre of the envoy Sir Louis Cavagnari and his suite who had been despatched to Cabul in pursuance of the arrangements under the recently concluded treaty. A second expedition became immediately necessary; the Amir, Yakub Khan, who had been recognised as ruler of Afghanistan by the Gundamuk treaty, was deposed, and the task of re-organising the country had to be undertaken afresh. It was in no spirit of panic that Lord Northbrook watched the breakdown of the new "forward" policy; still less is there a trace of ungenerous exultation at the fulfilment of his own anticipations. A deeper note runs through all his speeches and letters at this time. We have seen how chivalrous was his view of the duty owed to weaker and less civilised powers by the Indian Government, and how literal was his interpretation of the words of the Proclamation of 1858 laying down the great principles of justice in our dealings with native states, words which he had always at heart and which he had quoted again to his Winchester friends in this connection. It is no exaggeration to say that his moral sense was outraged by the failure of British and Indian statesmanship which was involved in the invasion and conquest of Afghanistan. It was this feeling combined of course with a conviction of the practical unwisdom, in view of both Indian and English public opinion, of anything like a policy of adventure which led him to write in June 1880: "If I were to say what I really think I could hardly find words to express my sorrow at the result of the last few years of Indian administration."

Capable as he was of the noble passion of moral indignation, I do not remember any other political issue in his career which caused him to give expression to it. On this occasion it certainly dominated his action, and gave an unwonted force to his condemnation of the policy to which he was opposed.[1]

The time was now approaching when Lord Northbrook was to be called on for more than criticism. Just a year before the dissolution of 1880 he remarked that "although upon home questions he would gladly have seen a conservative Government remain in power, yet that the management of foreign affairs and of Indian and Colonial affairs during the last two years had in his opinion been so bad that he would be very glad of any cause that might lead to a change." And upon Lord Beaconsfield's defeat at the polls in April 1880 he wrote: "I most heartily rejoiced at the result of the elections, not that I care for office myself but because I have become heartily sick of the style of government of the last six years both in respect of foreign politics and the affairs of India."

Lord Northbrook's political position at this time and his authoritative intervention in the Afghan controversy made it inevitable that he should be asked to join the liberal Cabinet. The summons was not long in coming, though, according to the strange tradition which governs these matters, he was not to serve in either of the posts for which his experience specially qualified him. He was in much apprehension of being pressed to go back to India

[1] See especially a speech in the House of Lords, February 20, 1880, in which Lord Northbrook analysed the causes, avoidable in his opinion, which had led to the fate of the Cavagnari mission and the disintegration of Afghanistan, and indicated the lines on which reconstruction should proceed. There is a characteristic tribute in this speech to the "gallantry of the native escort who gave their lives in the unavailing defence of the Residency."

EARL OF NORTHBROOK

(1880)

From a Photograph by the London Stereoscopic Co. Ltd.

and, as he told Sir Charles Aitchison, "it was a very near thing." But the story had better be given in the words of his own diary.

"I received[1] (at Stratton) a letter from Mr. Gladstone that he wished to see me as soon as possible, so I got on the cob and cantered to the station where I arrived just in time to catch the half-past nine train, and get to Harley Street (73) at half-past eleven. After I had sat some time with Mrs. Gladstone, he came in and said he was not going to ask me to go back to India, that Hartington would have the India Office and that he wished me to be First Lord of the Admiralty. I told him that he had relieved my mind very much about India, that I thought on the whole there was an advantage in having men who were not immediately concerned with recent events, that I would do my best to help Hartington, that I did not care about office, and that if his offer to me was intended to meet a claim I might be supposed to have rather than the best arrangement for the public service I was perfectly ready to leave the place for some one else. After some talk in which he satisfied me that I was really wanted I accepted. After, saw Hartington who seemed to be rather concerned as to whether he might not be blamed for throwing up the lead (that he wanted to do so before) after having fought the election. . . . Could not exactly make out whether H. was satisfied or not. Saw Lord Granville who was very civil about the help I could give him in the Lords. This by the way was urged upon me by Mr. Gladstone."

It is doubtless advantageous that a Cabinet should contain more than one man with an inside working knowledge of a particular department like that connected with the Government of India. The arrangement which placed Lord Northbrook at the Admiralty secured this advantage, and placed at the disposal of Lord Hartington and of the

[1] Note dated April 24, 1880.

new Viceroy, Lord Ripon, a colleague with expert knowledge and decided opinions, whose advice and assistance were all the more available by reason of his personal friendship with both these statesmen. Lord Northbrook indeed had long looked upon Lord Hartington as his natural leader, and he told a friend on this occasion that "no man on either side in politics had finer qualities for the work" which now devolved upon him.[1] With Lord Ripon his relations were from the first, as the correspondence shows, of the most intimate and indeed affectionate nature; he was always ready with advice whether about persons or policy, always at pains to mediate in the case of the misconceptions which must arise between the Government of India and the India Office or Ministers at home, to explain motives, to keep the Viceroy posted in political gossip, to cheer him in difficulties by generous messages of praise and encouragement.

His friendship with Lord Ripon was not the only personal link which enabled Lord Northbrook as a member of the Government from 1880 to 1885 to exercise considerable influence in Eastern politics and in foreign affairs. Major Evelyn Baring, now Earl of Cromer, had been appointed in 1880 Financial Member of the Viceroy's Council, and signalised his tenure of that post by vigorous reform and by at least one remarkable budget. He too was in constant correspondence with Lord Northbrook, and when in 1883 he entered upon the career in Egypt in which he was to win enduring fame, it was with

[1] Very shortly before his death the late Duke of Devonshire wrote to Lady Emma Crichton from Assouan saying that he hoped to be able to refer to his papers on the subject of Egypt, and adding, "Your father was one of my colleagues with whom I think I was most generally in agreement, and we usually acted together on the difficult questions with which almost from its formation the government of Mr. Gladstone of 1880 had to deal."

Lord Northbrook, who as the only minister with personal knowledge of the East was the natural adviser of the Government during the prolonged Egyptian crisis, that he communicated most fully and freely. Lord Cromer would be the first to acknowledge his indebtedness at this stage of his career to the powerful assistance and co-operation of his cousin and former chief, and Lord Northbrook must have derived the greatest advantage from the first-hand knowledge and sound advice which was thus always at his disposal during some momentous years. For his position in the Government was a somewhat peculiar one. In addition to his departmental labours as head of the Admiralty there was thrown upon him a great burden of work and responsibility in respect of at least two great branches of external policy. I do not gather that he was particularly effective in Cabinet discussions, but his letters and memoranda abundantly testify to the prominent part he took in the many critical decisions of the Government during this period as regards both India and Egypt. No better proof of this assertion could be produced than the letter which Mr. John Bright wrote to him on his retirement from the Government when orders were sent to bombard the forts at Alexandria.

"You speak most kindly of my course in the Cabinet. I can honestly return the friendly sentiments you have written. I have admired the wisdom with which you dealt with the questions connected with India, and have been sensible of the great value of the experience you have gained as Governor-General. I hope the Cabinet may long profit by it. To govern this Empire requires a wisdom and a moderation which it is difficult to secure."

The first question for discussion was the policy to be pursued in respect of Afghanistan, complicated by the

"hardly credible" miscalculation by the Indian Government of the cost of the war which came to light just at this time. Lord Lytton had indeed sufficiently indicated the course which he would have followed by the recognition of a new Amir of Cabul and the installation of another Shere Ali as Wali of the province of Kandahar, which was to be detached from the Cabul dominion and to remain under British protection if not actually in British occupation. "*Divide et impera*" had been his policy but little had been done to give effect to it, and the situation with which the new Government had to deal was in the highest degree critical and confused. No sooner had the new Amir been proclaimed (July 22, 1880) than the disaster of Maiwand and the investment of Kandahar by Ayub Khan, a new Afghan claimant, followed by the historic march of Sir Frederick Roberts from Cabul to Kandahar (August 11–31) and his defeat of Ayub, forced upon the Government the immediate reconsideration of the proposed settlement of the country. Lord Northbrook's whole weight was thrown on the side of the reversal of the Lytton policy, against which the new Government were already so fully committed. He was of opinion that the whole of Afghanistan should be under one ruler and that the Afghans were more likely to come to some settlement of their internal affairs if left to themselves than by means of British intervention.

"I have anticipated you," he wrote to Lord Ripon (October 1, 1880), "by having said that all your measures for the evacuation of Cabul and the relief of Kandahar by Roberts seemed to me to be wise, and their success all along the line has been glorious. All I now look forward to is that we should withdraw from the rest of Afghanistan and not keep an acre of Afghan soil for ourselves. This

would in my humble opinion be right and politic, and have the best effect not only in India but in Europe where our reputation for disinterestedness has suffered from the appropriation of Cyprus."

To another he urged that "nothing should be conceded to the opinion of men who have hitherto been proved by the sternest of facts to have been wrong in every prophecy they have made." He was for "reverting to the *status quo* and leaving Kandahar and Pishin alone." Lord Northbrook's advice went further than the Indian Government thought possible, for the districts of Pishin and Sibi up to the Afghan frontier were retained and formally incorporated as British territory in 1887. But on the main question, that of the abandonment of Kandahar, the decision of the Government was soon taken, and in November orders were given for the evacuation of that province which was to be handed over to the Amir of Cabul.

In the following spring the whole question was fully debated in both Houses and Lord Northbrook bore his part in defending the policy of the Government in the House of Lords, while Lord Hartington in the Commons wound up a very successful debate with one of the best speeches he ever delivered. The opposition was loud but half-hearted, and the famous phrases of Lord Beaconsfield's last public utterance seemed to recognise the wisdom of compromise and the uselessness of fighting against facts. "My Lords," he said, "the key of India is not Merv, or Herat, or Kandahar. The key of India is London. The majesty of sovereignty, the spirit and vigour of your Parliaments, the inexhaustible resources of a free an ingenious and a determined people, these are the keys of India!"

Whether or how far the increased facility of military access across the frontier, the chief outcome of the

Salisbury-Lytton policy, has conduced to the satisfactory relations which have since prevailed with Afghanistan must be left to the discussion, not untinged by political partisanship, of the rival schools of expert opinion upon frontier policy.

As regards the broad question of the relations of the Indian Government with Afghanistan, it is contended on the one hand that the Lawrence policy of complete non-interference had practically broken down before Lord Northbrook left India, and that the failure of his government to give sufficient guarantees to the Amir—guarantees such as those given to Abdur Rahman in 1880, to which the present friendly relations with Cabul are largely due—coupled with the dissatisfaction of the Afghans with the Seistan boundary settlement in 1872 and Lord Northbrook's own generous interference on behalf of Yakub Khan, had already alienated the Amir and furnished a too sufficient basis for Russian intrigue. Lord Northbrook's reply to this line of argument has been indicated. Even if it is conceded that he failed to realise how far matters had gone, the verdict of history will doubtless support his uncompromising refusal to force British envoys upon Afghanistan, the pivot upon which the whole question turns.

His recorded opinions, both upon the necessity of forbearance towards the Amir and upon the limits of the Russian danger, make it hardly doubtful that if he had been in office either at Calcutta or in London from 1876 onwards there would have been no Afghan War. There is little reason to suppose that a more plainly expressed decision to support the Amir, together with more sustained and determined action at St. Petersburg going to the length of declaring that there was a point at which England would fight—measures which Lord Northbrook would certainly

have supported and the second of which he continually urged—would not have proved sufficient to attain all the objects, even including the acquisition of a more "scientific" frontier, for which Lord Lytton's Government ran such risks and incurred such embarrassments, political and financial, both in England and India. The best justification after all for the course pursued by Lord Northbrook was the "confession of failure" which, as he expressed it on the fall of the Beaconsfield government, "lay in the simple fact that those most responsible for the war were urging in 1880 that we must now get out of Afghanistan at all hazards." The solution of the problem, it may be added, was only reached by a frank recognition of this necessity. Abdur Rahman having been wisely left to establish his power over the whole country, which he did by defeating his rival, the great controversy was closed by a return to the main lines of the traditional policy and by the gradual restoration of a strong independent and friendly Afghanistan. It is due to Lord Northbrook's reputation to emphasise the truth that not only was his foresight triumphantly vindicated by this result, but that it was his consistent and courageous statesmanship which mainly contributed to bring it about. But on this point Lord Cromer speaks with authority.

"Lord Northbrook was eminently a man who had the courage of his convictions. He showed at his best when he was defending a cause which, for the time being, seemed unpopular. This is what he did in connection with the change of policy in frontier matters which took place about the time he ceased to be Viceroy. Those who revere his memory have, I think, more reason to be proud of the line of conduct he pursued in respect to this matter than of any other political feature of his career, certainly of his Indian career. Although his views were at all times shared by a small minority of high Indian authorities who had paid

special attention to the subject, they were, as is well known, over-ruled. Few impartial persons will now, I think, be found who would not admit that he was a true prophet, or who would deny him the posthumous merit of having shown a more statesmanlike foresight than those who supported the counter policy which was actually carried out, with results very similar to those which he anticipated."

Lord Northbrook had never viewed with alarm the advance of Russia in Central Asia which he believed to be in the main conducive to the interests of civilisation. He had no sympathy with the anti-Russian ideas which had so largely inspired the Indian policy of Lord Beaconsfield's administration ; and he looked with apprehension on the rivalry which seemed to be driving the two countries into war and reprobated the dangerous talk which assumed it to be inevitable. Just before the fall of the conservative government he had specially alluded to the matter in the House of Lords (February 20, 1880).

"To any one who looks beyond the events of the moment there is something appalling in the position of the British and Russian Empires in Asia. These two gigantic forces which have hitherto moved each in its own sphere over countries which were formerly the prey of anarchy and rapine appear now by some fatal attraction to be about to meet in deadly conflict. It is the duty and the privilege of statesmen at the head of affairs to foresee and to avert such calamities."

Holding these views Lord Northbrook lost no time on the accession of the liberal government to power in raising the question of the "conclusion of a treaty with Russia on the lines of the Clarendon-Gortchakoff understanding regarding the lines of the Oxus and the Afghan frontier from Cherjui to Herat, *a treaty which might be published to*

the world. . . . If we give up the dreams of certain persons as to crumpling up the power of Russia in Central Asia by an advance from India, I do not see why we should not be on the best of terms with her." Lord Northbrook unfortunately found little or no support in the Cabinet or at the Foreign Office for his proposals at this time, and the opportunity passed away, not to recur until our own time, for a settlement on the broad and statesmanlike lines which he was among the first to suggest, and which he believed would powerfully tend towards the preservation of peace in Asia.

Lord Northbrook's influence upon Indian policy was not confined to frontier questions. The budget of 1882 was important and far-reaching, removing as it did the mass of the import duties including the cotton duties. Lord Northbrook agreed with Sir Evelyn Baring that the political arguments which had weighed so strongly with him in resisting the pressure of the India Office to abolish the cotton duties in 1875 now told in favour of a sweeping free trade course.[1] In view of Sir John Strachey's steps in this direction it had become in the highest degree desirable to put an end to the angry controversy between British and Indian interests, which any piecemeal dealing with the question would only further prolong. But Lord Northbrook's influence is discernible in the decision not to convert the License Tax into an Income Tax, a measure in favour of which strong arguments were advanced by

[1] In 1903 (July 10) he insisted strongly on the beneficial results shown by the increase of India's foreign trade which had followed this full adoption of a free trade policy. But he had meanwhile witnessed (in 1894) the restoration, for revenue purposes, of the tariff of 1875, with the important qualification of a countervailing excise duty on cotton fabrics manufactured at power mills in India. A revision of these duties in February 1896 exempted cotton yarns from duty and substituted for the 5 per cent. import duty on cotton goods a $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. ad valorem duty with a corresponding excise duty.

Sir Evelyn Baring, and which followed, though Lord Northbrook was never quite reconciled to it, a very few years later. The only other Indian subject to which allusion need be made is that of the Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill, known to history as "the Ilbert Bill." The object of this Bill was to remove a race distinction embodied in a compromise which had been agreed to, against the advice of some of the highest practical Indian authorities, by Sir J. F. Stephen when the Criminal Procedure Act of 1872 was passed. That Act while extending to Englishmen the jurisdiction of certain local Courts, disqualified native members of the Civil Service from exercising this jurisdiction. In accordance with the principle of the equality of all races before the law which had prevailed since 1833, which had been solemnly asserted by the Proclamation of 1858 and acted upon by successive Governors-General of India, Englishmen had long been made subject to all the Civil Courts of the country; and Lord Ripon's reform, a mere extension of this principle, and a small matter in itself, was entirely on the lines which had long been recognised as fundamental in Indian administration.

It is certain that none of those who were responsible for the measure anticipated the agitation which it was to create or would have introduced it if they had done so, least of all its immediate author, Sir Ashley Eden. The only warning note came, it is said, from Sir Henry Maine, then a member of the Indian Council in London, and his warning accidentally escaped notice. Lord Northbrook, who was fully alive to the fact that "men who really sympathise with the natives do not grow on the hedges in the official hierarchy," was himself surprised by the passion of panic and resentment which the measure aroused, and by the "abominable

feeling towards the natives," as he expressed it, which it revealed in the Anglo-Indian community.

There was indeed some cause for anxiety. Lord Ripon's well-known liberal tendencies and his supposed desire to "radicalise" the Government of India were already highly unpopular in certain sections of Anglo-Indian society, especially in Bengal and Calcutta ; and the possibility that an Englishman might be tried by a native official however well qualified was enough, aided by the incitements of the Anglo-Indian press and the *Times* newspaper in England, to send them entirely off their balance. However much the Government may have regretted the introduction of their Bill, it was impossible for them to allow themselves to be intimidated by a clamour partly interested and partly factitious, and they ended by pressing it through with modifications designed to remove all reasonable objections. The crisis was one to try the nerve of statesmen, and Lord Ripon excited the warm admiration of his friends by the calmness and temper with which he faced an almost unprecedented storm of obloquy. Lord Northbrook, though in no sense responsible for the introduction of the measure, showed equal courage and loyalty by the manner in which he came to the defence of the Indian Government ; and in speeches at Bristol ("The people at Bristol were very patient, but I must have bored them pretty considerably," he wrote to Sir E. Baring, Nov. 16, 1883) and later in the House of Lords, he argued their case with sincere conviction, and with a moderation of statement which was in striking contrast to the diatribes of Lord Ripon's opponents. He showed also his knowledge of his countrymen when he maintained that the outcry of London society did not represent the opinion of the country. What troubled him most in the whole unpleasant

incident, and he looked on the bad feeling produced by the agitation as a serious misfortune—"I abominate all excitement in India, with so much gunpowder lying about loose sparks are dangerous things"—was the prejudicial effect he feared it would have on Lord Ripon's much more important measures towards "self-government" in India. With these he constantly expressed the most complete sympathy. He was indeed early in the field with suggestions such as the following (September 1881):—

"I hope you will before long be able to do something which will show that you intend to associate the educated natives with the Government. Some plan of giving a certain number of them in each Presidency &c. the title of councillor and of consulting them upon all legislative measures affecting the country would be worth working out and considering. Men of good judgment were in favour of it in my time. If something in this direction is not done soon I expect there will be considerable discontent."

South Africa, Ireland, Egypt, were all names of ominous significance in the record of Mr. Gladstone's third administration, and each in turn had diverted public attention from India long before the controversy just referred to came into view. To discuss the South African tangle as the Government inherited it from their predecessors would be outside the scope of the present chapter, more especially as Lord Northbrook's papers contain very little reference to the subject. It should however be stated that he did not accept the common view, suggested by the fact that Majuba Hill was fought on February 27, 1881 and the armistice signed with Joubert on the 6th of March, that we "took a beating" and afterwards sat down and treated for peace. He held on the contrary "that negotiations for an

honourable settlement had been begun by the Boers and accepted by us, that these negotiations were jeopardised by our General exceeding his instructions, that Kruger at that time was acting in good faith and not treacherously, and that the only right course for the Government to pursue (though a naturally unpopular one) was to recognise the error of their General and to continue the negotiations as if that error had not been committed."[1] Nor is it necessary, for much the same reason, to attempt to cover well-worng round connected with the condition of Ireland or with the legislation, whether agrarian or coercive, arising out of that condition beyond noting that Lord Northbrook, differing in this respect from some later Unionist allies, does not seem to have found any serious difficulty in following Mr. Gladstone's lead on the Irish land question. Very early in the day his old chief, Lord Halifax, addressed to him a strong remonstrance, prompted by the introduction of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill (Ireland), the Hares and Rabbits Bill for England, and the Irish Land Bill in 1881, against the conduct of the Government whose action, he stated, in "interfering with the free action of individuals" was "contrary to every feeling and principle in which he had been brought up."

Arguments derived from abstract political or economic principle, as I have already had occasion to observe in dealing with Lord Northbrook's financial policy in India, had little, sometimes perhaps too little, weight with him as against those based on political expediency or necessity or what he deemed to be such ; and I do not think he was greatly disturbed by the theoretical objection to interference

[1] From a note furnished by Mr. S. H. Whitbread, M.P., at that time one of Lord Northbrook's private secretaries. It only professes to state the view held at the time by Lord Northbrook in justification of the policy pursued by Mr. Gladstone's ministry.

between landlord and tenant any more than he was by violent outcries from certain Irish landlord friends. He fell back on a principle of political, not economic, science when he remarked at the time: "The Irish landlords and tenants are at war over rents; therefore the State must settle the matter between them." And he was greatly impressed by the value of the actual experience gained in India towards the solution of the Irish problem, the similarity of the land tenures in Ireland and in the North-West (now the United) Provinces of India, and the fact that questions like the creation of rights of occupancy, the settlement of rents by government officers, and compensation for improvements, had presented no insuperable practical difficulties in a country far larger than Ireland.[1] It was inevitable that, holding such views as these, he should have been very unfavourably impressed by the partisan character of the discussion in the House of Lords which preceded their rejection of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill in 1880.

One other point of personal interest may be mentioned in this connection. It so happened that Lord Northbrook was giving a dinner, followed by a party, to the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh on the evening of the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Bourke in the Phœnix Park on the 6th May 1882, and it fell to his lot to assist in breaking the terrible news to some of Lord Frederick's nearest relations who were present at this entertainment. A world of painful emotion is concealed by the brief note in his diary: "At a little past eleven William Harcourt brought the news of F. Cavendish's murder, and told in my room upstairs F. Egerton, Lady Louisa and Hartington.

[1] Sir Edward Jenkinson, K.C.B., a cousin of Lord Northbrook, and his private secretary for a time at the Admiralty before he took up important duties under Lord Spencer in Ireland in 1882, is my authority for this observation.

Sent them home, and Mrs. Gladstone." It was the sort of crisis which brought out Lord Northbrook's best side; his power of deep sympathy, of quick decision and active helpfulness, and it was largely his own suggestion that deprived him of two of his ablest assistants at the Admiralty, Mr. (now Sir) George Trevelyan then Parliamentary Secretary, and Mr. (afterwards Sir Robert) Hamilton just appointed to the permanent secretaryship, who were at once selected for the honourable but arduous and perilous duty of replacing the murdured men. Mr. Hamilton left for Dublin at a few hours' notice to fill a post inferior in official rank to that which he had attained at the Admiralty; "as fine an instance of public spirit as I know," noted Lord Northbrook. Mr. Trevelyan gave up an office which, as he said, was "anyhow full of interest," but which "Lord Northbrook's kindness had made one of constant pleasure" and where he had looked upon himself as "the most fortunately placed man in the Government." Lord Northbrook was greatly indebted to Mr. Trevelyan for his able and successful representation of the Admiralty in the House of Commons and said so on more than one occasion. The cordial personal and official relations between them, and those which prevailed between Lord Northbrook and his naval colleagues had made the Admiralty Board a singularly harmonious body; while the official house to which Lord Northbrook had removed some of his favourite pictures, especially Dutch sea-pieces, from Hamilton Place and where he and Lady Emma Baring delighted in welcoming not only private friends but a wider circle of politicians, sailors and officials, became the pleasantest of social centres.

His way of life during the Parliamentary session was somewhat as follows. The day began with a morning ride

at ten with Lady Emma in Rotten Row, where he would frequently meet Lord Granville and his daughters, and where Lord Spencer and Lord Hartington would often join them. If there were any exhibition of pictures open he would be sure to find time to visit it. The rest of the morning was occupied by official business, but he always joined his daughter at luncheon if only for half-an-hour, and however busy he was he always made himself agreeable to the young people who were usually welcomed at that meal. He disliked dining out more than two or three times a week, but while he was at the Admiralty there were constant dinner parties at home and occasional evening parties and balls to be attended. Late in the season he gave quite small dinners, Mr. John Bright, Sir Henry (now Lord) James, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. John Morley and Lord Hartington were among those who would come straight from the House without dressing. He disliked spending Sunday in London, but when he could not get away to his fishing or to Stratton he would go to morning church and lunch out, perhaps with Lady Dorothy Nevill or his brother-in-law, Lord Alington ; and in the afternoon visit old friends such as Frances, Lady Waldegrave, Lady Ripon or Lady Strafford ; or else, what he always enjoyed, walk across the Regent's Park to the Zoological Gardens. A few weeks in August and September were usually spent at a place in the Highlands named Camesky in fishing, shooting and reading—his only real holiday in the year—and Stratton of course claimed the rest of his spare time. This active and fully occupied life suited him well, and until difficulties arose in the last year of Mr. Gladstone's administration his political career remained one of unclouded success, and seemed full of promise for the future.

It was as first Lord of the Admiralty that Lord North-

brook first came closely into touch with the series of questions arising out of the responsibilities which England had begun to assume towards Egypt. Just as the affairs of Ireland were emerging under Lord Spencer's courageous rule into comparative, if temporary, calm, Egypt took its place as the storm centre of English politics. Ever since the first military revolt headed by Arabi Pasha in September 1881 the internal condition of Egypt had been going from bad to worse, and it was becoming evident that either Great Britain or France, or both powers, would sooner or later be forced to take action in support of the Khedive's Government. The protracted and indecisive negotiations which preceded the single-handed intervention of Great Britain have been so authoritatively described in two recent works of first-rate historical value[1] that I need do no more than allude to the fact that Lord Northbrook's influence was thrown against the policy of joint occupation with France into which M. Gambetta strove to draw the British Cabinet; and that he preferred the alternative upon which Lord Granville fell back after the fall of M. Gambetta of intervention, if necessity arose, by Turkish troops (letters to Sir E. Baring, January 20 and June 2 and 16, 1882). When action could no longer be evaded, and orders were given for the bombardment of the forts at Alexandria, which took place on the 11th of July 1882, Lord Northbrook, as head of the Admiralty, became even more actively involved in the Egyptian policy of the Government, and he was largely concerned in the subsequent military operations under Sir

[1] Lord Fitzmaurice's "Life of Lord Granville," and "Modern Egypt" by the Earl of Cromer. The publication of the last-named work has fortunately enabled, and indeed compelled, me to restrict the observations in this chapter on the Egyptian policy of Mr. Gladstone's ministry within the narrowest limits, and I have therefore only dwelt on the passages in Lord Northbrook's correspondence with Lord Cromer and others which bring out the part he took on some momentous occasions during the Egyptian "crisis."

Garnet Wolseley which resulted in the rapid and brilliant success of Tel-el-Kebir[1] on September 13, and the final suppression of Arabi's insurrection.

In giving an account of these events before a popular audience in the autumn, Lord Northbrook dwelt with the interest and enthusiasm he always showed in naval and military operations on the admirable manner in which the navy, no less than the army, had performed the various duties which had devolved upon them, on the excellence of the arrangements by which 40,000 troops had been conveyed from England and from India, on the defence of Alexandria after the bombardment, on the occupation of the Canal, a very delicate operation, and on the excellent discipline of the sailors. He justified the British intervention in the following words :—

"As to the desire to annex or govern Egypt, I doubt if there is a responsible politician of any party who would wish to do one or the other. But we are not prepared to see Egypt in the hands of any other country, and we are not prepared to accept the responsibility of allowing Egypt to lapse into a state of anarchy considering the obligations which we have already contracted. With respect to the Suez Canal it is not our desire—we do not wish—to acquire the exclusive power over the Canal. But we are not prepared to allow Egypt to lapse into such a condition as to make it possible that the Suez Canal could be stopped at any time against British ships whether of peace or of war."

[1] "One thing I daresay those who are present here do not know, but I know it and can speak of it from my own knowledge, viz. that before Sir G. Wolseley left England, he placed his finger on the map of Egypt. I saw him do it myself, and on that place Tel-el-Kebir, and he said: 'That is the place where the action will be fought.' And a more extraordinary thing still, he said to a friend of mine in whom I have the utmost confidence, that the action would be fought on the 13th September, and it was fought on the 13th of September." (Speech at Liverpool, October 12.)

This utterance is very much what might have been expected from a member of a Cabinet confronted with the necessity for intervention, but committed more deeply than most governments have been against the extension of British liabilities abroad. Lord Northbrook however had, owing to his connection with India, followed events in Egypt more closely than most men, and his opportunity of doing so had been increased by the appointment of Sir Evelyn Baring first as Commissioner of the Debt at Cairo in 1877 and then as the British Controller-General in 1879. He therefore realised the "obligations" which we had already "contracted" in Egypt, and I have not observed in his correspondence at this time any forebodings, such as those expressed in 1877 by Mr. Gladstone, as to the increase of our imperial liabilities which intervention in Egypt however limited might entail upon this country. He had even, when in India, noted with approval Lord Beaconsfield's purchase of the Suez Canal shares, and he was convinced that the possession of India made it impossible for us to remain indifferent to the fate of Egypt. "If we had not India," he wrote to Lord Ripon (August 1882), "why should we be meddling in Egypt?" To Sir E. Baring (September 27, 1882) he wrote more fully in support (for once) of the decision of the British Government to charge some portion of the expense of the Indian contingent to India :—

"Even if India were a separate country she would lose more than England by the interruption of the Canal, for I cannot admit that the increase of our steam tonnage, &c., depends on the Canal. On the contrary, from a naval point of view, the Cape line is the best. . . . If India were a separate country would she not be vitally interested in the peace of Egypt? It would be a danger to her that there

should be a strong and hostile power there, and why should there not be? Is there anything unreasonable in the theory that an aggressive Mussulman Power might be developed if Arabi and men of his stamp were allowed to have the upper hand, or that some European nation might intervene as we have done, but without our pure motives and with a view to Eastern conquest? But as long as India remains under British rule the interests of England and of India in Egypt seem to me to go far beyond the traffic in the Canal, for the interests of both India and England demand that no other nation should be allowed to dominate Egypt."

On the other hand, Lord Northbrook was equally emphatic in his view that annexation was undesirable. "On the mere question of the interests of England," he wrote when Egyptian difficulties had more fully developed themselves, "the arguments against annexation seem to me to be very strong; the difficulty of governing a purely Mahommedan country, financial sacrifices necessary, suspicions of Europe, jealousy of France, &c."

He thought, as he once said, that Egypt was of "greater importance to India than Herat," but just as in India he had taken his stand against any increase of territory, so in this case his experience of government and his naturally sound and moderate judgment combined to make him very much averse to anything like a policy of imperial adventure. His efforts all through the Egyptian crisis were certainly directed, like those of Lord Cromer, to restricting to its necessary minimum the limits of England's responsibility for Egypt. He no doubt clung to the hope which inspired Lord Dufferin's famous report that a purely Egyptian Government might be so strengthened and guided as to render anything like direct British rule, much less annexation, unnecessary in order to secure such British or Indian

interests as might be involved. But he was not the man to deceive himself by words and phrases, and it was not long before the question of the soundness of the Egyptian finances reached a stage which made him realise that more decided action was necessary if disaster was to be avoided. To Lord Ripon on January 4, 1884, he wrote: "My impression is that we shall be forced to assume the direct government of Egypt for a fixed time, and I should like to take the bull by the horns and announce this at once. But probably other considerations will prevail and we shall drift into some position of discredit and possibly danger."

It would, however, be misleading to claim for Lord Northbrook a much greater degree of foresight than his colleagues as to the results of British intervention in Egypt, at all events in the earlier stages. It was not till many months had passed after the military operations to which allusion has been made that the real nature of the problem presented by the occupation of Egypt began to dawn upon the English Government. It is not unlikely that if it had not been for the military disaster in the Soudan the British occupation of Egypt might, as Lord Cromer suggests, have been brought to an end at an early period. But that event made it clear that it was impossible for the British Government, as they imagined in the earlier stages of their intervention, to escape from the responsibility of the decisions of the Egyptian Government by simply declining to advise (and to enforce their advice) in respect of those decisions. It followed that it was impossible for them to prevent Egypt from lapsing into a condition of anarchy, to obviate fatal mistakes in Egyptian foreign policy, to secure such an administration of Egyptian finance as would satisfy the requirements of jealous rival Powers, without accepting, for a time at all events and under whatever

specious disguise, the responsibility for governing the country. The only other logical alternative was withdrawal from any interference in the country, but this alternative, holding the views they did as to the importance of Egypt on the highway to India and considering the obligations they had incurred towards the native population, it was impossible for them to adopt, at all events after Tel-el-Kebir. Unable to accept fully either alternative, they were drawn on from one position to another by considerations of momentary expediency, of honour, and the like, with results which soon became patent to the world. There was never, in fact, a clearer instance of the truth of Mountstuart Elphinstone's famous remark: "Most mistakes in politics arise from ignorance of the plain maxim that it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be." But the completeness of the nemesis which attended the policy of drifting in the case of the Soudan has prevented any due perception of the extreme difficulty of the position in which Mr. Gladstone's Government were placed by their intervention at the time of Arabi's insurrection, or of the fact that in spite of the Soudan episode—for an episode it was—the foundations were all the time being laid upon which the future successful administration of Egypt was to be reared. That any logical or final solution of the Egyptian riddle was impracticable is proved by the whole course of subsequent events. No distinct choice of alternatives, no definition of ultimate aims, has perhaps even yet been ever adopted; but the logic of facts has made the British occupation continuous, and the diplomatic and administrative genius of Lord Cromer has rendered it on the one hand acceptable to Europe and on the other highly beneficial to Egypt, without that public assumption of supreme authority in the country which in earlier days

seemed to many to be inevitable. It is therefore not to be wondered at that the Government, even after they were in military occupation of the country, were slow in coming to any decision which might involve an assertion of practical control over the Egyptian Government. The question of the Soudan forced their hands and no doubt precipitated this solution ; and the various incidents connected with the evacuation of the Soudan involved them in a discredit which it is difficult not to feel was largely undeserved, and which would probably have been condoned or forgotten if the Nile expedition of 1884 had reached Khartoum a month, perhaps a week, earlier than it did. There was a good deal more than a mere attempt to excuse failure in Mr. Gladstone's plea that "the duties we had to discharge have been duties, I mean in Egypt and the Soudan, which it was impossible to discharge with the ordinary measure of credit and satisfaction, which were really beyond human strength. . . ." Certainly such duties, involving rapid and correct decisions on a series of military and strategical as well as political points, have not invariably upon other occasions proved to be within the competence of British Cabinets.

It was in the summer of 1883 that the first mistake was made in regard to the Soudan from which all the succeeding disasters proceeded. The impossibility for Egypt in her then state of military and financial weakness to maintain her hold on the Soudan, and the madness of attempting its reconquest, was clear to all the English authorities in Egypt ; but Lord Granville, while disavowing on behalf of the British Government all responsibility for the operations in the Soudan which had been undertaken by the Egyptian Government, decided that the best way to avoid that responsibility was to decline giving advice for or against the

proposed advance of General Hicks against the Darfur Mahdi. The result was the annihilation of Hicks and his army (November 5, 1883) and the recurrence of the question of the abandonment of the Soudan for the decision of Mr. Gladstone's Government in a more difficult form than before. There can be little doubt[1] that if Sir Evelyn Baring who took up his appointment as Consul-General at Cairo three days after General Hicks had started from Khartoum (on September 8, 1883) had been in charge a month or two sooner, that expedition, with all its momentous consequences, would never have started at all. He very quickly came to the conclusion that the abandonment of the Soudan was an "unavoidable though unpleasant necessity," and seized the occasion, as he tells us, on November 19, 1883 ("Modern Egypt," i. 373) "to draw the British Government out of the passive attitude they had previously adopted" by asking for instructions on the point. It was not until three weeks later, when in spite of the opinions of General Stephenson and Sir Evelyn Wood the Khedive's Government were unable to make up their minds to the inevitable course of abandonment, that the British Government, on Sir Evelyn Baring's advice, took the step (December 13, 1883) of formally recommending the "Ministers of the Khedive to abandon all territory south of Assouan or at least of Wadi Halfa." This telegram was, to a great extent, based on the following memorandum written by Lord Northbrook for his colleagues on the receipt of Sir Evelyn Baring's message of the 12th of December.

"This is a most difficult telegram to answer, and I write with the greatest diffidence and reserve.

"I think that it is beyond the strength of Egypt to hold Khartoum with all its consequences.

[1] "Modern Egypt," i. 363, 366, 899.

"I think it is beyond our power to do it.

"I think the Turk could not do it without ruin to the Ottoman Empire.

"It seems to be clearly out of the power of the Egyptian Government to pay for the cost of the operation, and neither the Turk or England would do it at their own expense.

"I think we have involved ourselves in responsibilities which make it necessary for us to defend Egypt—say from Wady Halfa, or whatever point may be decided—against the Mahdi if he advances. And, moreover, that it is our interest that the Red Sea Ports should be maintained in possession of the Egyptian Government. I do not see any overwhelming objection to the temporary garrisoning of the Red Sea Ports from India. They are safe for the present by our ships, but we could not keep them all the summer.

"Besides the main objections of the military difficulty and the financial impossibility, if the Turk was asked to assist, the Egyptian Government could not refuse to admit Turkish troops into Lower Egypt (which probably would under present conditions be the best base of operations), and this would make our position in Egypt untenable.

"I therefore see grave objections to all three alternatives, and prefer the deliberate abandonment of the attempt to govern the Soudan from Egypt, the withdrawal of Egyptian troops to such point as may be decided upon with our consent, coupled with the assurance that we will protect Egypt, for a specified time, within these limits.

"11/12. N."

Several long letters from Lord Northbrook to Sir Evelyn Baring discussing the various aspects of the question show how anxiously he considered it, but there was, in the opinion of all serious authorities, no possible alternative; and the only criticism which could fairly be made was that the decision had not been forced upon the Egyptian Government before the despatch of General Hicks' expedi-

tion. It was a critical decision, not only in a military but in a political sense, for it was in direct opposition to the wishes of the Egyptian Government; it involved the resignation of Chérif Pasha, the Khedive's Prime Minister, and therefore meant the assumption by the British Government of the authority to guide the policy of the Egyptian Government and the breakdown of the "theory of limited liability."

If however this decision was no less wise than necessary, history will hardly record the same verdict in the case of some of the subsequent steps in which Lord Northbrook was almost as largely concerned. The abandonment of the Soudan involved not only the necessity of protecting Egypt against a possible advance of the Mahdi beyond Wadi Halfa and of holding the Red Sea Ports from Suakim to Massowah which led to much fighting and loss of life and to several minor reverses, but also that of attempting the withdrawal of the Egyptian garrisons from Khartoum and other posts in the Eastern Soudan, an operation the difficulty of which, in spite of Sir Evelyn Baring's warning, was not sufficiently appreciated at home. It was this necessity which led to the despatch of General Gordon to the Soudan, a measure reluctantly accepted by Sir Evelyn Baring after two previous protests and one which every member of the Government heartily regretted before many weeks had passed; one of them, Lord Granville, when Gordon had departed from his original instructions, wisely urging his immediate recall. Yet it was a measure loudly demanded by the press and the public and by high authorities both in England and in Egypt, and it was determined upon, not indeed by the Cabinet as a whole, Lord Kimberley Lord Derby and the Prime Minister being notable absentees, but by four Ministers less likely to be carried away by a *coup de tête* than any who could easily be named. Lord Northbrook

who had had some previous acquaintance with Gordon and had been attracted by those aspects of his character which appealed to the public imagination, was not the least responsible of the four, though it was not until he had been converted by Gordon's attitude at this meeting that he came to the decision in favour of his employment. He described the eventful meeting of January 18, 1884, in a letter to Sir Evelyn Baring.[1]

"After I wrote I got a summons to go to the War Office to meet Chinese Gordon with Granville Hartington and Dilke. The upshot of the meeting was that he leaves by to-night's mail for Suakim to report on the best way of withdrawing garrisons, settling the country, and to perform such other duties as may be entrusted to him by the Khedive's Government through you. He will be under you and wishes it. . . . He has no doubt of being able to get on with you. He was very hopeful as to the state of affairs. Does not believe in the great power of the Mahdi. Does not think the tribes will go much beyond their own confines and does not see why the garrisons should not get off. He did not seem at all anxious to retain the Soudan; and agreed heartily to accept the policy of withdrawal."

A week later he wrote: "It seems to me that we are on the right track," and even on February 13, after the defeat of Baker Pasha in attempting to relieve Tokar which created a strong feeling against the Government, he maintained in a letter to Lord Ripon a characteristically optimist attitude. He thus commented on the discussions which had taken place in Parliament:—

"Salisbury in our conversation upon the address blamed us for scuttling out of the Soudan. Then they moved a

[1] Lord Cromer quotes this letter in "Modern Egypt," i. 429, note.

Vote of Censure in both Houses accusing us of vacillation instead of taking the only good ground for attack which was that the abandonment of the Soudan was right, but from our mismanagement it had been too long delayed and that thus we were responsible for the disasters—that we ought, in short, to have put our foot down long before against Chérif Pasha's Soudan policy. The result has been that the attacks of the opposition have signally failed. They were open to the obvious criticism not only in debate but in the country that after more than a year's consideration, with all the advantage of being wise after the event, they did not dare to say that at any one point in the history of the past, or in the position we have now to face, they could, as a party, put forward any line of policy which they themselves could declare ought to have been followed. . . . The situation is almost romantic, and profoundly interesting. Our main lines of policy seem to me to be clear and right; that we are satisfied that Egypt should no longer be hampered by the attempt to govern a piece of the world as large as Europe when she cannot find a Corporal's guard fit to fight from her own people, or provide a hundred thousand pounds to pay troops without plunging deeper into bankruptcy. On the other hand that we are not going to spend the lives of Englishmen or of natives of India in either supporting Egyptian rule in the Soudan or of taking half Africa for ourselves and trying to govern it. That this policy has been carried out in every particular as one would wish it, judging it with the light of events, is quite another thing; but this is not the question now. I cannot see under present circumstances anything which has not been done."

Up to this time Lord Northbrook retained his belief that General Gordon's own confidence in his success was justifiable, and that, in spite of the "flightiness" which was mixed with his "strong common sense," he was as his

letters to himself showed "in his heart quite in favour of our policy" and that "he had good cards to play." Within a month he had reached Khartoum, and received the fresh orders at Cairo from Sir Evelyn Baring which, while fully maintaining the original instructions and the policy of abandonment, gave a definitely executive character to his mission. Then came the gradual realisation by the heroic envoy of the true nature of his terrible task, and with it the fire of contradictory suggestions telegraphed home to bewildered Ministers who had built their hopes on his optimistic attitude in London.

Lord Cromer has given a most graphic description of the perplexity caused by General Gordon's telegrams from Khartoum, of his own efforts to "find out what General Gordon really wanted" and of his impression that "at the bottom of all General Gordon's contradictions there was an underlying vein of common sense." Even with his assistance however, it is not to be wondered at that the Government at home should very early in the day have felt themselves in the position of a ship without its rudder, so far as any guidance was to be derived from General Gordon's recommendations. "I have great confidence in his wisdom in action," wrote Lord Northbrook (February 29) to Sir E. Baring, "little in his steadiness in counsel." He summarised the advice received from him in the same letter:[1]—

"What a queer fellow Gordon is, and how rapidly he changes his mind.

(1) "Zebehr to be sent to Cyprus before Gordon arrives in Egypt.

(2) "Zebehr is to rule at Khartoum!

[1] Quoted in full in Lord Cromer's "Egypt," vol. i. pp. 492-494.

(1) "The Mahdi is a good kind of man whom Gordon is to visit quietly and settle affairs with.
(2) "The Mahdi is to be Emir of Kordofan.
(3) "The Mahdi is to be smashed up!
(1) "The Suakim Berber route is to be opened up and the Hadendowa tribe is to be set upon by the other tribes.
(2) "Suakim is to be left alone!"

A few words must be said about Lord Northbrook's attitude on the three questions raised in this comment. The idea of smashing the Mahdi involved the employment of foreign and therefore of British or Indian troops, and accordingly the reversal of the policy deliberately adopted by the British Government, as described in the words quoted above from the letter of February 13 to Lord Ripon. It did not, as he observed to Sir Evelyn Baring, "differ very much from Chérif Pasha's programme of keeping Khartoum on which you turned him out." In view of the fact demonstrated by Lord Cromer[1] that the policy of withdrawal was perfectly sound and was justified by subsequent events, it is clear that Lord Northbrook and the Government were right in refusing to go back from it either at this stage or upon the occasion of the fall of Khartoum.

The question of the employment of Zobeir Pasha, who was chiefly known in this country as having been intimately connected with the slave trade in the Soudan but who was a man of great influence energy and resolution, stands on a different footing, for it need not have committed the Government to any reversal of their declared policy.

The last word upon this proposal, as upon other aspects of the Gordon mission, has been spoken by Lord Cromer

[1] See *e.g.* "Modern Egypt," ii. pp. 31 and 32.

who has stated his belief "that the final catastrophe at Khartoum might possibly have been averted if Zobeir Pasha had been employed." Most people who study his pages will agree with him in this opinion, and sympathise with his repeated but fruitless efforts, after he had himself come round to the idea, to induce the Government to accede to General Gordon's request. Lord Northbrook however was of a different opinion—the first occasion on which he differed seriously from Lord Cromer—and took a strong line all through against the proposal. He recurs several times to the question in his letters.

"I don't think," he wrote (on March 12, 1884, to Sir E. Baring), "I ever remember a more difficult question upon its merits than this proposal of Gordon to use Zobeir. All the reason of the thing is against it, his antecedents, his ability, his blood feud with Gordon point him out as the man above all others who should be carefully kept out of the Soudan for the sake of Egypt, of Gordon, and of England who would be responsible for his employment. On the other hand are Gordon's strong opinions backed by Stewart and by you. Nubar I put on one side. I was much shaken by the last telegrams but against my reason and my instinct too. However it is clear enough, our House of Commons people say, that Zobeir's appointment will not be tolerated here. Gordon's slave trade proclamation was swallowed with a very wry face."

Again (on March 21, 1884):—

"You were quite right in pressing your view about Zobeir. The alternatives were very difficult, my impression is that we were right, and I feel more comfortable with Zobeir at Cairo than if he were at Khartoum. But whatever the real merits of the question were, it was *impossible* to send Zobeir. If we had authorised it we should have

been immediately beaten in the House of Commons where the feeling was very strong, led by W. E. Forster; and Salisbury had committed himself against it in the Lords the moment it was announced in the papers that we were going to do it."

Finally, nearly two years later, replying to the suggestion that as in the case of the despatch of General Gordon, so in that of the employment of Zobeir Pasha, the Government had been unduly influenced by public opinion, he wrote (January 13, 1886):—

"I believe that to have sent Zobeir would have been a gambler's cast, and that the probabilities were in favour of his acting against Gordon, and of his raising a power in the Soudan which would have been a greater danger to Egypt than there is now. I can say most positively that my own conclusion with every disposition to agree with you was very deliberately formed against Zobeir, and I am still of the same opinion."

This was at all events an honest opinion clearly expressed and maintained. It is probable enough that the Government did not realise that they were deciding against the one remaining chance of the success of General Gordon's mission. A different decision would certainly have altered the course of events; whether to the ultimate advantage of Egypt and the Soudan it is useless to speculate.

The necessary opposition between the man on the spot and the authorities at home comes out even more clearly in the correspondence between Sir Evelyn Baring and Lord Northbrook on the third and only remaining point on which a biographer of Lord Northbrook need touch, involving as it does the controversy as to the preparations for the relief of General Gordon at Khartoum. This was the

proposal put forward in the middle of March[1] by Sir Evelyn Baring to open the Suakim Berber route to Khartoum by the despatch of British or Indian troops. Here the Government were on much stronger ground in refusing to accede to the suggestion. The difference of opinion among the military authorities alone, as Lord Cromer admits,[2] justified their refusal, and Lord Northbrook entertained the strongest opinion against the employment of Indian troops, "from the certainty of the unpopularity of the service and the objection to bringing Mussulman troops in contact with Mussulman fanaticism." (To Sir E. Baring, March 21, 1884.) It is at least intelligible that the Government should at this period have declined seriously to consider the necessity of sending any military expedition to the relief of General Gordon, a necessity which Sir Evelyn Baring implored them to face at this time.

"Have you considered," wrote Lord Northbrook (in the above quoted letter), "how such a determination can be reconciled with our policy from the time when the destruction of Hicks' army was known? My impression of that policy is that we determined that neither Indian nor British troops should be sent to reconquer the Soudan. Then the Egyptian Government asked for an officer to help them to withdraw the garrisons. Did any one when Gordon was sent anticipate his support by an expedition? Certainly no such support was ever contemplated at the time. Are the circumstances such as to justify us in departing from this policy? I cannot see it. I cannot think it improbable that Gordon will be able to hold his own and come down when the Nile rises."

It is much easier for a commentator who is able to trace the sequence of events to its fatal close to put himself

[1] "Modern Egypt" i. 537, 899. [2] i. 543.

in the position of those on the spot who were clear-sighted enough to see that consistency must be brushed aside, and that the relief of General Gordon and Colonel Stewart had become from this moment, in Lord Cromer's words, "the most important point at issue,"[1] than in that of the Cabinet at home. But in criticising their action or inaction it must be borne in mind that for some months they had no certainty that it was not still in General Gordon's power, if he had wished to do so, to carry out his original instructions and come away. Lord Northbrook was clearly not convinced of his danger and even on July 25, 1884, wrote to Lord Ripon: "Gordon appears to be safe and stronger than he was, but we are very ignorant of his intentions." They entertained the belief on the other hand that he had lost sight of the main object of his instructions—the evacuation of the Soudan; that he thought chiefly of the subsidiary object of establishing some sort of settled government in the Soudan; that, in short, he wished to "smash up the Mahdi." "My own explanation of the failure," said Lord Northbrook afterwards (January 13, 1886), "is that instead of doing as we wished, viz. withdrawing the garrison of Khartoum, Gordon on his arrival hankered after the *ignis fatuus* of arranging for a settled government of a country which could not be settled excepting by a lengthened or possibly a permanent occupation in force." These two considerations go far to explain the prolonged indecision upon which Lord Cromer has commented in terms of severe but just condemnation.[2]

"The opposition," wrote Lord Northbrook to Lord Ripon on May 16, 1884 with reference to a fresh Vote of

[1] "Modern Egypt," i. 543.

[2] Lord Northbrook who had the opportunity of reading the portion of Lord Cromer's work which deals with the Soudan, himself concurred in the justice of this condemnation. See "Modern Egypt," i. 592.

Censure in the House of Commons, "had all the cards in their favour. We had nothing to say except that the particular decision we took at each particular point was either absolutely or relatively right. It is hard to fight against failure." The plea may perhaps be admitted; but the "succession of failures" of which he spoke, whether due or not to mistakes of judgment, flowed almost inevitably from one original error. "We made a terrible mistake," he admitted afterwards (January 13, 1886), "in having sent Gordon on the mission." No imputation of blame to Gordon himself is necessarily involved in this plain statement of the truth.

It would be unjust to Lord Northbrook's memory to assume from the extracts above given that he was a willing party to the delay in deciding upon the relief expedition which was caused by Mr. Gladstone's reluctance on this, as on other questions of policy connected with Egypt, to make up his mind to action. Lord Northbrook indeed in reviewing the whole matter in January 1886 did not attempt to dissociate himself from the action of the Government, though his words appear to admit that much avoidable delay did occur. "In the last of your criticisms," he wrote to Sir Evelyn Baring, "I am forced to agree. You gave us very distinct warnings in time that if Gordon was to be rescued an expedition would have to be sent, and no one regrets more than I do that the preparations were delayed from May till August."[1] But there is clear evidence in his letters as early as April that he was turning his mind, in spite of his original disinclination, to the possibility of a "rescue and retire" expedition by the Nile route, and the fact that he was in close touch with Lord Hartington,

[1] It does not however seem clear that an expedition by the Nile route was possible or was originally contemplated for an earlier period than "the autumn."

and with Sir Evelyn Baring who left Cairo for London on April 21 to attend the conference on the finances of Egypt, make it appear unlikely that he remained for many weeks in agreement with a policy of procrastination in this matter. There is, however, no actual record of the progress of Lord Northbrook's opinions during this period, though the members of his family clearly recall his impatience under the constant changes of plan and the delay in coming to a decision. The absence of any paper record is perhaps in itself significant. For Lord Northbrook, it may be here observed, was punctilious in the extreme as regarded his relations with his colleagues. No one who has had access to his confidential papers and correspondence can fail to be struck by their reticence on all Cabinet questions. One solitary extract indeed from his private diary, which contains but few political comments, throws a lurid light on the state of affairs in that body. "April 23, 1884. Cabinet 3 till 7. Great difference of opinion. Question of immediate steps for consideration of expenditure to support Gordon deferred. A message to him which will make him quite mad approved, written by Mr. Gladstone.[1] I think Government will probably break up. Decision not to send joint expedition to Berber or English troops to Korosko." But in all his correspondence, even with Sir Evelyn Baring, on matters of Egyptian controversy Cabinet decisions are treated as beyond question or discussion; there is hardly a hint of dissension, and still less anything like criticism of the conduct of a colleague or of the Prime Minister. The criticisms of his correspondent, it may be added, nearly always drew from him an energetic defence of their position. How far or up to what point his concurrence was due

[1] Presumably that printed in "Modern Egypt," i. 575.

to the loyalty of his character it is difficult to determine. But it may be observed that until his return from Egypt in November 1884 Lord Northbrook's own position in the Cabinet with most of his colleagues seems not to have been in any way difficult, and it is probable that up to that time no very serious strain had been put upon his naturally strong loyalty to his party and to the head of the Government. In December 1883 he was writing to Lord Ripon in rather a gloomy strain ending however: "But perhaps I am a bit on the growl and all will come right. Certainly the Tory speeches have not been very alarming, and as long as Mr. Gladstone remains as vigorous as he is now he is a tower of strength in the country and the House of Commons." Nearly a year later, when he had certainly no reason to be satisfied with his own treatment, he speaks with generous praise of the settlement of the franchise and redistribution quarrel as "a wonderful feat. Mr. Gladstone has conducted the negotiations with a temper and ability beyond all praise." By this loyalty of disposition and subordination of self Lord Northbrook does himself less than justice in his written remains. His own opinions and his own actions are unduly minimised, with the result that it is difficult for a biographer to give them their proper weight. Nothing indeed was less in his thoughts than the desire to justify himself at the expense of his colleagues. His single aim was to do the particular piece of work to which he had set his hand, to pull his oar in the boat, and the precise share of praise or blame which might fall to his lot was a matter of supreme indifference to him. No minister ever acted more consistently on the theory of Cabinet responsibility, and the ultimate provocation which put thoughts of resignation into the head of so staunch a colleague must have been strong indeed.

It was during the year 1884 that the finances of Egypt reached a crisis which necessitated negotiations with the great Powers. In the previous year the revenues assigned to the Debt produced so large a surplus that it was possible to reduce £800,000 of the capital, while the revenues assigned to administration fell short of the expenditure by twice that amount. Under the "Law of Liquidation" which plays so gloomy a part in the correspondence of ministers at this date, it was neither possible to divert the surplus from the revenues assigned to the Debt to meet administrative expenditure nor to raise the new loan which that expenditure imperatively demanded. Egypt in short, as Lord Northbrook observed, "had no credit left and no chance of paying her way without an alteration of the Law of Liquidation which could not be made without the assent of the great Powers." With a view to obtaining this assent a Conference met in London in the spring of 1884, the affairs of which occupied a great deal of Lord Northbrook's time and attention. Neither the English proposal nor the French proposal met with acceptance, the negotiations with France which necessarily raised the most delicate questions as to the position of Great Britain in Egypt broke down, and it was finally determined to ask Lord Northbrook to go to Egypt as a Special Commissioner "to report and advise Her Majesty's Government touching the counsel which it may be fitting to offer the Egyptian Government in the present situation of affairs in Egypt, and as to the measures which should be taken in connection with them." The Commission's special attention was to be directed to the "present exigencies of Egyptian finance."

"A bad day for me," Lord Northbrook prophetically noted in his journal on the day on which he was pressed at the Cabinet (August 2) to go to Egypt. For in reality

there was little room for a report, the facts were known, and what was wanted was, as Lord Cromer observes,[1] "the decision of character necessary to arrive at a definite conclusion." If Mr. Gladstone would not face the facts of the Egyptian situation there was little hope that any fresh reports would overcome his reluctance to do so. A better choice however could not have been made for the mission than Lord Northbrook.

"His high character, his wide administrative experience, the knowledge of the East which he had gained as Viceroy of India, his power of rapidly acquiring a mastery over complicated financial questions, and the breadth and statesmanlike nature of his views all pointed to him as exceptionally qualified to fulfil the duties entrusted to him. . . . Lord Northbrook possessed another and important qualification. He did not blind himself to facts. He had the courage of his opinions. When he had studied his facts and come to his conclusions he was in the habit of stating them without reference to whether they harmonised with any preconceived theories." [2]

The high standing of the Commissioner and the fact that Sir Evelyn Baring was associated with him raised considerable expectation in the public mind, irritated and perplexed by the ill success and vacillation which had latterly marked the progress of events in Egypt. The *Times* wrote somewhat grandiloquently of this "important step" and drew an "excellent omen from the spectacle of the two Barings, the Dioscuri of the East, repairing together to the distracted land of the Pharaohs." Mr. Gladstone wrote a friendly word of valediction commending the "generosity and courage which could alone have

[1] "Modern Egypt," ii. 367.
[2] Lord Cromer, "Modern Egypt," ii. 367–368.

induced" his colleague to undertake the mission, and adding "we are well satisfied that whatever is possible you will achieve; whatever judgment, experience, firmness, gentleness can do will be done." The ominous qualification "our task in Egypt generally may not unfairly be called an impossible task, and with the impossible no man can fairly contend," did not deter Lord Northbrook from throwing his whole energies into the task. After a fortnight's holiday at Camesky where he characteristically "worked tolerably hard at French" and a visit to Dalmeny (where he met Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone), he arrived with Sir Evelyn Baring, who had also cut short a much needed holiday, on the 10th September at Cairo. Not long afterwards he was writing to his sister as follows:—

"I am deeply interested with my work, and it becomes more and more exciting every day as I learn more about the people and their government, or rather misgovernment. What might seem to be the worst is in reality the best feature of the case. For where the tares are so bad there is room for improvement. With a most fertile country and a most industrious population, it must come round if there is only a decent government and peace.

"What I have done hitherto has succeeded beyond my expectations; we are really approaching something like a cordial understanding with the French which is for the settlement of Egypt and for the peace of Europe the thing most to be desired. I am going to start on Sunday night for Upper Egypt, not on a pleasure excursion, though I hope to enjoy the trip and see something of the ruins, but I have not a day to spare, and I must finish my report and get home by the beginning of November."

A very short survey of the financial situation led Lord Northbrook to advise the Egyptian Government to divert

certain sums from the service of the Debt, which already had sufficient to pay its coupons, to the practically bankrupt Treasury. It was an arbitrary measure protested against at once by the representatives of the Powers and later on condemned as illegal by the Mixed Tribunals, and which involved the Egyptian Government in some discredit and difficulty until the settlement of the Convention of London placed the financial arrangements on a sounder footing. Lord Northbrook defended it as an act of State "necessary to preserve the existence of Egypt" and prevent either "the collapse of the administration which must have followed if the army and officials had not been paid," or "the violation of the firmans if the Turkish tribute had not been paid." It is unnecessary to describe the incessant labour of travelling, interviewing Government officials and poring over official documents and accounts, which enabled Lord Northbrook in six short weeks to master all the main administrative and political aspects of the Egyptian problem, and to acquire in a marked degree the confidence of the Egyptian Government and of Nubar Pasha in particular. Before he left Egypt on October 25 he had settled on his report, which he wrote in the deck-house of H.M.S. *Iris* on the voyage back to Marseilles, and which he again modified in deference to expressions of disapproval from Mr. Gladstone and other ministers on his arrival in England. Eventually on November 20, 1884 he sent in two reports, one dealing with the financial situation, the other of a more general character. In the latter, though he did not attempt a solution of the problem of the Government of Egypt, he did not shrink from giving his opinion on the practical point upon which all else hinged, that of the British occupation of the country. The troops might before long

be reduced to about 4000 men, but "it is my duty," he said, "to express my decided opinion that it would not be safe or wise to fix any time for their entire withdrawal."

The financial proposals however were more than enough for the consideration of the Cabinet. They may be summarised in Lord Cromer's words.[1]

"(1) Adequate provision to be made for the improvement and extension of the system of irrigation; (2) a prospect of the abolition of the corvée; (3) the acquisition by the Egyptian Government of greater freedom in the matter of imposing taxes on foreigners; (4) the abolition of the dual administration of the Daira Domains and Railways; (5) a reduction of the land tax and of the taxes on the export and transit of produce; and (6) the issue of a loan of about £9,000,000, the interest of which was to be guaranteed by the British Government."

By this report Lord Northbrook definitely ranged himself on the side of single British control with all that it implied.

"The effect of the proposals I have made," he wrote in concluding his report, "will undoubtedly be to substitute the financial control of England for the international control which was proposed by the Conference; but the alteration seems to me to be an advantage both to the Egyptian and to the English Governments. Nor do I see what objections the other powers of Europe can entertain to this control being exercised by Great Britain, after the sacrifices which have been made in maintaining the peace and safety of Egypt, and the financial liability which has now to be undertaken."

On Lord Northbrook's arrival in London (November 2) it soon became evident that his proposals were too thorough-

[1] "Modern Egypt," ii. 370.

going to find favour with the Government and least of all with Mr. Gladstone, who, until the subject came before the Cabinet on the 19th November, had almost entirely avoided any personal communication with him about the report, while making it clear in his conversations with others that he was disappointed with it and disliked it. Other causes conspired to invest Lord Northbrook's return from the important mission which he had undertaken under strong pressure and from a sense of duty, with a disagreeable sense of disillusionment. His colleagues were engrossed in the franchise negotiations with the House of Lords in which Queen Victoria played so important a part; the public attention so far as Egypt was concerned was fixed on the progress of Lord Wolseley's Nile expedition towards Khartoum; and the newspapers were more eager to hear Lord Northbrook's justification of his naval policy than to examine the somewhat intricate details of his proposals about Egyptian finance. Thus it came about that his scheme never had a chance of acceptance or even of serious consideration. "In fact," Lord Northbrook wrote (December 8, 1884), "no one takes much interest in Egypt here and the business is looked upon as a troublesome affair which must be got through somehow, the most important thing being to avoid a parliamentary difficulty. I have not been successful in inducing Mr. Gladstone to take any interest in the business."

These words hardly represent fairly the attitude of many leading members of the Government who entertained the strongest objection on principle to Lord Northbrook's scheme on the ground that it constituted a direct breach of our pledges to the Powers, and who were opposed to the use of British credit for the benefit of the bondholder. At a meeting of the Cabinet within a week of his return he

noted: "Chamberlain on a piece of paper asked Dilke how many members of the House of Commons would support my proposals. Dilke answered o! I put on another piece of paper 'You won't have the pleasure of my company here much longer.' Dilke wrote under it 'I should be dreadfully sorry if I thought that were so. I can't think it.'" On the 19th when the Cabinet had assembled Mr. Gladstone, as he notes, "called me out in the little side room to the left, and told me that he could not propose my scheme to the House of Commons now although it was not impossible that we might come to it. 'I could not do it.' . . . Great doubts after the Cabinet whether I should not resign." Mr. Gladstone, on the following day, wrote a letter, to which Lord Northbrook replied that from its contents he felt sure some arrangement was possible, and that Mr. Gladstone might rely on his raising no unnecessary difficulties; but his opening question "Whether it was possible to execute such a sudden and entire *volte-face* before the Powers" brought into acute relief the fundamental difference between the two policies; and though much discussion followed on Mr. Childers' counter scheme in the hope of finding a compromise, the proposal for a loan with an English guarantee proved an insuperable objection. Whatever the real merit of this complicated question may have been it is certain that to a proud and sensitive man like Lord Northbrook the whole incident was intensely mortifying, and more than one expression of this feeling occurs in his notes and letters. For instance:—

"I must observe upon the extraordinary mode of proceeding which was followed in this proposal (Mr. Childers') having been sprung upon me at the Cabinet without any previous discussion, after the sacrifice I had made in undertaking the mission at Mr. Gladstone's earnest request, I may

say, pressure, when the Government was in a difficulty. In fact, ever since my return I was treated more like a member of the opposition than like a colleague whose only desire was to extricate the Government from a difficulty. Indeed if the negotiation with Lord Salisbury about franchise and redistribution were compared with the preliminary deliberations upon the Egyptian question, it would be found that he was treated with greater confidence in the former than I was in the latter. And I cannot accuse myself of not having done my best to meet Mr. Gladstone's views. Almost all my time had been occupied, notwithstanding the rapid approach of a naval discussion, in carrying out his suggestion as to the form of my report."

The evident consternation with which Lord Northbrook's proposal was received by his colleagues has a significance, apart from its effect upon Lord Northbrook's personal position, which has made it necessary to dwell upon the incident at some length. Every alternative solution of the Egyptian question, including annexation, had many times been the subject of consideration by individual members of the Government, but this was probably the only occasion on which they were invited by a moderate and influential member of their own body to grasp the nettle, and say "Yes" or "No" to proposals which if carried through would have given a "heavy blow" to the "internationalism which has been the bane of Egypt" and asserted in an unquestionable shape the paramount position of England as the protector of Egypt.[1] It would be difficult to assert, even in view of the success which owing to one man alone has attended other and less direct methods, that Lord Northbrook's scheme was in itself otherwise than wise and statesmanlike. But fresh from that country where his

[1] See Lord Cromer, "Modern Egypt," i. 371.

mission had raised the expectation that, whatever her pledges to the Powers, England was about to shoulder her responsibilities and extricate Egypt from a position of uncertainty which was paralysing all administration, he certainly under-rated the great international difficulties which the subsequent negotiations revealed, not only in the case of France, but in Prince Bismarck's unfriendly attitude; although his plan was based on giving a financial sop to the Powers in return for freedom of action for ourselves. What was even more important he failed to realise Mr. Gladstone's unwillingness to face the difficulties of the situation. What these difficulties were he recognised later on with his usual fairness, when he wrote to a sympathetic correspondent—a typical instance I may observe of the loyalty I have alluded to above—"Personally I need hardly say that I agree with you that it would have been far better if the Government had taken my report, and in regretting all the delay that has occurred, but the difficulties have been greater than you can understand and I cannot properly explain them without a breach of confidence." (January 29, 1885, to Sir E. Baring.) However this may be, he fought his battle stoutly, and more than once he would have resigned if he had not become aware that his retirement would also involve that of Lord Hartington and the consequent break-up of the Government. On January 9, 1885 he wrote to Lord Dufferin in India:—

"Our Egyptian troubles are culminating. The Cabinet, or rather Mr. Gladstone, would not accept my plan of settling the finances which you and I talked over, and proposed a plan to the Powers in which we gave little or nothing and asked a great deal. France is to give her answer to-morrow and unless it should turn out to be unexpectedly friendly, we shall be put into great diffi-

culties. . . . I should not be surprised if there should be irreconcilable difference in the Cabinet."

The last crisis, as he wrote long afterwards to Mr. John Morley (October 15, 1902), "was early in 1885"—(it was on the 21st of January)—"when Hartington, Childers and I by threatening resignation forced Mr. Gladstone to decline the international commission of inquiry proposed by France into Egyptian finances. Afterwards, an agreement was arrived at with France and I think all further trouble was prevented by the improvement of the Egyptian revenues under Cromer's management." The long struggle indeed which England had carried on for the financial salvation of Egypt resulted, in March 1885, in the signature of the London Convention which empowered Egypt to raise a loan of nine million sterling under an international guarantee and made the necessary modification in the Law of Liquidation; and on looking back Lord Northbrook may perhaps have felt that, though his mission was in the ordinary sense a failure, his efforts had at least provided one of the bases of a settlement which, such as it was, extricated Egypt from her most pressing financial difficulties, and made possible the extraordinary progress which the next few years were to witness.

It is needless to pursue the morbidly interesting subject of the ministerial threats of resignation which clouded the last months of Mr. Gladstone's administration. They became almost a matter of chaff between Lord Northbrook and his friends in the Cabinet. The demoralisation of the Government which followed upon the fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon, events so nearly fatal to their existence, gave occasion for fresh troubles connected with the question of the immediate policy to be pursued in

reference to the Soudan. Lord Northbrook supported the policy of withdrawal from Dongola, which after a period of painful hesitation and public clamour was wisely adopted.

"As to affairs generally," wrote Lord Northbrook, on March 13, 1885, "I thought, I will almost be mean enough to say hoped, that we should have been beaten on the Vote of Censure, but as we were not beaten it is probable we shall go on till the dissolution. The fact is, that if the House of Commons and the country have little confidence in us they have still less in Salisbury Northcote & Co. The feeling however against the continuance of fighting in the Soudan is getting very strong. Neither Egyptian nor Soudan expeditions have been popular among the working classes, but now the unpopularity is rapidly spreading to the 'upper ten' and even to the Tories. There was never a greater mistake made than that Salisbury should have pronounced for a prolonged occupation of the Soudan. Besides there is the very great probability of a war with Russia, which will strengthen the hands of those who want to get out of the Soudan. These considerations made us very unwilling to sanction Wolseley's proclamation and the wide responsibilities it assumed by calling the Soudanese 'rebels' and the war a 'revolt,' and by the announcement that the Queen was determined to stop the rebellion at its source 'and to wipe out all trace of it.' This went very far beyond anything we had ever engaged to do, and I am inclined to think beyond what it is in our power to do."

Egypt, indeed, was certainly in no better position to attempt to hold or reconquer any part of the Soudan than she had been a year before, and England was now confronted by the imminent danger of war with Russia over the Pendjeh incident. The new crisis had the effect of postponing the break-up of the Government. Resignations

THE ALHAMBRA, GRANADA, FROM THE GENERALIF GARDEN (1903)

From a Water-Colour Drawing by Lord Northbrook

were withheld, Lord Northbrook representing on at least one occasion to colleagues who were at variance on questions of Irish policy and finance and other matters that they were "bound to see the Russian business through." His appeal was all the more effective because, as he truthfully observed, he "had himself made some sacrifices on that account." How necessary such advice was, the following graphic entry in the diary reminds us: "Hartington wrote me a note, 'We are in for war after Mr. Gladstone's speech.' When I read it I thought it gave us the best chance of peace. Which will be right?"

The vote of credit which was the occasion of Mr. Gladstone's great speech thus referred to was also the cause of the latest of the attacks on Lord Northbrook's naval administration which had helped to discredit the Liberal Government during its later months. "What with the Navy and Egypt," Lord Northbrook had written before Christmas 1884, "I shall soon be the best abused man in England;" and a little later occurs the only other personal allusion I have noticed to the agitation: "Beaumont thinks the *Pall Mall* attacks are doing me a great deal of harm." However little Lord Northbrook noticed or cared about the personal aspect of the matter this was undoubtedly their effect, and it is therefore necessary to inquire what amount of justification there was in his conduct as First Lord of the Admiralty for the censure which public opinion at that time passed upon him. In one particular form, indeed, the impression made by the controversy still lingers, if only in the minds of political students. It is commonly believed, to quote the assertion as it was made by a prominent political opponent soon after

the fall of the Government, that whereas in December 1884 Lord Northbrook in response to the agitation in the press had announced a large increase of expenditure on the navy amounting to over £3,000,000, he had only five months before stated in the House of Lords that "so far from any large increase being necessary he was of opinion that if any such large increase were made he would have some difficulty in knowing how to dispose of it." The insinuation conveyed by this assertion was one which he felt deeply, involving as it did a charge of inconsistency, of weakness, and even of neglect in the performance of the duties of his high office. I do not know that steps were ever publicly and authoritatively taken to answer or contradict this statement, at all events until it was repeated three years later in a peculiarly offensive form by a member of the Conservative Government in a speech at Plymouth, and then only in a local newspaper. "I have not thought it worth while," he told an intimate friend on this occasion, "to take any notice of what has been said from time to time of the matter." But Lord Northbrook had a perfectly sound reply which he gave in a letter privately circulated to certain of those who had listened to the remarks quoted above. In that letter he showed, by quoting the words of his earlier speech (of July 10, 1884), that what he had deprecated was the expenditure which had been urged upon him of an unlimited amount of money on the

"present type of ships of war. It would," he thought, "be an extravagance to spend £2,000,000 of money in the construction of large ironclad ships. The great difficulty the Admiralty would have to contend with if they were granted £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 to-morrow *for the purpose referred to* would be to decide how they should

spend the money. . . . The difficulty of the present time was whether it was desirable to increase the number of these enormous ships of war; and that was a difficulty felt not only by our Admiralty but, as he knew, by those who had to conduct the naval affairs of other countries."

In this speech Lord Northbrook had given his reasons for such doubts which were, shortly, the difficulty of protecting these large vessels by armour-plating against the powerful new guns then in course of construction, and the development of the torpedo as a weapon of offence. "I was speaking," his letter continued, "as the whole passage in Hansard shows, about large armour-plated ships only, whereas you applied my remarks to the whole navy." The misrepresentation was patent though not altogether unnatural, nor was the charge of inconsistency borne out by the nature of the expenditure which was actually proposed in December. For out of that expenditure only one "large armour-plated ship" was provided for in addition to the three which had previously been decided on as part of the normal rate of progress for the year.

Not many statesmen in Lord Northbrook's position would have been content to defend themselves by means of a private communication of this kind. That he was so content is, I think, due in great part to his complete conviction of the soundness of the case in favour of his whole naval policy.

But the disregard of what might be said or thought of him was characteristic of the man, as was also the manner in which he steadfastly refrained from making any public comment on the shortcomings of his own predecessors at the Admiralty which would have been a tempting theme to the ordinary party politician. "Any one" (as he wrote later) "who tried to make out that the Liberal Government

starved the navy, and the Conservatives supported it, says what can be proved by figures to be exactly the reverse of the truth." He had not been long in office at the Admiralty before he wrote to one of his colleagues : "The late Government let the shipbuilding go down too much, and I am trying to set it right as well as I can without asking for any serious increase in the estimates" (October 7, 1881) ; and again : "I cannot say that I was satisfied with the rate of the iron shipbuilding as I found it, and I have given it a substantial push on. I have said nothing publicly for I do not wish to throw blame on my predecessor. . . . Fortunately we have kept the navy and army out of the arena of party controversy." (To Admiral Sir A. Milne, October 21, 1881.)

Finally in January 1882 he drew attention, when writing to Mr. Gladstone about the navy estimates, to the fact that on the change of Government "we found ourselves behind the French in our preparation for the provision of guns of the new types," and to the necessity of "increasing considerably" the sums to be provided for naval guns.

These extracts indicate the governing facts of the then existing naval situation, upon which the defence of Lord Northbrook's policy on its technical side must be based. The advance made during the last twenty years in the strength of the navy and in the corresponding expenditure has been so enormous that the work of the Board over which he presided has been completely overshadowed, and has indeed passed out of the memory of all but experts. The popular conception, so far as any recollection of it survives, is probably that they were content to drift along in contented apathy until roused by the popular clamour of the autumn of 1884. Whatever the truth about the navy may have been, the truth about Lord North-

brook's administration of it is widely different from this popular conception. Not only was the moment of his accession to office perhaps the most momentous in the whole modern history of the navy, but the evidence is clear that he and his Board thoroughly grasped the nature of the problem before them. The whole question of the design of ships of all classes and their armament was then in so experimental a stage that before any rapid advance could be made in the direction of strengthening the fleet fundamental principles of construction had to be debated and decided on. They found themselves "on the eve of a complete revolution in the armament of our ships and an entirely new departure in design." So wrote the late Admiral Colomb, the biographer of the brilliant and accomplished sailor, Sir Astley Cooper Key, whom Lord Northbrook was fortunate in finding already installed as First Sea Lord. This officer was peculiarly qualified to deal with the situation I have described, for as Admiral Colomb observes "it is probable that no naval lord who ever lived had more influence over this department of naval policy (construction) than he had." Lord Northbrook further strengthened his Board for the purpose in view by the appointment of the "Controller" to a seat on the Board, and by the creation of an additional civil lord to be possessed of "special mechanical and engineering knowledge as well as administrative experience," in the person of Mr. George Rendel of the firm of Sir William Armstrong & Co. The Board thus constituted was not slow in reaching "decisions of a binding and far-reaching character," decisions which may be briefly indicated.[1] In

[1] For a full account of the policy of Lord Northbrook's Admiralty Board the reader is referred to chapters xvii. and xviii. of the late Admiral Colomb's "Memoirs of Sir Cooper Key" (1898) from which I have taken the above details. Admiral

the "Admiral" class they laid down a type of battleship which was marked by the "definite parting with sail power" and by the "adoption of the long-barrelled breechloading rifled gun," and this was moreover the first occasion on which so many as "five first-class battleships of a definite type had been laid on the stocks together." The same bold and consistent ideas were adopted as regarded fast cruisers; and another widely adopted innovation was the design of the torpedo boat *Scout*, the "first recognition of the torpedo in a sea-going and sea-keeping ship as her primary and not her secondary armament." When it is added that the rate of construction was raised from under 8,000 tons per annum to over 12,000 at an increased cost of something like a million sterling a year; that whereas, when the Board came into office there was not a single breechloading gun of the new type in the service, there were 594 such guns available when they went out; and that machine guns were now made a definite part of the ship's armament having hitherto been almost unknown, it is clear that the explanation of the outcry raised against the Admiralty must be sought for in causes altogether outside the range of their actual work. For as Admiral Colomb observes:—

"It is impossible to resist the conclusion that the Board headed by Lord Northbrook and technically advised and nfluenced by Sir Cooper Key, which was commonly thought at the time and is still looked back on as being somewhat supine did, as a matter of fact, take more decided

Colomb acknowledges in the preface his indebtedness to Lord Northbrook "without whose aid it would have been difficult" to write these chapters. They may therefore be taken as affording a statement of the views of Lord Northbrook, who though he never published any justification of his own actions was doubtless glad of the opportunity of assisting in the vindication of the memory of his able coadjutor.

steps than perhaps any Board that had preceded it; and in the steps taken every Board has since been treading. . . . The whole policy of Lord Northbrook's Board was rapid advance in every proper direction."

While giving all possible credit, as Admiral Colomb does, to Lord Northbrook's expert advisers, it would be a great mistake to minimise his own share in the progress thus described—the share of the responsible head whose function it is to weigh the facts and decide upon the action to be taken. This function was one for which Lord Northbrook's marked administrative ability peculiarly fitted him. "In respect to decisions," writes Admiral Sir John Hopkins,[1] "he was very rapid, and he was equally quick in scribbling off a business letter clearly. . . . As an honest, fearless, upright, conscientious administrator at the Admiralty he was in the first flight, and we all felt that whatever his decision was it was the result of careful consideration and due conviction." It is a curious irony of circumstances which has deprived him of the credit of some of the best work of this kind he ever did.

With such a record behind him and conscious as he was that he had rather gone ahead of public opinion than lagged behind it, it is perhaps not to be wondered at that Lord Northbrook should at first have paid too little attention to the agitation started on the 15th of September 1884 by the publication in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, then under the editorship of Mr. Stead, of the first of a series of powerful articles on the "Truth about the Navy," followed a few days later by a letter by Mr. W. H. Smith in the *Times*. He was at that time in Egypt, and his first allusion to the subject is in a letter of October 3 to Sir Cooper Key:

[1] Private Secretary to Lord Northbrook at the Admiralty from 1881 to 1883 when the present Admiral Sir Lewis Beaumont succeeded him.

"As you know I do not greatly regret attacks upon me for not doing enough"; and a little later on: "My impression is that the best use to be made of the scare is to push on the fortifications of our coaling stations abroad and harbours at home, and in expediting the supply of naval guns. I don't like the game of beggar my neighbour with France in building big ships."

Letters from his colleagues at the Admiralty, notably from Mr. Campbell Bannerman, then Parliamentary Secretary and very highly appreciated by Lord Northbrook in that capacity, soon warned him of the formidable nature of the explosion; and in his absence the Government decided to meet the clamour by announcing a programme of expenditure to be produced at the close of the autumn session, a precipitate proceeding distinctly unfair to Lord Northbrook, which confirmed the impression that there had been a change of policy, and which he would himself, as he afterwards stated, not have recommended had he been in England. The necessity of preparing for this statement on his return, in the midst of his preoccupation with Egyptian finance, made the month of November the most anxious and harassing of his official life; and it was almost inevitable in the excited state of public feeling that Lord Northbrook's statement of December 4, 1884 should have been regarded as merely an inadequate concession to the clamour, and that Sir Cooper Key should have been blamed by the naval service for not having taken further advantage of the opportunity which the agitation had put into his hands. Although the Board used its best endeavours to produce a scheme of expenditure in accordance with the lines they were engaged in working out, it is very significant, and in itself a rather striking justification of the objections entertained both by

Lord Northbrook and Sir Cooper Key to asking for a very large lump sum for the navy, that none of the types of vessels built under this suddenly devised programme were afterwards followed.[1] Lord Northbrook's reply to a correspondent (Sir Edward Sullivan) who later on gave utterance to the prevailing feeling of uneasiness shows something of his real feeling with regard to the public panic.

"In fact the programme is being rather more than carried out. If some of our critics had used their energies six or seven years ago when the shipbuilding was let down too low, they would have been of more use than now when we have gradually remedied the deficiency. There was then some foundation for the apprehension that France might get too close to us, but during the last five years we have laid down two ironclads to every one the French have laid down, and we shall spend this year nearly double what the French spend on shipbuilding. If that is not enough to satisfy people I am sorry for it."

Lord Northbrook was not one of those who fly to the platform or rush into print on every occasion of an attack on his public action. His conduct all through this trying experience well exhibits, as Admiral Sir Lewis Beaumont has observed to me, "his high conception of duty, his unfaltering loyalty, his patience and forbearance, and the dignity with which he rose above all personal considerations, and accepted in silence the misunderstandings of his official acts." "Grant Duff's dictum 'the strong man waits' is generally true as regards all criticism of departments," wrote Lord Northbrook to his colleague, Sir Thomas (now Lord) Brassey, who was anxious to justify the Admiralty policy, "Parliament is the proper place to

[1] "Memoirs of Sir Cooper Key," p. 451.

meet it." Even in Parliament he did not often go out of his way to justify himself, and practically all he thought fit to say on this topic is contained in a speech in the House of Lords after the fall of the Government. The incoming Chancellor of the Exchequer had made an attack on Lord Northbrook's arrangements in connection with the vote of credit for the preparations against Russia, an attack of which one of Lord Northbrook's least emotional colleagues remarked "a more ungracious and unfair attack without notice was never made in Parliament." The incident however cannot be passed over quite so lightly. Although the circumstances were very exceptional and the finance of a vote of credit stands on a different footing from that of ordinary votes of Parliament, there was certainly a justification for the inquiry into the responsibility for the large excess on this vote which was entrusted to a Select Committee by the new Government. "Lord Northbrook," as the report stated, "in his evidence took much of the responsibility for the incompleteness of the official records of the transactions under the vote of credit upon himself," and there were special circumstances connected with *personnel* of the Admiralty at that time, besides the necessity for secrecy at a moment of crisis, which fully accounted for the technical insufficiency of financial control upon which the Committee animadverted. But no impartial critic would admit that mistakes were brought home personally to Lord Northbrook or a charge established of generally faulty administration. The affair however contributed to the unfavourable impression which the public had formed of his naval administration, coming as it did at a moment when popular feeling was running strongly against Mr. Gladstone's Government. In sending a copy of his House of Lords speech to Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff in the

September following Lord Northbrook commented as follows :—

"The first part you need not read, for it refers to a storm in a teapot blown up by Hicks Beach because he found out, or thought he had found out, that all the t's were not crossed or all the i's dotted by some of the departments in the Admiralty, when we were doing our utmost to prepare for a war with Russia. The whole thing of course is this ; that his Chancellor of the Exchequership did not find out quite as soon as he wished that in consequence of the negotiations dragging on we were obliged to spend half a million more than we should have spent if peace had been made a couple of months sooner. But the latter part deals with the policy of the Admiralty for the last five years and shows that we have done, just as you would wish, in securing the predominance of our Navy over France, or France in combination with any other Power. I am satisfied we had a sufficient number of ships building, but we had some leeway to make up. This is the substance of the thing ; from one reason or another I feel that what we have done has not been fully appreciated, but this is a small matter and is the usual fate of Administrations, especially of the Navy."

A few passages from this speech which fairly sum up his Admiralty policy may be here transcribed.

"As my connection with the Navy has come to an end, I can speak to-night with greater freedom than I have been able to do heretofore with regard to the policy of the late Government, and of the late Board of Admiralty, as to the building of ships. In 1880, when the late Government came into office, we found the naval supremacy of this country in respect to ships perfectly secure for the present, but we also found that, with regard to the future, matters were not so satisfactory because our powerful friend and

neighbour France, in the exercise of her undoubted right and for very good reasons, was building a great many armour-plated ships, and their number was greater than that of those we were building ourselves. We found, moreover, that France was superior to us in respect, not to the number or the armament, but to the speed of their cruisers. I do not say this with a desire to throw any blame upon the Board of Admiralty which preceded ours. It is impossible for me to say that they would not have pursued, if they had remained in office, exactly the same policy which we have pursued and with equal success, therefore I have no reason to blame them. I am simply stating facts ; this having been the state of the case, I might have come to Parliament with a story of the neglected state of the Navy under our predecessors, have been praised to the skies by all military papers, and have spent a large sum of money in ordering at once a great number of ships. I deliberately abstained from doing this. I did not wish to throw any blame on our predecessors, as I have said before ; but I had another and a stronger reason for not stating the case publicly then. I did not want to proclaim our condition to the world, for if I had done so we might have been placed in an awkward position as regards our future supremacy at sea, for it would have been quite competent for our friends on the other side of the Channel to say, 'We now know in what state the English Navy is, and we have only to increase our expenditure to keep up our strength to theirs.' That would have defeated the object I had in view.

"In order that your Lordships may feel satisfied that this description of our policy is not an afterthought, or invented for the occasion, I may mention that in 1881, when I was asked by the Royal Commission upon the defences of the Colonies and Trade to appear before them, I gave my opinion respecting the general condition of the Navy ; and I stated then frankly the circumstances of the case, and explained that the policy of the Admiralty was

to increase very considerably the number of armour-plated ships and of fast cruisers. My lords, that has been done steadily and gradually since. Year by year, as members of the other House know very well, the money spent upon shipbuilding has been increased, and year by year we have laid down more armour-plated ships and more fast cruisers; and when public opinion was roused upon this subject, I am bound to say long after the Board of Admiralty were aware of the facts and were engaged in dealing practically with them, we gladly took advantage of the feeling for the purpose of adding considerably to the rate of expenditure. As I was satisfied by carefully watching the progress made in the construction of ships of war abroad that there was no immediate risk, I believe we were right in moving gradually and in accordance with public opinion. In my view, in a country where the Government depends upon the support of the House of Parliament elected by the people, it is not safe for any Administration to undertake large expenditure in advance of the general feeling of the people."

After a short statement of the results achieved in the building of armour-plated ships and cruisers Lord Northbrook concluded: "I hope these remarks will satisfy my noble friend that our policy has been consistent throughout. We have done quietly, without talking about it, what we intended to do five years ago, and we only took advantage of public opinion to increase the rate of our progress."

Among the beneficial reforms for which Lord Northbrook was personally responsible was the creation of the beginnings of an Intelligence Department at the Admiralty, the abolition of corporal punishment in the Navy, and certain improvements in the position of petty officers and seamen such as a revision of the scale of pay and allowances, and changes in the dietary in Her Majesty's ships

which among other things gave greater encouragement to sobriety.

It may be added that in its executive capacity the Navy under Lord Northbrook's rule successfully stood the test of more practical work than often falls to its lot, in connection for instance with the bombardment of Alexandria, the transport of troops, the guardianship of the Red Sea ports and the measures taken on the occasion of the Russian scare, which included the occupation of Port Hamilton in Corea and its junction by cable with the mainland and Hong Kong, and the shadowing of Russian warships all over the world.

Lord Northbrook was thoroughly trusted by the senior members of the Service. His correspondence with Admirals on active service shows both him and them in a pleasant and favourable light, and one of them when the end came wrote: "I have admired the honesty with which your patronage has been administered, reminding me much of the years 1849–1851 when the First Lord of those days" (Lord Northbrook's father as it happened) "for the first time boldly announced that the officers must rise by merit." Between the First Lord and the First Sea Lord it is unnecessary to say that the relations were those of mutual confidence and esteem, and that Lord Northbrook had the highest opinion of Sir Cooper Key's ability, open-mindedness and political judgment. The Naval Lords generally supported him with the utmost loyalty "because they knew," as he said, "that he was determined in general accordance with their views to insure the naval supremacy of the country."

Friendly critics might have described the situation by saying that Sir Cooper Key's loyalty to Lord Northbrook and Lord Northbrook's loyalty to Mr. Gladstone kept them

to too modest and moderate programmes. But Lord Northbrook's words hardly support this idea at all events as regards his own attitude. If he was incapable of sheltering himself behind the authority of experts, he was equally incapable of shifting the responsibility for "starving" the Navy to the shoulders of his financial colleagues. In the speech from which I have already quoted he specially stated, in reply to certain insinuations which had been thrown out by the Duke of Argyll in debate, that it was "quite a mistake" to suppose that there was any disagreement between members of the late Government upon the question of the naval supremacy of Great Britain.

"With Mr. Childers," he remarked, "I have been in constant communication during the past five years and we are quite in accord on the subject; and I can also assure my noble friend that there was never any such disagreement between Mr. Gladstone and myself. On no occasion has Mr. Gladstone declined to accede to the proposals which I considered it my duty to make on the subject of increased expenditure upon the Navy."

We may be sure that this was no mere formal or parliamentary assertion. As regards public money Lord Northbrook was indeed, as he sometimes half apologetically remarked, of an "economical turn of mind," and he did not "look" (as he said) "with any satisfaction upon large military and naval expenditure." At the height of the agitation he had observed in connection with the preparation of the Navy estimates, "I am much afraid that there is a tendency to spend more all round owing to the recent discussion, and it is our business to see that we do not ask for more money than is really required." Such a spirit is not long maintained in a department which is

given its head in the matter of spending, and in the reaction which followed the era of Gladstonian thrift efficiency came to be too often identified in the public mind with mere profusion. Lord Northbrook, it is clear, would have fought with all his strength against any such tendency, but it need not be supposed that either he or his Board would not have been glad to have had command of larger resources from the beginning. It remains true however that they took a more sober and less imaginative view of the naval requirements of the day than their critics; that they were more or less content to cut their coat according to their cloth; that they were averse to presuming beyond a certain point on the willingness or the capacity of the taxpayers. Lord Northbrook, it may be admitted, was unfortunate in having presided at the Admiralty at a moment of transition. Without knowing it he stood on the threshold of an era of expansion in imperial affairs and a corresponding change in public sentiment which necessitated, or at all events was accompanied by, a hitherto undreamed of growth of naval and military expenditure. No other explanation is required of the disparagement from which his naval administration has suffered. As regards the Navy the modest annual outlay which had been thought, and indeed had so far proved, amply sufficient not only for the protection but also for the naval supremacy of the country was suddenly discovered to be dangerously inadequate. Lord Northbrook's three millions turned out to be only a prelude to further naval programmes, to Imperial Defence Acts and Naval Defence Acts (considered necessary at that time to ensure continuity of policy), to annual increases in the estimates and enormous supplementary estimates; all enthusiastically endorsed by the public opinion of the

day. "Almost untold millions," as Sir Michael Hicks Beach expressed it when Chancellor of the Exchequer, were lavished on the Navy during the following fifteen years. The result was an overwhelmingly strong fleet, the value of which as a guarantee of peace has been incontestably proved in recent years. Lord Northbrook doubtless shared the satisfaction of his countrymen at this signal recognition of the vital necessity of naval superiority for the defence and indeed for the very existence of the British Empire. But his original objection to increasing the strength of the Navy by means of great building programmes was perfectly sound. He was opposed to it not only because of the rapid evolution of the art of naval construction which made a large increase of vessels liable to become obsolete in a short space of time a doubtful and extravagant proceeding, but also because of the stimulus which a widely advertised programme gives to shipbuilding in other countries. The event did not belie this anticipation on either head. The "scrapping" of comparatively new vessels has been a noticeable accompaniment of immense building operations, and it is at least a question how far the formidable growth of foreign navies has been the cause and how far the effect of our own vast expenditure in the race for supremacy.

"The introduction of 'programmes,'" he wrote (December 12, 1897) to Sir Nathaniel Barnaby, "does not appear to be in all respects a desirable change. Although I had to introduce the first programme, the decision to have one was arrived at contrary to my personal opinion when I was in Egypt. They force our shipbuilding operations on the special attention of foreign nations, and they have led, certainly in one case, to corresponding increases abroad. It may be replied that ships can't be built without foreign

governments being aware of the fact, so that the announcement of a 'programme' makes no real difference. I admit that foreign governments must know what you are doing, programme or no programme; but this is by no means the same thing as the announcement to the public of a grand scheme. This acts upon public opinion abroad in a much more effective manner than any information from experts could. Moreover the tendency of programmes is to make people think we are safe, at any rate for a certain number of years, and may thus prevent that careful watch over the shipbuilding action of our rivals which is necessary if our naval supremacy is to be maintained. You doubtless remember an instance of this which occurred after our time. On the other hand there are some financial advantages in the system of 'programmes'; and what is more to the point, I doubt if the public at home would have been content with a more quiet, and in my judgment a more sensible, method of procedure."

It would, as I have suggested, be incorrect to give the impression that Lord Northbrook watched the great increase in the strength of the Navy or in the expenditure upon it which took place in late years with anything but satisfaction. He did not allow his views on naval policy to be prejudiced by what had occurred in his time. As he once remarked to a friend, "it don't signify what has been done; the real question is whether we are, or are not, strong enough at sea now." The game of "beggar my neighbour" once entered on, the only safe course for this country was to show unmistakably her power to distance all competitors. Accordingly Lord Northbrook gave his hearty support to Lord George Hamilton's measures, approving of the expenditure proposed by him in 1889 of £21,000,000 on shipbuilding to be spread over five years, a "not unreasonable amount in itself" and "not more than adequate for

the demands of the service," and he further lent the weight of his authority to the proposal to set aside the practice of surrendering unspent balances to the Exchequer at the close of the financial year, which he described as "rather the pedantry of finance than adherence to the real principles of financial control or financial examination." When Lord Spencer went to the Admiralty he had ceased to follow naval affairs in any great detail, but in 1893, while repeating his doubts as to the advisability of advertising any grand scheme of naval construction lasting over a great number of years, he spoke strongly in the House of Lords in favour of increased efforts to maintain the naval supremacy of the country.

By this time however the controversy with which we have been specially concerned was dead; Lord Northbrook was in political alliance with the party which had criticised his naval policy, and Lord Salisbury seized the occasion to make a generous recantation of the attacks which his followers had indulged in some years before.

"One thing," he said,[1] "I should wish to say with regard to history. I think it is only fair to say that the first person who awoke Parliament and the country from the torpor into which we had fallen in respect to naval construction was the noble Lord who has just sat down. It was Lord Northbrook's administration undoubtedly, I perfectly well remember, which first called attention to the necessity of a new and better state of things."

[1] Parliamentary Debates, 1893, vol. 12 (4th series), p. 1035.

CHAPTER IV

HOME RULE—COUNTY WORK—CLOSING YEARS

1885–1904

LORD NORTHBROOK'S feeling at the fall of the Government of which he was a member was chiefly one of relief. The experience of the last year or two had taught him that, as he sometimes used to observe, it is much easier to get into a government than to get out of it again.

"I know nothing," he wrote to Lord Dufferin in India on June 12, 1885, "in fact no one knows anything more about Government prospects than that we are out and Salisbury is at Balmoral. If it had not been for his 'swindler bankrupt' illustration[1] and for Randolph Churchill's pronouncements against continuing the Crimes Act, I think the Conservatives had a very good chance of serving the country well. Oh, this constant extra Parliamentary oratory! It is ruining us all. Bismarck may come out of the sulks and Egypt be settled somehow, but the Crimes Act is the difficulty. If it were not for Randolph Churchill I think they might continue it for a year. This we could not do properly, but they are in different circumstances and I think they might. . . . Personally I am by no means sorry to be out of it, for I have been very much disturbed by a great deal that we have recently done, and omitted to do, as to Egypt."

Most of his colleagues, though some for different reasons, shared his feeling and after a meeting of the dying Cabinet,

[1] An allusion to language used by Lord Salisbury about Russia.

held at a moment when the negotiations for bringing in Lord Salisbury to carry on till the dissolution seemed likely to break down, Lord Northbrook rather sardonically noted that "Mr. Gladstone was the only man who really looked pleased at the prospect of returning to office." It may be questioned whether some present on that occasion, when in after years they realised the effect upon their party fortunes of having placed in office (for a few months only as they fondly imagined) a seemingly impotent opposition, may not have discovered some wisdom in the attitude of the "old Parliamentary hand."

Lord Northbrook's dissatisfaction at this time arose, as we have seen, rather from his personal experiences in regard to the Egyptian question than from disagreement with the main items of liberal policy. So deep was his impression that he had been played with when he was sent on a wild-goose chase to Cairo, and so clear his perception from that moment of the evils which had flowed from Mr. Gladstone's handling of Egyptian policy, that he left office in June 1885 with the full determination never again to serve under his old chief. But as long as the Government lasted he did not allow any personal feelings to affect his conduct as a Minister. Having decided on what seemed to him sufficient grounds to stick to the ship when it got into stormy waters, he put aside his own feelings and, so far from doing anything to aggravate the difficulties of the situation, he played the mediator between his colleagues in the dissensions which arose in the last few months over Ireland, finance, and other matters. He remained in fact, what he had always been, a sincere liberal and a loyal member of the party. He had always been accustomed to describe himself as an old Whig; he belonged in fact to that "left-centre" party which he

believed represented the political attitude of the majority of Englishmen. But he had much stronger popular sympathies than such a definition sometimes implies, sympathies which sprang from temperament and which grew with his years.

"I can assure you," he said at Bristol in 1883, "that it was one of the greatest pleasures of my life, when I was a member of the House of Commons, that I was able to attend such meetings as this and that of last night, and when I saw before me, as I see now, many of the working men of this country, strong liberals as they are in advance perhaps of my own opinions, having the advantage of communication of liberal sentiments between myself and them."

He never took up in the Gladstone Cabinet a distinctively Whig position in respect of the domestic legislation which had alienated men like the Duke of Argyll and Lord Lansdowne, nor did the discussion which raged in the autumn of 1885 around Mr. Chamberlain's "unauthorised programme" draw from him any pronouncement indicating alarm at radical tendencies. No man was ever less biassed in his political judgment by class or personal considerations. He played no factious part in the dissensions in connection with the various phases of the Irish question which had been the real cause of the break up of the Government, although he sided with Lord Spencer in opposition to the original Home Rule scheme advocated by Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke. But he early realised that "this was the most serious question with which the country had had to deal for many years"; and allusions to it soon became frequent in his letters to friends.

At this time three distinguished liberals, Lord Dufferin as Viceroy, Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff at Madras, and

Lord Reay at Bombay were ruling India ; all three, it was noted, personal friends and members of the Breakfast Club, a well-known social institution in London at the time, and all three of course deeply interested spectators of the party drama at home. To the first two Lord Northbrook from time to time wrote his impressions of the situation. On August 5, for instance, he wrote to Lord Dufferin :—

"There has been great disgust generally at the way Spencer has been treated by the members of the new Government in the House of Commons, and I think it will tell greatly against them. My own particular view has always been that whichever party allies itself with Mr. Parnell will lose by so doing, and I am very glad Chamberlain's advances since he left office have been snubbed by the Home Rulers and that Randolph Churchill over-trumped him. But what moderate men on either side are to be after the recent election it is hard to say."

Next month he wrote to Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff :—

"Personal questions first, my daughter sends her best remembrances to you and the Queen of Madras, and begs to say that in answer to your kind enquiries 'Piggy' (a pet dog of Lady Emma's in whom Sir Mountstuart's letters showed great interest) is yet alive, but I will add that the term of the natural life approaching for such creatures I have taken the precaution of providing a successor from Hong Kong! . . . The speeches are beginning. I think Hartington was right in putting forward moderate views and in challenging Parnell, but it would be bold to prophecy which side will win in the end, for Randolph Churchill seems to be master of the situation, and I should not be surprised at the Parnellite-Conservative alliance being strengthened by some concessions which Parnell will use as a stepping stone to further demands, and which will prevent the combination of moderate men

against his demands which Hartington pretty clearly indicated to be in his mind."

Another letter (September 4, 1885) contains some further speculations on the same subject and is of interest in other respects.

"My dear Harry," he wrote to Mr. Grenfell from Guisachan, September 4, 1885, "I missed both *Spectator* and *Daily News* and have seen no account of Lord Halifax. If you have it I wish you would send me yours in the *Spectator* to read.[1]

"There is no doubt that the old-fashioned race of men who did not care for the press and went their way to the best of their lights on the business before them, has pretty nearly passed away. Sir G. Grey, Lord Halifax, my father, Lord Taunton, and Lord Panmure, were all of them of the same class. What the journalistic idea of them is, I don't know, and I don't think any of them would care much. . . .

"I have been for three weeks at Loch Luichart which Lady Ashburton lent us, and since Monday here. . . . Scotland is a capital place for health. I have given up deer-stalking for I found a few years ago I could not hit the beasts, which was a nuisance to all concerned. But I can manage to hit a grouse with the aid of steady dogs so I have had some exercise and amusement. Fishing there has been none for want of rain, turnips and anglers suffering mutually. . . .

"The duel between Hartington and Parnell is most interesting. If 80 Irishmen are returned who, when they propose the repeal of the Union in the House of Commons and it is rejected, combine to prevent any other business from being done, they can reduce the House of Commons to a deadlock so long as they remain in it; and there I think Hartington is right, the rules must be

[1] See *ante*, p. 35.

so altered as to put them on one side to let the coach go on.

"In no representative assembly from a vestry upwards, could such an abuse of the power of a minority be tolerated. But I am by no means clear that the Government will not come to some terms with Parnell, who, whatever he may now say, professed not long ago that he would be satisfied with a much smaller measure than his present programme. The recent changes seem to have had for their principal result the strengthening of Parnell. Having taken office I think there were strong grounds for justifying Salisbury in not trying to renew the Crimes Act for Ireland. But I think he was wrong in not having taken the question into consideration before he accepted office. When he was sent for by the Queen he should have said he must have time to consider the Irish question. He should then have consulted Spencer and Hamilton" (Sir Robert, then Under-Secretary) "and if he had, as I believe he would have, come to the conclusion that Ireland will not be safe for the winter without some renewal of the Crimes Act to prevent the renewal of intimidation and outrage, he should have told Mr. Gladstone his conclusion and asked whether he would support him or not, and declined office if the answer had been in the negative. This would in my humble opinion have been the honest straightforward course. From a party point of view I rejoice in having escaped from a Parnellite alliance."

It is clear also from a note to Lord Granville early in the autumn that Lord Northbrook was apprehensive of a demonstration by Mr. Gladstone in favour of "some modified Home Rule of the sort proposed by Chamberlain in the summer" which he thought would do harm in the country and would be a bad move in a party sense. He took however no further part in the discussion which revealed a growing dissension between Mr. Gladstone's sup-

posed views and those of Lord Hartington, beyond noting that Mr. John Morley's utterances alone seemed to show an appreciation of the difficulties of the situation ; and it was not until after the General Election at the end of the year 1885, which made the Parnellites masters of the situation as between the two great parties, that he seriously applied his mind to the great problem which had now emerged for instant solution by political leaders on both sides. On the 17th of December 1885 after a visit to Chatsworth and after talking over the situation with Lord Spencer at Althorp he wrote to Lord Dufferin : "Within the last week I have seen Derby, Spencer, Hartington and W. Harcourt and several recently elected M.P.'s. On one thing all are agreed, and that is the very serious position in which the country is placed by the result of the Irish elections which shows that the vast majority in Ireland is for the Nationalists." A few days earlier he had drawn up a memorandum discussing the three various alternatives by which it might be possible to satisfy the aspirations of the people of Ireland ; (1) the gradual extension of local self-government as far as such extension would be safe, as sketched by Lord Hartington at Belfast, (2) the more extensive grant of centralised powers of self-government suggested by Mr. Chamberlain and the Radical programme, and (3) finally the grant of some legislative independence, *i.e.* Home Rule with guarantees. It is significant that in agreement so far with Lord Spencer[1] he ruled out the first two suggestions as impracticable, and that, swayed like him by the recollections of the preceding year, the failure of both Mr. Gladstone and Lord

[1] Lord Spencer's account to Lord Granville of the "very thorough discussion" at Althorp supports this view. He (Northbrook) admitted that there was "considerable force in my plea for a large measure, but he was very strong on the necessity for the greatest caution in procedure." Fitzmaurice's "Life of Lord Granville," vol. ii. p. 468.

Salisbury to renew the Crimes Act and the apparent hopelessness in view of the attitude of the Conservative Government and the commanding position of the Parnellites in the new Parliament of a steady continuous and vigorous administration of the law, he did not by any means exclude the third alternative from consideration. He stated the arguments in favour of accepting or of resisting a measure of Home Rule with great force and impartiality, and on the assumption that some form of Home Rule *might* be granted without injustice to the landlords (who would have to be bought out), or to the Protestants (whose oppression by a Dublin Parliament he did not expect), he proceeded to ask whether the concession of large legislative powers would produce "real loyalty to England," or "renewed agitation to remove the remaining safeguards." A few days later he made his own attitude clearer in a note to Lord Spencer (December 16, 1885). "Pushing all the probabilities home, the question seems to be between accepting separation or refusing Home Rule with all its consequences of having to govern Ireland absolutely. The alternatives are simply appalling." Then followed the paragraph in the *Standard* (December 17) professing to give Mr. Gladstone's views which caused a fresh outburst of anxious correspondence between the liberal leaders, Lord Northbrook expressing the fear that Mr. Gladstone's action in taking a step of "such supreme importance" as was suggested by the appearance of the *Standard* announcement (whether authorised or not) without consulting his colleagues, "would break up the party and seriously interfere with any satisfactory solution of the Irish question." "Governing the whole situation," he wrote (on December 17) to Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, "are two considerations" :—

"(*a*) No settlement is likely to succeed unless the mass of the two great parties in England are agreed. (*b*) No settlement can be made unless the people of England are for it, and the general opinion is that the feeling in England is against any concession to Parnell. Such being the problem what progress has been made to solve it? The Government have been silent, Parnell has been silent. Mr. Gladstone without consulting his late colleagues has allowed his opinions to escape in favour of Home Rule with certain guarantees. This only happened yesterday so that it is premature to say what the effect will be. My own view of the present course for the opposition is that they should have left the Government to form and express their feelings, and have determined in a great national crisis to support them publicly if possible. Altogether I think you will agree with me that nothing can be worse than the outlook. I wonder what you will think of it in the midst of your palms and bananas!"

Several letters were exchanged between Lord Northbrook and Lord Spencer Lord Hartington Lord Selborne and Mr. Campbell Bannerman, the only fact that seemed clear to the group of friends, still in complete uncertainty as to the intentions of the Conservative Government some of whom were suspected of being in favour of Home Rule, being that Lord Hartington was publicly committed against any big measure.

Early in the new year a party assembled at Stratton, including Sir George Trevelyan and Mr. Campbell Bannerman, to discuss the situation. They did so with fair agreement, Lord Northbrook according to the testimony of his two guests being by no means the strongest of the three in their common opposition, at this moment, to the Parnellite demands. But if he was "very doubtful of the ultimate success of resistance to those demands" he was,

as appears from the account he gave of this meeting to Lord Spencer, even more doubtful of the possibility of obtaining the guarantees which alone would make the grant of Home Rule safe. He was convinced that the question could only be solved by the two parties uniting to deal with it, "but how this is to come I do not know." There was clearly some ground for the impression which his guests carried away that Lord Northbrook was willing to give a fair hearing to such proposals as Mr. Gladstone might put forward, if only as the least impossible of the alternatives before the country. But there was perhaps even more reason for his own belief that they would naturally travel from a similar starting point to his own along the road which he was destined to tread. None of the parties to this discussion realised that they were at the parting of the ways, and when the moment for definite action arrived it was inevitable that there should be some surprise and some unspoken reproach on both sides.

Even upon the formation of Mr. Gladstone's Government in February, Lord Northbrook for his part had taken no position of irreconcilable hostility to Irish demands or of opposition to those of his colleagues who decided, as he did not, to join his old chief. His refusal was perhaps hardly less connected with the coolness which had arisen between himself and Mr. Gladstone in the last Government than with differences on the Irish question, for it must be remembered that the new Government when it took office was ostensibly pledged not to Home Rule, but only to "*examination of the question.*" The story of his decision not to join Mr. Gladstone's new Government may be given in his own words.

"To London and back.[1] Saw Spencer who told me

[1] Diary, February 3, 1886.

Mr. G. wanted me to see him and ask me to join Government. Mentioned that the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland or the Privy Council were open to me. I answered I had decided before not to join, not feeling sufficient confidence in Mr. G. to expect to be of any use; that I was glad he had been the medium of communication as I could speak quite frankly to him, and asked him to answer Mr. G. in such manner as would be suitable, thanking him for his flattering proposal."

The position is made clearer still by the letters which passed at this time between Lord Northbrook and his old friend, Mr. Henry Grenfell. The latter wrote (on February 5, 1886) :—

"If you have made up your mind to become Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, don't read the rest of this. *A quoi bon.*

"But if you have not I hope you will let the following considerations weigh with you.

"What do they want you to be Lord Lieutenant for? Just to hold the position while they make the arrangements for doing away with it. If good is done John Morley will have the credit. If disaster follows you will be blamed by all the press-gang which Morley inspires.

"You have the experience of your Egyptian expedition which when you went there was, as I understood you to say, fortified by a promise that your recommendations should be adopted.

"Then there is another most important thing for your own reputation, and that is that the old Grey connection is more or less centred in you. That is the tradition of good official efficiency with parliamentary ability sufficient for daily use. That element is sure to be wanted again when general confusion, such as we are now about to enter on, ensues. The late Government had little of this and their fame was tarnished by the alliance they made in order to come in.

"Pray then stick to Hartington and refuse absolutely to join on any terms."

"It was very good of you," said Lord Northbrook in reply, "to write to me and what you say is very sensible and true; but you preach to the converted. In fact I had never any intention of joining another administration of which Mr. Gladstone was the head. You may have observed that during the election I held my peace and was the only member of the late Government, unless it was Selborne, who never made an electioneering speech. I could not feel that confidence that I should be able to agree with such a Cabinet as to feel any reasonable expectation that I should be of any use. I did not expect, after my mission to Egypt, that Mr. Gladstone would have wished me to join his Government again but in this I was mistaken, for I had a summons last Tuesday and went up Wednesday and saw Spencer who told me Mr. G. wished me to join, and made certain offers which, if I had intended to join, would have enabled me to do so most creditably and agreeably. But as I have said my mind was made up and I declined. I thought this—that I had been offered and declined—was generally known. I have never gone so far as to discuss the pros and cons of the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland; but even if on general grounds I had joined the Government I doubt if I should have accepted the offer. The position which Mr. G. has taken upon the Irish question, coupled with the weakness shown by the late Government, has produced a state of circumstances under which it seems to be inevitable that we should see if any tolerable terms can be made with the Home Rulers; and I am not going into opposition to any such proposals. I shall wait and see what they are; but I am not sanguine that Mr. G. will succeed. I feel sure he has a plan in his head.

"Of course I am not going to turn Tory.

"There, I have told you all about it. I should have

first said with reference to your remark 'that when I went to Egypt I had a promise that my recommendations should be adopted' that no such promise was given me. The story of the treatment of my proposal is a long one, but what happened did not increase my confidence in Mr. G."

To Lord Granville he wrote thanking him for a note of regret at his refusal to join. "For many reasons I wish I could have joined the Government, and among them is the recollection of the days when I used to be so constantly over in Carlton Terrace from the Admiralty, and of the pleasure which my intercourse with you always gave me notwithstanding the troublous times."

"I most sincerely hope," he wrote to Lord Dufferin (February 5) "that the new Government will succeed, but the task is a most difficult and dangerous one."

In one of his earlier letters deprecating any pronouncement in favour of Home Rule by Lord Spencer, Lord Northbrook had observed "no one but a minister prepared to propose such a measure to Parliament can ascertain if these guarantees" (*i.e.* against its use as a stepping-stone to independence or to the spoliation of the landlords) "can in any substantial form be obtained." The production of the measure convinced Lord Northbrook that they could not, and drove him into the opposition to the proposals from which he had previously refrained; and he at once became a leading member of the Liberal Unionist Committee which was formed under the presidency of Lord Hartington for the rejection of the Home Rule Bill on the second reading.

The evolution of Lord Northbrook's opinions on the Home Rule controversy, as indicated by the above references to the interesting correspondence which passed between

him and his political friends at this stage, affords a very characteristic instance of his manner of approaching an important political issue. Lord Northbrook's Whig antecedents and associations, his Indian experience which might have inclined him to "strong" government, the absence of idealism in his political outlook, and, it must be added, his want of confidence in Mr. Gladstone's judgment, all presaged an early and rapid decision in his case against the Home Rule proposals. As it was, a crisis of more than common intensity and importance testified not only to his genuine liberalism but also to his possession of mental and moral characteristics no less rare than they are admirable in a statesman; open-mindedness, freedom from prejudice, and desire to inform himself as to all the facts and possibilities of the situation, qualities which he had shown as Governor-General of India and which go very far to explain the unquestioned authority he exercised over those associated with him in public work. The secret of this influence lay in his method of forming his opinion by inquiry, consultation and careful thought, no less than in his adamantine adherence to a decision thus arrived at. He was not devoid or neglectful of the arts of diplomacy and persuasion, but he carried his point by the fairness and thoroughness with which he weighed the merits of a question and by the straightforwardness which left no doubt of his intention and decisions when formed. His adhesion to the Unionist cause was therefore a matter of greater importance than that of some better known and more popular leaders. When he had chosen his part there was no going back, and he did not hesitate to do all in his power to ensure the success of the cause with which he had deliberately identified himself. Although with the ruin of the liberal party as he had known it in all its phases

for forty years much of the savour of political life disappeared for him, he continued for almost the whole remainder of his career to give his Unionist associates the steadfast and most loyal support, a support made easier for him as time went on by the confidence which, contrary to his expectations, he gradually came to feel in Lord Salisbury's conciliatory statesmanship and his cautious and pacific management of foreign affairs.

"You made an excellent speech," wrote Lord Northbrook to Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff (June 4, 1886) "or rather you wrote an excellent address to your university. The different lines of employment you presented to the choice of young Madras are so tempting that I should not mind starting fresh in one or other of them. I think I should choose Botany. But pray what is the method of the 'Vythians'? . . . We are in a state of political excitement as you may imagine; almost all the best of the liberal party are either avowedly or in their hearts against Mr. Gladstone's Bills. Not only in my opinion are they wrong in conception, but the plans are themselves hopelessly unpractical and impossible of execution. I can hardly believe even now in a dissolution, for I don't see what Mr. Gladstone is to gain from one."

After the general election during which he manifested the keenest interest in his son, Lord Baring's, candidature as a liberal unionist for North Bedfordshire (staying at Wrest while it was proceeding) he wrote again (July 30, 1886):—

"Many thanks for yours of the 25th of June and for your explanation of the 'Vythians,' people who much exercised your friends. Even Acton was nonplussed.

"Well the elections showed that our democracy, as it is the fashion to call the electors nowadays, did not follow

the 'old Parliamentary hand' notwithstanding his unscrupulous appeal to class prejudices, and were on the side of the educated men. A great work has been done by the Liberal Unionists and particularly by Hartington, whose courage moderation and powers of argument have raised him very high. Goschen too has been very active and courageous, and Chamberlain and Bright have done good service.

"The newspaper reports are correct that Salisbury wished Hartington to form a Government.

"The reason against a coalition was that such a Government must have depended on the Conservatives. Chamberlain would not have joined, nor if he had been willing would the Conservatives have accepted him. So the Liberal Unionists would have broken up, whereas now they have the command of the situation. The coalition, moreover, would have permanently separated the moderate liberals from the extreme section to great public disadvantage in the future. . . . I much doubt whether the difficulty of governing Ireland is not exaggerated, and whether the clear expression of the opinion of England against Home Rule will not have a calming effect in Ireland. If outrages are renewed with a firm Government in power this country will only be more determined than ever.

"Mr. Gladstone's decadence, in his hasty adoption of Home Rule, his hasty and ill-considered and impracticable Bills, his ambiguous utterances in the House of Commons and his deplorable endeavour to set class against class in the country, is most melancholy. I personally had lost confidence in him before; ever since, indeed, he refused to believe in Gordon's danger at Khartoum, and I look upon the action of the Liberal Unionists as the deliberate and public expression of want of confidence in him."

To Lord Dufferin he wrote in much the same strain, laying stress on the importance of avoiding at this stage, if possible, a formal junction with the Conservative party.

"A coalition," he wrote, "would have broken up the Liberal Unionists who although weak in numbers hold the balance in the House of Commons, and to whom in the course of events probably the best part of the Liberal Party will return. . . . Another reason which I think weighed very much with Hartington against a coalition was that the extreme wing of the Liberals would have been deprived in the future of the moderating influence of the 'Whig' section, which would be merged with the Conservatives. . . ."

Lord Northbrook was a strong supporter of the policy outlined in these words by adherence to which, until the general election nine years later, the Liberal Unionist retained a position of powerful independence together with the possibility of rallying the bulk of the Liberal party to its banner. It is useless, if tempting, to speculate as to what might have happened if Mr. Gladstone had been obliged to retire from active politics five years earlier than he did. Lord Northbrook, at all events, with his recollection of the effect of the Peelite split upon the Tory party was the last man to do anything to make the reunion of Liberals more unlikely than it was; and it was therefore inevitable that he should have rejected certain overtures which were made to him at the time of Lord Randolph Churchill's sensational resignation in December 1886. On that occasion Lord Hartington, to whom Lord Salisbury appealed, refused with the full concurrence of his liberal unionist colleagues to join the conservative government himself, but apparently intimated his willingness that one or other of his colleagues in the House of Lords should enter the Cabinet with Mr. Goschen. Lord Northbrook, as is proved by a letter from Lord Derby congratulating him on his decision, was approached in this sense and

declined the suggestion. In a letter to Lord Hartington on January 3, 1887 he said :—

"It seems to me that you would have weakened the unionist cause if you had either taken Salisbury's place or joined his government under existing circumstances. But Goschen has been in some respects something of a conservative, and although his speeches were very able and courageous and most useful to the cause of the Union last year I hardly think he is a strength to the Liberal unionists, for the radical section is the one most likely to split off and by them Goschen has, I fancy, for some time been looked upon as hardly a liberal at all.

"My own strong disposition is to support you in whatever course you may take in the very difficult position in which you are put, and I do not see any reasonable probability of our differing; at the same time I have no desire to be concerned in another Cabinet, and there are so many good men in the Lords that I don't think I am wrong in supposing that there is not much chance of my being really useful in any eventuality which I can foresee."

This episode marks the close of Lord Northbrook's active political career. It is impossible not to regret that his long and varied administrative experience, his sound judgment, and his high conception of public work and of honour and loyalty in public life, should have ceased to be available in the government of the country at a moment when his capacity for useful work stood at its highest, and when his character was becoming appreciated beyond the circle of colleagues and officials. For his position in the country had been undoubtedly raised by his conduct during the crisis which was the cause of his virtual retirement from politics. Party convulsions like that which accompanied the Home Rule agitation tend to evoke hitherto unsuspected qualities of energy enthusiasm and statesmanship

in those who are called upon to deal with them. Such movements undoubtedly do much to keep party politics alive and wholesome by forcing both upon leaders and the public the consideration of great principles either of government or finance. But their devastating effect upon party relations extends to the careers of individuals, and it is often the men most distinguished by their single-minded devotion to principle and to the public interest who suffer most seriously in the process. This was not Lord Northbrook's first or only experience of the personal and political consequences of the emergence of some great new issue. His entrance into political life had coincided with the disruption of the Tory Party on the question of free trade, and his apprenticeship to politics had been facilitated by the long domination of Whig and Peelite administrations due to that event. Before he died he was to witness the outbreak of fresh and equally disastrous dissensions on this very question of free trade in the party which had come into power on the question of Home Rule. If Lord Northbrook had been a political philosopher he might have left some valuable reflections on the character and duration of political coalitions.

Lord Northbrook did not from this time contemplate the likelihood of his being required again to take office in a Cabinet. But there is nothing to show that he looked upon himself as having definitely retired from political life. He had taken an active part in the formation of the new liberal unionist party. One episode is thus described by Mr. Arthur Elliot :—

"The course of events steadily tended to widen the breach in the Liberal Party created by Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule policy. Yet there were many Liberals both of the Unionist and Home Rule section who deeply deplored

the dissension amongst old political friends, and who long looked forward to the ultimate reunion of the party. The Eighty Club, born in the year of Liberal Victory 1880, consisted for the most part of ardent young Liberals who had banded themselves together to forward the policy then represented by the great personality of Mr. Gladstone. The object of the Club was to assist the Liberal cause by providing speakers at contested elections and on party platforms and to offer opportunities, by the giving of occasional political banquets to leading statesmen, to expound the Liberal faith, and stir the zeal of their followers.

"At the General Election of 1885, the Eighty Club had given its united efforts to aid the Liberal Cause. But when in June 1886 another dissolution was announced the Eighty Club was torn with dissension. Unionists and Home Rulers in the Club and on the Club Committee were in vehement contention over the political principle which Mr. Gladstone wished to make the sole test of Liberalism; and it was accordingly decided, with the laudable intention of avoiding a rupture, that the Eighty Club should take no part for or against the Home Rule policy at the pending General Election. But when the General Election was at an end and the country had given its verdict for the Union, there were many who hoped for a real restoration of peace, and the continuance of a Club to which Liberals whether Unionists or Home Rulers might still belong. Strangely enough it was the banqueting, not the electioneering, function of the Club that was to destroy its harmony. It had been found possible to suspend its activity throughout the fateful elections of 1886; but what was it to do about its banquets in 1887? Liberal Unionist members of the Committee would have left its hospitality open to acceptance by such men as Lord Hartington, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Chamberlain, whilst the majority of Home Rulers were determined that no invitations should ever be sent to a statesman opposed to Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule policy. The minority appealed to a General Meeting of the

Club. This accordingly took place at the Westminster Palace Hotel on the 18th May with Lord Kensington in the chair. Mr. Arthur Elliot's motion 'that it is inexpedient in the interests of the Club that the principal guest at the dinner of the Club should be selected from one section only of the Liberal Party' was defeated, after a very warm discussion, by an amendment of Mr. R. T. Reid (now Lord Loreburn) supporting the action of the Home Rule majority of the Committee, and declaring it to be the 'duty of the Club to oppose the Crimes Bill and to maintain and enforce the policy of Home Rule.' The amendment having been carried by 143 to 55, the minority, protesting that the Eighty Club was now merely a Home Rule Club, at once withdrew into another room, placed Lord Northbrook in the chair, and resolved to withdraw in a body from the Club. A few days afterwards eighty members sent in their resignations to the secretary of the Eighty Club which then consisted of about 300 members ; and it was often observed afterwards that this sort of proportion very generally existed between Unionist and Home Rule members of party clubs and associations. The dissentient members of the 'Eighty' joined the 'Liberal Union Club,' and Lord Northbrook was thus instrumental in bringing a considerable accession of strength into the Unionist Camp."

Lord Northbrook became notably more active as a platform speaker than he had ever been before. Not only in his own county at Portsmouth and elsewhere, but at Sunderland, Newcastle, Durham and Worcester, he delivered within the next year or two addresses on the Irish question, vigorous and effective enough from their strong conviction. His speeches indeed, as a friend politically opposed to him on this question humorously observed of one delivered in the House of Lords, gave the impression that he would have guillotined the Home Rule Liberals, if he could have had his way. Another remarks, "I believe his separation

from the liberal party on Home rule was a source of real sorrow to him, though after the separation I think he was hard on his old allies." But though he was once more "terribly in earnest" there was no element of personal resentment in his feelings. It was Lord Northbrook's lot to be concerned as a protagonist in the two bitterest political controversies of his generation, those concerning the Afghan war and the Home Rule proposals; controversies which parted life-long friends and even divided families. No man really suffered less than he in this respect, and the fact is as creditable to his principal opponents as to himself. When Lord Lytton, for instance, returned from India in 1880 Lord Northbrook was one of the first to show him courtesy and hospitality; and with Lord Spencer and Lord Rosebery his personal relations after 1886 can hardly be said to have been interrupted. It would therefore have been easier for him than for most men, as appeared when he parted company politically with the conservatives over free trade in 1903, to have resumed his place among old liberal colleagues; and if the Home Rule question had disappeared as a political issue and the liberal party had been reformed on something like its former basis, as most liberal unionists at this time anticipated, Lord Northbrook might well have held office in another liberal administration. Events, however, took a different turn and when at length the time for a unionist coalition arrived, it was too late for him to re-enter the political arena, even if he had wished to do so under the new conditions. That he would have joined a coalition government even if he had been a younger man is, I think, unlikely. Loyally as he supported the Conservative party from without, he would never have felt really at home in its midst. He was not sufficiently in sympathy with the Conservative attitude on some important

questions. He approved for instance of the principle of Sir William Harcourt's Death Duties which equalised the taxation of realty and personalty, he disliked the Education policy of the Conservative Government, and voted against the Licensing Bill of 1904 in the Lords.

"He was not really happy," writes Lord Cromer, "in the Conservative camp. In English politics without being a Radical he had been a strong Liberal, and the old Whig traditions still survived in his breast with sufficient strength to make him wince at his association with those who, having been the political opponents of himself and his father before him, became his allies and associates. He was, I think, not sorry that, at the moment when his political life had practically closed, the protectionist policy adopted by the Conservative Government afforded him a valid reason for crossing the floor of the House of Lords and voting with the Liberals."

Lord Northbrook in effect must have been one of the very few liberal unionists who in consequence of the ambiguous attitude of the Unionist Government towards Mr. Chamberlain's Tariff Reform agitation, definitely withdrew his support from the Unionist party by refusing to receive the party whips ; but he regarded himself, he said, as too old to take any active part beyond this silent protest against the revival of economic ideas which had been decisively set aside in his early youth. He was at the time of his death one of the last, perhaps the last but one, of the Whig leaders who had remained faithful all through to the creed of the great school of statesmanship in which he had been brought up.

When the break up of the Liberal party in the year 1886 threw Lord Northbrook out of the direct line of political employment he was still only sixty, active and young for

his age with unimpaired vigour of mind, a man to whom idleness was impossible. Many interests besides politics claimed him at this time of comparative leisure, and there were many demands upon his help and sympathy. There was, for instance, the choice to which his father had directed his attention at the beginning of his career[1] and to which his mind had recurred at more than one interval in his political life, as the following letter shows. It was written by him, when Governor-General of India, to his brother-in-law Mr. John Bonham Carter, who had failed to retain his seat for Winchester at the general election of 1874. "You must miss your work very much, but you never gave up local and county business, and I am sure much good is done by thoroughly sound men of business steadily doing country gentlemen's work, each in his own neighbourhood. It is what I look forward to doing myself if I am spared to get home to Stratton some day."

The time was approaching when the expectation expressed in these words was to be fulfilled, and fulfilled in a more ample measure than the writer of them could have anticipated. But it would be contrary to the fact to assert that Lord Northbrook now sought out this field of work, and it is certain that he found great difficulty at first in giving his mind to the smaller questions of local government. The work however came inevitably to him, and no record would be in any sense complete which failed to give some account of his active and beneficent rule of his native county, for such it almost became, as Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire and Chairman of the County Council. I have been fortunate in obtaining this account from Mr. John Martineau, a well-known Hampshire magistrate, who was a colleague of Lord Northbrook on the

[1] See *ante*, p. 26.

County Council and on the Education Committee, and who has been assisted by letters and advice from Sir William Portal, Vice-Chairman of the Council and Lord Northbrook's aide-de-camp, as it were, in his county work. Mr. Martineau's narrative admirably brings out the peculiar value of Lord Northbrook's work in connection with the revolution in the system of local government caused by the legislation of 1888. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the most successful and fruitful portion of his public career—after his period of office as Viceroy of India—was that devoted to county work. It was certainly that in which his genius for administration had the most satisfactory scope. Common as ability for, and interest in, local administration happily remains in spite of democratic changes among the class of country gentlemen, there can have been but few instances of one who had occupied some of the highest positions in public life giving himself up to this work in so whole-hearted a manner as did Lord Northbrook during the remaining years of his life.

Lord Northbrook[1] had qualified as a Hampshire magistrate in 1856. But in the following year he had entered Parliament, and from that time till his return from India in 1876 he had seldom been for any considerable interval out of office, and had had little leisure or opportunity for taking much part in county business. In 1870, indeed, he had been asked to preside over the Second Court at Quarter Sessions for the trial of prisoners, but being then Under Secretary for War he could not afford the time for doing the work which otherwise he would not have been unwilling to undertake. After his return from India he used generally to attend Quarter Sessions, taking a leading part

[1] Mr. Martineau's valuable contribution begins with these words and ends with the words "in the way" on page 253.

STRATTON

From a Photograph

in the discussions as became his position in the county, such as proposing Mr. Melville Portal as Chairman in succession to Lord Eversley in 1879 and moving the Address to the Queen on the occasion of the Jubilee of 1887. But there was no important place for him to occupy in the management of county business until the passing of the Local Government Act of 1888.

The love of country life and pursuits and of sport, the long-established tradition of making a home in the country in preference to the town, if not in youth or middle-age at any rate as a retreat in declining days, has always been a marked characteristic of the upper and upper-middle classes of Englishmen. Thus there has always been, not gathered together in town *côteries* as in most European countries but distributed over the length and breadth of the land and in close relation with their neighbours of all classes, a large proportion of men of a good type socially, well-educated and often with ripe experience; county magnates, retired Army and Navy officers, squires, clergy, with here and there a retired statesman, for the most part accustomed from their youth in different spheres of action to a position of greater or less responsibility, and inspired by a spirit of local patriotism which made them ready to give their services to the county. Thus there has been ready to hand good material out of which to create and maintain a magistracy competent to carry on the government of the county in civil, and except as to the graver offences, in criminal matters. And there was no need, as in other countries, to look to the Crown or to the Central Government to provide Governors, Intendants or Prefects.

It is unnecessary to describe in this place the conditions of county government which prevailed during the earlier

portion of Lord Northbrook's active life, but it may be observed that before the end of the third decade of the nineteenth century it began to be apparent that a greater uniformity of principle and practice throughout the country was essential to good management and results, and especially to the administration of Poor Relief, than could be secured under the existing parochial system. In 1834 the new Poor-Law Act was passed which incidentally effected the first great diminution of the jurisdiction of the magistracy by transferring the duty of relieving the Poor to an elected Board of Guardians ; and though the magistrates remained ex-officio Members of the Boards until the Local Government Act of 1894 by an unfortunate provision deprived them of that status and in that capacity many of them took a leading part in the great Poor Law reforms that followed, their individual responsibility as magistrates was done away with.

During the next half-century comparatively little was done in the way of limitation of magisterial jurisdiction. But highway, sanitary, and other local matters began to demand more time and attention than Parliament could devote to them; and there was impending the great question of elementary and secondary education to be dealt with locally, so as to relieve the increasing pressure on the Education Department. Matters so various and important necessarily involved not only a great increase in the machinery of administration and in expenditure, but also fundamental principles upon which opinions would be likely to differ widely and as to which it was essential that public opinion should be directly represented. When therefore Lord Salisbury brought in his Local Government Bill of 1888 to create elected County Councils to supersede the magistrates in the civil administration of the counties,

it was generally accepted, not indeed without regret—for the old system had worked well and the change was a drastic one—but with acquiescence in its necessity.

The task of arranging the details of the methods by which the new Councils were to be created and set in motion was thrown upon the Quarter Sessions. The Hampshire Quarter Sessions lost no time in setting to work. Immediately after the Bill was brought in, at the Easter Sessions of 1888, a select committee consisting of the Chairman of the Court and the chairmen of the different committees was appointed to report on the provisions of the Bill. In August when the Bill had passed, this committee was reappointed and enlarged, and instructed to consider and report on arrangements for forming electoral divisions in the county in compliance with the Act. Lord Northbrook amongst others served on the committee, and from this time he took a leading part in the proceedings by which the transfer of authority was effected, and which it required not a little tact and discretion to bring about without friction.

At the Epiphany Sessions 1889 the Court of Quarter Sessions met for the last time as the authority for the financial business of the county. On Lord Northbrook's motion a resolution was carried, recording the high sense of the care watchfulness and ability displayed by its Chairman, Mr. Melville Portal, in presiding over its deliberations, and of the services of all those who had assisted in conducting the county business with efficiency and economy. Thus with few words and in characteristically brief and simple fashion closed the administrative reign of the old Court. And "the old order changeth giving place to the new."

The elections to the new County Council followed and passed off with little excitement, most of the candidates

being unopposed. Their first meeting was on February 7, 1889, at the Crown Court of the Castle at Winchester. Lord Carnarvon had come home from Italy expressly to preside as Lord Lieutenant. But to his great regret he was too ill to attend, and his place was taken by Mr. Wickham, the High Sheriff for the year. The first business was to choose the Aldermen. There had been a tacit understanding that Peers and Members of the House of Commons should not stand for Councillors, but should take their chances afterwards of being co-opted as Aldermen. This was carried out, and all the county Members of Parliament together with the Peers resident in the county who presented themselves, were chosen [a precedent which has been generally followed since when vacancies have occurred] and amongst them Lord Northbrook.

When the numbers of the Council were thus completed the result showed that, excluding the representatives of the Isle of Wight which soon afterwards was detached from Hampshire, fifty out of a total of eighty-five were magistrates. It was a result which did not indicate any discontent with the way the affairs of the county had been managed hitherto, or any desire to make violent changes. But the new men were inclined to be a little apprehensive as to the relative position they would occupy if the old traditions were too rigidly adhered to; and in order to avoid any danger of friction much depended on the choice of a Chairman. In respect of past services to the county no claims could come up to those of Mr. Melville Portal, the Chairman of Quarter Sessions. He had held the position for nine years, had been Judicial Chairman for twenty-four years and a magistrate for forty-three years. An able vigorous man, he had given his time and energies to county work of many kinds with exceptional devotion,

diligence and zeal. He was a rigid economist and a strong Chairman, with a reputation for being a little inclined to be high-handed in his manner of conducting business. Gentle breezes had occasionally arisen under his sway even in the tranquil atmosphere of Quarter Sessions. In the less equable climate of an elected Council such breezes, it was thought, might not impossibly attain to the height of storms. Second only to the Chairman of Quarter Sessions in claims for past services and with the experience of having been formerly for six years President of the Local Government Board was Lord Basing, whose placid and conciliatory disposition was above criticism. He was understood to be the candidate preferred by all the new men. The majority of the magistrates, but by no means all of them, were induced by a feeling of loyalty to their old chief to support Mr. Portal. Lord Northbrook as an old friend and near neighbour of the latter might naturally have been disposed to support his candidature or to stand aloof altogether, but in the interests of the harmonious working of the new Council he felt constrained to put aside personal feelings and himself to propose Lord Basing; and it was probably due to his doing so that Lord Basing was chosen by a substantial majority.

All went smoothly with the transfer of authority to the new Council. During Lord Basing's Chairmanship of four years' duration there were no burning questions leading to any marked difference of opinion, unless it were now and then that of spending money on public works and buildings, and notably on those for the use of the Council itself at the Castle at Winchester, as to which the Council was lavish to an extent that never would have been thought of by the old Quarter Sessions. But there was much detail work to organise, and financial business

to be managed. Lord Northbrook was Chairman of the Finance Committee, and in this and other departments his ready grasp of every subject his experience in organisation and close application to every question as it arose at once marked him out as a leading spirit.

In 1889 Lord Northbrook was elected to the ancient office of High Steward of Winchester in which city he always took the greatest interest, and in 1890 on the death of Lord Carnarvon he was, in accordance with the general expectation, appointed Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire by Lord Salisbury, but it was not till nearly four years later that the more arduous post of the Chairmanship of the County Council devolved upon him. Early in 1894 Lord Basing's failing health made it evident that he could not long continue to hold that office.

"I was at Stratton at that time," writes Sir William Portal, "and Lord Northbrook spoke to me with regard to Lord Basing's successor as Chairman of the Council. He said that he wished it clearly understood that he would not accept the office if offered him. 'Wild horses would not induce me to do so,' he said. He then alluded to work which he had undertaken in the past and of his wish for rest. Knowing very well that there was a unanimous desire on the part of members of the County Council that Lord Northbrook should occupy the position of Chairman, I spoke to him of this, and further urged that if he could be persuaded to consent, it would be the effort of each of the chairmen of committees to save him from the necessity of any personal supervision of matters of detail. Eventually, happily for the county, the Chairmanship was accepted by him, and he undertook the duties of the office with great energy and zeal. He took a keen interest in the work, and especially in that of county finance which he supervised with remarkable ability."

He was an ideal Chairman, and presided over the Council with a quiet courteous dignity, alert and prompt to suppress irregular or irrelevant speech by a call to order, which if not instantly complied with would be followed by a characteristic gesture—two forefingers extended and brought down sharply once or twice with emphasis but without a word spoken, till they pointed at the offender as an indication to him to resume his seat—an indication never known to be disregarded. Without having a natural gift of fluent speech or the temperament of a public speaker, he could on important occasions speak with force and even eloquence arising from sheer strength and clearness of conviction. In all the business of the Council in every department he was completely informed, and was diligent painstaking and conscientious in his work down to the smallest details.

In 1902 the Education Bill was brought in. Education was not a subject on which Lord Northbrook had formed any very definite opinions or had specially interested himself ; and the prospect of having to undertake it as part of the Council's work did not at first commend itself to him.

"The Education Bill," he wrote to Mr. Bernard Mallet at the time, "which will throw a greatly increased burden on the rates paid by real property, seems to be a strange proposal after the Report of the Local Taxation Commission. My opinion has all along been that the wiser course would have been to have transferred secondary education to the County Councils and strengthened their Committees before giving them primary education.

"I have not yet read the Bill but I am afraid it will not work. I am Chairman of the Hants County Council, and I do not think I could undertake to be a Minister for Education at seventy-six years of age. But I reserve my opinion till I have read the Bill."

How much or how little he liked the Bill after he had read it,[1] it would be hard to say. Probably he scarcely stopped to ask himself the question. The old instinct which was so characteristic of him, never to neglect an opportunity of doing a bit of good honest work when he came across it or to take any account of whether it was irksome or congenial to him, moved him to throw himself into it with all his energy. He originated the whole organisation himself, so far as it was not already done by the Act, nominating on the Education Committee members from the Council, and then with great care selecting the additional members from outside — lady-members, clergy, Roman Catholics, dissenting ministers and others, so as to let every educational tendency and sentiment be represented; and from this parent Committee appointing sub-committees for elementary and higher education for building, finance and other matters as the need arose; in each case, as a rule, proposing the members himself to whom general assent was never refused by the Committee. Almost more perhaps than was desirable, and certainly more than was compatible with a reasonable care of his own health and strength, he took the burden of work upon himself and ruled the Education Committee to its entire satisfaction; keeping an open mind, listening with attention, patience, and sympathy to every one, and then taking his own line decisively and pursuing it, not merely by a general super-

[1] According to my own recollection and that of others who heard Lord Northbrook talk about the Bill, he held a strong opinion that it was not "workable"; and he was much preoccupied with the amendments which he believed that a liberal government, when it came into power, would be likely to introduce in it. I well remember his discussing this question with the Bishop of Winchester and with Sir Edward Grey on the occasion of a visit which I paid to Stratton in November 1903, the year before his death, and how readily he welcomed the suggestion that he should meet Mr. Strachey (the editor of the *Spectator*) at dinner in order to impress his views upon him.—B. M.

vision, but with infinite pains and trouble occupying himself even with comparatively minute details. Perhaps his greatest success, and the one which afforded him the greatest satisfaction, was the syllabus for the religious instruction of Council Schools which was the unanimously accepted production of a special Committee carefully selected for the purpose by Lord Northbrook, and consisting of two clergymen of the Church of England, two Nonconformists, a Roman Catholic priest and a lady who took much interest in the subject. This Committee was unanimous in approving and recommending (1) the regulations as to religious instruction in the County Schools, (2) a form of prayer to be used both morning and evening, and (3) hymns for daily use. Its recommendations were unanimously approved by the Education Committee consisting of fifty persons, largely members of the Church of England, and by the County Council itself. It was afterwards adopted without alteration by several other counties.[1]

In his capacity of Lord Lieutenant Lord Northbrook carried on the tradition of keeping party politics out of county affairs. He took great pains, indeed, to try and find liberals fit for the position of Justice of the Peace, and often complained that when he had succeeded in doing so his nominee was apt before long to develop into a unionist! The following letter from Sir William Portal bears witness to the care and impartiality of his appointments to the Bench:—

"It had been from time to time suggested throughout the country that the magistrates appointed by Lords Lieutenant were mainly of one particular party, and in 1894

[1] It will be remembered that Mr. Birrell specially referred to the Hampshire Syllabus, reading a letter from Sir William Portal, from which this account is taken, in his speech on the introduction of the Education Bill of 1906.

Lord Herschell, who was then Lord Chancellor, arranged to pay a visit to Stratton in order to consult his friend and former colleague, the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, on the subject.

"Lord Northbrook asked me to come and meet him, and I shall always remember how interesting were the two days' discussions that took place. Lists had been prepared of all the chief residents, irrespective of profession or party, in each of the Petty Sessional Divisions, who had either been already appointed or whose names had been forwarded to the Lord Chancellor as deserving of appointment. Each of these names was considered in turn. As a result Lord Northbrook was able to show to the complete satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor with what absolute impartiality he had acted as regarded his magisterial appointments, and Lord Herschell had no suggestions to offer.

"It was impossible," adds Sir William Portal, "to be often in his company without being influenced for the better by his personality. He was essentially unselfish and unassuming, and there was in him an innate personal goodness and high principle which was unsurpassed. He was so devoid of what may be termed effusiveness of manner as to seem somewhat distant to those who did not know him, and yet no one had a greater dislike to stiffness and pride in any form. I well remember his saying how greatly he disliked people who were 'starchy and huffy.'"

Considering his great experience and reputation and the high position to which he had attained, there was in his bearing conversation and conduct a rare modesty and self-effacement, and an inclination to ask an opinion rather than to pronounce one. Many-sided and wide-minded he had a ready sympathy with any cause, however new to him, which commended itself to his judgment. Many a charity, many a good work, many an effort in promotion

of art was indebted to him for initiation or for encouragement. Nor did he let his Council work, arduous as it latterly was, stand in the way.[1]

Lord Northbrook's handling of the religious question in the Education controversy owed its success as much perhaps to his own deep but tolerant religious faith as to his statesmanlike qualities. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who dwells on both aspects in the following eloquent and interesting letter, speaks with peculiar authority on the ascendency exercised by Lord Northbrook in local work, religious and other, by reason of his knowledge and experience of public life and government. He writes as follows to Lady Emma Crichton (15th March 1908) :—

"Until I became Bishop of Winchester in 1895 my acquaintance with your father had been slight and conventional. But from the moment that my responsibilities for diocesan work in Hampshire began, I found both the necessity and the value of his ever-ready counsel. I sought it frequently, and I do not remember ever seeking it in vain.

"It has been my good fortune in three successive dioceses to be able to draw freely from the local knowledge and experience of lay leaders in high official position. But your father's local knowledge had, in all matters of opinion, the invaluable 'setting' and corrective not merely of an acute and calm intelligence, but of a wide and varied experience of public life and government both in England and in India. He was one of those men who under a quiet, and almost diffident, manner possess the power of bringing intuitively to the touchstone of that wide experience of men and things the question of the moment, however local or petty or temporary it might seem. His

[1] End of Mr. Martineau's paper.

statecraft was never obtruded, but he gave to those who consulted him, at all events he gave to me, the helpful sense of having been allowed access, so to speak, to his ample storehouse of accumulated and digested knowledge. On the occasions when I turned to him for advice in matters educational or religious, and they were many, I learned increasingly to trust to the sober and impartial judgment of one whose natural powers were coloured and deepened and expanded by the simple Christian faith which was so evident a characteristic of the man. His was, in matters of faith, pre-eminently the childlike spirit for which we are taught to pray. I learned lessons at his hands which I have tried to make fruitful in subsequent life and under grave conditions of responsibility, and I thank God that I was allowed during eight busy, and to me eventful, years the high privilege of his friendship."

This letter shows how leading a part Lord Northbrook played in the religious and educational work of the county. His interest in another very different side of the local life dated from very early days, and is thus described by his son-in-law Colonel Crichton :—

"Lord Northbrook always took the greatest interest in the Hampshire Yeomanry which he had joined when he was at Oxford in 1842, and he commanded the Winchester Troop for many years which used to come periodically to drill in Stratton Park and were royally entertained to dinner afterwards.

"When the Regiment went to Aldershot for manœuvres in the year 1869 they were under canvas in Cove Common and suffered to a certain extent in the horse stampede which took place in the Cavalry generally, but they suffered still more on one occasion in shortness of supplies for their men ; this want Lord Northbrook, who was Under Secretary of State for War at the time, supplied, not in the orthodox way, but by personally foraging and requisitioning the raw

material wherever it was to be got in the neighbourhood, and so appeased the appetites of his hungry troopers.

"When Lord Northbrook went to India as Viceroy he still maintained the expenses of his Winchester Troop during the whole time of his absence. He was eventually Major in the Regiment and then Honorary Colonel till his death."[1]

The South African War brought with it many new calls upon him in connection with the support of the county levies both of Yeomanry and Volunteers, with the raising of funds for the equipment of the troops and their comfort in the field, and with the care of the sick and wounded. Into all these duties Lord Northbrook threw himself with extraordinary energy, and his presence was constantly required at functions such as those at the return of soldiers or Generals from the front. The last years of Queen Victoria's reign were full of stirring ceremonial events, from the second Jubilee onwards, in which the county of Hampshire, with its great naval and commercial seaports, bore its full share and was most worthily represented by its Lord Lieutenant.

In addition to the county work which grew heavier with each year of his life, Lord Northbrook had upon his shoulders the duties connected with his estate which he performed with unusual thoroughness.[2] On his succession

[1] A curious coincidence almost amounting to a regimental custom in the Corps, which has been maintained from its institution till the present day, viz. that the wife of the Lt.-Colonel commanding should be the daughter of the Honorary Colonel, is perhaps worth noting.

Lt.-Col. Sir Henry Mildmay's wife was the daughter of Viscount Eversley—*1st Hon. Colonel.*

Lt.-Col. Hon. H. Crichton's wife, Lady Emma, is the daughter of Earl of Northbrook—*2nd Hon. Colonel.*

Lt.-Col. J. B. Seely's wife is the daughter of Colonel Crichton—*3rd Hon. Colonel.*

[2] The present Lord Northbrook has furnished the following particulars on this point.

in 1866 he had set to work with characteristic energy to make himself acquainted with the condition and management of the property.

The Kent estate in the neighbourhood of Lewisham, which had been acquired by the first Sir Francis from Lord Sondes and Mr. Angerstein, was at that time much less populated, and little had hitherto been done to encourage its development for building. To this work Lord Northbrook devoted close attention, and was to a considerable extent guided by the methods of management which his father-in-law Mr. Sturt had successfully adopted on his property at Hoxton and whose agent (Mr. Newton) he placed in control of his Lee estate with eminently satisfactory results. Churches, halls, open spaces for recreation, and a public library and park (formed from the old Manor House and garden where his father had lived and where the first Sir Francis died) are evidence of Lord Northbrook's liberality, and of his constant interest in the improvement of Lee and the well-being and comfort of its inhabitants.

At Stratton Lord Northbrook personally inspected the farm-houses, buildings and cottages, visited their occupants, and at once put in hand the necessary repairs and improvements.

The housing of the rural population was a matter in which Lord Northbrook took a keen interest. This interest was perhaps to some extent hereditary, for it was his father's custom for many years personally to inspect all his cottages once a year, and he was actually engaged in "cottage hunting" (as he described visiting cottages to ascertain their condition) until within a few weeks of his death. But his interest in the matter was no doubt stimulated by the views of his old friend Lord Sydney Godolphin Osborne

whose letters in the *Times* over the initials S. G. O. had directed so much public attention to this and other questions affecting the conditions of rural life.

Nor did Lord Northbrook forget the social improvement, recreation, and amusements of those among whom he lived. Cricket and football clubs were encouraged, an annual flower show for cottagers was instituted (both at Lee and in Hampshire) and, shortly after he succeeded, he founded Working-men's Clubs and Reading Rooms at Micheldever and Stratton, where newspapers, books, bagatelle boards and other amusements were provided, and at which a moderate consumption of beer was allowed. Friendly Societies had always a supporter in Lord Northbrook and he took a particular interest in the Hampshire Friendly Society, which owed its inception and its success mainly to the enthusiasm, sagacity and tact of the late Sir Wyndham Portal.

Lord Northbrook was a generous supporter of the Church both locally and in the diocese, and he restored the whole of the quaint octagonal interior of the Parish Church at Micheldever, and also provided for a permanent augmentation of the income of the vicar of the parish. At Stratton, which though a civil parish is comprised in the ecclesiastical parish of Micheldever, he pulled down the inconvenient and uninteresting church which had been erected in the Park by the first Sir Francis and built in conjunction with his brother Mr. Francis H. Baring, from the designs of Mr. T. G. Jackson, R.A., a new church on a more convenient site close to the village.

With the tenants of his farms Lord Northbrook's relations were most cordial. He was a just and also a liberal landlord, and if there was a doubt in his mind as to an expenditure on improvements or a remission of rent owing

to a bad season or through any other misfortune the tenant always had the benefit. When the depression in agriculture came Lord Northbrook met it boldly by an adequate reduction of rent freely offered, with the result that he never had a farm on his hands and that tenants still remain on farms which their families have occupied for several generations, a class which is unfortunately growing rarer throughout the country.

In 1878 he took over the Home Farm which had been in the hands of the first Sir Francis and Sir Thomas but which his father had given up just forty years previously, but he did so not so much from any predilection for farming as because he considered that a landlord should have some practical experience, particularly on the financial side, of the agricultural conditions in the district in which he lived; and also perhaps to give his son the opportunity of an early association with the land which he had not himself enjoyed.

Lord Northbrook had in truth neither a natural nor an acquired taste for agriculture. He took little personal interest in the crops of the farm nor in the manner in which they were cultivated; he kept a registered flock of Hampshire down sheep and formed a herd of pedigree shorthorn cattle, but although he visited the farm at times and inspected the animals for exhibition at neighbouring shows, he had no aptitude for judging their merit nor for the science and practice of perpetuating the best strains of blood.

Nevertheless Lord Northbrook was a staunch and true friend to the agricultural interest. He had great sympathy with the farmer when bad times came upon him, and was for many years Chairman of the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution, being a regular attendant at the

committees and giving much personal attention to the management of its affairs. Realising that farmers must by improved methods adapt themselves to the changed conditions under which they carried on their business and the vast importance of maintaining and improving the live stock of the country, Lord Northbrook was a good and constant supporter of agricultural and breed societies. Of several of these he was at different times the President, and often attended their shows and spoke at the public luncheons and dinners held on these occasions, when his common-sense comments and practical advice on agricultural matters were always heartily received and appreciated.

Such work as has been described, performed with the care and thoroughness that distinguished Lord Northbrook, would have been more than enough for most men of his years. But he always continued in addition to find time and energy for the larger interests to which his life had been devoted. He regularly spent the season in London and remained in touch with society and with the leaders of both political parties. He was always to be found in his place in the House of Lords on any important occasion, and intervened in debate two or three times in every session, sometimes taking a leading part on some question new to him such as that in regard to the "Outdoor Relief and Friendly Societies Bill" which Mr. Loch, the Secretary of the Charity Organisation Society, induced him to take up. But it was as the constant and ready champion of the interests of India and of the Indian population that Lord Northbrook made his most frequent appearances in the House of Lords. Not that his efforts on behalf of India were confined to speeches and questions in that assembly, for it was behind the scenes, in corre-

spondence with successive Viceroys, in consultation with Indian authorities at home, and in social endeavours like those connected with the Northbrook Indian Society which he founded and largely maintained, that his influence was even more usefully exerted. Sir Arthur Godley mentions that quite up to the end of his life he was in the habit of calling on him at the India Office to discuss questions of Indian finance, currency, and commerce. Hardly a session passed without his drawing attention to some question of Indian policy. The reimposition of a revenue tariff for India in 1894, which involved first the question of its extension to imports of cotton goods and then the imposition of an excise duty upon Indian cotton manufactures, stirred the embers of an old controversy; and Lord Northbrook followed it with close attention and with general approval of the measures taken by Sir Henry Fowler and Lord George Hamilton. He spoke on the Indian famine of 1897 and on the matter of the impressment of men and beasts in the Punjaub in 1898; and in the same year he took part in an important debate raised by Lord Roberts on frontier policy and on the recent military operations on the N.W. frontier of India. We hear the same voice which had spoken with such effect twenty years before in the condemnation now expressed by Lord Northbrook of the policy of interference with the Pathan tribes and the establishment of forts in their territory, which in his opinion had been the direct cause of the recent outbreaks.

"An impression," he observed in the preface to a reprint of this carefully considered speech, "has prevailed for some time that the recent policy on the North Western frontier has been mainly governed by the military opinion that, in order to defend India against an attack from Russia, it is necessary for us to occupy the line from

Kandahar to Cabul, and to open out and hold all the passes between British India and Afghanistan.

"An examination of recent events amply justifies this impression. Neither the Zhob expeditions nor the proceedings in Waziristan would have taken place if the Government of India had not been under the influence of these military opinions. Whatever view may be taken of the strategical argument, no one can deny that it is of the utmost importance to maintain cordial relations with Afghanistan and the frontier tribes; and the result of the 'Forward Policy' has been to lead us to the verge of war with Afghanistan, and to bring about the most serious outbreaks upon the frontier that have occurred during the fifty years that have elapsed since the annexation of the Punjaub."

In 1890 he drew attention to the Bengal Uncovenanted Service Pension Fund and to the Report of the Royal Commission on Indian expenditure with special reference to the question of the charge on Indian funds for British forces serving in India which had engaged his attention as Chairman of a similar Commission from 1880 to 1891; and in 1903 he initiated a discussion on the position of India with regard to Mr. Chamberlain's preference proposals. Lord Northbrook was strongly of opinion that a preference policy would be injurious to the interests both of India and of the United Kingdom; and he was emphatically not one of those who are disposed to underrate the preponderating importance of those interests in any consideration of the imperial problem. Perhaps the most characteristic point in this speech, in which he anticipated most of the arguments put forward officially by Lord Curzon's Government, was that in which he drew attention to the effect upon public opinion in India if the

"fiscal policy should be changed for the avowed object

of promoting what are supposed to be the interests of the United Kingdom. The feelings of the natives of India," he said, "have always been strongly pronounced in favour of the protection of native manufactures. Protection is already being discussed in the Indian press in consequence of Mr. Chamberlain's speeches. English finance ministers and English viceroys have met this feeling by declaring that the fiscal system of India has not been constructed with the object of giving any special advantages to the United Kingdom, but because we believe a tariff based upon free trade principles to be for the true interests of both countries. In my judgment we have been honest in our professions, and we can appeal to results in support of our arguments. But if the free trade tariff is to be changed into a system of preferential duties we must expect that an agitation will be raised in favour of protecting Indian manufactures."

Lord Northbrook's last speech on an Indian—I rather think on any subject—in the Lords was on April 19, 1904, when he referred to the fact that he had taken great pains on every occasion that had presented itself to advocate the interests of India in the House. He spoke at some length on this occasion of the Mission to Thibet, defending Lord Curzon's handling of the question but protesting against any idea of a permanent resident at Lhasa, and he concluded with an expression of approval of the Anglo-French agreement and of the hope that a similar arrangement might be arrived at with Russia. It is to be observed that during these latter years Lord Northbrook leant strongly to a policy of understandings, or even alliances, with certain powers as the only alternative to a naval expenditure which would be crushingly onerous, and that he attached great importance to the most friendly relations with the United States.

In the course of a debate on the constitutional position

of a Commander-in-Chief with a seat in Parliament, Lord Northbrook remarked, August 3, 1900, that he had been "connected with both the army and the navy for a longer period than probably any other member of your Lordships' House." It was therefore natural that he should have several times intervened in the many discussions which arose out of the conduct of the South African War. To enumerate his speeches would be tedious, and it is only necessary to mention his warm defence of his old friend Lord Wolseley in the controversy which arose in March 1901 upon War Office administration between that distinguished officer and Lord Lansdowne, and to allude to other speeches upon administrative matters of high importance such as military reorganisation, the provision of rifle ranges and the militia ballot, matters of far more vital importance, once the war had begun, than the question of the policy of that war to which he never referred.

Never a good debater though on occasion Lord Northbrook spoke with weight and earnestness, he shone in the conduct of a Committee or Commission. A barrister [1] who appeared occasionally before him speaks as follows :—

"I was much impressed by the dignity and precision he showed as Chairman of a Lords Committee dealing with a complicated Bill promoted by the London County Council. He checked all unnecessary display by counsel with the firmness of an experienced Judge, and he elucidated evidence without waste of time in the easy manner which belongs to an unaffected man of the world. He inspired those who addressed him with some awe, but his decisions gave them an impression of unmistakable fairness which is hardly ever created except by a mind of a distinctly judicial turn."

As Chairman of the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties, he showed the same remarkable power of manage-

[1] Mr. Cecil Chapman, now a well-known London Police Magistrate.

ment of men, and Mr Herbert Lyon who acted as its Secretary states that it was entirely owing to his skill industry tact and patience that this body composed of twenty-one representatives of every class connected with the mining industry, proprietors, lessees, miners, economists and lawyers, were brought into line after four years' labour to join in a unanimous report, a remarkable and almost unprecedented achievement considering the highly technical character of the inquiry.

But perhaps Lord Northrook's characteristics in the transaction of public business came out even more strikingly in his decisive intervention as a witness before the Committee on Indian Currency in 1898. He had always retained his interest in Indian finance ; but he now applied himself, with the assistance of the secretary, to mastering all the intricate considerations bearing on this question and to consultation with all those who could by any stretch be considered as experts on the subject. When he appeared before the Committee it was to speak with a weight and authority which greatly facilitated their ultimate decision.

It would be easy to enlarge on other aspects of his public work, but enough has probably been said to illustrate both his method in the transaction of business and the public spirit which was strong in him to the end. It will be of greater interest, and contribute towards a truer picture of the man, to describe some of the more personal and domestic tastes and interests which helped to fill Lord Northbrook's life.

" I have been indulging," he wrote some time in 1895, " in mild attacks of gout which have kept me a good deal in the house, where I have been indulging in idle kinds of industry, old papers, sketches, catalogues and *id genus omne.* I don't feel the least in want of political excitement."

Of these indoor interests the first undoubtedly was the arrangement and cataloguing of his great collection of pictures, most of them inherited [as noted above p. 141] from his uncle, Mr. Thomas Baring. The following extract from a description given of these pictures in the *Times* on Lord Northbrook's death brings out the point that the taste for pictures was a family trait of the Barings. The writer remarked that the Northbrook collection offered a "very interesting example of the way in which the great English collections were formed in the golden age of picture buying which followed the French Revolution and the Great War, and which may be said to have lasted up to 1850. It may be said that the Barings have always been buyers of choice pictures. The Ashburton collection with its splendid Rembrandts and its fine cabinet works of the Dutch school is one instance of the connoisseurship of the family." But with Lord Northbrook the love of pictures was a more personal matter than this extract would indicate. Though he can hardly be said to have possessed what is known as the "artistic temperament," he was a lover of all beautiful things, and as we have seen himself an excellent draughtsman. The possession of these pictures was a constant and daily delight to him, their lighting and hanging a perpetual interest, and he enjoyed few things more than showing them to an appreciative visitor. He devoted much time to the compilation, in consultation with various high authorities, of catalogues which are models of what such volumes can be. The London pictures are illustrated by photographs, and the Stratton collection by small sketches of the principal pictures, more than one from his own hand and others by his daughter and his son-in-law, Colonel Crichton. In the introduction written by himself Lord Northbrook states that the collection was,

"with very few exceptions, made by Mr. Thomas Baring. As the second son of Sir Thomas Baring he had been brought up in familiarity with good pictures, for his grandfather, Sir Francis Baring, acquired a fine collection of Dutch masters at the end of the 18th Century. On the death of Sir Francis in 1810 his son Sir Thomas parted with the Dutch collection to the Prince Regent, and formed a gallery mainly composed of Italian pictures. Afterwards he added to it some works by English and Dutch masters. Mr. Thomas Baring" (who it will be remembered had joined the house of Baring Brothers early in life) "began his collection in 1835 and constantly added to it till 1871, two years before he died. In 1846 Mr. Baring, Mr. Jones Lloyd (Lord Overstone) and the late Mr. Humphrey Mildmay, bought the collection of Dutch pictures of Baron Verstolk van Soeler of the Hague who died in that year. . . . In 1848 on the death of Sir Thomas Baring his collection was sold in accordance with his will, and the Italian Spanish and French pictures were bought at a valuation by Mr. Baring."

Thus it came about that some of the pictures sold from Stratton in 1848 found their way back to their old home. The most important however remained in London, first at 4 Hamilton Place and finally at 42 Portman Square to which house Lord Northbrook removed a year or two before his death, and where he thought they were seen to even greater advantage than in Hamilton Place. Most of these came originally from the foreign collection mentioned above, and among them are pictures by Metsu, Terburg, Jan Steen, Ruisdael, Rembrandt and Berkheyden. Other pictures of these schools, acquired either by Mr. Baring or Lord Northbrook, included works by Mabuse, Van Eyck, Franz Hals, Ostade, Teniers and Rubens, and some of the Italian and Spanish masters, Murillo, Crivelli, Andrea del Sarto and Correggio.

Lord Northbrook was most particular as to the authenticity of the names attached to his pictures and many fine works therefore hung unnamed upon his walls, among them a lovely Madonna and Child generally considered to be an early work of Raphael, the only specimen in the collection of this master whom he greatly admired. It had formerly belonged to Sir Thomas Baring. Lord Northbrook's love of painting was not confined to any particular school, but he delighted especially in fine accurate drawing of which he was a first-rate judge ; and pictures of the Italian Renaissance and the Dutch schools perhaps appealed to him more than others. He admired the great finish, the calm harmonious colouring of the Italians ; and Perugino, whose masterpieces he studied at Perugia and elsewhere, was a great favourite. He was very fond of some little pictures which stood about on drawing-room tables ; one, a small Mabuse of the Virgin and Child with angels the figures in which are similar to those in the triptych at Palermo, carefully studied by him at that place on one of his later journeys. There was a tiny very attractive Madonna and Child once ascribed both to Van Eyck and Memline, and another very popular one was the fascinating little water colour of two squirrels by Albert Dürer. Modern pictures many fine examples of which, as has been noted, he possessed at Stratton did not seem to give him the same pleasure. It may be added that most of these pictures were well known to connoisseurs and the public, as their owner was a most generous contributor to loan exhibitions like those of the old Masters at Burlington House and the Guildhall.[1]

[1] It should perhaps be noted that Lord Northbrook parted with certain pictures to the National Gallery. These were a large picture of the Virgin and Child by Sebastiano del Piombo (in 1895) ; and (in 1894) a small picture by Antonello da Messina of St. Jerome in his study, an important example of Andrea Mantegna [the three sleeping disciples in the foreground and in the background

It is not however by names and lists that an idea can be given of the beauty and orderliness of Lord Northbrook's homes, such as is conveyed in the happy touches of the following description :[1]—

"My recollections of Lord Northbrook are wholly personal and frivolous ; he was that rare thing a perfectly consistent and harmonious man, at one—at all events in his own homes—with himself and his surroundings ; in fact he seemed so 'involved,' so to speak, with his collections and houses that his and their description must be interwoven. Stratton, his Hampshire home, and 4 Hamilton Place his London home, were models of English homes ; slightly early Victorian in character perhaps, but the very best of the type impressing with a sense of order cleanliness and comfort, seldom to be met now-a-days amidst chaotic 'art' decorations.

"The exterior of the house at Stratton is a plain white solid block of buildings with an air of respectable calmness to be admired. The interior, a museum of interesting and beautiful things. The first floor consists of a suite of charming living rooms giving on to a wide red carpeted corridor furnished with statues and an organ.

"The drawing-room, daintily pretty in its old-fashioned primness, had lightly tinted walls touched with gold, satin covered furniture, a beautiful tapestry screen with delicate colouring, and pictures. At Stratton pictures abounded everywhere, overflowing into passage and bedroom, and Lord Northbrook might often be seen busily engaged with a 'tame' house carpenter moving and rearranging his favourites.

"The dining-room was my especial delight—a beautiful

the Saviour with a distant view of Jerusalem], and finally a picture formerly ascribed to J. Van Eyck and Lucus Van Leyden representing an incident in the life of St. Giles. A famous Cuyp was also sold privately about this time.

[1] By Lady Antrobus, of Amesbury Abbey, who knew them and their owner well in these later years.

portrait 'The Man in Yellow' [Lord Newport by Vandyke] hung on one side of the door, its pendant a woman's full length portrait on the other; 'The Fire of London' by Loutherberg opposite, such a glow of colour, and on one side of the fireplace a splendid 'Lawrence' portrait of three men with keen clever faces, heads of the Baring house; they are at a table covered with apparently important documents which they are discussing.[1] The excellent dinners accompanied by choicest dry 'Sillery' seemed strangely in character with the room, and each night we ate off different services of Sèvres Dresden and Vienna porcelain. Tea was also a speciality of Lord Northbrook's houses, at Stratton served in the library (a solemn but most comfortable apartment) in cups of 'Grosbleu' Worcester, outside speckled with white like a guinea fowl's back, and inside garlanded with pink roses. In Hamilton Place after a dinner party, tea (a delightful custom unusual in modern London) was served in the small front drawing-room and dispensed by Lady Emma in beautiful little Dresden cups. The walls of the four drawing-rooms in Hamilton Place were hung with a brocaded sage green damask, making the best possible background for the pictures which were chiefly examples of the Italian and Dutch masters.

"I found Lord Northbrook a most congenial companion, excellent, rather ceremonious, manners but kind and sympathetic; he loathed gossip and attributing evil and designing motives to others; he called himself a second-rate politician but this was I think an under-estimation of his abilities. He had a keen clever face, in expression not unlike one of his Lawrence-painted ancestors. With all his cleverness, he had a great sense of fun, and a wonderful power (often a characteristic of clever people) of interesting himself in trivial things. He loved children and could throw himself into their pursuits and amusements. The children's parties in Hamilton Place were delightful.

[1] The pictures referred to on p. 141.

"Lord Northbrook was one of the most companionable (he had a genius for it) people I ever met, he always seemed on the terms of an elder brother. With his son and daughter one never saw traces of the 'heavy' father about him. His nephews Henry (alas now dead) and Cyril Foley, adored him, 'Uncle Northbrook' was their ideal of perfection and they generally spent their holidays at Stratton." [1]

It was necessary to see Lord Northbrook in his own home, especially at Stratton, to gain an idea of his innate kindliness courtesy and companionableness, or of the atmosphere of busy interests, political social and artistic, in which he lived. He was very hospitable and liked to have people coming and going. On his return from India the circle was naturally enlarged, the younger generation had grown up, and a big ball for the county in 1877 served as a house warming. With office came the entertaining of political friends, and Stratton was occasionally the scene of almost historical gatherings. In 1883 the King and Queen, then Prince and Princess of Wales, visited Stratton to open the Show of the Royal Counties Agricultural Society (of which Lord Northbrook was President) at Winchester. In November of the same year Mr. Gladstone, at that time Prime Minister, and Mrs. Gladstone, with Lord and Lady Granville and others, spent a few days at Stratton. Mr. Gladstone displayed great enthusiasm over the splendid trees, and in the course of his visit he paid a memorable visit to Winchester, lunching at the Deanery, going over the Cathedral and the School and its Chapel, and addressing the "men" assembled in College to receive him. Another such party was that invited to meet Lord Rosebery who came in 1901 to unveil the statue of

[1] Sons of General Sir St. George Foley. Their mother was a sister of the late Lord Alington and therefore a sister-in-law of Lord Northbrook.

Alfred the Great at Winchester. Lord Roberts was a distinguished guest on another occasion. The Gaekwar of Baroda was among the Indian notabilities welcomed by Lord Northbrook at Stratton, and the visitors' book could easily furnish a list of many well-known people who succeeded each other on more informal visits—political colleagues, soldiers (Lord Wolseley was a frequent guest from early days), great Indian officials such as Sir Richard Temple, Sir Henry Norman and Sir Alfred Lyall, and others with whom Lord Northbrook had been officially connected at the Admiralty and elsewhere. Then there were the old friends whose names have often recurred in these pages ; county neighbours and fellow workers, and sportsmen who came to shoot the partridges. Where so many were welcome a more particular enumeration would be wearisome, but a word may be said of one life-long friend to whom Lord Northbrook was sincerely attached and to whom he showed continuous kindness—Edward Lear.[1] During his Viceroyalty Lord Northbrook had induced his friend to spend a winter painting in India, which Lear described in a journal now at Stratton, probably the most life-like and unconventional record of impressions of travel ever penned. He painted a vast number of pictures and sketches, many of which remained in Lord Northbrook's possession, and, in spite of his affection for his host, probably his least enjoyable days were those spent in the Government Houses, with their uncongenial surroundings of viceregal ceremony. "Hustlefussabad" was one of the names he gave to the Viceregal Court at

[1] Lady Strachey's publication of Mr. Edward Lear's correspondence with Lord Carlingford has revived the memory of this great humorist and remarkable artist. An article by Mr. Ian Malcolm in the *Cornhill Magazine* (January 1908) usefully supplements this volume by some account of the great collection of Lear's sketches and letters preserved at Stratton, and of his travels in India in 1873–4.

Calcutta, and a story is recorded of the shock caused by the appearance in a local newspaper of his inimitable rhymes on the "Akond of Swat" while he was staying with Lord Northbrook, and a state visit from that potentate was expected. He was more than once at Stratton in later days. He wrote voluminously, humorously, pathetically to Lord Northbrook during those years from his villa at San Remo, and in 1887 Lord Northbrook planned a journey to that place with the special object of seeing him and cheering him in his then sad state of health, by daily visits.

Stratton, then, was the centre of the family life, and it is almost as difficult to dissociate Lord Northbrook from his home as it is to think of him in his private life apart from the daughter to whom he was so tenderly attached. From her thirteenth year Lady Emma was his constant companion, and there was not a detail of her life which he did not supervise and provide for with unceasing and unselfish care. She travelled with him, sketched with him, rode with him, fished with him, shared his friendships and presided over his houses. It would not be easy to imagine a more perfect relationship, in its complete understanding and sympathy, in its easy and graceful charm, than that which existed between this devoted father and daughter. Lady Emma's marriage in 1890 to Colonel the Hon. Henry Crichton caused far less interruption to their life-long intercourse than might have been expected. It brought indeed new interests into Lord Northbrook's life. Colonel Crichton proved to be a thoroughly congenial son-in-law, occupied like himself with county work and with a similar enjoyment of sketching and holiday travelling. He and Lady Emma used to spend the season in London at Hamilton Place, and Lord Northbrook delighted in visiting them at

their home at Netley Castle on Southampton Water, and in helping them to add in many ways to the beauty of their house and garden. When they were separated a day hardly ever passed without Lord Northbrook writing to his daughter. The family circle was further increased in 1899 by Lord Baring's marriage to Lady Abercromby, which once more gave a hostess to Stratton and which added sensibly to the happiness of Lord Northbrook's remaining years; and the Crichton and Abercromby children took the place in his affections which grandchildren of his own would have held. That Lord Northbrook should have been able to adapt himself to all these new surroundings in the way he did is a testimony not only to the exceptional sympathy and affection he bore towards his children, but also to the alertness and youthfulness of mind which he retained to the end of his life.

The sense of order noted by Lady Antrobus was a leading characteristic of Lord Northbrook. It was to be found in the arrangement of his papers, his sketches, his autographs, in the cataloguing of his library, in his reading and his occupations, no less than in the care of his artistic treasures and the dignified comfort of his household arrangements. The result was that, like many really busy men, he always seemed to have time at his disposal. He was an early riser and always found time before breakfast, if not later as well, for some quiet reading, though it was probably only in holiday time that he read as much as he liked to do. There are at Stratton manuscript volumes from an early date containing elaborate notes on the books he read; his diary especially in holidays generally mentions a list of books; and whenever he was at sea a great deal of his time was passed in reading. He had an excellent memory for what he read, he knew for instance most of

"Childe Harold" by heart and had much of Shakespeare at his fingers' ends.

The following notes are taken almost at random from his diaries. On the way back from India in 1876 he writes "Learnt 'Il penseroso' again. As to reading did not manage a volume a day but read 17, and two-thirds of Farrar's 'Life of Christ,' 2½ vols. of 'Talisman' besides, as well as 15 lessons or so of Ollendorf's Italian, so have not been very idle."

Here is another which shows not only the habit of reading but a love of it, which those who knew Lord Northbrook as a man of action rather than of thought would not have suspected. "Long day beating a wood for red deer and roe. R. D. killed 2 roe. No one else got a shot. Best thing I did was to read a Canto of Tasso."

Here again is a short account of a holiday while he was at the Admiralty :—

"August 28–September 12, 1883. Holiday at Camesky with Frank and Emma. Out fishing every day but one and mostly all day, only taking I think three mornings at work. Result as to sport indifferent (40 fish), result as to health very good for us all. . . . Not altogether idle either. I did my office work day by day and read 'Newman's Sermons,' Vol. V. in the morning before breakfast.

"Carlyle's 'French Revolution.'

"Green's 'History of the English People' (two last vols.).

"Goschen on 'Local Government.'

"Henry George, 'Progress and Poverty' (half).

"Shakespeare, Henry VIII., Troilus and Cressida, Timon, Coriolanus, Much Ado, Merchant of Venice, As You Like It ; and of novels—

"Froment Jeune et Risler Ainé, Yolande ; besides the Blue-book on Local Self-Government in India."

For writing, except for writing of an official kind and for the considerable correspondence he had to maintain, he had less time and not much natural inclination. But he was a very rapid worker, and his wonderful industry enabled him to get through a much greater volume of reading and writing than most active men, with the taste he had for out-of-door life sport and travel—tastes however kept strictly under control,—are able to accomplish.

The love of foreign travel never lost its hold upon Lord Northbrook. Hardly a year passed after he left office in 1885 without some trip abroad ; to Rome, to Florence, to the South of France, to Sicily, and occasionally to some German watering place. In February and March 1895 he accomplished what had always been a wish of his heart, an expedition to Palestine on which he was accompanied by Lord Baring and Colonel and Lady Emma Crichton. He remained what he had always been a first-rate travelling companion, full of resource and interests and thoroughly enjoying the planning of routes and the other incidents of a journey. A good sailor he had always been, Lady Emma's marriage gave him opportunities of yachting of which he often availed himself in later years, and some of his travelling was thenceforth done with the assistance of Colonel Crichton's yacht. Not only did he thoroughly enjoy occasional cruises in the Solent in the 34-ton steamer *Chimæra*, but he ventured twice on foreign trips as far as Holland, visiting the island of Maarken in the Zuyder Zee and getting as far north as the Helder. The picture galleries at Amsterdam and the Hague were a great delight to him. He very often on these earlier occasions slept at hotels on shore, but his good spirits and keenness to see all there was to be seen carried him through much discomfort including

bad weather. Later on in a larger *Chimæra* of 96 tons he made several voyages with greater comfort, one for instance to Dartmouth Plymouth and Falmouth, the scene of his bygone election triumphs, and another in 1902 to Bruges to visit the exhibition of Flemish Art to which he had sent his famous Mabuse of the "Virgin and Child" and other pictures.

Outdoor pursuits played a large part in Lord Northbrook's life. In addition to walking and sketching of which something has been said, he took in later years a great interest in his garden and grounds. Something of a botanist he had always been and a morning stroll through the gardens was a constant practice with him. He was particularly interested in adding to and improving the pleasure grounds, in introducing flowering trees and shrubs, and in the plants which he had brought from places abroad and which he used to tend, and even weed, when he had leisure. Among sports shooting was that to which he seems to have been least addicted. After his return from India at all events he largely gave it up, handing over the management of this department more and more to Lord Baring, while retaining a keen interest in the arrangements and the success of the sport, joining the shooters at lunch and riding about the fields on his cob. Lord Northbrook was always at home on horseback, and up to recent years used to ride over his estate visiting in this way outlying farms and cottages.

Hunting was a favourite pursuit with him in his earlier years. He had while at Christ Church hunted with the neighbouring packs of hounds, and for some years subsequently he kept a few horses at Stratton whence he hunted with the Hampshire Hounds, the Tedworth, then under Mr. T. Assheton Smith, the Vine Hounds of which

his old Christ Church friend[1] Mr. W. W. Beach was somewhat later for so many years the master, and he much enjoyed an occasional day with the staghounds which were kept by the late Mr. Yates at Bishops Sutton. Lord Northbrook gave up hunting comparatively early in life and there are not many now in Hampshire who have a personal recollection of him in these days, but among them is Mr. Arthur Yates who writes "I remember very well Lord Northbrook hunting with the Hampshire Hounds and also with my father's staghounds: he used to go very straight to hounds and was a good horseman. I have heard my father say he was one of the hardest riders he ever saw."

Whenever it was possible Lord Northbrook was at Stratton during his boys' holidays and delighted in taking them out with the old-fashioned pack of Harriers then kept at Winchester by that worthy and popular Hampshire sportsman the late Mr. James Dear, who was the son of a former tenant on the Stratton estate and who at that time had among his supporters Lord Gardner, Mr. John Bushe and others who were well known in the shires, but who had arrived at a time of life when they preferred the open down country of Hampshire to the enclosed pastures of the Midlands.

It must however be said that of all country sports fishing, at all events in his middle and later life, stood first.

"Fishing" writes one who has the best right to speak on this subject[2] "was Lord Northbrook's favourite recreation, and after his return from India in 1876 he rented two fishings on the Itchen, one at Alresford and one at

[1] M.P. for North and West Hants 1857 until his death in 1901 when he was "father of the House of Commons."

[2] His daughter, Lady Emma Crichton, who has compiled the following account from her own and Sir Edward Grey's recollections.

Itchen Abbas, each of them some 6 or 7 miles from Stratton. The Itchen Abbas fishing he shared with friends, the Alresford fishing he kept in his own hands, and here for some years he had a cottage.

"At Alresford there were but three bedrooms and a sitting-room opening straight on to the lawn, through which within a few yards of the sitting-room door flowed the little river, one of the main sources of the Itchen ; it ran between fine clumps of pampas grass and continued its twisting course in little rapids through a pretty and uncommon garden, under rustic bridges and weeping willows, past unexpected summer houses, till it reached the water meadows and wandered away through them, sometimes with smooth deep water sometimes with shallow streams rippling over waving green weeds in white chalk gravel, as the manner of the Itchen is. On the walls of the cottage honeysuckles and roses grew in profusion ; a man and woman, both capable and reliable, lived there so that other servants were happily unneeded, and the absence of a front-door bell, gave, politely, a sufficient hint to neighbours that callers were not expected. Among the friends who went there the cottage was known as Paradise, and if rest and quiet constitute Paradise it was well named.

"Through the years of office work and the whirl of London engagements, many were the happy Saturdays to Mondays which he and his daughter spent in this little retreat, coming down by an early morning train on Saturday, taking a well-earned rest in the afternoon when as a rule the fish do not rise, and fishing hard when the evening and twilight came. Dinner was dispensed with and its place taken by a delightful meal at 6.30 so that Lord Northbrook would often fish till 9 or 10 at night. It was indeed looked upon as a black Saturday if a Cabinet Council or some inevitable London engagement prevented them from coming.

"There was no fishing on Sunday ; Morning Service attended at Old Alresford Church of which Rev. G. Sumner,

now Bishop Sumner, was Rector; and in the afternoon or evening a stroll along the path by the river among the reeds and innumerable water plants, where he and his companion never tired of watching the habits of the trout.

"Just above the garden were some exceptionally large trout and here Lord Northbrook caught with fly, and not a very large fly, three monster fish weighing respectively 7 lb. 2 oz., 8 lb. and 9½ lb.; and his daughter to whom he had imparted his love of fishing caught in the same water, though with a fly of larger dimensions and questionable origin, a trout weighing 7½ lb.

"Many quaint and witty entries in the journal under the name of 'Nappy' testify to the constant visits of his brother-in-law Colonel Napier Sturt, always an amusing companion and a first-rate fisherman.

"Sir Algernon West's name appears among those often asked to Stratton for the annual Whitsuntide fishing parties. General Sir Daniel Lysons shared the delights of a day's fishing on Derby Days with Lord Northbrook. Mr. Charles Barrington, an experienced fisherman, was constantly on the river; also Mr. Arthur Scott of Rotherfield, his friend and neighbour, Sir Henry Clarke Jervoise and many others. Colonel C. Birch Reynardson, A.D.C. to him in India and between whom and Lord Northbrook a strong friendship existed, says (January 9, 1908):—'Alas I have not the pen of the ready writer. I should love to contribute to the memory of the kindest master and very best friend I ever had from the day I first met him, May 25, 1872 just outside Simla, to the day of his death. . . . I spent many happy days fishing with him at Alresford and Itchen Abbas, and it was on these occasions that he was really happy. How keen he was and what pains he took no matter how bright the sun or how the wind blew down stream, and at Alresford I have known him persevere till you could not see your hand before your face. I often used to think to myself that these occasions were the only real holidays he ever gave to his mind.'

"The name however which occurs most frequently in the fishing book during those many years was that of Sir Edward Grey, his cousin, to whom he had become guardian on the death of Sir George Grey in 1882. Many are the entries of their days together, such as 1882, April 13th, 'E. Grey fished wonderfully well in the rain dry fly against the wind'; and Lord Northbrook used to say 'E. Grey was the best fisherman he ever knew, that he thought he knew not only every bit of the river but every fish in it.'

"This guest well remembers the impression made by the life there—the quiet and beauty of the place, the simple summer breakfast in sight of the stream, eaten with anticipation and talk of the pleasure in a day's fishing to come. Lord Northbrook's enjoyment of fishing was real and keen; excitement indeed he seldom showed, but no one who fished with him or watched the interest with which he talked of fishing or listened to the talk of others, could for a moment doubt how genuine and strong his keenness was. There was nothing dilettante in his fishing; on the Itchen he would never willingly stop fishing or leave the water, while trout were rising. He always had in his pocket some cutting from a newspaper he wished to read or some small book, and if the fish did not rise would sit reading patiently and watching the river until a fish showed signs of rising. When salmon fishing in Scotland he would wade deep in strong streams and fish carefully and thoroughly down all their length whenever there was a chance of rising a salmon or grilse, and often, as every keen salmon fisher does, when the chance was very small. But with all his keenness there was no outburst of impatience or disappointment when things went wrong or catastrophes happened. An eager friend once listened with dismay on the banks of the Lochy to an account from the gillie of how in the pool then being fished Lord Northbrook had a few days before hooked and lost, after a prolonged and exciting struggle, what was in the gillie's opinion about the largest salmon he had ever seen in the river. It was evident enough that the gillie had felt

the loss intensely. 'Did Lord Northbrook mind very much?' asked the friend. 'Well,' said the gillie, 'he didn't say anything.'

"Not less sure than his own pleasure in fishing was the pleasure which Lord Northbrook took in the keenness of others, and this found constant expression in his kindness to a boy who was for some years at school at Winchester and whose fondness for fishing Lord Northbrook knew; he took every season the trouble to find out what were the three or four 'leave out' days in summer at the school, and at each of them either arranged to fish at Itchen Abbas himself so that the boy could fish with him, or sent him written leave to fish the Alresford water; not a day was ever missed or forgotten. An instance slight in itself but typical of the thoughtfulness which there was in all his kind acts. Much expression of gratitude he never desired; there was a peculiar unobtrusiveness and delicacy in his kindness, but it was felt in a way which made him loved.

"During the years of Cabinet office, from 1880 to 1885, he took for August and September a salmon fishing without shooting in Scotland; the first year on the upper part of the Spean, and after that a better beat on the Lochy. Here he stayed with his son and daughter in a farm-house let with the fishing and enjoyed the river, the country and the open-air life. After 1889 the lease of the Alresford Cottage came to an end and he occupied the cottage near Itchen Abbas, which had been built by Sir E. Shelley as a keeper's house and fishing cottage combined, and which he had previously lent to Mr. Marjoribanks (now Lord Tweedmouth) and Sir Edward Grey. It is a little red-roofed cottage standing close to a few big oak trees and having from the windows a view of the river winding through rich water meadows and in the distance the woods of Avington Park showing up dark against the sky. There after the year 1900 when his daughter married he spent many days, sometimes even a week or more at a time, sometimes with his son or a friend but often alone. There is certainly no

prettier part of the Itchen, there can hardly be anything of its kind more pretty anywhere than this water. A few other friends shared this fishing with him, but as he grew older it was arranged that the meadow nearest the cottage should be reserved for him alone. In this and in the neighbouring meadows he fished often with a little nine-foot rod and did not fail on favourable days to catch two or three or more brace of trout averaging perhaps 1½ lb. in weight on fine gut and very small flies, in water where the trout were well educated and by no means very easy to rise on hook. Even in his last year he fished several days and as usual alone, without any attendant to land or carry the fish. Then after the morning rise was over he would go back to the little sitting-room at the cottage and spend the rest of the day alone reading, or very frequently in the last years working at the papers and problems of the Hampshire County Council ; sometimes if it was a fine summer evening putting on his waders again and going to the nearest water for the evening rise. 'Great sadness,' wrote one who knew and loved the river well, Lady Grey, on November 19, 1904, 'seems to have fallen all over the Itchen country since Lord Northbrook died. Nothing will ever be the same again. He was the reason of our having come here and his kindness made a shelter for us.' "

Full of the occupations and interests of which an attempt has been made to give some idea in the preceding pages, Lord Northbrook's life drew on to the close touchingly alluded to in these words. Although in his seventy-ninth year there was no diminution in his mental energy, no perceptible failing of physical power, no change in his active habits of life. After a busy winter at Stratton he went in the spring of 1904, as he had done the year before, to the Villa Cynthia at Cap Martin where, at first in the company of Lord and Lady Baring and then in that of Colonel and Lady Emma Crichton, he passed a couple

MENTONE FROM THE GALLERY OF VILLA MORGAN, CHRISTMAS 1858

From a Water-Colour Drawing by Lord Northbrook

of months of perhaps the happiest leisure hours he enjoyed in his later years. Associated as it was with early recollections of his married life and several times revisited since, the Riviera was perhaps more familiar to and better loved by Lord Northbrook than any part of the world to which his travels had led him. The terrace gardens of the villa with paths winding down to the rocky beach, the unsurpassed view of the Bay of Monaco, the air the sunshine and the flowers gave him unmixed pleasure ; and for serious occupation (a necessity of his life) the arrangement of the letters and papers for the compilation of his father's life filled up several hours every day. The season of this year he spent in London, varied as usual by constant visits to Winchester on county business. In the course of the summer his sister, Mrs. Bonham Carter, was taken gravely ill, and from this time Lord Northbrook in order to amuse and cheer her wrote every day a letter of gossip, and accounts of people, of talks, of dinners and luncheons at his own house, of discussions in the House of Lords.

"I have been sitting" (he writes for instance on July 13) "to Cope[1] to-day and he wants two more sittings. William Harcourt is sitting too and I just caught him and had a little talk. He is being painted in the robes of a Chancellor of the Exchequer. I asked him if they were Pitt's robes. 'No,' he said, 'Dizzy kept Pitt's robes. Mine were Gladstone's. Hicks Beach had them after me and then I had them again and I would not let Randolph Churchill have them. I gave £50 for them and they have come in useful as I went to a Fancy Ball at Devonshire House in them!'"

A little later he writes, after one or two attendances in very hot weather at the Licensing Bill discussion in the

[1] For the portrait which now hangs in the County Council Hall at Winchester, reproduced as the frontispiece to this volume.

Lords—a "bad" bill which there was "very little chance of improving in committee"—"I have promised to go yachting in the *Chimæra* for a bit. I don't know what Harry Crichton's plans are; I rather hope he will go abroad as it is more of a change than going about the Channel." "So the cruise in the yacht to Stockholm," writes Lady Emma, "was planned," and she and Miss Crichton and Lord Northbrook joined Colonel Crichton in his yacht at the entrance to the Kiel Canal, and gradually worked their way up from Kiel where he was greatly impressed by a sight of the German fleet—an entirely new creation since he had been at the Admiralty—to Copenhagen, and then from Goteburg in lovely weather through the lakes and canals and islands to the uniquely beautiful capital of Sweden; Lord Northbrook sending descriptions of the different places of interest to Mrs. Bonham Carter as they went along. After a very rough passage back to Kiel the party shipped in the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosser* for Southampton from Bremen whence he wrote "I suppose you remember that we came from Bremen. . . . Our ancestor, Franz Baring, was the Minister of the church of St Ansgar; it is a large church and rather a fine one. Harry drew the pulpit and Emma wandered about looking at the tombstones to see if she could find a Baring, but without success. We had only an afternoon at Bremen or I should have tried to interview the present parson."[1]

[1] From the pedigrees and records preserved at Stratton which Lord Northbrook printed in his Memoir of his father, it appears that the earliest known member of the family was a certain Peter Baring of Gröningen in West Friesland Holland who died about 1532–6. His son Franz (1522–1589) in early life entered a Carmelite brotherhood but at the reformation "left the cloister and the papal religion" and later became Superintendent General, a dignity in the Lutheran church corresponding to that of an English Bishop, at Lauenburg on Elbe. From his second wife descended the Bremen Barings, and his great grandson was Franz the Bremen pastor (1656–1697) father of Johann who settled in England. This descent is proved by an extant obituary notice of Dr. Franz Baring written in 1697.

"On these cruises," writes Lady Emma, "he used the Deck House as his study, though to any one else it would have seemed anything but a quiet spot, being the thoroughfare to the saloon and also the place where all coats, telescopes and books were kept. It was really wonderful the way in which Lord Northbrook at his age adapted himself to the ways and size of the yacht; how cleverly he crept up and down all the 'companions' which were by no means easy ones, and how patiently and quietly he would sit for hours at a time in his corner of the Deck House writing or reading and smoking his cigar, while the other members of the party were always coming in and out, probably banging the door, or leaving it open when it was most wanted shut. However he found yachting a great rest and change; the absence of daily posts and freedom from any engagements or callers on business gave him time to write and work, and he compiled a good bit of the Memoir of his father on board the *Chimæra.* On July 20 of this year (1904) he had written to his sister:—

"'J. Morley has sent me back my Chapter on my father's budget, he and Francis' (Lord Northbrook's brother) 'want me to expand it so I suppose I must, but I doubt whether I shall improve upon it; I cannot work excepting at Cap Martin and on board Harry Crichton's yacht.'

"All Lord Northbrook's journeys are beautifully illustrated in pencil, pen and ink, finished and unfinished, sketches which he carefully pasted into books himself, and catalogued."

After this ideal holiday Lord Northbrook returned home for the last time to take up the burden of his work for the county of which he was the head and centre. In the full tide of this work he was seized with one of the attacks of gout from which he had periodically suffered in the last years of his life, and died on Tuesday, the 15th of

November 1904, after a few hours only of serious illness. On the Sunday indeed preceding his death he had been well enough to discuss with Sir William Portal all the details of the business for the impending quarterly meeting of the County Council. It was an end which his active spirit would certainly have desired.

None of those who were present a few days later at the wonderful gathering in Micheldever Church of relations, friends, colleagues, and above all country neighbours, will ever forget the sense of loss which pervaded it. "He was Hampshire, everything depended on him," said Lord Selborne to a friend on that day, and the remark only anticipated the simple and feeling language which he used a few weeks later in unveiling the portrait for which the county had subscribed.

The expression of the admiration and affection with which he was regarded in his own county called forth by Lord Northbrook's death was unprecedented in its warmth, and the recognition by the English and Indian press of his high standing in public life was something of a revelation to those who had looked on him only in the light of a statesman long retired from office, and had underestimated, as those engaged in the active struggle of politics are apt to do, the influence of high character and unselfish patriotism upon all classes of their countrymen. There can be no doubt that the position he held at the time of his death was a great deal higher than when he had finally given up political office nearly twenty years before. To the wealth of knowledge and experience which age brings he united the activity and keen interests of a much younger man; he had become one of those whose advice counts in all great affairs, and his opinions carried all the more weight from the fact that he was detached

from party ties and known to be superior to mere party considerations. Especially was this the case in his treatment of questions affecting the Empire, for the "wisdom and moderation" which had been noted by Mr. Bright, made him one of the most influential exponents of "sane imperialism" behind the scenes of active political life.

It is undeniable that Lord Northbrook's later ministerial record had not altogether fulfilled the high anticipations formed by the observers of his earlier years. An uninterrupted career in the House of Commons might probably have given fuller play to the exercise of his undoubted financial and administrative ability than that which actually fell to his lot; it is certain that the 1880 Government proved, for one reason or another, unfavourable to most of those who entered it with established reputations; and it is more than likely that, had it not been for the dislocation of parties caused by the Home Rule question, Lord Northbrook's services might have been again employed in Cabinet office with increasing credit to himself. When all is said, however, it will hardly be disputed that Lord Northbrook was deficient in some of the qualities which ensure the highest success in a parliamentary career. He was not one of those who come at once to the front by reason of their grasp of ideas, the width of their views, their imaginative insight into political problems. He was on the contrary typically English in his distrust of generalisation whether in philosophy, history or economics; and he had been schooled by the example of men like Sir George Grey, who himself had much more the temperament and endowment of a great popular leader, invariably to submit principles to the test of their applicability to circumstances. He was therefore something of an opportunist in politics, opportunist in the higher sense

of the term which by no means excluded, in the Whigs of his school, sincere attachment both to principle and party. Statesmen of this order may succeed in the end, as Lord Northbrook did, in inspiring the English public with complete confidence in their wisdom and integrity, but without the gift of eloquent or persuasive speech they can hardly win their way to the highest political station. And Lord Northbrook was singularly devoid, for a man of his real cultivation and wide reading, of the power of fluent or literary expression, whether in speaking or writing. Allied to this defect was the reserve which was a marked feature of his character, a reserve springing partly from shyness, partly from a proud humility of mind which in middle life at all events gave an impression to the general public of cold aloofness, very far removed from the truth.

What was there in his case to set against such drawbacks as these? I do not lay any special stress on the inherited position which gave to Lord Northbrook what is nevertheless the incalculable advantage of early initiation into great affairs, for he shared this advantage with a larger number of contemporaries similarly situated than would be the case to-day. Nor was the almost unbroken ascendency during his early years of the party with which he was connected an unmixed benefit to his career, for he had to fight his way against exceptionally strong competition at a time when the overwhelming preponderance of political ability was on the liberal side.

But the training which he received under the Whig statesmen of an earlier generation was precisely that best suited to one of his practical turn of mind, and he emerged from it with an aptitude for the conscientious and business-like despatch of official work which was one of his greatest assets as a politician. He liked administrative work, order,

detail. "The best man of business I ever served under" was the verdict of one distinguished civil servant, and it is echoed by most of those with whom he was officially associated. Of his method of dealing with any difficult question which arose several instances have already been given[1] and little further need therefore be said. But the check which he placed upon his natural inclination on such occasions to come to a rapid and perhaps premature decision was due not only to his eminent fair-mindedness and impartiality, but also to the wish to anticipate and disarm opposition and, by conciliating divergent views, to carry through the particular bit of work on which he was engaged. Lord Northbrook's diplomatic skill was a little-noticed feature of his character, and it is another instance of the superiority of direct and straightforward dealing to the tortuous manœuvring often associated with this art. So far, it may be said, he was merely a great official; but what differentiated him from the official and, together with his unquestioned ability and life-long experience of important public affairs, gave him his great position as a trained ruler of men was his self-reliance. He never in India or elsewhere allowed himself to be, or seem to be, under the influence of other people; he never appeared to feel the weight of responsibility; and his confidence in his own carefully formed judgment was an important element in the confidence which he inspired in others.

One other qualification he had as a ruler, the capacity for sympathy. He was no pedant or bureaucrat, but a true man with great natural warmth and vivacity of disposition and with the strongest human sympathies. None of those who were closely associated with him either in

[1] See *e.g.* pp. 68–9 and 101–2 as regards Indian decisions, and p. 231 as regards Home Rule.

family or official life failed to appreciate this truth, which was too often hidden from the wider circle of his contemporaries by the reserve of his usual demeanour in society and by his lack of the power of self-expression. But as sometimes happens in such cases the poorer classes, as well as individuals among them, instinctively appreciated his simplicity, his straightforwardness, his large-heartedness. They understood him as he understood them. His Falmouth constituents were devoted to him. In four short years his "sympathetic and genuine spirit," as Sir Stewart Bayley described it, touched the heart of the Indian masses. After his death Dr. Fearon at a great county gathering in Winchester gave a striking instance of what I mean.

"About three weeks ago," he said, "I happened to be addressing a large gathering of working men and working women in one of the poorest and least favoured districts of Southampton. I was speaking to them of the sanctity of honest work, and in that connection I quite incidentally introduced the name of Lord Northbrook and at once from all parts of the hall a loud cheer went up which was obviously quite spontaneous and obviously came from their hearts."

Lord Northbrook would probably be classed as a type of statesman which is rapidly disappearing from English political life, but it may be doubted whether such a notion would be just. An aristocratic Whig he certainly was by training and temperament, but if that designation implies ignorance of, or antipathy to, popular needs and aspirations it does not properly describe him. For the qualities which distinguished him—notably this gift of human sympathy, and his ingrained habit of looking at new questions and problems with a single eye to the public good and judging of them on their merits apart from preconceived ideas or class feeling—made him, as his later career at all events

showed, a leader of the kind that still appeals to the popular instinct far more strongly than is always realised.

Before leaving the subject of Lord Northbrook's characteristics as a statesman I may be allowed to quote two appreciations, neither of them mere eulogies nor written for publication here, which sum up and supplement what has been said. Lord Welby's view is none the less valuable for the note of criticism it contains :

"What struck me about Lord Northbrook was his essentially Baring character, rather unsympathetic outwardly, certainly very undemonstrative, with tendency to strong prepossessions, some would say prejudices, which marred in some respects the equity of his judgment. But subject to that qualification very just, perhaps a trifle severe in his judgment of men, but eminently just and always anxious to do justice. He had to my mind the great quality of the old Whig statesman, a carelessness as to ephemeral public opinion. He was not, I think, very far-seeing, and there was a perhaps certain limitation in the range of his mind. Indisposed to speculative or abstract ideas in politics he did not fully appreciate that such ideas are often public opinion in the process of formation which the practical statesman should study and understand in order to guide and moderate it as it develops into force. But he was firm and thorough, able to get to a practical conclusion and determined in carrying it out. *Au fond* a liberal, and a firm liberal of the older type. It is needless to say that he was an upright gentleman in every sense of the word. I think he had less vanity than most of us, for every man born of woman is vain in some point, but his eyes were very little turned inward ; and in taking his course he was actuated by his judgment of what ought to be done regardless of its result to himself. I think he had great financial ability, and that was his main distinction, strengthened by the tenacity of character which he possessed in an eminent degree.

"I should call him a notable specimen of the statesman of the second degree, I might almost say a noble specimen."

The line between intellect and character, mental and moral temperament, is always difficult to draw; but particularly so in the case of Lord Northbrook. The following account by Lord Cromer of his qualities as a statesman lays eloquent stress on some features of his moral character which have not been fully emphasised in the preceding pages:—

"The fact that he was a bad public speaker would probably have prevented him from ever rising to the first rank in English public life. Further, his want of knowledge of the world, which was largely due to the genuine simplicity of his own character, detracted in some degree from his usefulness as a statesman more especially in the direction of making him a faulty judge of men. But these trifling defects were more than compensated by his high attachment to principle, by his loathing for anything that was in the slightest degree mean or dishonourable, and by the sterling straightforwardness of his acts and thoughts in every relation of life. Few men have ever acted more persistently and conscientiously throughout their lives up to the Stoic principle of *nil bonum nisi verum*. Few could with greater sincerity use the fine lines which Homer puts into the mouth of Achilles:—

> ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κεῖνος ὁμῶς Ἀΐδαο πύλῃσιν
> ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθῃ ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἄλλο δὲ εἴπῃ.[1]

"I have never known any one animated with a higher sense of public duty, and more wholly regardless of personal consequences which might result to himself from any acts which he might perform or opinions which he might express. Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff quotes in his diary

[1] Il. ix. 312. He is hateful to me as the Gates of Hades who thinks one thing in his mind, and utters another.

(vol. ii. p. 293) a saying of Father Strickland to the following effect: 'One may do a great deal of good in this world if one does not care who gets the credit of it.' I have come across very few people in my public career who have really acted on this principle. It is one from which Lord Northbrook never departed. So long as any work he had in hand were done he was well content that others, far less deserving than himself, should reap the honour of doing it. Self-advertisement, the curse of the present day and the latest born child of a somewhat despicable vanity, was absolutely foreign to his proud self-reliant but eminently modest nature. I have never heard him boast of any success he had achieved himself, and though a warm defender of any friend or subordinate who he thought required support, he was generally parsimonious in his praise of others. He considered that virtue was its own reward, and held with the old Duke of Wellington that a public servant did not deserve any excessive praise for doing his duty."

Much of what has been said of Lord Northbrook as a statesman applies to his character in private life. There was the same simplicity unselfishness and high-mindedness, the same shyness and personal dignity. From the Barings he doubtless derived his sound judgment and his faculty for finance and business; and in his active mind and capacity for detail he greatly resembled his ancestor, the first Sir Francis, to whom, if one may judge from the portraits, he bore some likeness in feature and expression, while in his general interests and devotion to public duty he had much in common with his father. With all this, however, he represents a new and in a sense more distinguished type in the history of the family which has been slightly sketched in a preceding chapter, differing from his predecessors in many marked traits, both physical and moral, doubtless derived from his Grey ancestry. He was a man of high

spirit and much native energy, buoyant and cheerful in disposition in spite of severe private sorrows; and there was in him a strain of quickness and obstinacy of temper which the discipline of life taught him to keep generally under severe control, but which added force and authority to his personality. Like many men of strong reserved natures he mellowed and expanded with years. He would take trouble to put shy people at their ease, and talk to those who seemed neglected. He was not only respected but loved by all who came for any reason into intimate relation with him. Private secretaries and A.D.C.'s all speak of him in the same terms of absolute devotion. Many who went to him in difficulties could tell of the advice and help he gave, of the confidence inspired in them by his judgment, of the open-handed generosity which he himself so studiously concealed. "I think I may say," writes Sir Edward Jenkinson, "that his chief characteristic was kindliness and thoughtfulness about others. He was always thinking how he could be kind to and help others, and when he had found a deserving case or had made a promise to any one applying to him for help he never forgot it." The great influence he exercised was that of example rather than precept, the example of sound sense, active public spirit, unselfish interest in others and simple dignity of life, certainly not that of a preacher or moralist. Nothing was more remarkable in him than his enjoyment of life on its lighter as well as its more serious side. Many busy men have found relaxation in books society and amusement of an incongruous, and sometimes even unworthy, kind. Lord Northbrook's mind was too well balanced for such distractions as these. The interests and occupations into which he threw himself with so much zest have already been indicated. He had besides a keen sense of humour

and rather liked "chaff," and no one enjoyed a good story more than he. Although his life was largely spent with statesmen, officials, and men engaged in serious work, he generally preferred the company of his own domestic circle, of young people, of old friends, or that of an amusing gossipy man of the world such as Sir Henry Calcraft and his brother-in-law Colonel Napier Sturt, to society of a more intellectual kind ; and his evenings were less often spent in conversation than in games of cards of which he was fond. In conversation however on social or political matters he was an eager questioner and liked to hear other people's opinions, and his own talk upon occasion, when for instance he found himself in company with an old friend like Lord Carlingford or happened to be engrossed in some question of the hour, was full of interest from the accuracy of his memory the extent of his reading and the variety of his experiences. It was at the same time singularly free from personalities. He followed the sensible rule which he himself laid down for his daughter's guidance when she first entered society.

"In conversation," he wrote, "take care not to be induced to say sharp things of other people. There is no need to say you like people if you don't, but there are very few people in the world who have not some good quality or another ; and at any rate we ought all of us to think sufficiently ill of ourselves to prevent us from picking out the faults of others. The habit grows upon people especially if they are quick and clever, but it carries with it its own punishment, for no people are really more unpopular however amusing they may be than those who say sharp things of others, and no people are more generally liked than those who never do so."

He liked to have young people about him, children and

pretty and attractive women ; and any promising young man was sure of his sympathetic interest. With them he seemed always more at his ease and his manner was perfect. To show his tolerance of the impetuosity of youth, the following anecdote is worth quoting :—

"He was staying at Achnacarry in the early '80's and met there one of Cameron of Lochiel's nephews, an Eton boy who happened to live near Portsmouth and who was very keen on naval and seafaring matters. With the audacity of youth, and a certain amount of rough and ready knowledge gleaned from intercourse with men and ships near his home, the boy joined in the conversation which was proceeding about the state of the Navy, little realising that Lord Northbrook was First Lord of the Admiralty. 'Captain A. had said this, and Captain B. had said that,' stated the boy. His information must therefore be correct. Such and such a class of ships were useless, and dangerous, whereas the number of another class should be doubled. The Admiralty of course was to blame in many matters. It was behind the times, and wanting in energy and foresight. The First Lord smilingly seemed to accept the corrections and statements of his young friend, and in his charming manner even encouraged the Etonian to dilate still further on the subject, which he perceived he had at heart. Eventually towards the end of dinner the boy began to realise he had been lecturing the head of the Admiralty and the member of the Cabinet responsible for naval affairs. He naturally felt ashamed at his daring to contradict so great a personage, but the charm of Lord Northbrook very soon softened any misgiving, and the First Lord and the Etonian became fast friends from that day—a friendship which lasted during all the years till the time of the former's death ; and the young man afterwards followed his mentor in political and county affairs more devotedly perhaps than Lord Northbrook ever realised."[1]

[1] The present Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.

Another, who was brought in early life into contact with Lord Northbrook through family relationship, gives an account of the manner in which his way of handling big questions in conversation struck a young man.[1]

"Lord Northbrook's influence during his later years over the young men of his generation was deep and lasting. The first impression which he made on them was of a certain cynicism in his outlook on the affairs of the day; but it very soon became apparent to those who knew him that cynicism was the last word to apply to his mind and thought. He resolutely refused to be carried away by first impressions on any new subject; he had an ingrained suspicion of shouting with the crowd. Two instances of this may be given. The present writer happened to be staying with him at the time when the Jameson Raid started. There was a well-nigh universal shout during the first day or two both in the press and in society in support of Dr. Jameson, who was supposed to be going to rescue the women and children. Lord Northbrook's comment was, first of all, were we quite sure of the object of the Raid? and even if we were, was it at all calculated to secure the end supposed to be in view? He hazarded the opinion that the Raid would fail completely, and would be followed by a war in earnest.

"Again, when the fiscal controversy was started by Mr. Chamberlain in May of 1903 politicians divided themselves immediately into sharply opposing camps, and were bitterly angry with all those who would not declare themselves on one side or the other. When the matter was being hotly discussed at his house in the early stages of the controversy, he, a life-long Free Trader, was confidently appealed to for his opinion. He drily replied that it was 'a very proper subject for English gentlemen to differ about.' He then proceeded to investigate the whole matter *de novo*, but until he had done so would not express a

[1] Col. J. B. Seely, M.P., son-in-law of Col. H. Crichton.

definite opinion. Ultimately, as is well known, he decided that the case for Free Trade had been strengthened by the events which had taken place since its adoption, and declared himself unhesitatingly against the new proposals.

"In a word, his outlook on life was to refuse to commit himself to any opinion and resulting action until he saw his way quite clearly, but if and when the right course seemed clear, to devote his whole energies to the end in view.

"It was for this reason, as he once told the present writer, that he threw himself with so much earnestness (and with such striking success) into the cause of county government in Hampshire. Here he saw his way plainly, knew that he could render help which no other man could give, and, at a time of life when most men take their ease, was to be found day after day attending meetings, writing long letters, holding conferences, from early till late, in furtherance of good county government."

I cannot bring these notes on Lord Northbrook's character to a close without reference to an aspect of it which, though it inspired his life, was never obtruded on public notice. His religious faith became a part of his very being, and like his whole character was simple, sincere and strong. At every crisis of his life he found in it comfort and support, and a part of his day was always given to religious thought and reading. A curious detail is revealed by his private diary, every day of which during his four years in India and in later life is headed by a text chosen by himself from the Bible. He read and re-read Newman's and Robertson's sermons and noted the dates on which he had done so in the volumes. He was a student of scriptural commentaries and criticism. Yet no man was less perplexed by religious difficulties and dissensions. He had, as the Archbishop justly observes, "the childlike spirit in matters of faith"; and in this fact lies

the explanation of the toleration which was his eminent characteristic. In India he had taken much interest in missionary work, and on his return he stated on one occasion the effect which his study of that work had produced upon his mind. Presiding (on May 9, 1879) at an annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society, at which he ventured to speak a word in favour of Roman Catholic Missions, he said, "It has often struck me, as it has no doubt most seriously-minded men who visit India, that the difference of dogma between different societies of Christian faith sink into insignificance when you are brought face to face with the great Hindu and Mohammedan religions." The future of Christian teaching in India often occupied his thoughts, and in one of his letters speculating on the subject while in India he wrote: "My feeling is that the Christian Church of India will not be Roman Catholic or Protestant, but will be founded on more general principles immediately deduced from the New Testament." It was this idea which doubtless led him to compile and publish towards the close of his life a little volume for the use of the Natives of India, entitled "The Teaching of Jesus Christ in His own Words," which had an immense circulation both in English and in several Eastern languages. Lord Northbrook's success in reconciling opinions on the Education Committee of the County Council was due to this same large toleration of view, a toleration far indeed removed from the toleration born of indifference. No one who ever walked across the park at Stratton with the old statesman to the church which he had helped to build, and watched his participation in the service, could have failed to recognise the unquestioning and unshakable strength of his religious convictions.

In this respect and in some other traits Lord North-

brook's later years recall much of what Bishop Creighton has recorded of Sir George Grey's old age. It is true that there were many points of contrast between the two, both in their natural gifts and the outward circumstances of their careers, and that in Lord Northbrook's life there was far from being any period of that "absolute and complete" retirement in which Sir George Grey's final years were spent. They resembled one another, however, not only in their simple piety and tolerance but in the width of their interests, in their cultivation and love of good literature, in the discretion and moderation to which they had disciplined themselves, in their hatred of personal gossip, in their scrupulous avoidance of the fault of attributing unworthy motives in the discussion of public events in which they had been concerned, in their true courtesy founded upon unselfishness, in the vivacity and youthfulness of their minds and their free and open intercourse with young people, in the manner in which they liked to elicit, and would defer to, the opinions of others. "No subject was too trivial for Sir George Grey's interest," says the Bishop, "provided it had a practical aim. . . . I do not think that he knew what it was to feel bored." The remark is singularly applicable to Lord Northbrook. Both, in short, were pre-eminent examples of the kind of character which, from a constant and instinctive adherence to high ideals of life and conduct, becomes more impressive with increasing age and experience ; and both had a rich reward in the benefits they conferred and the ennobling influence they exercised upon others, in the honour and affection with which they were surrounded, and in the inner serenity and contentment of mind which crowned their declining years.

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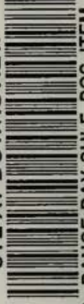
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