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Depression in the West Indies *Free Trade the Only Remedy*.
Written for the Cobden Club
By C. S. Salmon
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Depression in the West Indies.

Free Trade the Only Remedy.

THE depression in trade which has been more or less felt all over the world for some time past, has its origin in well-known, but complicated conditions of supply and demand in the various markets and centres of production. As no arrangements, however elaborately made, will enable a community to be forever exempt from the ill consequences of bad seasons and unsatisfactory markets, or guard it from the effects of the competition and rivalry of other people, it is important to note the countries whose economic laws and conditions best enable them to meet adversity. The methods employed may be such as to enable a community to struggle through difficulties without any eventual loss of power and energy, and to bear with calmness and courage the ills that cannot be avoided. Anyone who has a practical knowledge of the condition of the industrial classes in continental Europe and in England will be struck with the fact that in the latter, where the pressure of population is felt even in the best of times, where competition is keenest, and where, perhaps, habits of personal saving and general family thrift are by comparison little practised, food and clothing and the complicated necessities of an advanced civilisation are more abundantly available, are of a higher standard, and are used by the people in larger proportions, than in any other country in the world, except the United States and some of our colonies. The people of England are evidently better off under a bad condition of markets for the sale of the products of industry, and when earnings are low and the labourer only partially employed, than their continental neighbours. If we consider the constant increase and consequent pressure of the population compared with France, for instance, where there is no increase, and, therefore, no such pressure, the distinction becomes striking. For our neighbours are exceedingly thrifty, hard-working, and intelligent workers. The vast majority of the British nation has accepted this result as practically and entirely due to free trade, which has enabled the working classes to procure food and the chief commodities of life at lower rates than can be had in almost any other country.

I hope to show in this short pamphlet that the same system which has made it possible for England to hold her own against the world, and against specially adverse conditions, will also enable our West Indian colonies to emerge eventually from their present dangerous state into a prosperous future.

The general impression about the industries followed by the people of our West Indian colonies is not a correct one. The popular notion is that the work to be done is purely agricultural and that it is exceedingly easy for a human being to exist comfortably out there by doing little work and earning little money; that, in fact, food can be almost picked up by the way-side and the struggle for existence is reduced to a minimum. As a matter of fact the industries pursued are quite half manufacturing industries. The making of sugar or rum from the cane, as it ought to be made, and as it must now be made to command a market, is not a less elaborate process than that which is followed in many of our factories. In fact the preparation of almost any produce for the great markets is daily becoming a process depending more and more on skill and machinery, and is a very different affair indeed from the growing of corn and digging of potatoes. The ideal notion we mostly have of how the black man lives is also equally far from the stern reality. Nature is great everywhere, and her greatness and potential riches are perhaps more abundantly observable under tropical suns than in temperate climates. There is clearly more foliage if fewer flowers. Fruits and some natural productions, that man may eat but cannot subsist on, may be occasionally more abundant and richer to the sight; but it is open to doubt whether they are, on the whole, more substantial than what may be picked up in our English woods. At any rate, the clearing away of ancient forests from the proximity of his abode, and the ownership of most of the good land by individuals, as well as the necessities of civilisation, have made it as impracticable for the negro of our West Indies to count on nature to help him in the way of food as for the modern Englishman to look to acorns and nuts as a supplementary diet. I have found it necessary to say this because of the false impression abroad, due to statements made by people who know better, but who seemingly cannot avoid saying again how easy it is to live in the tropics, simply because it has been always said.

The food of the people of our West Indian colonies has to be imported from foreign countries in a far larger proportion than is the case even with England, and there would be starvation in the Islands of the West Indies within a short time were the supply to be cut off by untoward circumstances. In some of the Islands, however, a portion of the population undoubtedly does subsist almost wholly on roots of their own growth and on salted fish. The appearance and physique of these people is inferior. Anæmia is largely and widely prevalent among them, they are physically unfitted for a severe remunerative labour, and diseases and leprosy are prevalent. These facts were reported by Commissioners some years ago, and the last Royal Commissioners also stated: "Medical evidence is strong on the subject of signs of decreasing vitality in the negro race." (Jamaica Report, page 63.) Some people seem to imagine the negro so made by nature that he can be treated differently to men of other races, and that heavy and reliable labour can be got out of him without the expense of getting him the same food other men want. But nature is inexorable and her laws are not to be thus trifled with; she has already done much for the black labourer in enabling him to work in tropical heat and under burning suns; but this is very wasting work for the frame even of a black man. It is not necessary to study the question profoundly to see that the only cause of the loss of vitality complained of in the negro race (which must and will always continue to be the chief labouring population of the West Indian Islands) is entirely due to the want of a sufficiency of proper food. It is practicable enough, no doubt, to exist in the tropics on little food, as may be done elsewhere, but the labour a man can give will be exactly proportioned to the sufficient or insufficient quality and quantity of his food. A low-class food means a low-class energy. To this cause may be distinctly traced the want of energy and the listlessness so much complained of among the labouring population of the West Indies. Even in Europe, where the incentives to labour are as powerful as they can be made among communities of men, the working classes, when they find the necessaries of an adequate and decent subsistence are almost beyond the reach of ordinary labour, are liable to fall away in energy, intelligence, and general aptitude for work. All life, movement, spirit of progress and love of work disappear, and the people, and perhaps the race, are held culpable for a condition of things which Englishmen themselves would succumb to under similar circumstances.

The negro is a powerful man by nature, one of the most powerful that exist. It is, indeed, doubtful whether races can be found anywhere of greater physical strength than those to be met with in Africa. This characteristic has been built up by generations of men whose surroundings were favourable to physical development. It was doubtless due to this that the African race was so sought after as slaves and they fetched higher prices as slave labourers than any other people ever did before. They transformed the West Indies into gardens, and made millionnaires of their owners.

The same race now peoples the West Indies in larger numbers than ever, and yet the condition of the Islands is unsatisfactory; their industries are not well-sustained, and the position of all classes is precarious. Why is this? How comes it that islands by their position within easy reach of the best markets in the world, having the most suitable soil and climate for the raising of every description of valuable produce, inhabited by a labouring population of unsurpassed qualities, and with England behind them as the mother country, should be verging on bankruptcy and ruin?

The answer is simple enough. By artificial means food is made so scarce and dear, and the inflow of capital is so restricted, that both the money necessary to support the people's industries and the food the labourer should live on are placed out of reach; the local planter cannot keep up his cultivation to its proper standard for want of capital, and the local labourer cannot live decently because of the high customs tariffs. The market prices of most tropical commodities are now so low that the grower and manufacturer find it difficult to place them at a profit, at the same time these commodities supply scarcely any nourishment to the labouring population, while customs duties make bread-stuffs artificially dear.

The remedy required in the West Indies is the application to them of our national policy. In his work, "Free Trade and Protection," page 52, the late Professor Fawcett said:—

"If by making food and other agricultural produce dearer, the general remuneration of capital and labour is increased, the farmers and their labourers must share the advantage with the rest of the community, and there will be an advance both in agricultural profits and in agricultural wages. If, on the contrary, it can be shown that by making food dearer, every industry is carried on under greater difficulties, and labour and capital become generally less productive, then the farmers and their labourers will not be able to escape the loss caused by this decline in industrial prosperity, if the returns in their capital and labour be diminished. It can, I think, be conclusively shown that the inevitable consequence of making food dear must be to diminish the productiveness both of labour and capital, and that in all industries including agriculture there will be a decline both in profit and wages. It is not more certain that the returns to industry will be lessened by making food artificially dear; than it is that the efficient working of a machine will be impeded if unnecessary obstacles are thrown in the way of its free movement. Suppose, for instance, that, by restricting importation, bread, butter, cheese, and other such articles of general consumption were all made 40 per cent, dearer, a labourer

would find that what he was able before to purchase for 5s. now cost him 7s. In this event one of two things must occur. If his wages are not advanced in consequence of this rise in the price of food, a most serious loss will be inflicted on him. His wages, though nominally the same as before, are really greatly reduced, for he finds that all that portion of his wages which he spends in procuring food and other articles which are made artificially dear, has lost a considerable part of its purchasing power. The loss which will be thus inflicted on him will be more serious than that which others will have to bear; but it can be readily shown that the injury which is done to the labourers, will spread far and wide over the rest of the community."

The charges on bread-stuffs in the West Indies, on importation, make them 40 per cent, dearer, as a rule, than they would be were there no customs charges. The revenues raised throughout these Islands have trebled during the present generation. As about a quarter of these revenues are raised on imported food, the charges on the labouring classes have largely increased. Wages, meanwhile, have remained stationary where they have not declined.

The Professor also says, page 117, what could not be more apt if written expressly for these Islands:—

"When the commodities which are subjected to a duty are those in general use, the effect of this duty is precisely the same as if an income tax were levied from the entire community. Such a tax cannot be adjusted or equalised as is the case with the income tax in our own country; small incomes cannot be exempted, for, however poor a man may be, the tax will fall with unerring certainty on all that portion of his income or his wages which are expended in the purchase of those articles which are protected."

It must be borne in mind that the West Indian industries are practically manufacturing industries. An agricultural people are supposed to grow food chiefly, and have enough for themselves in the first instance. Sugar and other produce is grown and prepared mainly for export, indeed entirely so, and all the arguments against food tariffs that obtain in a purely manufacturing country apply therefore in even greater force to these Islands.

All the evils which were exposed years ago in the course of the free trade agitation in England exist in the West Indies, and prove the necessity for the application of that kind of fiscal legislation which here is predominant.

The evidence taken in the Islands by the late Royal Commission is at times conflicting enough as regards the individual opinions of the parties examined; but there must have been something in the balance of fact against the system in operation for the Commissioners to recommend a lowering of the tariffs on food, the abolition of export duties on produce, and the suppression of the Encumbered Estates Court, or at least its modification so as to do away with the monopoly so long held by the merchants. Mr. McLeod, a Jamaica planter, said:—

"The greatest want of the country is cheap living. I have seen men after two or three hours' labour in a complete state of exhaustion and staggering from weakness. I attribute this to the want of proper food. I am speaking of the class who really labour, but from the dearness of imported articles cannot procure for themselves, and those dependent on them, the necessaries of life."

Mr. George Solomon said:—

"The total abolition of duty on flour would place it in the power of people to buy a barrel of common-grade flour at 20s., and any half measures will benefit the importer only."

Lower-grade flours only are imported into the West Indies. This causes the duties of customs—which are specific duties—to tell heavily on them. The Jamaica duty of 8s. a barrel is often equal to 40 per cent, added to the first cost of flour at New York. The proposed reduction of the duty to 4s. 2d. a barrel will be equal to about 25 per cent, added to its price, at the present cost of flour. The customs duties levied on cornmeal are equal to a tax of 18 to 20 per cent, on its value at New York. The Royal Commissioners recommend the retention of these duties.

Of course those who held that the negro did not require breadstuffs believed the tariffs did no harm. There are, however, other classes of people in the Islands, who have very limited means indeed, and to whom breadstuffs are even now the staff of life, and these people—the whites and the half-castes—feel the high prices keenly, and they and their families suffer much in consequence.

Thirty years ago provisions were much cheaper in the West Indies, and in many instances they could be purchased for half their present cost.

A duty on one breadstuff necessitates a duty on all of them. A duty was put on made food—biscuits, &c.—to protect the revenue derived from flour. For the same reason a duty had to be put on wheat. Messrs. Varley and Robinson say:—

"If it had not been for duty on wheat, they would have imported it, used their own machinery, and made bread cheaper."

What are the amounts of the duties complained of? They are high. In some of our richer and greater colonies there are import duties equally onerous. But wages are also very high in these places, and this enables

the people to meet the heavy cost of living. The duties levied on wheat and Indian corn and their flours, on biscuits, rice, salt fish, and meat in the West Indies averaged £288,000 a year for the years 1880-1-2. It must also be borne in mind that these duties tell more heavily than they would in England, because in the tropics provisions are more perishable, and the duties have to be paid at once in coin where cash is scarce and commands a very high value, the importer adds charges which much enhance the cost of food—often as much as 50 per cent, to the consumer—and at times there is a scarcity and the quality is bad. It is unnecessary here to give all the complicated details of the elaborate customs tariffs of the West Indies. It will suffice to say that from 20 to 30 per cent, of the revenues are raised on corn, flour, rice, fish, and meat. It is as if the people of Great Britain paid over £20,000,000 a year customs duty on the food imported. It is proposed to lessen these charges in the Islands where they are highest to a common uniform standard by which only about 20 per cent, of the revenue will be derived from this source. It is almost certain the change will bring but little relief to the labourer, for any duty on such articles will act as an impediment to their importation, and the difference in the retail price will be only slightly observable. In the Islands where the duties are now least prices are often as high as in those Islands where the tax is at its maximum. The lb. of bread varies in price from 2½d. to 3½d., the greater weight for the money and the lesser cost being often due to adulteration by manioc-flour and other starch flours.

Present cost of food in Jamaica:—Inferior quality rice, 2½d. to 3d. per lb.; cornmeal, 4½d. per quart; wheaten bread, 3d. per lb.; butter, 2s. per lb.; fresh beef, from 6d. per lb.; mutton, 1s. per lb.; salt beef and pork, 9d. per lb.; fish, 3d. to 6d. per lb., according to quality.

The returns show that the amount of rice consumed per head of general population in Trinidad is 123 lb. a year, and in British Guiana 182 lb. These are the colonies where the estates are largely worked by Indian coolies imported to labour under indenture, and these people live mostly on rice. The average for the labouring population will be about 100 lb. per head a year in Trinidad, and 150lb. in British Guiana. In Barbados the average is 54 lb. a head for the general population, and somewhat less for the labouring portion; in Jamaica it is only 17 lb. a head. In Trinidad the general population consume 105 lb. of wheaten flour per head, but the share of the labouring population is estimated to be only 33lb. per head; and in the Island of St. Christopher, where the average per head is 104lb., the labouring population has only 26 lb. In Jamaica, where the average is 41 lb. of wheaten flour, the labouring population only gets 14lb.; and in Barbados, where the average is 49 lb., the labourer gets 12 lb. of wheaten flour only in one year. Antigua and Barbados consume the most cornmeal, and this is only an average per head of 52 lb. to 54 lb. a year. In Jamaica and Trinidad it is 12 lb. per head a year. In Jamaica the labouring population consume therefore 28 lb. of breadstuffs and 17 lb. of rice per head a year. The average in Barbados is 91 lb. of breadstuffs and 54 lb. of rice, and in Trinidad 57 lbs. of breadstuffs and 100 lb. of rice. These are three typical settlements from which the condition of the others may be somewhat fairly judged, but there are others worse off. If we compare these returns with those from other countries we shall find that the average grade of living is a very low one for the labouring class and manifestly insufficient for genuine labour. On the other hand, it is doubtful whether the amount of roots, fruit, and vegetables eaten by the labouring population in the Islands is much larger in quantity per head than what is consumed by the people of the United Kingdom and of the United States, who are supposed to live mainly on bread and meat. In Great Britain the average consumption of rice is quite 13 lb. ahead; and potatoes alone come to over 27 lb. ahead; and the people consume bread at the rate of over 450 lb. a head per annum. The population of the United States consume per head about 8 bushels of grain a year. Bread in the West Indies, to speak fairly, averages 3d. the lb. The lowering of duties recommended by the late Royal Commissioners may have a slight effect on retail prices, but the bad principle will continue in full force, and the value of good food will be still enormously enhanced, artificially, and will be beyond the reach of the people.

There is another aspect of the question, of much importance, that has now to be dealt with. It is, one may say, the common opinion, and it is also the opinion of the Royal Commissioners, and of many of the people examined by them, that breadstuffs are not necessary for the food of the West Indian labourer. It is said he prefers sweet potatoes, yams, bananas, and other tropical roots and fruits for his chief diet, and after that he prefers cornmeal, but that bread is not his natural food. There is a good deal of truth in this, inasmuch that he has never been able to get bread. In Africa the black man has manioc, and many substances prepared from its flour, as well as sweet potatoes, yams, and other roots, but he has also a good deal of rice and Indian corn, and large quantities of palm-oil. It is astonishing what a quantity of food a powerful full-grown negro will consume. But the question also involves the further point whether there is a sufficient and constant supply of these roots and fruits of good quality and at low prices to meet all the wants of the West Indian labourer, assuming that he can thrive on them alone while working on a sugar estate. This is where the whole evidence in favour of a root diet breaks down. It is abundantly evident that the quantity of root crops locally grown is in most localities wholly insufficient for the wants of the population, notwithstanding the complaints of planters that the negro spends much of his time in raising such crops for his wants and thereby denudes the labour market of its proper

supply of hands, and makes labour irregular, and sometimes scarce at critical periods. People also seem to forget that economic laws work the same in the West Indies as in other parts of the world; where bread and corn are dear, other food articles, more or less, even if it be some distance off, keep a proportion to them in value; for the West Indian labourer, after all has been said, does eat bread when he can afford to get it. But the difficulty of getting bread forces him to seek the other food, and thereby renders it more generally sought after and more costly to him than it would be were breadstuffs available. Sometimes these very root provisions are exported from an island where the people would be glad for them to remain, to another island where there is a higher market for them. The evidence from tropical labour generally overwhelmingly proves that the severer forms of such labour cannot be accomplished persistently and satisfactorily on a root diet; that is to say, the kind of labour now wanted in a cane-field by a planter who hopes to sell the produce he raises at a profit.

The nature and severity of the labour wanted in a sugar estate cannot be better described than by quoting the statement in McCulloch's Dictionary for the year 1882, article "Sugar":—

"We regard it as the merest illusion to suppose that the severe drudgery of sugar-planting will be ever efficiently carried on in the West Indies by really free labour."

This is not an unnatural sentiment, and it would occur to any humane man who saw the work being accomplished by the half-starved and ragged gangs of semi-exhausted human beings. But if he goes to the States, and elsewhere where the black labourer has ample food, he will see the same and even severer labour cheerfully and well done.

The people of the Southern States, where the labour is chiefly performed by the African race, do not admit that roots, and some salt fish with a limited supply of corn-flour, suffice to make a labourer efficient. The dietary there is chiefly bread and butter, fresh and salt pork, fried or boiled beef once or twice a week, baked or boiled potatoes and other vegetables, and a pint of coffee and milk. This without limit, and given three times a day. The efficiency of a man for hard work depends much on how he lives, and there is nothing in the climate of a warm or tropical country which will enable a man to work hard on a low diet. If the experience of the Southern States, where the people are comparatively prosperous, goes to prove that a liberal diet is necessary, the experience of the West Indies, where the people are not prosperous, is a proof that the inferior diet and lower standard of living make labour bad, or at all events so unreliable as to be inefficient.

What are the wages a labourer may earn in order to meet these conditions of life? In Jamaica the average for good labour on well-conducted estates is 1s. to 1s. 3d. a day (6s. to 7s. 6d. a week), according to class of labour, in the fields. Able-bodied women earn 10d. a day when their labour is wanted. In crop time, by extra work, 6d. to 1s. a day extra may be earned. In all other islands wages are about the same as in Jamaica; sometimes they may be a little higher and sometimes lower. We know that food is dear in the West Indies, and difficult to obtain by the labourer, and in the Southern States it is cheap and abundant. The wages paid to coloured labourers in the Southern States

"Encyclopaedia Americana" for 1883, article "Agriculture."

are \$12.10 a month in South Carolina, \$18.20 in Louisiana, \$12.86 in Georgia and North Carolina, \$13.96 in Virginia, and \$16.40 in Florida—quite an average of 2s. a day. In crop time this is doubled. With these figures it is easy to see that in the future it will be difficult for the West Indies to compete with these fertile districts where produce-growing is skilfully and energetically conducted and gives good profits. They will be beaten hereafter in the markets of the United States unless the complexion of things be altered; unless the people get cheap food to put them somewhat on a level with the others, to enable them to work better and earn more wages.

It matters very little practically, although in principle it has its value, to say that in the United States the tariffs are, in the main, imposed for purposes of protection, and in the West Indies for revenue purposes only. But I have also heard it said that the food tariffs in the West Indies did favour the growth of home provisions, by raising their selling price at all events, and the late Royal Commission alluded to the fact, and gave the opinion that a tax on land instead of on imported food would shift taxation from bread-stuffs to yams and plantains. If no corn, practically speaking, were grown in England, and a high duty on foreign flour made bread unprocurable by the people, would not a tax on land instead of on flour make potatoes and vegetables so dear that the fiscal change would be injurious to the labourer? This is one of the arguments employed in favour of keeping up the food tariffs. Another argument is that the labourer pays no other taxes, and this is the only way to get at him. A further reason, which destroys any value there may be in the previous one, but which, nevertheless, is often used almost in one breath by the same people, is that the tax does not affect the labourer, as he practically makes little use of breadstuffs. The Commissioners also say that food taxes in the West Indies cannot be looked on in the same light as in the United Kingdom, because the soil of the former can produce all the food necessary for double the present population, while in England at least one-half has to be imported. But this argument fails because at present there are practically no bread-stuffs or rice grown in the West Indies, and it would be folly to grow them, instead of raising sugar and other produce more suitable to the soil and climate,

for these foodstuffs can be had from the States at perhaps half the cost it would take to raise them in the Islands. And there are not enough root crops grown for one-twentieth of the population. Raising sugar and other produce pays better than growing yams and root foods, except occasionally, and in a small way. But these duties are protective in one sense: they protect the large landed proprietor and others who might fairly bear more of the public burdens, and they shift too large a portion of the taxation on to the already heavily-laden shoulders of the toiler. Those who can best bear it almost escape taxation, while they reap the most benefits from settled and orderly government. It is now proposed to tax land at 1s. per acre up to 100 acres, 6d. an acre from 100 to 500 acres, and 1½d. an acre for every acre over 500 acres. The peasant proprietor, the owner and cultivator of a small holding, being thus the most heavily taxed, and the large proprietor being less taxed. The reason given for this favouritism, as it must be called, is that the large owner will have much of his land in wood and pasturage, which is held not to be so valuable as cultivated ground. This can hardly be deemed a sound and valid reason. It is a direct tax on industry and enterprise in favour of the man who may choose to keep land for his pleasure, or for speculative purposes, or because he prefers keeping it in his own hands to letting others make a better use of it. Pasturage is valuable, and so are properly managed forests.

The freeing of breadstuffs, fish and meat, in fact what is—or ought to be—the food of the people, from any customs charges, will, of course, cause a serious loss of revenue. The difficulty is no doubt great, but it has been exaggerated. There are forms of taxation available that are now untouched. The facility of raising revenue by customs tariffs in the West Indies, where there was no educated public opinion strong enough to curb the fatal tendency, has resulted in an unusually large proportion of revenue being thus raised. Free trade principles are dominant in Great Britain, and are practised here because the people so will it, and are well informed enough to see the advantages and necessity of applying them. The influences that prevail in the West Indies are sectional, and the power is practically in the hands of classes who, in England, would not hesitate to reestablish protection, had they a like influence and control, and deemed it in their own interest to do so. The public mind of the Islands is also ignorant of what is really wanted; the people feel the pressure, but do not know of the remedies.

Fewer customs charges will cause a diminution of the expenditure of collection, and the force of events would, in the course of time, lead to a less public expenditure, not by diminution of salaries and less effectiveness of service, but by a further and needful concentration of offices. The various governments in the West Indies were founded when communication was difficult, and each island had therefore its own complete staff of officials. Recent federations have not altogether broken through long-established usage. With the aid of steam and the telegraph, administration might be made cheaper by concentration and the employment of fewer hands.

Taxes on real and personal property could be made to contribute a far larger share of revenue if they were imposed in the manner adopted by most civilised countries. A tax on food falls ultimately on the proprietor and cultivator, through his available labour being made inefficient. Customs charges are mostly unobserved in their immediate effects by the ignorant, who feel the pinch but do not trace whence it comes, and the well-to-do are directly little affected by them. The indirect consequences are those which are most mischievous. In their present low condition any direct taxes on the people would be exceedingly unpopular and perhaps be resented; they would deem them fresh charges and look upon any promised relief from other quarters as delusive. They see the cost of government increasing every decade, while the prosperity of the Islands shows no stable advance in any direction, and often a falling away. On the whole no conclusive reason has been shown why land should not pay more of the public revenue. If a choice of evils has to be made, there can be no doubt the food taxes do irreparable and far-reaching injury. While the Islands were undergoing the transformation into free trade centres of industry, by the abolition of these tariffs, it may be that an Imperial loan would be required to aid the administration. But the prosperity that would certainly follow on the adoption of our fiscal system in the West Indies would enable them before long to repay the aid given.

The West Indies are very anxious to have sure and remunerative markets in the United States and elsewhere for their produce, but it will be in vain to expect to have this boon permanently anywhere unless they can also take something equal in value in return. Payment in coin does not lead to so permanent a trade as payment by other commodities. No one owes the West Indies anything, and they cannot expect to be favoured above other people by selling what they produce at a profit and not taking a full equivalent. The West Indian food tariffs, as it happens, interfere with industries quite as much as protective tariffs and bounties do in other countries, but with more fatal results, for in the case of the West Indian Islands, it lessens the power and influence they would undoubtedly otherwise command in the markets of the United States and elsewhere as consumers. The entire abolition of vexatious and injurious tariffs long ago would have been the means of establishing a much larger trade with the States in necessary bread-stuffs, which it would have been the interest of every one to keep up, and sugar and other produce would have naturally gone in payment. The West Indian Islands may be sure of this, that no compact or treaty or arrangement with any Government will establish trade permanently on a

sound basis, unless it be the interest of the several dealers to carry it on. They can make it the interest not only of the dealers in the United States, but of those of the world generally to do business with them by adopting free trade principles, and abolishing tariffs that keep out commodities necessary for the people's welfare. They have now to buy their food dear, while they must sell their produce low, and they are consequently more heavily weighted than others in the competition. But can they expect permanently to establish a sound basis of prosperity by dealing with the question superficially, by the application of palliatives, and by special treaties with one State? If they set to work on sound principles of free trade with every country, they will not have to depend on any one market for their existence; they will be sure of themselves and of the products of their industry finding buyers in every market.

The tariffs on food not only interfere with and hinder the natural flow of supply and demand and the interchange of commodities, and therefore check trade and intercourse, but they lower the value of labour by lessening the purchasing power of wages, on which its physical strength depends. Mr. Mundella said in Parliament on the 31st of October last: "They must make Englishmen the most intelligent, the most thrifty, and the most competent workmen in the world, and then they would have nothing to fear from foreign competition." If the West Indies overlook the interests of the labourer so completely as they do now, they must not expect to succeed in competition with other countries which work on different lines.

Most of our West Indian settlements levy export duties on produce shipped from their ports. In their origin these duties were mostly intended to supply funds to support a local militia and yeomanry—sugar estates furnishing men, and the owners receiving for each man a grant of £25 or £30. Some of the export duties were imposed for the purposes of keeping up the Established Church and for assisting planters to get coolies from India. Taxes of this nature, for whatever object imposed, had little or no injurious results in the days of high prices for sugar, but in these days it is unnecessary to dwell on their ill-effects. The Imperial expenditure in the maintenance of the land and sea forces in the West Indies cannot be less than £400,000 a year, and the few militia and yeomanry maintained at local cost would be of no use whatever in case of war and invasion. Some people deem such forces useful should it ever become necessary to suppress risings or insurrectionary movements among the people. All evidence up to date shows not only the inexpediency of keeping up such a force for such an object, but that it would be valueless at an emergency. A reliable civil police should be all that is wanted to keep internal order in a British colony.

In Jamaica an export duty of 5s. 9d. is levied on every hogshead of sugar, 4s. 6d. on every puncheon of rum, and 6s. on every tierce of coffee, &c. In Trinidad the export duty is 6s. on a hogshead of sugar. Antigua, under three separate ordinances, charges 5s. for every hogshead of sugar exported. St. Christopher charges export duties not only on sugar, but also on rum, molasses, and cotton. St. Vincent and Grenada include cacao, arrowroot, and spices. The small island of Monserrat taxes everything exported. The Virgin Islands, having no other produce to levy an export duty on, tax the cattle and food they send to the neighbouring market of St. Thomas.

The Royal Commissioners have recommended the abolition of export duties in all the West Indian Islands.

Unless the principles which political and social science deem essential to progress, are inapplicable to our West Indian colonies with their mixed races, it must be evident that our laws with reference to land in these Islands are in themselves almost sufficient to account for their adverse condition. It is doubtful whether any continental nation would have admitted into its colonies a system of monopoly such as Free Trade England has allowed her merchants to hold in the West Indies. As some of our own institutions are more the result of unconscious and unobserved development than the product of direct legislation, so in these Islands, the Encumbered Estates Court, when formed in 1854, was a necessary and valuable institution, and the legislators who formed it, and the administrators who recommended and introduced it, had a well-founded hope that it would have had most useful results. It was intended that the owners of heavily encumbered estates, who were unable to cultivate them or pay their debts, should be forced to sell if their creditors so willed it, and the purchasers were to get a valid and unencumbered title. This was a sound measure, and should have had the beneficial effect of bringing free trade principles to bear on the transfer of land and in all dealings connected with it. But the practical working of the measure, after it had passed out of the hands of those who framed and introduced it, fell into the hands of men whose notions on the subject were not the same, and whose principles of justice had a somewhat different standard. The action of the Court has consequently had a quite different result from what was intended.

The West Indian Encumbered Estates Court was established in 1854 (17 & 18 Vict. cap. 117), and amended and continued (35 Vict. cap. 9). The Commissioners appointed under the Act first compelled the sale of all estates in England, but local commissioners were afterwards appointed in the Islands to see that sales should be carried out there if the applicant so desired it; but of course the applicant, if he be an English merchant, very rarely does desire this. An appeal lies to the Privy Council. It seems that the Court from the beginning applied a rule, founded on a decision of Lord Elgin in 1808 (*Scott v. Nesbitt*—14 Ves. 448), which gives priority of claim

to what is called the "consignees' lien" over any previous debt, or claim, or encumbrance, even if guaranteed by mortgage, or founded on a will or, a settlement This "consignees' lien" is, in other words, the amount, on a balance of account, that may be owed by a proprietor to a merchant who happens to be dealing with an estate—buying the sugar and giving advances in the regular course of business. If, therefore, any person who knows and has confidence in the owner of an estate lends him money to cultivate it, and it becomes consequently of value, he may find his investment a secure one for years; but if the owner has dealings afterwards with a merchant, and gets involved, this merchant—who is perfectly aware of the incumbrance existing on the estate before he dealt with its owner—can force the sale of the estate in the Encumbered Estates Court, and obtain priority for all his claims over all pre-existing claims. Sometimes no one bids for the property at the auction in London, and the merchant then buys it in for the amount of his debt, and the Court gives him a new and perfect title. The mortgagee loses everything. Should the estate by any will or settlement be charged with any payments for the benefit of widow or children, such claims will also be overridden by the merchant's lien, and entirely lost, unless, indeed, the amount realised by the sale should be in excess of the amount due to the merchant, an improbable contingency. It is obvious that a great injustice has been done to these Islands; they have been handed over, as it were, to a powerful corporation, and the consequences of this monopoly are seen in that want of development and that stagnation which is the only end possible to such a state of things.

The Royal Commissioners, in page 40 of "Windward Island Report," said:—

"The West India Committee in London, a body interested in, but certainly not resident in, the Islands, has on occasion claimed sufficient influence to advise the Imperial authorities that Ordinances passed by the Local Legislatures may be disallowed as being opposed to what this Committee consider to be the best interests of the Islands."

This great influence, wielded by absentees, and the representatives of one interest only, and that an interest often even opposed to the best interests of the people of the Islands, is entirely due to the action of the Encumbered Estates Court, which has thrown the land into the power of the mercantile class and has frightened away all other capital. There is another and obvious evil consequence arising from this monopoly, and that is that planters are forced to deal with merchants for advances, as being the only parties who can be secure of their money; consequently, the merchant can make what terms he pleases for the sale of produce and for freight. What is wanted here is the abolition of the Encumbered Estates Court, and let land be dealt with in the same way as any other form of property. Free trade principles applied to the land are absolutely essential to the prosperity of these Islands and their inhabitants.

The recent lamentable incident in the Island of Trinidad has drawn public attention in England to the fact that we have in some of our West Indian settlements large numbers of coolies.

At the Jubilee of the Anti-Slavery Society (1st August, 1884), Mr. Forster said:—

"It was the duty of the Anti-Slavery Society to keep watch on the condition of our freed negroes, freed slaves in the West Indies and also at the Cape, and it was abundantly their duty to keep a jealous eye on the efforts to introduce slavery in another form—sham emigration and sham contracts."

This is a very pregnant and suggestive statement. I shall here only deal with that part of it which refers to the bringing of coolies to our West Indian Islands, where there already exist more than enough black labourers (freed negroes and their descendants) for the purposes of cultivation.

Free trade principles applied to labour must mean that the rates of wages paid shall be left to work to their natural level by the ordinary rules of supply and demand. In the majority of the West Indian Islands the liberated Africans refused to work for planters on the conditions offered to them. It has been shown in this paper that these conditions were insufficient. The planter, thereupon, with the aid of the public taxes, and assisted also by the authority and weight of the Imperial Government, sought labourers in India, where wages are very low, and brought them to the West Indies, where wages are much higher. The imported coolie labourers are bound to work for their employers for a term of years. In recent times they have been well treated, and, for East Indians, well paid, well housed, and well fed. Coolies have not so many children as the liberated Africans; they have, consequently, not the same family obligations, and they pay no taxes.

The result of this system of coolie importation may be seen in the creation by it of two classes of colonies. We have colonies outwardly prosperous, such as British Guiana and Trinidad, but where all cultivation is practically carried on for absentee proprietors by coolies under indenture, and if there are time-expired coolies working for hire among them, the wages of these latter will be more or less determined by the rate of remuneration accorded to the indentured coolies. We have also colonies where Africans are more largely in the majority, but these people refuse to work except irregularly, because the wages offered them are less than they demand. Coolies have also been imported into some of these latter settlements—into Jamaica, for instance—with the result of yet further demoralising the African labourers. Had the English Government left the employers of labour in our West Indian Islands to their own devices, they would undoubtedly have found means to conciliate the liberated Africans in these Islands, because the necessities of both parties would have

urged them to reconcile their interests. The labourers would have received more pay, or the food taxes would have been abolished, or a superior method of cultivation would have been adopted, or all these three results might have been brought about, as has been the case in the United States.

Mr. G. D. Godkin, in the *Contemporary Review* for November, 1883, in an article entitled "The Southern States since the War," says:—

"The negro race does the work of the country—the sowing, hoeing, ploughing, picking, and reaping—apparently better than it ever did, and the black population has increased from 5,639,749 in 1871 to 9,000,031 in 1880."

It is stated in the same article that since emancipation the cotton product of all the States taken together has increased by 90 per cent., that of wool by 51.7 per cent., that of wheat by 407 per cent., and that of Indian corn by 99 per cent. Mr. Godkin further says:—

"There is no difficulty in obtaining black labour of good quality by those who pay wages regularly in cash."

The blacks of African race are showing themselves capable citizens in every form of industry.

Our West Indian Islands are inhabited by exactly the same races, but a similar result has not followed their emancipation, because we have acted in an opposite spirit to that which has been followed out in the States. We make the higher-class foods so artificially dear that the labourer cannot procure them, and we introduce into the Islands another race of labourers who are forced by circumstances to be subservient to their masters on conditions the native-born labourers cannot afford to accept. Mr. Herbert Spencer has said:—

"Unless the mass of citizens have sentiments and beliefs in something like harmony with the social organisation in which they are incorporated, the organisation cannot continue."

In our West Indian Islands the native races are all Christians, and if they were given a fair chance they would work and prosper materially, as they do in the States. The Indian coolie is either a Mahomedan or he belongs to one of the religions of India, and he has nothing in common with the people he is brought along.

The Royal Commissioners recommend a large State-subsidised and State-supervised importation of coolies into all the West Indian Islands, because they consider the native labourers to be non-available for planting purposes. At the present prices of food and rate of wages the Commissioners are perhaps right in concluding that the African will not work. But the West Indies will never be prosperous colonies under a system of emigration which is only a disguised form of giving a bounty to the planter. An African able and willing to labour can do the work of two coolies. He is appreciated elsewhere, and he is leaving our Islands for Central America in thousands. Are we sure the coolie, when he is able to do so, will not follow him when he finds he also can get better wages by so doing? The statement that the African will not work is disproved by all we see in the Southern States; it is also disproved by the example of Barbados, an island into which no coolies were ever imported, and it is now the most highly-cultivated and the most civilised and enlightened of all our West Indian settlements. Mr. Mackinnon, the Manager of Government Railways in Jamaica, stated to the Commissioners that he preferred black men (Africans) to whites, because they did not drink, and were more reliable and cheaper. In Jamaica 60 per cent. of the total value of exports is the produce of the sugar-cane; but out of the whole population of the island—580,000—only about 5 per cent., or 29,000 people, are engaged in its cultivation. With such figures it is impossible to substantiate a claim for the introduction of coolies into the island after the manner indicated. Even in Trinidad and British Guiana, where labour was much scarcer, it would have been perhaps wiser to have relied on native labour only, and by fair terms to have attracted free labour from other places where it was not fully employed. Had favourable conditions been held out to them, had the Government not interfered, the African population of the West Indies would have largely increased, as they have done in the Southern States, and it would be now equal to supply a far larger demand for labour than is likely to be made by planters.

Vital statistics are to some extent a gauge of the condition of a people. The West Indian climate being remarkably suitable to the negro race, the returns of births and deaths have much value because they bear directly on the question of food. The causes that operate among the poor in cold countries necessarily result in a considerable mortality, but deaths among infants are largely owing to the severity of the weather. In the West Indies the climate is favourable for children. Yet in England out of every 1,000 children born 736 are alive on the 5th birthday. In Jamaica there would be only 600, and in Antigua only 500. These serious circumstances have led to the establishment of public nurseries, and in Antigua it is provided likewise that an inquest shall be held on every child dying within a year of its birth. A more certain remedy would be cheap and abundant food. The negro mother is fond of her child, but she is often unequal to the strain of rearing it.

If imports and exports are in any way indicative of the well-being of a population, the returns show considerable differences between the Islands.

The following figures are averages for the ten years 1873—1882.

The Leeward group export produce at the rate of £4 8s. 4d. ahead; Barbados, £5 18s. 3d.; the four Windward Islands, £4 4s. 6d.; Jamaica, £2 7s. 6d.; Trinidad has been returned as high as £13 4s. 2d., but the

average for produce has recently been about £12. The exports of British Guiana for twelve years have averaged £2,550,000 a year, but the produce is almost entirely raised by coolies from India. The average exports of the West Indies may be roughly taken at £9,000,000 a year, or £5 12s. 6d. per head; and the imports at £7,800,000, or £4 17s. 6d. per head. They thus lose about £1,200,000 a year, which may be considered the profit made by the merchants and others who work the estates but live abroad. This profit contributes nothing to the public revenue.

Taken as a whole the West Indies are showing but little signs of progress or vitality, while the trade of Venezuela has quadrupled within a few years and the people of the various states of Central America have been displaying much activity and enterprise. A large amount of American capital is invested in Campeachy and Yucatan, amongst which about five millions of dollars in the cultivation of the *Agave Americana*, yielding the sisal hemp of commerce.

The strong lustrous fibres of the *Agave Americana* are superior to every other species of *Agave* for ropes and cordage.

Sugar, coffee, fruits, and all the most valuable products of tropical climates are being also largely raised; but above all it is evident that considerable capital is being sunk in these countries in cultivation which will tell hereafter. In order that our colonies may hold their own and also progress, it will be necessary to apply to them the system we find so efficacious in England. The adoption of free trade principles in dealing with land will attract the necessary capital and enterprise, and a form of impost founded on the system of untaxed bread-stuffs will give to labour such advantages that it will prosper and the Islands will speedily be raised to a high stage of prosperity.

At the recent Jubilee of Emancipation, Lord Derby said:—

"What may be the future of the negro race (in the West Indies) is one with which we are only indirectly concerned. What does concern us is that we should do our duty by them. Let them have freedom, let them have a fair chance, let them be fairly matched in the race of life; and whether they win or lose our responsibility is covered. We are not answerable for their doing well; we are answerable for putting no obstacles in their way to prevent them doing well."

The past success of the West Indian Islands was due to a condition of things that can never return—a state of things which gave them a monopoly of some of the richest markets of the world. The labour was then no better and the soil was no richer than now. But prices of produce then ruled artificially high as now they rule artificially low. For the future the West Indies will have to stand on their own merits against powerful competitors. Not only will they have to compete for the best markets, but the people of African descent will emigrate from the Islands if the latter do not offer them advantages at least as great as they can obtain elsewhere. The soil of these competing countries is no richer, but it is equally as rich as that of the Islands, and the best appliances of human ingenuity will be brought to bear on it. If our colonies fail in this contest, if they be not among the foremost, it will be due to Englishmen not giving them those advantages of free trade enjoyed by the mother country.

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The Western Farmer of America.

By Augustus Mongredien,

Author of "Free Trade and English Commerce."

Cobden Club logo CASSELL, FETTER, GALPIN & CO.: London, Paris & New York. 1882

These Pages

Are respectfully Enscribed

To The Farmers of America

By their Ncere Friend,

A. Mongredien.

Forest Hill, near London, England.

The Western Farmer of America.

Chapter I.

Introductory.

THE golden rule for successful trading is "to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market." Strange to say, the American farmer

The word "farmer" will be used throughout these pages as meaning the producer of all articles derived from the cultivation of the soil, whether grain or cotton, meat or tobacco, &c.

reverses this rule. He sells in the cheapest and buys in the dearest market. For what he raises he gets a lower price, and for what he consumes he pays a higher price, than the land-tillers get and pay in any other country in the world. This is a very singular state of things, and is well worth thorough examination.

While the Western farmer himself neither receives nor seeks any legislative "protection," he is compelled by law to supply his wants, not from the cheapest sources, but from certain privileged establishments to which he has to pay extravagant prices. While he requires no State subvention, because his occupation is of itself a profitable one, he is heavily taxed to support unprofitable manufactures in the Eastern States, and has to make good their losses out of his profits. That this is hard upon him everybody must admit, but no one can realise how really hard it is, or how vast a sum is year after year wrung from him in this way, without resorting to figures and setting it forth in dollars and cents. This we shall proceed to do as accurately and as briefly as we can.

For this purpose let us inquire—

- How much is actually taken yearly out of the pockets of the American farmers by compelling them to buy dear, instead of allowing them to buy cheap, goods.
- What becomes of the enormous sum that is yearly drained from them in this way.
- How this dreadful and wanton waste can be avoided.

Chapter II.

HOW MUCH IS ACTUALLY TAKEN (YEARLY) OUT OF THE POCKETS OF THE AMERICAN FARMERS BY COMPELLING THEM TO BUY DEAR, INSTEAD OF ALLOWING THEM TO BUY CHEAP, GOODS.

BY the census of 1870 the population of the United States was found to be 38,600,000; and the number over ten years of age was 28,229,000. Of these, 12,506,000 were engaged in various kinds of occupations, the rest being women, young persons of both sexes, idlers, &c. What were the respective employments of these 12,506,000 workers? According to the census returns there were—

In round numbers, there were two millions of persons engaged in manufactures, and these were exclusively privileged to supply nearly all the physical wants (except food and lodging) of the other ten and a half millions of workers and their families.

As in these pages we only profess to represent the case of the American farmer, we must confine our attention to the six millions of persons and their families who are engaged in the cultivation of the soil. It is quite true that the remaining four and a half millions engaged in professions, in trading, in mining, and in personal service, are sufferers to quite a proportionate extent, but they do not come within the scope of the present inquiry.

Now let us see what is the actual amount which the farmers (that is, soil-workers generally) spend yearly on the goods produced by the manufacturers.

In the first place, the six millions of agriculturists of 1870 must by this time have increased to at least 7,500,000, as will no doubt be seen by this year's census. To be within the mark we will call them 7,000,000, nearly all of them having wives and children. Now, what is the average annual expenditure on all articles of consumption, except food and drink, of each of these families? On careful investigation, and consultation with conscientious inquirers and with persons most competent to judge, we feel confident that we are within the mark in computing such annual expenditure at 200 dollars per family, including within that average the small minority of unmarried men among the 7,000,000 agriculturists. It must be borne in mind that this amount includes:—1. Woollen, cotton, linen, and silken fabrics, and, therefore, every species of clothing for male and female, as also sheets, curtains, blankets, carpets, &c. 2. Iron and steel manufactures, and therefore all iron-work, wire, cutlery, tools, farming implements, farriery, agricultural machinery, as well as railway conveyance on iron, which cost very much more than it would have cost had it been imported from abroad. 3. Leathern fabrics, and therefore boots and shoes, saddlery, gloves, &c. 4. Earthenware and crockery, tinware and glass, and numberless other household necessaries, all of which come under the price-inflating influence of the Customs tariff. It is on these objects that the greater portion of the agriculturist's outgoings is expended, for he is but at little expense for his food. Moreover, this yearly average of 200 dollars per family comprises a large

number of rich and well-to-do persons, and it may safely be assumed as rather under than over the reality.

Having now cleared the way thus far, it is easy to calculate the total sum annually spent on manufactured goods by the farmers and agriculturists generally of the great Central and Western States. The amount being 200 dollars to 7,000,000 families, is, therefore, 1,400,000,000 dollars in the aggregate.

The next step is to ascertain what portion of that amount the Western farmers would save if, by the abolition of import duties, they were left free to supply their wants from the cheapest market, wherever that might be, whether in America or in Europe, whether in New England or in Old England. This question is easily solved, as, fortunately, we have the guidance of positive facts supplied by the official returns of the United States Government. From these we learn that prices are so high in America and so low in Europe, that, in spite of the enormous duties levied on them, considerable quantities of European goods are imported into the United States, where they must, of course, leave a profit to the senders, or they would not be sent. Let us enumerate some of the leading articles imported in the year 1878, stating their amounts and the rate per cent, of duties which they had to pay:—

What do these figures mean? They mean that the prices which the Western farmers (and the American people generally) now pay for their woollen cloths and stuffs are so excessive that the British woollen manufacturers can afford to pay from 54 to 77 per cent, import duties for the admission of their goods into the States, and still get a profit. That is to say, that (taking the average duty at 66 per cent.) the Western farmer could, if he were allowed to buy where he could buy cheapest, get the same quantity and quality of woollen and worsted stuffs for 12 dollars for which he now has to pay 20. Eight dollars out of twenty thrown away!

They mean that the prices which the Western farmers now pay for their cotton and linen goods are so excessive that the British makers of the same goods can afford to pay from 30 to 63 per cent, import duties for the admission of their manufactures into the States, and still get a profit. That is to say, that (taking the average duty at 50 per cent.) the farmer's wife could, if she were allowed to buy where she could buy cheapest, get the same articles for 6 dollars for which she now has to pay 9. Three dollars out of nine thrown away!

They mean that the American railways are constructed of iron which cost so clear that the British makers can afford to pay 30 to 50 per cent import duties for the admission of their goods into the States, and still get a profit; so that the railway companies are compelled to charge the Western farmer a proportionately excessive rate for the conveyance of his produce to a market. The burden of the difference, of course, falls on the patient back of the Western farmer!

Those figures mean, in short, that the same enormous artificial inflation of natural prices runs through every article (except food) with which the farmer has to provide his family.

The American has extraordinary advantages over the British farmer. He has, first, a soil so fertile as to produce freely with cheap tillage and no manure; second, a climate highly favourable to agricultural operations; third, abundance of land so cheap that the fee-simple costs less than is annually paid for rent in England. But, on the other hand, the British farmer enjoys for the present one decided advantage: he sells his produce in the dearest, and buys his clothing, implements, &c. &c., in the cheapest market in the world.

Let us, however, continue our inquiry as to the total annual amount taken out of the pockets of the Western farmers by exorbitant protective duties. These duties have a very wide range. They are as low as 10 per cent, on diamonds which the Western farmer does not use, and as high as 93 per cent, on cleaned rice which he does use. They are levied on no less than 1,600 different articles, some of them yielding less revenue than it costs to collect it, and the whole producing a complexity which gives comfortable employment to swarms of clerks, &c., at every seaport. The heaviest percentage rates are those imposed on articles of general and necessary consumption by the people, which accordingly contribute very nearly three-fourths of the total amount collected. But let us strike an average. By a careful comparison of the total value of the chief dutiable foreign articles imported in the year 1878, with the total amount of duties levied in that year on the same articles, it has been clearly ascertained that the average rate of duties paid on their value was $42\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Were the average confined to the articles named in the table at p. 9, it would no doubt much exceed $42\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, but, to be within the mark, we will adopt the general average. This average, then ($42\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.), is the measure of the difference between the prices which the Western farmers now pay for what they consume, and those which they would pay were foreign articles admitted duty free. The prices which the manufacturers in the Eastern States make the American people pay for their goods are not, and cannot be, less, but are, and must be, something more than $42\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, in addition to British prices, or else how could the Britisher pay an average of $42\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, duties, and still make a profit on what he sends to America? If the prices paid by the Western farmer to the manufacturers of the Eastern States only exceeded British prices by, say 25 per cent., no British goods, having to pay $42\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, import duties, could possibly be sent to the United States. The very fact of large imports being poured in, year after year (as shown in table at p. 9, for 1878), in spite of the $42\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, duty for admission, makes it clear that the prices in America must be at least 50 per cent, in excess of those current in England, or else those sendings would leave a loss, and would be discontinued. Those importations, be it noted,

are not fitful or intermittent, but are, though fluctuating in amount, constant in their recurrence. The continuous overflow, however slight, of a tank is clear evidence of its being full; and, in the same way, the continuous importation of goods burdened with $42\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, duty is clear evidence that the ordinary prices of such goods in the importing country must keep sufficiently high to make such importations profitable.

However, to err on the side of caution, we will instead of 50 per cent, or $42\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., take 40 per cent, as the overcharge which the Western farmers have to pay for the goods which they require to supply their wants. Now, we have shown at p. 9 that their annual expenditure on the supply of those wants amounts in the aggregate to 1,400,000,000 dollars. Let us see what proportion of that sum is unnecessarily squandered. If the American farmers were allowed to buy, as they could buy, for 100 dollars what they are now compelled to pay 140 dollars for, it is clear that they could buy for 1,000 million dollars what they now pay 1,400 million dollars for, and consequently they would save 400,000,000 dollars every year. In other words, by being left free to buy where they could buy cheapest, they would benefit to the extent of 400 million of dollars, which they now lose by the operation of the protective duties.

Truly a startling sum! A stupendous sum! That such a pile of wealth should year after year be unnecessarily and wantonly flung away and wasted seems utterly incredible, and yet it is literally true. "What!" we can imagine a Western farmer exclaiming, "do you mean to say that we farmers, our class alone, are every year, out of our hard earnings, needlessly and heedlessly throwing away 400 millions of dollars, and that we could, if we would, save in our yearly expenses a sum large enough to defray the whole of the national expenditure nearly twice over?" "Yes, sir," we reply, "it is a fact. We have clearly shown that the same articles of consumption that you could get from the Britisher for 100 dollars, you have now to pay 140 for. Now, if you, one with the other, rich and poor, spend 200 dollars a year on such articles, the common rule of three shows that but for your heavy Customs duties you need only spend 143 dollars for the same things instead of 200, and that, while living just as comfortably, you would on an average save fifty-seven dollars a year. Now, as there are 7,000,000 of you agriculturists, multiply that number by the fifty-seven dollars which each would save, and you will find it comes to 400,000,000 dollars. The fact is, that you never realised the amount of your loss—never put it into figures. It is so mingled up in small doses with your daily spendings that, though enormous in the gross, it does not strike you in the detail. You go on paying thirty cents for a knife instead of twenty; or fifty cents for a piece of canvas instead of thirty; or ten dollars for woollen clothing instead of six; or your wife buys a printed calico gown for three dollars instead of two, and so on throughout the whole range of your requirements; but you do not stay to inquire how much you are overcharged at each step. Now, this has been calculated for you. For every seven dollars which you now spend you ought only to spend five; the other two dollars are simply thrown away in consequence of your import duties."

It has been said the American farmers actually prefer paying seven dollars to the Eastern State manufacturers to paying five dollars for the same thing to the Britisher, especially as the extra two dollars do not go out of the country. Well, if the two dollars do not go into another country, they at all events go into another pocket, and surely the farmers can hardly be persuaded that it is the same thing to them whether they pay seven dollars to a man in Massachusetts, or five dollars for the same article to a man in Lancashire. We believe, on the contrary, that the hardworking Western farmer prefers getting as much as he can for his money. But if we are wrong, and if it be really true that the farmers are content, knowingly and voluntarily, to pay out of their pockets a yearly contribution of 400,000,000 dollars as a free gift to the Eastern States manufacturers, to enable them to carry on a losing business, which, without that assistance, would have to be given up, we can only admire and wonder. And we wonder all the more as this immense sacrifice is made in vain, and is of very little or no benefit to anyone. This we shall show in the next chapter, when we examine what becomes of the 400,000,000 dollars which the farmers lose.

At all events the farmers ought surely to have a voice in the question, whether they really do (as it is stated they do) prefer losing, or whether they prefer saving, the \$400,000,000.

Again, it is said that the American farmers have flourished and prospered; that they have profitably extended, and are still extending, their operations, and that therefore they cannot have suffered the yearly loss alleged. That does not at all follow. No one contends that an average loss of \$57 per annum sustained by each agriculturist could turn the scale and make farming a losing business. It does not destroy the farmer, but it sweeps away so much of his profits. By the census of 1870, the total value of (cereal) farm productions amounted to \$2,448,000,000. Out of this farmers could afford to throw away a certain portion, and still thrive and make money. But that is no reason why they should persist in throwing that portion away. A man with an income of \$2,500 may live on \$1,000, muddle away \$500 on rotten speculations, and still lay by \$1,000 a year, but he would certainly be richer if he did not muddle away the \$500. A waste of \$57 a year multiplied 7,000,000 times does none the less amount to \$400,000,000 in the aggregate.

Again, it is said that the prices of some of the Eastern States' manufacturers are not so much higher than those of the foreigner as we make out. But, if so, why keep up such heavy import duties. And, again, if so, how

it is that, in spite of those heavy duties, foreign goods can still afford (see p. 9) to come in? The Western farmer might say, "Come, I do not mind paying 10 per cent, dearer to you than to the foreigner. Reduce the import duties therefore from an average of 42¾ per cent, to 10 per cent. If your prices are, as you say, moderate, surely, with a bonus of 10 per cent., besides freight and charges, you can withstand foreign competition! But if not, and if the condition of your existence as manufacturers is an import duty of 42¾ per cent., which means that we farmers, as a class, are to subscribe out of our earnings \$400,000,000 a year to keep you gentlemen of the East pegging away at a losing business, we protest against it. It is paying far too dear 'for a whistle.' We will withdraw from a game in which we are to find the stakes (and heavy ones too) for others to win, and we will go in for buying where we can buy cheapest."

It should further be observed that the more freight the Western farmer has to pay to get his produce delivered into the European markets, the smaller the net residue that comes to him; for the European buyers' prices include freight. Cheap freights from America to Europe, therefore, mean large profits to the farmer, and dear freights small profits. But as the enormous American import duties prevent heavy and bulky goods, such as iron, coal, &c., from being freely sent from Europe to the United States, and as ships must make a certain amount of freight on the round or cease running, what happens? They make up for getting little or no freight from Europe to America by charging nearly double freight on the cotton, grain, and other farmer's produce which they convey from America to Europe. This surcharge of freight from, to compensate for the absence of freight to, American ports, amounts in the aggregate to a very large sum, which comes out of the pocket of the Western farmers, and constitutes another heavy burden inflicted on them by the present oppressive tariff.

But the mischief done to the American farmers by heavy import duties is not confined to the immense direct losses inflicted on them. Their interests are also vitally injured in another way. The very essence of their prosperity depends upon their having large and increasing outlets abroad for the large and increasing amount of their produce. They grow far more grain, meat, cotton, &c., than their own country can consume, and must look to their foreign customers to take off the surplus. But the protective duties step in to thwart, cripple and restrict the farmers' dealings with their foreign customers. How are the farmers to export if the manufacturers will not allow of imports? "What is the foreigner to pay you in," we would say to the farmers, "if you refuse to take his goods? Will it be in gold and silver? No such thing. It is now well established and universally admitted that debts between nation and nation are not paid in specie (beyond the merest fraction), but in commodities, and that all commerce is substantially barter. If you will only take from the foreigner such of his goods as he can make a profit on after paying 42¾ per cent, import duty, you limit his power of buying from you, and consequently your own power of selling to him. It becomes a necessary condition of your dealing with him that you should get so low a price for your produce and give him so high a price for his goods, that the margin shall make up for the 42¾ per cent, import duties. These, therefore, cut against you both ways. Not only you pay more for what you consume, but you get less for what you produce. You may not feel the pinch so much just now, but average harvests in Europe would make it absolutely necessary for the United States to secure free sales by making free purchases. If you aspire to feed the world you must take in payment what the world can give you."

Let us now look at another branch of the subject.

Chapter III.

WHAT BECOMES OF THE \$400,000,000 YEARLY TAKEN OUT OF THE POCKET OF THE AMERICAN FARMERS?

THE amount of Customs revenue which the United States Government derived in 1878 from duties on foreign goods imported was \$130,000,000. To this amount, the agriculturist, being rather less than half of the total population of the country, contributed about \$60,000,000. This was, therefore the proportion of the \$400,000,000 overcharged to the American farmers on their annual expenditure that went to the legitimate purpose of national revenue; and so far, \$60,000,000 of the total is satisfactorily accounted for. But what of the remaining \$340,000,000? Who are the lucky men whom this mighty sum, drained year after year out of the farmer's earnings, goes to enrich? Strange and incredible as it may appear, careful examination and analysis will show that all this money has been, and is being, absolutely wasted, squandered, and spent as uselessly as it would be in hiring an army of men to dig holes and fill them up again. It has neither enriched, nor even benefited anybody. While it has to that extent impoverished the farmers, it has only served to fill up the gap and make good the losses occasioned by the misapplication of capital and labour in the Eastern States to the wrong kinds of production.

Let us trace where these \$340,000,000 go. They form the extra sum paid annually to the manufacturers of

the Eastern States over and above what the farmers would have had to pay for the same articles were they allowed to make their purchases from abroad. If the Eastern manufacturers were able to produce their goods as cheaply as the foreigner, all that money would be saved to the farmers; but as they cannot, the farmers are made to pay the difference. Nothing whatever is got by anybody in return for those \$340,000,000; and that sum is simply thrown away and sacrificed to make up for the want of skill, or of capital, or of whatever else it may be, by reason of which the Eastern manufacturer makes no more profit by selling an article at \$140 than the Britisher does by selling the same article at 8/100. If, indeed, the Eastern manufacturer could produce the article for \$100, and if he did get \$140 for it, he would be benefited and enriched; and it might be some consolation to the farmers for their loss of \$340,000,000 a year that it went to form large accumulations of wealth in the pockets of their fellow-citizens in the Eastern States. But this consolation does not exist, and we shall presently show that, in spite of the enormous sum overcharged to the farmers, the profits of the Eastern manufacturer are precarious, fluctuating, and by no means above the average of other occupations. His charge of \$140 for what the Britisher can afford to sell for \$100, only leaves him a bare living profit, because it costs him \$40 more to produce the article than it costs the Britisher. Why this should be the case we cannot here stay to inquire, but such is the fact. Indeed, how else could British goods be largely imported into the States in spite of the 42¾ per cent, import duties which they have to pay?

It is these \$40 uselessly spent out of 140, which, added up, form the \$340,000,000 which the farmers of America are called upon to throw away every year without any benefit to themselves or to anybody else. It is sheer waste; just as it is sheer waste to pay one man exorbitantly for doing the same work (no more and no better) which another man, more expert, will do cheaply;—just as it would be sheer waste to go on thrashing with a flail instead of using a machine, merely because the man with the flail was a neighbour, and the machine-maker was a stranger. We can fancy a shrewd Western farmer saying, "A man down East makes a article which he can't afford to sell me under \$140, while a man over the water offers me the same article for \$100. I want to deal with the latter, but to prevent that, they clap \$40 duty on to the 100, and then tell me that, as now, in either case, I shall have to pay \$140 for the article, I may as well buy of the man down East, because he's a kind of brother, whereas, the man over the water is only a cousin. All I see in it is, that I am done out of \$40."

That the Eastern manufacturers only make the average profit, and their men the average wages, of other occupations, is the necessary result of internal competition. No trade can for any length of time maintain higher rates of profit or of wages than the average, because people soon flock from other trades into that, and thus they all settle down to about the same level. There does, indeed, at intervals occur a sudden spurt of demand, causing for a brief period high prices, high profits, and high wages, but these bright, short flashes of prosperity cost the manufacturers and their men very dear. Fresh capital and fresh labour are thereby freely enticed into the trade, and when the spurt is over there is not sufficient vent for the increased supply. The result is, ruin to many, loss to all. Such a spurt occurred in 1872-3. In 1874 the reaction came, and there followed five years of commercial depression and suffering. An immense body of American workmen were thrown out of employ, and in the course of those five years (mostly in 1877 and 1878) upwards of 600,000 persons left the East to seek a living in the West. During those five years a large number of industrial establishments closed their doors, and in the iron trade alone 250 blast furnaces were blown out, and 60 to 70 rolling mills ceased work. In the six years 1873 to 1878, the average number of commercial failures in the United States per year was 7,866 against an average of 2,889 the previous seven years. In short, those five years were the worst that American commerce had ever experienced. Yet during all that time the farmers were yearly disbursing \$340,000,000 to support the manufacturers. So far, however, from enriching them, this large sum was engulfed in their losses and was squandered in vain. It is abundantly clear that, as we said at p. 19, "the profits of the Eastern manufacturers are precarious, fluctuating, and by no means above the average of other occupations."

Just now (1880), the iron manufacturers are enjoying another temporary spurt, owing to the wealth created by the farmers and the consequent necessity for more railways; and this leads to another question of vast importance to the farmers. At what cost are those new railways to be constructed? Is the farmer's produce to be conveyed to the sea-board on cheap rails at a fair rate, or on dear rails at an exorbitant rate? Are the railway-makers to pay Pennsylvanian prices or British prices for their rails? If the former, the cost of the required iron and steel will be nearly twice as much as if the latter.

The import duty on steel at this time amounts to 120 per cent.

Now, as the rates of freight must be in proportion, everyone who may use the railways about to be constructed will have to pay high fares and freights forever, because the legislature interdicts cheap iron and artificially makes it dear! Surely this would be an enormous evil, and all the less excusable as it could so easily be avoided!

At first glance it appears almost impossible that so vast a sum as \$340,000,000 should be lost in the mere diversity of value between what two different sets of men in two different countries can produce by the

application of the same amount of capital and labour. And yet the explanation, when sought for, is soon found. To take a man away from what he can do well, and set him to do what he can only do badly makes an immense difference in the result of his labour. A baker would earn poor wages indeed as a tailor; and a clever carpenter would starve on his performances as a watchmaker. A Western farmer produces excellent and cheap crops, but if he were to set up as a woollen manufacturer he would soon come to grief (unless indeed his neighbours subscribed handsomely to make good his losses and bolster him up). The difference between what men produce who are expert and what men produce who are inexpert, constitutes a very large percentage on their production, and a large percentage on the total production of the world means a sum to which 8340,000,000 is a trifle. As things are, to take the world at large, the human race do not produce perhaps the hundredth part of what they might produce if their labour were properly and intelligently applied. The greatest creator of wealth at the smallest cost is division of labour, and whatever interferes with it is an obstruction to human productiveness. Everyman ought to be allowed to do the work which early education, long experience, natural aptitude, peculiarity of position, or other circumstances enable him to do best; and that legislature is sadly mischievous which shunts him off from the right on to the wrong line, and compels him to lay aside the work which he can do well and take to that which others can do better.

It may perhaps be asked, "How are the Eastern manufacturers, and the workmen they employ, to live if the farmers withdraw the yearly subsidy which is their only support?" The answer is easy. The increased imports which the abolition of customs duties would bring about would necessitate increased exports to the same amount to pay for them; for there can be no additional import without a corresponding additional export. There would arise a brisk demand for fresh capital and labour to produce those increased exports, and that demand would absorb whatever capital and labour might be set free by the diminished consumption of the Eastern States manufactures. It is quite an exploded notion that if you import what you made before, workmen are thrown out of work. It is not so; they are merely thrown on to other work to supply the articles that will be exported to pay for the new imports. The same amount of American capital and labour would be employed as before, with this difference, that then, their operations would be remunerative, whereas before they were not. No doubt this transference of capital and labour from one kind of business to another is attended with temporary inconvenience and delay to the parties interfered with, but not more than was the introduction of steamboats, railways, electric telegraphs, and other improvements, which largely benefited the many, while they were, for a time, displeasing to a few. Indeed, it would not be long before the owners both of the displaced capital and of the displaced labour would feel and recognise the advantage of being engaged in industries which were self-supporting, instead of industries which were dependent for their very existence on a national subvention revocable at any moment at the will of the people.

The manufacturers of the Eastern States "object to their trades being called losing trades, because they and their workmen live out of them." But they do not live out of them! They mostly live out of the \$340,000,000 which the farmers yearly pay to those trades over and above what they need pay if they dealt with others. They live out of that, and of as much more paid to them in the same way by the rest of the American people. We believe that many trades would thrive better unassisted, but by clinging to Protection they proclaim their dependence on it. Were it otherwise, why keep up such heavy import duties, and how is it that, in spite of those heavy duties, foreign goods can still afford to come in? Surely those must be "losing trades" in which \$140 worth of capital and labour are spent to produce \$100 worth of goods. Such trades depend for their maintenance, not on their own merit, but on other people's help. They are private establishments supported by public involuntary contributions.

We feel sure, however, that the manufacturers of the Eastern States underrate their own strength, and that they would soon walk alone, if they were deprived of the gc-cart of Protection. Under the wholesome stimulus of open competition, the energy, activity, and shrewdness of their race would rapidly enable them to recover the ground they had lost under the enervating influence of the coddling system. We would venture to say to them, "Why, gentlemen, should you not, with raw cotton at your doors, compete with the Britisher, to whom it goes across the ocean? Yet whereas in 1860 your export of cotton manufactures was \$11,000,000, it was only \$11,500,000 in 1878, a paltry increase of \$500,000 in eighteen years! In England the increase within the same period \$60,000,000. There is no doubt that had you been left unencumbered by the fatal boon of Protection you would have made infinitely greater progress, and you might by this time have proved formidable rivals to the Britisher in neutral markets. Again, in three years 1866 to 1868. agricultural exports formed 74 per cent, and manufacturing and other exports 26 per cent, of the total exports. In three years 1876 to 1878 the agricultural exports formed 80 per cent., and the manufacturing and other exports only 20 per cent, of the totality. No doubt that, but for the fatal boon of Protection, you would not have lagged behind in the race, and that your relative proportion of exports would have shown an increase instead of a diminution. Again, in spite of the vast expansion of the world's commerce, the tonnage of the United States mercantile navy is actually less now than it was twenty years ago. From 1855 to 1863 it was upwards of 5,000,000 tons; from 1874 to 1878 it was little

more than 4,000,000. English tonnage in 1861 was 4,350,000 tons; in 1877 it was 6,115,000. Within the last twenty years English tonnage has increased by 2,000,000 tons while yours has diminished by 1,000,000. Formerly your mercantile navy shared the carrying trade of the world with England; now, not only that is lost, but your own produce is carried away from your own ports in foreign bottoms. Is it that the American of to-day has degenerated in energy, skill, or enterprise? Not a bit of it. But here also Protection has shed its baneful influence. Iron has superseded wood in the construction of large ships, and your tariff makes iron nearly twice as costly to the American shipbuilder as it is to his British rival. Abolish your import duties, and you will speedily see your mercantile marine restored to its former splendour."

To sum up, the vast amount yearly wrested out of the earnings of the American farmers is simply a useless and wanton waste. It makes them by so much the poorer, without making others one whit the richer. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that we have in these pages only calculated that share of the general loss which accrues to the agriculturists. These barely form half of the total population of the United States, and the other half suffers a fully proportionate loss on their yearly expenditure, from the same causes and with the same results. What steps should be taken to put a stop to these extravagant and unjustifiable losses shall be examined in the next chapter.

Chapter IV.

HOW TO PUT A STOP TO THE INTOLERABLE LOSSES WHICH ARE YEAR AFTER YEAR INFLICTED ON THE FARMERS OF AMERICA.

FORTUNATELY, great as is the grievance, its removal is easy. The remedy is in the farmer's own hands. It lies in the exercise of his voting power. It is simply this: let the American farmers give their support to no candidate for a seat in the House of Representatives who does not pledge himself, if elected, to propose, or at least to vote for, "*a reduction of 5 per cent, every successive year on the import duties, till the whole are abolished.*" Never mind what party he may belong to. The relief of the farmers from an intolerable burden is not, cannot be, and must not be, a party question. It is a paramount and inevitable measure which comes before, overrides, and casts into the shade all party distinctions. To refuse the abolition of the tariff is to refuse justice to the agriculturists. It amounts to a persistence in the iniquity of confiscating the farmer's property. Up with the tariff means down with the farmer!

If it be said that abrogation of the tariff would suppress one of the sources of State revenue, the Western farmer's ready reply would be, "Out of the \$400,000,000 yearly taken from us, only \$60,000,000 go to the revenue. There are plenty of ways of raising \$60,000,000 of revenue without resorting to the clumsy, wasteful, roundabout process of inflicting on us a loss of \$400,000,000 to enable the State to get \$60,000,000. You might as well say that there is no other way of roasting a pig than by burning down the house. We shall be all the better able to pay the taxes necessary to replace the import duties if our earnings are left with us intact."

The farmers, by insisting on justice being done to themselves, are at the same time fighting the battle of the American community at large. All are sufferers from the same fiscal absurdity, and all ought to join the farmers heart and hand, in enforcing the redress of a common grievance.

Every farmer should hold this language to the candidates: "I will only vote for you if you will vote for me; and voting for me means voting in the House for *A reduction of five per cent, every successive year on the import duties till the whole are abolished.*" If this were done pretty generally, the tariff, in its present shape, would not survive the first sitting of Congress. The voting power of the farmers is overwhelming, and will further increase after the next census. They hardly know their own strength. They are the backbone of the great American Republic. They own most of its soil, they have created most of its wealth, and they form the most numerous and influential body among its population. The exercise of their voting power would forcibly influence the commercial policy of the government, and if they choose to exercise it an end will be put forever to the yearly exactions from which they are now suffering. In other words, they have but to signify unmistakably by their votes that they wish to be freed from the unjust burdens laid upon them by heavy import duties, and those duties will speedily cease to exist. Is it possible to imagine that they should feel the evil, know the remedy, and hesitate to apply it?

It is doubtless true that many, perhaps most, of the American farmers are unaware of, or have given little attention to the facts set forth in these pages, and hence their silent endurance. But if every farmer who reads this concurs in our views, would order from the nearest town ten or twenty copies of this little paper, and would distribute them by hand among his neighbours, or by post among his friends at a distance, a spirit of inquiry would rapidly be roused, and a definite expression of public opinion would soon be elicited. By such means each man would contribute to the good work, and, with little trouble and little expense, the exact state of the

case might be laid before every farmer in the Union. It would be for him, after obtaining a knowledge of facts so interesting to his class, to decide whether he would continue to endure the grievance or insist on its removal.

Meanwhile, all honour, Western farmers of America, to the brave and blessed work which your indomitable energy and brawny arms are accomplishing! While in Europe millions of able-bodied men are dragged from the plough and the loom to be trained to bloodshed and destruction, you are pursuing your beneficent conquests over nature, and converting barren wastes into orchards and cornfields. Surely the least that you can demand in return is that your earnings should not be wrung from you by unjust laws, and that you should be allowed to enjoy undividedly the fruits of your unremitting toil.

IT IS FOR YOU TO DECIDE, AND TO ENFORCE YOUR DECISION.

Appendix.

IN order to ensure all possible accuracy in the estimate of the yearly expenditure of the American farmers and their families, the writer printed and distributed among those persons whom he deemed most competent to judge, fifty copies of the following memorandum:—

"Estimate of Expenditure in America.

"It would greatly assist the undersigned in the completion of a little work on which he is engaged if you would kindly give him the best estimate in your power in relation to the following subject.

"By the census of 1870 there were in the United States of America, out of a population of 38,600,000, a total of 12,506,000 persons engaged in various occupations. Of these 5,922,000 were engaged in agriculture, which number has by this time (1880) increased to at least 7,000,000.

"*An estimate is wanted* of the average annual expenditure of each of these 7,000,000 persons (most of whom have families) on all articles of consumption, except eatables and drinkables. Those articles would comprise every description of clothing, household ware, tools, agricultural implements, railway conveyance, &c. &c.

"Of course, strict accuracy is unattainable, and all calculations must necessarily be conjectural and approximative.

"It may be noted—

- That by 'agriculturists' are meant, not only the cereal farmers, but the producers of all articles derived from the soil, whether grain or cotton, meat or tobacco, &c. &c.
- That there are in the United States 2,600,000 farmers, who, most of them, own the soil which they till, and whose annual expenditure must be considerable.
- That the wages of farm labourers in the North and West range, (see an article in the *Times* of 26th August, 1879) from \$19 69c. monthly (\$236 per annum) to \$38 22c. monthly (\$458 per annum). In the South, under the competition of negro labour, wages are only \$15 monthly (\$180 per annum).
- That, as food and lodging cost the farmers and labourers but little, most of their expenditure falls on the articles of consumption comprised in this inquiry. The question therefore is, "What is the average yearly expenditure, on such articles, of each of those 7,000,000 persons in the United States of America, who are engaged in agricultural pursuits, some of whom are single, but most of whom have families?" It will be esteemed a favour if you will address a communication at your earliest convenience to

"A. Mongredien,

"*Author of Free Trade and English Commerce.*"

FOREST HILL, near LONDON.

"8th March, 1880."

The answers received (and they were not many) ranged from \$150 per annum up to \$5 per week (\$260 per annum), In the work we have taken \$200 as a fair mean. But, even upon the lowest estimate the sum is so vast, that it really matters very little which valuation is adopted. If any reader thinks that \$200 per annum is too high an estimate let him boldly strike off 25 per cent., and the balance will still be found amply large enough to justify all our conclusions.

For our American statistics we are chiefly indebted to that valuable compilation, "The American Almanack for 1879," by Mr. A. R. Spofford, to which we beg to refer those who may doubt the accuracy of our figures.

Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., Belle Sauvage Works, Londr, E.C.
Pleas for Protection Examined.

By Augustus Mongredien,
Author of "Free Trade and English Commerce," &c.
Cobden Club logo CASSELL, PETTER, GALPIN & CO.: *London, Paris & New York.* 1882.

Preface.

THE following pages mostly form part of, and are, for the purpose of separate and early publication, borrowed from, a larger work on which I have been for some time engaged. That work embraces a somewhat wide range of topics, of which Free Trade only forms one. But as the larger work may not be completed for some months, and as it has been deemed advisable not farther to delay the issue of that portion of it which is here given under the title of "Pleas for Protection Examined," I am content that it should be so. I, however, hereby reserve to myself the right of re-incorporating into my larger work the whole or part of the present pages, as their subject-matter is essential to its entirety, and forms a necessary, though subordinate, part of its plan.

Augustus Mongredien.

FOREST HILL, S.E.,

January, 1882.

Table of Contents.

PLEAS FOR PROTECTION EXAMINED.

Chapter I.

Introduction. 1. International debts not paid in specie. 2. All commerce is barter.

It is marvellous how unanimous in England is the assent to the abstract theory of Free Trade. It is equally marvellous how many of its professed votaries, while they extol that theory, object to its practice. They loudly abjure the name of "Protectionists," but adhere to the thing "Protectionism." They are Free-traders with "ifs" and "buts." This is their plea : "We are doctrinally as thorough Free-traders as that incarnation of the Cobden Club, Thomas Bayley Potter himself; *but* only under certain circumstances—only *if* all other countries become Free-traders as well as ourselves." So that, according to these notions, truth is bound to remain in practical abeyance until it is universally acted on! As long as it is not practised by everybody, it must be practised by none! It is most salutary to mankind if all mankind adopt it, but it is most injurious as long as only a portion of mankind adopts it! A curious paradox, showing how the same thing may at the same time be both true and false !

The fact is that these "if" and "but" Free-traders are simply Protectionists under the pseudonyms of Reciprocitarians, Fair-traders, and what not. It is hardly "fair" or them to deny that they are Protectionists. The test that shall draw the line between true Free-traders and sham Freetraders is simple, and of easy application. Free Trade does not allow of any import duties being imposed on such articles as are likewise produced at home.

The article "spirits" is an apparent, but not a real, exception. The import duties levied on foreign spirits are the exact counterpart of the Excise duties levied on home-produced spirits. Thus foreign and native distillers are placed on exactly the same footing.

Protection does. Here is, in a few words, the radical difference between them, and that difference is clear

and definite. Free Trade lays down a broad general principle. Under it no protection is given to home industries, the entire amount levied by import duties goes to the revenue, and our market is freely and fully open to foreign competition. Under Protection, the import duties imposed are protective; of the duties levied, part goes to the protected native producer, and only part to the revenue, and foreign competitors are handicapped in our market to the extent of those duties. The distinction is, we think, clear and unmistakable. Which of the two systems is the best is not the question now before us; we have discussed that before, and shall discuss it again. At present we have only to point out the plain line of demarcation that divides Free Trade from Protectionism, and to ask to which of the two does Fair Trade belong. The reply is obvious. The very thing which Fair Trade proposes to do is to impose import duties on some of the foreign articles which are also produced at home. This is also the very thing which Protectionism in its old form did and does; therefore the two are identical.

What those foreign articles are which Protectionism, under the guise of Fair Trade, proposes to tax, its advocates are not agreed, but they are determined to tax something, and the majority seem inclined for a 5s. per quarter import duty on wheat. That is the proposal that "divides them least." Be this as it may, the essential and distinctive programme of the so-called Fair-traders is to impose protective import duties. They are, therefore, to all intents and purposes Protectionists. They may call themselves by another name, but they advocate the same fiscal measures, and adduce the same arguments to advocate them. We shall, therefore, use the old denomination of Protection and Protectionism as embracing all classes of opponents to Free Trade, whether to its principles or to its practice.

It is our intention in these pages to collect and pass under review the most prominent or plausible of those pleas which have been adduced to justify the adoption of a Protective policy and the rejection of Free Trade. We shall endeavour to state them, discuss them, and refute them fairly, freely, and briefly. The Protectionist pleas we shall print in italics, to be followed by our remarks on each.

1. *Balances due by one country to another are paid for in specie. Hence, if the balance of trade be against us, we shall be drained of our specie to pay for such balance.*

Now, in the first place, there is practically no such thing as a "balance of trade." The trade between two countries entirely consists of a series of commercial dealings between a number of persons in one country and a number of persons in the other; and there can be no national balance of trade, because each dealing (of which the totality is formed) is settled for at the time, and balances itself.

We may, it is true, buy from some countries more than we directly sell to them, but the difference is not paid for in specie; it is paid for by bills on other countries to which we sell more than we buy from them. On the whole, the commercial dealings of a country with the world at large are self-adjusting, and leave no balance to be paid to or from either side. But although there is no such thing as a "balance of trade," most countries do either import more from the rest of the world than they export to it, or *vice versa*; and it is this excess, on whichever side it may be, that is ordinarily, though wrongly, termed the balance of trade.

How such excess arises we shall shortly see; here the question is simply whether it be true, as alleged, that if we import more than we export "we shall be drained of our specie to pay" for such excess of imports. Past history and present experience conclusively show that it is not true. Amounts due (from whatever cause) by one country to others are not paid for in specie. In England, our imports have exceeded our exports, year after year, for more than a quarter of a century, by an average of about £50,000,000 a year; and yet throughout all those years, instead of our bullion having been drained from us, our import has largely exceeded our export of it. This fact is at once so undeniable and so conclusive, that we shall not waste time upon it. If anyone desires fuller details and statistics on the subject, we beg to refer him to Mr. G. W. Medley's recent pamphlet, where it is treated in a masterly manner.

"Reciprocity Craze," by G. W. Medley: Cassell's, 1881: pp. 11—14, *et passim*

The ebb and flow of bullion between various countries has comparatively a very small range, and depends almost entirely on their respective circulation requirements. Even in wealthy England, the abstraction of a few millions' worth of gold so deranges the circulation as to raise the rate of interest to a point sufficient to bring it back again. How then can any one dream of our sending away 100 millions of it annually to pay for our annual excess of imports? The fact is, that every country possesses and retains as much specie as is required for circulation purposes—sometimes a little less, sometimes a little more, but never much less, nor much more. No country was ever drained of its specie by its foreign commerce. The only way in which it can ever be denuded of specie is by the adoption of an inconvertible paper currency. The circulation requirements being then supplied by paper, the specie becomes surplusage, and is sent abroad where its value is greater.

To sum up, the truth is that **BALANCES DUE (FROM WHATEVER CAUSE) BY ONE COUNTRY TO ANOTHER ARE NOT PAID FOR IN SPECIE; AND NO COUNTRY HAS EVER BEEN DRAINED OF ITS SPECIE THROUGH THE**

2. Commerce is not the exchange of goods for goods, which would be barter; but of goods for money, which is not barter. It will not, we think, be difficult to show that the exchange of goods for money is virtually as much barter as though the goods were directly exchanged for other goods.

The only possible value of money consists in its purchasing power. Money is only worth what it can buy. Just consider. Of what possible use can money be if it be not used to purchase something with? Whether that "something" be commodities, or land, or labour, &c., matters not; the only worth of money is in its power to purchase such things. True that it may be melted down and applied to manufacturing purposes, but then it ceases to be money, and becomes only a metal. A dollar may be converted into a pencil-case. In its latter shape it is useful, but has no purchasing power; in the former shape, it is utterly useless except by reason of its purchasing power. Now in all commercial transactions, if the money which the seller of the goods receives for them is ever utilised at all, it can only be by the purchase with it of some other commodities. Hence it follows that, virtually, an interchange takes place between the commodities which that seller has sold for money and the other commodities which he has used that money in acquiring. All trade dealings are inevitably attended by the same process. No sale is made by any person without his making, sooner or later, a corresponding purchase. The goods so sold are, virtually and substantially, bartered for the goods so purchased, and the money merely serves as the medium of interchange. In most cases the barter is not effected either directly or at once, and is only completed when the money received for the goods is made use of for some definite purpose. It may for a time be deposited in a bank, but it will not long remain idle. It may for a time be transferred from one person to another as a loan; but, soon or late (in most cases, soon), it is used as a payment in exchange for something, and that something is the "thing" for which the goods originally sold are ultimately bartered.

Occasionally a long time elapses before the barter is completed; as, for instance, when the receiver of the money, instead of using it at once, puts it in an old stocking and hoards it. The completion of the barter is suspended until the owner takes the money out of the old stocking and utilises it. He may use it, let us say, to pay the wages of labour in which case the interchange is perfected, and the goods originally sold are bartered for labour. In point of fact, the money paid by the buyer to the seller is equivalent to a ticket authorising the holder to receive, in exchange for the goods which he has sold, other commodities to the same amount, of any kind which he may choose, and at any time that he may think fit. The moment he utilises that ticket the barter is complete, and the commodities which he receives form the counterpart to the goods which he has sold.

The money which the seller receives for his goods would be little more than so many pieces of broken slate were it not for its purchasing power. The consideration for which his goods have been given is not the mere coins, it really is the commodities which those coins will purchase. The mere money itself is utterly valueless, unless it be, sooner or later, turned into commodities, whatever those commodities may be, whether land or labour, raw materials, or manufactured products. If you purchase wheat, and pay for it in money, that money may perchance be used for purchasing a horse, in which case the horse has been, indirectly but no less truly, bartered for wheat. To put it into a more general form, every sale or purchase is a barter of the commodities so sold or purchased with the commodities on which the seller may expend the money received. If money, as money, had any other value beyond its purchasing power, it might be said that every sale or purchase is a barter between goods and money. But money, as money, has no real but only a representative value. The barter really is between the definite goods given for the money, and the undefined goods which that money represents, and which it may at any moment realise. Just as when you buy a ticket for a concert, the consideration given for your money is not the piece of paste-board of which the ticket itself consists, but the musical performance which the ticket represents.

Let us conclude by an illustration. You buy, we will say, a cargo of wheat from New York. Against the bill of lading, &c., of this shipment you accept a bill drawn on you by the seller, payable in England, and probably you pay for this bill in money before you get possession of the wheat. Now, pray observe. The money which you pay for that bill is not sent over in specie to America. It remains in England, to the credit of the banker in New York to whom the bills drawn on you were endorsed. The usual and natural use which he makes of this credit is to draw bills from New York against it, which bills he will sell in America, for a given number of dollars, to anyone who wishes to make a remittance to England—perhaps to a man who has ordered some Manchester goods, for which he pays by remitting those bills to Manchester. In such case, it is evident that the specie does not leave England, and that, substantially, the American wheat has been bartered for Manchester goods.

Frequently the process is more indirect and circuitous; but, if analysed, it comes to the same thing. For instance, the bills referred to above, instead of being sent direct to England may be sent to Rio Janeiro to pay

for coffee; and sent from Rio Janeiro to England to pay for Sheffield steel-ware bought for Brazil. In this case England gets the American wheat, America the Brazilian coffee, and Brazil the English steel. And thus a double barter—something like Capt. Marryat's triangular duel—has taken place without the slightest displacement of specie. Note, moreover, that this is the regular, normal, and nearly universal practice in mercantile operations. Hardly once in a thousand cases are foreign goods paid for by direct export of specie.

To sum up, the truth is that ALL COMMERCE IS BARTER; FOR IT IS AN INTERCHANGE BETWEEN THE COMMODITIES SOLD FOR MONEY AND THE COMMODITIES WHICH THAT MONEY WILL BE USED IN PURCHASING.

Chapter II.

3. Excess of imports mostly a sign of wealth. 4. Imports and exports (except those for loans or repayments) balance each other. 5. Protection discourages native industry.

3. Permanent excess of imports impoverishes, and permanent excess of exports enriches, a country.

This is the reverse of the fact. It would not be true even if such excess of imports had to be paid for by the receivers, or if such excess of exports implied a return payment of some kind. But this is never the case. For had such excess to be paid for, the payment must necessarily be either in goods or in specie. Now, it could not be in goods, as then, *ex hypothesi*, the goods exported would equal the goods imported, and how could there be an excess either way? Neither could that payment be made in specie, for it has been shown over and over again that the displacement of specie between country and country is confined within a very narrow range, that it is almost exclusively governed by circulation requirements and that balances due by one country to another are never paid, unless to a mere fractional extent, in specie. The fact is that these permanent excesses of imports over exports, or *vice versa*, consist of non-mercantile operations which are not repayable. They consist of national loans (repayable at indefinite periods, but scarcely ever repaid), of investments in foreign undertakings, of interest and dividends on such loans and investments, of subsidies to allies (less in fashion now than formerly), of war indemnities (that of France to Germany in 1871 to wit), ocean freight earnings, and other similar disbursements which are outside of, and in addition to, ordinary commercial interchanges.

"How," the Protectionists ask, "can a nation go on buying more than it sells without at last (like a spendthrift who lives beyond his income) becoming utterly ruined?" The answer is simply that no country ever buys more than it sells, nor sells more than it buys. The trade of a country consists of the aggregate operations of individual traders, which are always equal, co-ordinate, and self-balancing; and which necessitate to a mathematical certainty (with the exception of bad debts) an import as a counterpart to every export, and *vice versa*. As we have already shown, all commerce is direct or indirect barter. Whatever a country exports beyond what it imports, it gets no return for; whatever it imports beyond what it exports, it gives no return for. Such excess goes either to liquidate old international debts or to contract new ones. Whatever is brought into a country over and above what is sent out from it is either a payment or a loan. If a payment, it is retained for ever; if a loan, it will be retained till repaid at some future indefinite period. Of the rare and exceptional case of a nation paying off its foreign indebtedness, we shall treat elsewhere, but it does not invalidate the general principle that a permanent excess of imports over exports is not paid for, and must, therefore, far from impoverishing a country, add to its present wealth if the excess represents a loan; or to its permanent wealth if it represents a payment.

How it comes to pass that this excess of imports or of exports takes place, we have already in great measure explained. Beside the normal commercial profits which naturally contribute to make what comes in of greater value than what goes out, wealthy nations which have lent money to foreign states, or otherwise invested money in foreign countries, have annually to receive large amounts for dividends on those loans and investments. These amounts are periodically remitted to them in goods (not in specie), which figure in their statistical returns as excess of imports. Let us take the case of England. She has yearly to receive about £60,000,000 from abroad for interest on foreign investments. She has also to receive some £40,000,000 to £50,000,000 more for ocean freight (gross) and charges, because two-thirds of the entire ocean-carrying trade of the world is conducted by her mercantile navy. Now, since England has to receive about £100,000,000 per annum from abroad in goods, for which, as they constitute a payment to her and not a sale, she has to make no return, it is clear that these will figure in the Board of Trade returns as imports without any corresponding amount of exports. They will appear as an excess of imports over exports to the extent of £100,000,000. But

how can receiving £100,000,000 a year, and keeping it without making any return, be either a cause or a symptom of impoverishment? By what peculiar twist of the mind can this be made the subject of regret or alarm? At all events, this excess of imports must continue, and probably increase, as long as England possesses an annual income from abroad and the ocean-carrying trade. Even if England were to double or treble her yearly exports, her imports must of necessity continue ahead of them by that £100,000,000, or probably more.

The converse applies to over-exporting countries; their excess of exports generally represents the amount which they have to pay to the world, as borrowers, for annual interest, &c. The fact, in brief, is that all lending nations must necessarily import in excess of their exports, and all borrowing nations must export in excess of their imports; and the alarm which some feel at our over-importations should be converted into exultation at the wealth which they imply and to which they minister. To sum up, the truth is that **THE WEALTHIER A NATION IS, THE GREATER WILL BE THE PERMANENT EXCESS OF HER IMPORTS OVER HER EXPORTS; AND A PERMANENT EXCESS OF EXPORTS IS A SURE SIGN OF INDEBTEDNESS.**

4. It is false that imports and exports balance each other, since many countries import more than they export, and vice versa.

Why it is that some countries over-import and others over-export, we have just explained. But if we leave out those exports which are sent to pay a previous debt or to create a new one, we shall find that all other exports are balanced by corresponding imports. For, indeed, how otherwise could they possibly be paid? That they are not paid for in specie, we have seen; so that, if they are ever paid for at all, it must be in kind. All commercial transactions resolve themselves, directly or indirectly, into interchanges of commodities; so that, as we have said before, all commerce is barter; and there can (loan and investment payments excluded) be no import without an export to same amount, and *vice versa*. Every purchase implies a corresponding sale.

It must be borne in mind that in speaking of the imports or the exports of a country we of course mean the total imports or the total exports of that country from, and to, the world at large, and not those from, or to, any one particular other country. Some have misapprehended this, and have applied what had reference to the total foreign trade of a country to the special trade between that and a single other country. The aggregate commercial imports and exports of each country must, as we have seen (that is, debt-payments excepted), balance each other, but it does not at all follow that the separate dealings between two individual countries will show a similar result. Over-imports from countries A, B, &c., will be counterpoised by over-exports to countries C, D, &c., and, in the aggregate, one will make up for the other, and the equilibrium between the total commercial imports and total commercial exports of each country will be maintained. To sum up, the truth is that **FOR EVERY EXPORT OF GOODS TO THE WORLD AT LARGE, EXCEPT WHAT IS SENT TO PAY A PREVIOUS DEBT, OR TO CREATE A NEW ONE, THERE MUST BE AN IMPORT OF GOODS FROM THE WORLD AT LARGE TO THE SAME AMOUNT, AND VICE VERSA.**

5. Protection promotes native industry by providing fresh channels for the employment of native labour.

It would be well if this were all, but truth requires the addition of the following words: "It at the same time destroys more of the old channels for the employment of native labour than it provides new." Such is the fact, and in its suppression lies the fallacy. Ceasing to import foreign goods means ceasing to export those native goods which were sent in exchange for the former, and throwing the producers of such native goods out of work. A country that adopts the Protective system ceases to import, and produces for itself, certain articles which we may call X Y Z, and thus capital and labour acquire "fresh channels for employment." So far, so good; but this good inseparably brings with it an evil that far more than counterbalances it. When the nation in question imported the articles X Y Z, it exported in exchange for them other articles of native manufacture which we may call A B C. But when it ceased importing the former, it necessarily (for imports and exports are, as we have seen, correlative) ceased exporting the latter. What is the consequence? The articles A B C are no longer produced, and the capital and labour which produced them remain idle. The capital can afford to wait; but what of the labour-sellers who are thrown out of work? Instead of "native industry" being "promoted," it is "the old channels for employment" that are "destroyed."

Eventually, the displacement is partially remedied by the absorption of the disorganised capital and labour into the new industry. But is the change which has been effected through this displacement a benefit? Certainly not. Quite the contrary. The advantages which the division of labour confers have been set aside. The capital and labour which were employed in the production of articles A B C, with which the foreign producer could not compete, are now diverted to the production of articles X Y Z which cannot compete (else, why protective duties?) with the production of foreigners. In other words, men are taken away from what they can do better than others, and set to work on what others can do better than they can. The capital and labour which used to be

employed remuneratively are now producing a loss which has to be made up by a public subvention in the shape of an import tax.

If, instead of taking the instance of a nation that is adopting the Protective system, we take that of a protected nation that is adopting Free Trade, we arrive at analogous results. Such nation, by abolishing the import duties on certain articles X Y Z, imports them from abroad, where they are cheaper, and discontinues their production at home. Thus capital and labour lose some of their old channels of employment. But let us look at the other side. Now that this same country imports, instead of making, the articles X Y Z, it necessarily exports in exchange for them (for every increase of imports necessitates an increase of exports) other articles of native production, which we may call A B C, and thus fresh channels of employment are created. The capital, fixed and floating, and the labour, which have become disused by ceasing to produce the articles X Y Z, are utilised in producing the articles A B C, for which an export demand is created by the importation of the articles X Y Z. And now let us inquire—Is the change which has been effected through this displacement a benefit? Yes! and a very decided one. The same capital and labour that was before unprofitably employed in producing the protected articles X Y Z, which the foreigner could produce cheaper or better, are now profitably employed in producing the articles A B C, which suit the foreigner's market, and which he readily takes in exchange for his own. Hence the capital and labour which used to be devoted to losing are now devoted to remunerative industries, the consumers enjoy the benefit of cheap goods instead of dear ones, the division of labour is effectually carried out, and a great impulse is given to foreign trade. In this way the producer gains, the consumer gains, the national wealth is increased, and the general commerce of the country is extended.

The fresh industries which Protection creates are created at the expense of the staple old industries which Protection curtails. The former can only exist by taxing the entire community; the latter were self-supporting. A country cannot at the same time cease importing foreign articles, and go on exporting the native articles which used to be sent in exchange for them. Free Trade says, "Go on exporting the cheap native article and importing the cheap foreign one." Protection says, "Leave off producing the native article which you produce so cheaply, and turn to producing the foreign article which you can only produce at a high price, and the law will compel the consumers to pay you that extra price by laying a heavy import duty on the cheap foreign article." Were the principle of opening new losing industries at the expense of old profitable ones fairly carried out, England might create a fresh industry by producing her own wines, and thus being independent of France; France, by producing her own cotton, and thus being independent of America; Germany, by producing her own silk, and thus being independent of China, &c. &c. The absurdity of such a policy is palpable, but the absurdity is equally positive, though not so palpable, in every case wherein nations discourage the industries for which they are best adapted in order to create others for which they are less fitted.

Protection, therefore, does not promote native industry, but simply displaces it from a good to a bad position. We have dwelt at some length on this topic because the fallacy of the Protectionist proposition is not immediately obvious, and many honest inquirers have been temporarily misled by it. The key to its solution is in the fact that just in the proportion that a country curtails its imports, in that same proportion it curtails its exports. To sum up, the truth is that PROTECTION DISCOURAGES NATIVE INDUSTRY, BY CLOSING PROFITABLE CHANNELS FOR ITS EXERCISE AND SUBSTITUTING FOR THEM UNPROFITABLE ONES.

Chapter III.

6. Import duties on foreign goods fall on the importers. 7. Free Trade supplies native industry with cheap materials and cheap living.

6. Import duties on foreign goods fall on the foreigner, and are paid by him.

This is absolutely the reverse of the fact, but the assertion has been frequently made, with a jaunty indifference as to its truth, in order to coax the consumer into acquiescence with levying duties on foreign goods. He is told, "Let us lay on, say, 10 per cent, import duty on such or such a foreign article. You will not have to pay it; oh! dear, no! It is the foreigner who will bear it. He will let you have his goods 10 per cent, cheaper than you pay now, so that the duty will make no difference to you, and the revenue will be benefited at the expense of the foreigner." Very tempting, but alas! quite untrue. The foreign producer will not, and cannot, make the reduction. Before the duty is laid on, competition has already reduced the price of the article as low as it could go without trenching on a fair living profit. Such a profit leaves no margin for such a reduction. The imposition of the duty by no means diminishes the amount of labour and capital expended on the production of

the article. The foreign producer may, if the imposition of duty takes him by surprise and he has a large stock, submit to some deduction for the moment. But permanently he must get the old price, or the importing country must do without the article. If the importing country will, however, have the article, it must itself bear the 10 per cent, duty which it imposes. Suppose that England laid an import duty of a penny a pound on raw cotton, does anyone for a moment imagine that the price of cotton would thereupon fall a penny a pound in America, so that cotton would stand in to English spinners no more than it did before the duty? Who, in this case, would have to bear and pay the duty—the American grower or the English consumer? Can there be a doubt as to the reply? Again, if putting a duty on foreign imports makes no difference to the consumers of the importing country, then, of course, neither would taking the duty off make any difference to them. So that, according to this doctrine, if England were to abolish her import duty on tea, the Chinese would get all the benefit, and the English consumers would still pay the same price as before! But as the subject is again referred to under the next head, we will not enlarge upon it here. The proposition implies that the prices which we now pay for foreign goods are so exorbitant, that they could easily be reduced by the amount of import duties which we might levy on them—which is simply absurd. Of course, some slight and temporary variations in the relative demand and supply might occasion some slight and temporary variations in prices, but they would be both trifling and transient. To sum up, the truth is that IMPORT DUTIES ON FOREIGN GOODS FALL ON THE CONSUMERS OF THE IMPORTING COUNTRY, AND ARE PAID BY THEM.

7. Under Free Trade native industry is taxed, while foreign industry is not.

If it were possible for a nation to tax foreign industry, it is most wonderful that such a scheme, which would shift the unpleasant burden of taxation from our own to other people's shoulders, should not be universally resorted to. Why should the native be taxed at all, if the necessary taxes can be levied on the foreigner? What are statesmen about that they do not raise the entire revenue of the country by taxing foreign industry? The fact is that to tax foreign industry is a sheer impossibility, and to fancy that it can be done is one of those delusions which only exist as long as they escape examination. "Oh! but it is possible," interposes a Protectionist; "it is done every day. The United States of America tax foreign industry through their import duties on foreign goods, and in 1880 they levied from this source a revenue of \$186,000,000, equal to £37,000,000." Here then we join issue. The Protectionist maintains that this enormous amount of Customs' duties levied in the United States on foreign commodities falls upon, and is borne by, the foreign producers; while we maintain that it falls upon, and is borne by, the American consumers. Evidently one of us must be egregiously wrong. The question is narrowed to a very simple issue, and there ought to be no difficulty in solving it. Let us look into it carefully, and, to avoid complexity, let us take some average article as a type of the rest. In 1880 the United States imported, chiefly from England, cotton manufactured goods to the value of \$25,723,000 (£5,200,000), on which the Customs' duties levied on admission at American ports amounted to \$9,976,000 (nearly £2,000,000), which is equivalent to an average import duty of 38½ per cent, *ad valorem* on the amount imported.

Now, then, comes the question, who pays that £2,000,000 of duty? If the Protectionist is right, the American consumers do not pay it, but only pay the £5,200,000 which is the current value of the goods imported at their place of production, *plus* the freight. The £2,000,000 of duties "constitute a tax on British industry, and are paid by the British producer." The latter consequently only receives £3,200,000 in payment for goods of which the current value in Lancashire is £5,200,000. He is actually content to accept in America £3,200,000 for what he can get £5,200,000 elsewhere. This is the Protectionist view. Does it accord with common sense? Merely to state it clearly is a refutation. Do English manufacturers make two prices—one for the general market, and another, 38½ per cent, cheaper, for the American market? Or are their profits so enormous that they can allow a discount of 38½ per cent, to the American buyers, and still make sufficient profit to induce them to continue the trade year after year?

Let us take another article. In 1880 the United States imported pig iron to the value of \$11,619,000 (½2,300,000), on which the Customs' duties amounted to \$4,318,000 (£863,000), equivalent to a duty of 36½ per cent, *ad valorem*. Can anyone for a moment imagine that our iron-masters could afford to supply the American market at prices 36½ per cent, below those current at home, and would go on doing so year after year? It is patent to all who have any knowledge of trade (1) that the average profits on all our large staple commodities are kept within very moderate limits by the pressure of competition, and (2) that, as a rule, those markets which do not afford that moderate margin of profits cease to be resorted to. But that the producers of such articles will continue to send them to a market where they can only get within 36 or 38 per cent, of what they get elsewhere is an assertion which, although it may possibly be believed by the assertors themselves, is quite too heavy a demand on average human credulity.

The instances which we have quoted fairly represent the entire list of the dutiable articles imported by the United States of America. We could easily find instances far more striking. For instance, steel rails are not

admitted into America under a duty of 90 per cent, *ad valorem*; so that, on the assumption that import duties "constitute a tax on the foreign producers and are paid by them," the British steel producers are content for every hundred pounds' worth that they send out to receive back only £10! On that assumption, was it generosity or foolishness that induced them to send out to America in 1880, on terms equivalent to giving them away, a quantity of steel rails of no less an amount than \$1,644,000? If iron be as cheap in America as it is here—as it ought to be, barring a trifle of freight, if the Protectionist assumption be correct—why have the American ship-building industry and their ocean-carrying trade collapsed?

But it is, perhaps, needless to multiply proofs, and we think that all our readers will by this time agree that the Protectionist doctrine is erroneous, and that, beyond all doubt, import duties on foreign goods are borne by the consumers in the importing nation.

To revert, however, to the £5,200,000 worth of English cotton goods imported into America in 1880, on which an import duty of £2,000,000 had to be paid, it is perfectly clear that those goods were not sent to America to make a loss of £2,000,000, but they were sent because the current prices ruling in America for such goods made it probable that they would realise there an amount sufficient to cover (1) the cost, (2) the freight and charges, and (3) an average trade profit. Otherwise, where are the madmen to be found who would, year after year, send out that amount of goods to bear a large amount of loss? The trade would not be carried on at all unless the American consumers paid for those goods at least £7,700,000; viz.:—

At anything less than that, the goods would leave no profit, and a trade that leaves no profit quickly dies out. The same process of reasoning applies to all cases, and to all countries, in which an import duty is levied on foreign commodities. The duty is paid, not by the producers in the exporting countries, but by the consumers in the importing country.

It is clear that the American producers of that class of cotton goods which we above referred to as imported from England were unable to produce them for less than £7,700,000; or else why should the American consumers have paid that amount for British goods? Hence it follows that if, from any cause, such importation of those British goods were to cease, the American consumers would still have to pay £7,700,000 for them to the native manufacturer, while the United States Government would lose the £2,000,000 per annum which it now receives for import duties. In other words, the American consumers who now pay for those goods £5,700,000 cost and freight, and £2,000,000 duty to their Government, would then pay the whole of the £7,700,000 to the native manufacturers. Nor would these benefit much out of the £2,000,000 thus lost to the revenue. They would increase their sales by £7,700,000 annually, on which, assuming their net profits to be 6 per cent., they would realise £460,000, leaving £1,540,000 (or three-fourths of the £2,000,000 duties lost to the revenue) as a dead loss, owing to capital and labour being diverted to losing trades which the consumer is taxed to maintain.

In all countries which impose import duties on foreign merchandise these duties will assume one of three forms. These three forms will be (1) purely revenue duties, (2) protective duties, and (3) prohibitory duties. Now, (1) pure revenue duties are those which are levied on such commodities as are not produced at home, but are wholly imported from abroad; as well as upon such commodities as are partly produced at home, but on which the native producers pay precisely the same percentage of internal or Excise taxation as the foreign importation does of import duties. In these cases, whatever the consumers pay extra in consequence of those duties goes, in its entirety, to the revenue. (2) Protective duties are those levied on such commodities as are partly produced (free) at home, and partly imported (under duty) from abroad. In these cases, whatever the consumers pay extra in consequence of the duties goes in part to the revenue and in part to the native producers, who could not withstand foreign competition were it not for the tax so paid by the consumers. (3) Prohibitory duties are those which are too high to allow of importations from abroad, and leave the consumers entirely at the mercy of the native producers. In this latter case, the revenue gets nothing, and whatever the consumer pays extra for the prohibited commodities goes entirely to the native producer, who could not withstand foreign competition were it not for the tax so paid by the consumers. In none of these cases do the foreign producers bear any part of the import duty. It falls entirely on the native consumers. In the first of these cases, the whole of the extra price which the consumers pay in consequence of the import duties goes to their own Government, and relieves them to that extent from other taxes. In the second case a part, and in the third case the whole, of such extra charge to the consumers goes to cover the losses of the protected producers. From such portions, therefore, of that extra charge the national revenue derives no benefit, and the deficiency has to be made up by some other tax in some other form on the poor consumers, who thus have to pay two taxes instead of one.

Some, in reply, have said, "Admitted that heavy import duties are borne by the importing country, but a small duty is a different thing; the foreigner will lower his price to that extent sooner than lose his market." The answer is easy. Say that you tax a foreign article, A, 1 per cent. The foreign producer will certainly not lower his price as long as you continue to take from him the same quantity of that article, A, as you did before. Price is regulated by relative supply and demand. If that relation remains un-altered, the price will also remain

unaltered. The only chance of buying that article cheaper would be to sensibly diminish your purchases of it from the foreigner. But to do so, and yet meet the consumptive demand, you must to the same extent increase the native production of that article. Now, at the price hitherto current the native producer must have produced all that he could produce at a profit, and he can be stimulated to increase his production only by paying him an increased price. But the proposition stipulates that the price to the consumer is to remain the same. How are these two incompatibilities to be adjusted? By what process is the native producer to get a higher price for his article, A, and yet, at the same time, is the price of it to the consumer to remain the same? If the native producer does not get that higher price, he can produce no larger quantity than he did before; you will take from the foreigner the same quantity as you did before; in which case, as the relative supply and demand will remain unaltered, he will obtain from you the same price as he did before, and the i per cent, duty will, against your proposition, fall upon the consumer.

If the consumer does pay the per cent, duty, it then becomes a common case of Protection to that extent. The native is enabled to produce a little more than he did; the foreigner will supply a little less than he did; your exportation of other articles will diminish a little; the consumer will have to pay a little more than he did; and, generally, the same effects will take place, though on a small scale, as though the import duty, instead of 1 per cent., were 10 per cent, or 40 per cent. In every case, import duties, whether they be small or whether they be large, will equally fall upon the consumers.

"You will however grant," says a Protectionist, "that if not the whole, at least some part, of the import duty is paid by the foreigner." We regret that truth will not allow us to be so complaisant. The average profits made in a regular trade are, as a rule, kept down by competition to a certain level, below which the trade would not be continued. Under the additional burden of an import duty, that trade would first droop and soon die, unless prices rose in the importing country so as to cover the import duty. No merchant (unless for a short time and as a mere experiment) will go on employing his capital in a trade which does not yield him the average profits which capital earns in other channels. Now if prices rise in the importing country so as to cover the duty, and thus allow the trade to continue, it clearly must be at the expense of the importing consumers, and not of the foreign traders.

But Free Trade is blamed not only for not taxing foreign industry, which we have shown to be impossible, but also for taxing native industry. This is a totally unfounded accusation. Not only it is false that Free Trade specially taxes native industry, but it is true that Free Trade assists and promotes it in the most effective manner. Both these assertions we will in a few words make good. It is obvious that Free Trade imposes no special tax on native industry. All members of a community, whether under Free Trade or Protection, are subject to the general taxation deemed necessary to defray the Government expenditure, and they are liable to exactly the same burdens under both systems. This we think clear and incontrovertible. Now, on the other hand, Free Trade greatly assists and fosters native industry by supplying it with all the foreign materials which it needs to work with, or to work upon, at the cheapest possible cost, and unburdened by any import duties whatever. It at the same time lessens the cost of living, and increases the comforts obtainable for the same expenditure. It is hardly possible to over-estimate the enormous advantages which this cheapness confers on, or the strong stimulus which it affords to, productive industry. The cheap products of this industry will, of course, find a vent in all neutral markets, since the dear products of protected countries cannot possibly compete with them. Where the materials on which productive industry is exercised are enhanced in cost by protective import duties, it is impossible that the product should not be enhanced in cost in the same proportion. But the cheapness arising from untaxed materials not only fosters a demand from abroad, but also lessens the cost to the native consumers, and the benefit is thus twofold. It is, therefore, abundantly clear that native industry is largely promoted and developed by having, as a consequence of Free Trade, cheap untaxed materials to work with and to work upon. If the United States had had cheap untaxed iron, they would not have lost their valuable share of the ocean-carrying trade.

We must apologise for devoting so much time to the refutation of a fallacy so easy to refute; but this we thought necessary from the frequency of the allegation, and from the number of honest-minded men who, not having a ready answer, have been mystified by it To sum up, the truth is that FREE TRADE TAXES NO INDUSTRY, WHETHER NATIVE OR FOREIGN; BUT, AMONG OTHER ADVANTAGES, IT GREATLY FOSTERS NATIVE INDUSTRY, BY AFFORDING IT CHEAP, UNTAXED MATERIALS WHEREWITH AND WHEREON TO WORK, AND BY ALLOWING IT TO FLOW IN ITS NATURAL AND MOST PROFITABLE CHANNELS.

Chapter IV.

8. Wages highest where most wealth is created. 9. Protection

frustrates division of labour. 10. If protected nations prosper, it is in spite of, not because of, Protection.

8. If the labour-seller in protected countries pays more for what he consumes, on the other hand his wages are proportionately higher.

It does not at all follow. The present average rate of wages in Free Trade England, now that everything is cheap, is at least 50 per cent, higher than it was formerly in protected England, when everything was dear. Indeed, if the statement that heads this paragraph be correct, how comes it that our Protectionist friends so persistently warn us that we are being, or are going to be, undersold by our foreign competitors in consequence of the lower rate of wages and the longer hours of labour that prevail abroad? How is it that they so loudly call on Government to protect the British workman by import duties, to prevent him from being reduced to the low wages and long hours of his protected continental fellow-workmen? Here is surely a curious contradiction. Wages in protected countries cannot be at the same time higher and lower than they are here. If higher, what need is there to protect the British labour-seller against his higher-paid foreign competitor? If lower, then Protection in foreign countries, while it enhances the cost of living, does not enhance the rate of wages. How are these utter discordances to be resolved? This is how it is done. Division of labour is resorted to. One set of the Protectionist party uses statement No. 1, and another set uses statement No. 2. There is the "higher wages abroad" division and the "lower wages abroad" division. If the one fails to convince you, you are handed over to the other, who proceeds on a diametrically opposite tack; and it will go hard if, between the two, you can help being, if not convinced, at least mystified.

The fact is that the money rate of wages does not depend (except when it is at the famine level) on the cost of living, but on the relative demand for, and supply of, labour. Wages are higher than with us in protected America, and lower than with us in the protected continental States of Europe. It is where there is abundance of cheap capital, as in England, or abundance of cheap land, as in America, that there will be the greatest demand, and consequently the greatest remuneration, for labour. Capital is the fund out of which the wages of labour are paid, and the larger that fund, compared with the number of labour-sellers, the higher will be the rate of wages. The increase of that fund depends on increased production, and there are no more powerful agencies in the production of wealth than free commercial intercourse, general and international division of labour, and such an application of capital and labour as will produce a *maximum* result. To sum up, the truth is that WAGES ARE NOT REGULATED (EXCEPT AT STARVATION POINT) BY THE COST OF LIVING, BUT BY THE GREATER OR LESSER DEMAND FOR LABOUR, WHICH IS GREATEST WHERE WEALTH IS MOST RAPIDLY CREATED.

9. Protection promotes diversity of industries in the protected country.

So much the worse. It is a matter of regret not of boast. The greater the diversity of industries in a given locality, the less scope there is for universal division of labour. This fertilising and wealth-creating principle is crippled in proportion to the smallness of its sphere of operations. By whatever it is short of being international and world-pervading, by so much is its efficacy impaired. It is merely sectional and intra-national in those countries where great diversification of industries prevails. Nowhere does the diversity of industries exist in a higher degree than among the Pitcairn islanders, unless it were among the country people of the olden times, when each family raised its own food and spun its own garments.

No doubt Protection does promote sectional diversity of industries, since it discourages commercial interchanges between nation and nation. If it were possible for each country to have within itself such a diversity or universality of industries as that all its wants could be supplied by native capital and labour, there would at once be an end to all foreign commerce; for as all countries would have their needs supplied out of their own resources and exertions, no one of them would take anything from the other, and, of course, no one of them would raise or produce anything beyond its own wants, since there would be no outlet for such surplus. The more perfect the system of self-sufficing diversity of industries, the more complete would be the isolation. It has not been the fault of man's fiscal enactments that this complete isolation is not attained; it is the fault of nature's laws. Not only does each nation want something which other countries can, but which itself cannot, produce, but each nation has through its aptitudes, natural or acquired, certain surplus productions for which it desires to find a vent, and for which it must—positively and inevitably must—take in exchange the products of other nations.

Suppose, for instance, a country, A, blest with a fertile soil, with a genial climate, and with land, abundant and cheap, cultivated by an energetic and industrious race of men; the result will be the production of agricultural commodities far in excess of the requirements of that country itself. If for that surplus produce the

producers find a vent in the other countries of the world, they will have to take in payment for it the world's commodities of other kinds; for there is no other mode of payment. If country A, in its determination to be self-sufficing, were totally to prohibit the admission of any foreign goods whatever, its surplus of food productions could not be sent abroad at all, since nothing foreign was admitted in exchange for it. Its vent would be confined to the home demand, and the production would have to be cut down to the limit of that demand. The diversity of industries fostered by the self-sufficing system would exercise a blighting and fatal influence on the great staple industry of that country.

If this diversity of industries is promoted by Protection, it would be still far more completely promoted by total prohibition. Indeed, it would be yet farther promoted by cutting up the country into small districts, each to supply its own wants by its own industries. In this case, each little community would have its occupations diversified to the fullest extent, and the division of labour would be effectively impeded. The antagonism between the diversification of industries and the division of labour may be exemplified thus:—If 3,000 men be set to produce pins, needles, and thread, the former system diversifies the industries by setting each man to produce as many pins, as many needles, and as much thread as he can, by his separate and individual efforts, produce in a given time; whereas the division of labour sets 1,000 of these men conjointly to produce nothing but pins, 1,000 to produce nothing but needles, and the remaining 1,000 to produce nothing but thread. By which of these two processes will the greatest quantity of pins, needles, and thread be produced within that given time? Can anyone doubt the result? Will it not be 100,000 to 1 in favour of the latter? If the greatest possible diversification of industries be right, then the division of labour must be a mistake, and we must go back to the good old times when each family combined within itself a diversity of industries, raised its own food, spun its own clothes, and reared its own hovel.

Under a system of perfect freedom of commercial intercourse between country and country there would be such a distribution of industries as was consonant with the aptitudes, natural or incidental, peculiar to each country, and on these the productive energies of each country would be concentrated. The total productiveness of each would be far greater, although there would be a smaller diversity in the variety of articles produced. Nature says, "Devote your efforts to producing abundantly those things which you can produce best." Protection says, "Produce a little of everything, whether they be things which you are most fitted, or things that you are least fitted, to produce." Left to themselves, capital and labour easily discover and promptly adopt those industries from which they derive the most productive results, and the diversity of industries thus naturally attained furnishes them with their most remunerative employment. On the other hand, Protection diverts them, to a greater or lesser extent, from that profitable employment to other industries which can only flourish by the imposition of a tax on the community at large; and to that extent, while the diversity of industries is enlarged, the wealth of the country is diminished. All diversification of industries which goes beyond its natural boundary, and which, instead of being the result of the regular course of things, is artificially extended by State ordinances, is an encroachment on the division of labour, and therefore an evil. To sum up, the truth is that PROTECTION FRUSTRATES THE DIVISION OF LABOUR BY ARTIFICIALLY LOCALISING THE GREATEST POSSIBLE DIVERSITY OF INDUSTRIES WITHIN LIMITED AREAS, WITHOUT REGARD TO THEIR NATURAL DISTRIBUTION.

10. Some protected nations are prosperous, therefore Protection is a benefit.

In this sentence the word "therefore" is entirely out of place. It involves a *non sequitur*. It might just as well be said that whereas some ignorant persons are clever, therefore ignorance is a benefit. We hold, on the contrary, that those protected nations which are prosperous are prosperous not because of, but in spite of, Protection—just as we hold that the ignorant persons who are clever, are clever not because of, but in spite of, their ignorance. No doubt, protected nations may and do attain a certain degree of prosperity in spite of Protection, for its evil influence only stunts without destroying their productive power. What we contend, is that they would be far more prosperous if they adopted Free Trade. We have never said that protected nations accumulate no wealth, but simply that they would accumulate it much faster if they abandoned the protective system. If a property being badly managed yields an income of £1,000 per annum, whereas under good management it would yield £1,500, it does not follow that the owner is utterly ruined by his bad management, but it does follow that, through it, his income is £500 per annum less than it might be. Neither does it follow that, because a badly-managed property yields a comfortable income, "therefore bad management is a benefit." The owner is prosperous not because of, but in spite of, his bad management. By adopting a better system, he might add 50 per cent, to his income.

The mere fact of a nation's comparative prosperity is surely no bar to improvements that may render that nation more prosperous still. It will be time enough to scout improvements and arrest progress, when we have reached (if ever we shall reach) the extreme limits of human perfectibility. Till then it is irrational to say, "We are prospering, and we therefore decline entertaining any scheme for the increase of that prosperity." To allege that the Free Trade scheme will not conduce to such increase of prosperity, affords a fair and legitimate subject

for discussion. We contend that it will, and have adduced our reasons for coming to that conclusion. But to contend that Free Trade is an evil merely because a certain amount of prosperity has attended the opposite system, is an inconclusive inference, since it does not exclude the probability that a much greater amount of prosperity might have attended the Free Trade system; in which case, Free Trade would have been a benefit. No argument against Free Trade is deducible from that style of reasoning. Nations progressed at a certain rate before the application of steam to locomotion by sea or land, but afterwards the rate of that progress was greatly accelerated. So do we say that nations may prosper to a certain extent before the application of Free Trade to their international relations, but that when so applied that prosperity will increase in a greatly accelerated ratio.

The Protectionist proposition is a mere statement of opinion, unaccompanied by any proof, and therefore our contradiction of it must partake of similar vagueness. The truth or fallacy of either opinion must be reasoned out on other grounds. Indeed, the issues raised have been fully discussed by us in other shapes. Mere assertion can only be met by counter-assertion, and therefore, to sum up, the truth is that SOME PROTECTED NATIONS ARE PROSPEROUS; BUT THEY WOULD BE FAR MORE PROSPEROUS STILL UNDER FREE TRADE; THEREFORE PROTECTION IS AN EVIL.

Chapter V. 11. As to dependence on foreigners. 12. Free Trade a boon to the nation, whether others adopt it or not. 13. As knowledge spreads so will Free Trade.

11. Protection renders a country independent of foreigners.

This is only another form of that principle of isolation which, if fully carried out, would convert the various nations of the world into so many hostile tribes. In what possible way could mankind be benefited if each country were really to be commercially independent of every other? The evils and privations which all would suffer from such mutual estrangement are too obvious to require pointing out, but what would be the counterbalancing advantages? We can see but this solitary one—that, in case of war, the country that had no commercial intercourse with other countries would be free from any inconvenience that might be caused by hostile interference with such intercourse. This might, perhaps, hold good if every nation were perpetually at war with every other nation. But such a state of things never did and never could exist. Even under the present very imperfect system of international relations, wars are only occasional, and are never universal. Where, then, is the wisdom of a nation voluntarily inflicting on itself for all time the evils and inconveniences of isolation merely to avoid their possible temporary infliction by an enemy in case of war at some future uncertain period? It is thus that the coward commits suicide from fear of death. Is a man to deny himself all present enjoyments because he may some day or other be deprived of them by illness or misfortune? Are you never to carry about you in the streets a watch, or a purse, or a handkerchief, because it is possible that, sooner or later, they may be purloined by a pickpocket? If the mere fear of some future war is to divest us for ever of the benefits of commercial intercourse with other nations, it is one more to be added to the long train of evils which the war system inflicts on mankind.

Moreover, it is to be noted that full and free commercial intercourse does not imply the dependence of one country on the rest—it implies the mutual and equal interdependence upon each other of all countries. Interchanges presuppose benefit to both parties, or they would not be entered into. In the same way, the interruption which war would cause to such interchanges would prove equally injurious to both parties—to one just as much as to the other. The stronger the ties of mutual interest and the more numerous the points of pleasant and profitable contact, the greater will be the interdependence of nations upon each other. But that mutual interdependence does not place anyone of them at special disadvantage as compared with the rest. If there be any disadvantage when war supervenes, it will be common to all. They will occupy in this respect the same relative positions which they would have occupied if they had, during all the time that they were at peace, deprived themselves of the advantages of foreign trade. It is true that the more nations are knit together by the ties of mutual interest, the greater will be the reluctance to break through them, and the more they will all lose by substituting hostile collision for peaceful commerce. But the reluctance will be felt, and the loss will be shared alike by all of them. If there be a shade of difference between them, it may perhaps consist in this. The more largely and closely a nation is in connection with the rest of the world, the more independent will that nation be, supposing that its foreign commerce were partially disturbed by war with one or more other countries. That commerce would still continue, and would be carried on partly through its old and partly through fresh channels. What articles it might no longer procure from its enemies would, through its organised intercourse with neutrals, be abundantly poured in by the latter. Either from them or through them its wants would be supplied; and either by them or through them its productions would be taken in exchange.

In reference to this subject, we may quote a speech delivered by Macaulay in 1842. In answer to the argument that England ought only casually to be dependent on other countries, for food supply, he said that he "preferred constant to casual dependence, for constant dependence became mutual dependence As to war interrupting our supplies, a striking instance of the fallacy of that assumption was furnished in 1810, during the height of the continental system, when all Europe was against us, directed by a chief who sought to destroy us through our trade and commerce. In that year (1810) there were 1,600,000 quarters of corn imported, one-half of which came from France itself." Napoleon's Berlin decrees were far more oppressive and intolerable to the continental nations from which they nominally emanated than they were to England, against whom they were directed.

Thus that "independence of foreigners," on which Protectionists lay such stress, is a privilege acquired at an immense sacrifice of annual wealth, and which, when war supervenes to test its value, is found to be worthless. To secure it we are, according to this doctrine, to do without foreign trade during peace in order to teach us to do without it during war. We are to forego it when we can reap its benefits in order to inure us to the privation when we cannot. To sum up, the truth is that INDEPENDENCE OF FOREIGNERS REALLY MEANS COMMERCIAL ISOLATION, WHICH NULLIFIES INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF LABOUR, DISCOURAGES PRODUCTION, AND FOMENTS A HOSTILE SPIRIT AMONG NATIONS.

12. Free Trade would be a special boon to England if all nations adopted it; but till then it is a disadvantage to us.

We maintain, on the contrary (1) that if all nations adopted Free Trade it would be, not a special boon to England, but a general and equal boon to all mankind; and (2) that meanwhile, till other nations adopt Free Trade, it is a special boon to us. Let us examine these propositions.

(1) Free Trade simply means unrestricted, and therefore far more frequent and extensive commercial interchanges than at present, between the various populations that tenant this globe of ours. Now, all such interchanges, whether they be few or many, are quite voluntary. None need either buy or sell unless he reaps, or hopes to reap, some benefit from the transaction. Self-interest guides both parties in every commercial dealing. Both expect and believe that they are gainers by it. To forbid, or to curtail, or to discourage commercial interchanges, is to deprive both the parties (not one of them only) of the advantages which they would, if left alone, reap from them. To remove all impediments to such interchanges between the people of all countries, and to leave to the parties dealing together full and free scope for their operations, is to allow both these parties (not one of them only) to reap the advantages which such operations afford. How, then, can this latter policy be said to be a boon to anyone country? We know that such a notion does exist; but it is none the less an absurd, misleading, and pernicious error. England can only share with other nations, and not one jot more than other nations, the benefits which these extended interchanges would confer.

It may be said that, if Free Trade were universally adopted, England would export more goods to the world at large. Very true; but the world at large would at the same time export more goods to England. For what could England take in return for her increased exports? Gold? Certainly not. It has been demonstrated over and over again that specie only migrates from country to country in homoeopathic quantities as compared with the amount of commercial dealings. It would be goods, then, that England would take in exchange. In that case the foreign producers, sellers, and exporters of those goods would reap at least as much profit from them as the English would from the goods for which they would be exchanged. Where is the special boon to England? A policy by which all parties benefit equally is a universal boon to all—not a special boon to anyone of them.

(2) While other nations are debarring themselves from the advantages of Free Trade, those advantages are being specially enjoyed by ourselves. From a number of such advantages thus accruing to us, we shall content ourselves with specifying three, (a) Cheapness of living to our people, who, while they earn higher wages than their continental comrades, have their wants supplied at a cheaper rate, (b) Cheapness of production; for as all the materials which we work upon or work with come to us untaxed, we can undersell our rivals in all neutral markets, and thus secure all but a monopoly in these, (c) Cheapness in naval construction and equipment, which gives to us another all but monopoly of the lucrative ocean-carrying trade. Lack of space prevents us from detailing the numerous other direct and indirect advantages which we enjoy through our present monopoly of Free Trade. Indeed, some able men have argued that we derive greater advantages from being the only Free Trade country than we should enjoy if all other nations were also to become Free Traders. While dissenting from this view, it is undeniable that, under the present system of Free Trade here and Protection everywhere else, we have secured an unexampled pre-eminence in international commerce. Our foreign trade (combined imports and exports) now forms no less than one-fourth of the total foreign trade of the world at large. To sum up, the truth is that FREE TRADE WOULD BE A GENERAL BOON TO ALL NATIONS IF THEY DID ADOPT IT; AND MEANWHILE IT IS A SPECIAL BOON TO ENGLAND, THAT HAS ADOPTED IT.

13. Other countries are too wise to follow the example of England, and adopt Free Trade.

We submit that for the words "too wise," we ought to substitute "not wise enough." But, indeed, "wisdom" has had little to do with the discussion of the subject abroad. The great bulk of the people composing civilised nations have never studied, never considered, and perhaps hardly ever heard the name of, Free Trade; and yet it is the great bulk of the people who are most interested in it, and to whose welfare it would most conduce. Of the wealthier and more leisured classes, part are the capitalists who have embarked their fortunes in, and identified their interests with, the protected industries, and all their influence is directed against any change; while the rest are, for the most part, indifferent to the subject, absorbed in other pursuits, and averse to trouble themselves with dry questions of political economy. As to the governing classes, they chiefly devote their attention to those topics which more immediately press on them—such as party triumphs or defeats, foreign politics, financial devices, religious contentions, dynastic intrigues, and other matters of statecraft. As to whether the people they govern would prosper better under Free Trade than under Protection, why should they trouble themselves about that, since the people, who are the greatest sufferers, do not move in it? Why should they lose votes, and perhaps power, to introduce changes which the many whom these changes would benefit do not ask for, and the few whom they would inconvenience loudly cry against?

Nevertheless, from all these various social strata there come forth in every nation a certain number of thoughtful, truth-seeking men who do study the subject, and whom that study has made Free Traders. These men, whose convictions are founded on research, are by no means inactive in promulgating the truth. But they are as yet comparatively few, and their voice only reaches a small part of the multitude itself, whose earnings are being clipped and pared by protective taxes. Gradually and steadily, however, nations are becoming leavened by Free Trade doctrines. A small but increasing number of active politicians in every country are clustering into a compact Free Trade party, and their labours in the cause are entitled to our warmest appreciation and sympathy. They have up-hill work before them. In their endeavours to benefit their countrymen they meet with apathy on the part of those whom they wish to serve, with obloquy on the part of those interested in the abuse which they wish to correct, and with neglect on the part of the rulers whose policy they wish to influence. All honour to their glorious efforts! This passing tribute is amply due from us, who have gone through the struggle, to our brother Free Traders in protective countries who are going through it. That they will succeed in breaking through the barriers of ignorant indifference and interested opposition, no one who sees how irresistibly the wave of progress is rolling onward throughout the world, can for a moment doubt. To sum up, the truth is that THE MOMENT THE MASS OF THE PEOPLE IN OTHER COUNTRIES SHALL BECOME AWARE THAT PROTECTION TAXES THE MANY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FEW, FREE TRADE WILL BECOME UNIVERSAL.

Chapter VI 14. Increase of wealth under Free Trade. 15. That increase not due to the gold discoveries. 16. As to threatening foreign countries with retaliation.

14. England has not prospered under Free Trade, and is living on her former capital.

Both statements are the reverse of true. As to the first, the marvellous expansion of England's prosperity and wealth within the last thirty years is so notorious, and has been so clearly, amply, and conclusively shown by statistical records, that it is mere waste of time to dwell upon it. The great wonder to us is that any man should be found so blind as not to recognise, or so bold as to deny, the fact. As to the second, the only ground on which the statement is based is the permanent excess of our imports over our exports—a fact which, far from proving, effectually disproves the statement that England "is living on her former capital." For, as we have before put it, how can receiving a hundred millions per annum more from abroad than we send away be a cause of impoverishment? Or, rather, how can it be other than a splendid accession to our wealth and capital?

It is said that this excess of imports has been partly paid for by the redemption of American Government bonds, and that consequently the indebtedness of the world to England is to that extent less. Let us examine this assertion. It is quite true that the United States have paid off a portion of their national debt, some of which was held in England; and all honour be to them for it! But how can the creditable liquidation of their debts prove a source of impoverishment and diminution of capital to us? "They now owe us less," is your feeble moan. Why not? How can it be a loss and a grievance to you that a high-minded debtor should take the earliest opportunity

of repaying what he owes you? If it be an injury to you to have solvent debtors, then long live the Turks and Egyptians! As regards them, you will ever be free from the nuisance of having the world's indebtedness to you diminished. But how the repayment of a loan can injure a creditor passes conception. Because our Anglo-Saxon brethren in the other hemisphere have repaid a portion of their national debt, does it follow that the aggregate indebtedness of the world to you (on which you lay such stress) has diminished? Not at all. Both in financial circles and on the Stock Exchange (the best, and indeed the only, authorities on the subject) the verdict is (1) that a larger sum than has been repaid to us by the United States in one form has, during the same period, been invested by us in other American securities, and (2) that, in addition, England has been, year by year, making fresh loans to, and large investments in, other countries (chiefly her own colonies). The result is—and it will relieve the fears of our timorous friends to know it—that the present indebtedness to England of the world at large is greater than it has ever been before. Paying us off is a very rare operation; borrowing from us a very frequent one.

There are also other proofs patent to everyone who looks around him that, far from England's living on her capital, that capital is yearly increasing at a rapid rate; for it is accumulating before his eyes. Every year the fixed capital of the country is, visibly and tangibly, receiving a vast accession by the construction of new dwelling-houses, new ships, new factories, new railways, new harbours, new docks, new warehouses, &c., &c., of which the aggregate value is enormous. Every year vast sums are invested in new commercial enterprises, both at home and abroad. Every year our population increases at the rate of about 1,000 a day; while food, clothing, lodging, &c., are more easily and abundantly supplied to them than ever, for pauperism has decreased 19 per cent, since 1870. And it is in the face of these facts that we are told that England is living on her capital! Out of what fund, then, if not from our annual savings (excess of income over expenditure), does the money come to provide these enormous annual additions to our national wealth? To sum up, the truth is that UNDER FREE TRADE WE HAVE ACCUMULATED WEALTH WITH UNPRECEDENTED RAPIDITY, AND ARE YEARLY MAKING VERY LARGE ADDITIONS TO OUR CAPITAL.

15. *England has no doubt prospered, but that prosperity is due, not to Free Trade, but to the gold discoveries in California and Australia.*

If, instead of California and Australia, the gold discoveries had been made in Yorkshire or Cornwall, one might more easily understand how England would have specially benefited by them; but that the decay of England should have been arrested by, and the huge fabric of her prosperity have been erected upon, the discovery, thirty years ago, of auriferous deposits in territories thousands of miles distant, is an assertion that bears on the face of it the stamp of absurdity. The effects of that increased production of gold have been much over-rated. They no doubt did enrich the people of America and Australia; just as the discovery of new copper mines or petroleum wells enrich the people who own them. But the profits on gold production are by no means excessive. The labour which it absorbs is abstracted from the production of wealth in another form, and the average net result is not considerable. No doubt, the consequent increase in the world's stock of gold tended to arrest the general fall of prices, and even in some degree to enhance them. It thus, for a short time, gave some stimulus to the trade of the world. But such effects, limited as they were in extent and transitory in duration, were common to all countries. England merely shared that influence with others, and derived from it no special or exceptional advantage. We should hardly have adduced for confutation so weak a plea as the above, but that some Protectionists (not many) have, from some peculiar turn of mind, considered that there was something in it. To sum up, the truth is that ENGLAND SHARED WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD THE BENEFICIAL INFLUENCE, SUCH AS IT WAS, OF THE GOLD DISCOVERIES IN CALIFORNIA AND AUSTRALIA, BUT DERIVED FROM THEM NO ADVANTAGE SPECIAL TO HERSELF.

16. *By threatening to impose import duties on foreign commodities we shall induce foreign countries to reduce, or remove, their present import duties on ours.*

To such a threat the foreigner might probably reply to this effect, "You urge Free Trade on us, gentlemen! Good. But do you urge it upon us as being a benefit or an injury? If you really and sincerely deem Free Trade to be a benefit, then you certainly will not carry out your threat of adopting Protection if we decline your proposal. If, on the other hand, you believe it to be an injury, then your proposal is—well, self-answered." We cannot just now find the proper repartee to this. Meanwhile, the Protectionists may exclaim, "It is not fair for foreign nations to saddle our productions with Customs' duties while we admit their free." Why not? When we adopted Free Trade it was with a view to our own interests, and not in order to please or favour foreigners. On what plea, then, can you ask them to discard their own policy (good or bad) in order to please or favour you? We can imagine the foreigner answering you thus, "If you, O Englishmen! prefer Free Trade, be it so. We do not seek

to control you. We do not come to you, and threaten that unless you adopt Protection we will lower our import duties and become Free-Traders. That would be casting a stigma on the sincerity of our belief in Protection. Like the fox in the fable, you have cut off your tail, and you now want us also to cut off our own; but the very urgency with which you press us begets the suspicion that you yourselves repent the operation. If you do repent having Free Trade, your remedy is easy—replace your tail—re-enact Protection; but do not be so inconsistent as to threaten us that unless we participate with you in what you assert to be the benefits of Free Trade, you will participate with us in what you assert to be the evils of Protection."

This is all very fine," you will say, "but this Free Trade of ours is one-sided. We buy freely at the world's shop, while the world refuses to buy at ours." Divest yourself of this error. The world buys of you just as much, neither more nor less, as you buy of the world. No trade can possibly be one-sided. The essence of trade is to give and take. All commerce is barter. If you buy freely from the world, the world is compelled, from the very nature of things, to buy just as freely from you. It cannot help itself. The goods you buy will and must be paid for, directly or indirectly, in the goods you sell. The debts due to or by a country by or to other countries, whether for goods, or loans, or interest, or anything else, are not—never were—and cannot be—paid in gold. But this has been demonstrated so repeatedly and so clearly before that we need not further dwell on it.

What Protection does is, not to sell more to us than we sell to the protected world (for that is impossible), but to prevent each protected nation from selling as much to the rest of the world (by preventing it from buying as much from the rest of the world) as it would do under Free Trade. International exchanges, which constitute foreign commerce, and by which both parties would profit, are discouraged, checked, and curtailed. The loss of that profit is not one sided but two-sided. The protected nation and the rest of the world are both equal losers; and the evil is due to Protection, not to Free Trade. The curtailment of those mutually beneficial international exchanges would become all the greater if we ourselves adopted Protection. By so doing we should no doubt punish the protected countries, but we should punish ourselves in the same degree. We should diminish their foreign commerce, but at the same time diminish our own. Surely the very worst way of increasing international exchanges must be to adopt the very system which we complain of in others as curtailing them.

As to what are the foreign articles that are to be taxed, in the improbable case of the Fair Traders, *alias* Protectionists, getting their own way, they are by no means agreed among themselves; and no wonder. The people at large decidedly object to have their food taxed, the manufacturing classes decidedly object to have their raw materials taxed, and the general consumers decidedly object to have the miscellaneous articles taxed. What is to be done? Well, as the general consumers are a long-suffering and patient race, let us suppose that they are sacrificed, and miscellaneous articles of foreign manufacture are to be selected for taxation in order to constrain foreign countries "to reduce or remove their present import duties on our commodities." But here comes another difficulty. The amount of foreign manufactures imported by us from each country is too small to afford the required leverage. They consist of about 2,000 various articles, coming from about fifty different countries, and ranging in amount and importance from silks down to sarsaparilla. They constitute in value about one-tenth of our total importations; or, as some make it, by rating such things as confectionery, and works of art as manufactures, about one-eighth: it matters very little which. The aggregate value of these 2,000 foreign taxable articles is from £40,000,000 to £50,000,000 annually, which amount is cut up into small portions, not only by its distribution among a multiplicity of articles, but by its further subdivision as coming from various countries. The idea of frightening foreign nations into making a change in their fiscal policy by taxing, or threatening to tax, such comparative trifles, is sublimely ridiculous.

The Protectionists also talk of introducing differential duties, to be less on the productions of some countries and more on those of others; and these would occasion fresh subdivisions and complications which it would require an army of Custom-house clerks and revenue officers to detect and apportion. The practical difficulties of assessing and collecting duties on these fragmentary objects of minute taxation would bewilder the greatest financier of the age, Mr. Gladstone himself; and the Fair Traders, *alias* Protectionists, would have to evolve a Chancellor of the Exchequer of 10-Gladstone-power to cope with them. To sum up, the truth is that TO THREATEN FOREIGN COUNTRIES THAT WE SHALL ADOPT THEIR FISCAL POLICY UNLESS THEY ADOPT OURS, IS TO LEAVE TO THE DECISION OF OTHERS WHETHER WE ARE (RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY) TO ADHERE TO FREE TRADE OR REVERT TO PROTECTION.

Chapter VII.

CONCLUSION.

BESIDES the sixteen pleas for Protection which we have now discussed, there are (for error is hydra-headed) a number of minor and subordinate ones. But these are either so trivial as to have no weight, or so obviously

unsound as to carry with them their own refutation. Almost all of them, moreover, are branches of, or correlative to, those of which we have treated, and we shall, therefore, refrain from passing them under review.

We cannot conclude without adverting to two curious phenomena in connection with the subject under discussion.

1. Here is a matter of science, in which the facts or data are numerous and well-authenticated. The inferences from these data are by no means abstruse or recondite; and the arguments on either side have been abundantly, if not always very luminously, set forth. And yet, of those who have more or less inquired into the subject, while nine out of ten have arrived at one conclusion, the remaining one-tenth have arrived at a conclusion diametrically opposite. By what peculiar twist of the brain is it that the same data lead one man to a direct affirmative and another to as direct a negative? No admission on either side that there is something to be said on the other! There is no neutral tint. All is either jet black or refulgent white. The reasons for such contradictory conclusions from ascertainable facts may, we think, be traced to some of the following explanations, which apply to imperfect reasoners on either side of the question: viz., 1. Some persons treat unsupported assertions as admitted facts. 2. Some shrink from statistics which they find troublesome, and therefore call them misleading. 3. Some only take those figures which tell in their favour, and leave out the rest. 4. Some ignore, or forget, a portion of the essential data, and conclude from incomplete premises. 5. Some admit a proposition, but afterwards go on reasoning as if they had refuted it. 6. Some confine their attention to local and transitory topics, but reason as if they were general and permanent. 7. Some, biassed by self-interest, look obliquely instead of straight at the data before them. 8. Some, clinging to foregone conclusions, shut their eyes to new facts and their ears to new arguments. 9. Some resist an argument, not as being unsound, but simply as being adverse. 10. Some grant that the formula $2 \times 8 = 16$ is quite correct in theory, but contend that it is inadmissible in practice. 11. Some fancy that what is verbose and obscure is profound, and that what is concise and lucid is shallow. But we need go no farther. These and similar logical shortcomings may serve to explain the curious discrepancy noticed above.

2 Through what marvellous coincidence does it happen that nearly all English Free Traders belong to the Liberal, and nearly all English Protectionists belong to the Conservative party? Here is an economic question, purely scientific, the discussion of which, and the conclusions in regard to which, can only rest on considerations intrinsic to the question itself. If different persons arrive at different conclusions upon it, such differences should be the outcome of a diversity in their reasoning power, not of a diversity in their party proclivities. And yet, by some peculiar elective affinity, we find one set of conclusions identified with the Liberal party and the opposite set with the Conservative party. This cannot be the result of mere chance. Are we to infer that the peculiar mental organisation which impels a man to be a Liberal is precisely that which will impel him to be a Free Trader? Or that the special form of brain which predisposes a man to adopt Conservatism happens to be the very brain formation that will evolve Protectionism out of his economic inquiries? These inferences are hardly admissible, and we fear that the coincidence in question is due to less recondite and more vulgar causes. The fact is that the so-called convictions of many, both Free Traders and Protectionists, are not owing to independent, fearless, truth-seeking inquiry, but are the result of old traditions, early education, immediate surroundings, class interests, spirit of comradeship, and generally of influences extraneous to the abstract question of truth or error.

While few Liberals are Protectionists, many, especially of the leading, Conservatives are from conviction Free Traders; and to these the alliance of their party with an effete theory must be distasteful and embarrassing. They would, perhaps, not be sorry were a friendly voice to address the rank and file of their party in something like the following terms:—"Beware of identifying yourselves with a scientific heresy. Protection is a defunct fallacy which no amount of political galvanism can resuscitate. How long will you continue to encumber yourselves with its dead body? You compromise the future of your party by hampering it with a discarded policy. By so acting the triumph of Free Trade becomes the defeat of Conservatism; and if Free Trade be a scientific truth, you are pledging yourselves to the adoption of a scientific error. It is as though the Conservative programme were to include a belief in astrology, or to involve a repudiation of the Copernican system, and a return to the good old times of Ptolemy. Pray do not make it anti-Conservative in a man to assent to the binomial theorem."

But whatever party be in power, one thing is clear. The people of England have made up their minds. They will not go back to those miserable and memorable times when Protection taxed their food, curtailed their foreign trade, crippled their industry, and periodically spread starvation, destitution, and despair throughout the land. You might as well exhort the emancipated slave to resume his fetters. We have adopted a living principle;—under it we have thriven, and to it we will cleave.

Free Trade and English Commerce.

Free Trade and English Commerce.

By Augustus Mongredien.

"If you wish to see this question of free trade and our trade well discussed, I advise you to pay sixpence for the little book published by Messrs. Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., of London, entitled 'Free Trade and English Commerce,' written by Mr. Mongredien. I wish every elector in Preston could have it and read it, and I may recommend it to Mr. Hermon as a book out of which he may begin to learn something of correct facts and sound arguments on the question of free trade, and on the results of our policy as adopted by Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone, since the year 1841. I have not time to write to you at greater length. The little book I have mentioned will tell you the truth on the facts and results of our free trade policy."—*The Right Hon. John Bright, M.P., to an Elector of Preston.*

Cassell & Company, LIMITED: *London, Paris, New York & Melbourne.*

Preface to the Present Edition.

THIS little work, which was written in 1879, has enjoyed a wide circulation, owing chiefly, no doubt, to some words of praise from a great orator,

Right Hon. John Bright, in his speech of the 25th October, 1879.

and to the powerful propagandism of the Cobden Club. We are now in 1881, and I have little to add to, or to subtract from, either the facts or the principles embodied in it. I have, however, carefully revised the present edition, and made a few corrections in trifling matters of detail.

The present position of our trade with the United States of America curiously confirms the doctrines advanced in this little book. In August, 1879, Mr. James Howard, the present member for Bedfordshire, asked me my opinion as to how the United States had been paid for their large exports to us; my reply was as follows:—

- The Americans have been buying largely, from both England and the Continent, of their own Bonds and Stocks, and have given prices above the marketable value of them in Europe.
- Normally the United States are exporters of gold, they being producers of it. Latterly they have ceased sending gold to Europe, and the flow has set in from Europe to America,—not to an extent inconvenient to us, for we have a redundancy, but to an extent that may become inconvenient to the United States if the influx should continue; for when it reaches a certain point, gold will diminish in value (in other words, prices will rise), and importation will be encouraged and exportation checked; and their protective system will be *severely tried*.
- Notwithstanding the redemption of American Bonds and Stock referred to, the United States have still to remit a very large sum annually to Europe for interest and dividends, for which they pay in exports.
- The commercial operations of one year are so interwoven with those of the year before and of the year after, that a series of years must be taken into account;—and the enormous increase of the American bread-stuffs, which deficient harvests have compelled Europe to import, only dates a couple of years back. Its effects are not yet fully disclosed.

To these remarks I fully adhere, and I may take this opportunity of adding that:—

- It is not our gold that has gone to pay for our large imports from America. Our stock of bullion has remained remarkably steady throughout, and is more than ample for our requirements.
- American indebtedness to England, far from being reduced, is now greater than it was, for our fresh investments in the United States exceed the amount of American State Bonds, &c., redeemed.
- Our exports to the United States have, in spite of the exorbitant import duties, exhibited within the last two years a very considerable augmentation.
- The largely increased revenue-receipts of the United States customs, in consequence of their largely increased importations from Europe, constitute a largely increased tax on the American consumers. For that revenue comes out of their pockets, and is not paid by the European exporters, who have made handsome profits on their sales.
- As long as America continues to export largely, she must also import largely, at whatever enormous cost (under the present tariff), to American consumers.
- The superfluously large Customs' revenue that is being raised by heavy duties on heavy importations, will year by year become a source of greater trouble and perplexity to the United States Government.
- Every fresh addition to the productive and exporting power of American agriculture will increase the difficulty and hasten the crisis. For there is no escape from the inexorable law that the more a country exports, the more, in the same proportion, it must import.

Augustus Mongredien.

Contents.

Free Trade and English Commerce.

Chapter I.

Introductory.

It is intended in the following pages to take a short review of the present position of the free trade question in respect to the world at large, and especially in respect to the commerce of England. Such an inquiry might be useful, and perhaps interesting, at any time, but now,

In 1879.

when commerce is abnormally depressed, and when it is a moot point how far that depression is connected with our free-trade policy, it becomes an important and urgent one.

It is proposed, in the first part, to show the bearings of free trade on the commerce and industry of nations generally; and in the second to examine into the real causes of the present condition of English commerce, and ascertain to what extent, if any, it may be ascribable to the operation of free trade.

The subject will be treated from a practical and popular point of view, its technical and scientific aspect having had ample justice done to it by Professor Fawcett and others. In matters of this kind, where the practical application of scientific conclusions depends on the action of men laboriously engaged in political or mercantile pursuits, who have little time to devote to the study of abstract questions, it is necessary to place the subject before them in the most direct and concrete form, and to appeal to demonstrable facts and undeniable figures, in order to arrest their attention and obtain their assent. Still more necessary it is to treat the subject in a popular manner in order to secure a hearing from the mass of the public, who, not unnaturally, shrink from the study of dry works on Political Economy.

Neither is it necessary to study Political Economy as a science in order to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the principle of free trade. The question narrows itself into a few simple issues, on which plain common sense is quite competent to deliver a verdict.

We propose, in the first part, to show—

- That balances due by one country to another are paid directly or indirectly in commodities, and not in specie, unless occasionally and to an insignificant extent.
- That, consequently, for every export of goods that is not sent to pay a previous debt there must be an import of goods to the same amount; and, *vice versâ*, for every import of goods that is not received in liquidation of a previous debt there must be an export of goods to the same amount.
- That all artificial limitation of imports necessarily limits exports to the same extent; that it curtails foreign trade, neutralises the benefits of division of labour, and displaces labour and capital from productive into unproductive channels of employment.
- That various other inconveniences and disadvantages result from the curtailment of foreign imports and the restriction of commercial intercourse between man and man.

To revert to the first proposition : a slight consideration of the actual course of events as they occur under our own eyes, shows that the precious metals play a very small part indeed in the payment of debts between nation and nation. Hardly any specie changed hands in the payment of the enormous French indemnity to Germany; or in the transmission of the £400,000,000 or so which we lent to foreign countries in the years 1871, 1872, and 1873; or in the settlement of the £230,000,000 which we imported in excess of exports during the last four years, 1875 to 1878. The ebb and flow of bullion is on a scale far too minute to do much towards the settlement of international accounts. A country rarely possesses much more or much less specie than is needed for the purposes of currency and of the arts; and never exports specie so as to trench, beyond a trifling extent, on the amount required for circulation. On the other hand, a country never retains much of the specie that is in excess of its circulation requirements. In the first case a comparatively small withdrawal of gold raises the rate

of interest, lowers the price of goods, discourages importation and encourages exportation, so that the balance is soon restored. In the second case the redundant specie that remains after the wants for circulation are supplied lowers the rate of interest, raises prices, checks the outflow and attracts the influx of merchandise, and finds its way abroad, where its value is greater. This is constantly being exemplified by the action of the Bank of England. When it is wanted to attract a few millions of gold from abroad, the rate of interest is raised, and it flows in; when the stock becomes redundant, the rate of interest falls, and the surplus beyond circulation requirements gradually disappears. The amounts which turn the scale are comparatively trivial. So sensitive is the money market, that three or four millions abstracted from, or added to, the currency are quite enough to depress or to raise the rates of interest sufficiently to produce a counterbalancing effect either way. And yet there are people who fancy that the balances owing to us, or by us from and to foreign nations, are paid in specie! Last year (1878) we imported from abroad £63,000,000 in excess of what we exported. To send abroad that amount in specie, or one-half of it, or even one-quarter of it, would have been simply an impossibility.

Specie tends, like water, to find its level everywhere, the standard being the circulation requirements of each country. When short of that, its value is raised; when in excess of it, its value falls, and it flows in or flows out of the country in proportion. It is under the operation of this law that inconvertible paper money drives bullion out of a country. If its circulation requirements be partly supplied by paper money, less specie is wanted, and as a country does not long retain specie in excess of its circulation requirements, the precious metals (of course not the paper) are sent abroad where they are in greater demand and of greater value. If not a part but the whole of the circulation requirements be provided for by inconvertible paper money, then the whole of the specie (except perhaps a little hoarded here and there) will disappear.

If it be admitted that no diminution of, or increase to, the amount of specie required for the circulation of a country can be otherwise than both trifling and temporary, it follows as a necessary consequence, that "balances due by one country to another are paid directly or indirectly in commodities and not in specie, unless occasionally, to an insignificant extent."

Chapter II.

Exports (Unless in Payment of Debt) Necessitate Imports to the Same Amount.

If it is not specie that we receive in return for our exports, or that we send in return for our imports, there is no alternative but to conclude that they pay for each other. In the case of national indemnities, subsidies, loans, interest on loans and foreign investments, these are paid for by the export of goods without any return for them. But as far as commercial dealings go, it is utterly impossible to export goods without importing goods to the same amount, and *vice versa*. Of course, this is a mere truism to those who are conversant with the subject, but there is a large number of people who look with dread on large imports, and it is necessary to make it clear to them that large imports mean large exports. If it be, as they deem, an advantage to import as little as possible, it follows as an indispensable consequence that they deem it an advantage to export as little as possible, and to have as little foreign trade as possible; for reduced imports necessarily imply reduced exports, and reduced foreign trade.

But let us suppose it possible for a country to export largely without importing in return any commodity except bullion, and equally possible for it, to compel the retention of the bullion, by prohibiting its re-exportation, would that country be the richer for it? Certainly not. Let us work it out. There could be no increase of real wealth, for the bullion being in over-supply in respect to the commodities which it represents, would fall in value in the exact proportion of such over-supply; in other words the money price of all commodities would rise in that ratio. No one would be the richer for that, for the exchangeable value of all commodities (that is, their relation to each other) would remain precisely the same. If the working man received twice his former wages, he would have to pay double for all he consumed, which would leave him where he was; indeed, the cost of living would rise upon him far more rapidly than he could, by remonstrance or strikes, &c., enforce a rise of wages from his employers. The gold and silver coins being but the counters used to represent the various objects that constitute the wealth of the country, the result of doubling the number of the counters would be, not to increase the wealth of the country, but simply to diminish the purchasing power of the counters, and make two of them necessary to represent the same commodity which was before represented by one.

Meanwhile the money-cost of production would have become so great that the foreigner could no longer afford to purchase the productions of that gold-glutted country, and exportation would cease. Foreign trade would, therefore, be totally suppressed, and the happy country would, like Japan of yore, live within itself, and

be independent of the foreigner—a model result of the perfection of protective policy. True that there would be an accumulation of twice as much bullion as before, but as its purchasing power would be diminished by one-half the possessors would be no richer than those men abroad who had but half the quantity. The only way to obtain the full value of the accumulated bullion would be to allow its export, and sell it to the foreigner. But to export bullion means the importing of goods, for what else could be got in exchange for it? And that means a total abandonment of the gold-accumulating policy. Yet what is to be done? Gold may be piled up in mounds, but if it loses its purchasing power it ceases to be wealth. Bullion is only worth what it will fetch in the commodity-market. It would buy twice as much abroad as it would at home. To utilise it, therefore, it must be sold to the foreigner. Then there would occur the converse of the operations that produced the glut of bullion. There would be large imports and small exports of goods, the protected interests would be ruined, internal commerce would be disorganised for a time, and everything would be unsettled until the superfluous bullion had been worked off, and its quantity reduced to the level of legitimate circulation requirements. But what can be said of a policy that led to such disasters as its reversal alone could remedy?

The supposititious case, however, of a country which let specie flow in but allowed none to flow out, never did actually occur, because no prohibitory measures ever could prevent the precious metals from being transferred from a country where their value is less to those countries where their value is greater. But the hypothesis serves to show that even if such regulations could be enforced, they would be productive, not of advantage, but of evil.

There are countries of which the imports habitually exceed the exports, and others in which the converse is the case. These apparent exceptions to the rule that every import must be balanced by an export are easily explained, and only tend to prove the rule.

In the first place, the balance on either side is not paid or received in specie, the movements of which, as we have seen, are quite insignificant in comparison with the balances in question. For instance, the imports into the United Kingdom exceeded the exports in 1877 by £80,000,000, and in 1878 by £63,000,000. If these enormous balances had had to be paid in specie, they would have swept away not only every coin, but also all the plate, watches, and trinkets, in these islands. For it is calculated that the entire circulation of the country, together with all the precious metals it possesses as articles of ornament or utility, from a gold tankard to a silver pencil-case, barely amount to the £143,000,000 in question. But far from the country being drained of its gold and silver, there is in it now quite as much as there was two years ago, before these balances arose, and our circulation requirements have not been trenched upon in the slightest degree.

Neither has England obtained these £143,000,000 worth of goods on credit. Merchants do not, in these days, give or take the same long credits as formerly. If the enormous sum in question had to be paid for by England at all, it has been paid long ago. Indeed a certain portion of our imports are paid for long before the goods themselves come to hand. A cargo of wheat from California takes four to five months from the day of the ship's sailing before it reaches England, but it is paid for by drafts on England at sixty days' sight, which, sent forward by rail and steam, mature one or two months before the wheat itself arrives here. No! In whatever way we obtain the possession and use of this immense mass of commodities over and above what we send away, it is certain that the amount is not a debt owing by us. In fact, it is just the contrary; it is sent to us in satisfaction of debts owing to us for interest and dividends on money lent to, and invested in, foreign countries. We shall treat this subject fully later on, meanwhile we will just indulge in one or two remarks.

All wealthy nations which have lent money to other countries must of necessity import more than they export, since the annual income which they derive from those countries is paid to them in goods. In the same way, the poorer nations who have borrowed money from other countries must of necessity export more than they import, since it is in goods that they pay the yearly interest on the money they owe. Indeed, the comparative wealth or poverty of nations may be pretty fairly deduced from the amount by which their imports or exports are permanently in excess of each other. That amount which a nation exports without receiving a return for it in imports, goes to pay a debt that it owes. That amount which a nation imports without sending out a return for it in exports, constitutes the payment of a debt owing to it. Consequently, instead of a persistent excess of exports being a matter of pride, it is a proclamation of indebtedness to other countries; and on the other hand, to view with regret the increased excess of imports over exports, is to view with regret the increase of national income arising from foreign investments.

In the following pages it is always to be understood that in viewing the relation between imports and exports, allowance is made for that portion of either that is sent or received as payment for loans, war indemnities, subsidies, interest on investments, &c., leaving the question of the commercial interchange of commodities to rest on its own merits.

Chapter III.

Futility of the Attempt to Export much and Import Little.

ALL parties seem to agree as to the great advantage it is to a country to export largely. Each country produces some things that are useful and desirable to other countries, and whether from climate, soil, geological formation, natural aptitude or practice and education, it has some speciality in which it excels. It benefits itself by exchanging its surplus productions for the productions of other countries, and the latter are also benefited by the process. The more largely that country exports, the greater the benefit to itself and others. To put it more concisely—foreign trade is a universal benefit. Up to this point the unanimity of opinions is wonderful; and what we have said appears a mere enunciation of a string of truisms. But how are these truths acted on practically? By a persistent attempt on the part of the majority (at present) of nations to export a great deal and to import very little, ignoring the utter incompatibility of the two courses. All are agreed as to the great advantage it is to a country to export largely, only it has been, and should not be, overlooked that those exports must be paid for in goods, since, as we have seen, specie is not used for that purpose (except sometimes provisionally and to a fractional extent). If, therefore, you import little, you can only export little. If you want to export much, you must import much. You cannot curtail your *bête noire*, imports, without curtailing to just the same extent your pet, exports. For every hundred pounds' worth of foreign articles which, by prohibition or by prohibitory duties, you prevent coming into your country, you prevent one hundred pounds' worth of your own articles of production from going abroad. It cannot be repeated too often—because it is at the very root of the question—that to restrict imports is (by the inexorable law of logical sequence) to restrict exports to the same extent, and therefore to that extent, to restrict foreign trade. The delusion of wishing to sell without buying is equivalent to the old paradox of a valley without a mountain. In vain do the prophets of protection preach—"Let us have an extensive foreign trade to consist wholly of exports." It is simply an impossibility. As well say let us have shadows without light, or a square without corners. The doctrine that foreign trade is an evil would be, though a questionable, at all events an intelligible, one; but to maintain that foreign trade is a good while the influx of foreign commodities is an evil, is a palpable contradiction. Practically, all interchange of commodities is barter, and money is merely a common standard by which to measure their relative values.

Chapter IV.

If Protection be Beneficial as between Country and Country, it must be Beneficial as between Province and Province.

IF to protect native industry by putting such duties on foreign commodities as shall keep them out of the market, and compel the consumers to deal exclusively with native producers, be beneficial to a country, the same system must, for the same reasons, be beneficial if applied to the various provinces of that country. Let us take an instance. Wales at present buys her cotton goods from Lancashire, and her pottery from Staffordshire. There are a few small cotton-mills and three or four manufacturers of coarse earthenware scattered here and there throughout the Principality, but these cannot develop themselves under the competition of English producers. Wales therefore demands "protection for her native industry, through the imposition of such protective duties on English cottons and pottery as shall keep them out of the Welsh market. Supposing the request granted, the Welsh cotton-mills and potteries at once receive great extension; capital and labour are diverted to them from other industries, and the entire Cambrian community pays a heavy tax in the shape of high prices for bad goods, in order to support a few native manufacturers, and in order that capital and labour should be transferred from profitable to unprofitable employments. We will suppose, however, that this is a benefit to the Principality. If so—by parity of reasoning—why should not the native industry of Monmouthshire be protected against the competition of the Carmarthenshire producers? And if we continue to carry out the principle to its logical results, we finally arrive at a state of things which in primitive times did really exist—viz., that in which each family live on their own farm produce, and in clothes of their own spinning and making—a state of things in which there would be no imports, and which would afford complete protection against foreign competition.

We have put the case of England and Wales, but the reasoning equally applies to the various parts of which all large states are constituted. If America or France deem it good policy to protect their population from foreign competition at the expense of their foreign trade, they must, as a logical sequence, deem it good policy for California to be protected from the competition of New England, or for Provence to be protected from that of Normandy. Why should not San Francisco and Marseilles be protected against the cotton goods of Lowell and Rouen, so as to foster and develop cotton manufactures of their own? Why should the west of America be

dependent on the east, or the south of France dependent on the north, for hardware or linen fabrics? The fact of San Francisco and Lowell, or of Marseilles and Rouen, being under the same national government does not affect the question of free trade or protection in the slightest degree, for this is an economic, not a political question. If a free interchange of commodities between two regions be an evil at all it must be an evil inherent to the system itself, and not convertible into a good, if the two regions happen to be under the same government. If it be to the advantage of a community to restrict its trade with the rest of the world by lessening its imports, it can make no difference as to the truth of that doctrine whether the community be large or small, or whether it be independent or politically connected with other communities. We shall have occasion in a subsequent chapter to advert again to this subject.

Chapter V.

RECIPROCITY.

It has been proposed to enlarge our foreign trade by the following curious process. We are to prevail upon foreign countries to take more of our goods by threatening that, if they do not, we shall take less of theirs. We are to induce our neighbours to extend their foreign trade by proposing, as the alternative, that we shall diminish our own. This is called the reciprocity, but it ought to be called the retaliatory, system. If the foreign country with which we are negotiating yield to our pressure, we increase our foreign trade; if not, we diminish it. In the first case we increase our exports and consequently our imports too. In the second case we diminish our imports and consequently our exports too. It is to be left to the caprice, ignorance, or ill-will of a foreign nation to decide whether England is to lose a portion of her foreign trade or not. For it cannot be too often repeated that if we carry out our threat of importing less, it necessitates our exporting less to the same extent. It is proposed that we should enter into a formal international engagement to lop off a portion of our foreign trade, and in various other ways to do ourselves a serious injury, unless other people agree to alter their fiscal policy. Supposing that other countries decline acceding to our minatory invitation that they should reduce their tariffs, and that we accordingly impose such an import duty on articles that they have been in the habit of sending us, as shall reduce our annual importations thereof by £10,000,000, what then? No doubt they will not like it, but how shall we? A reduction of imports of £10,000,000 means a corresponding reduction of exports to the same amount, and is equivalent to a diminution of our foreign trade to the extent of £20,000,000 per annum, to say nothing of the disastrous effects to every consumer in the country, of the rise that would ensue in the price of the articles which we ceased to import, and the numerous other evils which the change would entail. Are we prepared to enter into a compact that we will submit ourselves to all these calamities in the event of other countries declining to be coerced by us into free trade? It is surely better to leave things as they are than to resort to measures that shall subject us to such an alternative.

Fortunately, reciprocity possesses one great advantage—viz., it is impracticable. Among the articles which we receive from abroad there is hardly one that reciprocity can lay hold of. Ninety-one per cent, of what we import consists of food and raw materials, to tax which is out of the question, and the nine per cent, of manufactured goods—which is all that the entire world supplies to us—affords far too feeble a leverage to work with.

By taking in the multifarious and insignificant odds and ends lumped together in the Board of Trade returns as "Unenumerated Articles," and by classing as manufactures such things as pictures, works of art, books, medical drugs, toys, confectionery, &c. &c., the percentage of foreign manufactures imported has been distended by Reciprocitarians to 13½ per cent. Even if we admit this incorrect classification, the argument remains untouched, for foreign nations would hardly be coerced by our threat of taxing such trifles as their sulphate of quinine, or their violin strings, or their macaroons, &c. &c.

This part of the subject has, however, been made so clear in various recent publications that we need not dwell on it.

There is the greater incongruity about the reciprocity system, from its being advocated by many who, in other respects, profess free-trade principles. For there is a manifest inconsistency in asking our foreign friends to admit our goods and so far adopt our policy of free trade, under the alternative that, otherwise, we shall shut out theirs and so far adopt their policy of protection. Since free trade teaches us that it is unwise in foreign nations to exclude our commodities from their ports, how can it be wise in us to carry out our threat and exclude their commodities from our ports? It is tantamount to proclaiming to the foreigner, "Unless you will become free traders we will become protectionists." We might just as fitly proclaim to the Turks, "Unless you become converted to the blessed truths of Christianity we will ourselves turn Mahometans," If free trade be a truth and a reliable principle it must remain an immutable standard of right to those who understand and believe

in it; and is not to be alternately professed and ignored in order to drive a bargain or gain an advantage. Those who entertain a firm conviction that free commercial intercourse is for the benefit of all men in all countries, will never consent to enter into conditional arrangements under which there may be a possibility of their having to act in opposition to that conviction. To adopt the reciprocity system would be the first step towards re-enacting the Corn Laws.

Chapter VI.

Division of Labour.

AMONG the many advantages conferred on mankind by free foreign trade—that is, by the unrestricted interchange of commodities between man and man throughout the globe—one of the most signal is that, in the highest degree and to its widest extent, it promotes division of labour. There is surely no need to expatiate on the important part which division of labour plays in multiplying and perfecting the products of human industry. Through its instrumentality the productive forces of the human race are employed in such a way as to lead to the most efficient and remunerative results. The larger the community or the aggregation of communities, the more effectually the division of labour can be carried out. In a country village, or in an incipient colony, a shop is a miscellaneous store, a dealer devotes his attention to a number of incongruous articles, and an artisan is a jack-of-all-trades. In a populous district labour is more divided, and to each individual is allotted some special work to do, which constant practice enables him to perform with greatly-increased efficiency. In large countries each province settles down more specially to certain forms of industry, according to a variety of influences, such as geographical position, soil, climate, natural productions, hereditary tendencies, early education of the people, sometimes chance immigration, and other causes more or less accidental. By means of this division of labour each province produces more abundantly, more cheaply, and in greater perfection, the special articles to which it devotes itself, and all work harmoniously together for the common good. The benefits conferred by division of labour would be lost if these provinces were to split among themselves, and each determine on combining within itself all the various trades and industries which before formed the speciality, some of one province, some of another. All of them would be losers; because, whereas before, in each of them capital and labour were concentrated on certain employments to which they were the most competent, they are now diverted from these and directed to a variety of others to which they are the least competent. If the pottery district in Staffordshire were to decide on diverting a portion of its capital and of its skilled labour to the creation of woollen and linen manufactures, in order to become independent of Leeds and Belfast, it is plain that the operation would be a losing one, chiefly because the immense advantages derived from division of labour and industrial organisation would be wantonly thrown away.

So, in the world at large, had it not been for the pernicious interference of governments with the natural course of things, each country would have settled down more specially to certain forms of industry, and, were trade left free, would, through this natural division of labour, each produce cheaply and abundantly those special articles to which it had devoted its attention, and contribute, to the full extent of its productive power, to the wealth of the world. It would, moreover, follow that as each country would devote its energies to the production of those commodities which it was more specially fitted to raise, with a view of exchanging the surplus for such commodities as other nations were more specially fitted to produce, the amount of international traffic would be enormous, and foreign trade would be developed to an extent at present undreamt of.

It is in the performance of this function of interchanging the commodities of one country with those of another, that foreign trade is instrumental in promoting division of labour all the world over; and whatever tends to impede the former must impair the latter. Now, protection, by checking imports checks exports, and in that proportion curtails foreign trade. It is, therefore, clear that the protective system interferes detrimentally with the division of labour. Indeed, if that system were carried out to its full extent by not only isolating, as it now does, nation from nation, but also province from province, community from community, and family from family, division of labour with its attendant benefits would be altogether suppressed.

Fortunately Nature herself interposes a limit to the isolating tendency of protection, by the diversity of the products yielded by different parts of the earth. The most thorough protectionist will admit that there are many foreign commodities which each country must either import or entirely deprive itself of. The utmost he can accomplish is to abridge foreign trade, he cannot altogether annihilate it. Thus, under the operation of a natural law, no nation can, without an intolerable degree of privation and suffering, be completely self-dependent, and man is, in order to interchange the special products of one zone with those of another, compelled, apparently against his will, to exercise, at all events to a certain extent, the humanising influence of international commerce.

Chapter VII.

Protection Applied to Young States.

THERE are two classes of states which, while admitting the theoretical truth of the free-trade system, claim exemption from its operation for contradictory reasons—young states because they are young, old states because they are old. The former say that were they old they would not dream of maintaining protection, but being young their case is exceptional. The latter say that, were they young they would not dream of hampering themselves with protection, which they now find so onerous, but being old their case is exceptional.

Let us first take the case of the young states. Their plea assumes the following shape. They are supposed to say, "As a theory, free trade is, we admit, unassailable, but, exceptionally, and for a time, it does not apply to young nations or colonies, for they would never learn to manufacture anything for themselves unless their early efforts were 'protected' from the sweeping rivalry of older and more expert producers. Give the native manufacturer a fair start by artificially fostering his infant labours, and when he has made some progress, and reached a certain amount of proficiency, we will then strip him of protection, let him breathe the bracing air of open competition, and adopt free trade without reservation." This doctrine will not, however, stand the test of close examination. On the contrary, it can, we think, be shown that it is precisely to young countries, or newly-founded colonies, that the application of the protective principle is the most pernicious and indefensible.

These young communities are generally situated in the midst of an inexhaustible area of fertile land which only waits the application of human industry to be converted into mines of wealth. There is a strong demand for labour, which accordingly receives a high rate of remuneration. But so favourable are the natural conditions, that high wages are perfectly compatible with the cheap production of articles which foreign countries readily take in any quantity, giving in exchange such other articles as the young country could not produce except at a much greater cost. Its commerce is thus carried on under the most favourable possible conditions, and the working power of the young nation is all directed into the most profitable channels. It is now proposed to alter this prosperous state of things. Some of the articles hitherto obtained from abroad in exchange for the staple commodities of the young country are, at any cost, to be raised or manufactured at home, and the export of the staple commodities lessened in proportion. The capital and labour which are now working with admirable results are to be abstracted from the production of commodities so cheap and good that foreign countries willingly buy them, and to be devoted to the production of commodities so dear and bad, that in order to compel the native consumers to buy them, the importation of the same articles from abroad has to be prevented by prohibitory duties. And who is it that is benefited by this policy? No one, not even the workman or capitalist whose labour and money are engaged in the new manufacture; they were fully and remuneratively employed before, and now that they are diverted into new channels, competition keeps wages and profits down to the average level, while to enable them to get even that, the entire community has to be taxed. Certainly not the rest of the nation, for they have to subsidise the new industry to keep it going.

It is much more to the purpose to inquire who it is that is injured by this policy. Everybody is. All the consumers of the "protected" fabric, who are mulcted in the difference between the low price at which they used to get a good article from the foreigner and the high price which they now have to pay for an inferior article to the native. All the producers and traders in the country, who suffer from the diminution that takes place in their foreign commerce in consequence of the reduced amount of the importations. And, finally, even the protected industries themselves; for, while the labour and capital employed in them obtain no more than the average remuneration, they are subject to one peculiar disadvantage: they exist on sufferance, and the system of protection by which they were brought into being, and under which alone they can live at all, is precarious, questionable, and liable to break down altogether at any moment that the nation may get tired of paying a yearly subscription for the purpose of artificially maintaining it. These industries, the nurselings of well-meaning but short-sighted patriots, are for the most part sickly, nerveless, and etiolated; and although reared into existence with the professed view that they shall someday stand the brunt of foreign competition, the day never arrives when they are equal to the struggle, and protection has either to be continued indefinitely, or its removal is their death-warrant.

As these fragile protected industries increase in number and importance they at last become formidable obstacles to the full adoption of free trade. As to encouraging their growth with the idea that at some future period they will willingly encounter, or be found able successfully to withstand, foreign competition, it is an error and a delusion of which most old countries furnish abundant illustrations. The time will come when those young countries which have acted in that vain hope, will bitterly repent having done so. They will find that they have made sacrifices to create interests, the vitality of which is entirely dependent on the national bounty, and

which will have either to be left to their fate, or will remain a perpetual drain on the resources of the country. Far better not to have called them into exist-*once* than to let them grow until the alternative faces you of either immolating them, or of unwillingly adhering to a commercial policy which you know to be injurious, and which you only adopted temporarily.

The plausible cry under which this mischievous policy is usually inaugurated is, "Do not let us pay the foreigner for what we can produce ourselves !" The answer is obvious, "You do not pay the foreigner for his goods in the sense you mean it, that is, in money. Imports are paid for by exports, not in bullion." All commerce is barter. You simply exchange with the foreigner what you can produce better than he can, for what he can produce better than you can, and both parties are benefited. In prohibiting that exchange, you at the same time nullify both the sale of your own, and the purchase of the foreign commodity. In order yourselves to produce the foreign article, you have to produce so much less of the native article which you would otherwise have given in exchange for it; for the same capital and labour cannot produce both, and by stopping the import of the former you stop the export of the latter. The phrase, "Do not let us pay the foreigner for what we can produce ourselves," correctly interpreted, means "Do not let us exchange our productions for those of the foreigner," or, in other words, "Do not let us have foreign trade."

Chapter VIII.

Protection in Old States.

THE doctrine that we have just examined—as to young states being the only proper exceptions to the universal adoption of free trade—offers a curious contrast to another which asserts the precise contrary, viz., that it is the old states, and not the young ones, that are entitled to form the exceptions in question. The plea may be condensed into the following shape:—"As a theory, free trade is, we admit, unassailable, but, exceptionally, it does not apply to old states, in which interests have grown up under the shelter of protection for such a length of time, and have attained such dimensions, that the change now to a free-trade policy would bring with it wide-spread ruin and desolation, and must therefore be avoided. Would that these interests had never been created and fostered by protective laws! But, unfortunately, here they are, and we shrink from the task of disturbing them. Of course, young states would not be so foolish as to encumber themselves with such burdens, but our forefathers were unacquainted with political economy, and hence the errors of which we are now feeling the effects." We may observe, in the first place, that as the truth of the free-trade theory is not controverted, and as the only question is whether the positive and permanent advantages which its adoption offers would compensate for the temporary disturbance which it would occasion to protected interests of old standing, we need only address ourselves to the latter topic.

To paraphrase the old Roman axiom, *salus populi, suprema, lex*, we may say that the good of the people ought to be the first and paramount consideration. That the interests of certain limited classes should be consulted to the detriment of the country at large, that all should be injured in order that a few should be favoured, is a doctrine which has too often been acted upon, but has never been unblushingly proclaimed. In the present day, if put forth in its naked deformity, it would be denounced as utterly false and untenable. And yet that is, in plain words, the doctrine advocated in the foregoing plea. It implies opposition to all change and denial of all progress, because the change might be injurious to a few, though the progress would be the beneficial to the many. It is, no doubt, to be regretted that the interests which stand in the way of the public good should ever, from a false policy, have been placed in that position, and we may sympathise with the individuals who may prove to be the innocent victims of an evil system, but that sympathy must not blind us to the fact that the community had for a long period been suffering from the existence of the abuse, nor still less induce us to stay the hand that is lifted to destroy it. The longer the evil has lasted, the more just and necessary it is to put a speedy end to it; and since we know that the change is for the national good, our desire to confer a permanent benefit on the community must overrule our regret at abolishing privileges by which a few gained and all the rest suffered.

All improvements in the machinery by which our social requirements are supplied involve changes that are injurious to some class or other. Railways occasioned a vast displacement of the capital and labour employed in the previously-existing modes of conveyance. The adaptation of electricity to lighting purposes would, if successful, occasion heavy losses and deal a severe blow to the innocent holders of shares in gas companies; and so on in hundreds of analogous instances which are of constant recurrence. Yet no one has ever seriously maintained that these improvements were to be "prohibited" in order to "protect" the interests which such improvements interfered with. Even a century ago, when the buckle-makers of Birmingham petitioned Parliament to protect them, by prohibiting shoe-ties, their request was refused, although it was in perfect

consonance with the protective principles that then prevailed.

Under the Tudors and the Stuarts the protective system in England assumed the shape of patents and monopolies under the Crown. By arbitrary edicts consumers were not left free to buy where they could buy the best and cheapest wares, but were compelled to deal for certain articles with certain "protected" parties only, who frequently were new and clumsy at their trade. This system became so costly and oppressive that the Commons frequently remonstrated with Elizabeth and James against it as an intolerable grievance. It was accordingly alternately remedied and renewed, until the sturdy Puritans came and put an end to it altogether. The people of Europe and America who at the present day suffer by the protected trades, as we, of old, suffered by patentees and monopolists, and who also are "not free to buy where they can buy the best and cheapest wares, but are compelled to deal for certain articles with certain 'protected' parties only," have not yet thoroughly realised the situation, and suffer in silence. The fact is, that those who are pecuniarily interested in the maintenance of high duties and protective laws, are few in number but wealthy, energetic, clamorous, and united; while the people, whose individual loss is small, though the aggregate is large, are apathetic and frequently misinformed and misled. It is hardly therefore to be wondered at that the rulers of nations should, hitherto, have found it expedient to court the alliance of the former, instead of siding with the inert and indifferent mass of the public.

But if statesmen are sincere in their recognition of the advantages derivable from the adoption of free trade, and only hesitate from the fear of injuring "old protected interests," let them bear in mind that this disturbance of interests is limited and temporary, since, as has been the case with all new movements, whether from scientific or political causes, the displaced capital and labour rapidly get re-distributed into other channels, while the improvement is universal, permanent, and expansive. Moreover, if it should be absolutely necessary, the disturbance which is so much dreaded can be mitigated by graduating the fiscal changes, and spreading them over a certain space of time. As a certain quantity of the previously-prohibited articles gradually obtained admittance from abroad into the country, its exports would increase to the same extent, and to the production of this increased export, the capital and labour disengaged by importing what was before produced at home, would by degrees be applied. This process would go on until the protective duties were wholly removed, and very soon the "old interests," which were dependent for a precarious existence on a subvention from the rest of the community, would become "new interests," vigorous, self-supporting, and contributing to the wealth of the country instead of subtracting from it.

Chapter IX.

What England is to do if she be the Only Nation that Adopts Free Trade.

It has sometimes been asked, "Of what avail is the adoption of free trade to a country if every other country adheres to the protective system? What is a single free-trading nation like Great Britain to do when every other nation is tightening the bonds of restriction, and isolating itself as much as it can from the rest of the world? What is to become of our foreign trade if all other countries resolve on having as few dealings as possible with each other and, as a necessary consequence, with us?" In the first place, let us observe that this question must proceed from a free trader, and must pre-suppose that the curtailment of foreign trade is an evil. For if it were not so, and if the querist deemed commercial isolation to be an advantage, what room has he for complaint if foreign nations, by carrying the protective system out in its integrity, should force upon us the blessings of isolation? If it really be the final object of sound commercial policy that each country shall supply its own wants (*far da sè*) and be independent of the outer world, then it must be absurd for us to hanker after foreign trade. Why should we repine at protection indirectly producing the same effects on us as it directly does on its own votaries? If those effects are beneficial to them they must be so to us. It is evident then that the querist is a free trader, only he is scared and shaken by the unanimity with which free trade has so far been scouted by foreign nations. True that all scientific inquirers are in favour of it, but the "still, small voice" of science is drowned in the loud clamour of the interested, while the people not understanding the question are silent and the rulers side with the active and energetic.

That protectionist doctrines and policy do prevail in almost all countries but England, and among the people as well as among the governing classes, is very true and somewhat strange. Not strange, perhaps, among the people, to whom the old cries, such as, "Keep the balance of trade in your favour"—"Sell much, buy little"—"Do not be dependent on foreigners"—and similar fallacies in the shape of aphorisms have been handed down traditionally as the condensed wisdom of their ancestors. But certainly strange among the governing classes, whose business and duty it is to study and make themselves masters of a subject of such vital

importance to the people whose destinies they rule. On the question of the truth or falsity of free trade principles, depends the policy which involves the greater or lesser well-being of many millions of human beings. The statesman who, in his fiscal measures, acts on the protective principle without first examining with the utmost care and conscientiousness whether it be a true and reliable one, or whether it be (as political economists assure us) a false and misleading one, is utterly unjustifiable. A grave responsibility rests on him if he persists in ignoring or neglecting the warnings of scientific experts who have devoted years to the investigation of the subject, and thus stakes the welfare of a nation on the line of policy which they utterly condemn.

It is a remarkable fact that among the eminent men who have made political economy their special study there is not one who does not uphold free trade and pronounce protection to be a disastrous error. In the Index to the Catalogue of the London Library there is a list of seventy-seven authors who have written on that science. Most of their works are written in English and French, but several are in German, Italian, and Russian. Here, then, are seventy-seven professional witnesses, men who have investigated the subject thoroughly, and whose opinion must, therefore, carry great weight. What do they say? By a majority of seventy-five to two (the two being eccentrics of no note), they declare that the protective system is a mistake most injurious to the country that adopts it. What a startling contrast! The scientific men (who have studied the subject) recommend one line of policy; the statesmen (who have not) mostly act on the opposite. For a statesman to justify to his own conscience the adoption of a protective policy, he must have arrived at a moral certainty that all those men who have scientifically analysed that policy, and have unreservedly condemned it, are utterly mistaken. Their verdict, however, will outlive his action, for the conclusions of eminent thinkers are not to be scornfully ignored, and the Napoleonic contempt for *Messieurs les idéologues* is a thing of the past.

One thing is certain: there can be no compromise between the two systems. Either the one or the other must be irretrievably bad, and it is almost impossible to adopt the one without totally discarding the other. The fiscal measures requisite to carry out protection are in diametrical opposition to those called for by free trade. The question, therefore, as to which is right and which is wrong is too important to be left in abeyance. It ought to be settled at once and for ever. Scientific men have done their part, and have unanimously decided in favour of free trade. It remains for the people and their rulers to institute a thorough examination of the subject, and to give practical effect to their decision. Symptoms of awakened attention to this all-important matter are now apparent in France, Germany, and the United States. In all these countries the resisting power of vested interests is strong; but, on the other hand, those nations abound in able men and profound thinkers, and error will not live long under the "fierce light" that they will throw upon the question—a question that has unfortunately been rather neglected abroad, as appearing to be, though in reality not being, too abstract and technical for general discussion.

There is a mistaken notion afloat in the minds of some of our neighbours that of two countries that trade together one gets a larger profit than the other, and that England, for instance, in her mercantile transactions with other nations, reaps from them more advantage than do those she trades with. But a little consideration shows that this is impossible. The act of trading, whether by sale, purchase, or barter, is a purely voluntary one, and unless it suited both parties it would not take place. A man buys because he prefers the article that he purchases to the money which he gives for it, and he sells for the converse reason; but that preference is spontaneous, and he yields to his own wish, not to compulsion. When two persons interchange commodities, each is actuated by the belief and expectation that he reaps a benefit from it. National trade is but the aggregate of individual mercantile operations, just as national profit is only the aggregate of individual gains; and individual traders have so keen a perception of, and so eager a desire for, lucrative traffic, that they may safely be trusted only to do business when they see a fair prospect of gain. And if they gain, what matters it if the parties they deal with gain too? It is of the very essence of commerce that buyers and sellers, importers and exporters, should all be benefited. In fact, were it otherwise, no interchange of commodities would take place at all; for who would buy were it only profitable to sell? And who could sell if there were no buyers? For a government, therefore, to restrain its subjects from buying because the seller is benefited, or from selling because the buyer is benefited, cannot be deemed a rational policy. If England has profited largely by her foreign trade, it has not been because her percentage of gain has been over the average (for it could easily be shown that it has generally been below it), but simply because of, and in proportion to, the enormous dimensions to which it has reached.

Of this enormous expansion of her foreign commerce, England owes the greatest part to her adoption of free trade. The development of her commercial intercourse with the rest of the world since the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, and of the Navigation Laws in 1849, is marvellous. In 1840 our combined exports and imports were £172,000,000; in 1878 they were £611,000,000. True that in most countries some increase of foreign trade has taken place within the same period, but in many cases it has only been slight, and in no instance has it progressed in anything like the same ratio. It is open to all nations to obtain similar results by the

adoption of the same commercial policy. That free trade causes an increase of imports is admitted by its opponents, and, indeed, forms the very ground of their complaint, and since increased exports follow as a necessary consequence, there must ensue a proportionate development of foreign trade.

And that all nations will sooner or later adopt the free trade system there is not, we think, the slightest room for doubt. How slow the world is in recognising and acting upon scientific truths there is many a precedent to show. Almost every improvement has had to make its way through a long period of neglect, of misconception, of prejudice, and, where "old interests" were encroached upon, of positive and obstinate resistance. A theory may be slighted, misrepresented, pooh-poohed, and even persecuted for a time, but if it possesses the vitality of truth, the day will come when it will pierce through all opposition, and triumph in universal recognition. So will it be with free trade. It has become a scientific truth, and has gone through the ordeal of the most critical examination. All who have seriously studied it have become converts. It is neglected, not confuted. It is as a policy, not as a theory, that it has opponents. This discrepancy, however, cannot long prevail. Practice has a slow but steady tendency to conform to principle. The mass of the people do not yet clearly see how injuriously they are affected by a protective policy, because the tax which it inflicts on them is paid indirectly, and as it were imperceptibly, in the shape of the enhanced prices that they have to give for the protected articles. If that tax were collected from them directly and avowedly, their eyes would quickly be opened. They would begin to inquire why they should be asked to subscribe so much a year in order that A B & Co., and C D & Co., should be enabled to make money out of a losing business. And when the process of inquiry is once entered on, discussion and analysis will lay bare the truth, and a general reaction will take place in favour of free trade.

Meanwhile, all that England needs to do is to pursue her way unmoved, trade with other nations as much as they will let her, be ready to multiply dealings with them when they are ready, and open up new markets when opportunities offer. As to trying to force our intercourse upon others by raising our tariffs against them, we have already shown that all such retaliatory measures are much worse than useless, and have for effect merely to willfully abridge our own foreign trade, in order to spite those who refuse to increase theirs.

Chapter X.

Impossibility of Encouraging Exports and at the Same Time Checking Imports.

FORTUNATELY no government and no legislation can succeed in altogether putting a stop to international trade. The world is preserved from the complete application of protectionism by two important influences. The one is the fact that there are several commodities which a country must either do without or import from abroad, as the native production of them is impossible. No amount of protection could enable England to produce her own wine, or France to raise her own cotton, or America to grow her own tea. To some extent, therefore, Nature compels nations to interchange commodities, and thus she points the way to free trade.

The other influence is almost as forcible and effective. It arises out of the intense desire that exists everywhere, and is perhaps most intense in protected countries, to sell, that is, to export, to the greatest possible amount. Indeed, this eagerness to export did formerly often, and does even now sometimes, prompt governments to grant bounties on the exportation of certain articles, so as to enable the producer to sell his goods cheap abroad, while he gets the full price of them at home. This process simply amounts to taxing the community in order to make a present to the foreigner of a portion of the proceeds. The absurdity, however, proved too flagrant to endure, and has therefore nearly (not quite—see the French Sugar bounties) become obsolete. All governments and all nations are exceedingly anxious to swell the amount of their exports to the rest of the world, and, strangely enough, this passion for selling co-exists with a vehement aversion to buying, or importing from other countries! As if the achievement of both these purposes at once were not an utter impossibility! It has been clearly shown that if a community desires to export, it must, from the nature of things, import in proportion—and if it determines on curtailing its imports, it must be content, in a similar ratio, to curtail its exports.

As we have elsewhere pointed out, some nations do indeed export more than they import, but that is because they are in debt to the rest of the world, either for interest on loans, &c., or for war indemnities, or for tribute to a suzerain power, and such like. These debts are provided for, not by the transmission of specie, but by the export of goods, and for that portion of their exports those countries, of course, receive no imports in return. So likewise some countries (among which England stands foremost) import more than they export, because the rest of the world is in debt to them, and this excess of imports being sent in payment of that debt, no return is made for it in the shape of exports. But beyond the amount of such debt-payments, it is an incontrovertible fact that for every hundred pounds' worth exported, a country must receive back one hundred

pounds' worth of foreign commodities. If you determine on only importing fifty pounds' worth of foreign commodities, you must be content with only exporting fifty pounds' worth of your own productions. Such must of necessity be the final result of your commercial transactions with the world at large. Of course, with one or more individual countries, your separate account may stand differently; you may export largely to these, and get but few imports from them in return; but your imports will be, in the same proportion, larger from, and your exports smaller to, other countries, so as to restore the equilibrium, and in the aggregate, your imports and exports will balance each other.

It is this passion for exporting which practically acts, to a certain extent, as a counterpoise to the aversion of protectionist countries to the importation of foreign commodities. They cannot indulge their love for selling, and, at the same time, indulge their repugnance to buying. Of this they are unaware, and they delude themselves by a vain expectation that they can compel the foreigner to pay in specie for the goods which they sell to them. But it is not so, it cannot be so, and even if it were so, it would be of no advantage to them, for the reasons which we have given elsewhere. The goods which they export will be paid for in goods. Practically and substantially all commerce is barter.

Some have proposed, as a milder and more allowable form of protection, that protective duties should be levied on foreign manufactured goods only, and not on agricultural produce or raw materials. The reason assigned is that the former represents a larger percentage of capital and labour than the latter class of commodities. This distinction, if admissible, would not meet any of the objections to which we have shown the protective system to be open. But it is not admissible. The only difference (and that a slight one) is that the element of rent of land enters rather more directly into the value of raw material than into that of a manufactured article. But otherwise, fifty pounds sterling's worth of the former represents as much of wages of labour and remuneration to capital as fifty pounds' worth of the latter. The identity of their market price shows the identity of their exchangeable value, and, as nearly as possible, the equivalence of their cost of production. There is undoubtedly more labour and capital absorbed in a £50 pianoforte than in a ton of pig iron at per ton; but not more than in ten tons of the same pig iron, since they also represent the same sum of £50. It is not the question of relative bulk or weight which we have to consider, but that of relative value, and whether it is expensive cutlery or cheap raw cotton that constitute the import, the same value of each represents, as nearly as possible, the same amount of capital and labour.

Chapter XI.

Free Trade Practised Internally by all Protectionist States.

THE avowed and no doubt sincere object of the protectionist statesman is "to foster native industry, by employing it to supply the wants of the community, instead of paying tribute to the foreigner by resorting to him for the supply of those wants." This is only the isolation principle in another shape. If you wish for an outlet for your productions, you must submit to employ and pay the foreigner for his productions to the same value, for you will have to receive them in payment for yours. If, on the other hand, you wish your country's wants to be supplied exclusively by its own inhabitants, you must cease interchanging commodities with the outer world, lose the advantages of division of labour on a large scale, and, as the Japanese formerly did from choice and on system, or as our remote ancestors did from ignorance and necessity, shut yourselves up within your own circle of resources.

But even then you are not relieved from the detested presence of free trade. It rains paramount within your own country. It may not exercise its alleged baneful influence on your relations with other countries, but it does exercise its full influence (baneful or not) on the relations of one part of your country with the rest. All the commercial intercourse that takes place between the various provinces of your empire is entirely governed by free trade principles. Yet it is not found that this unrestricted competition benefits some to the injury of others. On the contrary, each part works harmoniously with the rest, and all are left free to adjust their dealings under the natural laws of supply and demand. Each district settles down to that form of industry to which circumstances have best adapted it, and requires no Government interference to protect it against the competition of neighbouring districts. All trades in all places within that country are open to all men, and no one would deem it to be a benefit that a heavy tax should be imposed on the cheap and good wares produced in one spot, in order to force the sale of dear and bad wares produced in another. In fact, the principle of free trade has been, and is, acted upon to the fullest extent by all governments within the limits of their own dominions. There may have been some few apparent exceptions, such as the *octroi* duties on the introduction of certain commodities into some Continental towns, and similar local taxes, but these were levied for the purpose of revenue, not of protection. In the completest and widest sense, it is a fact that no government, however

protectionist in its practice towards other countries, has ever acted counter to free trade principles within the range of its own empire.

It is not easy to justify this inconsistency. If free trade be an evil as between the United States of America and the other countries of the world, how can it be a good as between, say, Pennsylvania and the other states of the Union? The economic relations of these to each other are not in any way affected or modified by the fact of their being members of the same political confederation. The native industries of Kentucky and Illinois remain exposed to the competition of the well-organised and old-established industries of New York and Massachusetts in spite of their being all represented in Congress at Washington. If protection be so beneficial to the country at large, why not extend its blessings to each of the states of which it is composed?

Until recently, Italy was split up into several different realms, and each was (of course for the "good of the people") "protected" against the productions of the other. But when the Italian states merged into one nation, those restrictions were removed. If those protective shields against competition had really worked efficiently for the "good of the people," their removal must have occasioned great suffering and distress, but no "cry of anguish" has reached us on that score. If, twenty years ago, it had been really good for the people of Piedmont and of Naples respectively to have had few commercial dealings with one another, the mere accident of a change of government cannot have altered the eternal fitness of things, or made it right now, as it was wrong then, to leave those two populations exposed to the terrible misfortune of unrestricted commercial intercourse with each other.

Again, let us imagine the deplorable contingency (which we most sincerely trust may never occur) of the Western and Eastern States of America separating and forming two several independent republics, what then about protective customs' duties? If it be a wise and beneficial policy for the present United States to protect its people against the cheap manufacturers of old Europe, it would follow as a necessary consequence, that it would also be a wise and beneficial policy for the Western republic to protect its people against the comparatively cheap manufactures of the older Eastern states. To judge by all historical precedents of what men would do under such circumstances, we should infer that the government of the new dominion would undoubtedly (unless they were very much in advance of the present state of public opinion in America) adopt the usual old policy of "fostering native industry" by means of the protective system. But here again there would be a manifest and palpable inconsistency. If, in case of separate sovereignty, the welfare of the Western republic of America required the adoption of a protective policy against the Eastern states, why should such not be required now? The pleas as to fostering native industry, protecting infant manufactures, and being independent of extraneous supplies are as urgent at the present time as they would be then. Why are those pleas to be only attended to in case of secession, and disregarded while the Union is maintained? Are we to believe that, under the present form of government, commercial prosperity is only obtainable by free trade, while, under another, it would only be obtainable by protection?

Each state of the Union is at present exposed to the competition of more than forty other states and territories extending over a vast continent and occupying a space equal to one-fifteenth of the habitable part of the globe, and yet none of them have uttered a syllable of complaint in respect to the system of free trade which prevails among them, or asked for the enactment of defensive tariffs to protect them against each other. Yet, at the same time, the aggregate of these forty or fifty states fancy that they cannot get on without a defensive tariff to protect the entire body of them from other countries. If one-fifteenth of the world can prosper under internal free trade, why should not a third, or a half, or indeed the whole of the world?

But let us glance at another contingency. At present, the United States and the Dominion of Canada form two separate and distinct governments. Accordingly, each is hedged round by *chevaux de frise* of tariffs, and their commercial intercourse is checked and hampered by import duties and restrictions having for avowed object the protection of their respective populations and the increase of their prosperity. According to the protectionist theory, each nation is benefited by these arrangements, and would be injured by their removal. Very good; but let us suppose that political changes were to bring about the admission of Canada into the Union, and a fusion of the two dominions into one federal republic, what would happen with regard to the fiscal regulations which are now declared to be essential to the prosperity of both populations? Would they be persevered in? It is not likely; it would be an unexampled anomaly that one part of a republic should be debarred from free commercial intercourse with the other parts. Consequently, the principle of free trade which now governs the commercial relations of the different states of the Union among themselves would be extended to Canada, and the results of unrestricted commercial intercourse between the two dominions, now so carefully guarded against, would have to be faced. On the protectionist theory, those results should prove ruinous to both parties; but can anyone seriously believe that such would be the case?

Chapter XII.

Concluding Remarks.

SOMETIMES objections are made to free trade, not founded on any imperfection in the theory itself, but arising from altogether extrinsic considerations. But such objections are quite irrelevant. Each science has its own province of inquiry, and its conclusions are confined to the topics that form the special objects of its investigation. The purpose of political economy is to ascertain the laws under which human industry can produce the most ample results, and the "wealth of nations" be best developed. It is no impugment of the truths which it propounds to contend that there are considerations foreign to the science itself which render it inexpedient to act on its conclusions. In an æsthetical point of view, factories may be objects too hideous to be tolerated, and it may be better to leave a coal-mine unworked than to destroy the lovely trees which adorn its surface. In a political point of view, it may be better that each country should keep itself independent of foreign commerce, so as to be prepared, at any moment, without feeling its loss, to wage war with other nations. Or, in a theological point of view, it may be better for men not to devote too much attention to such subjects, as tending to seduce their minds into mammon-worship. But it is the business of the statesman, not of the political economist, to examine these allegations, and allow them practically such weight as they may deserve. The mission of political economy is confined to the elucidation of economic principles and their application to plutology or the science of wealth; and it is no refutation of the truth of its conclusions that objections may be raised to their practical adoption, which arise out of a quite different order of considerations.

We have confined ourselves, in these pages, to some of the most salient points connected with the antagonism between free trade and protection. There are, however, a variety of subsidiary and collateral topics that might furnish ample matter for contrasting the two principles. To quote only a few instances, we might enlarge on the tendency of hostile tariffs to excite and maintain feelings of irritation between one country and another, and on the contrary tendency of large international dealings, through free trade, to bind nations together by a strong community of interests, and thus to check and discourage war. We might advert to the beneficial operation of free trade in partially obviating "gluts," that is, the over-production of some articles as compared with others, and in rendering the commercial world far more sensitive than it now is to variations in supply and demand, so that incipient fluctuations would be quickly checked, and would never reach the extreme range which they now attain. We might point out that free trade would tend to equalise prices throughout the world, and would pave the way to many important improvements, such as the general unification of weights, measures, and coins; perhaps even to the assimilation and codification of the laws which now in each country variously affect commerce. But we must refrain from dwelling on these matters, for this does not pretend to be an exhaustive treatise on free trade; it is simply a rough sketch of its principal features as they practically affect the commerce of the world.

We shall now proceed to examine the relation in which free trade stands to the commerce of the United Kingdom, and see how far the present depression of trade may or may not be connected with its adoption here about thirty years ago.

Part II.—English Commerce. 1879.

Chapter XIII.

Population, Debts, and Trade of the World.

THAT there exists a great and general depression in trade throughout the United Kingdom is so notorious and recognised a fact, that it is needless to do more than to assert it. This depression has been growing in intensity since the year 1874, when it only just began to be perceptible; and the hopes that have from time to time been entertained that it had reached its maximum, and that a reaction was at hand, have hitherto been disappointed. What are the causes that have led to this untoward state of things? Are those causes of a permanent, or only of a transitory, nature? If the former, are they remediable by a change in our commercial policy? If the latter, when may we look for their ceasing to operate, and can any measures be devised to accelerate that result?

These are the inquiries to which we purpose to turn our attention, and in order to give shape and method to our investigation, we shall examine and analyse the following propositions, which are all intimately connected with the subject in hand:—

- The amount of our foreign trade (combined imports and exports) has been diminishing since 1874.

- Since 1874 the price of almost every commodity, British and foreign, has been gradually falling—in many cases, considerably, but, more or less, in nearly all.
- Since then, there has been greater competition than before in neutral markets, between the English and foreign producer.
- The wages of labour have been forced down by the decline in the price of goods.
- Since 1874, there have been heavy failures among merchants, manufacturers, and banking establishments.
- Since then, the excess in the amount of our imports over that of our exports has exhibited a marked and unprecedented increase.
- The inactivity of trade and the decline in prices have during the last few years been more or less general throughout the civilised world.
- The peace of Europe has been much disturbed the last few years by actual war and by rumours of war.
- Since 1874, there have been some additional large national defaulters in the payment of interest on the loans made to them.
- Since then, we have made fewer foreign loans, and embarked in fewer foreign enterprises than before.
- There is, and there has been of late years, a larger amount in the country than usual of surplus unemployed capital.

Before we enter on the consideration of these various topics, we must put forward an important statistical document which we have been at some pains to draw up as accurately as possible. It exhibits at a glance a comparative view of the population, of the indebtedness, and of the foreign trade of every country that can make any pretension to be called civilised. By a reference to it, it will be seen that, 1st, it records the financial and commercial position of fifty-six states whose united population amounts to nearly 1,200,000,000—that is, within about 200,000,000 of the computed population of the entire globe.

From the reports of the latest African travellers, we are led to think that the population of Central Africa has hitherto been underrated, and we are inclined to estimate the number of the uncivilised nations of the earth (those not enumerated in our table) at nearly 400,000,000; which would make the total population of the earth about 1,600,000,000.

2nd. The amount collectively due, for loans made to them, by the specified fifty-six governments to a number of individuals residing in all parts of the world, is £4,818,000,000, and on that sum the lenders are entitled to yearly interest according to certain stipulated rates. Seventeen states, however, have ceased paying interest on their debts, amounting to £929,000,000. On the remaining amount, viz., £3,889,000,000, interest is being paid, and of this interest, we are led, by what research we have been able to make, to estimate the average rate to be per cent. Assuming this to be correct, the holders of these various government stocks are in the annual receipt of £165,000,000 from the aggregate of the indebted countries. It may be remarked that these loans were contracted for at somewhat less than the nominal capital, not all of which therefore passed into the borrowers' hands, but they, nevertheless, engaged to repay the nominal capital in full, and meanwhile to pay interest thereon.

In the customs' returns of a country's imports, the amount is always in excess of that which has actually to be paid to the foreigner; for the valuation taken of them includes freight, insurance, and other expenses, whereas the foreign sender has only to receive the net amount after deduction of those charges. To him the importer has only the cost of the goods to pay; he has to pay the freight to quite a different person, viz., to the ship-owner. What percentage must, on the average, be deducted from the customs' valuation of imports in order to arrive at the correct sum which accrues to the foreign sender is a question of some difficulty. On cheap and bulky articles the percentage of freight is large, as is also the insurance when the voyages are long. On the other hand it is the reverse on compact articles of value and on short voyages. Taking everything into consideration, we have come to the conclusion that we shall be near the mark in estimating the average of freight, insurance, and other minor charges at 11 per cent, on the customs' valuation of imports. Accordingly, if we take 11 per cent, off the £1,456,000,000, which we find imported into all countries during the one year given, it reduces the amount to £1,296,000,000, which is within a mere trifle of the £1,316,000,000 exported, in totality, by the same countries during the same year.

TABULAR VIEW OF THE POPULATION, INDEBTEDNESS, AND FOREIGN TRADE OF ALL THE (MORE OR LESS) CIVILISED COUNTRIES OF THE EARTH.

- In the figures given 00,000's are omitted : that is, our figures represent millions and tenths of millions. Thus, 5.9 stands for 5,900,000; £16. for £16,000,000, and so on.
 - The population, debt, and annual trade given are those of the latest year of which we could obtain a record.
 - The annual foreign trade given is the aggregate of both imports and exports.
 - The National Debts include both the home and the foreign, but not the floating debts.
- States. Population. National Debt.; Annual Foreign Trade. Divided into Imports. Exports. £ £ £ Algeria 2.9

16. 9. 7. Argentine Confederation & Buenos Ayres 1.8 21. 17. 7. 10. Austria and Hungary 37. 343. 103. 52. 51. Belgium 5. 47. 185. 98. 87. Bolivia 2. 3.3 2. 1. 1. Brazil 10. 74. 32.5 15.5 17. Canada 3.7 30. 35. 20. 15. Cape Colony 1.4 6. 9. 5. 4. Ceylon 2.4 .8 10.1 5.6 4.5 Chili 2. 12.7 13. 7. 6. China 425. 2. 45. 21. 24. Colombia 3. 14.7 3.3 1.3 2. Costa Rica 2 3.4 1.5 .6 .9 Denmark 2. 10. 23. 13. 10. Ecuador 1. 3.3 .7 .3 .4 Egypt 17. 87. 16. 4. 12. France 37. 750. 367. 174. 193. Germany 43. 190. 324. 196. 128. Greece 1.5 15. 8. 5. 3.

States. Population. National Annual Foreign Trade. Divided into Debt. Imports. Exports. £ £ Guatemala ... 1.2 .9 1.2 .6 .6 Haiti6 3. 2.5 1.2 1.3 Honduras ... 3 6. .4 .2 .2 India ... 240. 127. 114. 49. 65. Italy ... 27. 400. 85. 45. 40. Japan ... 33. 3.5 10.3 4.8 5. Java ... 18. ... 17. 7. 10. Mexico ... 9.3 79. 10.7 5.7 5. Morocco ... 6. ... 2.6 15 1.1 Natal3 .3 1.9 I. .9 Netherlands ... 3.9 80. 104. 59. 45. New South Wales6 12.5 27.6 14.6 13. New Zealand4 20.7 13.3 7. 6.3 Nicaragua4 2. .3 .2 .1 Paraguay2 3. .2 .1 .1 Persia ... 5.5 ... 3.9 2.4 1.5 Peru ... 3.2 49. 12. 4. 8. Portugal ... 4. 85. 14. 8. 6. Queensland2 6.5 6.8 3.2 3. Roumania ... 5.3 21. 94 4.1 5. Russia ... 88. 350. 109. 59. 50. San Salvador4 .9 1.1 .5 .6 Servia ... 1.7 ... 2.9 1.3 1.6 Siam ... 9. ... 2.8 1. 1.8 South Australia2 4.3 8.9 4. 4.9 Spain ... 17. 460. 31. 15. 16. Sweden and Norway ... 6. 14. 46. 27. 19. Switzerland ... 2. 1-3 6. 3.5 2.5 Tasmania3 1.5 2.7 1.3 1.4 Tunis ... 2.7 5. 1.1 .4 .7 Turkey ... 21.1 194. 32. 14. 18. United Kingdom. ... 34. 778. 611. 366. 245. United States ... 47. 460. 226. 87. 139. Uruguay5 12.1 5.8 2.8 3. Venezuela ... 1.8 8. 6.2 3. 3. Victoria8 17. 31. 16. 15. Western Australia1 .2 .7 . .4 Total 1,189.9 4,818.9 2,772.4 1,456. 1,316.4

Chapter XIV.

The Amount of our Foreign Trade has been Diminishing since 1874.

THE subjoined table exhibits the fluctuations in our foreign trade (exports and imports combined) since 1867; in millions of sterling.

In the above trade returns, the influx and efflux of bullion are not included. But the balance between the export and import of the precious metals is, on an average of years, so insignificant and has so slight a connection with our trade in goods, that it is of very little account. Taking the three last years of the above series, viz., 1876, 1877, and 1878, the total amount of the gold and silver imported into, and exported from, the United Kingdom during that period was as follows:—

So that the operations of the country in bullion and specie during the last three years resulted in an excess of importation amounting to about £10,000,000, or a little more than £3,000,000 a year. It may, by-the-by, be as well to note that, during those same three years, the aggregate excess of our imports over our exports amounted to upwards of £200,000,000, and that, instead of our sending our bullion abroad to pay for this excess of imports, as the protectionists assume, we actually received £10,000,000 in bullion from other countries. But we shall refer to this more fully elsewhere.

It appears, then, that in the years 1871 and 1872 there occurred a large and sudden inflation in the amount of our foreign trade. Instead of the previous steady and normal advance of about 2 per cent, each year, it, at that period, increased by sudden jumps of 12½ per cent, one year, and 9 per cent, the next. A brisk demand arose for all kinds of commodities, and the activity extended more or less to every branch of trade. In the year 1872 we sent abroad and received from abroad goods to the amount of £120,000,000 more than in 1870. Not that this enormous increase in the money value represented a proportionate increase in the quantities exported and imported. Mines, collieries, factories, &c., when in ordinary fair work, as they were when this exceptional activity sprang up, could not be made suddenly to increase their productiveness beyond a certain ratio. The enhanced amount of our trading operations was to no small extent due to the great and rapid rise that took place in the prices of commodities. This rise (as will be shown further on by tables) was entirely confined to our own productions. While we charged much dearer for our exports, we paid no dearer for our imports, and the increased money amount of the latter was owing to their increased volume. But, as regards our exports, the increase in their amount was largely due to enhancement of prices, and only partially to increase of quantity. The demand from abroad for our staple productions was, during the height of the inflation far in advance of the supply, and the advance prices, caused by the competition of buyers yielded magnificent profits to the manufacturers, abundant wages to the working men, and stimulated production to its utmost. Capital and credit came forward profusely, and almost pressingly, to share in the general prosperity, and increased the activity of trade by the unusual facilities which they afforded.

That this feverish prosperity was short-lived, and that, as is usual, it was followed by a grievous reaction, we know but too well, for we are still under the chilling influence of that reaction. It is now well understood and admitted that the operation of that brief period of lurid prosperity was injurious to the permanent and

legitimate progress of the country. We had to give way and yield back a large part of the ground which we had gained by an ill-advised rush, and this, like all retreats, was attended with losses and disaster. Habits of indulgence and even of extravagance had been fostered by the rich profits and high wages of those halcyon days. Increased expenditure prevailed among all classes of society, and everything was *couleur de rose*, even to the budgets of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But the bubble burst. Prices declined, foreign trade diminished, and profits and wages have, since 1874, been continually falling. We are in the position of an individual who, having had his income unexpectedly doubled by some lucky accident, and having adapted his style of living to his improved circumstances, suddenly finds his income cut down again to its old limit, and has to go through various unpleasant processes of retrenchment and self-denial.

If, instead of the "leaps and bounds" which our foreign trade made in 1871 and 1872 (as shown by the tables at p. 50), we had only progressed at the old steady rate of 2 per cent, per annum, a calculation will show that, starting from the amount of our foreign trade in 1870, viz., £547,000,000, it would by this time have arrived at a higher figure than it actually has attained, notwithstanding the jumps of 12½ per cent, and 9 per cent, in 1871 and 1872. For instance, adding the supposed gradual increase of 2 per cent, per annum, our foreign trade would have reached

As, therefore, the causes that led to the inflation of our trade in 1871 and 1872 are, as it were, at the root of the commercial depression from which we are now suffering, it is of importance to trace and determine them, in order to arrive at a correct view of our present position.

Among those causes, the most direct and the most potent was the immense amount of money which England lent to foreign nations in the course of the years 1870, 1871, 1872, and 1873. During that period France, Russia, Turkey, Egypt, Peru, Brazil, India, American States and cities, together with a host of South American republics, and also the promoters of foreign undertakings of all sorts, such as railways, telegraphs, gas-works, water-works, &c., appeared as successful borrowers in the English money-market to an extent totally unprecedented till then, and quite unequalled since. No doubt a certain share of the amount was contributed by foreign investors, but it was British capital that provided a very large proportion of the colossal sum that was raised. It is very difficult to ascertain with any degree of precision the total amount that England had to remit abroad in consequence of making these loans, for they were contracted for at various rates of deduction from the nominal capital—some were payable in installments, and of others a portion was set aside for sinking funds, &c. But it may not perhaps be very wide of the mark to estimate the total amount that England had during the four years, 1870 to 1873, to transmit abroad in fulfillment of these engagements, at £450,000,000; forming an average of £1,10,000,000 per annum.

How was the transfer of this enormous amount accomplished? Assuredly not by shipments hence of bullion and specie. We have already seen that no large movements of money from one country to another are ever effected by corresponding displacements of the precious metals. A comparative slight encroachment on the circulation requirements of the exporting country so violently disturbs the exchanges that reaction ensues, and the balance is speedily redressed. But setting aside all theoretical reasoning, it is a fact that English imports and exports of bullion and specie for the four years during which the transmission abroad of the vast sum in question took place, were as follows:—

We, therefore, during the four years in question, received from abroad gold and silver bullion and specie to the amount of 9,000,000 more than we sent away.

In proceeding to solve the question, it must be borne in mind, in the first place, that British investments abroad had for many years before 1870 been constantly on the increase, so that by that time the dividends which foreign debtors had to remit yearly to England formed a very considerable sum. Each year after 1870 those annual payments have become larger, and by this time they have expanded into a prodigious total. It has been shown (p. 47) that after deducting the dividends that should be, but are not, paid by the insolvent States, the yearly sum of £165,000,000 is still actually divided among the holders of national stock throughout the world. To these dividends on national loans must be added the dividends payable on a multiplicity of foreign, municipal, joint-stock, and other public investments which swell the total sum distributed annually among private investors to upwards of £200,000,000. What proportion of this amount falls to the share of the British investors can only be a matter of conjecture. It must, however, be observed that, with the exception of France, the United States, Portugal, and, perhaps, one or two others, only a small proportion of the money borrowed by the fifty other States of the world has been lent to them by their own subjects respectively. Who, then, are the lenders? France, Germany, and Holland are wealthy nations, and are holders of a considerable amount of foreign stocks; as also are, of course, a certain number of opulent individuals in most civilised countries, but, undoubtedly, it is British capital which is the most profusely invested abroad, and which is the recipient of a proportionately large share of the total annual dividends.

Whatever that share may now be, there is reason to believe that in 1870 the annual amount accruing to England for interest and dividends on foreign investments was at least £30,000,000, and that by 1874 this

amount was increased, by the large fresh advances made meanwhile, to £50,000,000, which gives an average of £40,000,000 for the intervening period. This sum would naturally form a part of the £110,000,000 remitted to the borrowers abroad each year of the four in question, leaving £70,000,000 still to be accounted for. This enormous amount was supplied, either directly or indirectly, by an increase to the same annual amount in the exportation of British goods. That this was the case, we have both negative and positive proofs. Negative, because there is no other way of showing how the money was handed over to the borrowers. That they did receive it, nobody denies; that it was not sent to them in the shape of bullion or specie we have made abundantly clear; there is, therefore, no other possible way in which it could have reached them, except in goods, either directly or indirectly. And as regards proof positive, we have merely to refer to the unerring records of the Board of Trade. These show that the exports from the United Kingdom during the four years 1871-1874. averaged nearly £68,000,000 in excess of those of the preceding four years, 1867-70; which excess as nearly as possible accounts for the £70,000,000 which remained to be provided for out of the £110,000,000. The following are the exact figures:—

Total exports (in millions of £) from the United Kingdom for the years exhibiting an excess of £68,000,000 per annum in the latter four years.

To show that the great increase in the exports of the years 1871-1874 was owing not to the natural growth of trade, but to the abnormal stimulus given to exportation by the vast sums which England had then contracted to lend to foreign nations, we append a statement of the annual exports (in millions) of the four years which followed the cycle of 1871-1874, viz:—

It is evident, therefore, that, as soon as the "abnormal stimulus to exportation" was withdrawn by the cessation of England's mania for granting foreign loans, the amount of our exports rapidly diminished, and they have continued gradually to recede until at the present time they have fallen to the exact point in 1870 (£245,000,000 per annum) from which they darted forward so briskly in 1871.

No small portion of the loans made to foreign countries had been handed over direct to them in the shape of commodities required for national purposes, such as iron rails, locomotives, iron steamers, machinery, fire-arms, steam-coal, and similar objects; and while exportation generally was stimulated to an unprecedented extent, the articles above referred to were, beyond all others, forced up to unnatural prices. Of course, these were the articles that most keenly felt the reaction. England, after 1874, not only lent money abroad much more sparingly, but had yearly to receive more from abroad for interest and dividends. Exportation, therefore, no longer artificially excited, gradually fell off, and now flows within its former natural channels, so that compared with its previous impetuosity, the current appears to have become languid and sluggish.

So much for the causes of the transient prosperity of the years 1871-1874, and for their bearings on the depression in trade that has since prevailed.

Chapter XV.

Fall in Prices Since 1874.

WE have already adverted to the fact that the great increase in the amount of our exports in 1872 and 1873 was more the result of advanced prices than of augmented production. Similarly the decrease in the amount of our exports since then has been far more the result of diminished prices than of diminished supply. We will endeavour to verify and as nearly as possible measure this decline in values.

We append a table of the comparative quantities and values of the leading articles of export for the years 1872 and 1878 respectively, these years being the highest and lowest points of our exportation since 1868. It will show, among other interesting inferences, that the amount exported in 1878 represents nearly as many tons, yards, &c., of goods, as the larger amount exported in 1872.

Table.—IN MILLIONS AND TENTHS OF MILLIONS; THAT IS, 00,000'S OMITTED.

Articles Exported.	Quantities In 1872.	Quantities In 1878.	Amounts 1872	Amounts In 1878.	£	£
Alkali.....	4.5	5.6	2.5	2.	Bags and Sacks.....	doz. 3.7 5.2 1.6 1.6
Coal, Coke,&c.....	13.2	15.5	10.4	7.3	Cotton Yarn.....	lbs. 212.3 250.5 16.7 13.
Cotton Goods.....	48.	13.	3,538.	3,618.1	63.5	
Iron and Steel	3.4	2.3	36.	18.4	Linen Goods	yds. 245. 161. 8.2 4.9
Linen Yarn.....	31.2	18.5	2.1	1.2	Woollen Yarn.....	lbs. 39.7 31.2 6.1 3.9
Worsted Stuffs	192.6	20.9	7.4	4.4	36.	4,300.5 168. 107.7

It appears from the foregoing table, supposing that the important articles named afford a fairly

approximative index to the rest, that, if the quantities exported in 1878 had been at the same prices as ruled in 1872, the amount thereof would have been £162,900,000, instead of the actual amount £107,700,000; consequently the general fall of prices must have been in that proportion, viz., 34 per cent.; of course, the decline was lighter in some articles, and heavier in others, but that must have been the average percentage.

In these calculations we have taken for basis the total quantities and the total amounts. In working out each article separately, the result is somewhat different, because in some years the changes are greatest in those items which represent the greatest value, while, in others, the contrary occurs. But in the long run these variations correct each other, and for the comparison of large results, the total values of the total quantities constitute sufficient data to indicate the general tendency. The percentages of fall on the various items by themselves are as follows:—Alkali, 35 per cent.; bags and sacks, 30 per cent.; coal and coke, 40 per cent.; cotton yarn, 34 per cent.; cotton goods, 26 per cent.; iron and steel, 25 per cent.; linen goods, 9 per cent.; linen yarn, no change; woollen yarn, 19 per cent.; and worsted stuffs, 37 per cent. The above remarks also apply to imports.

On the other hand, the prices we paid in 1878 for our imports were also much reduced, though not in the same proportion, because in them the previous rise had not been great. By the following table of the comparative quantities and values of the leading articles of import for the years 1872 and 1878 respectively, it will be seen that the average decline since the former year in the prices of those articles is about 22 per cent

Table.—IN MILLIONS AND TENTHS OF MILLIONS; THAT IS, 00,000'S OMITTED.

Articles Imported.	Quantities	Quantities	Amounts	Amounts	In 1872.	In 1878.	in 1872.	In 1878.	£	£		
Bacon.....	1.8	3.5	3.8	6.7	Butter.....	1.1	1.8	6.	9.9	Cheese.....	1.1	
2. 3. 4.9	Coffee	1.5	1.3	5.2	6.	Corn : Wheat	42.	49.8	26.	27.4	Flour	4.4
7.8 4.1 6.8	Maize,) Barley, &c. {	"55.3	71.6	20.7	24.1	Cotton (Raw)	12.6	12.	53.6	33.5	Flax.	
.....	2. 1.6	5. 3.5	Hides	14	1.2	4.9	35	Jute	4.	4.2	4. 3.2	
Linseed	1.5	1.9	45	4.9	Rice	6.9	6.1	3.5	3.2	Silk (Raw)	lbs. 7.2	
4.2 7.7 3.7	Sugar	155	18.2	21.1	20.8	Tea	186.	205.5	12.8	131		
Tobacco	46.5	91.4	2.6	3.7	Wine	galls. 19.9	16.5	7.7	6.	Wood & Timber ...		
Toads 4.9 5.3 12.7 131	Wool	302.9	395.5	18.1	22.8	Woollen Yarn	11.7	11.3	1.4			
1.4 730.2 912.7 228.4 222.2												

For, taking the leading articles selected as a criterion for the rest, if the quantities imported in 1878 had been worth the same prices as those which ruled in 1872, the amount thereof would have been £285,500,000, instead of the £222,200,000 that they actually did amount to. Consequently the general fall of prices must have been in that proportion, viz., 22 per cent.

That this fall in values is chiefly due to reaction from their sudden inflation in 1871-2-3 is beyond all question, but it must be observed that the fall has been hastened and probably intensified by another cause that is working slowly and silently, but efficiently and continuously. We allude to the diminished, and still diminishing, production of gold, in the face of the yearly extension of its use for currency purposes. Not only are the auriferous districts of California and Australia yielding smaller quantities than formerly, but, at the same time, gold has been rapidly replacing silver as the chief circulating medium of France, Germany, and Holland; and as the bi-metallic system loses ground, the currency of Europe will consist more and more of gold, and will absorb it in greater quantities. Tending in the same direction is the fact that the greater the production, the commerce, and the wealth of the world, the larger become its circulation requirements. As the objects constituting material wealth multiply, so either the number of golden counters by which they have to be represented must be multiplied in the same proportion, or else, each counter will have to represent more of such objects than before, that is to say, prices will have to fall.

For a time, the increasing demand for gold was amply met by copious supplies from California and Australia. Indeed at one period it was thought that there would be a great excess of supply, and speculations were rife as to the extent to which prices might be expected to rise in consequence. But, for some years past, the yield of the gold-fields has fallen off, and has not kept pace with the increased demand for gold. If this disparity should continue, and *a fortiori*, if it should become greater, there must necessarily ensue a corresponding fall in the money equivalent, or price, of all commodities. Were it not for two incidental circumstances, this general fall of prices would be of little importance, as commodities would still retain the same relative, or exchangeable value, and the wealth of the world would remain unaltered. But these two circumstances, which are as follows, introduce some rather complex elements into the subject.

1. The recipients of fixed incomes, such as interest on loan investments, &c., will have to receive the same nominal sum, whatever rise may take place in the value of money, and, in proportion to such rise, will they be

receiving more than the real amount contemplated when those liabilities to them were originally contracted. Such variations are of small consequence as long as they keep within a limited range. There have constantly been some fluctuations in the value of money, but these have never gone beyond certain bounds, and the oscillations have sometimes moved in one direction, sometimes in the other. But should the supply of gold persistently continue inadequate to the demand (and it must be remembered that, besides what is used in the arts, the actual wear and tear by abrasion, &c., and loss by shipwreck, hoarding, &c., amount to many millions per annum), the aggregate deficiency year after year must be productive of serious changes in the relations between the payers and the receivers of fixed annual sums; between the governments throughout the world and their creditors, the holders of stock. If the time should come when gold shall have so increased in value as to acquire twice the purchasing power which it now possesses, England, for instance, will find herself in a very peculiar position. The yearly interest of her own debt, if then nominally the same, will in reality be twice as costly and onerous as it now is; while, on the other hand, the £50,000,000, or thereabouts, which the British public now receive yearly from abroad for interest, &c., on foreign investments will, if then paid, be equivalent to £100,000,000 of money at its present value; or, as the sum would be received in imports at half the present range of prices, foreign nations will have to send to England twice the quantity of commodities which they now send, in payment of the same nominal sum.

2. A tendency to lower prices is generally adverse to the revival of trade. Capital and credit, the two wheels on which commerce revolves, and without which it drags, keep aloof from falling markets, and distrust the security of property that is declining in money value. It is when prices are rising that capital and credit freely come forward and accelerate the rise. They like to connect themselves with prosperity, and it is their recklessness in assisting it that often pushes it beyond the mark; just as, when the reaction comes, the wild rush of alarm with which they tear themselves away aggravates the panic from which they seek to fly. It is best for the interests of trade that prices should remain as steady as possible, or, at all events, should be free from other fluctuations than those to which it is inherently liable. But unless the increasing circulation requirements be met by an increasing supply of the medium of circulation, the divergence will materially affect the stability of prices, independently of all other causes.

The disturbing influence which a very deficient gold supply would exercise may, let us hope, be averted by increased production, and even if not, it is only by degrees, and in the course of years, that its effects would be felt to any severe extent. We thought it right, however, when treating of the fall of prices, to advert to a cause which, although only a subordinate one for the present, is likely, as time advances, to become more and more powerful.

Chapter XVI.

Competition in Neutral Markets.

IN 1872 our exports amounted to £314,000,000. In 1877 they had sunk to £252,000,000. To what extent was that decline in our exports due to the successful competition in neutral markets of our foreign rivals? An interesting and important question, which the detailed information afforded us by the Board of Trade returns will enable us to solve without difficulty. On examination, we find that the deficiency of £62,000,000 in the exports of 1877 as compared with those of 1872, is entirely made up of the decline of our exports to six only out of the 56 countries enumerated in table at page 48, with which we trade. Here are the figures, the accuracy of which are beyond all dispute.

EXPORTS IN MILLIONS AND TENTHS OF MILLIONS (00,000'S OMITTED).

In 1872. In 1877. Deficiency. £ £ £ To Russia 9.5 6.2 3.3 To Germany 43.1 28.9 14.2 To Holland 24.3 16. 8.3 To the United States 45.9 19.9 . 26. To Egypt 7.3 2.3 5. To South American Republics, viz., Columbia, Uruguay, Peru 8.4 3.4 5. 138.5 76.7 61.8 which is (within a fraction) the deficiency on our exports to the six states named.

It is quite clear, therefore, that the large diminution referred to in the amount of our exports in 1877 arose entirely out of, and is fully accounted for by, our dealings with the six States indicated. To the rest of the world we have exported as much in amount in 1877 as in 1872, and, taking into consideration the fall in prices, at least 25 per cent more in quantity. Taking the average of the other fifty markets which we supply with goods, these, in 1877, took from us 25 per cent, more in weight, measure, and bulk than they did in 1872, when, in consequence of high prices, the amount of our exports reached the highest point. To put it in another way, if we leave out the six countries we have named, then, to the rest, that is to the fifty neutral markets, our exports in 1872 at the high prices, amounted to £175,000,000, whereas in 1877, had the same prices existed, they would

have amounted to £219,000,000. We have taken 1877 as the basis of calculation because the reports of that year were complete, but our remarks and inferences are quite as applicable to 1878, as the exports were then within two per cent, of the former year, and for that difference we have amply allowed by taking the fall of prices at 25 per cent., which is less than the reality.

In the face of these facts, there does not exist the slightest ground for supposing that we have been supplanted to any extent whatever in the neutral markets of the world. On the contrary, we have been sending to them and receiving from them more and more goods every year. A collateral proof of this fact will be found in the following statement of the tonnage of British and foreign vessels (sailing and steam), entered and cleared each year with cargoes at ports in the United Kingdom, from and to foreign countries and British possessions:—

It is also deserving of notice that as we admit foreign manufactures free of duty we should, if we were undersold by them at all, be undersold in our own country nearly as effectually as in neutral markets; yet what is the fact? Of our total imports 91 percent, consist of raw materials and articles of food, and barely 9 per cent, consist of manufactured articles; while of this fraction, fully half consists of silks and woollen fabrics, which we have always been in the habit of importing. In contrast to this, 92 per cent, of our exports consist of manufactured goods, and only 8 per cent, of raw produce, of which latter two-thirds consist of coal, coke, and pig iron.

Let us now examine our position with regard to the six countries to which our exports in 1877 were £62,000,000 less than in 1872. Is this serious diminution the result of foreign competition, and have we been supplanted in those six countries by our rivals? Not at all! The real causes are obvious. In the case of the United States, it is increased import duties that have excluded our goods from their markets. It is protective tariffs that have curtailed both their and our foreign trade. If the Americans prefer a policy of commercial isolation, that is not our fault, and it proves anything but our inferiority in the art of cheap production. Our exports to Germany (direct and through Holland) received a sudden and enormous expansion in 1872 and 1873, chiefly owing, no doubt, to the increased spending power of that country resulting from the French war indemnity, but the trade soon subsided to its previous level. In the case of Egypt and the three South American republics, they have bought less from us recently because we have lent them less. In 1872 we sold them large quantities because they paid us out of our loans to them. In 1877 we sold them much less because they then had to pay us out of their own resources. As to Russia, the deficiency is slight, and is accounted for by the state of her political relations with us.

It may perhaps be said that the two years that we have selected for comparison, viz., 1872 and 1877, might happen to furnish data exceptionally favourable to our views. We have therefore taken the average of the three years, 1871 to 1873, to compare with the average of three later years, 1875 to 1877, and we find that they yield the same result. Here are the figures:—

EXPORTS, IN MILLIONS AND TENTHS OF MILLIONS.

Total Exports To In Three Years, 1871—2—3.	In Three Years, 1875-6-7.	Total Deficiency.	£	£	£	Russia ...						
... .. 31.	26.1	4.9	Germany	118.3	92.7	25.6	Holland	71.	54.8	16.2	United States	121.3
65.2	56.1	Egypt	20.7	8.	12.7	Three South American Re-publics	22.3	9.9	12.4	384.6	256.7	127.9

The decline in the exports to Holland arises chiefly from a diminution in the sendings to Germany in transit through Holland.

Chapter XVII.

FALL IN THE WAGES OF LABOUR.

JUST as commerce, after having been unduly stimulated in 1871, 1872, and 1873, has since been suffering from the consequent reaction, so wages, after rising enormously during the same period, were affected by the same reaction, and have been from that time gradually falling. The well-being of the wage-receivers, or working men, has fluctuated with that of the profit-receivers, or capitalists. In both instances the intoxication arising from sudden and inordinate prosperity led to improvidence and rashness. The employers were tempted into erecting too many new mills and factories, or into working poor mines that could only pay as long as prices continued exceptionally high. The operatives, in most of the flourishing industries, not content with an advance of from 30 to 120 per cent, on their former wages, insisted on working shorter hours, and on lessening the value of that work by unsteadiness and unpunctuality. In the coal districts they adopted the suicidal policy of limiting the output with a view of enhancing prices and keeping wages up; as if the smaller the harvest the more food there would be for everybody. This policy was very much akin to that of the Dutch formerly, who are said to

have burnt all the spices their tropical islands produced beyond a certain quantity, in order to enhance their value. When, after the unnatural inflation, demand subsided into its legitimate channels, wages gradually fell, and have continued to fall, in sympathy with, but not in the same proportion as, the reduced profits of capital and the lessened prices of commodities.

Against this decline the wage-receivers have (as is natural and excusable) fought inch by inch. By concerted action, by strikes, by the partial adoption of co-operation, and by every weapon which trade-unionism put in their hands, they opposed all the resistance in their power to the reduction of their wage. But the irresistible course of events proved too strong for them, and they had to yield.

In former times the effects of such severe and protracted commercial depression as that which we have gone through would have been visible in the general destitution of the people, in mass meetings of hundreds of thousands of unemployed workmen, in an immense increase of pauperism, and in lawless and destructive riots, such as were of periodical recurrence a generation or two ago, when we were a highly "protected" people. That nothing of the kind should have occurred in the present day, is no doubt partly due to the better education and softer manners that now prevail among the working men, but it must be observed that the fall in prices has pressed far more heavily on the mercantile than on the operative classes. If the latter received less pay than before, on the other hand, their outgoings were less, and there was more than a proportionate reduction in the cost of living. Moreover, in consequence of the fact, to which we have adverted, of the volume of our productions not having diminished since the culminating period of excitement, 1872, there was plenty of work to be done, although it might be paid for at a lower rate. If there was less employment for labour in some branches of our industries, there was more of it in others, and the surplus in the former quickly became absorbed in the latter. That the transition from high to moderate wages has not inflicted severe distress on the wage-receivers and that the condition of the bulk of the people has been continuously improving, is made evident by the following facts:—

1. Pauperism has decreased. Here are the numbers of the paupers relieved yearly in England and Wales since 1871:—

2. Emigration has decreased. The yearly number since 1871 of emigrants from the United Kingdom to America, Australia, and other places, is given below:—

Against the 95,105 emigrants in 1877, there were no less than 81,848 immigrants.

3. Convictions for criminal offences are fewer relatively to the population. Here are the numbers of the convictions for the United Kingdom and of the population since 1871:—

4. The Excise has yielded a larger revenue. Here are the yearly amounts since 1871:—

5. The people consume more per head of sugar, tea, tobacco, and imported food than ever. We give the average annual consumption of the following articles per head of the total population of the United Kingdom in lbs. and 100ths of lbs.:—

6. The deposits in the Savings Banks have increased. Below is a statement showing the amount invested in both the Trustees' Savings Banks and the Post Office Savings Banks, year by year, from 1871 to 1877:—

We come therefore to the conclusion that while the wages of labour have undergone a considerable decline since the extravagant rise of 1871—1873, it is no less certain that it has by no means seriously deteriorated the condition of either the wage-receiver or of the bulk of the community; and that it is the manufacturing and trading classes that have most suffered from the commercial depression that has prevailed for the last few years.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Commercial and Banking Failures Since 1874, and Ratio of Fall in Prices.

IT is in the nature of things that, during the period when, from whatever cause, prices are falling, commercial operations should, as a general rule, result in loss. During the transition from high to low values, a purchase made one week is dear the next. At whatever price a merchant may buy an article, he will, in a falling market, be undersold in a few days, or at all events before he can get quit of his merchandise. Under these circumstances, he naturally curtails his operations and buys less from the manufacturer. The latter finds, therefore, that, in spite of his having submitted to gradual reductions in price, his stocks are accumulating; and as he cannot pay wages and meet engagements, without making sales, he is compelled, whatever his loss, to tempt purchasers by still lower and lower prices. To meet this reduction in the value of his fabric, he has to lower the rate of wages. After a struggle the wage-receiver submits, but as he has less money to spend among the tradespeople, they, in their turn, come in for their share of the bad times. As the process continues each step downward makes matters worse. The depreciation of value extends to all sorts of property. Not only do

commodities become cheaper, but factories, mills, mines, machinery, stock, shares in industrial enterprises, houses and even land, all participate in the depreciation. Banking capital that has all along been freely making advances on commercial securities, now takes fright, and seeks to disengage itself from those investments by calling in its advances or contracting their amount. This demand falls heavily on the trader at that moment, for, in declining markets, everything he touches loses money, what stocks he holds have sunk in value, those who owe to him—themselves under pressure from the same cause—defer their payments, the credit by which he was before assisted is now sparingly given or withheld, and he finds difficulty even in discounting his bills. In spite of all this, he must go on, or his business and position will be compromised. Those who have sufficient strength and capital, withstand the pressure and can afford to wait to recoup themselves when good times return; but some have to give way, and one failure leads to another.

Some banks, when deeply involved with one or more large and over-weighted mercantile firms, have tried to prop them up and carry them through the transition period, hoping thus to retrieve the fortunes of both; but in most cases they have themselves sunk under the burden, and the efforts made to avert the catastrophe have only tended to render it doubly disastrous. Thus enormous and unexpected bank failures have contributed their sinister effects to the general loss and depression.

These are the features by which the commercial history of the last few years have been marked, and such features have always more or less accompanied a continuous fall in prices. The brunt of the evil has been borne by the trading and professional (that is the middle) classes; for, as to the wage-receivers we have before explained that the reduction in the cost of living has nearly coincided with the reduction in wages; and as to the receivers of fixed incomes, they have been, not injured, but positively benefited by the fall in the value of commodities.

We may conclude that while the commercial and banking failures that have occurred of late years are the outcome, and not the cause, of the fall in prices that set in in 1874 and 1875; on the other hand, they undoubtedly contributed to increase the gloom and ruin out of which they sprung.

Since the upward or downward tendency of prices produces so powerful an effect on commercial prosperity, it becomes of the utmost importance to ascertain : (1) at what point of the foil we have now arrived; (2) how far prices have sunk below the level from which they started upwards in 1871; and (3) at what stage we may fairly hope to have reached the turning-point. The first two inquiries we may solve without much difficulty.

By means of tables constructed on the plan of those given at page 58 (the details of which, however, would occupy too much space here) we have arrived at the conclusion that the following are the exponent numbers that represent the comparative average prices of the chief articles of our export trade for the undermentioned eight years, taking 1861 as the standard, and assuming that the average price of our export commodities for that year were represented by the figure 1,000:—

From the above it will be seen:—

- That average prices rose to a higher point in 1865 than in 1872. This was chiefly owing to the enhanced value of cotton goods in 1865, arising from the scarcity and dearness of the raw material in America.
- That prices in 1878 sank to a lower point than in any other of the years given, and were 8 per cent, below the average of those of 1861, which was a year of great commercial embarrassment and stagnation.

The latter is a fact of peculiar significance, and we shall shortly advert to it more fully. But it is necessary, in order to take an accurate survey of the course which the average prices of all commodities have taken for some years past to turn to our imports, and examine into the fluctuations of price that have taken place in that branch of our trade.

On the plan of the table given on page 59 of the comparative quantities and values of certain articles of import, we have constructed a series of others by which we have arrived at a number which represents the comparative average price of all the articles of import comprised in that table for each year. The articles which we have selected as bases of calculation are 21 in number, out of about 100 which appear in the Board of Trade list, but they are by far the largest and most important, for they constitute nearly two-thirds of the entire amount of the imports, leaving only one-third to be represented by the remaining 79 articles. These latter, it may be assumed, fluctuate in nearly the same lines as the larger items, and if there are any small deviations in one direction or the other, they are pretty sure, in obedience to the law of averages, to neutralise each other.

The following are the results which these investigations have yielded. Giving that the average prices of our imports for the year 1861 shall be represented by the figure 1,000, then

From these remarkable deductions let us draw a few inferences:—

- While our exports have generally ruled at higher (sometimes much higher) prices than those of the year 1861, the prices of our imports have since that year been continuously declining.
- While the articles which we sell now (end of 1878) command within 8 per cent, of the prices of 1861, the articles which we buy are 32 per cent, cheaper than they were at that period.

- The articles of which the prices remain nearly the same as in 1861 (those we export) consist in great measure of manufactures. The articles of which the prices have fallen largely since 1861 (those we import) consist almost exclusively of raw materials of agricultural produce.
- For the same quantity of our exported goods for which we got £1,000 in 1861, we got £1,396 in 1872. For the same quantity of imported goods for which we paid £1,000 in 1861, we only paid £871 in 1872. Thus the brisk trade of the latter year did not raise the prices of foreign commodities, but only, for a time, checked the rapidity of their fall.
- The prices of our export goods which had in 1872 advanced $39 \frac{2}{3}$ per cent, from those of 1861, fell in 1878 to $7 \frac{2}{3}$ per cent, below those of 1861. This is a fall of $47 \frac{1}{3}$ per cent., taking 1861 as the standard, and is equivalent to a fall of 34 per cent, on the increased prices of 1872. On the other hand, the prices of our foreign importations, which in 1872 had fallen 13 per cent, below those of 1861, fell in 1878 to 32 per cent, below them, which is equivalent to a fall of 22 per cent, on the diminished prices of 1872. In other words, the fall on our goods of 34 per cent, between 1872 and 1878 was upon a great rise; that on foreign goods of 22 per cent, during the same period was upon prices already reduced.
- The alteration that has steadily been going on in the relative, or exchangeable, values of the two great classes of commodities, viz., the agricultural and the manufactured, is very suggestive, and leads to some interesting considerations, for which, however, we cannot find place here.

It is easy enough to trace the course which the price of each separate article takes from year to year because you have to deal with single factors; but the result is of no use in an inquiry as to the march of prices generally. The difficulty is to trace the course from year to year of the total average price of all commodities. Not only is their variety immense, but their relative quantities must also enter into the calculation. In the table which follows we have averaged the price-exponents of our exports and of our imports, making due allowance for the relative quantities of each. It will therefore show the relative average prices of one year to another of the entire volume of commodities that constitute the import and export trade of the United Kingdom, assuming that the leading articles (in value and bulk) fairly represent the rest. Indeed, as our trade embraces nearly every article of any importance which the world produces, and as the variations in price that occur in our markets are rapidly responded to in every part of the globe, our table may be said, in a rough way, to represent the relative average prices of all the world's commodities. Given that the average prices of all the articles both of export and import for the year 1861 shall be represented by the figure 1,000, then

We arrive, then, at the conclusion that since 1861 the average price of commodities, after rising for some years, has again fallen, and is now $22\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, below the average of that year, and $30\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, below the high figure which it had reached in 1872.

If reaction from the high prices of 1872-1873 had been the sole origin of the existing depression of trade, we must by this time have more than reached the turning-point, for prices have receded much beyond the level from which they started. But another cause is at work. We have already adverted to the influence exercised over prices by the decreased production of gold, and the increased volume of commodities which gold has to represent. The combined operation of these two agencies, while it has no effect on exchangeable value, has produced, is producing, and will continue to produce, a reduction more or less rapid in the money value of commodities. The strain on gold is the heavier on account of the demonetisation of silver in some countries, so that gold has to do additional work. But this is far too large a subject to be treated in a cursory manner, and is fully entitled to a separate and careful inquiry.

At all events, we have seen that, from whatever combination of causes, prices have descended to a lower level than mere reaction warranted, and that the fall since 1861 has been considerably greater on foreign goods than on those of our own production.

Chapter XIX.

The Increased Excess in the Amount of our Imports over that of our Exports.

THAT we import foreign goods to an amount largely in excess of that of our exports, and that this excess has, of late years, been far greater than it ever was before, are notorious facts which have attracted general attention. The prevailing notion among a large portion of the community is, that this state of things is an evil, and many persons consider that it betokens the decline of our trade and the diminution of our wealth. "Foreign countries," say they, "resort to every device to curtail and pare down their purchases from us, while we go on purchasing enormously and increasingly from them. It is not our goods but our money that the foreigner wants in exchange for his goods; and the increasing excess of our purchases over our sales is the measure of our

we im-ported by £28,000,000; during the four years 1875, 1876, 1877, and 1878, we imported more than we exported by £231,000,000. Now if international balances were paid in specie, it would follow that we must have received from abroad gold in far larger quantities than usual during the first of those two periods; and sent away large quantities of gold during the second. But what do we find to be the fact? If anyone will make a calculation from the figures in the table just given, he will see that during the first period, the balance of specie received over the specie sent was £16,147,000, while during the second it was £16,326,000. That is to say, during the four years that we exported largely, we received £180,000 less specie from abroad than we did during the four years that we imported £231,000,000 in excess of our exports. Is it possible to show more clearly and conclusively that we do not pay in specie for the excess of our imports over our exports?

In fact, as we have shown before, no large international payments are ever made in specie. The stock of it in each country (except at places of production) is totally inadequate to such a purpose. When in 1871 to 1873 we undertook to send large sums abroad as loans to foreign countries, they went not in specie, but in the shape of increased exports. France, after 1871, had an enormous indemnity to pay to Germany. What part of it was paid in specie? The merest fraction. In the *Economist* of March 15th, 1873, there appeared a statement to the following effect:—that the French Government had just completed a payment to Germany of £94,600,000, and that the various items of which the payment consisted were as follows:—

The *Economist* adds that the £80,000,000 on Holland, Germany, and England represent the excess of commodities which France has furnished in order to meet the ransom; and that, meanwhile, the bullion in the bank of France has been maintained at £30,000,000. Thus the circulation requirements of France were not interfered with by this enormous payment, and even then £6,000,000 of gold and silver paid were probably the produce of the hoards which had been accumulating in the old stockings and under the hearthstones of the frugal and industrious French peasantry, and which had not before been in circulation.

We dwell the more on this topic because it is a very common notion that the balances due from nation to nation are paid in specie, and it is this radical error chiefly that leads protectionists to aim at selling as largely as possible and buying as sparingly as possible, in the delusive hope of getting the difference in specie. The futility of such an aim is at once apparent, when it is clearly seen that specie is not the medium through which the balance between exports and imports is adjusted, or through which heavy payments, from whatever cause, are made by one country to another.

We undertook next to show that our large excess of imports over exports is "the sign, not of our decay, but of our wealth."

That England has, or rather that individual Englishmen (using that term generically for the inhabitants of the United Kingdom) have yearly to receive from almost every foreign country large sums of money for interest, dividends, &c., 011 loans, shares, and other investments, everybody is aware, but what the aggregate amount is that has thus to be annually transmitted to this country, is a mere matter of conjecture, and has been variously estimated at any sum between £30,000,000 and £70,000,000 sterling. Mr. E. Seyd in 1876 estimated the indebtedness of other countries to this at £1,100,000,000 with an annual interest of £40,000,000 to £50,000,000. Professor Fawcett, in his recent work on "Free Trade and Protection," says that "it has been calculated by competent authorities that the balance annually due to England as interest on capital invested in India and America alone is about £30,000,000," which seems high, considering that it refers to only two countries. We have taken considerable pains to collect all available data on which to found a conclusion, but even these still leave a considerable margin for mere conjecture. If anyone will consult Wetenhall's official "London Daily Stock and Share List," he will see a classified enumeration of the various foreign securities in sterling money for which London is the central, and, in some cases, the only market. Besides these, there are a vast number of others which are in foreign currency, and of which the chief, markets are abroad. After analysing these, calculating the yearly return yielded by each, and estimating as closely as possible the portion thereof which has annually to be remitted to England, including the amount which India has to send each year in payment of that portion of her government expenditure that is defrayed here, we find the total to reach the sum of £55,700,000. On the next page is a detailed statement of the various classes of securities of which the total is made up.

It therefore appears that we are the recipients of an income from abroad of about £56,000,000 per annum, in addition to which, if we take into account the repayment of some small part of some few loans which take place every year, the profits remitted here on British capital invested in private undertakings never heard of on the Stock Exchange, and those sent from numerous branch houses abroad to the parent firms here, we shall probably find that the amount which has to be remitted each year to England from abroad does not fall far short, of £60,000,000.

It is that large amount which, being transmitted to us in the shape of goods, constitutes the excess of our imports over our exports, and as long as our debtors continue to fulfil their engagements, so long (and long may it be !) shall we continue to witness the same excess of imports. Indeed, it would have been considerably larger

but for the cessation of dividend payments by defaulting states. We have for half a century past been a lending nation, and therefore have always been receiving an income from abroad in return for

ANNUAL INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS ON FOREIGN INVESTMENTS, &C., IN THOUSANDS OF POUNDS.

Total, To Be Annually Remitted To London. Colonial Government Securities	£4,628	90%	£4,165	Foreign Stocks, Bonds, &c., of which the dividends have all to be remitted to London (not including the bad debts, such as Spanish, South American, Turkish, &c.)*
.....	10,680	15%	17,550	Foreign Stocks, Bonds, &c., dividends payable abroad
.....	506			Indian Railway Debentures, Bonds and stocks, all
.....	4,874	90%	4,387	Railways in British Possessions, chiefly India
.....	1,149	80%	919	Foreign Railways, financed and dividends paid in London
.....	1,542	85%	1,311	Railway Obligations, Mortgages, &c.
.....	3,473	35%	2,952	American Bonds and Shares—sterling—payable in £ sterling
.....	6,700	20%	1,340	payable in American currency
.....	298	70%	208	Colonial and Foreign Mines
.....	1,991	85%	1,692	Gas, Water, and Miscellaneous
.....	10,000			Sum that has annually to be remitted by India for a portion of her Government Expenditure defrayed here—average

£55,710 In addition to the above, there are a number of private industrial and other enterprises abroad, in which British capital is engaged, and from which it derives a revenue, which are not represented or dealt in on the London Stock Exchange. * We insert the whole of this amount because, although the Stocks are not all* held by Englishmen, it has all to be remitted to London, where it is distributed to the investors, whether British or foreign.

British investments (though by no means to the same extent as now), but a reference to the table at page 78 will show that since 1863 and up to 1874 the excess of imports, in spite of the income in question, was but small; and indeed, in the years 1871, 1872, and 1873, it was the exports that were in excess of the imports. Of these fluctuations the reason is obvious. From 1863 to 1870, we were steadily investing money in foreign loans, &c., and thus absorbing in fresh investments part of the sums that we were receiving for interest, &c., on our previous ones, and accordingly during those years there was but a small excess of imports. But during the years 1871, 1872, and 1873, we suddenly and largely increased our foreign investments; we contracted foreign loans with indiscriminate eagerness, and lavished our money abroad with almost blind profusion. Hence exports received an extraordinary stimulus and an unprecedented development. The money which the British capitalist lent was largely laid out with the British manufacturer, mine-owner, shipbuilder, &c. Wages rose, traders made more and spent more, and the pulse beat quicker throughout the whole commercial body. Thus not only were the sums absorbed that we were receiving as returns for our previous investments, but more was required, to provide for which we had to export in excess of our imports, as pointed out at page 56. However, this mania for lending money to foreign countries rather suddenly came to a stop in 1875, partly because our surplus capital had been pretty well exhausted for a time, but chiefly because several of the countries to which we had lent money declared their inability to pay their dividends, and a well-founded apprehension arose that the example would be followed by others. These defaults caused heavy losses to British investors, and made them so cautious, that from that time up to this, very little money has been lent to foreign countries. The consequences of this change were immediately visible. Our income from foreign investments, which we have shown to be nearly £60,000,000, not being neutralised by any outflow for loans as it was during the preceding years, and being of course sent to us in goods, there was a proportionate increase in the excess of our imports. According to the preceding calculations, that excess ought to be equal to the amount of our investment income, viz., £60,000,000 per annum. On reference to the table at page 78, it will be seen that the excess of imports for the four years 1875, 1876, 1877, and 1878, amounted to £231,000,000, which gives an average of £58,000,000 per annum—a closeness of approximation between results arrived at through two different processes, which strongly confirms the accuracy of both.

The effect of our abstention during the last four years from foreign investments has manifested itself in two directions : 1. A great collapse in the export trade which the loan system had stimulated to an abnormal extent. The British capitalist lends much less money abroad to be laid out with the British manufacturer, mine-owner, &c. Wages have fallen, traders have made less and spent less, and the pulse beats more feebly throughout the whole commercial body. 2. A large accumulation in England of capital that seeks, but cannot yet find, profitable and safe employment. Our large income from abroad, instead of being squandered in loans to foreign nations, is retained in the country, and is daily adding to the mass of money that is lying unused. The rate of

interest has sunk as low as it has ever been known, consols are rising, and seem likely to reach par, and it is estimated that the amount now lodged on deposit at the various banks throughout the United Kingdom is upwards of £600,000,000—an amount far exceeding all precedent.

That excess of imports proves the wealth of a country and excess of exports its indebtedness to foreigners, is a fact that necessarily results from the foregoing considerations, and has been the subject of some remarks at p. 15. But we shall give here a few illustrations of its truth. On a reference to the table at p. 48, it will be seen that, besides England, imports are in excess of exports in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, all wealthy or improving countries with debts that are moderate compared with their foreign trade. The case of Norway is a peculiar one. It is the large mercantile navy of that little state that brings them in so rich a tribute from the foreigner every year. In 1878 there entered with cargoes at British ports, 1,734,000 tons of Norwegian shipping, by far the largest of any foreign country; Germany coming next with 1,048,000, and the United States lagging a long way behind with 542,000. On the other hand, we find that the countries in which the exports exceed the imports are the United States, Spain, Turkey, Austria, Brazil, India, and Peru, all of them indebted states with large foreign debts as compared with their foreign trade. As to France, she has not yet wholly recovered from the financial and commercial disturbance occasioned by the German indemnity, but she is rapidly assuming her place among the over-importing countries, as all wealthy and progressive nations must do.

Chapter XX.

The Depression in Trade not Confined to England, But Prevalent Everywhere.

IF, as some assert, free trade be the main cause of the depression in trade that has prevailed in England for the last three or four years, it would follow that those countries that lived under the protective system should, by way of contrast, exhibit great commercial activity, and be revelling in prosperity. If it be from the unwholesome influence of free trade that our commerce is suffering, the commerce of those countries that are free from that influence ought to be healthy and vigorous. But this is far from being the case. The trade of the rest of the world is mostly in a more depressed state than it is here. From every country on the continent of Europe there arise loud cries of distress both from the employers and the sellers of labour; and the shield of protection hangs so uneasily on them that they are asking for it to be shifted, either higher or lower, they hardly know which. As to the United States of America, the most highly protected country in the world, the condition of the trading and industrial classes is, in spite of their access to abundant, fertile, and cheap land, worse than it is in Europe. Of this conclusive proofs are at hand. In the two years 1872 and 1873, at the highest point of our commercial inflation, when labour was both scarce and dear, 328,000 persons emigrated from the United Kingdom to the United States of America. In 1876 and 1877, when trade here was greatly depressed, the number of emigrants had dwindled down to 54,000 and 45,000 respectively. Indeed, during the latter years, nearly as many returned to England from the United States as went there. Surely the great fall in wages here in 1876 and 1877 ought to have stimulated our working men to leave us for America in very much larger numbers than in 1872 and 1873 when they were getting ample wages, and labour was in great demand. Instead of which, quite the contrary has happened, and emigration has almost come to a stop. How was it possible for this to occur if the protective system was working beneficially for the United States, while free trade was working detrimentally for England? If this should meet the eye of some working man yearning after protection, we beg that he will ponder over that question. The fact is, that while industrial prosperity had declined in England, it had, in spite of all the protection lavished upon it, declined in a far greater degree in the United States. Of this, the working classes here, deeply interested in ascertaining the value of labour in different labour-markets, became so well aware, that they preferred moderately low wages here to idleness or starvation wages in the United States. It is clear, therefore, that free trade cannot be accused of causing a state of things which exists in an aggravated form in countries where the contrary system prevails.

As an instance (and it is an important one) of the comparative results of free trade in England and of protection in the United States, let us look at the relative success of each in securing a share in the carrying trade of the world—a prize worth contending for. Up to 1849, Great Britain "protected" her mercantile navy by the celebrated Navigation Laws, which created almost a monopoly of our trade for our own merchantmen. In that year we repealed those laws, and boldly threw our trade open to universal competition. Of course, the total downfall of our mercantile navy was confidently predicted by the protectionist party, but their fears were not realised. Instead of decadence came development; our mercantile marine became more pre-eminent than ever; we have become the carriers for the world, and our flag waves in every port where any trade exists at all. This

was the effect of discarding protection.

Now let us look at the working of the opposite system (protection) on the carrying trade of the United States. Previously to 1860 the American mercantile marine competed stoutly with our own as carriers of merchandise from one part of the world to another, and they obtained a considerable share of that lucrative employment for capital and labour. Nearly three-fourths of the goods that were sent from, or brought to, their own shores were conveyed in United States vessels, and the Stars and Stripes were constantly found alongside the Union Jack in the principal trading ports of the world. The unfortunate Civil War between North and South put a temporary stop to this competition, for with the characteristic spirit of the Anglo-Saxon race, all the energies of the American people were concentrated on that fierce struggle. But after the close of the war there was apparently nothing to prevent the American shipowners from resuming their rank among the mercantile navies of the world. One thing, however, had occurred meanwhile which destroyed all their chances of success. The protective system had assumed formidable dimensions. The ruling party carried it out to an unprecedented extent, and by the imposition of excessive import duties shut out cheap foreign goods, to be replaced by dear native ones. Prices were raised thereby to such a point that it became no longer possible for America to construct and equip merchant ships (whether sailers or steamers) on terms that would allow the owners to compete with British merchantmen, and the latter have accordingly had the carrying trade almost to themselves ever since. The United States, nevertheless, possess a large and very fine mercantile navy, but its operations are in great measure restricted to their extensive coasting and internal trade. Owing to her immense sea-board bathed by [two vast oceans, the Atlantic and the Pacific—to the noble rivers that afford navigable access to the very heart of the country—to the great expanse of her lakes, or rather inland seas—owing, above all, to the free trade system that prevails between state and state, and to the skill and enterprise with which it is utilised in the extension of trade between one part of the huge continent and the other, a very large tonnage is required to meet that internal demand. But when we come to the external relations of the United States, in which free trade is abolished and replaced by protection, American shipping is so heavily handicapped that it is distanced by some even of the minor states of Europe. From her own ports her own produce is now carried away mostly in foreign bottoms. We have before us a recent number of a publication (Dombusch's "Floating Grain Cargoes List") in which the names and nationalities are given of 107 vessels which were then loading grain for England at San Francisco, California, and Portland, Oregon. Of these 107 vessels, most of them of large size, 84 were British, 9 were German, 2 were French, and only 12 were American. Without having similarly precise statistics, our inquiries lead us to believe that in the eastern ports of the United States the proportion of foreign tonnage employed in conveying American produce to Europe is equally large. Such are the effects of discarding free trade.

It is curiously typical of the two systems adopted in the two countries respectively, that while we in the United Kingdom take three-fourths of the total American exports, the United States barely take one-twelfth of the total of ours. Some are shocked at the contrast, and think that it means a heavy loss to us. No such thing! How can it be a loss to us to obtain what we require? It would really be a loss if wanting a thing we could not get it, but how we lose by getting it is not easy to understand. If, indeed, it were forced upon us, that might be objectionable; but, no! our purchases are quite spontaneous. Some people talk as though it were an act of great kindness and condescension on our part to buy largely from the Americans, and that they ought to be very grateful to us for it. This is a delusion. If we import cotton or wheat from the United States, is it out of love and regard for our American cousins? Do we do so in order to confer upon them so great a favour that it entitles us to ask them in return to alter their fiscal system in order to please us? Not a bit of it! We buy their commodities out of selfish motives, because it suits us to do so, and it entitles us to no gratitude whatever. The very men who tell us that we ought to discourage the importation of American produce, encourage it by eating bread made from American wheat and wearing garments made from American cotton. If it is so wrong to buy from Americans because they do not choose to buy from us, why then do we do it? "Oh!" it will be said, "they inundate us with their wheat and maize, and once here what can we do?" Now, it is a great though a common mistake to say that the Americans inundate us with their grain. Far from that being the case, the Americans do not send us as much as one ship-load of grain in the course of the whole year. Many years ago the Americans used to consign a little wheat and maize to Liverpool for sale, but of late years none at all. There are not 100,000 qrs. of grain of all kinds imported in a year for American account. The whole of the large importations into the United Kingdom of American wheat, maize, &c., are purchases made in New York, Baltimore, &c., by English millers and dealers, which are shipped there for English account, at English risks, and paid for by the English buyer before he gets possession of the goods. This is a very different thing from sending the grain over to seek a sale for it here. Nor does it look as if the Americans were foisting their produce on us. They are not pedlars who bring their goods to your door and ask you to buy. They keep an open shop where you may go and make purchases if you choose. If it is such a grand favour to them and such a bad thing for you to buy their grain and their bacon and their cotton, why do you do it? There is no compulsion. The fact is that you do it for

your own sake, not for theirs; and it suits you to buy quite as much as it suits them to sell. As to their being ungrateful because they prefer making their goods themselves at a heavy cost instead of buying them cheaply from you, that is nonsense. It may be a mistaken policy of theirs (and we are sure that it is) to restrict their dealings with the rest of the world when they might expand them threefold or more by adopting free trade; but, after all, it is their own affair, and while you may have a right to feel surprise or regret, you have none to express indignation.

Chapter XXI

The Effect on Trade of Political Complications and of Losses on the Debts of Defaulting States.

THE depression in trade, of which we have been tracing the main causes, was no doubt in some degree enhanced by the fear lest the political complications connected with the Eastern Question might drag us into war. Indeed, the evil effects of war on trade are chiefly felt just before its commencement from uncertainty, and just after its close from reaction. Actual hostilities occasion a large expenditure on the part of Government, and a stimulus is given to a variety of trades. Hence a brisk demand for labour and corresponding animation among the retail dealers. Money is rapidly circulated, and for a time the industrial and mercantile classes enjoy a factitious and artificial prosperity. But at the close of a war a reaction sets in very much akin to that which followed the "leaps and bounds" of our commerce in 1872-3, and stagnation and distress ensue. Thus it was, after the termination of the long war with Napoleon in 1815, that the country underwent a commercial crisis more severe than any that she has since sustained. Hundreds of thousands were thrown out of work, and were driven to desperation. Incendiary fires, attempts at plunder, and "bread or blood" riots spread alarm throughout the country during the years 1816 and 1817. Again, the close of the war, with Russia in 1856 was succeeded by a severe panic in 1857. Numerous failures occurred, and the aggregate liabilities of the failed houses were computed to amount to £45,000,000. Government had to interfere, and saved commerce from a deadlock by empowering the Bank to extend its issues beyond their legal limits.

We do not think, however, that political apprehensions exercised much influence on the recent state of trade—certainly far less than resulted from the losses sustained by the British investing public through the non-payment of dividends by several indebted states. Not only did there ensue the immediate loss of the interest that was due, but also the fear that the capital itself was endangered. Neither individual nor national suspensions are often followed by a resumption of payments. When a country once forfeits its credit by the non-payment of its dividends, it loses one great incentive to the punctual performance of its engagements, viz., the hope of contracting fresh loans. These losses were, *pro tanto*, a diminution of the available capital of the country, and thus they contributed in a certain measure to the general depression. Fortunately the bulk of these losses fell on wealthy persons, to whom they brought disappointment, but not ruin. One compensating effect attended them. The faith of English capitalists in the solvency and morality of foreign governments was thoroughly shaken. Fewer fresh investments have been made abroad the last few years, and the savings of the country, roughly estimated at from £180,000,000 to £220,000,000 per annum, have mostly remained at home to accumulate into the unprecedentedly large sum that now lies nearly idle, and is eagerly seeking fresh fields for profitable employment.

Chapter XXII.

Summing Up.

WE have in the course of these pages endeavoured, among other things, to show:—

- That balances due by one country to another are paid, directly or indirectly, in commodities, and not in specie, unless occasionally and to an insignificant extent.
- That for every export of goods, except what is sent to pay a previous debt, or to create a new one, there must be an import of goods to the same amount, and *vice versâ*. So that to restrict imports is, to that extent, to restrict exports, and to diminish foreign trade.
- That free trade is the only system under which capital and labour find their most natural and permanently profitable fields for employment.
- That the protective system transfers capital and labour from natural and profitable into forced and unprofitable employments, artificially raises the cost of commodities, forfeits the advantages accruing

from the division of labour, reduces foreign trade, and tends to isolate a country from the rest of the world.

- That the reciprocity or retaliatory system, were it practicable (and it is not), would be fraught with all the evils of protection, of which it is the reproduction under a different name.
- That the sudden increase of our exports in 1871 and 1872 was caused by the exceptionally large sums which, at that period, we sent abroad by way of loans to divers foreign countries and of other foreign investments; which sums were transmitted, not in specie, but in commodities.
- That on the cessation of that exceptional state of things, a reaction took place, and the amount of our foreign trade has been decreasing since 1874.
- That while the money value of our foreign trade (combined exports and imports) has declined, the bulk or volume of the goods which we have sent out and received in, has undergone no diminution.
- That owing partly to reaction, and partly to diminished gold production, a general fall has taken place in the average price of all commodities, and it has been by far the heaviest on those articles which we import from abroad. The present average price of all British produce is 8 per cent., and the present average price of all foreign produce is 32 per cent., below the average price of the same two classes of commodities respectively in the year 1861.
- That the wages of labour have also fallen, but not in full proportion to the fall that has taken place in prices generally, so that the burden of depression has chiefly weighed on the mercantile and middle classes.
- That the depression in trade was not confined to England, but was universal, and has been severest in the most protected countries, so that it cannot be ascribed to free trade.
- That we have not suffered from foreign rivalry in neutral markets.
- That the increased excess of our imports over our exports is the sign of our wealth, not of our decay; and that all prosperous nations import more than they export; while, on the other hand, an excess of exports is a sure sign of indebtedness.
- That our recent abstention from foreign investments has produced a larger accumulation in the country of unemployed floating and loanable capital than has perhaps ever been known.

The conclusion to which all these considerations lead us is, that just as the free trade system enabled us to take the utmost possible advantage of the period of prosperity, so it has enabled us to meet the phase of reaction and adversity with less strain on our resources than any of the protected countries; and that any change in, or modification of, our commercial policy would prove in the highest degree inexpedient and disastrous. The present combination of low prices and of abundant capital warrant the expectation that before long there will be a movement towards higher values. As soon as this occurs, business operations will become more profitable, capital will regain confidence and circulate more freely, commerce will resume its activity, and we shall enter on a fresh cycle of prosperous years. Such periodical oscillations in trade are of never-failing recurrence, and we ought by this time to be prepared for them. But instead of this, when business is brisk and flourishing, we act as if high prices and large profits were the normal condition of trade; while, when prices fall and profits vanish and the "depression" comes on, we sink into gloom and despair, fancy that things never were so bad before, that "this time" trade is past all recovery, and we clutch at any quack nostrum as a "kill or cure" remedy. This same thing has happened every ten years on an average since the commencement of the century, and there is no merchant with some experience who does not remember within his own time two or three "crises," each of them being "the worst that ever before occurred." These alternations are, in regard to their frequency, duration, and intensity, subject to certain laws which it would be useful to study and bear in mind. It may safely be predicted, for instance, that a cycle of prosperous years will be of shorter or longer duration according to the steadiness or the precipitancy of the upward movement. The swifter the pace at which, and the greater the height to which, prices are driven up, the greater will be the corresponding reaction, and the sooner it will occur. The more moderate the rate of progress, the longer will it be before we experience a check, and the less violent will that be when it does come.

But, no doubt, the lessons which we are thus taught will soon be forgotten or unheeded, and when the time of excitement comes, each one of us will push and press on with all his might until prices reach their climax, when reaction will ensue, and another period will supervene of loss, depression, and gloom, similar to that through which we have been passing, and from which we hope and believe that we shall before long emerge.

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The Reciprocity Craze.

A Tract for the Times.

By George W. Medley.

Cobden Club logo CASELL, PETTER, GALPIN & CO.: *London, Paris & New York*. 1881.

Contents.

The Reciprocity Craze.

I. Introduction.

FOR some time past incessant attacks have been made on our Free Trade policy. At first these attacks were made doubtingly, hesitatingly; but lately, speakers and writers have become emboldened, the banner of "Protection to Native Industry" has once more been unfurled, and the air resounds with cries for "Reciprocity or Retaliation." This is an astonishing phenomenon to those who understand and appreciate what Free Trade has done, and is doing, for this country. The most striking feature about the agitation is, to their minds, its extraordinary inopportuneness; the time chosen for it being just that moment when the clouds of depression are dispersing, and we seem to be once more floating on the rising wave of prosperity. We have now had thirty-five years' experience of Free Trade, with their ups and downs of inflation and depression. In the course of these years we have witnessed all sorts of political and social changes. We have seen the overthrow of dynasties, the uprising of peoples, and wars waged on an unprecedented scale. Railways and telegraphs have obviated to a great extent the inconveniences of distance and time. Great perturbations in the standard of value have occurred, the gold discoveries at first causing a general rise in prices. Of late years, however, an increasing demand for the metal, and a diminishing supply, accompanied by a partial demonetisation of silver, have caused a disturbance of values in the opposite direction of a general fall in prices. During all these years, England alone among the nations has maintained a system of free ports, the only changes in her fiscal policy being in the direction of greater freedom, while other nations, such as the United States, France, and Germany, have raised round themselves the barriers of prohibitory tariffs. With one exception, every conceivable economical condition that could constitute a test of the principles and practice of Free Trade has occurred, the one condition untried being universal Free Trade. In these circumstances, and with all this varied experience, one would suppose that there was not much room for differences of opinion as to the results achieved, and as to our national condition at the end of the ordeal. Yet, from what is passing around, we cannot but see that extreme divergences exist. While, on the one hand, the Free Trader contemplates with satisfaction the position which his country has attained by her commercial policy, and appeals with confidence to the facts which abound on every side, and which, to his mind, verify to the fullest the theories he has embraced; on the other we find a school of neo-protectionists lamenting what seems to them to be the decadence of their country, and appealing also to facts which appear to them to bear out their views. But, the most astounding thing is, that some of the very same facts which are appealed to by one party as evidence of our abounding prosperity, are held up by the other as the certain proofs of our decay! A crucial example of this is to be found in the various conclusions drawn from the figures which appear in our Board of Trade Returns under the head of "Imports and Exports." The views of the writer upon this and other cognate subjects are, of course, those of the Free Trader. They are set forth in the following chapters in a manner which, it is hoped, will be sufficiently clear. They may perhaps aid the candid inquirer in a search for the truth, and tend to dissipate the "craze."

II. Imports and Exports.

"Pons Asinorum."

THE fact that year after year the money value of our imports vastly exceeds the money value of our exports, and that this excess tends to increase is, to many minds, not only a puzzle, but a rock of offence, and a cause of alarm. To those, however, who are acquainted with the facts and circumstances which cause this excess, nothing can seem more absurd than the feeling which has been aroused, and the conclusions which have been drawn. The absurdity will be made abundantly clear as we proceed.

But, I must here warn the reader that he will have to master what I have to say under this head, for it constitutes the "Pons Asinorum" of the Free Trade question. If he passes this "pons," he will find himself among the Free Traders on the other side. If not, he must be numbered among the Neo-Protectionists, who seem to be utterly unable to pass over it. This is what they cannot get over:—They point to the Board of Trade returns for 1880, which show that we imported £411,000,000 worth of commodities, and exported only £286,000,000 worth; and this they call a balance of trade against us of £125,000,000; and from this fact they

draw such deductions as these : that this balance is a loss to the country; that John Bull *buys* £411,000,000 of goods from the foreigner, and *sells* him only £286,000,000 worth; that, consequently, the foreigner has the best of the trade; that he is draining away all John Bull's wealth; that the latter is getting poorer and poorer; that if the system goes on it must end in his ruin; and that this is the outcome of the one-sided Free Trade now existing. And then they give vent in their agony to such cries as "Protection to Native Industry," "Reciprocity or Retaliation." Here are some of their utterances:—

The Quarterly Review, July 1881, p. 293.—"In 1846 our imports amounted to little more than 74 million; in 1850, when Sir Robert Peel died, they reached 100½ millions. Last year they were valued at 410 millions. Did Sir Robert Peel ever dream of such an import trade as this? If he did, it is most probable he saw in his dreams our exports approaching the same standard if not exceeding it, and that such a balance sheet as the following never rose up before his mind's eye:—

This excess, according to the writers we have quoted, represents the sum by which we have grown more wealthy in 1880 than we were in 1879. Is it possible that any one with a mind capable of comprehending facts and their meaning can really believe it?"

Ib. p. 288.—To buy more than we sell, and to make that not a mere accident of our trade but its permanent condition—the end above all others to be sought for and desired—this, according to the economists is a most excellent thing for the country. Practical men who look at such matters from a strictly-business point of view, come to a different conclusion. They hold that we cannot persevere in this system without plunging the country into disaster.

. . . As one authority (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, M.P., 27th June, 1878) puts it, 'the magnitude of our import trade, so far from being a matter for alarm, is evidence of the greatness of our resources and the stability of our position.' This is one of the most blundering and most mischievous of the delusions which have helped to blind a portion of the people to the true state of their affairs."

Sir Edward Sullivan, Bart., *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1881. p. 171.—" It [Isolated Free Trade] has enabled foreigners to flood our markets with cheap, and often nasty manufactured goods." "It has increased the balance of trade against us, till it has reached the alarming figure of £136,000,000." P. 176.—" In the face of these facts we are warranted in again asking our economic philosophers how we are to continue to find money to purchase foreign food. The food question is at the bottom of our commercial troubles; we are buying food from abroad faster than we are making money to pay for it. But of course this cannot last. Until the immense and increasing excess of imports over exports, is considerably diminished, there can be no return of general prosperity. We may for a time draw upon our capital and our accumulated wealth, but for how long? If we cannot get as much for our goods as we are compelled to pay for foreign food, the deluge must be at hand."

Nothing can be more clear and distinct than the issues which these statements raise. I shall at once address myself to them, merely remarking, in passing, that under the head of "Two Neo-Protectionists," I shall have to make further reference to the articles from which I have quoted.

The first thing that strikes one regarding these utterances is this—that the bare fact of our imports being larger than our exports is held by these writers to constitute in itself a great and growing evil. According to them it is a self-evident proposition, the mere propounding of which ought to carry conviction to every mind. And on this idea their whole argument seems to be based. They leave out of account everything but the bare fact that our imports exceed our exports! They leave out of account such matters as the following:—Our shipping receipts, insurance, interest, merchants' profits, and, last not least, the income we derive from our foreign investments! Let us try to make a rough estimate of these "unconsidered trifles."

As regards shipping, we possessed in 1880 56 per cent, of the world's ocean carrying power; assuming that the average of freight is about 10 per cent, *ad valorem*, and our combined export and import trade is about 700 millions, our receipts under this head may be put down at 40 million; but to this must be added the receipts for our inter-foreign and inter-colonial trade, and the receipts from passenger traffic. I do not think 45 millions a high figure to set down as our total shipping receipts. Mulhall, in his "Balance Sheet of the World," p. 44, puts them down at £51,920,000.

Then comes insurance. An average of ½ per cent, on our total trade gives £3,500,000.

Next comes interest. If we take the moderate sum of 100 millions as employed in our foreign trade, 5 per cent, gives us 5 millions.

Next come merchants' profits. Say 2½ per cent, on the 700 millions: this gives us 17½ millions.

Lastly, take foreign investments. The *Economist*, of March 5th last, quoting from the "Bankers' Magazine," puts these down as yielding over 55 million per annum.

What is the total of these items?

Which means simply this—that before England has to exchange a pound's worth of her own products for a pound's worth of foreign products, she has to receive annually, in some shape or other, over 100 million pounds from the foreigner!

And thus bursts the bubble of our adverse balance of trade! The balance, if there be such a thing, seems to be the other way! And it must be the other way.

It is a matter of common knowledge, or ought to be, that year by year, on the whole, the world grows more and more indebted to us. Year by year we have more and more of the world's obligations in our strong box.

The fallacy under which our Neo-Protectionists labour lies in the terms "buying of the foreigner," "selling to the foreigner."

They fancy that our imports are what we "buy" and our exports what we "sell;" and, that as there is an excess of the former there is a balance of trade against us, which, somehow or other, out of our wealth, we have to liquidate, and that this process impoverishes the country.

But, as I have shown, there is no balance to liquidate, so there can be no impoverishment; and so their argument is exploded.

But, let us for a moment look at their supposition in another light. Why should the bare fact of our importing 411 millions of commodities in exchange for 286 millions be held, *ipso facto*, to involve a loss?

To get in more than one gives out seems, *primâ facie*, to ordinary minds, the only way of making a profit! It cannot be pretended that Great Britain stood indebted at the end of 1880 for the excess of imports. There can be no doubt that at that period the world was as much, if not more, indebted to her than at the end of 1879.

But 1880 does not stand alone in its excess of imports. The same thing has gone on for the last thirty-five years. In 1856 the excess was 43 million; in 1880 this figure, with interruptions, had risen to 125 millions. Let me ask, out of what fund have we liquidated all these supposed adverse balances?

Then let me ask, what would our Neo-Protectionists say if the products of our industry were annually exported to the extent of 411 millions, and we received back from the foreigner only 286 million worth in exchange?

Look at the question in yet another light. How can it be otherwise than that our imports should exceed in value our exports? If a merchant export £100 worth of goods, and in exchange for them imports goods worth only £100, he must make a dead loss under the heads of freight, insurance, interest, and profits.

How can it be otherwise?

Let us suppose the goods cost him £100 at Liverpool. He exports them to some foreign country, and, of course, has to pay freight and insurance. Let us say this comes to 10 per cent. On arrival at the foreign market the goods must therefore be worth £110. They must be sold, of course, and let us suppose the proceeds re-invested in goods for importation here. Again comes in the charge for freight, another 10 per cent., which, added to the £110, makes the goods worth £121 on arrival at our ports, independently of interest on the money used, and what the merchant may lay on as profit.

And so the £100 of exports comes back as £121 at least, of imports, and must do so as long as trade is carried on.

And, on this showing, what becomes of complaints founded on the bare fact of our imports exceeding our exports, such as—

That the balance of trade is against us!

That we are being ruined!

That Free Trade is a complete failure!

And now, with reference to this last assertion, let us for a few moments contemplate some of the facts and figures which the records of the last quarter of a century afford us.

I will first take the figures of the years 1870 to 1880, as comprising the latest periods of inflation and depression; then I will take in the whole period from 1854 to 1880, 1854 being the earliest year for which I possess the statistics. Now, what have we done between 1870 and 1880?

The Board of Trade returns record our

Did we pay away any gold for this excess? Let us see

The returns show that in these years

A result achieved during an unprecedented demand for gold throughout the world, owing to the currency requirements of the United States, Germany, Holland, and other states.

This ought to stagger our Neo-Protectionists; but if not I have yet another factor to bring into our calculation, and that is our foreign loan and investment account.

Having no official records to refer to, I can only make a rough estimate as to the probable balance of our transactions in this respect during the period in question.

In this time probably 500 millions of foreign loans were floated in London; and supposing that we took one-half of these, besides purchasing enormous amounts of United States securities, and investing in all sorts of industrial enterprises abroad, I do not think we should be very far from the mark if we put down the figure at which we have made the world our debtor during these eleven years as 350 millions. How will John Bull's external balance-sheet for these years then stand?

And in the face of these facts we are asked to believe that we are plunging yearly into disaster !

The figures of the last twenty-seven years are still more startling.

The totals for these twenty-seven years are:—

The bullion records before me show that from 1860 to 1880 inclusive, we imported, on balance, £83,000,000, or at the rate of about four million a year. I have no figures for previous years, but we may reckon, from common knowledge, that as from 1854 to 1859 gold flowed into this country in greater quantities, and remained here in larger quantities than since, probably eight million a year remained here on balance; so that for the whole twenty-seven years we probably retained £131,000,000 of it.

We will now look at the foreign loan and investment account for this period.

As before stated, we receive by way of interest an annual sum of fifty-five millions.

This capitalised at 4½ per cent, makes over 1,200 millions. And assuming that during the period in question we acquired only one-half of these bonds, &c., the account will stand thus for John Bull:—

In the course of these twenty-seven years, therefore, we seem to have got hold of the world's products to the amount stated for less than nothing; for, besides getting these products, we have actually acquired a vast sum in money, and have also induced every civilised nation on earth to give us I O U's., amounting in the aggregate to at least 600 million sterling! And, with these facts in our possession, we cannot but see that all the talk we hear about "buying more than we sell" and "our adverse balance of trade" is nothing but arrant nonsense; and that it is not the Free Traders, but the Neo-Protectionists, who cherish "blundering and mischievous delusions."

III. One-Sided Free Trade.

HAVING safely passed our "pons" we will now, by the help of what this has taught us, examine what our Neo-Protectionists call One-sided Free Trade.

I hold it to mean that while every nation has a free sale for its products in our home markets, we are excluded more or less from some of the great markets of the world by hostile and prohibitory tariffs. This is the truth, but the inferences and conclusions drawn therefrom by our Neo-Protectionists are as false and absurd as their notions about our adverse balance of trade.

They suppose that Great Britain is the principal if not the only sufferer from this state of things; and they assert that while Protection is advancing the prosperity of other countries, Free Trade is destroying ours.

Free Traders deny these propositions, and, on the contrary, affirm that Free Trade has been, and is, a source of vast prosperity, and an unmitigated blessing to the country, and that Protection has been, and is, a source of loss to those countries which have established it

Let us now see what we, as a nation, have done under our one-sided Free Trade.

First, let us try and understand the meaning of the com-plaint that every nation has a free sale for its products in our home markets. From the terms used, it must be evident that every nation which produces anything, and wishes to sell it to us, has to compete with every other nation wishing to do the same thing. It is therefore impossible for us to get the commodities we want cheaper than we do through this universal competition.

No other nation enjoys the advantages which flow from this state of things. We find constantly that commodities are cheaper here than in the countries which produce them. The poor among us are thus enabled to fight the battle of life on the most favourable terms possible. Our labourers are thus fed, housed, and clothed, as cheaply as possible. They are thus enabled to produce cheaply, more cheaply than any other workers; so cheaply that they have become the dread of every Protectionist nation:—so cheaply that *ad valorem* duties of 50 to 200 per cent on their productions are inadequate to keep them out of Protectionist markets; so cheaply, that we almost monopolise, as a matter of cheapness, every neutral market; so cheaply that we have managed to obtain nearly five-eighths of the world's ocean carrying trade, and are daily driving out of employment such of the remaining vessels as belong to Protectionist nations.

Our one-sided Free Trade has done all this for us, at all events. And no Protectionist nation can divest us of what we have thus got. And of the advantages we enjoy we cannot be deprived except in one way—by other nations becoming also Free Traders.

It must be clear, that so far as our one side goes, it is a very good side, and cannot be improved. Ought we not to be extremely careful how we touch it? I am going to ask presently why we should touch it? The Neo-Protectionist would probably say, "because we want to get the other side also."

Are we quite sure this other side will be as good as that we have? I doubt it.

The complaint is that by hostile tariffs, our productions are excluded from the principal markets of the world. This is true, and on cosmopolitan grounds, and in the interests of humanity, this state of things is to be regretted. But we are not now considering the interests of humanity, we are trying to see how we can advance the particular interests of Great Britain.

There are good reasons for supposing that the existing state of things is not to be regretted by us from the selfish national point of view.

I am not sure, as some are, that Great Britain would in the long run be a gainer by universal Free Trade, and I now start this as a question worthy of calm discussion.

If universal Free Trade existed, its vital and energetic principle, division of labour, would, of course, have full play, and mankind would by its means achieve the maximum of production at the minimum of cost

I am not quite certain that, as a nation, we should, under it, be absolutely, or comparatively, as well off as we are now.

Let us for a moment imagine all hostile tariffs suddenly abolished.

Has any one ever seriously considered the possible effects, immediate, and remote, which might arise?

Among them would be:—

- A sudden and vast demand for labour at home.
- A sudden and a great increase in wages.
- A rapid increase in the number of our factories, work-shops, mills, furnaces, &c.
- A rampant speculation in everything connected with trade and manufactures.
- A general rise in prices distressful to those with fixed incomes.
- A rush of population from home and abroad to our manufacturing centres.
- A stimulus given to marriage and population.
- A demoralisation of our labouring classes.
- Strikes for an increase of wages.
- The culmination of the foregoing.
- The beginning of a reaction owing to the commencement of foreign competition.
- The commencement of a fall in prices.
- Labour disputes, and strikes against the fall.
- Progress of the fall in prices.
- Failures of mill owners and manufacturers; closing of mills and factories, and blowing out of furnaces.
- Labourers thrown out of employment, and consequent increase of pauperism and crime.
- Extreme depression takes place.
- The usual healing courses have to be followed.
- After some years of suffering things settle down pretty much as they were.

All this is based on the sudden opening of foreign ports. A gradual opening would, of course, modify the process, but the ultimate result would not be different. One of the results which would most probably happen is, that our population might be increased by two or three millions more than it otherwise would be. But then several questions arise, such as:—"Would the nation then be absolutely or comparatively better off?"

Free Trade introduced into Protectionist countries would disorganise their industries—ruin some of them—and cause a general displacement of capital and labour. Effects the converse of those described as happening with us would take place with them. At last a basis would be found. Then would arise everywhere a real and keen competition with us. Is it quite certain we should come out of it victorious? Take such industries as these: Our cotton and wool manufactures, our iron manufactures, our ocean-carrying trade.

The United States grow cotton, and in Alabama this cotton is adjacent to the iron and coal which are produced there and in the neighbouring states. Would our cotton lords and ironmasters view with equanimity the contest with our cousins which would commence on the morrow of the opening of their ports? It might turn out that these cousins might find out some way of making cotton goods and iron as cheap as, or cheaper than, we can. If the competition of foreigners be keen now, notwithstanding the weight they carry in the shape of enhanced cost of production, arising out of Protectionist tariffs, what would it be should the weight be removed? What would become of our shipbuilding and ocean-carrying trade? What would become of our trade with the States? What would become of us in neutral markets? What would become of us in our own markets?

At present, as regards cheapness of production, we stand supreme everywhere in all these things. Protection, in this respect, handicaps and kills our competitors. Free Trade would breathe life into them. I say, therefore, speaking selfishly as an Englishman, we had better remain as we are, and "let sleeping dogs lie."

But I want to know what it is our Neo-Protectionists have to lay at the door of Free Trade, even one-sided Free Trade.

Let us do a little more national stock-taking, for there is no other way of seeing how we get on.

Under the head "Imports and Exports," I gave figures which show the grand external results of our one-sided free trade. Let us now look at our internal condition, and see whether we can recognise any moral and material progress.

Let us take—1. Population. 2. Pauperism. 3. Crime. 4. Education. 5. Thrift. 6. Bankruptcy. 7. Taxation. 8. National Debt. 9. Banking. 10. Railways. 11. Agriculture.

I.—POPULATION.

There is nothing discouraging here, surely. During the last ten years 3,275,000 persons, nearly 900 a day, have been added to our population, notwithstanding emigration, and a protracted agricultural and trade depression.

What is the economical condition of this population?

The following tables will indicate this:—

Years. Exports. Per head of Population. Imports. Per head of Population. Excess of Imports per head. £ s. d.
£ s. d. £ s. d. 1854 115,821,092 4 3 7 152,389.053 5 10 2 1 6 7 1860 164,521,351 5 14 4 210,530,873 7 7 0 1 12
8 1870 244,080,577 7 16 5 303,257,493 9 14 4 1 17 11 1880 286,414,466 8 6 1 411,229,565 11 18 7 3 12 6

Bearing in mind what was said under "Imports and Exports," a glance at this table shows that, fast as our population has increased, its command of wealth, and purchasing power in the world's markets has increased still faster; and that they exercised this power may be seen by the following table, which shows the consumption per head of population of some of those articles which our working classes consume most:—

CONSUMPTION PER HEAD OF POPULATION OF IMPORTED AND EXCISEABLE ARTICLES.

Imported only, and exclusive of native. 1870. 1875. 1880. Bacon lbs.... 1.98... 8.26... 15.96
Butter... 4.15... 4.92... 7.42 Cheese... 3.67... 5.46... 5.66 Potatoes... 2.80... 16.05... 31.63
Wheat... 122.90... 197.08... 210.42 Rice... 6.74... 11.68... 14.14 Sugar (raw)... 41.40... 53.97... 54.22 Sugar
(refined)... 5.83... 8.88... 9.46 Tea Spirits imported and excisable gals. ... 3.81... 4.44... 4.59 1.01... 1.30... 1.09 Malt
(British) bushels... 1.84... 1.95... 1.65 (1879)

Now let us take pauperism.

2.—PAUPERISM.

These tables also tell their own tale, we see:—

1. That while agriculture remains depressed, trade is reviving, the figures for 1880 and 1881 for England and Wales bringing the fact into strong relief; 2, that as while in 1870 this part of the kingdom had a million of paupers to support, in 1881 it has only 800,000, although the population has in the meantime increased 3,340,000, a marvellous proof of progress; 3, that we appear to be once more embarked on the rising wave of prosperity as a trading and manufacturing nation. Let us now turn to our criminal statistics.

3.—CRIME.

Do these figures require a word of comment? Let us now turn to the matter of education.

4.—EDUCATION.

We thus see that while the material condition of our population has steadily improved, their moral and intellectual condition has also advanced in a remarkable degree.

One of the signs of improvement is in the matter of thrift. Take the Savings' Bank figures:—

5.—THRIFT.

6.—BANKRUPTCY.

In 1879 insolvencies were in number 13,132, and in amount £29,678,000.

In 1880 the insolvencies were in number 10,298, and in amount £16,188,000.

7. TAXATION.

8.—NATIONAL DEBT.

Let us now take Banking and the Clearing House returns:—

9.—BANKING.

Do any of these figures give one an idea of decay?

Let us now look at our Railway traffics:—

10.—RAILWAYS.

Here again we have to notice the effects of the depression, and the indication of a fresh start, which the figures of 1880 afford. There is one thing, however, to be noted. Considering that since 1875 some 1,300 miles of comparatively unproductive lines have been built, we cannot but see that an enormous advance in the general prosperity has taken place in this department also.

Let us now take a few figures from our agricultural statistics:—

11.—AGRICULTURE.

Here is the one bad exhibit in the national balance-sheet. Bad as these figures are, however, they do not, at first sight, convey any idea of the disastrous years, 1877, 1878, and 1879.

To obtain anything like a correct notion of the circumstances, it must be borne in mind that an almost total failure of crops, especially in 1879, was accompanied by very low market prices. The result was disastrous to the agricultural interest, and to every other interest which depended on it.

Landlords had to forego their rents. Farmers lost a great portion of their capital. Manufacturers lost the home markets. All this constituted our agricultural, and helped to constitute our commercial, depression.

Our working classes, however, owing to the bountiful harvests of America, were fed more cheaply than ever. And this has been, commercially and economically speaking, the salvation of the country.

I speak, of course, of the nation as a whole. Certain interests have suffered, and are suffering. The agricultural interest, and the manufacturing and commercial interests which depend on it, have suffered, and are still suffering, from the combined influences of bad harvests and low prices. But, large and important as these interests are, they cannot be allowed to outweigh the interests of the whole community.

As we have seen from all these facts and figures, it is quite possible that important interests may suffer, and yet that the community as a whole may be prospering. No Free Trader denies, or wishes to deny, that certain interests have suffered.

What the Free Trader asserts is that the nation as a whole is prosperous and thriving, and that the proofs abound on every side. The Neo-Protectionists deny this; but, in seeking to prove their case, they do not appeal to facts as a whole, but pick and choose those which appear to bear out their contention.

The facts, however, which they bring forward never do more than show that some particular interest or class is suffering, and this no one is concerned to deny; their facts never prove that the nation, as a whole, is suffering. In truth, every fact proves that the nation, as a whole, is very prosperous.

As a matter of course, the classes which suffer call out for relief. Agriculturists agitate for "Protection." Manufacturers clamour for "Reciprocity." I will discuss these matters in the following chapter.

IV. "Reciprocity or Retaliation."

THIS is now the battle-cry of our Neo-Protectionists. They maintain that if foreigners keep out our products by hostile tariffs, we should threaten to do the same with theirs.

One of two things must happen : they will either open their ports, and we shall then have Reciprocity, or we shall close ours, and we shall then have Retaliation.

I have already discussed what might be the outcome of Reciprocity, that is free trade, to ourselves as a nation.

As regards the world at large, all are agreed upon the benefits that would ensue from an adoption of Free Trade. But, we might be driven to Retaliation, and that involves many important considerations which our Neo-Protectionists steadily keep out of view.

Let us look at some of these.

Let us assume that all the difficulties which might arise from "the most favoured nation" clause in existing treaties are obviated, and Retaliation pure and simple set up.

We should find ourselves in a most absurd and anomalous position.

Pray observe that when I use the terms "we," "us," "our," I mean the nation, the community, and not any particular class composing it. The distinction is an important one, but our Neo-Protectionists steadily ignore it. In discussing these questions it is found convenient by them, according to the exigencies of their argument, to use ambiguously the terms "we," and "us," and "our." When they use these terms, what is in their minds is, *some class and Us supposed particular interests*; which they would have you identify with *the nation and its general interests*—two things which may be diametrically opposed.

For this purpose "we" and "our" are convenient ambiguities.

The absurd and anomalous position in which we—that is the nation—should find ourselves is this:—The facts and figures I have adduced prove to demonstration that under the existing system of what our Neo-Protectionists are pleased to call one-sided Free Trade, and by means of it we, as manufacturers, and traders, have attained a position in the world which is at once the admiration, the envy, and, commercially

speaking, the terror of competing nations; yet, because some of our interests suffer from time to time in the fierce competition which has been engendered; and without pausing for a moment to estimate what benefits this same competition may in other respects have conferred on these very interests, they call in question our Free Trade policy; they deny or ignore the results which it has attained for us; and the nation is counselled to reverse that policy.

Each suffering interest has its noisy organs, its irresponsible chatterers. The agriculturist organs suggest duties on grain, but never hint at duties on other products. The manufacturing organs clamour for protective duties on the foreign products which compete with their own, but scout the notion of taxes on the food of the people, or on the raw material they use. Each one wants his own industry protected, while anxious that freedom shall rule in every other department.

It never seems to strike them that if Protection be once started, it must be extended to all commodities, and embrace all interests. It never seems to strike them that to protect one interest to the exclusion of the rest, is to commit a gross injustice. It never seems to occur to them that the interests, or supposed interests, of a class may be incompatible with, or opposed to, the interests of the community; and that when this is the case, it is just and politic that the latter should prevail. They never seem to truly estimate such an elementary proposition as this : that however large and numerous a class may be, it forms only a part, and is not the whole of a nation.

Tried by these tests, what becomes of the cries which occasionally arise from some interest which may from time to time suffer from the universal competition, while the general progress of the nation is one onward march in the path of wealth and prosperity?

The largest, the most important interest among us is agriculture. If any interest could claim protection as a matter of justice or policy, it is this. But, it was seen that to protect agriculture would be injurious to the general interest, and on this ground the Corn Laws were abolished.

The reasons which hold against Protection to agriculture apply with tenfold force to other and minor interests. If these interests clash with those of the community they must give way. There is no other possible method of attaining to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. And on no other ground can a Free Trader argue the question as regards Retaliation, or whatever form Protection may take; whatever net gain it might bring to a class, the loss to the community would be much larger.

It must be contrary to the general interest that the price of any commodity should be artificially raised. To raise prices is, on the one hand, injurious to producers by checking consumption, and thus diminishing the demand for the article produced, and for the labour which produces it; while on the other hand, it is injurious to the consumer, in forcing him either to pay more for, or to consume less of, the article of which he stands in need.

To diminish production is to diminish our industry, our trade, and our commerce, and thus to impoverish ourselves and the rest of the world.

It is the interest of the community that the keenest competition should reign, so that energy, enterprise, and invention shall have full play, and shall work for the benefit of ourselves and the rest of mankind. Protection dulls and stifles these beneficent forces, and its inevitable tendency is to bring about the minimum of production at the maximum of cost. And on this ground it stands utterly condemned.

V. Two Neo-Protectionists.

- A Quarterly Reviewer, July, 1881.
- Sir Edward Sullivan, Bart., *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1881.

UNDER the head of "Imports and Exports" I have given a few extracts from two of the latest Protectionist utterances. I here take the opportunity of making a few comments on some of the facts relied on, and the conclusions drawn, in these two diatribes against Free Trade.

Let the reader turn to p. 7, *supra*; let him note the figures there given in a little calculation of three lines, and let him attentively consider the deductions which the Quarterly Reviewer draws from them, and the idea which he would give us of Sir Robert Peel's possible "dreams." First, as to his figures. What can be the writer's qualifications for discoursing on British Trade? He does not seem to know or comprehend the meaning of "re-exports of foreign and colonial produce." If he did, he would not have made the egregious blunder of leaving out this item, which amounts to 63 millions. He makes out that the excess of our imports last year was 187 millions, but as he has taken no account of commodities merely passing through our ports, he overstates this excess by 63 millions! Next, as to what Sir Robert Peel would have thought of a state of affairs which does not exist. If Sir Robert had lived in our day, and were as ignorant as this writer is, he might express alarm as this writer does, at the magnitude of our import trade. But Sir Robert had some acquaintance with the subject, and would not have been oblivious, or regardless, as this writer is, of the fact that Great Britain does more than half the world's ocean carrying trade, and that she has interest to receive on her foreign investments besides

other trifles of this sort; and that before she need do any bargaining as to her exports or imports, she has to receive from creation, by way of interest on loans, &c., and for work and labour done, in money, or in kind, considerably over 100 millions of pounds sterling a year! No wonder a writer in *The Times* money article cites this blunder as "a measure of the intelligence of the new reciprocitarians."

Now for an instance of "hopeless muddle." In p. 291 of his article, the Quarterly Reviewer makes a kind of effort to explain how poor indebted England discharges this (according to him and his school) annually increasing adverse balance of trade. He says:—"We have about 2,000 millions invested in American and other foreign bonds, and with this we are paying for a large part of the difference between our imports and our exports. We are constantly told that gold is disappearing, and we know that instead of being an importer of the precious metal we are now obliged to export it. The theorists who uphold the wonderful dogma just referred to are lost in wonder over the 'drain of gold,' and are always asking someone to tell them what becomes of it. It goes towards the payment of our debts—that is the heart of the mystery. But this explanation does not satisfy the economists, and we find them, in despite of all evidence and reason, clinging hard and fast to an exploded delusion of an effete school, concocted during a period essentially different in all respects from the present." These are strong words. Let us look at them a little closer. He says we are paying our debts by selling our American and other foreign bonds. Indeed! If so, when did the process commence? There is not a single year, for the last twenty years, in which our imports have not exceeded our exports by at least 50 millions, the amount of the excess in the aggregate being something like 1,500 millions. And yet, at the end of this period, which comprises more than half the Free Trade epoch, and during which the country is said to have been getting rapidly impoverished, he makes out that we have in our strong box 2,000 millions of the world's obligations! What can be this writer's idea of "evidence and reason?" Both flatly contradict him. How did we get these 2,000 millions of bonds? We must have got at least half of them during the last twenty years. But during this time we had imported on balance over 100 millions of bullion! How can we be getting in goods, bonds, and bullion from the rest of the world, owing nobody anything, and at one and the same time be impoverishing ourselves? But, he makes some obscure reference to a "drain of gold." Coupling this with his idea of our paying away our American and other bonds, I think I can pluck out what he calls "the heart of the mystery." It is matter of common knowledge that from 1877 to 1879, three years, European harvests were deficient and American harvests plentiful. The harvest of Europe in 1879 was about the worst ever known. This state of things was good for the United States, and bad for Europe. The demand for corn was enormous; and as the United States had it to sell, they were enabled to turn it into money, and with the proceeds to do two most important things. They had outstanding a debt on which they were paying 5 and 6 per cent, and they were suffering under an inconvertible currency. During the nine years 1871—9 they had exported on balance £76,084,000 in gold. Trade and commerce from 1873 to 1877 were extremely depressed, more depressed than with us; but in a moment all was changed. By means of the vast supplies of grain they exported and sold to Europe, they were enabled to pay off a considerable portion of their debt, to reduce the interest on the remainder, and to establish their currency on a metallic basis. The process adopted was to call in their bonds; and to buy gold in the markets of the world, as Italy, for a similar object, is now doing. Some of these bonds were held by us, some by other nations; we paid for them when we bought them years before, and we got money or money's worth when we parted with them. As to the gold, some gold went away—not more than we could easily spare, seeing that with an increased volume of business money remains at from 2 to per cent. In 1880-1 the United States imported on balance £18,500,000 in gold; but while Free Trading England exported it to the extent of two to three millions Protectionist France exported six or seven millions. I attach no importance to this fact, however, I only use it as an *argumentum ad hominem*; for gold, like everything else, is a commodity, and tends to go where it is most wanted, and can be paid for. All that happened amounted to this, that America, by the extraordinary coincidence of her possessing three abundant harvests, while Europe suffered under three deficient ones, was enabled to pay off some of her debt, to reduce the interest on the remainder, and to put her currency on a metallic basis. All this should have been within the ken of a writer who lays claim to "a mind capable of comprehending facts," and who sets himself up as an instructor on the Free Trade question. But, all is ignored, and we are made to carry away a dim sort of idea that, in order to pay our way under our Free Trade system, we are selling our bonds, and are being drained of our gold; a state of things which only exists in the minds of such writers as this Quarterly Reviewer.

And now for another passage of his, p. 289:—"Again, if we look at the United States where Mr. Bright has so often told us to look, we shall find that their exports for the year ending June, 1881, exceeded their imports by £54,000,000. This ought to mean that the Americans are getting poorer, if they are not actually approaching bankruptcy; but they by no means regard it in that light. They like Mr. Bright's praises of their country, at the expense of his own, but they will not have his teaching at any price, and consequently they will go on exporting more than they import as long as good fortune enables them to do so. Then there is France, she also should have been sinking deeper and deeper in the slough of despond, for in her case also the exports exceed the imports."

This statement about France is astounding! It is absolutely contrary to fact. In 1880 France, according to the returns, imported in excess 63 millions; in 1879, 57 millions; and in 1878, 43 millions. France is now, and has been for the last five years, an importer on balance, and her annual excess imports are rapidly mounting.

Very severe things might be said of such a blunder as this, but I pass on to his notions about the United States excess of exports, which, by the way, was not 54 millions but 52 millions, for the year ending in June last. His notion that the wealth of the United States, and the virtues of protection, are proved by this excess of exports is one worthy of the Neo-Protectionist school, and "a measure of their intelligence." Is our Quarterly Reviewer ignorant, or is he oblivious, of the fact that the United States are largely indebted to Europe, and have to pay a large annual tribute to Europe, in money, or in kind, by way of interest on that debt; and that they have scarcely any ocean-carrying trade? Is he ignorant, or oblivious, of the fact that thousands of absentees, and travellers, who come over here from the States, have to remit to Europe, in one shape or other, the expenses which they incur? Let us endeavour roughly to estimate what these three items amount to. 1.

Indebtedness.—Let us say the States owe Europe 500 millions; 5 per cent on this makes 25 million a year for them to pay annually. 2. Shipping.—Owing to blessed Protection—poor one-sided Free Trading England does most of this business for them. They had not a single ocean grain-ship floating last year, and they carried only 17½ per cent, of their foreign commerce. Their export and import trade amounted to 309 millions. Let us suppose for a moment that on 82½ per cent, of this they paid 5 per cent, for freight; this would make 12¾ millions more to pay. Then there is the item of passenger fares across the Atlantic, to and fro. Let us say half a million for this. 3. What shall we put down for the 10,000 absentees, and travellers, who flock to Europe every year, and some of whom are among the richest men in the world? Shall we say an average of £300? This would give us 3 millions more. There may be other items for works of art, jewellery, &c., but of them I will take no account, so we will now sum up.

So that before the States can commence to talk about exchanging a dollar's worth of their own products for a dollar's worth of foreign products, they have to pay over to Europe, in money or in kind, no less a sum than 40 million sterling!

No wonder their exports exceed their imports! What ignorance, what folly, does it not betray, therefore, to build up an argument in favour of Protection, and against Free Trade, on the bare figures which appear in trade returns! In the next chapter the reader will find the true deductions which may be drawn from them.

Now for Sir Edward Sullivan in the *Nineteenth Century*. On page 8, *supra*, will be found two passages from his article, "Isolated Free Trade," to which I would again refer the reader. They, and some further extracts which I shall make, betray the fatuous ignorance concerning "imports and exports," which is the characteristic of the whole school of Neo-Protectionists. They all have the same notions about "foreigners flooding our markets with cheap and often nasty manufactured goods;" the same idea of "Free Trade increasing the balance of trade against us till it has reached the alarming figure of £136,000,000;" the same notion that we are "drawing upon our capital and our accumulated wealth."

But, there are other choice morsels which I must transcribe verbatim:—"The cloud that threatens the industrial existence of England has been gathering and intensifying for six years. 'Who,' asks Mr. Bright triumphantly, 'dare now propose a return to Protection?' 'Who,' it may be asked in return, 'amongst all the wise and acute and thoughtful men in enlightened Europe and America, dare now propose the adoption of Free Trade?' Not one; absolutely not one. After carefully watching the working of 'isolated' free trade in England for thirty years, they have unanimously, without a dissentient voice, rejected it as belonging to the puerile doctrines and illusions of mankind." "Practical thoughtful men are beginning to compare the prophecies and theories of free trade with the practical results, and they are aghast." "England is the only country in the world that has adopted what is called free trade, and England is the only country in the world that is retrograding in industrial prosperity." "Under protection America is accumulating annually £165,000,000. Under protection France is accumulating annually £75,000,000. Under Free Trade England is accumulating annually £65,000,000. Many experts maintain that since 1875—£76 she was losing money instead of accumulating. Protective America now exports more than she imports. Protective France imports annually £4,000,000 more than she exports. (The balance against her is £40,000,000 in ten years). Free trade England imports annually £130,000,000 more than she exports!"

Very few remarks are necessary on this farrago of reckless assertion and false inference.

It is not true that any cloud threatens the industrial existence of England, or that she is retrograding in industrial prosperity; facts abounding on every side point to the very opposite conclusion.

It is not true that wise, acute, and thoughtful men in Europe and America have unanimously, without a dissentient voice rejected Free Trade. I deny that any single "wise" man has done so, whatever any acute or thoughtful men—they are not necessarily wise—may have done. I deny that any but the merest sciolists are aghast at the practical results of Free Trade, for the simple reason that there is nothing in these results at which to be aghast. While, as to the prophecies which have been made as to the general acceptance of Free Trade by

the nations within a certain limited time, it may be conceded that the generous forecasts of its advocates have hitherto been unfulfilled. This, however, does not arise from the falsity of their doctrines, as the Protectionists would have it, but because of the prejudices and ignorance of men—such prejudices and ignorance for instance as these writers display—because of the existence of the self-same spirit which placed Galileo in prison for maintaining that the earth went round the sun; and which consigned Giordano Bruno to the flames for asserting that the world was round.

And now I have to ask Sir Edward Sullivan for his authority for the figures given by him as to the respective annual "accumulations" of America, France, and England, in which England with £65,000,000 is placed at the bottom of the list with the remark that "many experts maintain that since 1875-1876 she was losing money instead of accumulating."

I ask: who is his authority for such a statement?

Mr. Giffen, in one of his "Essays on Finance," 1878, puts down our "accumulations" for 1865—75 as 400,000,000, or £240,000,000 annually, and there is no reason for supposing that they have decreased since; the figures given under "One-Sided Free Trade" proving the contrary. If there be any "expert" to set against the chief of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, I should like to know who he is, and on what factors he bases his calculation.

Then I have to ask him who is his authority for the statement that "Protective France imports annually, £4,000,000 more than she exports;" and that "the balance against her is £40,000,000 in ten years?"

On taking up Martin's "Statesman's Year Book for 1881," I find that, for the ten years ending 1879—the last year given—the figures stand thus for her Imports and Exports:— But, there is last year, 1880, and I find that Mulhall in his "Balance Sheet of the World" puts down France's excess of imports for that year as 63 millions, which brings up the total excess for eleven years to 170 millions! In 1870, however, France exported on balance 3 millions, so that the fact is that France for the last ten years has imported on balance, on the average, 17 millions, not 4 millions! But, to stop here would be to give a very inadequate notion of what France is doing in the way of imports and exports, for I find that so that France, though Protectionist, is actually, according to our new school of writers, going down hill along with free trading England!

But does it not seem extraordinary that in the face of these figures we should be given to understand that France imports annually only £4,000,000 more than she exports?

At all events, he admits that France imports more than she exports. But, this is in direct contradiction to his fellow in the *Quarterly*, who, as we have seen, asserts that France exports more than she imports! These two Neo-Protectionists, therefore, are at direct variance with each other on a matter of fact forming the very basis of their argument!

*"Arcades ambo
Et cantare fares et respondere parati."*

The only thing on which they are agreed is praise of Protection and vilification of Free Trade.

Here I leave them, commending to them Mr. Gladstone's recent advice to Lord Randolph Churchill, to "avoid facts and logic, and stick to rhetoric and declamation."

VI. Conclusion.

AND now let us endeavour to draw a few practical deductions from the foregoing discussion:—

- That the fact of a nation's imports exceeding in value the exports, indicates, other things being equal, that this nation is a creditor of some other country.
- And, conversely, that an excess of exports, other things being equal, indicates that the nation is an indebted nation.
- That, among the older States, those who are advancing in wealth are gradually increasing their excess of imports, while in those which are economically decaying, there exists either an excess of exports, or a gradual decrease in excess of imports; and that in proof of this we have only to examine the following figures, and to apply them to what is within common knowledge concerning the countries named:—
- That, among the younger nations, the United States stands out, at the present moment, as a great exporter on balance; but that, as she is a heavily indebted nation, she cannot avoid exporting on balance until she has redeemed her obligations, and has recovered her share of the ocean-carrying trade; and that, consequently, to point, as Protectionists do, to her 52 millions of excess exports as, *ipso facto*, a proof of the virtues of their system, is to draw an unwarranted and mischievous conclusion.
- That the term "Balance of Trade," as commonly used, is a misleading expression, calculated to give rise

to the most absurd fallacies.

- That the "Balance of Trade," if there be such a thing, is in favour of, and not adverse to, Great Britain.
- That this "Balance" is likely to be more and more in our favour.
- That the world is likely to become more and more indebted to us, and to pay us an annually increasing tribute in money, or money's worth.
- That this state of things took its rise with the advent of Free Trade, and is distinctly traceable to it as a great efficient cause.
- That the secret of our wealth lies in this, that our free imports give us an unmistakable advantage, as regards the element of cheapness, in the universal competition, and that the only way in which we can be deprived of this advantage is by other nations becoming Free Traders.
- That it would be a very unwise thing, looking at it from a selfish point of view, to disturb this state of affairs by threatening other nations with hostile tariffs in retaliation for their prohibitory duties.
- That if our threats were effective, other nations would immediately be put on the same basis as ourselves as regards cheapness of production, with a result, probably, anything but pleasant to us as traders, carriers, and manufacturers.
- That if our threats were non-effective, we should, in this way, also put ourselves on a level with our competitors, with such accompaniments, however, as the following:—We should raise prices all round, and so diminish general consumption, and, consequently, production; we should diminish our industry, our trade, and our commerce, and thus impoverish ourselves and the rest of the world, and, in doing so, we should imitate the very policy we condemn in foreigners.
- That Free Trade is the best, nay, the only possible policy for us as a nation.
- That some time or other, as sure as the day succeeds the night, the nations will discover that in establishing Free Trade, they secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and thus make a practical advance to a realisation of the benevolent motto of the Cobden Club—

"PEACE AND GOODWILL AMONG NATIONS."

August 15th, 1881.

England Under Free Trade

An Address *Delivered to the Sheffield Junior Liberal Association; 8th November, 1881.*

By George W. Medley.

Cobden Club logo CASSELL, PETTER, GALPIN & CO *London, Paris & New York. 1881.*

England Under Free Trade.

I HAVE the honour of appearing before you this evening for the purpose of delivering to you an address, which I have entitled "England under Free Trade."

Now, these are very wide terms. In their full meaning they cover a vast field of inquiry, and, if I were to attempt to traverse that field throughout, I should have to take in political, social, agricultural, commercial, artistic, literary, and other matters, which I have no intention of doing, for which there is no time, and for which I certainly have not the requisite ability. With your permission, therefore, I propose to confine myself to the one great subject indicated by my title, Free Trade, only touching on some of the others by way of argument or illustration.

In fact, our inquiry will resolve itself into a chapter or what is termed the Fair Trade Controversy.

That controversy turns, as you are aware, on the question whether the commercial policy we have adopted for the last thirty-five years has or has not contributed to the public welfare; and, consequently, whether we ought or ought not to maintain that policy.

The question may be put shortly thus:—Is Free Trade a success or a failure?

But, before we proceed further, let us define what we mean by the term Free Trade as just used. In the abstract, Free Trade may be defined as that state of affairs in which the nations exchange with each other their various products untrammelled by hostile and prohibitory tariffs. Protection, on the other hand, is that state of affairs in which the nations are hindered from this free exchange by tariffs imposed for that special purpose.

Well, we all know that Free Trade as thus defined does not exist. We are said to be living under Free Trade, but in a strict sense that is not so. We are living under a system in which our imports alone are free; our exports to some of the principal markets not being free. It is only as regards our imports that we enjoy perfect freedom; and it is for this reason that the present *regime* has been called One-sided Free Trade. It will now be our task to inquire whether this has been, as regards our national welfare, a success or a failure.

Now, all parties to the controversy are agreed as to the benefits Universal Free Trade would confer on mankind. So far as I can make out, no one whose opinion is of any scientific value denies that if Free Trade

were universal, it would be of infinite advantage to the human race. There are some among us, however, who maintain that partial Free Trade—such as that under which we now live—is prejudicial to the country which opens its ports to foreign productions, and beneficial to the country which, on the other hand, shuts out, as far as it can, by prohibitory duties, the commodities of other nations. And this is just the point of the discussion. Let us call to mind why it is that Universal Free Trade is so beneficial. It is because a vital and energetic principle which political economists call "Co-operation of Labour" is brought into most efficient play. Free Trade in a natural manner causes each nation to produce those commodities which are most suitable to its soil, and to the circumstances and the genius of the inhabitants of the particular region; and to exchange the commodities thus produced for the products of other nations, who, in like manner, have their own peculiar advantages and industries. In such happy circumstances energy, invention, and enterprise are allowed full play, and, as regards wealth, there is a constant tendency, by means of more extended division of labour, and improvement of processes, towards the maximum of production at the minimum of cost. "But," as Mill says, speaking under the head of "International Trade," "the economical advantages of commerce are surpassed in importance by those of its effects, which are intellectual and moral." "Finally," a little further on he says, "commerce first taught nations to see with goodwill the wealth and prosperity of one another. Before, the patriot—unless sufficiently advanced in culture to feel the world his country—wished all countries weak, poor, and ill-governed but his own; he now sees in their wealth and progress a direct source of wealth and progress to his own country. It is commerce which is rapidly rendering war obsolete, by strengthening and multiplying the personal interests which are in opposition to it. And it may be said without exaggeration that the great extent and rapid increase of international trade, in being the principal guarantee of the peace of the world, is the great permanent security for the uninterrupted progress of the ideas, the institutions, and the character of the human race."

As I have before remarked, all parties are agreed as to the economic advantages of Universal Free Trade, but there are some who, while admitting to the fullest the economical, or £ s. d. side of the Free Trade doctrine, maintain that it has also a political side. They admit that Free Trade tends to achieve the maximum of production at the minimum of cost, but they say that there are other things to be considered besides the accumulation of the greatest possible amount of wealth. One of the things to be considered, they say, is the necessity of educating a community in such arts and manufactures as its resources are naturally fitted for, but of which, except for Protection, it would remain ignorant. And another thing to be considered, they say, is this:—that so long as human nature is what it is, and nations are liable to go to war, it is not only prudent and statesmanlike, but absolutely necessary, in view of such a contingency, to endeavour to render their country as far as possible independent of the foreigner. And thus, according to this school, the doctrine of Protection may be reasonably maintained.

Now, I have two remarks to make concerning this doctrine. As regards the education of a people in an industrial art by means of Protection, it may safely be conceded that if the protection be withdrawn when the lesson is learnt, no great harm would be done, and a great benefit might be conferred. But, we know from experience that this is most unlikely to happen; and that when once Protection has been admitted into a commercial system it becomes the most difficult thing in the world to get rid of it. Then, with regard to the contingency of war, how different are the views of the school of which I speak from those held by that association to which I have the honour to belong—the Cobden Club! While the school referred to seems to be always contemplating and preparing for the contingency of war by means of hostile tariffs, we are striving might and main to render war impossible, by preaching our commercial gospel of peace!

As you are all aware, Great Britain stands alone among the nations as a free-trading country. It is natural to inquire how this is the case, how it is that people, acute, thoughtful, and intelligent, as, for instance, the French, the Germans, and the Americans, cling to the doctrines of Protection, while we alone adhere to those of Free Trade? A full answer to that question, gentlemen, would occupy more time than we have at command this evening. I must content myself with just indicating the direction in which I believe the causes of this phenomenon are to be traced. I cannot help thinking that most of the evil is to be laid to the account of wars. Their cost necessitates the imposition of heavy taxation. The persons who impose that taxation are for the most part ignorant of political economy. They take the first impost that occurs to them, and they lay it on the people they misgovern. They know nothing of the possible consequences, in an economic point of view, of what they do. One of these consequences is the creation of interests which would never have existed but for this cause, which grow up, and which gradually acquire sufficient influence and power to render it extremely difficult to get rid of them. This difficulty I hold to be the great economic problem of the immediate future.

At the present moment we may see these causes in operation in France, Germany, and the United States; what is taking place there affording apt illustrations. We ourselves have suffered in times past from these causes, but thirty-five years ago, we embraced Free Trade, and during that period we have been gradually emancipating ourselves from their baneful influence. The countries I have named, however, still cling to

Protection, and there seems to be no immediate probability of their changing their creed. If I be asked—Is this not an astonishing fact? I should answer—Not at all. England has been ahead of the rest of the world in other things before now. We had our revolution, and settled matters with our king, a hundred years before France did; in the matter of the abolition of slavery we were thirty-five years before the Americans; while as to Germany, the Cæsarism, the militarism, the despotism which reign there, and which impoverish her, place her in some respects a hundred years behind us in the march or civilisation.

The ground is now sufficiently cleared, I trust, for us to take a survey of our position under what is called our one-sided Free Trade. The first thing to which I shall call your attention is the Board of Trade returns, which, as you know, give the particulars of our trade with the rest of the world under the heads of Imports and Exports. The totals of these, as you are aware, have been growing, with slight interruptions, ever larger and larger year by year, until last year the sum total of our foreign trade amounted to the stupendous figure of 697 millions, which figure seems likely to be eclipsed by that of the year which is now drawing to its close. Of this trade our imports amounted to 411 millions, and our exports to 286 millions, leaving an excess of imports of 125 millions. Now, let me remind you that it is in regard to this excess of imports over exports that the Fair Trade battle most hotly rages. The Fair Traders maintain that this excess of 125 million is the measure of our national loss for 1880; while the Free Trader ridicules this view, and maintains, on the contrary, that it may more justly be considered a measure of our national gain.

In a little pamphlet call "The Reciprocity Craze," which I had the honour of writing for the Cobden Club, I made the assertion that this question of imports and exports constituted the *pons asinorum*, or "asses' bridge" of the Fair Trade controversy. Gentlemen, I reiterate that assertion, and, with your permission, we will endeavour to pass over this bridge, hand in hand, as it were.

The Fair Traders say something like this:—John Bull buys of the foreigner 411 million pounds' worth of goods, and sells him only 286 million pounds' worth, and they deduce from this that there is a balance of trade against him of 125 millions, which is a loss to him, by which he is so much the poorer; and that he is thus losing his wealth to the benefit of the foreigner, who has the best of the trade: And they maintain further that John Bull is getting poorer and poorer; that if the system goes on it must end in his ruin; and that all this is the genuine and unavoidable outcome of one-sided Free Trade. The Free Trader, as I have said, ridicules this view. He asks, in the first place, why the bare fact of our importing more than we export should be held to involve a loss—seeing that to get in more than one gives out appears to ordinary minds the only way of realising a profit.

And for the following reasons:—

In my pamphlet I asked this question—If a merchant export; £100 worth of goods, and in exchange for them, imports goods worth only how can he do otherwise than make a dead loss under the heads of freight, insurance, interest, and profits? Let us suppose the goods cost him; £100 at Liverpool. He exports them to some foreign country, and, of course, has to pay freight and insurance. Let us say this comes to 10 per cent. On arrival at the foreign market the goods must therefore be worth 10. They must be sold, of course, and let us suppose the proceeds re-invested in goods for importation here. Again comes in the charge for freight, another 10 per cent., which, added to the 10, makes the goods worth £121 on arrival at our ports, independently of interest on the money used, and what our merchant may lay on as profit.

And so the £100 of exports comes back as £121, at least, of imports, and must do so as long as trade is carried on.

In further illustration, let me quote from Mr. J. K. Cross's speech in the House on the 12th of August. He says, "£1,000 will buy 2,000 tons of coal free on board at Cardiff; the freight of this coal to San Francisco will be £1,500; the amount realised for it in San Francisco will be £2,500, which sum, invested in wheat, will purchase 2,000 quarters. The conveyance of this wheat to Liverpool will cost £1,500, and it will require to be sold at £4,000 in Liverpool to cover cost and expenses. In the import tables there will be an entry of £4,000 of wheat; in the export tables there will be an entry of £1,000 coal; the one exchanges for the other."

The Fair Trader, however, regardless of all such considerations, persists in asserting that every year we *buy* of the foreigner more than we *sell* him. The fallacy under which he labours arises, of course, from the use of the terms *buy—sell*. The Free Trader, with a more just appreciation of what takes place, discards these terms in the sense thus implied, and rightly says:—So far as commodities are concerned, we got in 411 millions of them, and gave out only 286 millions, and if that were all to be considered, it seems to be a mighty fine business.

But, there are a great many things to be considered, as we shall soon see. One great thing to be considered is, whether John Bull at the end of each year owes anything to anybody for his excess of imports. Everything turns upon this; so we will at once proceed to put the matter to the test. Now, in order to assist us in the investigation, let me lay down this proposition, which I consider an axiom:—That in international commerce there are three, and only three, modes of squaring accounts—namely, by commodities, bullion, or securities; in other words, that between nation and nation, debts can only be settled and liquidated in some one or more of these three modes. Let us apply this axiom to the facts of our commerce as recorded in our official returns. I

will first take the figures of the last eleven years, because, as they comprise the latest periods of inflation and depression of trade, they are calculated to give us a correct notion as to what has been going on. Now, what do these records say as to commodities? I find that during this period our imports in round numbers were 4,016 millions, and our exports 3,022 millions, leaving an excess of imports of 994 millions—994 millions! How in the name of fortune, one is inclined to ask, was this excess settled for? How much gold and silver went out of the country to pay for these 994 millions of commodities? Let us see. Again we turn to the records, and we find that during the period in question our imports of the precious metals were in round numbers 341 millions, and our exports 306 millions, leaving in our hands 35 millions. It actually turns out, therefore, that we have not only got these commodities, but have, in addition, pocketed this large sum on balance, notwithstanding the fight for gold which has been going on in the world for currency purposes. But surely, someone will say, it cannot be possible for us to have got in all these goods, and all this cash, without parting with our securities? We shall see. We have no Board of Trade returns for our foreign loan and investments account, so we must be content with an approximate estimate. You have all heard of foreign loans, many good, some bad. Well, during these eleven years, probably 500 millions of these were floated in London. Let us say we took one half of them, that is 250 millions. Then, for purchases of American and other securities, and for investments in all sorts of foreign industrial enterprises, and for commercial advances, let us put down a balance of 100 millions. These two amounts give us a total of 350 millions, for which John Bull has made the world his debtor during these eleven years. We thus see that what with the goods, cash, and securities, John Bull, who is supposed all this while to have been going to the dogs, has managed to appropriate on balance no less a sum than 1,380 million sterling. I think you will admit that this is not a bad result for a nation which is said to have been going to ruin fast during the last few years. The idea of ruin is ridiculous, farcical! Mark, there is no possible escape from the conclusion. I have shown that as a nation we, in this series of years, have managed to acquire on balance all these three things—commodities, bullion, and securities; and that, as there is no other mode of settling international accounts but by means of one or other of these three, the proof I give amounts to mathematical demonstration.

A similar result is found whether we take ten, or twenty, or any series of years during the Free Trade epoch. I have before me the figures for the last twenty-seven years, that is, going back to 1854, and from them I find that in those twenty-seven years, our excess of commodities imported was 1,742 millions, our excess of bullion imported was 131 million, and our excess of securities imported was 600 million, making a grand total of 2,473 millions as profit on our last twenty-seven years' foreign trade.

There can be no question, therefore, that as a nation we have become richer and richer. But, while I assert and prove this, I do not mean to assert that there has been at all times, and among all classes, an equal distribution of the wealth acquired. That is another and a totally different question. During the American Civil War, for instance, when there was a cotton famine, our manufacturing interests suffered great losses and privations. Then, during the last few years, the agricultural interest, and the interests which depend on it, have suffered most severely. I do not for one moment deny that some of our interests have suffered. With those sufferings I warmly sympathise, but while I acknowledge them, and condole respecting them, I cannot be driven from the position I take up that the nation, as a whole, is prosperous, the mathematical proof of this being found in the fact that year by year, on the whole, we get in on balance commodities, bullion, and securities.

Let me illustrate this by what is said of space, namely, that it has three, and only three, dimensions—length, breadth, and thickness. Now, no one has ever seriously propounded the existence of a fourth dimension, and I say that, until the existence of this fourth dimension has been proved, and until the existence of a fourth mode of settling international transactions has been discovered—so long as we get in on balance, in a series of years, the three things I have named—we may depend upon it we are getting richer and not poorer as regards our foreign commerce.

From what you have heard you will be able easily to understand how mistakes and fallacies are sure to crop up by doing what the Fair Traders do with the bare figures of trade returns, that is to say, by looking at them without taking into account, or consideration, a number of other facts and circumstances without which they are not only useless, but are absolutely misleading and mischievous. No one can get anything like a correct notion of what is going on between nation and nation until he has taken such matters as the following into account:—He must not only look at the bare figures of imports and exports, he must know the rules by which they are computed; and the rules differ in different countries. He must find out whether country A is lending capital to or buying the securities of country B, or whether the contrary is taking place; or whether A is paying off debt, or paying interest on loans and other securities to B; or whether B is doing all that to A. And, further, he must take into account the great ocean-carrying trade, and allow for freights and insurance; and he must see who provides the capital for this international trade, and whose merchants and bankers do the business, and thus earn the profits, and the commissions; and he must also take into account such matters as payments for war

indemnities, alterations of currency, and the complications arising out of fluctuations of prices, and out of changes in the standard of value. I say, that in order to obtain a perfectly accurate knowledge of what a nation is doing, the inquirer must know, and properly work in, all these various factors. But, as besides the figures in the trade returns we have no official figures, we can only roughly estimate other factors from such sources as are available, and arrive as nearly as we can at a correct conclusion.

Well now, let me ask, did you ever know or hear of a Fair Trader doing anything of that kind? I venture to say there is not one of them who, until lately, has had the faintest notion of what is required, and that the faint notion, such as it is, which they possess, has been instilled into them by their opponents during this discussion.

Bearing in mind these considerations, let us now examine some of the facts and arguments relied on by our friends the Fair Traders.

One of the facts relied on, is that our markets are flooded by foreign goods, to the detriment of the native workman; and the argument founded on this supposed fact is, that we ought to tax foreign manufactures, so that we may, by this means, either reduce these importations, and so increase our corresponding home productions, or, on the other hand, induce or compel foreign nations to reduce their high tariffs, and thus enable us to export more to them. Let us first see how the fact stands as regards the flooding of our markets. Our exports of manufactured goods amount to between 200 and 220 millions, and our imports to 45 millions. For every pounds' worth, therefore, that we import, we export nearly five pounds' worth, and this is what is called flooding our markets. The truth is, that the flooding is the other way, that Protectionist nations are straining every nerve to keep out our productions, and are utterly unable to do so. So much for the fact relied on. Let us see how their argument works respecting the 45 millions of manufactures which we import—one-ninth only of our whole importation—the other eight-ninths being food and raw materials, which we get from all nations put together. We are told that we ought to tax, and possibly keep out, most of these 45 millions. But the consequences of doing so might be very awkward for us.

Foreigners might do one of three things, 1. They might turn Free Traders in consequence of our action. 2. They might retaliate by further taxing our exports to them. 3. They might submit to our imposts, and do the best they could in the circumstances. As to their turning Free Traders, I cannot for a moment believe that at all likely to happen in consequence of our action. Their policy drifts more and more towards Protection, and is intended, apparently, not so much to extend exports as to restrict imports, and they most likely would retaliate on us by a war of tariffs, which would be most damaging to us, seeing that they have a field of taxation of our exports of 200 to 220 million, while we could tax them on only 45 millions. Surely that is not a pleasant contingency to contemplate! Then comes the third alternative, of their submitting to our imposts, and selling us as much as we should be able to take under the circumstances. And what would be the circumstances? Prices would of course be raised, and the consumer of these foreign goods would either buy less of them, or he would have to pay more for what he wants of them. In the first case, production on the part of the foreigner is checked, and he either gives up his manufacture, and thus loses his purchasing power in the world's markets, and you lose him as a customer—directly or indirectly, as I shall show you presently; or else, being baffled in your market, he turns his attention to neutral markets, competes with and injures you there, and perhaps drives you out of them. Anyhow, you impoverish both yourself and him. In the second case, where our home consumer consents to pay more for the article he wants, it is clear that, whatever the increased price may be, by so much is he directly impoverished—by so much is he less able to buy other commodities. There is less production; less demand for goods, and for labour; less trade; less shipping; less everything which contributes to make up the moral and material well-being of mankind.

And now let me explain practically what I meant when I spoke just now about our losing a customer directly or indirectly. Let us take French silks and French wines. It is a favourite idea with Fair Traders to tax these productions, because, as they urge, France does not buy of us anything like what she sells to us, and they arrive at the conclusion from this bare fact, that this is a state of things favourable to French commerce and detrimental to English commerce, in fine, a one-sided Free Trade extremely hurtful to us. Now, I wish particularly to draw your attention to this view of theirs, because in it is wrapped up one of the grossest fallacies of our opponents. This is what they overlook:—

By buying silks and wines of France, we give her so much purchasing power in the world's markets, a power which, as her trade returns show—she is a large importer upon balance—she fully exercises. Well, if she spends the money she receives from you in those products of foreign countries which she requires, as we know she does, she thereby, in turn, confers on those countries a corresponding purchasing power, and they, in their turn, lay out the money so received among other nations, and, as we are the principal manufacturers, we get the principal share in the business.

So that by this indirect and roundabout way, everything England buys of France, even in the way of wines and silks, enables England to sell her products to other nations, and thus to pay for those silks and wines; England all the while, as the great carrying and trading nation, getting a tremendous pull by way of freights,

insurance, and commissions, all of which are created by this all-round trade.

What were the figures of our trade with France last year?

I see that our imports from her were about 42 millions, while our exports to her were only about 15½ millions; leaving, apparently, a balance against us of about 26½ millions. Did we pay away any cash for this? Not a bit of it. Instead of paying anything, we received from France last year in gold and silver no less a sum than £3,411,000. You are now, however, in a position not to be in the least astonished at what appears at first sight an absurd result. It would appear, if we only looked at the Board of Trade returns, and at nothing else, that last year France made this country a present of 26½ millions of goods, and 3½ millions of money! But we know that this is impossible, and that France, in some shape or other, has received full value, and it affords a good illustration of the necessity which exists for taking other things into account besides the bare figures of trade returns. I do wish our friends the Fair Traders would consider fairly and honestly this crucial example of France, and make their theory of the so-called adverse English balance of trade square with the facts as they stand. Whether they recognise the necessity or not, they are bound to show how we settled accounts with France last year, a country from which, in the course of a twelvemonth, we got in money and in goods, and apparently for nothing, no less a sum than 30 millions sterling! Of course, gentlemen, you and I know now how it was done, and in time perhaps the more intelligent of our Fair Traders will also find out. When they find it out, however, their occupation will be gone. And now I will tell them something which they may perhaps not know, and which may console them from their point of view. It is this : that the balance in favour of France in 1880 was not as large as it appears, as Mr. Chamberlain pointed out in his speech on the French treaty. He tells us, "The returns of the Board of Trade must be taken with qualifications, and applied with knowledge. The figures for the French imports must be reduced by what is re-exported to the United States and our Colonies; and for those textiles of different kinds which come from Switzerland through France, and which are inextricably mixed up with our French imports. With regard to our exports, on the other hand, they have to be increased by the amounts due for yarns intended for French manufactures in the Vosges, which go by way of Antwerp, and which, therefore, do not appear in the exports to France." The consequence is, that the balance against us is not 26½ millions, but something considerably less, and this will probably console our Fair Trade friends. We must not, however, reduce this balance too much, for if we do, we shall demolish entirely that grievance of theirs about France; and from their point of view that would be a great calamity!

But I have not done yet by a long way with our friends. I mean to pursue to the bitter end their argument as to taxing foreign manufactures.

The ruling idea of the Fair Trader is, apparently, to accomplish one of two things. If the foreigner taxes our manufactures, we are to tax his; if he admits our goods free, we are to admit his goods free. He contends that if we are compelled, in the first case, to keep out foreign goods, our workmen will step into the place thus left vacant, and supply our home market with these or similar goods. But, there are goods with which we cannot be supplied at home owing to disabilities of soil and climate, to say nothing of race, but which it is of actual necessity, or prime convenience, for us to obtain. After what I have said, it must be clear that by taxing these, so far from helping the British workman, we should only impoverish him. There are other commodities, however, which the Fair Trader thinks would be supplied by the home workman instead of the foreigner. But, to be of any advantage to the British manufacturer, the British workman, and the British consumer, the following impossible state of things must occur. In addition to the goods which we now make for the foreigner, we must be ready to supply our home market with much of which the foreigner now supplies us, but of which we now are to cut him out. He is to sit down quietly under this, and buy of you just as much as he did before, although you have taken away so much of his purchasing power by cutting him out! At present, the foreigner makes certain goods better and cheaper than we can. When he is cut out, our consumers will consent, cheerfully as a matter of course, to pay higher prices for these same goods! Then, on account of the new home business which is to spring up, there is to be no fresh capital required, no fresh plant, no additional workers, or, if there are, there is to be no increased cost in these respects, there is to be no change in any respect whatever, except that our manufacturers will have cut out the foreigner and got the home market in addition to the foreign market!

But, gentlemen, this is all most absurd, and I am sure I need say nothing more respecting it. I would rather proceed to inquire how it is our own people cannot supply us with certain things which now come to us from abroad; for instance, French silks and French woollens. The simple fact is, of course, that from a variety of causes our manufacturers and workmen either cannot, or will not, supply us with these things. Whatever be the cause, I am not here tonight to point out the remedy, but, whatever that may ultimately turn out to be, no Free Trader will allow that it is to be found in taxing the foreign product. If, for instance, foreign silks and foreign woollens were to be driven out of this country by hostile tariffs, it is certain that, over and above the actual loss to us as traders, which, as I have shown, would be involved by these trades being killed, our consumers, that is, the bulk of this nation, would be driven to take up with fabrics of a kind and quality which they do not want. There is not much fear of such an eventuality, however, for I do not believe the people of this country would

put up with such intolerable tyranny.

As you know, complaints have been heard of the woollen manufactures of Bradford having passed away to their French rivals. But what are the facts? As I gather them, they stand thus. We find that British alpaca or lustre has been superseded by French merino. Some years ago alpaca was in high favour. Now it is neglected, and the soft woollen worsteds of France have superseded it. How was this? As I read it, it was because, when alpaca was formerly made of pure fine lustrous wools only, it was in favour; but when manufacturers, aiming at cheap production and high profits, mixed the new wool with cotton, they produced nothing but a shoddy, which soon lost favour. Our French competitors, it appears, saw their opportunity; they bought their wools in our own market in London, they took it to France, adopted for it new machinery, and every process which promised improvement, sought for and found new dyes, inventing soft half-tints and subdued shades of colour, and then brought it back to us made up into those fabrics which are now so much in vogue, and which are known by the name of French merinos and cashmeres. Now, I wish to ask whether this is creditable to us as manufacturers? There can be no question that, from some cause or other, our manufacturers have allowed the French to steal a march on them. Let them meet the modern demand by doing as the French have done; let them adapt their machinery, and study new processes, and, depend upon it, we shall then hear very little about French competition in this department

Now, having thus disposed of the Fair Trader's argument for taxing foreign manufactures, let me say a few words respecting his assertion that our excess of imports is to be considered the measure of our national loss. We now, on the average, import more than we export considerably over 100 millions' worth of commodities annually. We Free Traders say that instead of its being a loss to us, it is a profit to us, and that if we did not get in this excess of value we should be doing a very bad business indeed. I want to know, in the first place, why the shipowners of Great Britain, who possess one-half of the world's effective ocean tonnage, are not to receive what is due to them for the freights they carry, and if so, how they are to be paid? I want to know, in the second place, why those among us who hold foreign bonds, shares, and investments of every kind, are not to be paid the interest which is due to them, and if so, now they are to be paid? I want to know, in the third place, why our shipbuilders, who last year built 90 iron, and 160 wooden ships for the foreigner, are not to receive the price of those ships, and if so, how they are to be paid? I want to know, in the fourth place, why our merchants and bankers, who advance the capital by which our 700 millions of foreign commerce is put in motion, are not to receive the interest on their capital, and if so, how they are to be paid? And in the fifth place, I want to know if our merchants and brokers, who carry on this 700 millions of foreign trade, are to earn any commission thereon, and if so, how they are to be paid?

There are other items which might be brought into the account, but they are sufficient for my purpose; let us try and roughly estimate them. I cannot put down the gross receipts of our ocean carrying trade at less than 45 millions. With regard to the interest on our foreign investments, they are variously estimated by the best authorities at from 55 to 60 millions. I will take the smaller figure. Then the price of those 250 ships we sold last year cannot, at a moderate computation, be put down at less than million. Then, as to interest on capital, let us take 100 millions as constantly employed in moving our 700 millions of commerce, and say five per cent., this gives us 5 millions; and lastly, what are we to put down by way of commissions? $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, on 700 millions give us $17\frac{1}{2}$ millions. Let us now add up.

From this sum, however, must be deducted what we may have to pay the foreigner on so much of our foreign commerce as he carries for us, and for the balance between what we have to pay him, and what we have to receive from him, in respect of supplies, port dues, &c., and if for these items we take off, roughly, 14 millions, there remains 110 millions to receive from the foreigner annually by way of interest on loans, and for work and labour done for him. In other words, before we have to send away a pound's worth of goods with the view of getting a pound's worth in exchange, we have to receive in some shape or other from the foreigner no less a sum annually than 110 million sterling. In the name of political economy and common sense, how can this be a bad thing for this country?

Anyhow, and after making all possible deductions, you must see that we can import over 100 million worth of commodities without trenching on our capital, and that is the great point. But, it may be asked, why do we take goods and not cash?

The answer to that is, that in some years we take part goods, and part cash, some years all goods, never all cash. To be paid entirely in cash is about the last thing we should want, but if we did want it, we could not get it; 100 millions loose cash in the world does not exist.

But let us suppose for a moment that we could get cash by some impossible process. What should we do with it? We could not eat it We should not want to pile it up in vaults. We should have to send it abroad again in exchange for commodities, and, if in the end you have to do that, you may as well take commodities at once, and so save the expense and loss of two voyages of your cash. The fact is, that it is only in commodities that one nation can discharge the bulk of its debts to another nation, and that if the world owes us money, and makes

us its carrier and its general merchant, we *must* take payment in commodities. And thus you see, at a stroke we get rid of that bugbear to some people, the thing commonly called the Balance of Trade, and which, as commonly understood, is a fallacious and misleading expression.

There is one country which at the present moment stands in marked contrast to us as regards the balance of her imports and exports. I mean the United States. She of late years has been a large exporter on balance, and our Fair Traders have often pointed to this excess of exports as a proof of her prosperity, and of the virtues of her Protective system. When, however, we call to mind the fact that while we are a lending nation, with an excess of capital, and do more than half the ocean carrying trade of the world, and that the United States are a borrowing nation, requiring capital, and ready to pay for the use of it; and that owing to her Protectionist policy foreigners carry more than 80 per cent, of her foreign commerce; it is easy to see that, other things being equal, while we have to import on balance, she has to export. Now, it is impossible to estimate with any approach to accuracy what the States have to send abroad each year by way of interest on their indebtedness, and for freight, and for other things. I cannot put it down at less than 20 millions, and it is most likely a great deal more, probably nearer 40 millions. Whatever the amount may be, however, it has to be allowed the foreigner in account, and, therefore, any argument in favour of Protection, and against Free Trade, built up out of the bare figures of her trade returns, and without regard to the considerations to which I have called your attention, must necessarily be most fallacious.

If we turn to France, we shall find in her trade returns a curious exemplification of the truth of the principles on which I am insisting. As you are aware, the Franco-German war broke out in 1870 and closed in 1871. Well, just before that war, that is in 1869 and 1870, her imports and exports, according to Martin's "Statesman's Year Book," balanced each other almost exactly. You also know that in 1871 France had to pay an indemnity of 200 millions to Germany, and that she appealed abroad for a large loan to aid her to pay that indemnity. Well, in 1871 she imported on balance 21 millions. In 1872, however, and during the three following years she exported on balance 39 millions. How is this to be accounted for? By simply recalling to mind what everybody knows, that France was during those four years repaying what she had borrowed abroad; and that at the end of 1875 she had probably repaid the bulk of it, and had recovered from the terrible losses she had incurred. What are her trade figures since then?

and I see by a paragraph in the *Times* of the 16th September that her excess imports for the first eight months of 1881 amount to 1,097 millions of francs, or 43 million sterling, so that Protectionist France, according to our Fair Trade friends, must be going down-hill rapidly along with Free-Trading England, for she has been rapidly and unprecedentedly increasing her excess of imports! And now I ask Fair Traders how they reconcile these trade figures of France with their theories?

The trade figures of Germany tell the same story. While she was receiving the French indemnity she was a large importer on balance. When this operation was completed, this excess of imports began to diminish. If we take 1869 and 1880, I find in "Mulhall" that while in 1869 that excess was 12 millions, in 1880 it was only 6 millions. This is anything but a reassuring commercial sign for her. Indeed, when we couple this fact with others which crop up, such as, for instance, the falling off of savings' bank deposits in Saxony, the increase of emigration, the increased cost of living, the decreasing earnings per head of her population, we cannot be surprised when we hear that protests against her fiscal system have been made by an overwhelming majority of her Chambers of Commerce, and that in the late elections a majority has been returned pledged to oppose the Protectionist policy of Prince Bismarck. The fact is, that the vaunted system of Protection has utterly broken down in Germany, and that, as she is the poorest of our rivals, and consequently, the weakest financially, she is the first to show the disastrous effects of the policy she has so unwisely chosen. That this is so, may be gathered also from this little fact, that our Fair Trading friends no longer allude to Germany. "*Oh, no! we never mention her.*"

Now, gentlemen, let us take a comparative survey of ourselves, and our great rivals, France, Germany, and the United States.

Let us first take population. In 1871 the United Kingdom numbered 31,500,000; and in 1881, 34,800,000; an increase in 10 years of 3,300,000. As to France, the population in 1872, after the cession of Alsace and Lorraine, was 36,000,000, and this year it is probably 38,000,000, not more; an increase in 9 years of 1,900,000. As regards Germany, the population in 1871 was 41,000,000, in 1875 it was 42,700,000, and in 1881 it is probably 45,000,000, an increase in 10 years of 4,000,000. As regards the United States, in 1870 their population was 38,550,000, and in 1880 it was 50,150,000, an increase during these 10 years of 11,600,000.

The percentage of increase is thus:—

You thus see that the United States lead the way in this respect. The conditions which exist there, and which cause this enormous increase, are so well known and understood that I need not refer to them further. And you will notice that France is far behind ourselves and Germany, a fact which gives rise to many considerations, into which it is impossible to enter now. Great Britain and Germany have progressed very

evenly during this period; whether they will do so during the next ten years, remains to be seen. The consolidation of the Empire drew many into Germany, but the cost of that Empire becomes more and more onerous, and there are signs that the tide of emigration is rising. Any- how, as regards population, we stand well in comparison with the older States.

Now, let us consider some of the facts bearing on the economic condition of these four great nations. I find on referring to Mulhall's "Balance-sheet of the World, 1870—1880," that in a table of the world's industries, under the heads of commerce, manufactures, mining, agriculture, carrying and banking, he gives us the following totals:—

Taking man for man, therefore, we are far ahead of the world in industry, and, instead of going back, are actually improving our position.

Now let us see what Mulhall says of the earnings of the nations free of taxes per head of population:—

Man for man we thus, as regards our earnings, not only stand at the head of the list, but have gained on our competitors.

Let us now look at what is said under the head of manufactures:—

Once more we see that we not only stand at the head of the list, but are far ahead of Germany and the United States, France making the best show against us.

Let us now examine the figures concerning ocean shipping. What is shown is the effective tonnage, arrived at by multiplying steam tonnage by 5 in order to get a common denominator:—

We thus see that while in these ten years we have increased our effective tonnage by 7 millions, the United States have lost 140,000 tons!

Gentlemen, these shipping figures are conclusive. Protectionist nations may, by *hocus focus*, conceal the losses they internally suffer from their system, but they cannot conceal the facts which these figures show.

And lastly, let us see how it fares with us all as regards foreign commerce. Take the totals:—

The above figures are taken from Mulhall's "Balance-sheet of the World," as I have said, and they speak for themselves.

I will now quote from an admirably written article in the October number of the *Nineteenth Century*, written by Mr. Thomas P. Whittaker:—

"The following are the amounts of the exports of Great Britain and the United States to the five divisions of the globe for the year 1878, as given by the Americans themselves (excluding the trade between the two countries):—

"Where are the United States as an exporting nation in the neutral markets of Africa, Asia, and Australasia? To those three divisions of the globe they send £4,751,000 worth of goods, while we send £78,140,800 worth! Even to the peoples of North and South America, at their very doors, our exports are one-half more than theirs, and theirs are mainly food."

Well, gentlemen, besides being Englishmen, you are Sheffield men; and having heard what I have had to say concerning our common country and her commercial position, and having, I hope, come to the conclusion that England is prospering, you are probably ready to hear what I have to say about Sheffield, and Sheffield trade in particular.

With your permission we will follow a line of inquiry similar to that taken with regard to the nation at large. We will first take population. I find that in 1871 the population was 239,946, and in 1881, 284,464, an increase of 18 per cent. Well, there is no indication of decay in these figures; but before we can form a correct idea of the progress of your town, we must look at other factors. Let us take pauperism. In 1871, your paupers numbered on the 1st of January, 7,560; in 1881, 7,126; decrease, 434. So that with 44,000 more inhabitants you have 400 less paupers! If you had kept to the same ratio as in 1871, you would have had 9,000 and not 7,126.

That, at all events, is a satisfactory indication. Let us now, from the Savings Bank returns, see how Sheffield fares in the matter of thrift. As you are aware, there are two kinds of Savings Banks, the old Trustee Banks, and the new Post Office Banks. With regard to the former, I find that in 1870 the number of accounts open was 21,533, and the deposits, £493,998; while in 1880 the number of accounts open was 29,254, and the deposits, £759,427; an increase of £265,430.

As regards the Post Office Banks, I have only the figures from 1873 to 1879. In 1873 the number of depositors was 6,639, and the amount deposited, £59,008. In 1879 the number of depositors was 7,884, and the amount deposited, £78,125. Now, we know that in 1880 there was a great accession of deposits, and we may safely reckon that on the 31st December, 1880, there was £80,000 in these banks. Taking these last eight years, therefore, of both descriptions of banks, we find that whereas in 1873 deposits were £688,791, in 1880 they were £839,427; which, considering the times through which you have passed, may be considered a most satisfactory result.

We will now look at the statistics of crime:—

This again is highly satisfactory.

We will now take elementary education:—

Here we see that while in 1873 there was an average attendance of 53.7 per cent, of the children on the rolls; in 1881 that average had risen to 65.2 per cent.

Now, so far as these figures go, they indicate that materially, morally, and intellectually, Sheffield is in a far better position than she occupied ten years ago.

But, what these figures teach us is corroborated by what is to be ascertained from our Board of Trade Returns. Your town is interested in iron, steel, and all kinds of hardware. Let us compare the figures of 1870 and 1871 with those of 1879 and 1880.

Let me draw your attention in the first instance to the following table of our exports of all sorts of ironwork:—

Great Britain, therefore, did much better in her iron and steel in 1880 than in 1879, and, as a matter of course, Sheffield participated largely in the benefit. This is shown in certain figures which I find in the *Sheffield Independent*, to which paper I am indebted for them as well as for many other valuable ones on the subject.

I see that the exports of Sheffield to America in 1877 were £450,000; in 1879, £560,000; in 1880, £1,066,000; and that the total for the twelve months ending 30th September, 1881, was £1,223,830, being £157,419 over the total for the twelve months ending 30th September, 1880.

The prices of 1880, however, are not equal to those of 1870, and, of course, so far as this goes, there is not so much profit, but, inasmuch as there has been a general fall in prices during this period, the difference is not all loss, and what is gained by the fall in all other products has to be set off against this loss, so that, in the end, I suspect there would not be much to complain of in this respect. I have not time now to enter into the questions arising out of the fall in prices. It is, however, a most important and interesting subject. Anyhow, the prices of 1880 are better than the prices of 1879, and the prices of 1881 are, I believe, exceeding those of 1880.

Let us now see what Sheffield is doing in 1881 in all foreign markets. We have the Board of Trade returns for September. They show that the total value of hardware and cutlery exported for that month was £340,362, against £298,069 for September, 1880; and that the total for the nine months was £2,776,380, against £2,547,267 for the corresponding nine months of 1880. So far all is satisfactory, but, before I have done with statistics, I should like to give you another view of Sheffield trade by instituting a comparison of our iron, steel, and hardware trade with France, Germany, and the United States respectively. The figures I shall quote come direct from the Board of Trade.

Those referring to the United States are printed in the Appendix to Mr. Chamberlain's speech on the French Treaty in the House on the 12th August, as published by the Cobden Club. Those which refer to France and Germany have been forwarded to me on my application.

I find that as regards France, our importations of iron and steel manufactures for 1880 amounted to £118,000, while our exports to France for the same period were of partly manufactured articles of iron, wrought and un-wrought, £789,000; of manufactured articles—fire-arms, £5,000; other kinds, £3,000; hardware and cutlery, £174,000; steam-engines, £129,000; other machinery, £567,000; total £1,667,000. As regards Germany, during 1880, our exports of hardware to her were as follows:—Iron, wrought and unwrought, £1,145,000; manufactured goods—hardware and cutlery, £182,000; implements and tools, £13,000; steam-engines, £228,000; other machinery, £843,000; total £2,411,000; while as to our imports of iron and steel, on searching for this item I find literally *nil*; there is no entry whatever under this head in the paper which I hold in my hand, which I have received from the Board of Trade, and which is open to the inspection of any one!

Let us now turn to the United States. Our exports to them in 1880 were—pig-iron and old iron, £3,233,000; wrought iron, £6,814,000; machinery, £439,000; hardware and cutlery, £494,000; total, £10,980,000; while our imports from them of iron and steel manufactured goods came to £213,000.

So far, therefore, as Sheffield is concerned, we export to these three countries whom we are taught to consider our rivals, and successful rivals, these countries which are said to be flooding us with their goods, we exported, I say, to them in 1880 no less a value in iron and steel, and hardware goods, than £15,058,000, while we imported from them of like goods only £341,000.

Gentlemen, I think that we may gather from these figures that Sheffield is tolerably safe. Yet, as you know, there have been complaints that American iron, steel, and hardware are flooding our home markets. Well, this flooding, as you have seen, amounts to the stupendous figure of £213,000. It consisted probably of novelties, clever adaptations, ingenious appliances, in the way of scythes, scissors, saws, sewing machines, hay-forks, and such like trifles. Well now, as to hay-forks. I have never seen an American one, but a friend of mine told me the other day that an American hayfork was something quite different from an English one, that it was easy and pleasant to handle, and that with it he could do twice as much work as with an English one. Now, this is not creditable to us, I think. I want to know why I am to be compelled to work with an obsolete hay-fork when I

can get one so superior? Is there no enterprising Sheffield man here present who will deliver us from this flood of hay-forks? A year hence such a thing as an American hay-fork ought not to be seen in this country except as a curiosity. I do wish somebody would seize on this idea, which I freely offer him, would carry it out, and succeed with it, for then my visit to Sheffield will not have been in vain.

Well, gentlemen, I trust that by this time you have been able to form a pretty accurate notion of our condition as a nation of manufacturers, trades, and carriers, and that you can come to no other conclusion than that our position is an excellent one, and one which is principally due to Free Trade as its great efficient cause. Yet, as you know, you have been called upon, and are being called upon, to disturb this satisfactory condition of things. Two associations, one of them called the National League, and the other the National Fair Trade League, have organised themselves with the view, among other objects, of procuring an alteration in our commercial policy.

I am happy to say that as regards Free Trade, these efforts have met with but little success, and that as time rolls on there is every reason to expect they will meet with still less. As, day by day, we get over one by one our commercial troubles, and, little by little, find ourselves emerging from a long protracted depression, it will be harder and harder for the advocates of Fair Trade, *alias* Protection, to delude the people into taxing their right hands a shilling, for the slender chance of getting back sixpence with their left. That little game is just two years too late! Had they begun their agitation two years ago, when depression was at its worst, they would have made more disciples, and have given us Free Traders much more trouble to expose their shallow sophistries. Unfortunately for them now, they hardly ever commit themselves to a statement, or venture on an argument, but the next day some most inconvenient fact turns up in the news of the day to confound them. The time they have chosen for galvanising the mummy of Protection is about the worst they could have selected. It is as if some man, undertaking to prove the extinction of the sun, were to choose as the best time for making his assertions and giving his proofs, not the midnight hour—when darkness reigns and seems to lend confirmation to his statements—but the dawn, just when the orb of day begins to brighten creation, and every moment brings with it an accession of light and heat, and serves to prove him either a cunning knave or the victim of a craze.

And now, by way of contrast to our present condition under Free Trade—One-sided Free Trade—let us for a few moments take a glance back to that state of things which existed in the days of Protection, and to which we should most assuredly revert, were we to follow the counsels of our friends the Fair Traders. From what they tell us, one would suppose that such things as agricultural and commercial depression were unknown in those happy days, and that they only came into being with the advent of Free Trade in 1846. I will now quote to you, by way of illustration, a few passages from the article in the October number of the *Nineteenth Century*, entitled "The Proposals of the Fair Trade League," from the pen of Mr. T. P. Whittaker, to which I have already referred.

"In 1816 the poor rates at Hinckley, Leicester, were 52s. in the pound.

"It was stated in the House of Commons in 1817 that at Langdon in Dorsetshire, a parish containing 575 inhabitants, 409 were receiving relief. And at Ely three-fourths of the people were in receipt of relief.

"In 1817 wheat averaged 94s. 9d. a quarter. In 1822 wheat fell to 43s. 4d. a quarter. In 1819, 1820, and 1822, agriculture was in a state of universal distress, bordering on bankruptcy, and petitions for relief were presented to Parliament from all parts of the country. In 1822 a Parliamentary Committee was appointed to inquire into the cause of the distress. Farmers were ruined by thousands. One news-paper in Norwich advertised 120 sales of stock in one day. This was when the Corn Laws were in full force, and the price fixed by law for importing corn was 80s. a quarter.

"Again, ten years later, agricultural distress was great. The Marquis of Stafford used to take his rents in the value of corn, and in 1827 he abated 30 per cent., and in 1828, 26 per cent. In 1829, the workhouses in some parts of the country were so crowded, that at times four, five, or six people had to sleep in one bed.

"In 1829, families in Yorkshire were reduced to live on bran, and in Huddersfield 13,226 were reduced to semi-starvation.

"Sir Richard Phillips, in his "Facts" (published 1832), says:—"The dear corn years, from 1809 to 1818, swelled the list of crimes from 5,350 in 1809 to 14,254 in 1818. In 1839 wheat went up to 70s. 8d. a quarter, and averaged 67s. from then to 1841, and the distress in manufacturing districts was heartrending."

"In 1839-42 Stockport was almost desolate, one-half of the factories were shut up; 3,000 dwellings were unoccupied, artisans were breaking stones on the roads, and the poor rate was 10s. in the pound.

"In Bolton, in 1842, the Poor Protection Society had 6,995 applicants for relief, whose earnings only averaged 13d. per head; 5,305 persons were visited, and they had only 466 blankets amongst them, or about one blanket to every eleven persons.

"In one district in Manchester it was found that there were 2,000 families without a bed. In Glasgow, in 1842, 12,000 people were on the relief funds.

"In Accrington, out of a population of 9,000 people, only 100 were fully employed.

"In 1842, the reports of the factory inspectors showed that 10 per cent, of the cotton mills and 12 per cent, of all the woollen mills of Lancashire and Yorkshire were standing idle, and that of the rest only one-fourth were working full time."

And, in further illustration, I will quote from a speech made in the House of Commons by Cobden, in answer to Sir Robert Peel, as set out in Morley's "Life" of the great Free Trade Apostle:—

"Cobden, in answer to Sir Robert Peel, out of the fulness of his knowledge, showed that the stocking frames of Nottingham were as idle as the looms of Stockport, that the glass-cutters of Stourbridge and the glovers of Yeovil were undergoing the same privation as the potters of Stoke and the miners of Staffordshire, where 25,000 men were destitute of employment. He knew of a place where 100 wedding-rings had been pawned in a single week to provide bread, and of another place where men and women subsisted on boiled nettles, and dug up the decayed carcase of a cow rather than perish of hunger."

Well, gentlemen, it is only necessary to compare the state of affairs when these horrors took place, with that which now exists, to see that in wealth, morals, and intelligence, we have made a prodigious advance during the last forty years. In 1841, under Protection, the United Kingdom numbered 26¾ millions; in 1881, under Free Trade, we number 34¾ millions. In 1881, under Free Trade, there is not a man, woman, or child of these 34¾ millions—8 millions more than existed under Protection—who is not better off than he or she would have been under the old starvation laws. There is no class of labourers that I know of who do not command higher money wages now than they could then; and who with these wages cannot command more of the necessaries, the conveniences, and the luxuries of life than they could then, and who are thus enabled to get the utmost possible return for their labour. If it be not presumptuous in me to give a word of advice to our artizans and labourers, I would take the opportunity to say this: Endeavour, if possible, to master some of the first principles of Political Economy. Acquaint yourselves, for instance, with the meaning of the word Capital. Recognise in Capital that portion of wealth which is devoted to reproductive purposes, and that, as one of its chief purposes is the payment of wages, it should be treated as a friend, to be cultivated and encouraged, not as an enemy, to be plundered or destroyed. These things, however, are now, I am happy to say, better understood than they were. Trades Unions and Co-operative Companies are doing good service in the way of education respecting them, and are, I trust, preparing the way for the abolition of those disgraces to civilisation, those trade wars called strikes and lock-outs, which are as barbarous in their way as international war is in its way, and are much more excusable.

And, now, let me in conclusion say this : I hold it to be scientifically provable, mathematically demonstrable, that as a nation, that is, that taking the nation as a whole, we are in an excellent commercial position, and that the great efficient cause thereof is Free Trade—that One-sided Free Trade which our Fair Trading friends exclaim against. Under our system of free imports we get here everything that the globe produces on the cheapest possible terms. This advantage no Protectionist nation enjoys. The poor among us are thus enabled to fight the battle of life on the most favourable terms possible. Our labourers are thus fed, housed, and clothed as cheaply as possible, and are thus enabled to produce more cheaply than any other workers. This has given us an unmistakable advantage in the world's competition, and of that advantage we cannot be deprived except in one way—by other nations becoming also Free Traders. This being so, we need not be anxious, from a purely selfish national point of view, that Protectionist nations should throw off the fetters which now cramp their energies, but should calmly await the time when the scales shall fall from their eyes. That time may come sooner than some of us expect.

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A PRIMER OF TARIFF REFORM.

By David A. Wells.

During the fiscal year 1883-4, United States, by reason of taxation imposed and maintained for purposes of protection, collected from its people £20,878,725 more than was necessary to defray all its ordinary expenditures, including pensions and interest on the public debt. Had this enormous sum of money been remitted to the people, in place of having been extorted from them, it would have been sufficient to have bought two pairs of boots for every man in the country with an occupation, or two barrels of flour for every family; or it would add a week's wages to the gain of every manual labourer. It would have paid ten per cent, on a thousand million dollars of capital invested in agriculture, manufactures, or mining.

Cobden Club logo Cassell & Company, LIMITED: London, Paris, New York & Melbourne, 1885.

Platform of the New York State Revenue Reform League.

The New York State Revenue Reform League holds:—That the only tax on imports which should ever be tolerated by a free people, is a tariff for revenue only. That the greatest burden now borne by the American people is the unjust and unequal system of taxation called a protective tariff. This tariff, levied upon nearly 4,000 articles, is a masterpiece of injustice, inequality, and false pretence. By seriously injuring many industries, it has reduced the wages of labour, restricted the opportunities for domestic employment, and unnecessarily increased the cost of the necessaries of life. It has almost swept the flag of the American commercial marine from the ocean. It has cut down the sales of American manufactures at home and abroad, and depleted the returns of American agriculture—an industry followed by half our people. It costs the people five times more than it produces to the treasury, obstructs the processes of production, wastes the fruits of labour, promotes fraud, and fosters the growth of monopolies.

A Primer of Tariff Reform.

Q. What is a tariff?

A. A tariff is a tax imposed on commodities imported from foreign countries.

Q. What is a tax?

A. A tax is the portion of property or product which the Government takes (by compulsion) from every citizen—not a pauper—for public purposes.

Q. What are public purposes, in the sense of this definition?

A. A definition given by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1874 was as follows : "for the purpose of carrying on the Government in all its machinery and operations."

Q. What is Free Trade?

The following definitions of free trade and protection appeared in the *Philadelphia American*, of August 7th, 1884, a representative Protectionist paper:

"The term Free Trade, although much discussed, is seldom rightly defined. It does not mean the abolition of custom houses. Nor does it mean the substitution of direct or indirect taxation, as a few American disciples of the school have supposed. It means such an adjustment of taxes on imports as will cause no diversion of capital from any channel into which it would otherwise flow, into any channel opened or favoured by the legislation which enacts the customs. A country may collect its entire revenue by duties on imports, and yet be an entirely Free Trade country, *so long as it does not lay those duties in such a way as to lead any one to undertake any employment or make any investment lie would avoid in the absence of such duties.* Thus the customs duties levied by England—with a very few exceptions—are not inconsistent with her profession of being a country that believes in Free Trade. They either are duties on articles not produced in England, or they are exactly equivalent to the excise duties levied on the same articles if made at home. They do not lead any one to put his money into the home production of an article, because they do not discriminate in favour of the home producer. It is, therefore, no concession to the protective principle when the Democratic platform says that 'since the foundation of the government custom house duties have furnished its main source of revenue,' and that 'this system must continue.'"

"A protective duty, on the other hand, has for its object to effect the diversion of a part of the capital and labour of the people out of the channels in which it would run otherwise, into channels favoured or created by law."

A. Free Trade is the right of every man to freely exchange the products of his labour and services in such a way as seems to him most advantageous, subject only to such restrictions as the State may find necessary to make for the purposes of revenue or for sanitary or moral considerations. Conversely, it is the denial of the right of a free government to arbitrarily take from any person any portion of the product of his labour for the benefit of some other man who has not earned or paid for it.

Q. What is Protection?

A. Protection, on the ground of advantages accruing directly or incidentally, advocates and defends the imposition of taxes on imports for other purposes than those of revenue. The protective system is opposed to the revenue system because the Government collects revenue on what comes in, while protection is secured only to the extent to which commodities are kept out.

Q. What is the idea underlying each?

A. Free Trade assumes that a people like those of the United States might be left to themselves to decide what is to their own advantage; Protection assumes that Congress can better decide what business the people shall do than the people themselves.

Q. What is a tariff for revenue only?

A. A tariff for revenue only "is one so framed that all the taxes which the people pay, the Government shall

receive.

Q. What is meant by a tariff for revenue with "incidental protection"?

A. The adjustment of a tariff for revenue in such a way as to afford what is termed "incidental protection" is based on the supposition that by arranging a scale of duties so moderate as only to restrict and not prevent importations, it is possible to secure sufficient revenue for the State, and at the same time stimulate domestic manufactures by increasing the price of competitive foreign products.

Q. Is this double object capable of attainment?

A. Undoubtedly; but it is also one of the most costly of all methods of raising revenue. For while revenue to the State accrues only from the tax levied on what is imported, another tax, arising from an increase of price, is also paid by the nation upon all domestic products that are sold and consumed in competition with the foreign article. A tariff for revenue so adjusted as to afford incidental protection, is therefore a system which requires the consumers, who are the people, to pay much in order that the State may receive little.

A Tariff for Revenue "only" alone Constitutional.

Q. Has the Supreme Court ever passed judgment upon the question whether the Government of the United States has the right to levy taxes for any other than public purposes, as for example, for the protection or promotion of private interests?

A. The city of Topeka, in Kansas, under an act of the Legislature of that State passed in 1872, voted to give, and with consent of a majority of its electors, did give £20,000 to an Iron Bridge Company, on condition that the latter established and operated their shops within the limits of the city. When an attempt was made to meet this expenditure by taxation, the power of this city, as well as of any political organisation in the United States—Municipal, State or Federal—to levy taxes for any such purpose as the encouragement of manufacturing enterprises was denied, and the question thus raised, was finally carried to the U.S. Supreme Court for adjudication. The Court, with but one dissenting opinion, absolutely and unqualifiedly decided the question in the negative, and incorporated in its decision the following statement: "To lay with one hand the power of the government on the property of the citizen, and with the other to bestow it upon favoured individuals to aid private enterprises and build up private fortunes, is none the less a robbery because it is done under the forms of law and is called taxation. This is not legislation, it is a decree under legislative forms. Nor is it taxation. Beyond a cavil, there can be no lawful tax which is not laid for public purposes."

Q. Does this decision deny the right of Congress or of the State Legislatures to levy and collect taxes for any other purpose than revenue?

A. It is clearly incapable of any other interpretation.

Q. Why then has not the "protective" system been abolished in the United States by applying this decision of its Supreme Court?

A. Because it is impossible to prove in respect to any particular tariff tax, that Congress had imposed it for "protection" rather than for revenue.

Protection Involves the Principle of Slavery.

Q. What is the highest right of property?

A. The right to freely exchange it for other property.

Q. How do you prove this?

A. If all exchange of property were forbidden, each individual would be like Robinson Crusoe on his uninhabited island. He would have to live on what he individually produced or collected, and would be deprived of all benefits of cooperation with his fellow-men, and of all the advantages of production that come from diversity of skill or diversity of natural circumstances. In the absence of all freedom of exchange between man and man, civilisation would be impossible; and to the degree in which we impede or obstruct the freedom of exchange—*i.e.*, commercial intercourse—to that same degree we oppose the development of civilisation.

Q. Is it the intent and result of a "protective" tariff to restrict exchanges?

A. It invariably amounts to the same thing, whether we make the interchange of commodities costly and difficult by interposing deserts, swamps, unbridged streams, bad roads or bands of robbers between producers and consumers, or whether, for the benefit of some private interests, that have done nothing to merit it, we impose a toll on the commodities transported, and call it a tariff. In both cases there is a greater effort and an increased cost required to produce a given result, and a diminution of the abundance of the things which minister to everybody's necessities, comfort, and happiness. A twenty per cent, duty is like a bad road; a fifty per cent, like a broad, deep and rapid river, without any proper facilities for crossing; a seventy-five per cent, like a swamp flanking such a river on both sides; while a hundred per cent, duty, such as has been levied upon

steel rails, blankets, and window-glass, is as a band of robbers, who strip the merchant of nearly all he possesses, and make him not a little grateful that he escapes with his life.

Q. How does a tariff, enacted for so-called "protection," involve the principle of slavery?

A. Any system of law which denies to an individual the right freely to exchange the products of his labour, by declaring that A, a citizen, may trade on equal terms with B, another citizen, but shall not under equally favourable circumstances trade with C, who lives in another country, reaffirms in effect the principle of slavery. For both slavery and the artificial restriction of exchanges deny to the individual the right to use the products of his labour according to his own pleasure, or what may seem to him the best advantage. In other words, the practical working of both the system of human slavery and the system of protection is to deprive the individual of a portion of the fruits of his labour, without making in return any direct compensation.

Q. What is the argument generally put forth by protectionists to justify the restriction of freedom of exchanges?

A. That any *present* loss or injury resulting from such restriction to the individual will be more than compensated to him *indirectly*, as a citizen of the State.

Q. Was not this essentially the argument formerly used to justify the toleration of slavery in the United States?

A. Yes. The plea for slavery asserted that the system was really for the good of the slaves, and that any deprivation endured by them for the good of society—meaning the masters—would be fully compensated to them, through moral discipline, if not in this world, certainly in the world to come. It made the slave-owners, who enacted the laws, the sole judges of the question.

Q. Have not the same arguments employed for the restriction of exchanges—*i.e.*, indirect or future individual or social benefit as a justification for present personal restriction or injury—been always used to justify every encroachment by despotic governments on the freedom of the individual?

A. Yes; and especially in warrant of State persecution for heresy or unbelief; of enforced conformity with State religions; of abridging the liberty of speech and of the press and of restricting the right of suffrage. In short, the restriction of freedom of exchange for the purpose of subserving private interests, is one of those acts on the part of the State which are utterly antagonistic to the principles of free government, and which, if fully carried out, would be absolutely destructive of it.

Taxes in the United States.

Q. What is the average tax imposed upon dutiable foreign commodities by the United States?

A. For the years 1883-4, 42.6 per cent., or nearly one-half the value of the goods.

Q. What was the valuation of dutiable commodities imported into the United States during the year ending June 30, 1883?

A. £115,135,239.

Q. What amount of tax was paid upon these importations?

A. Over £42,127,000.

Q. By whom was this tax paid?

A. By the people of the United States.

Q. Was the revenue in 1883-4 more than was necessary to meet the wants of the Government?

A. It was very much more than was needed to support the Government, honestly administered.

Q. How do you prove this?

A. The net ordinary expenditures of the Government for 1883, and the interest on the public debt, were £53,081,600. The revenues were, during the same year, from all sources, £79,657,400.

Q. What was the rate of tariff before the war?

A. In 1860 the average tariff was 19.6 per cent, on all dutiable imports, and 15.6 per cent, on all imports.

Q. What is the total amount of taxes—national, state, county and municipal—at present annually assessed and collected in the United States?

A. More than one hundred and forty millions sterling. *The census estimate for 1880 was over £145,000,000.* Of this amount the Federal Government collected, during each of the years 1882 and 1883, about eighty millions sterling.

Q. What proportion does the total annual taxation of the whole country sustain to the value of its total annual commercial product.

A. The taxes absorb or represent more than seven pounds out of every hundred of product.

Valuation of the United States.

Q. What is supposed to be the value of the annual product of all the capital and labour of the United States?

A. In all probability, not in excess of two thousand millions of pounds sterling. The census estimates for 1880 were £1,700,000,000.

Q. The population of the country in round numbers, in 1880, was fifty millions (50,155,783). Accepting the census estimate of the value of the product of the country for 1880, what would have been the average annual share of each person?

A. About £34.

Q. If each such person was obliged to live on the results of his own labour, what would be the average individual expenditure permissible, to meet the expenses of living?

A. About 2S. per day.

Q. What proportion of the wealth of the United States is represented by the value of land?

A. Fully one-half.

Q. What have been the chief reasons for the rise in the value of the lands in the United States?

A. *First.* The good quality of the land itself, due to natural causes. *Second.* Increase of population, due to natural causes, and an immigration unparalleled in the world's history, attracted by the fertility and cheapness of the land. *Third.* Great facilities for cheap and ready inter-communication. *Fourth,* and not least, the entire absence of all artificial restrictions on trade, or complete *free trade*, between the people of the different sections of the country. The tariff had nothing to do with determining the natural condition of the country in respect to soil, climate, abundance of all minerals and timber, and easy methods of inter-communication, nothing to do with the establishment and perpetuation of free institutions, with facilities for education, or with the natural capacity of our people for turning these natural advantages to the best account.

Q. Has the tariff been influential in restricting the rise in the value of land in the United States?

A. It has, by increasing the cost of all tools and machinery, and by restricting the markets for the products of our land by interfering with free exchanges.

Q. What striking example can be given in proof of the former of these assertions?

A. The railroad system of the United States as it stands today (1884), at a nominal cost of over £1,400,000,000, is calculated to have fairly cost £1,040,000,000; of this cost fully one-fifth, or over two hundred millions of pounds, probably represents the result of tariff taxation for special interests.

Q. Has the value of farm lands in the United States increased uninterruptedly, irrespective of any tariff policy on the part of the Government?

A. All the evidence shows that the value of farm lands has increased more rapidly in the United States when the artificial restrictions on trade and markets were reduced through low tariffs to a minimum.

Q. The aggregate wealth of the United States has been estimated for 1880 at £8,800,000,000. Do these figures in themselves constitute any true evidences of the national welfare?

A. Not in themselves; and for the reason that the welfare of the people consists in abundant production, coupled with equitable distribution and the lightest taxation. The wealth of the few rich does not necessarily diminish the poverty of the many poor; and the wealth of the owners of the iron mines and steel works of the United States, which has been put into their hands by means of an obstructive duty on the imports of iron and steel, represents only a heavy tax, which the people of the country have been compelled to pay, but which neither the Treasury nor the iron-workers have received.

Q. The increase of the wealth of the United States in the years embraced between 1860 and 1880, has been estimated at £6,000,000,000. As the average population of the country during this period was forty millions, what was the average share of each person of this large increase, as represented by annual savings?

A. \$37.50, or £7 5s.

Q. With this small amount of annual average savings, what has the protective policy of the United States done in the way of taxing its people under the pretence of protecting their industry?

A. It has taxed every man, woman, and child somewhere from \$10 to \$15 per head each and every year of this twenty, of which about \$8 has gone into the National Treasury, while the rest has gone into the pockets of the protected owners of iron, copper, and coal mines, Bessemer steel, quinine, bichromate of potash, barbed wire, and other privileged persons.

Q. How much is it possible for the people of the United States to save out of their annual product (exclusive of the increase in the value of land) and lay up as new capital for future production or as provision for old age, infirmity, or for their children?

A. Not more, under the most favourable circumstances, and when taxes are light, than from \$10 to \$15 per annum out of every \$100 of annual product. When taxes, as at present, are heavy, and prices are thereby enhanced, and the opportunities for employment are restricted or made irregular, it is almost impossible for those whose earnings are small to save anything.

The Burden of Unnecessary Taxes.

Q. If the hundred million dollars of taxes which the Federal Government collected in 1884, over and above all its requirements for expenditures, including interest on the public debt, had been paid in commodities in place of money, what would the amount represent?

A. One hundred and twenty-five million bushels of wheat at 3s. 4d. per bushel; or two hundred and fifty million bushels of corn at is. 8d. per bushel; or one hundred thousand houses, costing £200 a-piece; or five million tons of pig iron (nearly the whole product of the country) at £5 per ton; or a thousand million yards of cotton cloth, costing 5d. per yard.

Q. If this sum of £20,000,000 in taxes, collected unnecessarily in 1884, had been remitted back to the people, instead of having been extorted from them, what would it have enabled the people to have bought?

A. It would have given a pair of good boots to every man and a pair of good shoes to every woman in the country with an occupation. It would have given two barrels of flour or two tons of coal to every family; or it would have added a week's wages to the gain of every manual labourer. It would have paid 10 per cent, on two hundred millions of capital.

Q. How have the protectionists proposed to deal with this great burden of taxation and unnecessary surplus revenue?

A. They have proposed on the one hand to take off the taxes on whiskey and tobacco, and maintain it on blankets, sugar, window glass, and all the essentials of common living; and on the other to keep up the taxes on everything, and distribute the surplus revenues for various purposes among the States. The practical effect of the latter proposition would be to take money out of one pocket of the people and transfer it to another, and pay a corps of officials for the purpose of doing it.

Does Protection Protect?

Q. It is constantly affirmed that if this system of taxation is not maintained, the United States will be subjected to a flood of foreign imports; and that their labourers will be defrauded of opportunity of employment, and be reduced thereby to distress and pauperism. Is there any good basis for such assertions?

A. They are mere pretence and humbug.

Q. How can this be demonstrated? Can high-priced American labourers compete in the same occupations with foreign paupers?

A. Paupers in one place are the same as paupers everywhere. Their labour is always unskilful, slovenly, poor, and costly. They are not dreaded in competition by working-men at home; and for the same reason pauper labour is not to be dreaded (if any such exists) in the manufacturing industries of Europe.

Q. Is there no other answer to this stock argument of the protectionists?

A. Yes; the real answer is to be found in the indisputable fact, that nearly every branch of work which is conducted in the United States, either of agriculture, manufactures, or mining, is done here, because it must be; because it is necessary that it should be; because no one will or can do it for us.

Q. Under what conditions, then, do the arts and manufactures of the United States exist?

A. Nine-tenths of all the arts and manufactures of the country exist by reason of necessity, and not by reason of any system of revenue laws; not by any discrimination in the imposition of duties; not from any cause which it is the power of legislators to promote, except by assuring personal safety, the enforcement of contracts, and an honestly-earned dollar as the unit of money.

Q. What branches of domestic industry owe their existence to a protective tariff?

A. There is not a single great branch of domestic manufactures which had not been established in some form in the United States long before a protective tariff had been or could have been imposed. The manufacture of iron is nearly as old as the history of every colony or territory in which there is any iron ore. The manufacture of woollens is as old as the country itself, and was more truly a domestic manufacture when our ancestors were clothed in homespun than it is now. The manufacture of cotton is almost as old as the production of the fibre on our territory. So also of the manufactures of leather, boots and shoes, hardware, furniture, wooden-ware, paper, spirituous liquors, &c., &c. And when you go beyond these, there is left only a comparatively few persons employed on glass, pottery, and silk.

Q. What articles can be specifically mentioned that cannot by any possibility be directly benefited by a protective tariff?

A. *First*, our great agricultural staples : our corn and our wheat, our beef and our pork, our lard and our tallow, our butter and cheese, our cotton and hay, and our fresh and canned fruits and vegetables. We export all these products, and anything which can be exported regularly, and sold in competition in foreign countries with

similar foreign products cannot be directly benefited by any tariff legislation. *Secondly*, an immense variety of the products of our other industries—our petroleum, turpentine, and rosin; nearly all building materials and constructions of wood, including vessels; our products of gold, silver, and copper; our stoves, tinware, shovels, axes, nearly all agricultural machines and implements, and most articles of common hardware; boots and shoes, and sole leather; coarse cotton and woollen fabrics, starch, refined sugar, distilled spirits and alcohol, most fermented liquors, waggons, carts, most carriages, harnesses, rail-road cars, sewing machines, all ordinary confectionery, the cheaper papers and paper hangings, photographs, picture frames, pianos, india-rubber goods, toys, watches, guns, fixed ammunition, newspapers, buttons, brooms, gas, clocks, and a great variety of other articles, not one of which, if the tariff was entirely abolished, would be *imported* to any considerable extent; and most of which, under free trade, would be manufactured and *exported* in vastly larger quantities than at present.

Q. What are other practical illustrations of the absurdity of the assertion of protectionists, that in default of a high tariff American industries would be wrecked by foreign pauper labour?

A. The whole number of persons who were engaged in the manufacture (including the mining of coal and ore) of a little less than 4,000,000 tons of pig iron in the United States in 1880, was less than 100,000. Their average annual earnings were £61 each.

Q. What would it have cost if England had supplied us in 1880 with this quantity of iron, in respect to the single items of freight, insurance, and other necessary charges, and had transported it to the centre of population or of the use of iron in this country?

A. It would have cost a sum equivalent to more than half the sum of all the wages paid to the whole force of labourers employed in the United States for 1880, in making pig iron; and in respect to iron mines and furnaces west and south of the Alleghanies, the natural protection created by distance and the cost of transportation would have been greater than the entire sum paid for making pig iron at these works.

Q. Is there, therefore, any pretext for the assertion that a high tariff is necessary to maintain the wages of the American coal and iron miners or the men in our blast furnaces, at a high rate?

A. It is simply an impertinent pretext, whose acceptance depends on the general ignorance of the people as to the true facts in the case.

Q. What proportion does the whole value of the annual pig iron product and of the annual wool clip of the country sustain to the value of its entire product of all articles?

A. Less than two per cent.; and yet the representatives of these two interests assume, for the sake of private interest, to dictate the entire commercial policy of the whole country. *The value of the annual product of pig-iron in the United States for 1884 is estimated at £18,000,000, and of the wool product of the country for the same year at £12,800,000, total £30,800,000. During the same year the value of the poultry product of the country—poultry and eggs—was estimated at £36,000,000.*

Q. If nine-tenths of all the industries of the country exist and flourish by reason of natural circumstances, how does the remaining tenth manage to exist?

A. By the taxation of the other nine-tenths.

Q. What is the greatest resulting evil of such a system?

A. The burden of taxation—direct and indirect—is most heavy, but the great natural resources of the United States and the energies of its people have thus far enabled the country to bear it and still prosper. A greater and unmeasurably more disastrous evil is, that in the effort to protect a fraction of our industries through taxation and restrictions on exchanges, the cost of all the products of our entire industry is enhanced to such an extent, that as a nation, we cannot export our manufactured products, and so extend our markets and increase our opportunities for domestic employment, except in those cases where our natural advantages for production are so great, as in the case of agriculture, as to overcome the increase of cost of all domestic production, thus unnaturally and artificially created. Hence the periodical glut of our markets and suspension of our industries, and the consequent wrong done to labour. Hence the evils of the so-called "over-production," which is simply a wrong name for mis directed production.

Q. What proportion of the articles imported by the United States from foreign countries are articles of necessity, used in our domestic industries, or as the food, and for the comfort of our operatives?

A. Of articles of the above character it is estimated that we annually import above £32,000,000 in value, on which we collect from ten to twelve millions of duties or taxes; and these duties raise the cost of the manufactures into which they enter at least £20,000,000 higher than they need be.

Q. Is such a policy protection to American or foreign industries?

A. Twenty million pounds is ten per cent, on two hundred millions' worth of product, and we accordingly grant a bounty of ten per cent. On the exportation from Europe of £200,000,000 worth of finished products, by a useless tax of 2,000,000; and to this extent make war upon our own labourers.

The Protected Classes.

Q. How many persons out of the whole population of the United States in 1880 (50,155,783) were, according to the census, engaged in gainful occupations?

A. 17,392,099.

Q. How many of these were engaged in agriculture?

A. 7,670,493; or about 44 per cent, of the entire population.

Q. What proportion of the number could be injuriously exposed to foreign competition, in the absence of productive duties?

A. We export in defiance of the competition of all the world nearly every variety of our agricultural products. Out of the whole number engaged in agriculture in the United States, not *five* persons in a hundred, and those mainly the growers of sugar, of rice and of wool to a very small extent, can be subject to any foreign competition in the sale of their products.

Q. How many persons in the United States were engaged in 1880 in manufacturing?

A. 2,739,907; or about 16 per cent, of the whole number—classified into 52,207 manufacturers and 2,587,700 workmen.

Q. How many of these could under any circumstances be subjected to foreign competition?

A. A careful calculation indicates 837,112, or not more than one-third of the whole number, and on a great part of even this number the competition would be but partial.

Q. How many persons in the United States in 1880 were engaged in occupations other than agriculture and manufactures?

A. 6,983,000; including 4,074,238 engaged in professional and personal service—lawyers, doctors, teachers, ministers, domestics, etc., and 1,810,256 in trade and transportation; or about 40 per cent, of the whole number of workers.

Q. Can any of the persons in the class be protected by the tariff?

A. Not unless the sphere of the tariff be so extended as to prohibit the emigration of lawyers, doctors, teachers, ministers, railroad employe's, clerks, nurses, labourers, and the like.

Q. What are illustrations of the way that people of this latter class are injured by protection?

A. A female domestic servant cannot be protected against the competition of foreign paupers; but she is taxed on every yard of cloth which she buys for her dress, on every silk ribbon, on every pin, and in fact on almost everything she buys.

Q. How many of such persons were there in the United States in 1880?

A. Nearly a million (938,000).

Q. Give another illustration.

A. Women working for wages scarcely enough to maintain themselves in reasonable comfort—milliners, dressmakers, seamstresses, etc. None of the product of their work, save a few fashionable samples, could be imported; and yet this great class are taxed on every spool of thread they use, on every needle with which they sew, on every yard of cloth they make up.

Q. How many of these workers were there in 1880?

A. Over 280,000; outnumbering all the women and children who convert cotton and wool into cloth; and if to this 280,000 we add the manufacturers of clothing who work in the great factories, it will be found that those who work upon cloth, where cloth is the raw material, outnumber by two to one all those employed in the great factories working raw material into cloth.

Q. How many men are engaged in the railroad service of the country?

A. More than 600,000, or more than can be found in all the branches of manufacture that could be subjected to foreign competition, even if there were no custom houses; add to this the average number engaged in the construction of railways for the last ten years, and we have an aggregate of about one million of workers, or about one man in every ten engaged in earning their living in this country, exclusive of those engaged in agriculture, in a business which can be taxed but not protected.

Q. What, according to the census of 1880, were the average wages of the unprotected railway employes?

A. £90.

Q. What were the average wages of the much smaller number of protected iron-makers for the same year?

A. £62 8s.

Foreign and Domestic Trade.

Q. If we had perfect free trade, what amount and kind of foreign products would be imported?

A. 1. Not more than one pound's worth in one hundred of all our agricultural products could possibly be imported, if there were no duty on foreign products of like kind, and if there never had been any. 2. Not two pounds' worth in every hundred of all the manufactured goods, of every kind, which we produce, could be imported if there were no duties upon foreign goods of like kind, and if there never had been any.

Q. To what extent would labour in the United States be interfered with if all taxation on imports except for revenue, were abrogated?

A. It would be extremely difficult to show that as many as five persons out of every hundred, who are employed in gainful occupations in this country, could be injuriously affected by any competition of labourers in other countries, whose products could be sent here, even if there were no duties whatever on foreign imports; and if the changes were judiciously made new occupations would open for them faster than their old occupations would be affected.

Q. In 1883, the railroads of the United States carried more than 400 million (400,453,439) tons of freight. How many ships would it have required to have transported this amount of freight across the ocean?

A. One hundred thousand of one thousand tons each, making four trips each in a year.

Q. Are there as many ships of this size in all the world?

A. No.

Q. How many ships does Great Britain and her colonies control or own?

A. In 1884, about 30,000, of a total tonnage capacity of 8,500,000 tons, and an average tonnage each of 283 tons.

Q. Suppose all of these ships should be engaged in transporting goods from Europe to the United States, and make an average of four trips each year, how many tons could they convey?

A. 34,000,000; or less than one-tenth of what our railroads transport.

Q. If 30,000 British ships should undertake to flood the United States with the products of foreign labour, would their owners propose to give these products gratuitously to the American people?

A. They would propose to sell every particle of such products at the highest possible price.

Q. In what would they have to take their pay for such sales?

A. In equivalent products of American labour; and when a man obtains some result of another man's labour by giving an equivalent result of his own labour, as for example, when the farmer gives wheat to the shoemaker for a pair of boots—there would be no loss, but rather a great gain to both parties for such exchange of products and services, unless one party in some way cheated the other.

Q. Would the American be obliged to buy any of these 30,000 shiploads of foreign pauper labour?

A. They would not buy or exchange a single dollar's worth unless they felt that it would be an advantage for them to do so; and when the Yankees have forgotten how to make a good bargain it will be full time for their Government to undertake to teach and protect them.

The Facts as to Wages.

Q. It is constantly asserted that one positive effect of the (protective) tariff policy of the United States has been to secure high wages to the labourer in that country. Is this true?

A. No; and the proof is, that wages are the highest in the United States—absolutely and in comparison with the old world rates—in those industries which do not have, or confessedly do not need, protection.

Q. What are some illustrations of this?

A. The Report of Bureau of Labour Statistics of Massachusetts, for 1884, shows that the rates of wages in the industry of food preparations—all of which we export—are 250 per cent, higher in that State than in Great Britain. In brick-making, which is a wholly domestic industry, American wages are double those of the British. In the building trades, where foreign competition is impossible, unless houses are to be imported whole, American wages are again nearly double those of the foreigner. In the manufacture of boots and shoes they are more than double; yet in no department of manufacture has the superior genius of American mechanics been more triumphant. On the other hand, in metals and metal goods, and in carpeting, all highly protected industries, there is little of advantage to the American labourer; while in cotton manufactures wages are shown to have been actually lower in some departments in Massachusetts than in England.

Q. Do labourers work longer hours in this country than in England?

A. The Massachusetts Labour Report for 1884 shows that the average number of working days in a year is 309 in Massachusetts and 305 in Great Britain; and the number of hours per week 60.17 in Massachusetts, and 53.5 in Great Britain—so the longer hours prevail by 12 per cent, in Massachusetts.

Q. Have wages advanced during recent years more rapidly in great Britain than in Massachusetts?

A. Yes. The same Massachusetts Report shows, that while wages advanced in England from 1872 to 1883, an average of nearly 10 per cent., they fell back during the same period in Massachusetts to the extent of 5.41

per cent.; a fact which completely refutes the popular theory about the influence of protection in maintaining and increasing the rates of wages.

Q. Are wages higher in America than in Europe?

A. Wages are higher in America than in Europe; they are higher in England than in France and Germany; they are higher in Canada than in England.

Q. Why are wages higher in this country than in Europe if the tariff has not occasioned such a result?

A. Wages are higher in this country, because owing to our great natural advantages, labour, intelligently applied, will here yield a greater or better result than in old and densely-populated countries. It has always been so, ever since the first settlements within our territory, and that is the main cause of the tide of immigration that for the last two hundred years has flowed hitherward. Hamilton, in his celebrated report on manufactures, made before any tariff on the imports of foreign merchandise into the United States was enacted, notices the fact that wages for similar employments were as a rule higher in this country than in Europe; but he considered this as no real obstacle in the way of our successful establishment of domestic manufactures, for he says that the manufacturers "can afford to pay them."

Q. Are wages also higher in Australia and the Argentine States of South America than in Great Britain?

A. Yes; and they are even higher in many departments of industry than in the United States.

Q. Assuming 300 working days in the year, what, according to the census of 1880, were the average daily wages paid in the leading industries of the United States?

A. In the manufacture of cotton 3s. 4d. per day; silk and and silk goods 4s. od.; wool 4s. 2d.; iron and steel 5s. 4d.; iron ore mining 4s. 2d.

Q. What, according to the census of 1880, are the relations which the sums paid for labour in the great industries of this country sustain to the total value of the finished products of such industries?

A. In manufactures of wool the wages paid represent on an average 16 per cent, of the value of the finished product; in iron and steel 21 per cent., in cotton 22 per cent., and in silk 37 per cent.

Q. If the prices of foreign fabrics of cotton and wool and of foreign iron and steel when landed in the United States are increased by reason of freights, commissions, insurance, and inland transportation, to the extent of only 5 percent., how much additional, by reason of this natural protection, could American manufacturers of the above articles afford to pay their labourers?

A. They could afford to pay their labourers about 25 per cent, more than is paid by their foreign competitors and yet be on terms of equality, so far as such an increase of wages enters into and controls the value of their products.

The True Principle of Wages.

Q. It is a common assertion that the inability which the American manufacturer now experiences in competing in the world's market with foreign producers of like articles, is owing mainly to great differences in wages in favour of the latter; or, stated differently, it is assumed that high wages necessarily involve a high cost of production. Is there any foundation for this assertion?

A. No. The truth is exactly the reverse.

Q. This seems paradoxical. How can it be proved?

A. Wages are labour's share of product, and in every healthy business are ultimately paid out of product. No employer of labour can continue for any great length of time to pay high wages unless his product is large. If it is not, and he attempts, it is only a question of time when his affairs will be wound up by the sheriff. On the other hand, if a high rate of wages is permanently paid in any industry and in any country it is in itself proof positive that the product of labour is large, that the labourer is entitled to a generous share of it, and that the employer can afford to give it him.

Q. What are the comparative wages paid in England and in the States of Continental Europe?

A. They are very much less in the latter than in the former in almost all avocations. Thus, in free-trade England, the average wages, according to the most recent investigations, are 42 per cent, higher than in Germany, and 58 per cent, higher than the average for France.

Q. Are the products of this low-priced German and French labour admitted free into England?

A. With the exception of wines, spirits, tobacco, and playing cards, they are absolutely so.

Q. Do the people of England ask for any protection against German and French labour? Has German or French competition ever reduced the wages of English labourers?

A. No. Wages in England for the last thirty years have tended constantly to rise and not to decline.

Q. If close competition and low wages on the Continent of Europe do not operate to reduce wages in England, why should the competition of these same low-priced labourers tend to produce an exactly opposite effect in the United States, a country more than 3,000 miles farther removed?

A. This is a problem for protectionists to answer.

Q. Wages in Mexico are very low. Living is also very cheap there, and the native enjoys a much higher protective tariff than that existing in the United States. Notwithstanding all this manufactures do not flourish in Mexico. Now, if a high tariff builds up domestic industries, why does it not so operate in Mexico?

A. This is also a puzzle for protectionists to solve.

Q. Has there been any recent confession on the part of the Government of any of the Continental States of Europe, the labouring population of which are in receipt of very low wages, of inability to withstand the competition of the more highly-paid labour products of the United States?

A. Yes. In 1882 the government of Austria created a new tariff, which largely increased the duties before imposed on imports, and one of the main reasons given by its finance minister for the new policy, was:—"An invasion of Western Europe by United States grain and pork, which threatens to close the markets for these products to Austro-Hungary."

"Self-protection," he said, "demands that the markets of Austria should be reserved for domestic trade, particularly in regard to grain, canned goods, meats, lard, leather, sewing machines, agricultural implements, domestic utensils, cotton yarns and textiles, and refined petroleum."

The World's Market.

Q. Is production in the United States now large?

A. Production was never before so great in the United States in relation to population as it has been in this last year (1884) of depression and want. The East is glutted with goods and wares; the West with corn and meat; the Middle States are burdened with coal and iron; the South, cotton and grain; and each section has what all the world needs.

Q. Why, under such circumstances, do men, willing to labour, want; why is business stagnant, trade depressed, and the opportunities for labour restricted?

A. Because our whole system of distribution has been paralysed by our bad system of taxation and a national commercial policy that has made us provincial and shut us out from the commerce of the world. The world wants all of our products that we can spare, and will give us in exchange a greater abundance of those comforts and luxuries that all desire; but the Government has assumed that it can control and give direction to the work of the people better than the people themselves; and its interference has culminated in obstruction and disaster.

Q. To what extent can the manufacturing industries of the country affect a market for our agricultural products?

A. Taking wheat as the standard of cereal consumption, the crop of 1880 was, in round numbers, five hundred millions of bushels (498,000,000). Of this quantity it is estimated that about 312,000,000 bushels were necessary for home use (food, seed and reserve), leaving 184,000,000 surplus.

Q. How much wheat in excess of their own production did the manufacturing States of New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland require to feed their own people in 1880?

A. Probably not over 35,000,000 bushels.

Q. To what extent would the manufacturing industries of these States have had to be enlarged to afford a domestic market for the surplus wheat product of the country in 1880?

A. At least fivefold.

Q. Are the manufacturing industries of these States already in excess of what is demanded?

A. The power of the manufacturing establishments of these States, and indeed of the whole country, to produce is far in excess of the demands of any market available to them to consume.

Q. If our surplus agricultural products could not be exported and sold in foreign countries, what would become of them?

A. They would either not be raised, or if raised would rot in the ground.

Q. When the Government gives subsidies, or bounties to private interests, either by direct appropriations or by protective tariff enactments, where does the money which measures these bounties or subsidies come from?

A. Governments never have any money except what they have previously taken from the people by taxation. If Congress enacts a law, the effect of which is to give a labourer in iron 4s. more than he could otherwise and naturally have earned, it can only do it by taking 4s. from a labourer in some other pursuit. If a manufacturer is paid £5 for a suit of clothes, under the tariff, which, without the tariff, could have been bought for £2 12s., the man who earned the £5 and bought the suit is robbed of £2 8s.

Q. What is the first essential for the prosperity of an agriculturist or a manufacturer?

A. Not good soil, seed, tools, intelligence, or industry, but a market for the products of his industry.

Q. What is a market in the sense of the term as here used?

A. The United States has at present a surplus product of almost every article which by nature or skill it has advantages for producing. By "*surplus*" is meant, all over and above home consumption, either of the individual producer, or of the nation. A *home market* means this consumption—while that part of the domestic product which is not consumed at home, but is sold (exchanged) outside of the farm, the workshop, or the country, means the *foreign* market, and that is the producer's profit. From the first comes our existence, from the last, our prosperity.

Protection and Prices.

Q. Does protection tend to cheapen manufactured products?

A. One answer to this is, that if protection is to be recommended because it leads ultimately to cheapness, it were best to begin with cheapness. Another answer is to be found in the circumstance that not a single instance can be adduced to show that any reduction has ever taken place in the cost of production in the United States under a system of protection which would, through the agencies of new inventions, discoveries, and economies, not have taken place equally soon under a system of free trade; while, on the contrary, many instances can be referred to which prove that protection, by removing the dread of foreign competition, has retarded not only invention, but also the application and use of improvements elsewhere devised and introduced.

Q. But how about the tables which are constantly presented showing the increased purchasing power of "farmers' articles," and of mechanics' wages since the establishment of the protective policy in the United States in 1860, as compared with a lesser purchasing power of the same articles, in former years under much lower tariff?

A. All such tables are defective, and intended to deceive, because they omit to show the reduction of prices which have occurred during the same period in free-trade countries. If the reduction of prices in the United States since 1860 is to be traced to the protection of the tariff, then the prices of like articles in England, where there has been no protection, ought to be higher. But, on the contrary, prices are lower in England: so the cause of the recent reduction of prices, or the increased purchasing power of farmers' articles and wages, must be due to some cause common to all countries.

Q. What is the cause?

A. Mainly the great improvements in the machinery of production and transportation. For example, the improvement in textile machinery in the past twenty-five years has been as important as it was in the previous fifty years, and the only thing the tariff has done has been to enhance greatly the cost of machinery; thus depriving the United States of the full advantage of the inventions of this most inventive age.

Q. It is constantly asserted, by the advocates of protection, that a tariff on imports "obliges a foreigner to pay a part of our taxes." Is this true?

A. No. The point itself involves an absurdity; for if there were any plan or device by which one nation could thus throw off its burden of taxation in any degree upon another nation, it would long ago have been universally found out and recognised, and would have been adopted by all nations to at least the extent of making the burden of taxation thus transferred in all cases reciprocal. Taxes on imports are paid by the persons who consume them; and these are not foreigners, but residents of the country into which the commodities are imported.

Q. What plain, practical test of this matter is available to every one?

A. Inquire of any dealer, what is the price of any dutiable imported article (the production and sale of which is not absolutely controlled by a monopoly) in bond, or free of duty, and out of bond or with duties paid. Sugar, for one example, has been selling for American use at 3¼d., while foreigners could buy it in bond for export at 1¾d. per pound, the difference being the exact measure of the increase of price occasioned by the duty, which in this case is 1½d. per pound.

Q. The advocates of protection assert that it is impossible to "point to a single monopoly in the United States that has been created or fostered by the protective system." Is this true?

A. No, and note the proof that it is not. The owners of the copper mines on Lake Superior (which a few years ago were public property, and were subsequently sold for a pittance), under a duty so prohibitory of all imports of foreign copper, that in 1878, only one pound of copper (paying a revenue of five cents) was imported, have for years fixed and controlled the price of this essential article in the United States, at a rate higher than is paid in any other country; and after exhausting every demand of the domestic market, have exported and sold the surplus product of their mines to foreigners, twenty per cent, less than they would permit it to be sold to their own countrymen.

Again, the action of our great iron lords, protected from foreign competition by duties ranging from 30 to two per cent, in uniting and publishing monthly price lists of their products which consumers must pay or go without, is also well known; while of other monopolies, these of quinine, bi-chromate of potash, wood-screws,

barbed iron wire, and steel rails, are familiar.

The Teaching of Experience.

Q. Is there any truth in the constant assertion of American protectionists that Great Britain adopted the free trade policy in 1842 only after she had attained great industrial strength and ability to withstand foreign competition, through the fostering for many previous years of all her industries, by a beneficial policy of extreme protection?

A. There is not a particle of truth in such assertions. Great Britain did, indeed, for many years adopt an extreme protection policy; but she was forced to abandon it, because its continuance had brought the country to the verge of bankruptcy, starvation, and revolution.

"It is utterly impossible to convey by mere statistics any adequate picture of the condition of the nation when Sir Robert Peel took office in 1841. Every interest in the country was alike depressed: in the manufacturing districts mills and workshops were closed and property depreciated in value; in the seaports shipping was laid up useless in the harbour; agricultural labourers were eking out a miserable existence upon starvation wages and parochial relief; the revenue was insufficient to meet the national expenditure; the country was brought to the verge of national and universal bankruptcy,"—*See Noble's Fiscal legislation of Great Britain*, page 11; also Leone Levi's *History of British Commerce*.

Q. Did the protectionists of England in 1842-6 resist the reductions of the British tariff?

A. They did most earnestly, and their speeches and arguments are an exact counterpart of those made by the protectionists of the United States at the present time. It was confidently predicted that a reduction of the British tariff "would shake the social relations of the country to their foundation, subvert the whole system of society, throw great quantities of land out of cultivation, render it impossible for the government to raise taxes, lower wages, and reduce the labourer to a lower scale of life." When Parliament repealed the British navigation laws, Mr. Disraeli and others confidently predicted that the ship-building trade of Great Britain would be ruined.

Q. Were any of these predictions verified?

A. Not a single one; for never in all history has any change in State policy been so magnificently vindicated. British shipping (registered tonnage of the United Kingdom), which before the repeal of her restrictions on ships, had for years been declining, commenced to increase, and rose from 3,096,342 in 1849 to over 7,000,000 tons in 1883. The results have in general been thus summed up by one of England's acknowledged authorities: "It has rendered agriculture prosperous, largely augmented rent, vastly extended manufactures and employment, increased the wages of labour, and, while securing the collection of an increased revenue, has, by improving the value of property, lessened the burden of taxation; and each successive development of this beneficent legislation has extended these results." The like results would follow in America if we extended the American principle of freedom to our intercourse with all the world.

The New Book of Kings

By J. Morrison Davidson,

(Of the Middle Temple)

BARRISTER-AT-LAW,

Author of "Eminent Radicals," &c.

If I might give a short hint to an impartial writer, it would be to tell him his fate. If he resolves to venture on the dangerous precipice of telling unbiassed truth, let him proclaim war with mankind—neither to give nor to take quarter. If he tells the crimes of great men, they fall upon him with the iron hands of the law; if he tells them of virtues, when they have any, then the mob attacks him with slander. But if he regards truth, let him expect martyrdom on both sides, and then he may go on fearless.

De Foe

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Præclaro Senatori

Josepho Cowen,

Josephi Mazzini et Josephi Garibaldi Amico,

Hunc Libellum

Dedicavit

J. M. D.

The New Book of Kings.

Chapter I.

Introductory.

"If there be never so many fair branches of liberty planted on the root of a private and selfish interest, they will not long prosper, but must, within a little time, wither and degenerate into the nature of that whereinto they are planted; and hence indeed sprang the evil of that Government which rose in and with the Norman Conquest. . . . And as at first the Conqueror did by violence and force deny that freedom to the people which was their natural right and privilege, so he and his successors all along lay as bars and impediments to the true national interests and public good, in the very national councils and assemblies themselves, which were constituted in such a manner as most served for the upholding of the private interest of their families."
—Sir Harry Vane.

IN these sentences Sir Harry Vane, the noblest of English men and Republicans, lays bare the tap-root of that thrice-accursed tree of Oligarchy, whose baleful shadow has blighted the lives of so many generations of his countrymen. His pregnant words, penned more than two centuries ago, are true now as then. "The cause"—the Republican cause—the cause of the People against privilege—has yet to be won. Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Plutocracy (the latest development of "private and selfish interest") still, alas! find England the happiest of happy hunting grounds. Sir Harry wrote in the past tense, believing that the serpent of aristocracy had been killed by the Revolution when in sooth it had hardly been scotched. Oliver Cromwell by force and fraud restored "one-man government" in his own person; and to the monarch by the sword not unnaturally again succeeded the monarch by divine right. The nation returned with enthusiasm to its more ancient chains.

Shall it always be so? Shall it never cease to be the reproach of Englishmen that they dearly love a lord?—that they prefer the status of *subjects* to that of citizens?—that they are incapable of rising to the full stature of freemen? Amid the saturnalia of the Restoration, Sir Harry Vane, under the shadow of the scaffold, uttered this prophecy:—"There hath been a battle fought with garments rolled in blood, in which Thou, God, didst own thy servants, though these nations have been thought unworthy any longer to enjoy the fruits of that deliverance. *Thou hast therefore another day of decision to come.*"

Why does Sir Harry's prophecy still await fulfilment? When shall that other day of decision come—as come it must? Why are Englishmen so tolerant of private and selfish interests—so slow to base their institutions on the only sure foundation—the absolute Sovereignty of the People?

The causes are multiple, but one stands out. The reaction against the Protectorate of Cromwell was singularly severe, leaving an indelible impression on the national mind, that to escape from the frying-pan of hereditary monarchy into the fire of military dictatorship is a highly questionable gain. Hence, largely, the despicable spirit of compromise that has animated the domestic policy of English statesmen ever since.

Still "the cause" was not dead. In 1688 it would have reasserted itself, to the sweeping away of all royal and aristocratic "bars and impediments," but taught by experience, the Aristocracy substituted cunning and deception for the weapons of steel that had failed them so conspicuously on the fields of Naseby and Marston Moor. They had recourse to a make-believe rosewater Revolution of their own, by which they changed the dynasty, and, according to Mr. Bright, who never spoke more truly, enthroned themselves. The so-called "Revolution Houses" took the place of the King. Once firmly in the saddle, they effectually strangled freedom at home by embarking the nation in the most criminal enterprises against liberty abroad. The French wars, which dried up every source of income except rent, may be said to have been waged for the preservation of primogeniture and entail, which Pitt—the Bottomless Pitt as some discriminating person called him—and his accomplices apprehended might be unfavourably influenced by the immortal principles of '89.

In time, the deluded people awoke to some sense of their folly. They wrung from the governing caste the Reform Bill of 1832, and it was not long before the People's Charter, that unique embodiment of democratic aspiration, was formulated and demanded, not without menace. In the Charter, the masses, with a correct instinct, recognised that they had found a master-key that would unlock every door in the mighty fortress of privilege. The Oligarchy were not less discerning. They cast about for instruments with which to crush so formidable an assault on their supremacy, and strange to say, Richard Cobden and John Bright came forward as the "saviours of society." With the relatively small reform of free trade in grain the great reform of parliamentary democratization was knocked on the head. A single end was achieved to the sacrifice of the means to many not less important ends. The small reform as usual killed the great one. The Oligarchy was saved once more, and to-day its power is unbroken. Mr. Bright, the tribune of the people, was able to rise with enthusiasm to the middle-class idea of free trade; the national idea of the complete enfranchisement of the people was less within the range of his sympathies. Had it been otherwise—had he and Mr. Cobden, with truer

political perspective, postponed the repeal of the Corn-laws to the triumph of the Charter, how different the course of events!

Since then we have had the Reform Bill of '67. Generally speaking, it extended the suffrage without materially increasing the influence of the Commons in what is facetiously called the Commons' House of Parliament. Howbeit, are we not indebted to it for the political existence of that virile museum-closing, Ireland-coercing champion of Democracy, Mr. Henry Broadhurst? With such a net result, what well-instructed elector will have the hardihood to maintain that our reform agitations have been altogether in vain?

Nevertheless, Vane's "other day of decision" has yet to come, and be it ours to hasten its advent. As yet the signs of the dawn are not such as he that runneth may read:—

*"The days of the nations bear no trace
Of all the sunshine so far foretold;
The cannon speaks in the teacher's place—
The age is weary with work and gold,
And high hopes wither, and memories wane;
On hearths and altars the fires are dead;
But that brave faith hath not lived in vain—
And this is all that our watcher said."*

Has our Radical-Liberal or Liberal-Radical Ministry of all the talents and of all the virtues, with the Grand Old Man at its head, inaugurated a democratic millennium? I trow not. Open the Hansards of the present Parliament, and you will hardly be able, with a microscope, to discover one measure of real national benefit. Page after page testifies to the anxiety of the vaunted Liberal majority to arrest patriots on suspicion; to expel from the House by "superior force" hon. members trying really to represent their constituents; to violate domicile by day and by night; to abolish trial by jury; to expel aliens; to re-establish the Norman curfew; to suppress freedom of the press and of the platform; to gag Parliament; to appropriate national funds for the payment of impossible rents; illegally to extrude a solitary confessing infidel; to incarcerate a crazy German refugee; to fire defenceless Alexandria in order to gratify Hebrew bondholders and rapacious officials; to give huge money grants and patents of nobility to the chief directors of the revolting work; to build royal yachts at shameless cost; to alienate national land for an old song; and to collect for creditors their bad debts through the agency of national officials; these are so far among the chief achievements of "the most Liberal Administration of the century."

The career of the present Ministry ought to teach the democrats of England several salutary lessons. *Imprimis*: Put not your trust in princes, be they Grand Old Men or Grand Young Men. When one says, "Lo! here I have found the political Messiah in the person of Mr. Gladstone;" or another, "Lo! there I have discovered him in the great caucus-compeller of Birmingham;" let the report be peremptorily discredited. There are no political Messiahs. Great men, like strong liquors, should always be partaken of in small quantities. The Greeks, who ostracised their mighty ones, were not such fools as they have been accounted. The Athenian elector who objected to Aristides because he was so often called the Just, was animated by a correct instinct. The reason is plain The best and the ablest of political leaders are fallible; and when they fall the cause which they represent but too frequently falls with them by reason of the blind idolatry of their devotees. Take, for example, the most iniquitous war of modern times—the Egyptian. It was blessed by upright Mr. Guinness Rogers, by upright Mr. R. W. Dale, and by the Quakers, simply because it was waged by the infallible Prime Minister. "They are a happy thing, great men and great officers," Sir John Eliot told a timid House, "if they be good, and one of the greatest blessings of the land; but power converted into evil is the greatest curse that can befall it. The greater the delinquent the greater the delict."

It is the firm grasp of well-defined principles of action that can alone really serve individuals or communities in the long run. Men who mistake a Pitt, a Peel, a Palmerston, or a Gladstone for a principle are but in the infancy of political thought. Whatever they may allege, they have not attained to the stature of free men. They are meet subjects for Personal Government.

Another lesson of the day, and that hardly of less moment to democrats: there are not really two parties in the State. There is but one great party, that of privilege, divided into two factions, labelled Whig and Tory, or Liberal and Conservative. Both do much the same things in office. The mimic warfare which they wage with each other no shrewd observer takes seriously. It is merely a pleasant game, of which the stakes are the spoils of office and patronage. It is only when the elector spectators show some symptoms of doubting their sincerity that the combatants show a little neat. An "organised hypocrisy" is but a mild description of an English Government, whether Liberal or Conservative The Liberal and the Conservative are the two thieves between

whom the People are evermore crucified. Your root-and-branch Republican to-day ransacks the royal pantry for subject-matter of censure; to-morrow, with Cabinet office within his grasp, he publicly renounces the "scatter-brain principles" of his hot academic youth, and hastens to Windsor to beslobber the royal fist. Long live expediency! Long live self-interest!

Has, then, the whole race of political heroes, of which Sir Harry Vane was the type, perished from off English soil? Has "that brave faith" of his which, without an effort, nerved him to face the scaffold and the block, really "lived in vain?" Is that "other day of decision" never to come to the long-suffering English people? It cannot be. Its advent is equally desirable and inevitable.

"Have ye chosen, O my people, on whose party thou shalt stand,
Ere the Doom from his worn sandals shake the dust against our land?
Though the cause of evil prosper, yet 'tis truth alone is strong
And albeit she wander outcast, now I see around her throng
Troops of beautiful angels to enshield her from all wrong!"

Chapter II.

The Ethics of Royalty.

And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king.

And he said, "This will be the manner of the King that shall reign over you. He will take your sons, and appoint them for Himself, for His chariots, and to be His horsemen; and some shall run before His chariots.

"And He will take the tenth of your seed and of your vineyards, and give to His officers and to His servants.

"And He will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to His work."

"And He will appoint him captains over thousands and captains over fifties, and will set them to earn His ground and to reap His harvest, and to make His instruments of war and instruments of His chariots."

"And He will take your daughters to De confectionaries and to be cooks and to be bakers."

"And He will take your fields and your vineyards and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to His servants."

"And ye shall cry out in that day because of your King which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day."

And all the people said unto Samuel, "Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not, for we have added unto our sins this evil—to ask a king."

—SAMUEL.

THE partiality of the clergy, especially those of the Established Church, for the above passage of Holy Writ is well known to all churchgoers. These spiritual guides never tire of reminding their flocks that monarchy is a sinful institution, repugnant to the Divine Will, and, as such, the inevitable source of misery, oppression and dishonour, national and individual. It is perhaps less generally known that the Archbishop of Canterbury, at the coronation of a new monarch, invariably prefaces the ceremony by reading, for his or her Majesty's benefit, the whole of the 8th chapter of 1st Samuel with extraordinary emphasis.

Nonconformist pastors are not less faithful. In their frequent encounters with latter-day sceptics, secularists, positivists, and other infidels, whose acquaintance with Scripture is apt to be slender or at second hand, they are wont to silence contradiction by forcibly appealing to our existing social and political condition as the literal fulfilment of this divine oracle. It may be difficult to show how the whale swallowed Jonah, but it is not at all hard to prove that cruel wars, intolerable taxation, scandalous sinecures, and impoverishing land monopolies are the normal concomitants of royalty. Ask those right hon. Republicans, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Mr. Henry Fawcett if it is not so. They know all about it, or at all events they once did!

But, strange to say, with revelation and reason, piety and impiety arrayed against it, this deadly nightshade of monarchy still continues to flourish in our midst, poisoning the very life-blood of society. "The divinity that doth hedge a king," of which Shakspeare, the poet of feudalism, wrote—the Swan of Avon's politics seem to have been about as bad as his poetry was good—is not unmindful even of such contemptible specimens of royalty as the Guelphs, regarding the first of whom a Caledonian bard asked with amazement—

"Wha the de'il do ye think we hae gotten for a king?
But a wee, wee German lairdie!
And when they gaed to bring him hame
He was delvin' in his kail yardie;
Sawin' kail and layin' leeks,
But the hose and but the breeks,
Then up his beggar duds he cleeks,
This wee, wee German lairdie."

It is still her Majesty's army, her Majesty's navy, her Majesty's Ministers, nay, her Majesty's Opposition—everybody and everything her Majesty's, except, as shrewd old Cobbett observed, her Majesty's debt, which is national. In the pulpit her Majesty is solemnly prayed for; in the press her great standing achievement of "driving out" is admiringly recorded; at the festive board she is loyally toasted; while the Mint is ever busy stamping the current coin of the realm with her image and superscription.

Why all this praying, recording, toasting, and stamping? We are all, it is too he feared, very great sinners; but why should royalty, for example, require such an exceptional stretch of the Divine clemency? True, her Majesty's immediate predecessors on the throne have been persons of most disreputable moral character; but did the unremitting orisons offered up for them during their proper lives perceptibly improve their conduct? Not in the least. Indeed, a more startling illustration of the inefficacy of prayer could hardly be had, and it is a wonder that in the late magazine controversy on the subject none of the anti-prayer disputants thought of using it. Can it therefore be that royalty is prayed for in order to show that it is past praying for?

Again, why should her Majesty's health be made the subject-matter of so much bibulous solicitude, so much postprandial laudation? A thousand chances to one the postprandial orator knows nothing whatever of the real character of the royal personage whose merits he extols. What is Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba? He will know something about Hecuba perchance when the memoirs of some veracious courtier like Greville appear; but not till then. With respect to the present monarch the postprandial orator generally discovers two, and only two, cardinal virtues—the one personal, the other political—which fill his soul with the profoundest admiration and thanksgiving.

Firstly, *the Queen has led the life of a respectable matron*. How marvellous in a queen! But were somebody to rise and compliment the orator on similar perfections in his (the orator's) wife, his sister, or his daughter, that erring somebody would not improbably be rewarded by having the handiest decanter thrown at his head. Is it, therefore, the orator's intention to show that hardly anything short of a miracle can prevent queens from falling below the most ordinary standard of female virtue?

Her Majesty's other pre-eminent virtue, the political one, is not less remarkable—*she never interferes with the course of government*. Was ever such a qualification for office, or any kind of human employment whatever, heard of before? Conceive of a chimney-sweep who never swept a chimney, a baker who never baked, a butcher who supplied no meat, a shoemaker who made no shoes, or a head clerk who never entered his office, being complimented for magnanimously abstaining from the discharge of the duties of their respective callings! Nay, more; conceive of a grateful nation rewarding such abstention by a clear grant to the abstainer and his or her relatives of a million sterling per annum, and the marvel has grown a hundredfold!

But our postprandial philosopher would probably demur to a comparison so odious. Kings and queens, he would contend, are not to be confounded with base mechanical butchers, bakers, and candlestick makers. Admitted, but wherein lies the distinction? It is here. Butchers, bakers, and candlestick makers perform functions useful and indeed necessary to society, whereas those of royalty are at best ornamental.

But he who drives fat oxen should, according to Dr. Johnson, himself be fat. Now the question arises, and with reverence be it put, is Victoria Regina really even an ornamental figurehead? Tastes, of course, will differ, but I venture to affirm, without fear of rational contradiction, that there are at least half a million of ladies in the land whose native grace, dignity, and mental gifts would far surpass those to which her Teutonic Majesty can lay claim—ladies, many of them of independent means, willing to do the national honours without garish splendour, and at their own cost.

Moreover, has it not been laid down on the unimpeachable authority of Mr. Oscar Wilde that true ornament is inseparable from utility? Why, then, if the State must have a figurehead, not apply at once to the Grand Old Man? Is he not ornamental? Is he not useful? Is it not ornamental to be equally at home in the jargon of *bric-a-brac*, and the labyrinths of Dante's *Inferno*? Is it not useful to be able to fell an oak, to coerce Ireland, and, after the burning of Alexandria, to demonstrate that "we have not been at war with anybody," and all this on strictly Liberal principles?

Again, are the simple hospitalities of the White House at Washington less enjoyable than the tomfooleries of the Court of St. James's? Is President Arthur or President Grévy less a gentleman than the Prince of Wales? Assuredly not. The ornamental argument will not stand a moment's analysis. Royalty is really paid for its inaction, not because it is in its nature ornamental and passive, but because an experience of more than eight centuries has abundantly shown that it is politically dangerous.

The danger from it now is not so much political as social. It acts as a convenient screen behind which there is hardly a job too gross to be hatched. It is the standing symbol of that social injustice and inequality about the effects of which in the East-end of London so much has recently been written. There is a matchless irony in the composition of Sir Charles Dilke's Commission of Inquiry into the Housing of the Poor. To set the Prince of Wales, the Marquis of Salisbury, and other noble lords to investigate the causes of wretched dwellings is more like appointing a committee of wolves to account for a scarcity of lambs than anything I can think of.

Why then so many canting prayers, so many sickening eulogies of an institution so ridiculous, so noxious to the people at large? Simply because the nation is not self-governed. England is ruled by a close oligarchy governing in its own interests, and to that oligarchy royalty is anything but useless.

The people interested in royalty may be roughly divided into two great classes. They are either knaves or fools—persons moved by self-interest or superstition, or, it may be, by a cunning compound of both. Political superstition, like religious superstition, is merely belief without evidence. The privileged ring, and those who are struggling to enter it, compose the former class, which is made up of courtiers, sinecurists, pensioners, peers, parvenus, landlords who neither toil nor spin, self-seeking clergymen, venal writers, lawyers, army and navy officers, snobs, *et hoc genus omne*.

This motley crew have one characteristic in common. They are all dishonestly bent on living luxuriously, and without toil, at the cost of the industrious portion of the community. To them the Crown is a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Let them be but deprived of its protection, and they would be like sheep without a shepherd. They would be taken in detail, stripped of their borrowed plumes, and relieved of their booty. They magnify royalty and prostrate themselves before it, not because they believe in it—they are too near it not to know how great an imposture it is—but because it effectually dazzles and stupefies the industrious classes—the fools—whose sore toil allows them neither time for reflection nor opportunity for study. Like Hamlet's "groundlings," they are adjudged "capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise."

Howbeit, the groundlings at times make a noise that is not at all to the taste of royalty and the parasitic creatures that cluster around it. Poor Blowitz of the *Times*, and his congeners of the press, have hardly yet recovered from the tempest of hisses by which the unmannerly groundlings of Paris drove the Spanish King out of the great Republican city. It was a new experience for monarchs and Monarchists, which cannot fail to do them a world of good. The significance of the incident may be measured by the childish horror of the organs of the privileged classes here and on the Continent.

In happy England the people are in no danger of falling into the anti-monarchical enormities of the Parisians. They know their station better, have better manners, and better political teachers—Radical teachers, too—to point out to them the path they ought to pursue. Listen to that right honourable Radical, Anthony John Mundella, on the vote in supply, to pay the cost of the Prince of Wales's mischievous jaunt to India:—"As long as we had a monarchy we should be ashamed to have a cotton-velvet or tinfoil sort of monarchy; he did not believe in a cheap, shabby, Brummagem monarchy, and he always would give his vote loyally and in consistency with those opinions, which he believed to be the opinions of his constituents." There spoke a true friend of the people! What more praiseworthy than to record one's vote in consistency with the opinions of one's constituents! No Brummagem monarchies for the opulent operatives of Sheffield! Against such claptrap the gods themselves might contend in vain. The fact is, the public mind has been so long saturated with delusive, constitutional cant, distorted history, and treacherous political compromises, that the boldest investigator may well despair of evolving order out of the chaos.

To begin with, "our glorious constitution," of which constitutional authors predicate so many excellences, never had any existence, except in the imagination of the writers. In the United States the meanest citizen can challenge the validity of an Act of Congress in a court of justice, and if it is held to be repugnant to the Constitution of the Republic—a document which most American schoolboys know by heart—it becomes a dead letter in spite of President, Senate, and House of Representatives. What is called the British Constitution, on the other hand, consists of an intricate tangle of successive checks and limitations imposed on the despotic feudal authority set up by Norman William at the Conquest. They are all so contrived that they can be suspended on the slightest provocation. In Ireland, at this moment, Earl Spencer, the representative of royalty, is clothed with powers which the Czar of Russia might almost envy. Our liberties, such as they are, depend not on a constitution, but on a form of government which a powerful Minister may twist into pretty much any shape he pleases. The armour of ancient despotism can be brought out from the store-room at any moment. It needs no refurbishing. So true it is that "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance," especially in oligarchic England.

Three elements enter into the composition of English Government : (1.) the Monarchical; (2.) the Aristocratic; and (3.) the Republican, represented respectively by Queen, Lords, and Commons. At the bar of history and reason, Monarchy and Aristocracy have long stood condemned. Their crimes in the past have been enormous, and to-day they exist only for themselves, which can be permitted to no man or body of men in this universe of God. The hereditary principle, or rather want of principle, is followed in flagrant violation of a well-observed law of nature. Wise men seldom have wise sons, good men often have bad sons, while men of intellect frequently beget intellectual imbeciles. Mental or moral gifts in excess antagonize the reproductive energies. Who would dream of making a man Lord Chief Justice of England or Astronomer-Royal on the ground of paternal tenure of office? Certainly no one in his senses.

Why, then, leave legislation to possible, nay, probable, fools or knaves? Is it a light matter that the welfare of millions should be perilled on such a hazard? No! a thousand times no! As has been said, kings, and aristocrats have been tried at the bar of history and reason, and found guilty. They await but the inevitable arrival of the executioner—the People. Then will have come that "other day of decision" which good Sir Harry Vane, with the eye of faith, prevised under the shadow of the scaffold:—

*"O, thou that sea-walls sever
From lands unwall'd by seas!
Wilt thou endure for ever,
O Milton's England, these?
Thou that wast his Republic,
Wilt thou clasp their knees? These royalties rust-eaten,
These worm-corroded lies,
That keep thy head storm-beaten
And sun-like strength of eyes
From the open air and heaven
Of intercepted skies."*

Chapter III.

Norman Royalty.

*William came over the sea,
With bloody sword came he.
Cold heart and bloody hand
Now rule the English land.*

SNORRO'S SAGA.

To realise in some degree the manifold calamities that royalty has heaped on the English people it is not necessary to go beyond the period of the Norman Conquest. The fatal year of Hastings, 1066, will ever remain the blackest in our annals. In that year sixty thousand of the greatest ruffians that could be collected not merely in Normandy, but in all Europe, crossed the Channel, and by sheer brute force possessed themselves of the land. They succeeded in garotting the entire English people, and to this day their descendants, or rather their pretended descendants, on the throne, in the peerage, and in the magistracy, keep a tight grip on the nation's throat. Conquests there have been before and since in the world's history, but never one with results so widely, so enduringly disastrous. The policy of the Norman robber is illustrated to-day not less by the misery and degradation of the Irish peasant, the Indian ryot, and the Egyptian fellah, than by the squalor of the East-end of London and the ruin of agricultural England.

WILLIAM THE NORMAN (1066—1087.)

The leader of the freebooters, variously known as William the Bastard, William the Conqueror, and William the Great, was the son of a tanner's daughter and a Norman duke styled, for sufficient reasons, Robert the Devil. Duke Robert and his predecessors had established in their Neustrian conquest a system of government which William applied to England with sundry amplifications and refinements of his own. To him we are indebted for the feudal system and the game laws in all their rigour.

William de Jumièges, a Norman writer, gives us to understand that these boons were not always appreciated, even in Normandy, by the peasants and other unprivileged persons, who ought to have known better. They were

unreasonable enough on one occasion to rebel, and the gentle Norman commander who corrected them, according to William de Jumièges, "cut off his prisoners' hands and feet, and sent them back in that helpless state to their comrades, to check them from such practices, and to be a warning to them not to expose themselves to something worse. And when the peasants received this lesson they returned to their proper places at the plough." Comment is unnecessary.

William's claim to be King of England was without legal or moral justification. The office had always been, and is now, simply one of trust, conferred by the representatives of the nation for the people's good, and not for the monarch's private advantage. However irregular at times may have been the practice, there is nothing more certain than that there resides in parliament plenary power to depose and to elect kings and queens as it has a mind. It is a right rooted in reason, and the practice of ten centuries. When the Long Parliament formally abolished royalty it resolved that "the office of king in this nation is unnecessary, burthensome, and dangerous." For one or all of these reasons the *régime* of the House of Brunswick might similarly be terminated tomorrow.

The Saxon Witanagemot never hesitated to deal sharply with perverse kings. Æthelwald, of Northumbria was deposed in 765; Alcred in 774; Sigeberht of Wessex in 755; Æthelbred II. in 1013, and Harthacnut in 1037.

Since the Conquest, Parliament in 1327 deposed Edward II. (the first King of England, curiously enough, whose reign had been made to date from the day following his predecessor's death, instead of from the ceremony of election and coronation); Richard II. in 1399, and James II. in 1688. In the case of Charles I., Parliament went a step further. It not merely took away the crown, but the head of the wearer also. Yea, "And what king's majesty," asks the immortal champion of English freedom, John Milton, "sitting on an exalted throne, ever shone so brightly as that of the people of England then did, when, shaking off that old superstition which had prevailed a long time, they gave judgment on the king himself, or rather on an enemy that had been their king, caught, as it were, in a net by his own laws, and scrupled not to inflict on him, being guilty, the same punishment which he would have inflicted on any other?" . . . "This," he continues, "is the God who uses to throw down proud and unruly kings, and utterly to extirpate them and their family. By his manifest impulse being set at work to recover our almost lost liberty, we went on in no obscure but an illustrious passage, pointed out and made plain to us by God Himself." We could put up with a hereditary line of Miltons; but they, alas! do not, like kings, run in families.

Generally, it is true, but not always, the National Council elected the monarch from a particular family. Cnut, the Dane, and Harold, the gallant but unfortunate English prince who fell at Hastings, had no blood relationship to the house of Cerdic. Harold, whose notions of Government seem singularly modern and enlightened, when William modestly demanded that England south of the Humber should be given up to him and his robber horde, proudly replied, "My royalty comes to me from my people, and, without my people's consent, I cannot lay it down." Indeed, it was not till the house of York, themselves usurpers, came on the scene that any serious attempt was made to treat England as if it were a private estate transmissible by primogeniture. To substitute the idea of territorial possession for that of personal and fiduciary office was the mischievous work of the lawyers, who are ever prone to fall into false analogies. Parliament, however, did not fail to reassert its old supremacy. As it had done in the case of the Fourth Henry, so it did in that of the Seventh. It set up a new royal stock, excluding the whole house of York.

To the Yorkist pretention of indefeasible hereditary right the Stuarts sought to add the still more preposterous claim of divine right. Bad gospel came to the aid of worse law. The Convention Parliament treated both without ceremony. For two months, from the 23rd of December to the 13th of February (1688-9), the monarchy was in abeyance. William and Mary, the dutiful nephew and daughter of the exiled James II., were then invested with regal power; and finally, in 1700, the succession was settled on Sophia of Hanover, granddaughter of James I., and the heirs of her body being Protestants, to the exclusion not merely of the direct line but of the elder children of Sophia's mother, Elizabeth.

The title of the present royal family to the throne is therefore a Parliamentary title, pure and simple, and what Parliament has bestowed it is clearly competent for Parliament to withdraw. All through the centuries royalty has been an unalleviated curse to the English people. It can no more change its essential character than can an Ethiopian his skin or a leopard his spots. A really Liberal Parliament, instead of manacling Ireland and garotting Egypt, would busy itself with the repeal of the Act of Settlement. The intellect and conscience of mankind are alike sick of kings and queens, limited and unlimited, small and great. "Unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous," should be written with an iron pen on every crown in Europe.

It is the boast of every snob in England that his ancestors "came over with the Conqueror." Well, ancestors, like other people, may be judged by the company they kept. Let us see, then, what manner of man this Conqueror was. Was he a benefactor of his species? Contemporary history is not silent with regard to his achievements. Take this as a sample:—The men of Northumbria were not partial to his kingship, and this is how, according to his unscrupulous panegyrist, Odericus Vitalis, he dealt with the region between Humber and Tyne: "He (the Conqueror) extended his posts over a space of one hundred miles; he smote most of the

inhabitants with the edge of the avenging sword; he destroyed the hiding-places of the others; he laid waste their lands; he burned their houses with all that was therein. Nowhere else did William act with such cruelty, and in this instance he shamefully gave way to evil passions. While he scorned to rule his own wrath, he cut off the guilty and the innocent with equal severity. For, excited by anger, he bade the crops, and the herds, and the household stuff, and every description of food to be gathered in heaps and to be set light to and utterly destroyed altogether—so that all sustenance for man and beast should be at once wasted throughout all the region beyond the Humber. Hence there raged grievous want far and wide throughout England. Such a misery of famine involved the people that there perished of Christian human beings of either sex and of every age one hundred thousand." Truly a charming gentleman this to accompany in any enterprise!

But William could not always find convenient bodies of human beings to slaughter. There were unhappy intervals in his life when he was obliged to content himself with shedding the blood of the lower animals. He made many deer parks," says the Saxon Chronicle, "and he established laws so that whosoever killed a hart, or a hind, or a boar should be blinded; for William loved the high game as if he had been their father."

These fatherly instincts induced him to lay waste an immense area between Winchester and the sea. This tract, subsequently known as the New Forest, embraced sixty parishes, with their churches and villages. These were burned to the ground and the inhabitants left homeless. "So stern was he," says the Chronicle, "that no man durst gainsay his will. Rich men bemoaned and poor men shuddered; but he recked not the hatred of them all."

Howbeit, one good man there was who could not be induced to profit by William's villainies—the Monk Guitand. This faithful priest was summoned from Normandy to receive an English bishopric. He came, saw, and not merely declined the preferment, but assigned reasons for conduct so unusual in an ecclesiastic. He was sick, he said, and perplexed with many doubts, sorrows, and frailties; but were he ten times fitter to guide others, he would never share in the spoils of blood. "When he thought of the crimes by which England had been won, he trembled to touch it, with all its wealth, as though it glowed with the fire of hell."

While engaged in the congenial task of burning the town of Mantes, William received a fatal injury, and died at Rouen, September 8th, 1087. No sooner was the breath out of his body than bishops, barons, physicians, courtiers fled in horror. The rabble burst into the apartment, stripped it of everything, leaving the monster's carcass naked on the floor. Of his sons, the eldest, Robert, was, at the time, in arms against him; the other two hurried off to secure their share of the spoil.

It was left to a simple Norman knight, "for the honour of God and the Norman name," to secure sepulture for the tyrant's bones. He conveyed them to the Abbey Church at Caen, and had a grave dug for their reception between the choir and the altar. But even then a serious difficulty occurred. The Bishop of Evreux had performed the obsequies, and the coffin was about to be lowered into the tomb, when there stood forward from the throng Oselin Fitz-Arthur, and said, "The ground on which you stand was the site of my father's house. The man who lies dead before you, and for whom you bid us pray, took my father's land from him by force and by wrong, and here, by abuse of his ducal power, he built this church. I claim back the land; and I forbid, in the name of God, that the robber should be covered with ground that is mine, and that he should have a burial-place in my heritage." The truth of Fitz-Arthur's assertion was notorious, and the assembled prelates had to guarantee him ample compensation before the grave was permitted to close over the remains of the Conqueror of England, who had barbarously ordered the body of King Harold to be buried on the beach, like a felon's, below watermark.

By the time of William's death, all England, with insignificant exceptions, had been clutched by his cut-throat followers, while the royal revenue, which in Edward the Confessor's time stood at £40,000 per annum, had, according to Giraldus Cambrensis, reached the extraordinary sum of £1,061 10s. 10½d. per day!

The population of England at the time of the Conquest is set down with proximate accuracy at about two million souls. During the reigns of the Conqueror and his sons, what through the sword, famine, and exile, it was reduced probably by one-third, and not till the time of Charles II. was it found to have more than doubled itself; so frightful was the curse inflicted on the unhappy country by the swarm of thieves from whom royalty and aristocracy are proud to claim descent.

WILLIAM RUFUS (1087—1100.)

William the Conqueror was succeeded by his son, William Rufus—a greater villain even than his father, if his more limited opportunities are taken into account. His profligacy was scandalous in an age by no means squeamish. He broke into convents, regardless of the vows of the fair recluses, and men talked privately of even worse enormities. He was a meaner robber than his father. On one occasion he took money from a Jew whose son had turned Christian, undertaking to bring the young man back to Judaism. He did not succeed, but he kept half the fee for his royal advocacy. Fifty Saxons accused of poaching had successfully passed the ordeal of fire. Rufus punished them, nevertheless, declaring that God was an unjust judge.

His courtiers were a band of thieves and robbers. In the houses where they were quartered during royal progresses they insulted the ladies, and frequently burned before the owner's door such articles as they could neither conveniently carry off nor sell. "Never day dawned," says the Chronicle, "but he (Rufus) rose a worse man than he had lain down; never sun set but he lay down a worse man than he had risen."

One morning, fresh from a heavy debauch, he went out to hunt in the New Forest, and was some time afterwards found by certain poor charcoal-burners with the arrow of a hunter or an assassin (most probably the latter) in his breast. His younger brother Henry was in the Forest at the time, and may have known something about the transaction. At all events, he showed much alacrity in laying claim to the Crown. It was noted as a judgment of Heaven that Richard, William the Conqueror's second son, as well as a nephew of William Rufus, likewise came to violent ends in the New Forest.

HENRY I. (1100—1135.)

Henry I., with better mental gifts than his brother, was a miracle of treachery, vindictiveness, and avarice. His praise of a man was a sure sign that he intended to ruin him. An old favourite boasted that he could build as magnificent a monastery as the king. Henry had him harassed by iniquitous law-suits till he died of a broken heart. Due de la Barre-en-Ouche, a literary knight, satirized him in a song. Henry had him seized and blinded, and the poor man dashed his brains out in despair. He was not even Henry's vassal. Juliana de Breteuil, the king's natural daughter, objecting to having her two children's eyes put out, was ordered by her amiable parent to be dragged through a frozen moat. When the last great sea-king, Magnus, was slain in Ireland he left in custody of a citizen of Lincoln an immense hoard of 20,000 lbs. in silver. Henry promptly threw the banker into a dungeon and appropriated the treasure. On the death of Gilbert, Bishop of London, Henry seized his effects. The holy man's silver and gold were carried to the king's exchequer in the episcopal boots.

The general pillage—taxation it could not be called—was passing belief. "Those who had nothing to give," says the faithful chronicler, "were driven from their humble dwellings, or, the doors being torn off their hinges, were left open to be plundered; or their miserable chattels being taken away, they were reduced to the extreme of poverty or in other way afflicted and tormented; while against those who were thought to possess something certain, new and imaginary offences were alleged; when not daring to defend themselves in a plea against the king, they were stripped of their property and plunged into misery."

His Saxon subjects he treated with undisguised contempt; while his only son, William, who, before his father's demise, providentially perished in the wreck of the White ship, had repeatedly threatened that when he came to the throne he would yoke them like beasts to the plough. A gluttonous feast of lampreys terminated Henry's career, but his death brought no redress to the miserable people.

STEPHEN (1135—1154.)

Stephen, nephew of the late king and grandson of the Conqueror, in defiance of his solemn oath of allegiance to Maud, Henry's daughter—kings' are like dicers' oaths—at once sought the kingly office, to which he was elected by the aldermen and Common Council of London! All the horrors of a disputed succession ensued—disputed successions and regencies are among the advantages of the monarchical system of government on which the admirers of royalty seldom enlarge. From end to end, the land was filled with rapine. Stephen was a mere swashbuckler; while Maud was an imperious, unfeeling woman, who could inspire no attachment. The perfection of human anarchy was attained. Everywhere frowning castles, built by forced labour, arose; their lords were undisguised bandits, who hauled men and women into their foul dens to rob them of their all. "Some," say the Chronicles, "they hanged up by the feet and smothered with foul smoke; others they hanged by the thumbs or the head, while fire was put to their feet; about the heads of others they knotted cords and bound them so that they went into the brain. Some were cast into pits where there were adders, snakes, and toads, and died there. Many of the castles had in them a 'loathy and grim,' which was a drag for the neck, such as hardly two or three men could lift. This was thus applied: being fastened to a beam, the sharp iron was placed round the man's neck, so that he could neither sit, nor lie, nor sleep, but must bear all this iron. Many thousands they wore out with hunger. To till the ground was to plough the sea. If two or three men were seen riding up to a town, all the inhabitants fled, taking them for plunderers. And this lasted, growing worse and worse, throughout Stephen's reign. Men said openly that Christ and his saints had gone to sleep."

It is the unspeakable misfortune of Englishmen that the true history of their monarchy has never yet been written by a competent hand. The Humes, Freemans, Froudes, Macaulays and Greens are scholars and polished writers, but the "root of the matter is not in them." They are respecters of persons, party advocates or word-painters, removed, it may be through no fault of their own, from all living contact and sympathy with the people. Comte's dictum, "The working class is not, properly speaking, a class at all, but constitutes the body of society; from it proceeds the various special classes which we regard as organs necessary to that body"—is the

true key to universal history, and they comprehend it not. Royalty, aristocracy, and plutocracy are not organs necessary to the body of society. They are but excrescences. They exist only for reprobation and extinction. "By their fruits ye shall know them;" but by their fruits, alas! they have never been made known by historians to the people of England. Royalty and aristocracy have been treated by nearly all English analysts as if they were the body of society, for whom the workers live, move, and have their being. Wanted—a competent English Historian. None but Republicans and Democrats need apply.

Chapter IV.

Plantagenet Royalty.

*God said, I am tired of kings,
I suffer them no more;
Up to mine ear the morning
Brings the outrage of the poor.*

*My angel, his name is Freedom,
Choose him to be your king;
He shall cut pathways east and west
And fend you with his wing.*

EMERSON.

STRIP the lives of the kings and queens of England of the meretricious glamour of historic, or rather histrionic, art, and what remains to be recorded is one long weary catalogue of human folly, depravity, and crime. No wonder our historians give play to their imaginations. If they did not permit themselves that indulgence, they must needs abandon their task in disgust. They would find themselves in a position somewhat similar to that of the criminal who was allowed to choose between the galleys and a searching study of the works of Guiccardini. The convict elected to peruse Guiccardini, but soon discovered his mistake, and went cheerfully to the galleys.

HENRY II. (1154-1189).

Henry II., the son of Matilda, was the first of the Plantagenets who misgoverned England with all their might for more than three hundred years—from 1154 to 1485. His one aim in life was to render the monarchy absolute, and except from the Church he encountered but little opposition. In Stephen's time Christ and His saints had gone to sleep," and during Henry's reign they can scarcely be said to have walked up. If he did not expressly order the brutal murder of Thomas a Becket, which sent a thrill of horror through Christendom, his words were, to say the least, highly ambiguous. His notions of religion were peculiar and original. When he did penance at à Becket's shrine, it was from no sentiment of remorse, but because he hoped to cajole the saint to use his influence to get him (Henry) out of certain troubles that then beset him.

For the sake of her large possessions in France, he married a notorious courtesan and *divorcee*. His own infidelities were unbounded. Among his mistresses was the fair Rosamond Clifford, of Woodstock labyrinth fame, whom the virtuous Queen Eleanor is said to have compelled to drink poison by holding a dagger to her throat.

Irishmen in particular have reason to execrate the memory of this king. To him they owe the beginning of their long protracted national agony. The occasion was befitting. One Irish chief or prince had made off with another chief's wife, and being brought to book for his misconduct by the over-King of Ireland, he posted off to do homage to Henry for his possessions. But years before this auspicious event Henry had concluded that Ireland "was commodious to him," and that it was desirable "to enlarge the bounds of the Church, to restrain the progress of vices, to correct the manners of the people, to plant virtue among them, and to increase the Christian religion! "The Pope had seen matters in the same light all the more clearly that Peter's pence was an uncertain quantity so far as Ireland was concerned. The result had been an annexational Papal bull in Henry's favour.

His last years were not cheerfully spent. His sons, Henry, Richard, and John all rose in arms against him. Eventually he was thoroughly beaten, and driven in headlong flight from his birthplace, Le Mans. As he beheld

the flames of the city ascend, he bitterly cursed God. His end was not edifying. His last words were, "Woe is me! Shame be upon me, a conquered king, and may God's curse be upon the children who have stretched me here!" So much for the conqueror of Ireland.

RICHARD I. (1189—1199).

Henry was succeeded by his dutiful son Richard I. This man was called Lion Heart, by reason of his habits of violence and brawling; while his fellow-crusader, Philip of France, was known as the Lamb, his manners being courteous and conciliatory. Richard was a mere atrocious blood-shedder, and nothing else. He had plenty of that animal courage which is still to be had in such abundance at the rate of eighteenpence a-day. He was neither statesman nor general. In both these respects he was greatly inferior to the infidel Saladin. He put up every office in the State for sale, in order to raise money for his mad expedition to the Holy Land. His subsequent ransom cost the nation some £300,000—an immense sum for such a worthless bravo.

He appropriately met his death in a petty brawl before the Castle of Chaluz, whose owner had acquired some treasure-trove which Richard coveted. Prowling round the walls with a mercenary band, he was hit by an archer, whose father and two brothers he had killed. On his death-bed Richard is said to have pardoned his slayer; but in point of fact he was flayed alive, while the rest of the garrison were hanged to a man. Sir Walter Scott, and others who have converted this merciless and purposeless scourge of humanity into a hero, have truly much to account for. He himself formed a much more reasonable judgment when, speaking comprehensively of his house, he said, "We came of the devil, and we shall go to the devil."

JOHN (1199—1216.)

Richard was succeeded by his brother John, whose character is summed up in one terrible sentence of contemporary hate: "Foul as it is, hell itself is defined by the fouler presence of John." He was an incomparable scoundrel, a compound of all the royal vices—cruelty, lust, avarice, faithlessness, ingratitude, blood-guiltiness. To make sure of the crown he murdered his nephew Arthur in cold blood, and threw his body into the Seine. To retain the crown he became the vassal and tributary of the Pope. To his father and to his brother he was the most shameless of traitors. His Court was a brothel. Of right and wrong he recked nothing. Yet this right royal ruffian, who "wearied God," signed Magna Charta, the foundation stone of such liberties as Englishmen possess.

It is the severest possible condemnation of royalty to say that the worst kings are always practically the best. Not that King John meant any good to the English people—far from it. The very thought of the Charter made him furious. He flung himself on the ground, gnawing sticks and straw like a wild beast. He got his over-lord, the Pope, to disallow every concession, and proceeded with mercenary troops from the Continent, to burn, slay, and harry the country from end to end. But the great avenger, death, was at hand. Gluttony or poison killed him, and Englishmen rejoiced and were exceeding glad.

HENRY III. (1216—1272.)

John was succeeded by his son, Henry III., a mere boy. He turned out an imbecile, a despicable braggart, and a tyrant to the full limit of his capacity. He could neither manage a horse nor order a battalion. Men called him *cor cereum regis*, or royal waxen heart. Yet he was a true son of John. In the songs of the day he is "the bitter king," "the enemy of the whole realm, of the Church, and of God." His Court lived at free quarters wherever it moved. The royal retainers robbed in all directions with impunity. One-sixth of the revenue was bestowed on foreign favourites. The Battenbergs, Weimars, and Leiningens are no new inflictions. Magna Charta was wholly disregarded.

But a new spirit of liberty had begun to animate the breasts of Englishmen. A deliverer was at hand. Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, threw down the gauntlet to the royal power. A man of stainless honour and a born soldier, Earl Simon was yet greater as a statesman. He was the father of representative government. Having defeated Henry and his son Edward, he summoned to parliament in 1265 not merely knights of shires, but burgesses of "communes." In physics the discovery of the law of gravitation was all-important; in politics the discovery of the true law of popular representation was not less so. It had escaped the subtlest philosophers of Greece and Rome, and Greek and Roman democracy had made shipwreck in consequence. Little mattered it that the founder of the House of Communes perished in battle within a few months of his imperishable achievement. He was before his time.

The victor of Evesham, Edward, "the greatest of the Plantagenets," as he has been called, showed the quality of *his* royal greatness by causing Earl Simon's body to be shamefully mutilated. His head and hands were presented to a second Herodias, Maud, wife of Roger de Mortimer. But the patriot's work neither Edward nor any of his successors, whether Plantagenet, Tudor, Stuart, or Guelph, could undo. Not a civilised people in

the world but has taken its cue from Earl Simon. Even the unhappy Egyptians we have seen making a promising attempt with their Chamber of Notables—an attempt, alas! to be stamped out in blood and flame by the Grand Old Man and his Cabinet of all the talents and all the virtues. Need we chide the Henrys and Edwards with such malefactors in our midst?

EDWARD I. (1272—1307.)

Edward I. succeeded his father, "the bitter king."

"The greatest of the Plantagenets" may be regarded as great beside such colossal criminals as John and Richard III. In no other sense was he great. Compare him with any real benefactor of mankind, and he at once becomes a moral pigmy. Kings and queens to shine at all must be judged by the lowest standard of moral excellence—that is to say by the royal standard. In a royal personage the mere absence of a marked vice becomes an astonishing virtue. What surprises us with regard to princes is not that they are good, but that everything considered, they are not a great deal worse.

When the Prince of Wales's mischievous trip to India was being planned, Mr. Bright announced that H.R.H. was "good natured." What more reasonable therefore than saddle the taxpayer with the cost of the jaunt? Had we not every reason to expect that a prince would be as surely as a bear? For reasons about equally cogent Edward I. has been styled the English Justinian. He was indeed a lawyer in the sense that, when he wished to rob his neighbours in Scotland, Wales, or France of what belonged to them, he generally prefaced his attacks by legal quibbles of which an Old Bailey lawyer might be ashamed. He tried his utmost to set aside the provisions of the Great Charter, and when he found the barons too strong for him he shed some crocodile tears in Westminster Hall, and abandoned the attempt.

By royal decree he made the Jews give up usury on pain of death, and in London alone two hundred and eighty of them were hanged. The position of the chosen race in England has greatly improved since then. But recently the Liberal Administration sent to Egypt a powerful fleet and army to extort exorbitant interest on their behalf. On the whole, Edward's method was more commendable. Better far hang a few Goschens, Rothschilds, and Oppenheims than burn Alexandria and slaughter thousands of inoffensive fellaheen at Tel-el-Kebir, or of gallant Arabs at El Teb.

It was the one great ambition of Edward's life to impose the Norman yoke on the whole British islands. To effect this object he drained England of men and money, while inflicting on Scotland and Wales untold miseries. Of the two last native princes of Wales, Llewellyn and David, he caused the head of the former to be stuck on the Tower, crowned with ivy the latter he commanded [to be drawn, hanged, disembowelled, and quartered. They had been guilty of the enormity of standing up for the independence of the ancient Cymric race.

But it was in Scotland that Edward's policy of craft and violence met with a check, the consequences of which can hardly be exaggerated. He had little difficulty in cajoling and intimidating the Scottish nobles (the most unpatriotic in Europe) into submission to his yoke; and when that was accomplished, according to feudal ideas and precedents, all should have been achieved. But what was Edward's rage and astonishment very speedily to find himself face to face with a rising of the Scottish people, a phenomenon absolutely new in feudal Europe! They were summoned to arms by a simple country gentleman, Sir William Wallace, without aristocratic connections of any kind.

This extraordinary man was the forerunner of the Kosciuskos, Capodistrias, and Garibaldi of later times. He was the first soldier in Europe who fought, not for a dynasty, but for a nation. He brushed aside all the technicalities of the feudal law, and boldly assumed in the face of the world the title of Guardian of the Realm of Scotland. He showed how burghers and peasants, with spears in their hands, might overthrow the iron-clad knighthood of Christendom, hitherto considered invincible. He was the first to form the British infantry square, and despite feudalism he introduced the conscription. His motto was "God armeth the Patriot." In Wallace modern democracy found its first great leader.

After repeated successes against overwhelming odds in the field, aggravated tenfold by the abominable treachery of the Scottish nobles in the council, he was defeated by Edward in a desperate battle at Falkirk, and ultimately betrayed to "the greatest of the Plantagenets" for gold. He was hurried to London, tried at Westminster, and drawn, hanged, disembowelled while yet alive, and quartered at Smithfield. It was not pretended that he had ever sworn allegiance to Edward. His great crime was that he had fought for the honour and independence of Scotland after her feudal lords had ignominiously succumbed. He was judicially murdered.

But like Simon de Montfort, his work was done. His example had made the Scots, the poorest and most uncivilised people in Europe, a nation of stalwart freemen, henceforth resolute never to unite with their powerful neighbour except on terms of perfect equality. Had it been otherwise, England would have had not one Ireland, but two on her hands to day. Englishmen, quite as much as Scotsmen, have reason to bless the memory of the Scottish hero. The burghers of Flanders and the herdsmen of Switzerland were not slow to learn

the lesson he had taught. No matter that his head, crowned in mockery with laurel, was stuck with that of his eldest brother, Sir John Wallace, on London bridge, feudal ruffianism in mail had received its death blow in Europe. How puny the greatest achievement of "the greatest of the Plantagenets" with such a result!

"But bleeding and bound though her Wallace wight
For his long-loved country die,
Yet the bugle ne'er sang to a braver knight
Than Wallace of Elderslie;
And the day of his glory shall ne'er depart,
His head unentombed shall with glory be balmed,
From the blood-streaming altar his spirit shall start.
Though the raven hath fed on his mouldering heart,
Yet a nobler was never embalmed,"

Chapter V.

More Plantagenet Royalty

*"Princes are gods; oh, do not then
Rake in their graves to prove them men."*

EDWARD II. (1307—1317.)

"THE greatest of the Plantagenets," Edward I.—his greatest achievements were to kill, and, like a savage to mutilate the bodies of his two immortal contemporaries, Earl Simon de Montfort and Sir William Wallace—was succeeded by his son, Edward II., the smallest of the Plantagenets. After vigour imbecility, alter senility infancy, such are among the frequent sequences of hereditary rule.

It is doubtful if even elective presidents are necessary to the welfare of a state; but compare, for example, the remarkable series of statesmen from Washington to Arthur who have presided over the destinies of the great republic of the West with the contemporary sovereigns of England from mad and bad George III. to Queen Victoria, whom the late Earl of Beaconsfield, in a moment of after-dinner veracity, pronounced "physically and morally incapable of government," and what a contrast! A Washington, an Adams, a Jackson, a Lincoln, or a Garfield were worth the whole spawn of English kings and queens from the Conquest to the present day. Nor is the condemnation of royalty merely comparative. It is positive and essential. Edward I. was a strong king, and Edward II. a weak one, but the more hurtful to the realm was Edward *père*.

The disease of royalty is the lust of arbitrary power. In pursuit of this unhallowed object, Edward I. bequeathed to his son a *damnosa hereditas*—a legacy of wrong-doing—which the latter was, fortunately for mankind, unable to take up. On the ever-memorable field of Bannockburn it was not Bruce that conquered Edward the Second; it was the spirit of Wallace and the principle of free nationalities that triumphed over Edward I. and the outrage of conquest. What Scotland achieved in 1314, Ireland, under altered conditions, is attempting in 1884. Better late than never.

Never was there a more unlucky prince than Edward II. The terror which his warlike father had inspired was at an end after Bannockburn. He became an object of contempt to his subjects. He had favourites—favouritism is a prime vice of royalty—and his barons hanged them. Occasionally, but not often, he was able to hang a stray baron by way of set-off. At last his queen, Isabella, took a trip to Paris, where she openly cohabited with a malcontent nobleman, Mortimer. The virtuous couple eventually got together an armed force, invaded England, took the king prisoner, had him dethroned with every mark of indignity, and committed to a dungeon. Among other offences, he was charged with disregard of good advice!

His treatment by his custodians was shameful. They amused the rabble by placing a crown of straw on his head, and hailing him with a "Fare forth, sir king!" His end was terrible to relate. It was contrived by his wife, her paramour Mortimer, and the Bishop of Hereford. He was thrown on a bed, held down by a table, while a red-hot plumber's iron was thrust through a horn into his intestines, so as to leave no marks of external violence. But his agonized shrieks aroused the whole castle, and a participant in the crime subsequently told the dreadful

story. "The divinity" which Shakespeare says "doth hedge a king" was clearly not on duty at Berkeley Castle that night. The pious Bishop of Hereford would doubtless have explained that the only effectual way to get rid of an obnoxious hereditary ruler is to murder him—another testimony to the superiority of the monarchical system of government.

EDWARD III. (1327—1377).

Edward II. was succeeded by his son, Edward III., a lad of fourteen, and who so fit to rule in the boy-king's name as the murderers of his father—his mother, Isabella, and Mortimer? In time, however, Edward was able to seclude the one and execute the other, and then devote himself energetically to the pastime of kings and the ruin of nations—war. His life was spent in fighting and pillaging Scotland and France. His quarrel with both countries, particularly the latter, was absolutely unjust. He claimed the crown of France, though notoriously cut off from the succession by the Salic law. He and his son, the Black Prince, won many battles—nay, surprising victories; but neither Neville's Cross, Sluys, Cressy, nor Poitiers secured England a single permanent advantage. Thousands on thousands of lives he sacrificed in the pursuit of a phantom. Whoever wishes to realise the the wickedness and absurdity of military ambition should study this reign. He succeeded in throwing France and Scotland into complete chaos, while England was taxed almost to the limit of endurance at a time when the Black Death had carried off from a third to a half of the entire population. He was a merciless marauder, without a single perceptible notion of statesmanship, and the Black Prince was, if possible, worse.

Among the achievements of the latter was to reseat on the throne of Castile the double-dyed murderer, Pedro the Cruel. In a single expedition in the South of France this Black Prince, this darling of romance, at the head of his "Free Companies," burned to the ground five hundred towns and villages. On one occasion he caused three thousand men, women, and children to be massacred in cold blood in the town of Limoges. Lucky it was for England that she escaped the rule of such a miscreant.

In his old age the victor of Cressy—all his victories come to nought—became the slave of an impudent courtesan, Alice Perrers. She countermanded royal decrees, and dictated to the judges on the bench. When the king lay dying she waited till his eyes were glazing, then stripped the rings from his fingers and decamped. The other attendants imitated so good an example, and like Marmion, the king was left, but for a single poor priest, "alone to die."

RICHARD II. (1377—1399).

Edward III. was succeeded by his grandson, Richard II., a boy of eleven. Richard, as he grew up, disappointed everyone. He was another Edward II. In the beginning of his reign took place the famous peasant revolt led by Wat Tyler—a movement which well deserves, and may receive in another connection, some measure of attention. The young king in the presence of danger promised much; out of danger he was, of course, prompt to revoke his plighted royal word. But to do him justice he was better than his landlord parliament, whom he asked if they would consent to enfranchise the serfs. "Consent," they replied, "we have never given, and never will give, were we all to die in one day." There spoke the Salisburys, Chaplins, and Lowthers of the fourteenth century!

Richard's besetting sins were favouritism and extravagance. Of one young minister, De Vere, whom he made Duke of Ireland, it was said, "he has seen nothing, he has learned nothing, and never been in a battle." This efficient administrator was popularly known as "the doll." In the royal kitchen it was complained there were no fewer than 300 servants, while 10,000 retainers had been known to sit down to dinner. What would the baronial grumblers have said of Queen Victoria, who, with a well-paid household of 1,000 servants, great and small, never feasts anybody but a few pauper German relatives? Doubtless she would have shared the fate of Richard.

Richard had a cousin, Henry of Lancaster, whom he had, with more or less reason, banished from England. Henry was a dark, scheming man, who could bide his time. He waited till Richard went on a visit to Ireland, from which he returned only to find Henry master of the kingdom. He was seized, mounted on a wretched nag, and led from town to town amid the jeers of the unfeeling multitude. He was then formally dethroned, and committed to a dungeon, Henry being elected king in his stead. The rest followed as a matter of course. To prevent the possibility of a restoration, he was secretly put to death, but by what means is unknown. Henry was not the man to bungle a murder after the Isabella Mortimer fashion.

HENRY IV.—(1399-1413).

Henry IV. ascended the throne a perjured man. At Doncaster he had solemnly sworn that he had no designs on the crown whatever; but perjury and murder are no disqualifications for the kingly office. He had the effrontery to lay claim to the royal title on the ground of descent as well as election, and circulated an idle

genealogical story about his mother to make good the point. It availed nothing. He had planted the dragons' teeth, which grew up as the White and Red Roses.

To strengthen his dynasty and to appease his conscience, he was the first to take to the burning of heretics. Of his own motion he passed a statute "De Hætico Comburendo," under which William Sautré, parish priest of Lynn, was the first, but by no means the last, to suffer.

Rebellion followed rebellion, conspiracy, conspiracy. Several attempts were made to poison him. Sharp irons were cunningly placed in his bed: at other times his hose and night shirt were smeared with venom. The constant dread of assassination which broke down the iron nerves of Oliver Cromwell was too much for Henry. He died the miserable victim of anxiety, epilepsy, and leprosy.

HENRY V.—(1413-1422).

He was succeeded by his son, Henry V., Shakspeare's Tiotous Prince Hal. What we know of him for certain is in singular contrast with the Shaksperian delineation. He stands out in history simply as a stern religious bigot and merciless soldier, carrying on unscrupulous wars abroad to divert the minds of his subjects from the defectiveness of his dynastic title.

While Prince of Wales he superintended the burning of a poor heretic, John Badby. He attempted to convert the half-burnt sufferer without success, and then piously recommitted him to the flames. Badby shocked him by maintaining that the bread in the sacrament was not the body of Christ.

His treatment of Sir John Oldcastle, the original of Sir John Falstaff, though Shakspeare found it convenient to deny it, was even more shameful. Sir John, afterwards Lord Cobham, was a man of the highest character, a brave and skilful commander, and a personal friend of the king, from whom he had the misfortune to differ in religious opinion. Sir John held, with Wycliffe, that the Pope was anti-Christ, and that the bread in the sacrament was bread, whatever else it might be. The king argued with his friend, and failing to convince him, handed him over without remorse to the tender mercies of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Oldcastla was condemned to be burnt alive. He escaped, but four years later he was recaptured and executed on the old charge.

Henry's claim to the crown of France was even less defensible than that set up by Edward III., and the war which he waged was, if possible, conducted with greater cruelty and less magnanimity than were exercised by the Black Prince. When a city capitulated, he seized the available goods, put the richer citizens to ransom, expelled all who would not become English, and hanged a selection of its bravest defenders.

His successes at Agincourt and elsewhere were equally astonishing and fruitless. He showed the wind, and his son reaped the whirlwind. He was as pious as the late lamented Mr. Peace of sainted memory, and made about an equally edifying end.

HENRY VI.—(1422-1471).

Henry V. was succeeded by his son, Henry VI., a child eleven months old. During his minority all the advantages of a monarchical regency were powerfully illustrated. He grew up a perfect imbecile. From time to time he lost his reason altogether. The war in France continued, but in time the tide turned against the English invaders.

At last appeared on the scene that unique figure in history, Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans. Her achievements require no recital. She saved France at the cost of her own heroic life. She fell into the hands of the English, by whom she was treated with incredible brutality. Though a mere girl of twenty, she was placed in an iron cage, and so bound with iron chains by neck, waist, feet, and hands that she could not move. She became ill, and the Earl of Warwick sent physicians to her with this royal injunction, "The king would not have her by any means die a natural death. He has bought her dear, and is desirous that she should die by justice, and be burned. Visit her therefore and cure her." The pure-souled girl met her dreadful doom as became the liberator of her country. The king's secretary, who saw her end, wrote with prophetic foresight. "We are all lost. A holy person has been burnt, but her soul is in the hands of God,"

In this wretched reign the nation, for the second time, tasted to the full all the horrors of a disputed succession. Constitutional writers insist that the hereditary principle gives stability to governments. Nothing could be further from the truth. Dynastic wars have from the first deluged the world in blood. Nor are they over. The last terrible death-grapple between France and Germany was, in reality, a dynastic war. It was caused by Hohenzollern succession intrigues in Spain, and the need of military *prestige* to give the son of Eugenie a chance of the imperial inheritance. How two civilised peoples could ever have permitted themselves to rend each other over such issues is inexplicable, except on the hypothesis that men in the mass may go mad exactly as individuals at times go mad.

If I were King of France, or, what's better, Pope of Rome,
I'd have no fighting men abroad nor weeping maids at home;
All the world should be at peace; let kings assert their right,
And those that make the quarrels be the only men to fight,

In the Wars of the Roses the old Norman aristocracy took sides—York v. Lancaster—to a man, and, like the swine in the Gospel, rushed headlong down a steep place into the sea, where, happily, they nearly all perished. Of "our old nobility" who "came over at the Conquest" hardly a dozen specimens were left alive. The struggle lasted for thirty years from the first battle of St. Alban's 1455, to Bosworth Field, 1485.

EDWARD IV. (1461—1483).

Edward IV. of York, who succeeded eventually in conquering Lancastrian Henry VI. and having him secretly murdered in the approved kingly fashion, had a better hereditary title than his victim, and perhaps he was not a worse king. But Philip de Comines, an excellent observer, remarks of him:—"He indulged himself in a larger share of ease and pleasure than any prince in his time." He surrounded himself with courtesans, epicures, parasites, and buffoons. Sir Thomas More observes:—"He" (Edward) "used to say that he had three concubines who excelled in three distinct properties. One was the merriest, another the wiliest, the third the holiest harlot in his kingdom." The merriest was the unfortunate Jane Shore.

EDWARD V. AND RICHARD III. (1483—1485).

Edward IV. was succeeded by his son, Edward V., a lad of twelve. He reigned for nearly three months—a long time, considering the character of his amiable uncle, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the Protector of the realm. It has been said that it is possible to paint the devil himself in colours too dark; but no one has yet been able to find pigments black enough to suit the moral lineaments of Richard III. Compared with him, even King John becomes respectable, and Nero has to look to his laurels. He accused his own mother of marital infidelity, and got his two nephews, the elder being the king, first bastardized and then suffocated in the Tower. The murdered lads' sister, his niece, Elizabeth, he proposed to marry, and the young lady, with the correct moral instinct of royal persons, was eager for the match. He beheaded everyone who stood in his way, generally without trial. Yet he appears to have been a man of considerable ability—a sort of "greatest of the Plantagenets" in his way. He was a patron of Caxton.

But such stupendous villany, though it might appal for a time, could not endure. The worst of the Plantagenets was also the last. On Bosworth field Richard encountered the Duke of Richmond, the head of the revived Lancastrian party, and shrieking wildly, "Treason! treason!" fell like *Macbeth*, fighting with desperate valour. Treason to Richard, or indeed to any of his hateful race, were indeed a paradox. "We came of the devil," said Richard I., "and we shall go to the devil." And he said well.

Yet true it is and of verity, that in our national and public schools the ingenuous youth of England are to-day taught to reverence rather than to execrate the memory of this detestable line of reprobates. We are but beginning to recognise that kings are not gods, but by the very law of their existence the worst specimens of men.

Chapter VI.

Tudor Royalty.

*"How much of all that human hearts endure,
Kings and their laws can cause, but cannot cure."*

To the last of the Plantagenets, Richard III., succeeded the first of the Tudors, Henry VII., the victor of Bosworth Field. He was the grandson of Owen Tudor, an insignificant Welsh squire in the service of the widow of Henry V. Owen married this lady, or she him, and was sent to Newgate for his presumption; yet his descendants came nearer to establish an absolute despotism in England than any of their predecessors on the throne.

The Plantagenets, in their long struggle with the barons, had been reluctantly constrained to concede many

popular rights. While the royal and aristocratic thieves were quarrelling, honest Englishmen had succeeded in getting some portion of what was their own, But no sooner had the old nobility met their doom in the Wars of the Roses and the hands of royalty were untied, than a determined and systematic effort was made to uproot every national liberty. The old Norman barons regarded themselves as the peers of the king. They owed their elevation to their swords. The new nobility, on the other hand, were the mere creatures of the king, made by his parchments. Their obsequiousness to his will in the Upper House affected the House of Commons so disastrously that parliament, under the Tudors, became little more than a court for registering royal decrees. Under the Plantagenet *régime* the kings had to commit their own murders, extortions, and illegalities, and stand to the consequences. The Tudors were more fortunate. They made parliament and the judges of the land sanction all their crimes, and bear the odium. So completely has Mr. Froude, the leading authority for this period of our history, misunderstood the spirit of the age, that he persistently represents Henry VIII.—a more execrable and capricious tyrant never breathed—as a high-souled Christian gentleman who had the misfortune to suffer from a plethora of wives deserving the halter!

From the time of Henry VII. to the Long Parliament the rack and other dreadful instruments for the torture of political prisoners were in constant use. Torture was introduced by royal warrant in 1468, and went on till 1640 without check, in flagrant defiance of the common law of the land. In countries where the Roman law prevailed torture was in regulated use. In England there was no rule but the caprice of the king. "The rack," says Selden, "is nowhere used as in England. In other countries it is used in judicature when there is *semiplena probatio*, or half-proof against a man. Then to see if they can make it full, they rack him if he will not confess. But here in England they take a man and rack him—I don't know why nor where—not in time of judicature, but when somebody bids."

The Tudor and Stuart kings rank as torturers with Nabis and Phalaris. So exquisite were the torments they invented that their victims, generally innocent, were wont "to wish and kneel in vain to die." Scores of royal torture warrants of the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. have happily, or unhappily, come down to us to illustrate the history of the monarchy of which Englishmen are so proud.

For nearly two hundred years there was scarcely a State trial that was not a judicial murder. To be accused of disloyalty was to be condemned. There are two, and perhaps only two, exceptions to this rule, one of them being that of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, in the reign of Queen Mary. But the erring jury in that case got a lesson they were not likely to forget. Four of them repented of their verdict and were discharged, while five, more contumacious, lay in gaol for eight months, and were fined £200 a-piece, say, £2,400 in present currency.

The accused, altogether contrary to law, was seldom or never brought face to face with his accusers. The judges acted more frequently as public, or rather, royal, prosecutors than as impartial arbiters. Take the case of brave and accomplished Sir Walter Raleigh. Sir Walter, *loquitur*, "Good my lords, let my accuser come face to face. Were the case but a small copyhold you would have witnesses or good proof to lead the jury to a verdict, and I am here for my life." Popham, Chief Justice: "There must not such a gap be opened for the destruction of the king as would be if we should grant this; you plead hard for yourself, but the laws plead as hard for the king." Even in the time of James II., it was declared from the judicial bench that "the laws were the king's laws, that the king might dispense with his laws in case of necessity, and that the king was the judge of that necessity." When the Duke of Norfolk asked for the aid of counsel, being, as he said, "brought to fight without a weapon," Chief Justice Dyer replied, "All our books forbid allowing counsel in point of treason."

The Tudors and Stuarts not merely set themselves above the law, but they employed armies of spies to incriminate unwary persons who might express disapprobation of their conduct or even be suspiciously silent regarding it. In the reign of James I (1614), Peachman, an aged clergyman, was accused of treason, and the virtuous Lord Bacon was one of the commissioners who examined him "before torture, in torture, between torture, and after torture." The old man, it was alleged, had in his possession a sermon, which he had neither preached nor published, disrespectful to the British Solomon!

Another and still more effectual method of crushing disaffection was to proceed by Bill of Attainder in parliament. Against this weapon it was absolutely useless to contend. Under the Tudors the Commons were no longer the representatives of the people. They were the slaves of the king. The rack had cowed them to such a degree that they behaved more like spaniels than men.

The Crown made new boroughs and revived old ones—an entirely usurped function—and took care so to manipulate the electorates that the return of its own nominees was assured. Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth made or revived no fewer than sixty-three boroughs returning one hundred and twenty-three royal nominees, while James I. and Charles I. were hardly less active in divesting parliament of whatever representative character it possessed. The key to the entire policy of the Tudors and Stuarts is their fixed determination to reduce the English people to slavery more degrading than that of Turks or Muscovites. When parliament took the life of Charles I., it acted, if not with policy, with unquestionable logic, for Charles most certainly would have taken the life of parliament if he could.

Some historians have professed to see in Henry VII. a ruler of exceptional talent and virtue, but the evidence of such characteristics is singularly defective. If to be morose and suspicious, and passionately addicted to money making and match-making, is to be a statesman then he was a statesman. Parliament voted him a large supply to enable him to conquer France. He landed with a great army; but the French king, knowing Henry's weakness, offered him a large sum and a pension to desist. Henry joyfully agreed to the terms, thus succeeding, as was pungently observed, in making profit out of his subjects for the war, and out of his enemies for the peace.

To increase his hoard he employed two unscrupulous lawyers, Empson and Dudley, to prey on his defenceless people. Their methods of extortion were so successful that the royal treasure soon amounted to £1,800,000, a sum at least twelve times more valuable than now. His annual income was £14,000, or, say, £168,000 current value, but out of that sum he contrived not only to maintain the royal household but to pay his body-guard, and play the host to foreign ambassadors. Is there not here, at all events, a lesson for the hermit of Balmoral and Osborne?

The whole reign was filled with plots, treasons, impostures, and executions. Sir William Stanley, the Lord Chancellor, to whom more than any other man he owed the Crown he caused to be put to death because, in a private conversation, Sir William had said that he would not bear arms against Perkin Warbeck if he were satisfied that Warbeck was really the son of King Edward.

A still more infamous act was the execution of the young Earl of Warwick, the last of the Plantagenets. This prince had been kept in close confinement from his infancy, and had sunk into such a state of fatuity that, according to the chronicler, he "could not discern a goose from a cap on." He tried to escape from the Tower, and for that presumption his head was forfeited. As an additional reason for the crime, Henry pleaded the unwillingness of Ferdinand of Arragon to give his ill-starred daughter Catherine, in marriage to Prince Arthur of England while a Plantagenet prince remained alive.

His thorough baseness was still more clearly exhibited in his treatment of the Earl of Suffolk, nephew of Edward IV. Suffolk, who had displeased the tyrant, took refuge in the Low Countries. The ruler of that region, the Archduke Philip, being driven into Weymouth by a tempest, was compelled, as the price of his own liberty, to give up Suffolk, whose life it was however stipulated should be spared. Henry kept his word, but enjoined on his successor to put him to death, a congenial task, which, needless to say, Henry VIII. performed with true filial devotion. Henry, who was a very pious man, had evidently in this matter profited by the politic instructions given to Solomon by David with respect to the sons of Zeruah. He died in the odour of sanctity.

HENRY VIII. (1509—1547.)

Henry VII. was succeeded by his son Henry VIII., the offspring of the union between the White and Red Roses. The late Earl of Beaconsfield, it is said, once cynically remarked of Mr. Gladstone that he had not a single redeeming vice. Well, if vice redeems a man, Henry VIII. were certainly one of the most completely redeemed men that ever lived. Assuredly no more detestable tyrant ever breathed. His horrible cruelties proceeded from the profound depravity of his own heart. They were without excuse of any kind. They fell indifferently on friend and foe, noble and ignoble, 'saint and sinner, Catholic and Protestant, wife and child. Lust, gluttony, vanity, pride, rapacity, blood-thirstiness, all strove for mastery in the breast of the first Defender of the Faith. That such a monster of iniquity should have been permitted to die a natural death must ever strike the historian with astonishment.

He is the true Blue Beard of English story. Long before his divorce from Queen Catherine was broached, his amours were notorious. Elizabeth Tailbois and Mary Boleyn, Anne Boleyn's eldest sister, had both ministered to his passions before he cast his eyes on his second queen. By the former he had a son, Henry Fitzroy, whom he made Earl of Nottingham, Duke of Richmond, Admiral of England, Warden of the Scottish Marches, and Lieutenant of Ireland. He would probably have named Fitzroy his successor, but the youth died before attaining his majority. To gratify his desire for Anne he divorced the faithful Catherine, repudiated the Papacy, doomed Wolsey, the magnificent cardinal, to destruction, and renounced many of the religious tenets for the defence of which in his anti-Lutheran treatise he had been dubbed by the Pope Defender of the Faith.

His charges of infidelity against Queen Anne, for which she and four alleged paramours, her brother being one, suffered shameful deaths, were almost certainly fabrications. On the day of Queen Anne's execution he dressed in white to celebrate an occasion so joyful. On the day following he married Lady Jane Seymour. Anne's daughter, Elizabeth, he was careful to bastardise, just as he had previously bastardised Catherine's daughter, Mary. He subsequently changed his mind, and made it high treason to question the legitimacy of either.

Luckily for Jane Seymour's neck, she died in child-bed, and his minister, Thomas Cromwell Earl of Essex, unfortunately for himself, had the temerity to provide for Henry another wife, Anne of Cleves. From the first he disliked her, called her "a great Flanders mare," and soon contrived to divorce her and behead the unfortunate

minister who had so far mistaken the royal appetite.

Then came Catherine Howard's turn. She pleased the tyrant for a time, but ante-nuptial irregularities were discovered, and both she and nine other persons were condemned to death by act of attainder. It was made high treason for any woman to marry the royal libertine with any unacknowledged sins on her conscience. People dared to smile at this absurd and brutal decree, and said the king must henceforth look about for a widow.

His sixth matrimonial venture was, in fact, the widow of Lord Latimer, Catherine Parr. She was a woman of tact, but on one occasion her neck was in the greatest jeopardy. By this time Henry was infallible head of the Church, and to dispute any doctrine which he chose to entertain was heresy, punishable by death. The queen ventured to express some slight dissent from one of the royal beliefs. The consequence was thither impeachment and arrest were immediately resolved on. But Catherine, meanwhile learning her danger, dexterously managed to convince Henry that when she had presumed to differ from him it was merely to give the infallible head of the Church the pleasure of refuting her. The result was that when the chancellor presented himself to convey her to the Tower he was told to begone for a knave, fool, and beast.

As a Church reformer, Henry suppressed no fewer than 645 monasteries, 90 colleges, 2,374 chantries and free chapels, 110 hospitals, with revenues amounting to nearly two millions per annum. He took care to share the plunder with his courtiers and others, so as to give the strength and cohesion of self-interest to the party of spoliation.

But Henry's most notable achievements were in his novel character of Supreme Pontiff of England, of infallible umpire in the province of faith and morals. The Bloody Statute, very properly so called, ordained that whoever should deny transubstantiation by voice or pen; affirm communion in both kinds; question priestly celibacy, the obligation of vows of chastity or the efficacy of private masses and auricular confession, should be burned alive.

The result of this unprecedented measure was that Protestants and Catholics were dragged to the stake on the same hurdles—the Protestants because they believed less than the king, and the Catholics because they believed more. An acute foreigner then in England observed: "Those who are against the Pope are burned, and those who are for him are hanged." While Bainham and Bilney were burned for Anti-Popery, the illustrious Sir Thomas More and the venerable Bishop Fisher were beheaded for denying the king's supremacy.

And thus the wheat and the tears were skilfully separated by this royal bishop of souls, the reformer of the Church of England! So delighted was Parliament with these and similar proofs of the royal wisdom and moderation, that they voluntarily bestowed on Henry's proclamations the force of law! He thus absorbed in his own person all the functions of king, pope, and Parliament, after the fashion of the Roman emperors, who figured not merely as imperators, but as consuls, praetors, *curule adiles*, and masters of the horse, all in one.

Henry varied his ecclesiastical and matrimonial murders by frequent political homicides. Among the more heinous in the last category was the execution of the Countess of Salisbury, because she had the misfortune to be the mother of his enemy Cardinal Pole, and that of the young and accomplished Earl of Surrey, because he had presumed to quarter the arms of Edward the Confessor on his escutcheon.

In his later years this second Herod was so corpulent that he was unable to walk up or down stairs, and machinery had to be employed to move him. He was afflicted with ulcers, which so maddened him that no one approached him without terror. At last the great avenger, death, laid his hand on the monster, and men breathed freely once more. His reign is an everlasting disgrace to the English name.

EDWARD VI. (1547—1553)

Henry VIII. was succeeded by his only son, Edward VI., a minor nine years of age. He died in his sixteenth year, not without the suspicion of foul play. The Duke of Northumberland had persuaded him to will the crown to Lady Jane Grey, the duke's daughter-in-law. Thereupon, to cure him of an illness, his physicians were dismissed, and an ignorant woman undertook to restore him to health. Her potions killed him in less than no time.

Like nearly all princes who die young, innumerable virtues were ascribed to him. How far he deserved them is another matter. But let him have the benefit of the doubt. "Whom the gods love die young." Especially is this true of kings, who almost necessarily become more depraved the older they become. "It is the hand of little employment that hath the daintier sense," as *Hamlet* observed of grave-making.

The story that he humanely refused to sign the death-warrant of the heretic Joan of Kent, when Cranmer urged him to do so, like so many other good deeds of kings, is now known to be apocryphal.

MARY (1553—1559.)

To Edward VI. succeeded his sister, Mary the Bloody. Her story is without complexity. She is the sullen, relentless, malignant bigot of English history—the religious persecutor *par excellence*—the female

Torquemada. Almost as a matter of course she put to death Lady Jane Grey and her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley, who had aspired to the throne. That was a mere preface to her great undertaking, the extirpation of the Protestant heresy from her dominions.

She settled down to her work with a vigour worthy of her father, the Defender of the Faith. In the Marian persecution it is computed that no fewer than two hundred and seventy-seven persons perished at the stake, to say nothing of other forms of persecution. Five bishops were burnt, twenty-one clergymen, eight lay gentlemen, eighty-four tradesmen, one hundred husbandmen, fifty-five women, and four children! Among those who met their fate with heroic constancy were Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester; Ridley, Bishop of London; and Latimer, Bishop of Worcester; while even Cranmer atoned for previous inconstancy by a courageous end. His heart was found among the ashes, unscathed by the flames. "Be of good cheer!" cried Latimer to Ridley at the stake. "We shall this day kindle such a torch in England as, I trust in God, shall never be extinguished!" Mary literally burnt the Pope out of the kingdom, in spite of the scholarly Legate Pole, who vainly urged on the vindictive woman milder and more Christian measures. After a reign of little more than five years she died childless, in an agony of grief and frenzied distraction, amid execrations all but universal. The cardinal legate died the same day; and "a voice in the night," in our courtly Laureate's drama of "Queen Mary," thus forcibly bids them adieu:—

*"God curse her and her legate! Gardiner burns
Already, but to pay them full in kind,
The hottest hold in all the devil's den
Were but a sort of winter! Sir, in Guernsey
I watched a woman burn; and in her agony
The mother came upon her—a child was born—
And, sir, they hurled it back into the fire,
That, being but baptized in fire, the babe
Might be in fire for ever. Ah, good neighbour!
There should be something firier than fire
To yield them their deserts! "*

ELIZABETH (1559—1603).

To the Bloody Mary succeeded the "Virgin Queen," Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn. As a matter of fact, Elizabeth was hardly less bloody than her sister. She was beyond a doubt the most shameless dissimulator and liar of her own or almost any age. The very fact that she laid claim to purity of life is about the best proof that she was as even charitable observers were compelled to believe, a woman of the most abandoned morals. Her Court Warrington describes as a place "where there was no love but that of the lusty god of gallantry, Asmodeus," where, according to Faunt, "all enormities reigned in the highest degree." Dudley, the husband of the hapless Amy Robsart, the most callous libertine of the day, the queen openly fondled before the whole Court, calling him her "sweet Robin." His bedroom was placed next to her own. She indulged habitually in the coarsest jests, and swore like a trooper. Hatton, Raleigh, Oxford, Blunt, Simier, Anjou, were all reputed among the number of her lovers.

Her hatreds, like her loves, were not speculative merely. They took instant shape. She collared Hatton, spat on Sir Mathew Arundel, and boxed the ears of the earl marshal.

Her vanity was unbounded. When she died her wardrobe was found to consist of nearly 3,000 dresses, all in the most approved "girl of the period" style. She was dissatisfied with certain portraits of herself, which she imagined conveyed an inadequate impression of her charms. She accordingly announced that an authorized portrait would be taken, which alone it should be lawful to reproduce. In point of fact, though it was almost high treason not to praise her charms, she was anything but a beauty. Her eyes were small, her lips thin, her teeth black, her nose hooked, and her hair red; yet when Hatton told her that "to see her was heaven, the lack of her was hell," she regarded him as a discriminating person. When she made a progress the people *en route* were expected to fall down on their knees, and they did so. The genuflexions which she exacted from all were Oriental rather than English. Her train, which was of ridiculous length, was borne by a marchioness.

Her greed was insatiable. While dropping a tear on "Sweet Robin's" grave she was careful to cause his goods to be sold by auction for the payment of certain debts to herself. The faithful Walsingham, who spent his life and fortune in her service, she allowed to die a beggar.

Secretary Davison, who screened the infamous part she played in the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, she committed to the Tower (where he died), and robbed him of £10,000.

While the nation was in ecstasies over the defeat of the Armada, the Queen was grumbling at the cost of the great deliverance, and making profit out of the spoil provisions of the fleet.

She was, perhaps, the only soul in England who regarded the Massacre of St. Bartholomew with as much indifference as if it had occurred in the planet Mars. Her sister Mary declared on her death-bed that if her bosom were opened, the word "Calais" would be found written on her heart. If Elizabeth's body had been opened, her heart might have been sought for in vain.

Her cruelties, unlike those of her sister Mary, had not even the poor excuse of religious bigotry. It is doubtful if she had any personal faith. The life she led was Pagan, not Christian. "Her majesty counts much on fortune," wrote Walsingham; "I wish she would trust more in Almighty God." When she persecuted, it was simply to enforce her own supremacy as head of the Church. What the Church taught she cared not. Within twenty years it is calculated that no fewer than two hundred Catholic priests were put to death, while a still greater number perished in the pestilential gaols into which they were cast. Cuthbert Mayne met a traitor's doom chiefly because there was found in his possession a copy of a papal bull or jubilee which he alleged he had bought at a shop out of mere curiosity. Nelson and Sherwood gave unsatisfactory answers, even under the rack, and were, after an interview with the queen, drawn, hanged, and quartered. Campian, the eloquent Jesuit was four times racked, and eventually suffered at Tyburn, along with Shirwin, Briant, and other distinguished Seminarists, it was these shameful severities that at last stirred the sluggish hostility of Spain, and brought the Armada into English waters. Yet the threatened danger was as loyally faced by Catholics as Protestants—Howard, of Effingham, a Catholic, actually commanding the English fleet.

But it was not Catholics alone that suffered. Two Anabaptists, Peters and Turwert, were committed to the flames, the queen "calling to mind that she was head of the Church, and that it was her duty to extirpate error, and that heretics ought to be cut off from the flock of Christ, that they may not corrupt others." Thacker and Copping, Brownists, perished in like manner, because, by objecting to the Book of Common Prayer, they were held constructively to have questioned the royal supremacy. The gaols swarmed with "recusants." Indeed it is on the whole hard to say why Queen Mary should have a monopoly of the epithet "bloody."

Elizabeth has been credited by most historians with profound political sagacity; but the fact is, she had no settled policy of any kind. Her chief weapons were sickening dissimulation and ceaseless intrigue; and when she died everyone was glad to be rid of her and her crooked ways.

Her last days were terrible to behold. She refused to go to bed by reason of what she enigmatically said she saw there. She kept beside her a drawn sword, which, like *Hamlet*, she from time to time thrust through the arras. She died as she had lived, a cruel, self-willed, heartless woman, possessed of few, if any, of the good qualities which the lying legends called history have ascribed to her.

Chapter VII.

Stuart Royalty.

Three or four wenches where I stood cried, "Alas, good soul!" and forgave him with all their hearts; if Cæsar had stabbed their mothers they would have done no less.
Casca in Julius Cæsar."

JAMES I. (1603-1625).

JAMES I., son of Mary, Queen of Scots, great grandson of Margaret, daughter of Henry VII. succeeded Elizabeth, the last of the Tudors.

"The Stuarts," it has been said, "might be pardoned their bad hearts for their worse brains;" but that is only a partial excuse for their wickedness. Their folly was no doubt great, but their natural depravity was very much greater. The British Solomon in particular was a choice specimen of every royal vice. Two years before James's decease, Count Tillières, the French ambassador, thus wrote of "the wisest fool in Christendom: "—"The king will have no man about him of condition, intellect, or judgment, but little people who defer to him in everything, who praise his vices as others praise virtues, and who calumniate all men of honour and virtue. He hates such mortally, thinking that they defame and dispraise him; he would fain avoid the sight of them because he thinks their countenances reproach him for his abominable and scandalous life." "At Newmarket," Tillières adds, "he (the king) leads a life to which past and present times present no parallel." "Unhappy people," he continues "to have such a king, who seeketh nothing but to impoverish them to enrich his favourites, and who careth not what cometh after his death."

Even Tillières, who was by no means squeamish, declines to record some of the unnatural crimes in which James I. is known to have indulged, and they cannot even be hinted at in these pages. The debauchery of the

Court was worse than pagan. Secret murders were perpetrated, and the murderers, as in the case of the Earl and Countess of Somerset, continued to enjoy the royal favour. Mrs. Turner, who was executed *vice* that worthy couple for the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, wondered that the earth did not open to swallow up so wicked a place. It is by no means improbable that James himself was an accomplice in the crime. Of his Court it has been truly recorded: "Impiety the most cynical, debauchery the most unveiled, public and unpunished homicide, private murders by what was called magic, by poison, by hired assassins, crimes natural, unnatural and preternatural were the common characteristics." James held that he was absolutely above the law: consequently he was not accountable to any earthly tribunal.

In a work on "The True Law of Free Monarchy," he had laid it down that "although a good king will frame his actions, to be according to law, yet he is not bound thereto, but of his own will and example-giving to his subjects." By a free monarchy James simply meant a state in which the people were to have no freedom whatever, and it was the logical application of this theory that brought his son's head to the block. "As it is atheism and blasphemy," he said, "to dispute what God can do, so it is a presumption and a high contempt in a subject to dispute what a king can do, or to say that a king cannot do this or that."

By his favourite maxim, "No bishop, no king," he meant that episcopal succession and hereditary regal succession were the only true foundations of Church and State—a doctrine received by the prelates with the greatest acceptance. They declared, at the celebrated Hampton Court Conference with the Puritan divines that this notable discovery of the British Solomon had been directly inspired by the Holy Ghost! The University of Oxford, not to be distanced in loyalty, decreed that "it was in no case lawful for subjects to make use of force against their princes, or to appear offensively or defensively against them." Queen Elizabeth did a good deal to "tune the pulpits;" but James went much farther. He laid it down that kings might "make what liked them law and gospel."

In pursuance of this comprehensive claim, he dismissed Chief Justice Sir Edward Coke, because he refused to administer the law illegally. He peremptorily ordered parliament to abstain from the discussion of certain "mysteries" of kingcraft beyond their province; and when hon. members said their say, notwithstanding, he sent for the journals of the House, and tore out the record of the proceedings with his own hand. "I will govern," he said, "according to the common weal, but not according to the common will." By "kingcraft" James simply meant comprehensive lying.

Even in the time of Nero, if a State prisoner died before conviction, his family did not suffer loss of the dead man's goods. But James improved on this unsatisfactory state of things. He caused corpses to be produced in court and convicted in order to secure escheat of estates to the Crown.

If he could not reach those who had offended him in one way, he did it in another. A half-crazed Scotsman—Thomas Ross—stuck a silly lampoon on his countrymen on the door of a college in Oxford. James could not get him adequately punished in England, so he sent him to his Privy Council in Edinburgh, who, to please their master, first caused the offender's right hand to be struck off, and then his head.

Yet at this critical moment, when the royal terror daunted all but the bravest spirits, the seeds of liberty were being silently sown. Hereditary kingcraft and episcopal priestcraft could not be imposed without challenge on a people politically convinced that taxation imposed without the consent of parliament is illegal; on a people with an open Bible teaching them that royalty was originally granted by the Almighty under a solemn protest and warning; on Christian men daily reading in their New Testaments, "The princes of the Gentiles bear dominion over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them, but among you it shall not be so. He that would be the greatest among you let him be the least, let him be the servant of all." Among a really Christian people it is not too much to say that a king could not possibly exist. It is noteworthy that when Christ had occasion to allude to King Herod he described him, not as His Gracious Majesty, but as "that fox."

Even in James I.'s time the storm-clouds of revolution were visibly gathering. In his parliaments of 1614 and 1621 the Pym, Eliot, and Wentworths—that matchless race of heroes—began to make their appearance in the House. But as usual, the sins of the father were visited, not on the father, James I., but on the son, Charles I. James died in bed, and Charles laid his head on the block.

CHARLES I. (1625-1649.)

Charles I., who succeeded James I., was not a very complex character. He had an inherited thirst for absolute rule, a fatal attachment to favourites, and no man or party could rely for a moment on that "royal word" of his to which he invariably appealed when he contemplated some act of unusual perfidy. Oliver Cromwell was perhaps not very far wrong when he pronounced Charles "the hardest-hearted man on earth," but he certainly was greatly at fault when he likewise credited him with "great parts and great understanding." "Insincerity," says the impartial Hallam, was "a fault that appeared in all parts of his life, from which no one who has paid the subject any attention will pretend to exculpate him." This it was even more than his tyranny that sealed his doom. It was the impossibility of binding Charles by any compact that nerved the Commons to

put him to death. Yet in the unhallowed arts of dissimulation he was a mere child compared with the matchless Oliver himself.

As for the tyranny of the king, it was neither greater nor less than that of his immediate predecessors, James and Elizabeth. He merely walked diligently in their footsteps over ground which their royal hoofs had helped to render impassable.

Hardly was he seated on the throne, when the memorable strife between king and parliament began. The House, led by Sir John Eliot, impeached the royal favourite, Buckingham, one of the most incompetent, reckless, and insolent of his tribe. "I must let you know," wrote Charles to the Commons, "that I will not allow any of my servants to be questioned among you, much less such as are of eminent place and near me." And summoning the members to Whitehall, he told them—"Remember that parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution; and therefore, as I find the fruits of them good or evil, they are to continue or not to be." This the Commons were very careful to remember when the Long Parliament met. They effectually provided against the exercise of a power so arbitrary and dangerous; yet even now the Prime Minister can of his own whim or for party purposes turn the Representatives of the People out of doors at any moment. Our rulers would utterly belie themselves if they did not preserve some relict of every State abuse.

Eliot's impeachment of Buckingham was conceived in a strain such as no Tudor or Stuart had ever listened to. "Through the power of State and justice he has dared ever to strike at his own ends. What have been his actions, what he is like, you know. By him came all our evils, in him we find the causes, and on him must be the remedies! *Pereat qui perdere cuncta festinat. Opprimatur ne omnes opprimat!*" (Let him perish who is in haste to ruin everything. Let him be crushed lest he crush everyone.) Eliot and Sir Dudley Digges were at once hurried to the Tower, while the House was speedily dissolved for its insubordination. Illegality followed illegality. But benevolences, forced loans, and ship-money were enforced to little purpose. The people sullenly resisted.

In another parliament the famous Petition of Right was wrung from the king, and Buckingham fell by the hand of the assassin Felton. Felton regarded himself as a public benefactor, and rich and poor drank to his health. The parliament of 1629 was dissolved like its predecessors, but not before it had declared "a capital enemy of kingdom and commonwealth" any minister who should advise the levy of subsidies without consent of parliament, and "a betrayer of the liberty of England and an enemy of the same" whoever should voluntarily comply with such illegal demands.

The king's third parliament was as unbending as the others. It was dismissed, and the king resolved to govern "by such other means as God had put into his hands." For eleven years Charles, Laud, and Strafford had it pretty much their own way. Sir John Eliot, the brave, the learned, the eloquent died in the Tower. Chambers, a patriotic London alderman, for complaining that Englishmen were worse off than Turks, was heavily fined, and died like Eliot in duress. To-day, alas! his civic successors suffer chiefly from excess of turtle and conger eel. The Petition of Right was treated as if no royal assent had been given to it. The apostate Strafford had undertaken "to vindicate the monarchy for ever from the conditions and restraints of subjects."

But the darkest hour was before the dawn. An unexpected light burst from the North. Presbyterian Scotland rose in arms as one man to resist Episcopal innovations which Charles had forced on that country at the instigation of Laud. James I., from a bitter personal experience, had admonished that narrow-minded ecclesiastic that "he knew not the stomach of that people." The Scots were over the border before the king could organise any adequate resistance, and their decisive action changed the whole aspect of affairs.

In 1640 the Long Parliament was convoked, and the whole fabric of royal tyranny, column by column, and buttress by buttress, fell to the ground. Strafford and Laud went to the block. The king's outrageous attempt to arrest the Five Members in the House itself was the immediate precursor of the civil war. On the field of Naseby the royalist forces were irretrievably shattered.

Fast, fast the gallants ride
In some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads pre-destined
To rot on Temple Bar:
And he—he turns and flies,
Shame to those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture,
But dared not look on war.

The war ended in the complete overthrow of the Royalists, the execution of the king, and the eventual usurpation of the supreme power by Oliver Cromwell, the Puritan Bonaparte of the English Revolution.

About the justice of the king's sentence there can be no rational dispute. He had violated the fundamental laws of the State and involved the nation in torrents of blood. The Commissioners who tried him were men of the highest probity, and of their president, Bradshaw, the worst that Whitlocke could say was that he was "a stout man and learned in the law—no friend of monarchy." Charles declined to acknowledge the authority of the Court on the ground that the English monarchy, being hereditary, he himself was the fountain of all law. Bradshaw overruled the objection, asserting that kingship, on the contrary, is an elective trust, and that the people are the source of all rights. In a previous chapter the reader may remember this question was examined and solved as Bradshaw solved it.

But all things that are lawful are not expedient. There are numerous "wenches" in society, as Casca said, always ready to cry, "Alas, poor soul!" when a high-placed criminal meets his deserts—aye, even "if he had stabbed their mothers," and out of consideration for these weak vessels, it can hardly be doubted that exile or imprisonment would have been a more politic penalty than death. What was to be dreaded was a monarchical reaction, and that, at all events, the execution of the king did not prevent. It is noteworthy that the illustrious trio, Vane, Blake and Sidney regarded the execution, as a grave political blunder.

Oliver Cromwell's account of the ground of *his* action in the matter, as afterwards narrated by his confidant, Lord Broghill, is worth relating:—

"The reason of an inclination to come to terms with him (Charles) was, we found the Scots and Presbyterians began to be more powerful than we (Cromwell and the Independent Army Officers) and were strenuously endeavouring to strike up an agreement with the king and leave us in the lurch; wherefore we thought to prevent them by offering more reasonable conditions. (At this juncture, there is every reason to believe, Cromwell would have been content with the earldom of Essex and the post of generalissimo.) But while we were buried with these thoughts, there came a letter to us from one of our spies, who was of the king's bedchamber, acquainting us that our final doom was decreed that day, What it was he could not tell; but a letter was gone to the queen with the contents of it, which letter was sewed up in the skirt of a saddle, and the bearer of it would come, with the saddle upon his head, about ten o'clock the following night, to the Blue Boar Inn in Holborn, where he was to take horse for Dover. The messenger knew nothing of the letter in the saddle, but someone in Dover did. We were then at Windsor, and immediately upon the receipt of the letter from our spy, Ireton and I resolved to take a trusty fellow with us, and in troopers' habits to go to the inn, which we accordingly did, and set our man at the gate of the inn to watch. The gate was shut but the wicket was open, and our man stood to give us notice when anyone came with a saddle on his head. Ireton and I sat in a box near the wicket, and called for a can of beer and then another, drinking in that disguise till ten o'clock, when our sentinel gave us notice that the man with the saddle was come, upon which we immediately rose, and when the man was leading out his horse saddled we came up to him with our swords drawn, and told him we were to search all who went in and out there, but as he looked like an honest fellow we would only search his saddle, which we did, and found the letter we looked for. On opening it we read the contents, in which the king acquainted the queen that he was now courted by both the factions, the Scots and Presbyterians, and the Army; that which of them bid fairest for him should have him; that he thought he could close sooner with the Scots than the other. Upon which we speeded to Windsor, and finding we were not like to have any tolerable terms from the king, we immediately resolved to ruin him."

But though Oliver's resolution to despatch the king was there and then taken, he professed to be undecided almost to the last. It was his invariable policy to appear to be led by those he was misleading.

At a later date honest General Ludlow made the following curious notes at a conference convened by Cromwell, in Westminster, between the so-called "Grandeers of the House and the Army" and the "Commonwealth's men," or Republicans, of whom Ludlow was one:—

"The Grandeers, of whom Lieutenant-General Cromwell was the head, kept themselves in the clouds, and would not declare their judgments either for a monarchical, aristocratical, or democratical government, maintaining that any of them might be good in themselves, or for us, according as Providence should direct. The Commonwealth men declared that monarchy was neither good in itself nor for us; that it was not desirable in itself from the 8th chapter and 8th verse of the First Book of Samuel, where the rejection of the judges and the choice of a king was charged upon the Israelites by God himself as a rejection of Him, and from divers more texts of Scripture to the same effect. And that it was in no way conducive to the interest of the nation, was endeavoured to be proved by the infinite mischiefs and oppressions we had suffered under it; that indeed our ancestors had permitted themselves to be governed by a single person, but with this proviso that he should govern according to the direction of the law which he always bound himself by oath to perform; that the king had broken his oath and thereby dissolved our allegiance. Notwithstanding what was said, Lieutenant-General Cromwell—not for want of conviction, but in hopes of making a better bargain with another party—professed himself unresolved; and having learned what he could of the principles and intentions of those present at the conference, took up a cushion and flung it at my head and then ran down the stairs; but I overtook him with

another, which made him hasten down faster than he desired. The next day, passing by me in the House, he told me he was convinced of the desirableness of what was proposed, but not of the feasibility of it, thereby I suppose, designing to encourage me to hope that he was inclined to join with us, though unwilling to publish his opinion, lest the Grandees should be informed of it, to whom I presume he professed himself of another opinion."

Chapter VIII.

Republic and Protectorate.

"And what king's majesty, sitting on an exalted throne, ever shone so brightly as that of the people of England then did, when, shaking off that old superstition which had prevailed a long time, they gave judgment on the king himself, or rather on an enemy that had been their king, caught, as it were, in a net by his own laws, and scrupled not to inflict on him, being guilty, the same punishment which he would have inflicted on any other?" . . . "This is the God who uses to throw down proud and unruly kings, and utterly to extirpate them and their family. By his manifest impulse being set at work to recover our almost lost liberty, we went on in no obscure but an illustrious passage, pointed out and made plain to us by God Himself."

MILTON.

THE REPUBLIC (1649—1653).

To the Monarchy succeeded the Republic, or Commonwealth. It lasted for four years and three months—down to 20th April, 1653, the date of the Cromwellian *coup d'état*. Short as the period is, it is the grandest in English annals, and the most pregnant with political instruction. On 4th January, 1649, the House resolved: "That the People are, under God, the original of all just power; that the Commons of England in Parliament assembled being chosen by, and representing the People, have the supreme power in this nation; that whatsoever is enacted or declared for law by the Commons in Parliament assembled hath the force of law, and all the people of this nation are concluded thereby, although the consent and concurrence of King or House of Peers be not had thereto." The Monarchy was formally abolished, it being voted that "The office of a King in this nation is unnecessary, burthensome, and dangerous." The Peers were voted simply "useless and dangerous." The Act constituting England a Republic, set forth "that the People of England and of all the dominions and territories thereunto belonging are, and shall be, and are hereby constituted, made, established, and confirmed to be a Commonwealth and Free State, and shall henceforward be governed as a Commonwealth and Free State by the Supreme Authority of the People—the Representatives of the People in Parliament—and by such as they shall appoint and constitute Officers and Ministers for the good of the People, and that without any King or House of Lords."

Later in the same year the following affirmation of allegiance was formulated: "I do declare and promise that I will be true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England without a King or House of Lords.—a formula which would suit Mr. Bradlaugh exactly. The Great Seal was ordered to be broken by a workman in face of the House, and a new one substituted—"The Great Seal of England, 1648." On the one side was a map of England and Ireland, on the other the House of Commons in session, with the legend, "In the first year of freedom, by God's blessing restored, 1648." The device was by Sir Henry Martin, the wittiest man in the House, and the staunchest of Republicans.

The executive functions of the House were vested in a Council of State, consisting of forty-one members, quorum nine. At first the President of this Republican Cabinet was elected at each sitting, Bradshaw and Cromwell being frequent occupants of the chair. Eventually the honour of Premiership was monthly. Their instructions were (1) to command and settle the militia of England and Ireland; (2) to appoint and dispose of magazines and stores; (3) to set forth such a navy as they should think fit; and (4) to sit and execute the powers given them for a year. John Milton was appointed the Secretary for Foreign Tongues to this remarkable council at a salary of £300 per annum.

Mr. Gladstone and other Prime Ministers have talked many senseless constitutional common-places on the dangers and inconveniences of large Cabinets, but the achievements of this illustrious Council by sea and land, in peace and war, have had no parallel in English history. In point of administrative efficiency the present Gladstonian Ministry of all the talents were but as pigmies compared with these giants. The members did not require to post off to Balmoral or Osborne to procure a useless royal signature in those times. They were simply members of an Executive Committee of the House, responsible to no other authority, and liable to removal by vote at the end of their annual term of office. Is there not here a lesson in governmental simplicity for constitution-builders to profit by? Complexity is as objectionable in politics as in mechanics. The simpler the

political organism the better. The boasted balance of powers in the British Constitution merely produces rotatory motion. Progress is rendered next to impossible.

Three faults, and only three have ever been seriously laid to the charge of the Republican House and its illustrious Council of State. Firstly it was nicknamed the "Rump," because it sat after the partizans of Charles Stuart had been subjected to Pride's Purge. But Parliament was *fighting* the King, and the expulsion of his supporters from the House was nothing more than an incident—a regrettable incident, I admit—in the war. The ejected would be much less dangerous in the field than in the Council. "We shall now know," said Vane when Colonel Pride appeared on the scene, "who is on the side of the king and who is on the side of the people."

Secondly, it has been asserted by admirers of Oliver Cromwell, as by the dupes of Napoleon III., that the *coup d'état* prevented anarchy. But the fact was that from 1648 to 1653 the country, as a whole, was profoundly tranquil and prosperous. There was, indeed, no anarchy but what was caused by the unprincipled ambition and unscrupulous intrigues of Cromwell. But to do that arch-traitor justice he never for a moment pretended that the Civil Authority was unable to maintain order. He had been one of them and knew better.

The third charge is less easily rebutted. The Republican Administration have been accused, and Cromwell loudly accused them of a desire to perpetuate their own power unduly, but the House was in the very act of passing a Dissolution Bill, substantially in accordance with the famous Agreement of the People, when it was forcibly broken up by the very man who had long been planning its overthrow on the pretext that it would *not* dissolve! Sir Henry Martin's reason for being in no hurry to appeal to the constituencies, was, in the circumstances, equally witty and wise. The Republic was a tender infant, and who "so proper to bring it up as the mother who had brought it into the world?"

PROTECTORS—OLIVER AND RICHARD CROMWELL (1653—1659).

Between the Man of December, 1851, and the Man of April, 1653, there is little to choose. Napoleon turned on his enemies, Cromwell turned on his friends. Cromwell before committing a flagitious act said his prayers: Napoleon drank brandy. But both were the destroyers of Republics, and both earned the everlasting execration of those who regard liberticide as the greatest of crimes. However Cromwell came to be looked on as a Republican is a mystery of mysteries!

The character of Oliver Cromwell has been a great bone of contention among historians and biographers. Nor is this to be wondered at, for surely no more religiously unscrupulous, humanely bloody, courageously crafty, and patriotically selfish mortal ever lived. In his own day he deceived, almost down to the *coup d'état*, the very elect of Englishmen—Sir Harry Vane, Blake, Algernon Sidney, Scot, Sir Henry Martin, Sir Peter Wentworth, Sir Arthur Hazelrig, Hutchinson, Ludlow, Bradshaw, and the whole Council of State. If he had been a hypocrite of the ordinary type depend upon it such colleagues as these would have fathomed and frustrated his self-seeking designs in time. But he was a very extraordinary hypocrite. Bishop Burnet, in a couple of sentences, gives what I believe to be the true clue to his later character. "I had much discourse," says Burnet, "on this head (Oliver's profound dissimulation) with one who knew Cromwell well, and all that set of men, and asked him how they could excuse all the prevarications and other ill things of which they were visibly guilty in the conduct of their affairs. He told me *they believed there were great occasions in which some men were called to great services, in the doing of which they were excused from the common rules of morality; such were the practices of Ehad and Saul, Samson and David; and by this they fancied they had a privilege from observing the standing rules.*" This notion once imbibed Cromwell was not merely able to impose successfully on others, but even on himself. In studying the character of Cromwell one continually encounters not a single Cromwell but several. You pay your money and you take your choice. My view of the Cromwellian moral enigma is simply this:—In youth he was an evil-liver. Presently he suddenly became a Puritan, and the evil spirit having been driven out, he for a time walked in dry places seeking rest and finding none. Later he returned to his house only to find it empty, swept and garnished. "Then goeth he and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man *was* worse than the first."

One man only among his contemporaries seems to have taken his true measure almost from the first—a remarkable man, who died Cromwell's prisoner in Elizabeth Castle, Jersey, at the early age of 39. More than four years before the fatal 20th of April, Lieutenant-Colonel John Lilburne, leader of the Levellers, or Radicals of the day, wrote thus: "The present contest is merely no more than Self in the Highest, and to set up the false saint and most desperate apostate, murderer, and traitor, Oliver Cromwell, by a pretended election of his mercenary soldiers, under the false name of "godly interest," to be King of England, that being now too apparently all the intended liberties of the people he ever sought for in his life."

Colonel Streater also saw the drift of Cromwell's intrigues. Brave simple-minded Major-General Harrison had been persuaded by Cromwell to take part against Parliament on the ground that the reign of the saints could not otherwise be inaugurated. Harrison was assured," he told Streater, "that the Lord General (Cromwell)

sought not himself but that King Jesus (Harrison was a Fifth Monarchy man) might take the sceptre." "Christ had better come before Christmas or he will come too late," was Streater's grim response. And too late he did come for poor Harrison, who ultimately found himself, like Lilburne, Cromwell's prisoner.

Nor could he bend stout incorruptible General Ludlow from the paths of rectitude. "Walking," says Ludlow, "one day with Lieutenant-General Cromwell in Sir Robert Cotton's garden, he inveighed bitterly against them (the Commons), saying in a familiar way to me, "If thy father were alive, he would let some of them hear what they deserved;" adding further, "that it was a miserable thing to serve a Parliament to whom, let a man be never so faithful if one pragmatistical fellow rise up and asperse him, he shall never wipe it off. Whereas," said he, "when one serves under a general, he may do as much service, and yet be free from all envy and blame.' This text, together with the comment which his after-actions put upon it, hath since persuaded me that he had already conceived the design of destroying the Civil Authority, and setting up of himself; and that he took the opportunity to feel my pulse, whether I were a fit instrument to be employed by him to those ends. But having replied to his discourse that we ought to perform the duty of our stations, and trust God with our honour, power, and all that is dear to us, not permitting any such considerations to discourage us from the prosecution of our duty, I never heard anything more from him upon that point."

Major General Lambert, a vain man, but a skilful officer, was more easily seduced from his allegiance to Parliament. The House had resolved to abolish the title of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland as unsuitable in a Republic. Nevertheless, Cromwell would inconsistently insist that Lambert should be sent to that country with the title of Lord Deputy-Lieutenant. The upshot was, that Fleetwood, Cromwell's son-in-law, got the post without the title, while Lambert was so incensed against Parliament that he was easily induced to conspire against it.

But Cromwell liked to have the sword of the spirit, as well as that of the flesh on his side. Where there could be no law, there might be gospel. In the "Life of Henry Neville," a member of the Council of State, there occurs the following:—

"Cromwell on this great occasion sent for some of the chief City divines, as if he made it a matter of conscience to be determined by their advice. Among these were the leading Mr. Calamy, who very boldly opposed Mr. Cromwell's project (to eject Parliament), and offered to prove it both unlawful and impracticable. Cromwell answered readily upon the first head unlawful" and appealed to the safety of the nation being the supreme law, 'But,' says he, 'pray Mr. Calamy, why impracticable?' Calamy replied, "Oh! 'tis against the voice of the nation; there will be nine in the ten against you. 'Very well,' says Cromwell, 'but what if I should disarm the nine, and put a sword into the tenth man's hand, would not that do the business?"

His master-stroke, however, was to get his own regiment which was bound to his interest by large extra pay, made the guard of Parliament. The wolf being thus secure of his prey, could choose his own time for devouring the flock. This was even a worse machination than the Self-Denying Ordinance, by which cuckoo-like he contrived to deprive all the members of Parliament of their commissions in the army *except himself*. Still the expulsion of Parliament, though the greatest, was by no means one of his most artistic acts of treason. Vane compelled him completely to take off the mask at the last moment. He had hypocritically demanded what he dreaded most, viz. an appeal to the constituencies, and when he was visibly about to have his wishes complied with, he raved like a maniac. Sir Harry Vane was "a juggler without common honesty!" But even in his wild outburst of baffled rage he was prudent. He clutched the Dissolution Bill, which unfortunately had not been printed hid it under his cloak, and carried it to his chambers, where it was seen no more. Cromwell meant to scatter the House for *not* dissolving; as it was, thanks to Vane's superior strategy, he had to scatter it *for* dissolving!

In judging of such a beast of prey as Cromwell, one should never regard for an instant what he said, but mark intently what he did. Vane, admittedly the purest, and as I think the ablest statesman of his age, was "a juggler without common honesty," and the noble band of more than Roman Senators, who clustered around him, were ordered to "give place to better men?" Now, what of the men, the better men, by whom Cromwell replaced the illustrious Forty-one, the Republican Council of State? Himself and the 'Creature Colonels,' as Lilburne aptly called them, Lambert, Harrison, Bennet, Sydenham, Stapely, Desborough! These the better men! Nay, add the two chief of liars and traitors, Monk and Sir Ashley Cooper (afterwards the thrice infamous Shaftesbury), and one is able to see at a glance what Cromwell meant by "better men." He meant men better suited for his own sinister purposes. That two such villains as Monk and Cooper enjoyed Cromwell's confidence is his severest condemnation. Shall not a man be judged by the company he keeps?

To secure at least one honoured name to gild then shame, this junto of knaves and dupes used every art to induce that "juggler without common honesty," Sir Harry Vane, to join them. His reply was, that doubtless the reign of the Saints had set in, but for his part, he preferred to wait till he got to heaven for his share of the felicity.

No man, both of head and heart, with the single exception of Milton, ever associated with the usurper more,

and even Milton, after the fall of Richard Cromwell perceived the error which his blindness largely excused and wrote with feelings of manifest relief of "those unhappy interruptions (the Cromwells) which God hath removed." Oliver's Parliaments were like his Councils of State nominated, manipulated, purged, brow-beaten, dissolved, expelled in a manner that neither Tudor nor Stuart would have dared attempt. When the recalcitrant members of Barebone's Parliament were ejected by Colonel White they admonished him that they were "seeking the Lord in prayer." "You may go elsewhere to seek the Lord," was the cynical response, "for to my certain knowledge He has not been here for many years." Oliver remorselessly distrained for taxes imposed by his sole authority, and when one of his collectors was sued, he threw the prosecuting counsel into prison. He gagged the press; and dividing England into eleven satrapies, governed them by the swords of his major-generals. He beheaded Sir William Slingsby and Dr. Hewitt for conspiracy without so much as the benefit of trial by jury. The cost of his government was unprecedented in the annals of England: enormous sums being spent in espionage. There was not an offence laid to Charles's charge of which Cromwell was not guilty in an aggravated form.

It is not a little curious that, like Charles, Oliver traced his descent on his mother's side to Alexander, Lord High Steward of Scotland—a fact which may to some extent account for his bad character. The name Cromwell was assumed by his great-great-grandfather, one Morgan Williams, on his marriage with the sister of Henry the Eighth's famous minister, Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex.

Oliver trusted no one except his secretary Thurloe, and not always him. Thurloe relates how "he was once commanded by Cromwell to go at a certain hour to Gray's Inn, and at such a place deliver a bill for £20,000, payable to bearer at Genoa, to a man he should find walking in such a habit and posture as he described, without speaking one word." Thurloe went, found his man, and to his dying day knew nothing more of the transaction.

Cromwell's organ of secretiveness was almost criminally large. Late one night in Thurloe's office he began hurriedly to dictate to the secretary a secret dispatch, without observing the presence of Moreland, afterwards Sir Samuel Moreland, who was fast asleep at his desk. Cromwell instantly seized a dagger, and, but for the earnest entreaties of Thurloe, who protested that Moreland was not awake, would have murdered him on the spot.

He had the tyrant's unfailing taste for severe practical jokes. In signing Charles the First's death warrant, it is on record that, taking up the pen, he smeared Sir Henry Martin's face with ink, the latter not failing to retaliate. In camp he would encourage his troopers to put live coals in each others' boots, in order to enjoy the effects. When his daughter was married to Mr. Rich, heir of the Earl of Warwick—he was an inveterate match maker—he amused himself by throwing about the sack-posset, and by bedaubing the seats with wet sweetmeats in order to spoil the ladies' dresses. "Cromwell," says Cowley in his famous "Vision," "was wanton and merry, unwittingly and ungracefully merry, with our sufferings. He loved to say and do senseless and fantastical things only to do or show his power of doing or saying anything. It would ill befit mine or any civil mouth, to repeat those words which he spoke concerning the most sacred of our English laws the Petition of Right, or Magna Charta. Today you should see him ranting so wildly that no one durst come near him; the morrow flinging of cushions and playing at snowballs with his servants."

His recklessness of human life was almost as great as that of the Roman Sulla, the Prussian Frederick, or the Corsican Bonaparte. His innate ferocity came fully out in his Irish campaign. At the storming of Drogheda he exultingly writes, "Divers of the officers and soldiers being fled over the bridge about 100 of them possessed St. Peter's Church steeple. . . . These being summoned to yield to mercy refused. Whereupon I ordered the steeple of St. Peter's Church to be fired, when one of them was heard to say in the midst of the flames, 'God damn me, God confound me, I burn, I burn.' I believe all their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously, but two: the one of which was Father Peter Taaff, whom the soldiers took next day, and made an end of." Irish Papists were to Cromwell as were Hittites and Hivites to the Jews of old.

Some despots have been not insusceptible to the sentiment of gratitude but Cromwell was not one of these. Parliament had loaded him with favours conferring on him lands of inheritance worth more than £6000 per annum—an immense sum in those days—out of the confiscated estates of royalists; yet that did not prevent him, when he wished to discredit the Legislature from lamenting that the injured ones were "driven like flocks of sheep by forty in a morning to the confiscation of goods and estates without any man being able to give a reason that two of them had deserved to forfeit a shilling." At other times he would find much consolation in the text:—"He shall be called Maher-shalal-hash-bash, because he maketh haste to the spoil." Latterly, in spite of the Act of Oblivion, he rigorously exacted from all who had borne arms for the King one tenth of their annual incomes! But with all his craft, hypocrisy and daring he missed the great object of his ambition—the Crown of England. On this he had probably not set his heart before the execution of the king. Attended by a private soldier named Bowtell he went to look at Charles's body. Being unable to raise the lid of the coffin with his staff he forced it open with the hilt of the other's sword. As he gazed on the severed neck Bowtell asked him

what form of Government they should now have. "The same as now," was the reply. But this mood did not last long. One day in November 1652 Cromwell met Whitelocke, prudent lawyer that he was, in St. James's Park when the following dialogue ensued:—

*Cromwell.*What if a man should take upon him to be king? *Whitelocke.*I think that remedy would be worse than the disease. *Cromwell.*Why do you think so? *Whitelocke.*As to your own person, the title of king would be no advantage, because you have the full kingly power in you already concerning the militia, as you are general; so that I apprehend less envy, and danger, and pomp, but not less power and opportunities of doing good in you, being general, than would be if you had assumed the title of king. *Cromwell.*What do you apprehend would be the danger of taking the title? *Whitelocke.*The danger, I think, would be this: One of the main points of controversy between us and our adversaries is whether the government of this nation shall be established in monarchy, or in a free state, or commonwealth. Now if Your Excellency shall take on you the title of king, the state of our cause will be thereby wholly determined, a monarchy established in your person, and the question will be no more whether our government shall be by a monarchy, or a free state, but whether Cromwell or Stuart shall be our king and monarch. Thus the state of our controversy being totally changed, all those who were for a Commonwealth (and they are a very clear and considerable party), having their hopes therein frustrated, will desert you. *Cromwell.*I confess you speak reason in this; but what other things can you propound that may obviate the dangers and difficulties wherein we are all engaged? *Whitelocke.*Propose a private treaty with the King of Scots, (Charles II) securing everybody's interest and civil and religious liberty. *Cromwell.*More time and consideration. Whitelocke adds:With this the general broke off and went to other company, and so into Whitehall, seeming, by his countenance, displeased with what I had said; yet he never objected to me in any public meeting afterwards. Only his carriage towards me from that time was altered, and his advising with me not so frequent or intimate as before.

When eventually offered the crown by a Committee of his mock Parliament in April 1657, Cromwell's language was throughout the hollow negotiations which ensued a miracle of ambiguity, though as to his wishes no man not by nature a dupe can entertain a doubt. Like our Grand Old Man he could become absolutely incomprehensible at will, plunging into a sea of wordy distinctions which defied analysis. But the "great business of the kingship" as he called it was too much of a good thing. Not even the "creature colonels" would hear of it. Lambert, Fleetwood, and Desborough threw up their commissions, while the other officers, headed by Pride, petitioned, or rather commanded the House, "in the name of the old cause for which they had bled." to withdraw the proposal. It was condemned by Republicans and Monarchists alike and had perforce to be given up.

His Jingo policy abroad was singularly unscrupulous and short-sighted. To promote Protestantism he assailed innocuous decadent Spain instead of formidable France. His disastrous attack on San Domingo was as unprincipled as Frederick's seizure of Silesia—an unique act of royal treachery. Blake's splendid naval victories were in nowise owing to Cromwell. Vane at the head of the Republican Admiralty Committee had made the English Navy. Indeed it was with "foul ships and musty biscuits" that Blake was compelled to face the foe, Cromwell being at the time too intent on the "great business of the kingship" to attend to such trifles. The great Admiral would never for a moment acknowledge the usurper, though he sadly told his men that "it was their duty to fight for their country into whatever hands the Government fell."

At last the Protector's arts of disimulation could deceive no one. Though feared he was all but universally detested. He complained that the "godly interest" had deserted him. Eventually appeared Colonel Titus's terrible indictment—terrible in its truthfulness and remorseless logic—entitled "*Killing no Murder.*" The tyrant read it and smiled no more. His nerves were unstrung by the constant dread of assassination. He habitually wore armour under his clothes, slept as seldom as possible in the same bed, and never stirred abroad without a strong body-guard. His precautions were those of a Russian Czar. His Government was merely a state of siege.

To the last he kept up a show of religion. On his deathbed he asked his chaplain if it were possible for a man once in grace to go to perdition—"No!" replied the chaplain. "Then," said Oliver with a fine touch of 'other worldliness' "I am safe for I know I was once in grace." If so, it were the better for him, for in this world he must ever be classed among the indescribable herd whom Dante admits neither into his Paradiso nor his Inferno "who neither faithful nor faithless were to God but only for themselves." Hence it is that this "grand juggler" as Lilburne called him has no statue.

He had magnificent opportunities. He might have played the part of an Epaminondas or a Washington and his name might have taken the first place on the bead-roll of human distinction. Instead of that he sold the mighty space of his large honours for such trash as never yet delighted the heart of a Brutus. His gigantic apostasy gave the cue to scores of minor traitors, He made patriotism a bye-word and a reproach among

Englishmen. His guilty ambition restored the Stuarts, who seemed a minor evil by comparison, and threw back civilisation for a couple of centuries.

He was no "Saviour of Society." 'Self in the Highest' was ever first in his thoughts. I care nothing for the piety of his 'Letters and Speeches:' the Directors of the City of Glasgow Bank were equally pious. I see in him only the Judas Iscariot of the English Republic on whose like let us hope Englishmen will never have occasion to look again.

His son poor "dawdling Dick" next tried the 'protecting' business for a few brief months and then "at one stride came the dark."

Chapter IX.

More Stuart Royalty.

*Age, thou art sham'd!
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
O! you and I have heard our fathers say
There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
The eternal devil to keep his State in Rome
As easily as a king.*

CHARLES II. (1660-1685.)

NO sooner had the Cromwellian Protectorate collapsed than the arch traitor Monk set to work. The nation, ashamed as it were of the moral grandeur to which it had attained, with the exception always of such choice souls as Milton and Vane, threw itself in a delirium of servility at the feet of a shameless and treacherous libertine. Charles II. "enjoyed his own again," but for the English people, alas! "what a fall was there!" The rotting bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw were dug up, hanged on the gallows at Tyburn, then decapitated, and the heads stuck on poles on Westminster Hall, by wretches who never would have dared to look them in the face had they been alive.

At his trial, Major-General Harrison, the bravest of the brave, whose aged frame bore many battle scars, had the hangman placed by his side, rope in hand, to give him a proper foretaste of death, the courtiers enjoying the spectacle in large numbers. He was cut down alive from the gibbet and disembowelled; he saw his entrails cast into the fire; his still beating heart was torn out and shown to the degraded herd. When Cook, the solicitor for the Republic, was quartered, the executioner, rubbing his bloody hands, was made to approach Hugh Peters, who was about to suffer, and ask him how he liked the work.

Sir Harry Vane, the greatest and most spotless statesman of his age, was sentenced to death because, as Charles wrote, "He is too dangerous a man to let live if we can safely put him out of the way." Vane was protected alike by statute and by the solemn pledge of the king to the Convention Parliament. But what of that? Though he had declined to sit on the Commission that tried Charles I., he was the soul of the Republican party, altogether too dangerous a man to let live—nay, on the scaffold he was too dangerous to let speak to the multitude. Stretching out his hands, he had said, "I do here appeal to the Great God of Heaven and all this assembly, or any other power, to show wherein I have defiled my hands with any man's blood or estate, or that I have sought myself in any public capacity or place I have been in," when his voice was ordered to be drowned by drummers, kept in readiness under the scaffold, lest his words should find an echo in the bosoms of the people. The trumpeters were made to "murre" derisively in his face while his pockets were brutally rifled. As he laid his head on the block he prayed, "Father, glorify Thy servant in the sight of men that he may glorify Thee in the discharge of his duty to Thee and to his country." "The Lord Jesus go with your dear soul!" cried the agonised crowd. He wore a red silk vest, "the victorious colour" of the Commonwealth. He never once changed countenance, and his severed head was instantly still.

And what of the king who found this man too dangerous to be let live? Could he, in similar circumstances, have made Vane's boast? Assuredly not. On Charles II., if on any man, the terrible judgment may literally be pronounced—*vendidit hic auro patriam*—this man sold his country for gold. While good garrulous Pepys was jotting down, in his famous diary, in regard to the triple alliance between England, Holland and Sweden to curb the ambition of France, that "it is the only good public thing that hath been done since the king came to England," Charles was negotiating with Louis the Fourteenth the secret Treaty of Dover, to which none but

himself, his brother James, and two of his ministers, Arlington and Clifford, both Catholics, were privy. For an annual pension of £200,000 from the most Christian king, Charles undertook to declare himself a Romanist, to join France in making war on Holland, and contingently on Flanders. If the English people should prove restive under so great a humiliation, it was stipulated that Louis should supply an army to "protect" his royal brother "in the execution," to use the language of the French ambassador, "of his design of changing the present state of religion in England for a better, and of establishing his authority so as to be able to retain his subjects in the obedience they owe him."

Like the first Defender of the Faith, Henry VIII., Charles was personally highly qualified to reform the religion of the State. His Court was a model. To his courtiers he was familiarly known as "the Old Goat." On the day that the Dutch fleet burned the English shipping in the Thames, the king supped with the Duchess of Monmouth, and amused himself by chasing a moth. He would quarrel with his mistress in public. She called him an idiot; he retorted, "You are a jade." She had two other lovers at the same time, actors, one of them a mountebank. In these circumstances the king not unnaturally, according to the unimpeachable Pepys, "declared that he did not get the child of which she is conceived at this time. But she told him, 'You—! You shall own it!' "And own it he did; but by way of consolation he took to himself a couple of actresses as a sort of set-off to the lady's actors.

On another occasion Pepys heard that the king had been "into corners with Mrs. Stewart, and will be with her half an hour, kissing her to the observation of all the world." Again, Captain Ferrers told him, "how, at a ball at Court a child was born by one of the ladies in dancing." It was taken off in a handkerchief. "And the king had it in his closet a week after, and did dissect it, making great sport of it." Pepys was loyal to the backbone, yet he characteristically concludes, "Having heard the king and the Duke (James) talk, and seeing and observing their habits and intercourse, God forgive me, though I admire them with all the duty possible, yet the more a man considers and observes them the less difference he finds between them and other men, though, blessed be God, they are both princes of great nobleness and spirits." What a libel is there here on "other men"!

"Both princes of great nobleness and spirits!" There is a world of significance in this saving clause. It is like John Bright's great discovery that the Prince of Wales is "good-natured." So also was Charles II. an exceedingly good-natured man. On his death-bed he apologised to his courtiers for taking such an unconscionable time to die. Yet a more abominable scoundrel never breathed.

As was the "Old Goat" so were his courtiers. The future Duchess of Tyrconnel disguised herself as an orange-girl and cried her wares in the streets. Sedley and Buckhurst after midnight ran through the streets nearly nude. Another courtier addressed the people from a window naked.

"The Duke of Buckingham, a lover of the Countess of Shrewsbury, slew the Earl in a duel; the Countess, disguised as a page, held Buckingham's horse, while she embraced him, covered as he was with her husband's blood, and the murderers and adulterers returned publicly as in a triumphal march to the house of the dead man."

But Rochester was the model knight of the Court of the Restoration. He was a poet as well as a gallant. For five years running he was drunk. He and Buckingham rented an inn in the Newmarket Road, where they amused themselves by stupefying husbands with drink and debauching their wives. One of his happiest achievements was to introduce himself, disguised as an old woman, into the house of a miser, whose wife he bore off in triumph. Buckingham finally got the lady, and to the intense gratification of the two peers, the miser hanged himself. Eventually, Rochester turned astrologer, and sold drugs for the vilest purposes. His poems and pamphlets are so filthy that they can scarcely even be named. "Here I first understood by their talk," says the pious, domesticated Pepys, "the meaning of the company that lately were called Bailers; Harris telling how it was by a meeting of some young blades, where he was among them, and my Lady Bennett and her ladies, and their dancing naked and all the roguish things in the world."

Such was Charles and such his courtiers. The darker features to be gathered from the "Mémoires de Grammont" it is impossible to fill in. To compare them with goats were an odious libel on the goats.

By confiscating the principal of loans advanced to the Treasury, the king and his advisers contrived at a blow to make bankrupt half the goldsmiths, then the bankers, of London. The act was one of undisguised robbery unparalleled in the annals of English Governments. The Great Mogul never filled his coffers in a manner more reprehensible. Charles eventually reached a point when the case-hardened Shaftesbury said of him that he "had brought his affairs to that pass that there is not a person in the world, man or woman, that dares rely upon him or put any confidence in his word or friendship."

On Sunday, 1st February, 1685, when death laid his icy hand on Charles, he was thus surrounded, and thus employed, according to Lord Macaulay:—"A party of twenty courtiers were seated at cards round a large table, on which gold was heaped in mountains. . . . The king sat there, chattering and toying with three women, whose charms were the boast and whose vices were the disgrace of three nations. Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland, was then no longer young, but still retaining some traces of that superb loveliness which twenty

years before overcame the hearts of all men. There, too, was the Duchess of Portsmouth, whose soft and infantine features were lighted up with the vivacity of France. Hortensia Marcini, Duchess of Mazarin, and niece of the great cardinal, completed the group. No gift of nature or of fortune seemed to be wanting to her. But her diseased mind required stronger stimulants, and sought them in gallantry, in basset, and in usquebaugh. While Charles flirted with his three sultanas, Hortensia's page, a handsome boy, whose vocal performances were the delight of Whitehall, and were rewarded by numerous presents of rich clothes, ponies, and guineas, warbled some amorous verses."

As the disease progressed, the queen, whom he had degraded to the level of his concubines, was summoned to the chamber of death, which was cleared of harlots. Last of all, an illiterate Catholic priest, named Huddleston, received the dying man's confession, and admitted him into the communion of the Church of Rome. Meanwhile, infatuated crowds thronged the churches, praying fervently that God would raise him up to be again the father of his people. Happily for themselves, their prayer was not answered, though certainly he was, as was wittily said of Henry IV. of France, the father of his people in more senses than one.

The Pension List is a perpetual reminder of his fatherhood. By Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, he had three sons, the Dukes of Southampton, Grafton, and Northumberland. By Louise de Querouaille, Duchess of Portsmouth, he had the Duke of Richmond; by Nell Gwynne, the actress, the Duke of St. Albans; and by Lucy Walters, the Duke of Monmouth. The costly trio of the present Dukes of Grafton, Richmond, and St. Albans are supposed to be the lineal descendants of the "Merry Monarch." Charles himself was more doubtful on the subject than the British taxpayer.

JAMES II. (1685-1688.)

Charles was succeeded by his brother, James II., the conscientious bigot who "threw away three kingdoms for a mass." James once advised his royal brother to beware of assassins. "They will never kill me," was the caustic reply, "to make you king." Unlike Charles, James II. was neither merry nor naturally humane. He was sullen and cruel. Even John Churchill's adamant breast heaved with indignation at the mercilessness exhibited by the king after his victory over Monmouth at Sedgemoor. "This marble," he cried, striking a mantelpiece on which he leant, "is not harder than the king's heart!" In "the Bloody Circuit" which succeeded the battle, his thrice infamous instrument, Jeffreys, committed no fewer than three hundred and fifty judicial murders, while eight hundred prisoners were sold into slavery.

James was almost, if not altogether, as great a libertine as his brother, and his taste was much less nice. Lord Chancellor Clarendon's daughter, Anne, whom he first seduced but afterwards married, was no beauty. Her father, the great historian, on being told by King Charles that she was *enceinte* by the duke, exhibited more than Roman fortitude. "He was ready," he informed the Council, "to give positive judgment, in which he hoped their lordships would concur with him—that the king should immediately cause the woman to be sent to the Tower, and to be cast into a dungeon under so strict a guard that no person living should be admitted to come to her; and then an Act of Parliament should be passed for cutting off her head, to which he would not only give his consent, but would very willingly be the first man that should propose it." There surely spoke a true friend of the monarchy.

The relatives of plain Arabella Churchill were more philosophically devoted to the throne. "The necessities of the Churchills," says Macaulay, "were pressing; their loyalty was ardent; and their only feeling about Arabella's seduction seems to have been joyful surprise that so plain a girl should have attained such high preferment."

Immediately on his accession James called parliament together, but apologised to Barillon, the French ambassador, for so doing. "Assure your master of my gratitude and attachment. I know that without his protection I can do nothing. I know what trouble my brother brought on himself by not adhering steadily to France. I will take good care not to let the House meddle with foreign affairs. If I see in them any disposition to make mischief I will send them about their business. Explain this to my good brother. I hope he will not take it amiss that I have not consulted him. He has a right to be consulted; and it is my wish to consult him about everything. But in this case the delay even of a week might have produced serious consequences."

Next morning Rochester told Barillon, "It will be well laid out. Your master cannot employ his revenues better. Represent to him strongly how important it is that the king of England should be dependent not on his own people, but on the friendship of France alone—"

Louis at once collected bills of exchange on England to the amount of £37,000, and sent them off. When Barillon came to the king with the money, James shed tears of delight and gratitude. "Nobody but your king does such kind, such noble things. Assure him that my attachment will last to the end of my days."

In recognition of such gratitude £120,000 more were presently forwarded to corrupt indifferently King, Court, and Parliament. It was deemed advisable to send a special messenger to thank Louis. The gentleman selected for this high office was none other than John Churchill, the brother of Arabella, the founder of the

unsavoury house of Marlborough. So prudent a financier was he that instead of his mistresses living on him he lived on his mistresses. Such cases still occasionally come to light in our police courts, among the most degraded of human kind. Macaulay thus describes John Churchill's start in life:—

"He was thrifty in his very vices, and levied ample contributions on ladies enriched by the spoils of more liberal lovers. He was during a short time the object of the violent but fickle fondness of the Duchess of Cleveland. On one occasion he was caught with her by the king, and was forced to leap out of the window. She rewarded this hazardous feat of gallantry with a present of £5,000. With this sum the prudent young man instantly bought an annuity of £500 a year well secured on landed property." Pope puts the case thus:—

*"The gallant, too, to whom she paid it down
Lived to refuse his mistress half-a-crown."*

After exhausting every other resource of tyranny, the narrow-minded king concluded that he could coerce the Anglican Church. Its prelates had long preached the doctrine of passive obedience, and he foolishly took them at their word. He speedily found, however, that they had only meant passive obedience for dissenters from their own ecclesiastical opinions and emoluments. Not a blow was struck in his defence. Even his daughter Anne, by Churchill's advice, deserted him. His other daughter, Mary, and his nephew, the Prince of Orange, dutifully took his throne. He died in France, in all the odour of monkish sanctity having literally, "thrown away three kingdoms for a mass."

Chapter X.

Dutch and German Royalty

Whence thinkest thou kings and parasites arose?
Whence that unnatural line of drones, who heap
Toil and unvanquishable penury
On those who build their palaces and bring
Their daily bread? From vice—black, loathsome, vice;
From rapine, madness, treachery and wrong;
From all that genders misery, and makes
Of earth this thorny wilderness; from lust,
Revenge, and murder.

WILLIAM AND MARY (1689—1702).

THE little knot of plotting aristocrats and ecclesiastics who seated William and Mary on the throne in place of James II. saved England from unlimited monarchy and compulsory Romanism. For these evils they substituted unlimited Oligarchy, Continental Wars, Standing Armies, and the National Debt. They sliced down the royal prerogative, but divided the pieces carefully among themselves. Within the last thirty-three years our dukes, earls, and marquises, with their relatives, according to the "Financial Reform Almanack," have looted the Exchequer of more than sixty-six millions sterling! It is for such adequate reasons as these that the calling to the throne of Dutch William in 1688 has been styled "the glorious Revolution." For the aristocracy it was indeed a glorious revolution.

As for Dutch William himself, the praises that have been heaped on him by Whig historians like Macaulay are almost ludicrously overdone. His body was weak and his mind devoid of culture. With a pious, Calvinistic creed, he was as much addicted to wine and women as his feeble health would permit. His temper was sullen and despotic. If he relinquished any attribute of kingship, it was not his fault. But having no child to succeed him he submitted to successive limitations of his power in exchange for English gold and English blood, which he caused to flow like water in his Grand Alliance and Spanish Succession Wars. The national debt he raised from one million to more than twenty-one millions. As a general he was below mediocrity.

Macaulay has striven to free William's memory from the awful guilt of the massacre of Glencoe, but without success. The extermination warrant was signed by the king at top and bottom, as if purposely to emphasise the inhuman mandate. The chief actors were all promoted.

The East India Company wanted a new charter, and in order to procure it, bribed right and left. £10,000, it was declared, were traced to the king himself.

A commission appointed in 1698 to enquire into the grant of forfeited estates in Ireland reported that 1,060,000 acres, worth £211,623 per annum, had been confiscated since 1689. The grantees were for the most part foreign favourites whom the king loaded with dignities. Bentinck was made Earl of Portland, Zuleisten Earl of Rochford, Schomberg Duke of Schomberg, Auverquerque Earl of Grantham, Keppel Earl of Albermarle, Ginkill Earl of Athlone, and Ruvigny Earl of Galway. But worst of all was the gift by this dutiful nephew and son-in-law of James's private estates, consisting of 95,000 acres, worth £26,000 per annum, to one of his (William's) mistresses, Elizabeth Villiers, Duchess of Orkney. Parliament insisted on resuming these forfeitures, and told the king to his face he was a dishonourable man.

On several occasions he threatened to resign, and it would have been well for England if Parliament had taken him at his word. On the flight of James the country might have become a republic, and saved itself from an endless chain of miseries; but the idea of self-government is always the last that occurs to Englishmen. They never seem to suspect themselves capable of such a thing. *Vult populus decipi et decipiatur.*

While busy planning on a gigantic scale further waste of English blood and treasure in the War of the Spanish Succession, William died in 1702. Mary had preceded him.

ANNE (1702—1714).

William and Mary were succeeded by James's younger daughter, Anne. Anne reigned, but certainly did not govern, for thirteen years. She was, as the late Earl of Beaconsfield described Queen Victoria, "physically and morally incapable of government." She was physically lethargic, and mentally imbecile. Of her husband, Prince George of Denmark, Charles II. said, "I have tried Prince George drunk, and I have tried him sober, but drunk or sober there is nothing in him." They were a well-matched couple.

For the better part of the reign the *de facts* sovereigns of England were John Churchill and Sarah Jennings, otherwise Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. It is difficult to say whether William's defeats or Marlborough's famous victories were the more disastrous to all concerned. "What they fought each other for," no one yet has been able to "make out." Eventually the duke's enemies got him convicted of peculation—theft is the Saxon word—and dismissed from his command. He was, perhaps, the greatest of English generals, yet, strange to say, he could not have passed the fifth standard in a Board School to save his life.

GEORGE I. (1714—1727.)

To Anne succeeded George I., Elector of Hanover, the first of the ignoble Guelphs. He could speak no English, and his ministers, Carteret excepted, could speak no German. Walpole had to use the medium of dog Latin in his communications with his august sovereign. He surrounded himself with Germans. "The very dogs in England's Court," according to the Scottish Jacobite song, "they bark and howl in German." The king admonished his retinue, from mistress to cook, to lay hold of everything they could get, lest their time among so fickle a people as the English should be short. "The German women plundered," says Thackeray, "the German secretaries plundered, the German cooks and attendants plundered; even Mustapha and Mahomet, the German negroes, had a share of the booty." "Coming," says Lord Mahon, "from a poor electorate, a flight of hungry Hanoverians, like so many famished vultures, fell with keen eyes and bended talons on the fruitful soil of England." And still, alas! they come, Where the carrion is, there the Teutonic vultures are gathered together.

In his own petty principality George had been accustomed to sell his subjects as mercenary soldiers at so many ducats per head. In England such things could not be done with impunity; consequently the king drew unfavourable comparisons between the two countries, and never remained a moment longer in London than he could help. He appropriated estates left to others under the wills of his wife and his father-in-law by the simple process of burning the obnoxious testaments. In England this offence was then punishable by hanging, and it is quite likely that George signed a few death-warrants as a lesson to such transgressors as himself.

As a husband and as a father his relations were simply brutal. His wife he immured in a dungeon at the age of twenty-eight for a suspected intrigue with Count Konigsmark. There she remained till she was sixty; and when her son, afterwards George II., sought to visit her, he was arrested by his father, and narrowly escaped with his life. Konigsmark, by the king's order, was brutally murdered. At a later date George deprived his son and daughter-in-law of the custody of their own children, and drove them with ignominy from St. James's Palace.

George I. literally kept a seraglio, with the Oriental accessories of two negro eunuchs, Mustapha and Mahomet. Among the host of his painted women were Frau von Kilmansegge (Countess of Darlington), Frau von Schulenberg (Duchess of Kendal), the Countess of Platen, and the two sisters, Elizabeth and Melusina, of the murdered Konigsmark. No such ugly and rapacious harpies had ever been seen or heard of in England. The

Duchess of Kendal, being tall and lean, was popularly known as "Giraffe;" while the Countess of Darlington, from her enormous dimensions, was named "the Elephant." In describing George's predilections, Chesterfield went straight to the point—"No woman came amiss to him, if she were only very willing and very fat."

And to such courtesans, ministers and courtiers had humbly to bow if they desired either title, pension, or place. To bribes they were always open. Of the "South Sea Bill" promotion money, no less than £30,000 were traced to their unhallowed coffers. "A train of the deepest villany and fraud with which hell ever contrived to ruin a nation," was the verdict of a Select Committee of the House of Commons on these corruptions.

The subsidies granted by Parliament for the defence or augmentation of George's Hanoverian Dominions were enormous. While the Englishman and the Hanoverian hunted together, it was invariably the Hanoverian that got the turkey and the Englishman the crow.

George's death, it is said, happened in this wise. His long imprisoned queen predeceased him by a few months, but before leaving this world she wrote a letter to her royal spouse in which she protested her innocence, and summoned him to meet her before the tribunal of God within a year and a day. This disquieting epistle a faithful hand placed in his coach as he was entering Germany in the summer of 1714. On reading it he was seized with a convulsion from which he never recovered.

GEORGE II. (1727—1760.)

George the First was succeeded by George the Second of our stock of "wee wee German lairdies." He can hardly be regarded as much of an improvement on his father, who, by the way, never, except for State reasons, acknowledged the paternity. He commenced by unceremoniously making away with his father's will. There was, however, a troublesome duplicate in the hands of the Duke of Brunswick, who had to be heavily bribed to give it up. Needless to say the British tax-payer had to pay the bribe. Macaulay thus comprehensively characterises him:—"Not one magnanimous or humane action is recorded of him, but many instances of meanness and of a harshness which, but for the strong constitutional restraints under which he was placed, might have made the misery of his people."

During his reign the nation was never done paying his debts, subsidising his continental allies, and fighting in his Hanoverian quarrels. His allies he changed as often as caprice or the supposed interests of Hanover required. The national debt he more than doubled, raising it to £146,000,000.

The morality of his court was equally incredible and indescribable. Queen Caroline, a woman of bad heart, but masculine head, not merely tolerated the presence of his concubines, but even at times acted as his procuress. His dutiful daughter advocated a beneficial change of mistress from Lady Suffolk, who had become stale; while, to improve the royal temper, Walpole admonished the queen to bring him in contact with pretty Lady Tankerville, "it being impossible that it should be otherwise, since the king had tasted better things," *i.e.*, than Caroline herself.

Both king and queen hated their hopeful son and heir, Frederick, Prince of Wales, father of George III., with undying rancour. "My dear lord," said Caroline, to Lord Harvey, "I will give it you under my hand, if you are in any fear of my relapsing, that my dear first-born is the greatest ass, and the greatest liar, and the greatest *canaille*, and the greatest beast in the whole world, and that I heartily wish he were out of it." Thus spoke a loving royal mother! Her wish was gratified. Frederick preceeded his father to the grave.

But of all the death-bed scenes on record, that of Queen Caroline is, perhaps, the most grotesque and suggestive of the order of moral ideas engendered by royalty. The king blubbered freely, alternately praising his wife's virtues and his own. "You should marry again," moaned the dying woman. "*Non, j'aurai des maîtresses* (No, I will have mistresses), sighed the Defender of the Faith. "*Cela n'empêche pas*" (That is no obstacle), faintly articulated Caroline, and passed, let us hope in charity, into that better land, "where," according to stern republican George Buchanan, "few kings dare enter."

With exemplary fidelity the inconsolable sovereign persevered with *maîtresses*, Ladies Walmoden, Yarmouth, and others, to the last. Truly if ever there was, as Frederick's mother called him, an absolute *canaille* and beast in this world, it was the second of the illustrious house of Guelph.

Chapter XI.

German Royalty.

"Farmer George" and "the First Gentleman in Europe."

Let us speak plain. There is more in names
Than most men dream of; and a lie may keep
Its throne a whole age longer if it skulk
Behind the shield of some fair-seeming name,

—*Lowell.*

GEORGE III. (1760-1820.)

To George II. succeeded his grandson, George III.—Farmer George, of pious memory. This man reigned longer—nearly sixty years—and possibly did more harm than any of his predecessors on the throne. His intellect resembled in its narrow bigotry that of James II., aggravated by intermittent madness. If James "threw away three kingdoms for a mass," George threw away a virgin continent for a tyrannical caprice.

If George had remained a lunatic the whole of his reign it would have been well for the country. As it was, his sanity was far more to be dreaded than his insanity. His education had been wretched, and the few erroneous ideas that had found their way into his barren brain he pursued with incredible obstinacy. His pliant ministers yielded to him rather than yield up their places. And so it came to pass that this contemptible creature wielded a power for evil far greater than any of his contemptible race. He hated men of talent. Pitt, the elder, was "a trumpet of sedition," and when he died George inveighed against the proposal to erect a public monument to his memory as "an offensive measure to me personally." Fox's name he struck off the list of privy councillors with his own hand. In the plenitude of his critical judgment, he triumphantly asked, "Was there ever such stuff as Shakespeare?" Only once was he known to have stumbled on a choice remark. With regard to a treatise on Biblical apologetics, he sagaciously observed that "he had never understood that the Bible required an apology."

George's mother, the Princess Dowager of Wales, and her alleged paramour, the Earl of Bute, were the king's earliest mentors, and worse he could scarce have had. Their influence induced him systematically to deceive his ministers, and to display so many other royal gifts and graces, that Phillimore does not hesitate to describe him as an "ignorant, dishonest, obstinate, narrow-minded boy, at that very moment the tool of an adulteress and her paramour."

George's own life was held up by the bishops and other shepherds of souls of his day as a pattern of all the Christian virtues. As Queen Victoria is lauded now for her exemplary morality, so was George III. lauded then. But the fact of the matter was, Farmer George was all the while guilty of an offence not merely against public decency, but against the law of the land, which in the case of a less highly placed criminal would have landed him in Newgate.

In 1759 he married Hannah Lightfoot, a Quakeress, in Curzon Street Chapel, Mayfair, and in 1761, in the lifetime of the said Hannah, he led to the altar the Princess Charlotte Sophia ("snuffy Charlotte ") of Mecklenburgh Strelitz. In other words, George III. was a bigamist. In 1762, George, Prince of Wales, "the first gentleman in Europe" that was to be, was born. In 1764, Hannah Lightfoot died, leaving issue whose fate is uncertain. There is, however, an honest couple, well-known in certain circles in London, who claim, and probably with good reason, to be King and Queen of England in virtue of descent from the fair Quakeress. Shortly after Hannah's death, as if to set at rest any doubt as to the legality of the first marriage, George and Charlotte were privately remarried at Kew. Of the illegitimacy of George IV. there can scarcely, therefore, be a doubt. At all events, when the "first gentleman" was impecunious—his normal condition—he did not fail to threaten his royal parents with an exposure as a means of extorting money. Still, for a Guelph, George III.'s conduct was reasonably decorous.

His chief faults lay in other directions even more disastrous to the nation. He insisted on being his own prime minister and dictating the national policy. And such a policy! He found the national debt some £146,000,000 in amount; he raised it to £900,000,000.

His wars had but one object—to crush liberty, which he hated with a rancour undistinguishable from insanity. For resisting the tea-tax—a notoriously illegal impost—Massachusetts was deprived of its chartered rights of self-government, and royalist functionaries superseded the colonial administrators. Political offenders were ordered to be sent home to England for trial. These acts of despotism, against which both Chatham and Burke inveighed, were the result of the king's personal intervention. Members of parliament voting in favour of the repeal of the tea-tax were declared not to be "king's friends." George kept lists of the divisions, and put a stigma against the name of every advocate of liberty.

Nor was this the worst. The means taken to crush the colonists were such as only the most brutal of tyrants would have had recourse to. Even Frederick of Prussia expressed his unqualified disgust. The Czarina of Russia

was appealed to in vain to supply 20,000 Muscovite troops to re-establish the royal authority in New England. Recourse was then had to the Duke of Brunswick, the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, and other German princelings accustomed to kidnap and sell their subjects as mercenaries to the highest bidder. In this way 17,000 Germans were conveyed to the scene of action, while the Creek and Cherokee Indians were encouraged to do their worst on the scalps of the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers.

In vain Chatham and Fox with their matchless eloquence denounced the royal methods of conquest; crown patronage and royal bribery did their work. The war went on, and the upshot was "the Free and Independent States" of America. After charging George with an evident design to establish an absolute despotism, the famous Declaration of Independence runs:—"In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms. Our petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people." George III. was the father—the involuntary father—of the American Republic, the mightiest and most enlightened commonwealth that the world has ever seen.

For He, who flung the bright blue fold
O'er mantling land and sea,
One third part of the sky unfurl'd
For the banner of the free!

Truly the crazy tyrant builded more wisely than he knew!

The war cost England well nigh £140,000,000! And so little was George satisfied with these trifling sacrifices of honour, blood, and treasure, that he threatened to resign his sceptre by reason of their insufficiency.

A wise people would have taken the maniac at his word, and following the illustrious example of our kin beyond sea, have established a sister Federal Republic, giving self-government to Ireland, and laying the basis of a true and lasting union with the United States. It is not too much to say that monarchy has ever acted on the grand possibilities of the English race like an extinguisher.

Nor did George confine his malignant detestation of justice and good government to America. He put forth all his strength to defeat Fox's statesmanlike India Bill, and succeeded. He canvassed the peers, many of whom he had created for reasons other than their deserts, and induced them to reject the measure. "Thank God!" he cried, "it is all over, so there is an end to Mr. Fox." That brave and tenacious friend of freedom was accordingly driven from power.

Almost as a matter of course, the influence of the Court was exercised on behalf of the culprit during the long impeachment of Warren Hastings, who was eventually acquitted. Hastings, it was alleged and firmly believed, judiciously conveyed to the king certain priceless diamonds, which perhaps were not needed to secure the royal countenance for so great an oppressor of his kind.

The part which George took in the iniquitous attempt to restore the Bourbons to the throne of France has been cloaked in a great measure, by the misdeeds of delinquents—so much more responsible—like the younger Pitt and Edmund Burke. Yet from first to last the king and the "king's friends" fanned the flame with might and main. To say that England which had expelled the Stuarts, should have abortively squandered more than £1,000,000,000, not to speak of the hecatombs of slain, to restore the Bourbons at the behest of a mad Guelph is really to question the sanity of the entire British nation. But so it was. Of the handful of discerning men who tried to stem the torrent of folly and wickedness some were exiled, some imprisoned, some slaughtered, and all calumniated.

In January, 1820, the king died, deeply lamented by all who did not know him. Previous to his decease he had been repeatedly stark-mad, quite obviously "physically and morally incapable of government." The "first gentleman in Europe" had in these unhappy circumstances acted as regent, discharging the royal functions as only the first gentleman could.

The Regent and his amiable brothers exerted themselves with true filial piety to relieve the sufferings of their miserable parent. But occasionally they took a method of testifying their sympathy which would perhaps occur to none but royal minds. They tied the paternal leg to a bed-post, and played bait the bear" with their august sire, who would run at them with demoniacal shrieks and jabber as far as his tether would permit.

And so entertaining was the sport that these amiable uncles of Queen Victoria would roar with laughter at a spectacle so comical. Nor did the entertainment cease in the sick chamber. The Prince had a talent for mimicry, and when he and the Duke of York went to Brooks's would convulse the company with close imitations of the insane parental gestures and ravings. But it is put on record by Jesse that "the brutality of that stupid sot (York) disgusted even the most profligate of his associates." Singularly enough a loyal parliament bestowed £10,000 a

year on the said sot for paying two weekly visits to his afflicted father!

GEORGE IV. (1820-1830).

The reign of George IV. is crammed with little but adulteries, lies, and debts. The former are too filthy, and the latter too monotonous, for detailed narration. Like his father, George IV. was a bigamist. In December, 1785, he married Mrs. Fitzherbert with whom he openly lived as his wife. He, of course, denied the contract when it suited his purpose; but after his death his executors, the Duke of Wellington and Sir William Knighton, admitted the validity of the proofs.

In April, 1794, he led to the altar Caroline of Brunswick. "Led to the altar" is here used in a metaphorical sense, for George was in a condition to be led, not to lead. He was so drunk that his two royal brothers could scarce keep him on his feet. He fairly astonished his grace of Canterbury by rising from his knees before the ceremony was half over. Caroline in after life may not have been a pattern of matronly virtue, but the English people with a correct instinct stood by her, holding that she was more sinned against than sinning. To procure evidence in the famous divorce suit against her, the Secret Service Money of the State was freely drawn upon.

The First Gentleman was, in fact, as expert a wife-beater as any coal-heaver, and his language habitually smacked of the brothel. When Napoleon's death was announced to him in the words, "Your majesty's bitterest enemy is dead," George jumped to the hasty conclusion that Caroline was no more, and joyfully exclaimed, "Is she, by God!" He was in Ireland, where he had arrived "in the last stage of beastly intoxication," when the news of the poor lady's actual demise reached him. "This is one of the happiest days in my life," he soon afterwards remarked. Nor was he less heartless to the women he "protected" than to those he married. Lady Jersey, Lady Conyngham, Lady Hertford. "Perdita" Robinson, and a host of others discovered, by bitter experience, that Thackeray was right when he affirmed that George owed everything to his tailor.

As a gambler, he repudiated his debts of honour, because honour he had none, and if he was not a turf swindler, his contemporaries in the affair of his horse Escape slandered him most foully. He professed to present George III.'s library to the nation, was secretly paid for it, and then received the effusive thanks of parliament for his munificence! With regard to so vile a creature as "the first gentleman in Europe" it is abundantly safe to reverse the ordinary legal maxim, and hold him guilty of everything till he is proved innocent. "He leads," says Greville, "a most extraordinary life—never gets up till six in the afternoon. They come to him and open the window curtains at six or seven in the morning; he breakfasts in bed; does whatever business he can be brought to transact in bed too; he reads every newspaper quite through, dozes three or four hours; gets up in time for dinner, and goes to bed between ten and eleven. He sleeps very ill, and rings his bell forty times in the night; if he wants to know the hour, though a watch hangs close to him, he will have his *valet de chambre* down rather than turn his head to look at it. The same thing if he wants a glass of water; he won't stretch out his hand to get it. His *valets* are nearly destroyed, and at last Lady Conyngham prevailed on him to agree to an arrangement by which they wait on him on alternate days. The service is still most severe, as on the days they are waiting their labours are incessant, and they cannot take off their clothes at night and hardly lie down. He is in good health but irritable." And these be your Gods, O Israel!

The only thing he left behind him which was worth "anything was his old clothes, which realised £15,000—a miserable asset for a sovereign who, though his reign was brief, must have cost the country some twenty millions sterling.

The political harm which he did was comparatively small, but what time he could spare from the more congenial pursuits of fiddling, tailoring, dancing, drinking, gambling, and worse things was chiefly devoted to mischief.

The best thing that can be said of him is that he was not worse than his brothers, York and Clarence, and that, like his father, he suffered from occasional lunacy. He had heard so much about Waterloo that he ultimately convinced himself that he had led a murderous charge of cavalry on that decisive battle-field under the name of General Brock. "Did I not do so, Arthur?" he would on occasion demand of the Duke of Wellington. "I have often heard your majesty relate the incident," was the diplomatic reply.

George the First was reckoned vile—viler George the Second;
And what mortal ever heard any good of George the Third?
When from earth the Fourth descended, Heaven be praised, the Georges ended.

Chapter XII.

More German Royalty.

It is the third Gate of Barbarism—the Monarchical Gate—which is closing at this moment. The nineteenth century hears it rolling on its hinges. Victor Hugo.

WILLIAM IV. (1830—1837.)

WILLIAM IV., who succeeded George IV., was a curious contrast to the "First Gentleman in Europe." Nobody ever accused William of being a gentleman. He was absolutely lacking in personal dignity, and kept his ministers and courtiers in perpetual anxiety lest he should do something that would make royalty ridiculous in the eyes of what Burke called "the swinish multitude." His eccentricities were in the last degree droll, and remind one more of Sancho Panza's attempts at government than anything else.

"His first speech to the council," says Greville, "was well enough given; but his burlesque character began even then to show itself. Nobody expected from him much real grief, but he does not seem to have known how to act it consistently. He spoke of his brother with all the semblance of feeling, and in a tone of voice properly softened and subdued; but just afterwards, when they gave him the pen to sign the declaration, he said, in his usual tone, "This is a damned bad pen you have given me! "

In another passage the Clerk of the Council thus characterises him:—"He was a man who, coming to the throne at the mature age of sixty-five, was so excited by the exaltation that he nearly went mad, and distinguished himself by a thousand extravagances of language and conduct, to the alarm and amusement of all who witnessed his strange freaks; and though he was shortly afterwards sobered down into more becoming habits, he always continued to be something of a blackguard, and something more of a buffoon."

He had about the same regard for the press of the country as his father, George III., had for Shakspeare. "After breakfast," adds Greville, "he reads the *Times* and *Morning Post*, commenting aloud on what he reads in very plain terms; and sometimes they hear, "That's a damned lie!" or some such remark, without knowing to what it applies."

But his freaks, though certainly strange, were not always amiable. At a certain levee he would insist that an unfortunate wooden-legged lieutenant should kneel down; while the president of the Royal Academy, who on one occasion chanced, among other portraits, to point out to him that of the late Admiral Napier, was amazed to be told, Captain Napier may be damned, sir! and you may be damned, sir! and if the queen was not here, sir, I would kick you downstairs, sir!" Indeed, it were hard to say whether the blackguard, the buffoon, or the madman predominated in the character of "the bluff Sailor King"—nay, saving the mark! "the Reformer King."

For the Post of Lord High Admiral of England he had but one qualification—profane swearing. In other respects his incapacity was so marked that resignation was forced on him. But though unfit to be a cabin boy he was quite good enough to be made a king. When king, he wasted the time of the Council by rambling, incoherent speeches to such an extent that Mr. Greville makes the following note:—"We are kept about three times as long by this regular, punctual king as by the capricious irregular monarch who last ruled us."

His zeal as a reformer was entirely on the adverse principle. His aversion to the reformers, particularly Lord John Russell, was extreme. When his son Adolphus told him that a dinner ought to be given for the Ascot races, he said, "You know I cannot give a dinner; I cannot give any dinner without inviting the Ministers, and I would rather see the devil than any one of them in my house." As Duke of Clarence, the slave trade had enjoyed the full benefit of William's distinguished patronage, and when king he expressly declared in writing that nothing in the world would ever induce him to sanction vote by ballot or manhood suffrage. During the first Reform Bill agitation, when the people in many places were starving by thousands, his only anxiety seems to have been to bring about a collision between the reformers and the military. What distressed him most was the orderly character of the meetings, which afforded no sufficient pretext for violent interference. Though he did not ultimately dare to veto the Bill, his deceitful and protracted opposition brought the country within twenty-four hours of revolution. Mr. John Arthur Roebuck's comment on the part played by the king is to the point—"very weak and very false; a finished dissembler." At a somewhat later date William astonished the guests at a diplomatic dinner, at which the American ambassador was present, by declaring "that it had always been a matter of serious regret to him (William) that he had not been born a free, independent American." This was dissembling, no doubt, but it can hardly be called "finished." William's function was to burlesque royalty, and in that *rôle* he was always tolerably successful.

When Dr. Allen came to do homage to him for the See of Ely, William graciously said to him, "My lord, I do not mean to interfere in any way with your vote in Parliament except on one subject, the Jews, and I trust I may depend on your always voting against them."

But this bizarre monarch, though he could not control home legislation as he wished, peremptorily insisted on the full measure of his prerogative with regard to foreign affairs. Earl Grey was admonished that no

diplomatic despatches were to be sent off without the king's "previous concurrence," and this important point is still conceded to the reigning Guelph, even though "physically and morally incapable."

In early life William's debts were of a very pressing nature, and he and his brothers Wales and York had recourse to a singularly successful method of raising money. They issued joint and several bonds to an enormous amount, bearing interest at six per cent. These were taken up chiefly on the Continent, the foolish holders fancying that royal securities must be exceptionally secure. They found it otherwise, to their cost, receiving neither interest nor principal. Five or six of them were so ill-advised as to come to England, in the hope of being able by legal process to charge the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall. They were at once arrested under the Alien Act by order of the Secretary of State, and deported to France, where they were seized and guillotined for carrying on treasonable correspondence with the enemy—as severe a commentary certainly as could well be imagined on the wise injunction, "Put not your trust in princes."

William's treatment of Mrs. Jordan, by whom he had nine children, was peculiarly heartless even for a king. Charles II.'s last words to his brother James were, "Don't let poor Nell (Gwynne) starve." But no such lingering sentiment of honour seems ever to have entered into William's callous bosom. Mrs. Jordan died in a foreign land, deserted and in the deepest poverty. Her numerous offspring, the Fitz-clarences, William did indeed handsomely provide for—at the public expense; while Mr. Ford, her previous "protector," was knighted, and made a stipendiary magistrate at Bow Street.

Fourteen of the Fitzclarence fraternity have held or hold no fewer than twenty-one public offices and pensions—all gross jobs—which have already yielded them £220,500!

Who paid the Bill?
"I," said John Bull,
"Because I'm a fool.
I paid the Bill."

(VICTORIA 1837—.)

William was succeeded by his niece, Queen Victoria, daughter of his brother, the Duke of Kent, our present Monarch. With regard to this lady, we are asked to believe all manner of incredible things. She is reported to be an incarnation of all the personal, political, and domestic virtues. But eulogies of kings and queens during their lives should always be received with the greatest caution. Very seldom is the real character of English princes known to their contemporaries. Lord Tennyson tells us of "the fierce light that beats upon a throne," and simple-minded folks repeat the well-turned phrase till they deem it the embodiment of a reality. It is, in fact, with the greatest difficulty that a single ray of public light can be made to penetrate the dark recesses of a Court. If, for example, the same fierce light that beats on the presidential chair of the United States were to be applied to the thrones of Europe, they would all, including that of Queen Victoria, be burned up in a fortnight.

Mr. Henry George generously proposed in a memorable speech in St. James' Hall to allow the Queen, as a widow woman, £100 per annum out of the rent or revenue of the national soil. Her services to the State as a Queen he correctly estimated at *nil*. Not so reckon the discerning British taxpayers. They pay her over £600,000 a year on the score of queenship; while her late husband, tho. Prince Consort, who impudently told us that "Parliamentary Government was on its trial," received altogether £630,000 for marrying her! "What is called Monarchy," says the immortal Thomas Paine, "always appears to me a silly, contemptible thing. I compare it to something kept behind a curtain, about which there is a great deal of bustle and fuss, and a wonderful air of seeming solemnity; but when by any accident the curtain happens to be open, and the company see what it is, they burst into laughter,"—or, he might have added shrink into loathing.

We have seen in previous chapters what the lives of the kings and queens of England have been, from the Norman, Conquest downwards, for a period of more than eight centuries. It is a record that reads more like the Newgate Calendar than any other kind of literature; from beginning to end one long revolting tale of ingratitude, deceit, selfishness, rapine, torture, tyranny, waste, lust, madness, bloodshed, murder—atrocious misgovernment. And we are now asked to believe that an institution which for so many centuries has produced such fruit as naturally as a thornbush produces thorns, has become suddenly respectable and innocuous. The Ethiopian has been pleased to change his skin, and the leopard his spots. I, for one, do not credit it. A good queen is as much a contradiction in terms as an amiable wolf, cheerful lightning, or a benevolent earthquake. That which has been is that which shall be, and there is no new thing under the sun. Royalty cannot change its character.

It is not that kings and queens are worse naturally than other men and women. It is the institution that corrupts and degrades them below the level of their fellows. Let us demand the abolition of kingship in the

interest of kings as well as in the interest of those whom they misgovern. No community has a right to place man or woman in a position where the temptations to vice are such as to render virtue next to impossible. Royalty is essentially an immoral institution, for the existence of which monarchists are more responsible than monarchs. The Hebrew prophet, Samuel, once and for all drew the moral, economic, and political lineaments of royalty in ineffaceable characters. (See I Sam., viii.). It is an institution that can neither be cured nor longer endured.—*Delenda est Carthago*.

And with the big kings or monarchs must go the smaller kings or peers who shine by light borrowed from the throne. In a word, the time has come when the whole system of aristocracy and land monopoly, on which it rests, must be brought to an end—a peaceable end, if possible, but at all events to an end. The people demand two things—a complete system of representative government and the restoration of the land. With the former royalty, with the latter aristocracy, is incompatible. Both must therefore fall. The people must begin sternly to agitate for the repeal of the Act of Settlement. "The third Gate of Barbarism—the Monarchical Gate—is closing." The first Gate of Civilisation—the Republican Gate—is ajar, and soon will be flung wide open. Long live the Republic!

"At the birth of each new era,
With a recognising start,
Nation wildly looks at nation,
Standing with mute lips apart,
And glad Truth's yet mightier man-child
Leaps beneath the Future's heart."

Chapter XIII.

The Cost of the Crown.

*These gilded flies,
That bask within the sunshine of a court,
What are they? The drones of the community!
They feed on the mechanic's labour;
The starved hind for them compels the stubborn glebe
To yield its unshared harvest.
And yon squalid form, leaner than fleshless misery,
Drags out his life in darkness in the unwholesome mine
To glad their grandeur;
Many faint with toil
That few may know the cares and woes of sloth."*

—SHELLEY.

"THE bitter cry of outcast London" has at last, let us hope, smitten the dull ear of society. All the fashionable world has gone "a-slumming." The journals teem with suggestions, and the pulpits follow suit. It is conceded on all hands that the poor are altogether too poor and miserable, and that something must be done for them, and done quickly. But where to begin is the difficulty. The rich and powerful are willing to give charity, but the dwellers in the slums ask for something very different. Their demand, however inarticulate, is for political equality and social justice, and these are precisely the concessions that the so-called upper classes never do make, except on compulsion.

The community is divisible into three great classes—beggars, robbers, and workers. The robbers make the beggars, and the workers toil for both. Now, is it not very remarkable that among so many philanthropic advisers it should seemingly occur to none that the first thing to be done is to get rid of the robbers? Who are the robbers? An ill-defined company, doubtless, but their chief, their shield and buckler, is, as a matter of course, the occupant of the throne. Hereditary royalty, at the top of society, necessarily implies hereditary poverty at the base.

Here we have a single family of perfectly useless royal people making away with a million per annum in

the very teeth of the apostolic injunction which forbids those who will not work to eat. A million per annum would support 20,000 East-end of London families, say 120,000 souls, in comparative affluence. Yet philanthropists stand aghast at the inadequacy of the remedial means at their disposal. The Queen and her family must already have cost the nation considerably over twenty millions sterling—an almost fabulous sum to pay for purely imaginary services. The indirect cost of the Crown as the fountain of corruption in church, army, navy, and diplomacy, it is impossible to estimate. How any people not absolutely demented could ever have permitted such a senseless expenditure is well-nigh incomprehensible.

Before Norman William landed in England there was hardly a manor or ecclesiastical benefice in the country that he had not by anticipation apportioned among himself and his fellow robbers. His own share was, to be sure, a handsome one, and though repeatedly confiscated and largely alienated, the Crown lands were still of considerable value at the Revolution of 1688. If they ever did belong to the kings of England as individuals—that is to say, as private estates—they completely lost that character when James II. fled to France. They then reverted to the nation, and parliament, as representing the nation, used them as it had a mind. The pretence that the Guelphs have some personal right to the duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall, from which they are permitted to draw large revenues, is as hollow as their more general claim to all the Crown lands. The Crown lands are in the strictest sense national lands, and ought, for the sake of accuracy and clearness, to be always so designated. Any revenue accruing to royalty from such sources is contributed by the nation as surely as if it arose from the tax on tea or on tobacco. It is important to remember this, as apologists of the monarchy have succeeded in breeding considerable confusion in the public mind on the subject.

If the whole of the royal salaries were taken directly from the Consolidated Fund the cost of the Crown would then appear in all its shameful enormity. But its exact amount it is all but impossible to set down, so numerous and varied are the royal perquisites that turn up in the most unexpected sections of the national accounts. Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Bradlaugh have both gone into the matter energetically, and both have in a measure been foiled. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be made to furnish an exact balance sheet, setting forth every farthing of royal income and expenditure. Patriotic Mr. Broadhurst will perhaps see to this when he can spare time from the more pressing duties of coercing Ireland and preserving working men from the abominations to be seen in art museums on Sundays.

Let us now look for a moment at the little bill of costs so far as we are permitted to know it.

Altogether this retiring German lady, according to the estimate of the Financial Reform Almanack, costs the nation no less than £619,379 per annum! She receives from a grateful people for doing nothing more in one year than an American Chief Magistrate does in sixty, for being about the hardest worked man on the Continent. Truly, "always a wonderful people the English!" as Mr. Carlyle would have said.

Nor is this robbery—and it would be a misnomer to call it by any other name—perpetrated in a straightforward Captain Kidd-like manner. When the House of Commons settled the amount of the Civil List it was careful to divide the vote into so many fixed portions. Thus: for the Queen's privy purse, £60,000; for household salaries, £131,000; for tradesmen's bills, £172,500; for bounties, £13,200. It was intended by parliament—foolishly intended, no doubt—that all the moneys not appropriated to Her Majesty's privy purse or private use should be rigorously spent in maintaining the dignity of office of the Chief of the State. Indeed, so careful were the faithful Commons to secure this object, that they inserted a clause in the Act to prevent savings, except of trifling amount, in any one category from being carried to any other. Now, it is well known that a good many sinecure offices in the royal household have been abolished: but what has become of the savings? Have they gone back to the Exchequer, as they were clearly bound to go? Not at all. They have, in defiance of the Act, found their way into the privy purse, or the Queen is very much belied. But what is worse, the £172,000 allocated for "tradesmen's bills" have notoriously never been spent. For many years there has practically been no court; consequently it is safe to conclude that a good £100,000 a-year have gone into the privy purse from that source alone. Ministers who have been parties to such breaches of trust, whether Liberal or Conservative, deserve not merely moral reprobation, but legal impeachment: and there have been times in the history of England when they would have been impeached. They are very much more to be blamed than the Queen, who, according to "our glorious constitution," can, of course, "do no wrong."

It is one of the many perfections of the said constitution that if the Monarch were to commit a murder to-morrow, there is no provision for bringing her to justice. The Queen against the Queen, in an indictment at the Old Bailey, would be a constitutional *reductio ad absurdum*, which would nonplus the united wisdom of bench, bar, and parliament.

But though it is surprising enough that the nation should have to pay over £600,000 a-year to a Queen Do-Nothing, it is yet more astounding that the lady cannot maintain her own family out of that sum. With a grasping avarice that nothing could exceed, she has called on parliament time after time to quarter her sons and daughters on the taxes wrung from the toiling masses. The sin of bringing into the world children whom they cannot or will not support is one frequently hurled at working men and women. When their offspring come on

the rates, there is not a voice lifted up in their justification. But what does this royal person do with impunity? She charges the nation some £170,000 per annum for the maintenance of her able-bodied sons, daughters, and relatives.

Now, the amazing feature of this unheard-of imposition is that the whole family are absolutely unfit to render the State any responsible service whatever. The royal supersition aside, what part, for example, in this world's business would any discerning man be disposed to assign to the Prince of Wales? Could he be trusted to drive a 'bus or a hansom? If so, that would be about the likeliest occupation for him. When the *noblesse* were happily cleared out of France, many of them earned an honest, if not very useful, livelihood by turning dancing masters; but the Heir Apparent is altogether too clumsy to compete in any such line of life. As for any form of intellectual labour, that would clearly be beyond him. In a Republic political life would be closed to him. In the United States it is not too much to say that he would have no chance of being elected even a parish constable by reason of his "record." As for the Duke of Edinburgh, does anyone imagine that he could ever have become an Admiral of the Fleet, had he had to rely on his merits instead of his birth? He might have attained to the state and dignity of an A.B.; but it is extremely doubtful if he would have had talent and perseverance to get further up the ladder. As for Connaught, nobody could imagine him any more than the Commander-in-Chief ever getting beyond the rank of drill-sergeant. Of the late Duke of Albany it might have been safe to predict that, had he lived longer he would have been fit to assist with advantage at penny readings, or even to act as a copying clerk. But surely there is nothing very extraordinary in this—nothing to justify the oceans of mendacious ink that have lately been shed in his praise. In a world of sorrow, where "every moment dies a man, every moment one is born," his death was of no public consequence whatever. His most memorable achievement was, characteristically enough, a heartless speech at Liverpool against out-door relief for the poor! Yet let us see how a grateful and starving people delight to reward such nonentities.

If these indisputable figures represented the entire cost of the Guelphic brood there would be less to be said though much to be condemned. But there are, as in the case of the Queen, sundry tantalising perquisites, difficult—nay, impossible to fix, and indeed almost surreptitious in character. For example, the Prince of Wales has £55,000 from the Duchy of Cornwall, which, by a fiction, is treated as his private property. He has likewise, as Duke of Cornwall, a snug perpetual pension of £16,216, granted in lieu of "post groats and white rents." When this little job was perpetrated in 1838 the entire revenue of the duchy was £11,536; so that compensation was given on the principle that the part is greater than the whole, a discovery that would certainly have astonished Euclid. Altogether Wales and "the Sea King's daughter from over the Sea," cost the nation over £120,000 per annum, or twelve times as much as the American Presidency! Always a wonderful people the English!

There are, besides, innumerable other thoughtful provisions made at the expense of the taxpayers for the convenience of travelling royalty; and when they condescend to take up their abode in public buildings it is amazing what sums have to be expended in "repairs." These tenants of the State are the worst imaginable. They are about twenty degrees worse than the worst Irish tenants ever known. They not merely pay no rent, but they recklessly destroy their land-lord's property. They are Socialists with a vengeance. The State does everything for them on a scale of munificence, and they do nothing for the State. Is there a Socialist working man in Soho or Clerkenwell who ever in his wildest dreams made such heavy demands on the State as these insatiable Guelphs, whose muddy German "blood" constitutes their sole claim to public consideration? It may be asserted without exaggeration that there is scarcely a family in England with a less creditable record.

Is it possible that this degrading monarchical superstition can survive in England much longer? Has the schoolmaster now been abroad so long in vain? Will the English people never take their destinies into their own hands, and close the long era of monarchical and aristocratic robbery? Are we never to have a Government that can hear the bitter cry of the outcast, and hearing, act? We know the goal. The goal is the *Democratic Republic*. Every minor reform is a delusion and a snare. Let us therefore walk in faith, and listen to the prophets. Listen more especially to the Right Hon. Sir Charles Dilke, at Newcastle-on-Tyne (6th November, 1871):—"There is a widespread belief that a Republic here is only a question of education and of time. It is said that some day a Commonwealth will be our Government. Now history and experience show that you cannot have a Republic without you possess at the same time the Republican virtues but you answer, Have we not public spirit? Have we not the practice of self-government? Are we not gaining general education? Well, if you can show me a fair chance that a Republic here will be free from the political corruption that hangs about the Monarchy, I say for my part—and I believe that the middle classes in general will say—let it come!" Amen.

Chapter XIV.

Progress in Liberty.

A land of old and just renown
Where freedom slowly broadens down
From precedent to precedent.

BROADENS slowly down! Alas, how slowly! English freedom, such as it is, is the resultant of more than eight centuries of struggle between selfish forces striving to supplant each other and to secure the mastery.

Kings, ecclesiastics, aristocrats, plutocrats, have happily never been able to form an enduring alliance among themselves, otherwise the sparse national liberties about which we sing such loud hosannahs would at this day be absolutely non-existent.

In the most primitive times the strong killed the weak and ate them. That was the age of *cannibalism*. Later, the conquerors made captives in battle and set them to labour for them. That was the age of *slavery*. By-and-by the slaves were permitted to retain some portion of their earnings for their own use. That was the age of *serfdom*. The fourth, or present stage of human evolution is *wagedom*. The producer's toil is treated as a chattel to be purchased in the cheapest market. He gets subsistence-money—no, not always that—while the non-producer revels in rent, interest, and profit. That is the gospel according to Bright. The fifth era of development, when co-operative industry shall supersede competitive or internecine production, has hardly yet dawned. It is in the womb of the future, and its heralds, like their precursors at every antecedent stage in the progress of the race, must look for nothing but misrepresentation, obloquy, and persecution.

There are practically four forms of government in the world—viz., Monarchy, Aristocracy, Oligarchy, and Democracy. In no country does any one of these forms exist in an altogether unmixed state. Russia is as nearly as possible an absolute monarchy, or one-man Government; but even the Muscovite despotism is "tempered by assassination." On the other hand, the United States Constitution, grandly democratic as it is, imposes many checks on the popular will, copied by its framers from the monarchical institutions of Europe. The English Government—it would be absolutely wrong to speak of the English constitution, for constitution there is none—is a cunning compound of monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy, and democracy, which produces the minimum of advantage and the maximum of disadvantage inherent in each system.

Let us consider for a moment how monarchies, aristocracies, oligarchies, and democracies are constituted. In every State there is a governing mind and an executive force. The executive force may, for practical purposes, be defined as the police, armed or otherwise. When an individual like the Czar of Russia or the Emperor of Germany obtains firm hold of overwhelming armed force, monarchy exists in its simplest form. But simple or mixed, it always strives to control the army.

Why do we see the Prince of Wales made a Field-Marshal; Connaught promoted to one of the most responsible commands in India; Edinburgh sent to command the Channel Fleet; to say nothing of the position of the Duke of Cambridge as Commander-in-Chief of the British army? The reason is obvious. These men never mean—indeed, could not be trusted by reason of their incapacity—to command against a foreign foe; but in the event of the English people resolving to rid themselves once and for all of the burden and disgrace of royalty, what easier for them than to take advantage of their military rank to stifle Republican aspirations in blood?

When a small number of families succeed in obtaining possession of the soil of a country along with control of the armed force, then an Aristocracy pure and simple is formed. England is the nearest approach that exists to a pure Aristocracy, and, as in the case of the monarchy, mark the anxiety of its members to obtain control of the armed forces of the State. Hardly by any chance can the most meritorious private soldier in the British army get beyond the rank of a non-commissioned officer. Hence the severe but just taunt of the first Napoleon, that our troops are a host of lions led by asses. And such is still the condition of the British army, military examinations and the abolition of purchase notwithstanding. But to officer the army is in the last resort to keep aristocracy alive.

Where a minority in a State—a minority that is neither monarchical nor territorially aristocratic—controls the disciplined force, then we have a pure Oligarchy. Such were the governments of Sparta, Rome, Carthage and the Italian Republics of the middle ages.

In modern England the distinctive element of oligarchy is plutocracy, which, unfortunately for public liberty, is but too often the humble handmaiden of monarchy and aristocracy. Successful merchants and manufacturers are but too frequently willing to barter their well-dowered daughters in matrimonial exchange for mortgaged acres and tarnished titles. Monarchy, aristocracy, and plutocracy in combination form a close Oligarchy or rule of the few, with aims sharply opposed to those of the Democracy or party of the people. At present this triple Oligarchy have everything pretty much their own way. They live by taxes, rent, interest, profit, and place.

"Still press us for your cohorts,
And when the fight is done,
Still fill your garners from the soil
That our good swords have won.
Still, like a spreading ulcer
That leech-craft may not cure,
Let your foul usance eat away
The substance of the poor."

But the chained lion of democracy, who lives by the sweat of his brow, has at last begun to think—to reflect on the miserable condition to which the superior cunning of the few has reduced the many. "The people at large," wrote the penetrating Aristotle, "may always quash the vain pretensions of the few by saying, 'we, collectively, are richer, wiser, and nobler than you.'" And the vain pretensions of the few the many will at last know how to quash. The many must learn to control the executive force in their own interests, as monarchs, aristocrats, and oligarchs have hitherto controlled it in theirs. In such a government kings, peers, and plutocrats can have no place. The three estates of the realm will then be reduced to one, viz., a democratic House of Commons—as in the time of the Commonwealth.

When the Long Parliament was expelled by the armed force and its treacherous chief the thread of political progress was rudely snapped; and ever since English public life has been destitute both of vigour and sincerity. But it is a long road that has no turning. Ideals like those of Vane, Hampden, Pym, Eliot, and Milton cannot finally be lost. The broken thread of seventeenth century Republicanism must be re-united with that of the nineteenth century. When an English Constitution comes to be framed, there should be no copying of the American, French, or Swiss Constitutions, with their monarchical reproductions of Senates and Presidents. What the far-sighted statesmen of the Commonwealth strove ultimately to establish was biennial parliaments, returned by the widest and most equal suffrage practicable. The House thus constituted was to elect a large Executive Committee for one year; this committee or Council of State to choose its own president monthly or otherwise, as it had a mind. By this means, good administrators, irrespective of party, could be secured, and the reprehensible idolatry of Grand Old Men prevented. The executive committee, forty-one in number under the Commonwealth, was divided into sub-committees for the different departments of State. These after deliberation, reported first to the full Council and then to the House, and if their policy was affirmed there was an end of the matter. If we had a Foreign Relations Committee, for example, like that of the United States, acting in a straightforward manner, instead of a conclave of Cabinet Ministers meeting in secret like a band of conspirators to involve the nation in iniquitous wars without so much as a pretence of consulting parliament, how different the financial burdens of the people to-day! In the Commonwealth parliament the figure-head was Mr. Speaker, and all commissions issued, and appointments made by the House were signed by him as nominal Chief of the State. By these simple arrangements the Republican Parliament of England combined simplicity and efficiency of administration in a manner never attained by any English Government before nor since.

And now by what means is the strong triple alliance of monarchy, aristocracy, and plutocracy to be overthrown by the toil-worn half-dazed giant of democracy? First, the giant must, above all things, attend to his political and general education. This task, his sore toil and grinding poverty render doubly difficult, but it is an imperative duty which, left undischarged, will be found an insuperable barrier to his emancipation. Were the giant but fully conscious of his rights and his irresistible strength, he would shatter the triple alliance of his enemies as easily as Samson snapped asunder the withs with which the Philistines had bound him. In order to grasp and retain the whole machinery of Government in his hand he has but to keep two objects steadily in view. He must possess himself of equal manhood suffrage and the land. These acquisitions are necessarily antecedent to all others. To the old watchwords of democracy, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," *Property* must now be added. Liberty to starve or to be driven into exile is not a kind of liberty worth having.

It is at this point that Mr. Henry George's land gospel comes to be of such vital importance to the British democracy. It smites at the very root of aristocracy and monarchy. Give every man, woman, and child in the country an equal inalienable interest in the national soil, and the feet of the democratic giant are at once planted on a rock. The whole earth is a natural monopoly, and cannot, therefore, become a true subject of free trade, much less of entail or strict settlement. Granted this—and it is impossible seriously to dispute it—the only question that remains is how to secure to each son and daughter of Adam an equitable share. The problem may be more difficult than Mr. George seems to think; but after all it is only a question of detail. In Russia the men of the *Mir* divide the land periodically, according to the number of mouths in the commune, and there is an end of the matter. But in England the population is vastly more urban, and such a primitive method of

distribution might be found inapplicable; though M. Laveleye does not hesitate to recommend its gradual adoption, and the Highland Crofters Commission have (*mirabile dictu!*) just recommended something very like a communal tenure.

But the democratic giant need not harass himself too much with details. Suffice it for him to assert his equal right to the soil with the Westminsters, Portlands, Devonshires, and Sutherlands. Our Bramwells and Argylls have attempted in a feeble way to deny the doctrine of equal land rights; but they could not have taken up more dangerous ground; for if there are no natural rights, what remain but natural might? If the Oligarchy have might on their side to-day, they cannot complain if the Democracy, feeling their strength, exercise their might of numbers to-morrow. Better secure exemption from all taxes, with a reasonable provision for widows and orphans, than run the risks of the French *noblesse* in 1789.

But in addition to Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Property, *Faith*—faith in God and Man—faith that the noblest aspirations of the soul will ultimately be justified by the severest revelations of science is needed for all abiding progress. The far-seeing and devoted Robespierre was right when he said:—"Atheism is aristocratic. The idea of a Great Being who watches over oppressed innocence and punishes triumphant crime is essentially the idea of the People." Mankind cannot live by bread alone. The new Socialistic Gospel, though an improvement on false and barren atheism, is, after all, only a gospel for beavers. It tells nothing of that "one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves," which from the dawn of history has inspired all true religion and philosophy.

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be,
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

The Norman Conquest found the English people well advanced in the essentials of a rude-liberty. They enjoyed much more equal land and suffrage rights than Englishmen do at this moment. With the introduction of feudalism in all its rigour they were reduced to serfdom. Before William the Conqueror, and his fellow-freebooters set a foot in England, they divided between themselves, on paper, every manor and every ecclesiastical benefice in the country, and the spoils were subsequently divided with scrupulous exactitude. Here was robbery, if you please. Not a word about compensation. And, singularly enough, the present race of landlords, who are so horrified at Mr. Henry George's proposal to put rents into the Exchequer instead of their pockets, make it their special boast that their ancestors "came over with the Conqueror." They glory in their descent from robbers. But Mr. George's objects are not at all to their minds, and no wonder. What their forefathers, real or pretended, did, was to take from the many and give to the few. That, indeed, was robbery pure and simple. Mr. George, on the contrary, though he would deprive no son or daughter of Adam of his or her natural stake in the bounty of Providence, would take their ill-gotten possessions from the robber few and restore them to the lawful owners, the lackland many. Mr. George's scheme is not one of robbery, but of confiscation in the original ety-mological sense of the word. Confiscation means the appropriation of the estates of robbers, traitors, and other felons to the uses of the fiscus or national treasury. It is in this sense that the American economist is a confiscator, and no other. He is not a robber. It is his landholding calumniators that are the robbers, and the inheritors of stolen property. They began at the Conquest by an act of universal robbery, and they continue the process under the very eyes of the people to this day.

An authority no less weighty than Sir James Caird has calculated that between the years 1857 and 1875 the landlords of the United Kingdom added to the value of their estates a sum, if capitalised, of £331,000,000 at a cost to themselves of £60,000,000! Here was a clean sweep in eighteen years of £271,000,000, for which these aristocratic lilies of the field did "neither toil nor spin." One moiety of this huge "find" was of course taken from the tenant farmers in the shape of uncompensated improvements, while the remainder was filched from the nation at large as "unearned increment."

Mr. Samuel Laing, M.P., a recent convert from Whiggery to Radicalism, and one of the greatest living authorities on railways and finance, has lately given us, in the "Nineteenth Century," a notion of the way in which "unearned increment" is created. £50,000,000 over market value, he tells us, have been paid to the landlords of the United Kingdom for the land taken for purposes of railway construction. The railways have at the same time improved real estate to the almost fabulous extent of £150,000,000 while relieving it of one half the rates! Here truly is robbery, if we had the trick to see it. A few hard concrete nuts like these given to the landlords and their friends to crack were worth bushels of abstract theories, however irrefragable in themselves.

At the head of the feudal system stood the king. He was in theory, and to a large extent in practice, the universal landlord. The Crown lands alone when Domesday Book was compiled consisted of no fewer than

1,442 manors. In Saxon times they were strictly national property, inalienably set apart to meet the expenses of Government. They were dissipated by the descendants of the Conqueror, and in some respects the results were not unfortunate. If kings had not been improvident, they would have had no need for national subsidies or parliaments to grant them. The extravagance of kings was the opportunity of the people. When the Commons voted any extraordinary supply they generally contrived, in exchange, to wring some small concession of liberty from the reigning tyrant. This is the history of English freedom, down even to the time of George III.

After the king came the royal vassals, or tenants *in capite*. The king was their immediate suzerain, to whom they owed homage, fealty, and military service. These royal vassals in the same way parcelled out their domains among less potent robbers, towards whom they stood in the relation of suzerains. By these means England was transformed into a camp, and what had been won by the sword was maintained by the sword, supplemented by the hardly less formidable weapon of feudal law. The Norman freebooters indeed elaborated a system of government so ingeniously compounded of violence and cunning, that to this day the mass of the people groan under it, while taught to believe that they are in the enjoyment of a "glorious constitution" that is the envy and admiration of the whole world.

The first great landmark in the development of English freedom is, perhaps not incorrectly, held to be Magna Charta. By that instrument the barons, spiritual and temporal, emancipated themselves from the arbitrary thralldom of the king. For the serfs, that is to say the great mass of the population, they did nothing except to stipulate that fines should not extend to the deprivation of their tools. Still, Magna Charta was a beginning. It was the first break in cast-iron feudalism, and foreshadowed, however faintly, the representative system of government.

Next appeared on the scene the great figure of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, the founder of the House of Commons. In 1265 he summoned to parliament for the first time the representatives of towns, or, to put it otherwise, of moveable property. This was beyond doubt the introduction into the body politic of a new force—the force of numbers, or democracy.

But it was not till the communistic preaching of John Ball and the rising of Wat Tyler that the serfs began to raise their bowed heads. Tyler was treacherously assassinated and the insurrection suppressed, but the moral effect of the movement was very great throughout rural England. What Simon de Montfort did for the trading or middle class at the cost of his life was hardly surpassed by what Wat Tyler effected for the serfs by the sacrifice of his.

Another blow of a different kind was struck at feudalism in the reign of Richard II. The first peer by patent was created in the person of John de Beauchamp, Baron of Kidderminster. A *territorial* was thus changed into a *personal* dignity, and by this means land, to some extent, was stripped of the legislative power hitherto attached to it. At a later period it was decided that peerages were held merely *in trust*, and that absenteeism or poverty entailed, the former forfeiture of estates, the latter loss of dignity. Absenteeism and bankruptcy in these more enlightened days are no disqualification for the duties of a hereditary legislator, any more than "physical and moral incapacity" in a queen.

During the Tudor period, as has been already shown, the dial of national liberty went back many degrees; yet a new factor was introduced into politics. In the reign of the very worst of these tyrants, Henry VIII., the principle of the sovereignty of the people, as expressed by *public opinion*, first took root. Henry, Edward, and Elizabeth, by repeatedly changing the national faith, compelled the people to think for themselves in matters ecclesiastical. Discarding false opinion or superstition in religion, a large section of the nation was led to challenge false opinion or superstition in politics. The Puritan party—the political ancestors of the Radicals of today—slowly grew in numbers, resolution, and clearness of democratic aim.

Their first great achievement was to wring from the king the Petition of Right, rendering illegal arbitrary imprisonment, billeting soldiers, martial law, forced loans, benevolences, and generally taxation without the consent of parliament. The second great and tragical blow struck by this new and incalculable power of *public opinion* was the trial and execution of "the man, Charles Stuart," for treason to the Sovereign People. The bruit of this unparalleled event is yet resounding throughout the world, and loosening everywhere the knees of tyrants.

When wilt Thou save the people, Lord—
Oh, God of mercy, when?
Not kings and thrones but nations;
Not chiefs and lords, but men.

Chapter XV.

Salus Publica Suprema Lex.

The One and the All are, as ruling powers, the only final quantities. The Few and the Many are either instalments and compromises, or quackeries, delusions, and names.

—Partridge.

The Cromwell of this age is an intelligent, resolute, and united People

—Goldwin Smith.

THE unhappy restoration of the Stuarts brought with it a whole train of evils, from which the nation still suffers. In 1660 a House of Commons, in which the landlords were supreme, relieved their estates of all feudal dues, then amounting to about one-half of the entire revenues of the State. Military service, purveyance, aids, relief, premier seisin, wardship, alienation, escheat, all disappeared in a day. In their place were substituted Excise duties. By 12 Charles II. c. 24 the great bulk of taxation was for the first time transferred from the land to the people, who have borne it ever since. In 1883 the revenue proper—*i.e.*, exclusive of receipts from the Post-office, Telegraphs, &c.—amounted to £73,128,000. Towards this sum Customs and Excise alone contributed £46,587,000. The Land-tax yielded £1,055,000! Our rulers tax the vices of smoking and drinking at home as a means of murdering Afghans, Zulus, Egyptians, and Soudanese abroad. Raise all taxes from the land, and we shall speedily hear of the last of these enormities.

For every shilling paid over the counter for cocoa, 1¼d. is for tax; for coffee, 1½d.; for currants, 2½d.; for raisins, 2½d.; for tea, over 4¼d.; while a shilling's worth of spirits is raised to 4s. 4¼d.; and a shilling's worth of tobacco to 6s. 8¾d. The smoker who buys an ounce of tobacco for 3d. pays 2½d. for tax and ½d. for tobacco. And this is exemplary free-trade England! It is noteworthy that this infamous statute of Charles II., which abolished the feudal burdens of the land lords, while leaving them in full enjoyment of their privileges, was carried by a majority of two, the numbers being—for the measure, 151; against, 149.

The Land-tax was fixed in 1692 at 4s. in the pound of *true annual rental*, but the landlords soon found this charge too onerous, and in 1697 they reduced their payments to a fixed sum, which was raised in 1798 to £2,037,627, and declared to be perpetual, subject to redemption. To-day the tax, if honestly levied on *true annual rental*, would yield about £35,000,000. Had it been honestly levied all along, there would have been no National Debt, and probably very few wars. Landlord parliaments, it is pretty certain, would have been careful to keep out of wars for which they themselves would have had to pay, and pay at once out of rent instead of the mortgaged wages of industry.

Still, the Restoration period was not wholly unfavourable to liberty. The Act of Uniformity drove two thousand Presbyterian clergymen out of the Church, and laid the foundation of political as well as ecclesiastical nonconformity deep and strong. Standing armies were declared to be illegal, and the Habeas Corpus Act guaranteeing to the people immunity from arbitrary imprisonment was passed. Nevertheless, standing armies exist to our cost, and during the present parliament we have seen nearly a thousand Irishmen and Irish women under lock and key at one time "on suspicion."

The expulsion of the Stuarts and the choice of William as king by a majority of two votes in the Convention Parliament made England beyond cavil an elective monarchy. The Act of Settlement has only to be abolished in order to bring royalty to a legal end, for what parliament has done it is clearly competent for parliament to undo. To the Dutch king's reign we are indebted for the Civil List as well as the abominable funding system, which enables "sovereigns and statesmen" by anticipating revenue to carry on flagitious wars at the cost of posterity.

In George the First's time, parliament passed the Septennial Act as a temporary measure to keep out the Pretender. Honourable members have since fraudulently retained it on the Statute Book to keep themselves in power a little longer.

As early as 1780 a great public meeting in Westminster demanded Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage, Equal Electoral Districts, Payment of Members, No Money Qualification, and Vote by Ballot. The then Duke of Richmond, who was president of the "Society for Constitutional Information," and Charles James Fox, considered these propositions reasonable, and maintained their urgency. Yet more than a hundred years have elapsed, and with the exception of vote by ballot not one of them has been made good. There is nominally, it is true, no money qualification demanded of parliamentary candidates, but they have to bear the charge of official election expenses, and that is a money qualification in the very worst form. Who shall say that in this "land of old renown freedom has not *slowly* broadened down from precedent to precedent?"

The Reform Bill of 1832 was a step towards the emancipation of the people, but a step marked by the

basest perfidy on the part of the middle class, who, once inside the fortress of citizenship, faithlessly helped to bolt the door in the face of their working-class brethren, whom they had solemnly undertaken promptly to admit. This treachery brought into existence the famous People's Charter, which was first published in May, 1838. It re-affirmed with emphasis the Richmond-Fox "points" of 1780, and secured an amount of zealous and intelligent advocacy unparalleled in the history of political reform. It gave birth to a generation of workmen patriots, whose honourable "records" are among the most precious memorials of their day and country.

But the Oligarchy was not to be overthrown by such feeble weapons as reason, eloquence, and justice. Peaceable meetings were broken up by armed force, and the leaders of the movement were arrested, imprisoned, and exiled. The late Napoleon III. endeared himself to "Society" by playing the part of an Anti-Chartist special constable.

Though stifled by oligarchic force and fraud, the democratic cause, however, was not dead, but it unhappily slumbered for many years. In 1867, Mr. Benjamin Disraeli caught the Whigs bathing, and made off with the suffrage clothes in which they had for years been masquerading as friends of the people. It was decided to admit, by "a leap in the dark," urban artisans to citizenship, but carefully to exclude their brethren in the country, as well as the whole class of agricultural labourers. Of course, no honest effort was made either by Conservatives or Liberals to redistribute political power; consequently, as usual the flattering promise of reform made to the ear has been broken to the hope. The vast interest of labour—the only interest in a properly-constituted society—is represented in the House of Commons by two members all told, and one of these unfortunately, generally acts as henchman and decoy-duck to the capitalist.

On the other hand, the peers have no fewer than 272 relatives in "the People's House;" the Fighting Interests, 168; the Landlords, 282; the Lawyers, 122; Liquor, 18; Money (bankers, &c.), 25; Literary, Professional, and Scientific Interests, 94; Placemen (past and present), 113; and Trade, Commerce, and Manufactures, 155.

The producing classes, while contributing at least three-fifths of the revenue, have certainly not more than a score of even passable representatives in parliament. The spending classes have the rest, the fighting interest alone making away with no less than thirty millions of the national income!

Now, however, it is proposed to redress some of these startling anomalies. For the first time in the history of parliamentary reform we have a Ministry which almost unsolicited comes forward to extend the liberties of the people. They have raised the banner of household suffrage in the counties and encouraged the hope that a Redistribution Bill is to follow. But desirable as it is in every way that the toilers in field and mine should be promptly enrolled in the ranks of citizens, it is quite possible to effect this object, as was done by the Bill of 1867, without perceptibly altering what Lord Salisbury calls "the balance of the constitution." Household suffrage in the boroughs has given us six years of Tory Jingoism, supplemented by Whig coercion in Ireland, the thrice-infamous bondholders' war in Egypt, and a crushing expenditure never exceeded in time of peace by the worst of recent Governments.

The cure for these and many other evils that afflict the body politic is to be found in the numerical equalisation of constituencies—in the one man one equal vote contention of the Chartists. To extend the franchise without redistribution is merely to increase the cost of elections, and thereby make the "rich man's club at St. Stephen's" even less accessible to honest poverty than it is at present. The equalisation of voting districts, on the other hand, would undoubtedly "alter the balance of the Constitution," transforming oligarchic England into a democracy, in which those who toil and spin might lead lives really worth living.

This being so, the question arises whether the franchise being once conceded to the counties, there will be any anxiety on the part either of Liberals or Conservatives to proceed to redistribution. All previous experience is against the supposition. Time—twenty or thirty years—it will plausibly be alleged, is needed to get at the wishes of the new voters whose choice of candidates will meanwhile lie between Dives and Croesus. This is the rock ahead, and genuine democrats must beware lest their bark be wrecked within measurable distance of the land of promise.

The anomalies of our representative, or rather misrepresentative, system can hardly be exaggerated. One hundred and eighty borough constituencies, with 3,500,000 inhabitants, return 231 members to parliament; while seventy-one others, with 11,500,000, return only 129 representatives! Forty-two boroughs, with less than 7,000 inhabitants, have one member each; while 178 towns, with an aggregate population of 3,630,000, and in no case counting less than 10,000 souls, are for voting purposes included in counties. Could there be a better reason than this for getting rid once and for all of the obsolete distinction between boroughs and counties? While say a Lambeth journalist, accustomed to handle every political topic of the day, has the twenty-fifth thousandth part of a representative in parliament, the enlightened Portarlington voter has the hundred and fortieth share in an honourable member all to himself! Could the perverse ingenuity of man invent a more preposterous system of government? Indeed, slight as have been the achievements of British democracy, as compared with the triumphs of our Republican "kin beyond sea," they are great and laudable in view of the

mighty barriers which the craft of oligarchy has erected on every hand.

But barrier or no barrier, ultimate victory is assured. Democracy, it has been well said, like death, never gives up a victim, never abandons an ideal. It is something that the people should know what they want. With equal land and suffrage rights democracy becomes possible. Without both it is impossible, and liberty, its offspring, remains unborn. A great future, a mighty inheritance, is opening up to the honest toilers of every land. The triple alliance of monarchy, aristocracy, and plutocracy is strong, but it can and shall be broken. Even if they are let alone they are sure ultimately to quarrel among themselves. The profit-monger will quarrel with the rent-monger because the latter neither toils nor spins, or for some other reason. Providence is on the side of the heavy democratic battalions. The people will at last enjoy their own and sit down under their vine and fig-tree, with none to make them afraid. The golden age—the age of Republican brotherhood—"when man to man the world o'er shall brothers be, an' a' that," is not in the past, but in the future. To us it is given to see it only in visions and glimpses, as Moses saw the Promised Land from the height of Mount Pisgah; to see it only, like him,

"Who, rowing hard against the stream,
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam.
And did not dream it was a dream."

The New Book of Kings.

Crown 8vo., 128 pp. Prices—Paper, 6d., cloth, 1s. 6d.

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None can deny that Mr. Davidson is an able writer.

—*East Aberdeenshire Observer*.

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—*People's Journal* (Dundee.)

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—*Batley News*.

He (Mr. Davidson) stalks through history like a pestilence.

—*The Republican*.

As these essays in their original form have possibly passed under the eyes of two millions of readers, they can hardly have failed to accomplish their author's purpose.

—*New York Nation*.

He has succeeded admirably in painting vile pictures. His canvas is filled with the most repulsive-looking monsters.

—*Dumbarton Herald*.

He (the author) conclusively proves that we would have been much better without them (the Kings.)

—*Stirling Observer*.

Mr. Davidson's book should be in the hands of every thinking man.

—*Dunfermline Press*.

Mr. Davidson is a vigorous writer, and might have used his pen for better purposes.

—*Brighton Herald*.

The "New Book of Kings" is nothing more nor less than a "scandalous chronicle" of the English Monarchy which under ordinary circumstances would be consigned with a feeling of disgust to the waste-paper basket. The denunciatory paragraphs now going the rounds of nearly the whole English, Irish and Scottish press are but gratuitous advertisements of a book which ought never to have been printed.

—*Dublin Mail*.

The New Book of Kings "embraces a travesty of history as unscrupulous, served up in a sauce of rhetorical malignity as base, as the most zealous foe of the monarchy could desire. To the entire satisfaction of his own insolence he (the author) shows that from the time of William the Conqueror to that of William IV. the career of royalty was one of consistent cruelty, fraud and debauchery.

—*Fifeshire Journal*.

Among literary items be it recorded that Mr. Morrison Davidson, Barrister and Journalist, has just published the "New Book of Kings" which is as fiercely revolutionary as Diderot himself could desire.

—*Irish Times*.

The "New Book of Kings" is an interesting and cleverly written little book by an Universal Iconoclast who not only pulverises all our English Kings, but even attempts to drag Oliver Cromwell from his grave and to gibbet him once more. There is a terrific amount of truth in Mr. Davidson's impeachment of Crowned Heads; but we do most certainly challenge the assertion that Cromwell was a 'beast of prey.' What we do admire about the author is his consistency; he has no mercy even for those who might be presumed to be his friends.

—*Daylight*. (Norwich).

This is a very clever little book. The best point in Mr. Davidson's work is that he seems to have shaken himself clear almost if not altogether from middle-class prejudices. The history of the great Middle-Class Revolution of the seventeenth century has yet to be written. Mr. Davidson's sympathy with the Levellers and genuine Republicans is so manifest that he would start with much in his favour. It needs some pluck even now to write this sentence, "judging of such a beast of prey as Cromwell we should never regard for an instant what he said but mark intently what he did.

—*Justice*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson describes the war in Egypt, carried on by the noble Mr. Gladstone for whom Mr. Davidson worked in 1880 as "the most iniquitous of modern times."

—*Yorkshire Post*.

The blackest of all the black marks is set against Cromwell, the hero of Carlyle and the demigod of English democracy. It is needless to say that Froude's affection for "Bluff King Hal" and Macaulay's enthusiasm for William III. find no place in these ruthless pages.

—*Eastern Evening News*.

Altogether it is an awful story, as pungent as a clever writer can make it, and perhaps the telling it in blunt language is not without its uses. I would advise any bad bold Radical who believes neither in king nor lord, to buy it and harden his wicked heart therewith.

—*Suffolk Mercury*.

The author of that very spirited book "Eminent Radicals" has issued from the Modern Press another very powerful Radical publication characteristically called the "New Book of Kings." It is written in Mr. Davidson's most trenchant style.

—*Hull Express*.

The "New Book of Kings" is a ferocious attack on Monarchy which is certain to have a great circulation both in this country and America. It has as much interest as a sensational novel and far more solidity.

—*The Galloway Free Press*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson has published his "New Book of Kings." Its author has not a word to say in favour of any English sovereign from William the Conqueror to Victoria. This monotony of turpitude would be wearisome were it not for the vivacious and trenchant style. It is calculated to serve the useful purpose of opening the eyes of people who now worship Monarchy as a fetish.

—*London Echo*.

The "New Book of Kings" would be justified in its tone if Queen Victoria were like King Bomba. It is a long libel on the sovereigns of England.

—*Western Morning News*.

I have hardly seen a book of this character since the days of Ernest Jones and Feargus O'Connor, Frost, Williams, and Jones. Such a book should be a sign to the Tories that society may want saving again. The "New Book of Kings" must be set down as a very advanced and thoroughly Republican production.

—*Rochdale Observer*.

If I wanted to convert any friend from the errors of Republicanism I should give him Mr. Davidson's book. "Nothing could be so bad as that," he would say. One can hardly criticise a volume written in this extraordinary style.

—*Liverpool Mercury*.

The Duke of Connaught, it is hinted, may not care to go back to India While here he can compare notes with his royal relatives holding similar cosy positions with respect to a book published recently entitled the "New Book of Kings."

—*Belfast Morning News*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson's "New Book of Kings" is causing something of a flutter in the Ministerialist dovecots. His writings read like the cry of the injured spirit of Liberalism coming to earth to indict false leaders and traitorous followers.

—*Wolverhampton Evening Star*.

The "New Book of Kings" is an astounding one and in any other country would be almost certainly suppressed. It is a savage attack on the Monarchy and strange to say on the present government.

—*Dublin Daily Express*.

The "New Book of Kings," by Mr. Morrison Davidson who wrote the smart sketches in the *Echo* "Senators in Harness" is written in too cantankerous a spirit. The book dwells on the bad side of each monarch's character and ignores the good.

—*Manchester Evening News*.

The style of the "New Book of Kings" is able and agreeable but its rampant Radicalism is calculated to appal even the followers of Mr. Chamberlain.

—*Newcastle Daily Journal*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson's "New Book of Kings" is a curious specimen of the literature with which extreme politicians occasionally favour us. Written with masculine vigour and no want of that it is yet about the most remarkable perversion of history that one could reasonably expect to see.

—*Glasgow Herald*.

The object of this Radical writer is to show that the sovereigns of England have been the vilest wretches that ever crawled.

—*Middlesbro' Daily Exchange*.

The "New Book of Kings" is simply a violent attack on the memory of the rulers of England from the time of the Conquest down to the present reign. It has the merit of being well written, but it is cruelly plain-spoken. There are passages in the book savouring of rank disloyalty.

—*Belfast News Letter*.

Mr. Davidson is the unblushing accuser of all the Kings and Queens that ever reigned over England. His little book is a veritable "bloody circuit" by a modern Judge Jeffries. It is a collection of short and pithy

condemnations of their acts, their characters and their lives written with sarcastic force and unsparing hate.
—*Norfolk News*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson—a gentleman well and honourably known in connection with the London Press—has published a short, severe and somewhat satirical sketch of the English Kings. The sketches are done with great skill and smartness and the declamation is trenchant and effective. It is a scathing criticism of modern Liberalism interwoven and illustrated by facts and arguments drawn from the lives of our monarchs.
—*Newcastle Daily Chronicle*.

It is a history of Royal blackguardism; eloquent and spirited but not always logical or even fair.
—*Sheffield Independent*.

Mr. Davidson is, however, an able and vigorous writer, and those who do not share his opinions will read his criticism on the Royalties of England with interest.

—*Dundee Advertiser*.

It is written from a thoroughly democratic and revolutionary standpoint; and even those who do not adopt its views may appreciate its vigorous treatment of the topic with which it deals.

—*Leeds Mercury*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson shows up with merciless severity the shortcomings of our Kings and Queens. The book is written with great ability, but the tone is characterised more by the vehemence of the pleader than by the calmness of the judge.

—*Northern Ensign*.

Its thoroughness raises a doubt as to its honesty. It should be read, but read with reserve and inquiry.

—*Eastern Morning News*.

A wholesome spirit runs through the whole work. Every line should be read by all who either believe or believe not in Kings.

—*The Centaur*.

Now and again efforts have been made to bring to light the real characteristics of the Kings and Queens of England. Possibly the most vigorous and truthful work upon the subject is the "New Book of Kings." Mr. Morrison Davidson spares no one; and he gives evidence of his statements. Every political or historical student should have the "New Book of Kings."

—*Boston Guardian*.

A perusal of "The New Book of Kings" will astonish the student of political history as to the number of evil things which can be raked together to the prejudice of Monarchs.

—*Edinburgh Daily Review*.

His criticism of past and present English Royalty is often fair enough but it is often coarse and altogether out of proportion.

—*Bradford Observer*

The Book of Lords,

(*A Sequel to the "New Book of Kings,"*)

By J. Morrison Davidson,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW,

AUTHOR OF "EMINENT RADICALS," "THE NEW BOOK OF KINGS," &C.

Sec yonder birkie ca'ed a lord,

Who struts and stares and a' that;

Though hundreds worship at his nod,

He's but a coof for a' that.

BURNS.

Price Sixpence.

London: The Modern Press, 13 and 14, Paternoster Row, And of all Booksellers. 1884.

Chapter I.

The Origin of the Lords.

"As far, at least, as our race is concerned, freedom is everywhere older than bondage. It is liberty that is ancient; tyranny that is modern."

—E. A. FREEMAN.

WHEN the great St. James's Hall meeting—the most intelligently revolutionary that has been held in the metropolis for half a century—unanimously voted in August last that the "House of Peers in Parliament is useless and dangerous, and ought to be abolished," it was noted by the *Times*, as a small crumb of consolation, that the naughty agitators had, after all, like true Englishmen, fallen back on a precedent more than two centuries and a quarter old. It was so, and so it always will be, in this "land of just and old renown." We cannot and do not wish to get beyond our precedents. It is the Peers and their apologists that are the dangerous innovators. We Revolutionists stand by the most ancient polity of the English People.

What was that polity towards which, during more than eight centuries of struggle, the soundest portion of the nation has ever striven consciously or unconsciously, to revert? Its rough outlines we now fortunately know, thanks to the devoted labours of a little band of learned historic investigators.

In England, before the Norman Conquest, there were practically three orders of men—the Thanes, the Ceorls, and the Slaves. Neither the Thanes nor the Slaves were a numerous class. Any Ceorl might become a Thane by acquiring five hides of land (600 acres), with whatever privileges attached to Thaneship. The slaves were either conquered Celtic Britons or Saxon felons judicially condemned to penal servitude.

The really important class were the Ceorls, most of whom owned and cultivated their own little farms, like the American homesteaders of the present day, the basis of their tenure, however, being mostly communal. "They were," says Hallam, "the root of a noble plant, the free socage tenants or English yeomanry, whose independence has stamped with peculiar features both our constitution and our national character." Alas! where are the yeomanry of England to-day? Swallowed up in the devouring maw of the aristocracy, five hundred of whom, calling themselves peers or hereditary legislators, have possessed themselves of from one-sixth to one-fifth of the entire national soil! Out of 509 Peers 438 hold 14,250,000 acres. To these 438 uncoiling lilies of the field the cultivators, or rather the consumers of agricultural produce, pay a yearly tribute called rent, of £12,000,000 sterling!

Verily, if the Lords court destruction, they cannot do better than appeal to antiquity and precedent. They are careful, however, never to go beyond the hateful period of the thirteenth century, when the systematic oppression of the English people first became a hereditary trade on the part of kings and aristocrats.

Even in Saxon England it is not to be concealed that the fatal virus of aristocracy had begun to circulate through the veins of society. According to the earliest records, many of the Ceorls had become annexed to the lands of the more powerful Thanes, to whom they were bound to render certain services. But in other respects the most dependent of the Ceorls were personally freemen and citizens. They were as "law-worthy" as the Thanes. The *weregild*, or composition for the slaying of a Ceorl, was 200s., payable to his family and not to his lord, as in the case of a slave. He was a legal witness. He had the right to bear arms. He was eligible for every magisterial office, and, as has been said, no barrier of birth or rank prevented him from becoming a Thane. He enjoyed in full all the local franchises in mark, hundred, and shire, and he was, at all events constructively, represented in the Grand National Council or Witanagemôt (the Assembly of the Wise).

The powers of the Witan were most extensive: (1.) They elected kings. (2.) They deposed kings if their rule was injurious to the people. (3.) They and the king appointed to vacant sees. (4.) They regulated ecclesiastical income and expenditure. (5.) They and the king levied the taxes. (6.) They and the king raised land and sea forces. (7.) They controlled the use of the national domain (folcland). (8.) They forfeited the lands of offenders and intestates. (9.) They could revise every public act of the king. (10.) They considered, and with the king, promulgated every new law. (11.) They made treaties. (12.) They were the Supreme Court of Justice civil and criminal.

The unit of ancient English Society was the mark or township. Then came the hundred, consisting of an uncertain aggregate of townships. Similarly the shire embraced so many hundreds, and the entire kingdom was made up of the totality of shires. In the Moot, Gemot, or Council, of mark, hundred, shire, and kingdom, every freeman had a right to an equal voice. On this all-important point there is hardly the vestige of a doubt. Universal suffrage is the birth-right of which more than "two millions of capable citizens" are at this moment shamefully deprived by their Hereditary Rulers.

A charter of Æthelstan, A.D. 931, was confirmed "*totâ plebis generalitate ovante*" (by the whole body of exulting Commons); while another Act, passed by the Witan sitting at Winchester in 934, is described as being executed "*totâ populi generalitate*" (by the entire body of the people). With regard to such declarations as the latter, the learned and cautious Kemble observes:—"Whether expressions of this kind were intended to denote the actual presence of the people on the spot, or whether *populus* was used in a strict and technical sense—that sense which is confined to those who enjoy the full franchise—or, finally, whether the assembly of the Witan making laws is considered to represent, in our modern form, an assembly of the whole people, it is clear that *the power of self-government is recognised in the latter.*" Indeed, so much was this the case, that even after the Conquest, in 1086, in the reign of the Conqueror, and again in 1116, in the reign of Henry I., Gemôts, *Communia Concilia*, or Parliaments (so called for the first time in 1246), were convened on Salisbury Plain,

consisting of all the land-owners of the realm, whether tenants of the Crown (*in capite*) or sub-tenants. On the former occasion it was computed that no fewer than 60,000 hon. members put in an appearance!

But this was precisely the weak point in the early English democracy. Such assemblies might sanction laws; they could not make them. They had all the vices of the Roman Comitia, which inevitably lost their authority, to the destruction of every popular liberty, just in proportion as the dominions of Rome were extended. A form of government in which every freeman represented himself was perfectly feasible in the moot of the mark, of the hundred, or even of the shire; but in the moot of the nation it was bound, for the most obvious reasons, to fail.

Yet, in the light of modern experience, this failure, fraught with its baleful train of all but ineradicable evils, was susceptible of easy prevention. Though every free man could not be personally present in the grand council of the nation, he might, from the earliest times, have been so by his delegate; and nothing is more astonishing, in the whole political history of the human race, than that this seemingly obvious expedient was never seriously tried till the immortal Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, made it current coin. One almost grudges this bright particular star to the aristocracy. It is some consolation, however, to reflect that he was a Frenchman by birth.

In 1265 this great man, convoking the first genuine House of Commons, solved a problem which had baffled the best intellect of Greece and Rome, and which, left unsolved, would, in all human probability, have found the England, and indeed the Europe, of to-day the hopeless prey of kings, priests, and aristocrats—that grand trinity of social and political evil. What Earl Simon did was to reduce the abstract right of every Englishman to a voice in the Grand Council of the nation—a right which had never been abrogated—to something like a practical reality. The Commons—the *communitas communitatum* of boroughs and shires—is the true Witanagemôt of pre-Norman England, and not the House of Lords, which is but an ugly wen or defacement of comparatively recent growth.

Let us now see through what national misfortunes, by what crafty devices, Englishmen have come to be saddled with the crushing load of royalty and aristocracy, which to this day weighs them down body and soul. Our forefathers' failure to discover the true principle of national representation was the grand opportunity of kings, priests, and aristocrats. They took upon themselves to manage the people's affairs—not, of course, in the people's interest, but their own. The kings, whose office was originally strictly elective and revocable by the Witan—amounting, in fact, to little more than a republican presidency—first laid claim to the whole kingdom and all its inhabitants as a hereditary fief, and ultimately, under the Stuarts, as a gift to them and their ancestors from Almighty God. The king's *comitates*, or courtiers, were not slow to follow so excellent an example. They set up as hereditary peers and oppressors of the people, each in his own corner of the unfortunate country, which had at one time so richly promised to become the chosen home of freedom. It was but the other day that the Duke of Portland gravely announced the divine right of dukes to legislate for the people!

The process by which the aristocracy accomplished their nefarious ends was simple enough. Meetings of the Common Council of the Realm, both before and after the Conquest, were frequent enough; but, except on occasions of the greatest importance, they were unattended except by the king, the ealdormen (governors of shires) the king's thanes, the bishops and abbots, and the inhabitants of the immediate neighbourhood—Winchester, Gloucester, and Westminster generally—in which the assembly was held. Poverty and distance prevented even the lesser thanes from ordinarily participating in the national councils in any numbers. "The largest list of signatures," says Kemble, "which I have yet observed is 106; but numbers varying from 90 to 100 are not uncommon, especially after the consolidation of the monarchy." Every freeman had the right to attend, and in theory every freeman, present or absent, did give his consent, his "Yea, yea," or his "Nay, nay." But "such right of attendance," says Freeman, with reason, "of course became purely nugatory. The mass of the people could not attend: they would not care to attend; they would find themselves of no account if they did attend. They would, therefore, without any formal abrogation of their right, gradually cease from attending. ... By this process an originally democratic assembly, without any formal exclusion of any class of its members, gradually shrunk up into an aristocratic assembly."

Thus, by degrees, under the Norman Kings, the People's Land (Folcland) became the King's Land (*Terra Regis*), and the Council of the Wise (Witanagemôt) became the King's feudal Court (*Curia Regis*). Those councillors honoured with a personal writ, the "majores barones," became Hereditary Peers; while those summoned generally by the sheriff fell back into the unprivileged mass.

The division of Parliament into two Houses, which constitutionalists would have us believe is an almost divine arrangement, had its origin in the meanest and most selfish of human motives.

At first, after Earl Simon's reforms, the barons and the knights of shires voted and probably deliberated together, the clergy by themselves and the burgesses by themselves. Each order assessed itself. In 1333 the barons, knights, and clergy each contributed one-fifteenth of their substance, while the burgesses gave one-tenth. On this occasion the knights and burgesses deliberated together, but voted separately. There was no

fixed order of procedure. The barons are believed to have assembled at the top of Westminster Hall, and the burgesses at the foot. After 1347 the knights and burgesses habitually deliberated together, and the clergy and barons together. Mutual jealousy, and not statesmanlike foresight, thus divided Parliament in two.

But if the existence of a Second Chamber in any form is, so to speak, an unconstitutional departure from the One-Chamber Legislative system of our forefathers, a House of Hereditary Legislators is a still more extraordinary and unwarrantable innovation. How could such a monstrously irrational claim ever have come to be set up? Who is responsible for it? As usual, the lawyers. These unscrupulous allies of wealth and power in all ages of the world's history, came to lay down the singular doctrine that if the Crown once summon a man to the National Council, it must go on summoning his representatives, however unfit, morally or intellectually, down to the latest generation. "Woe unto you lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge." Yet, strange to say, Mr. Gladstone, wielding the prerogative of the Crown, might make every elector, and, for matter of that, every non-elect, in England a peer to-morrow; and, according to the lawyers, all the first-born males of such noble lords would be entitled to succeed them as hereditary legislators. In Magna Charta, chapter xiv., King John stipulated as follows:—"We shall cause the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls "(then governors of counties), "and greater barons to be separately summoned by our letters. And we shall cause our sheriffs and bailiffs to summon generally all others who hold of us in chief." It would thus appear that even at the date of the charter (1215) men were summoned to the *Commune Concilium Regni* by virtue of office and by classes, and not in consequence of birth.

Indeed it was not till the reign of Richard II. (1377-99) that we find the absurd principle of heredity in full swing. The introduction of representative members into Parliament by Simon de Montfort doubtless suggested to the usurping oligarchy the idea of a hereditary chamber as an invincible barrier to further democratic progress.

The privileged simulacrum should have been abolished when Earl Simon resuscitated the old popular assembly of our pre-Norman forefathers. It has not even so much as a historic *raison d'etre*. The House of Lords is merely a standing embodiment of the usurpation and confiscation of ancient democratic rights by the greater barons, Court officials, and ecclesiastics, who alone were able, in consequence of their superior wealth and leisure, to attend the national council with some degree of regularity. It is merely a gigantic national fraud.

If the Peers and not the Commons are the old Witanagemôt as has been asserted, then historically every British elector, however humble, has a right to claim a seat in the Gilded Chamber. In throwing out the Franchise Bill, they should have done so *totâ plebis generalitate*.

Having thus briefly traced the origin of the so-called Upper Chamber of the Legislature, I shall in subsequent chapters show in some historic detail that it is not less objectionable in practice than it is irrational in theory.

Chapter II.

Blue Blood.

*"I will have never a noble, no lineage counted great;
Fishers, and choppers, and ploughmen shall constitute a state.
And to and behold! how these poor men shall govern the land and sea,
And make just laws beneath the sun as planets faithful be."*

—EMERSON.

THERE is nothing more unaccountable than an Englishman's proverbial love for a lord. It is a sentiment condemned alike by the absurdity of the principle—if principle it can be called—of legislative heredity, and by the history of the peerage itself. It is equally repugnant to the precepts of Christianity and the dictates of common sense.

"Be ye not called Rabbi, Rabbi," said the Divine Democrat; "neither be ye called master, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." If England were what she professes to be—a Christian State—she would most certainly recognise no titles of nobility. The able men who founded the mighty Republic of the West, as might have been expected, were not slow to exclude the pagan poison of aristocratic nomenclature from the Constitution of the United States. Article I., section 9, provides: "No titles of nobility shall be granted

by the United States; and no person holding any office of profit or trust under them shall without the consent of Congress accept of any title of any kind whatever from any king, prince, or any foreign State." Well has Mr. Lowell written—

*"There is more in names
Than most men dream of; and a lie may keep
Its throne a whole age longer if it skulk
Behind the shield of some fair-seeming name."*

True, "my lord" is but a word; but words, though the slaves of the wise, are the tyrants of fools; and we have it on the high authority of the late Thomas Carlyle that the people of these islands are unfortunately "mostly fools." I know a member of the present Liberal Administration, in other respects by no means an imbecile, who habitually quotes the worthless opinions of worthless "lords" of his acquaintance as if they had just dropped from the lips of a Socrates, a Confucius, or a Marcus Aurelius. The haughty Earl of Chatham and the Laodicean Palmerston were equally the victims of this strange disease of aristocracy. A gracious word from the second bestial Guelph would transport the elder Pitt with unspeakable delight, while the displeasure of the late Prince Consort was enough to make case-hardened "Pam" weep like a baby.

Even at this moment it is but too evident that Ministers are anxiously seeking to devise means to extricate the Peers from the perilous position in which their insolent opposition to the enfranchisement of "two millions of capable citizens" has placed them. That Lord Hartington, the heir to a great dukedom, chiefly carved out of stolen Church property, should advise surrender to the peers is intelligible enough. But what said Mr. Chamberlain, the most democratic member of the Cabinet, at Hanley? "We begrudge the Lords nothing that rightly belongs to them—their rank and titles, their stars and garters—any power that they may secure by long prescription and high station," &c. The President of the Board of Trade has seemingly forgotten that noble Lords, inasmuch as "they neither toil nor spin," can have very little that "that rightly belongs to them." Is this the voice of Birmingham? This the doctrine of the Caucus? What the people had a right to expect Mr. Chamberlain as the Coming Man to say was—"We be-grudge the Lords whatever does not rightly belong to them: to wit, their rank and titles, their stars and garters, and any power secured by long prescription or high station." It is precisely against these usurped possessions that the people are striking at this moment. It is hard to say whether the social or the political influence of an aristocracy is more injurious to a nation. The former produces snobs, the latter serfs, and a snob is first cousin to a serf all the world over. When Cromwell told a great Duke that England would never be well till his Grace was called plain Mr. Montagu he spoke the true language of democracy.

It was found next to impossible to keep the Israelites of old from relapsing into the most degrading forms of idolatry. So long as a "grove" or a "high place" was left in the land, so long must they follow after strange gods. And so with this deep-seated English malady of lord-worship. Until the great high place of aristocracy at St. Stephen's—the centre and source of the contagion—is utterly cast down, there is no hope of moral health for the English people. "When I was a child," said the apostle, "I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." Shall it never be given to Englishmen to put away the childish things of aristocracy, and assert the imprescriptible Rights of Man?

In theory, no rational being can defend a government by hereditary legislators. Born law-makers, born law-obeyers! If Lord Salisbury and his fellow peers were born to rule the people, then it follows, as the night day, that the people were born to obey my Lord Salisbury and company. Hereditary bondsmen we! What is this but palpable tyranny? And worse, it is the most stupid and irrational tyranny that could possibly be invented.

See yonder birkie ca'ed a lord,
Who struts and stares and a' that;
Though hundreds worship at his nod,
He's but a coof for a' that.

The business of government, it will be generally conceded, demands some small degree of intelligence, knowledge, and wisdom; but the hereditary principle provides for none of these things. Our kings and peers—they are both in the same boat—inherit power over their fellows not because they are wiser and better than the multitude, but because they have, or are supposed to have, a certain pedigree like a prize ox or stallion. Englishmen are ruled, not by rational but by animal succession; and, strange to say, while all the world wonders and jeers, we go on pluming ourselves on this very "peculiar institution." We know very well that the peerage

contains some of the greatest rascals and fools in the realm, but that signifies nothing. So long as they keep out of gaols and lunatic asylums, the Duke of Portland has explained to us, they have a divine commission to deprive "two millions of capable citizens" of the franchise, or any other right to which the subject multitude may lay claim.

Lord Salisbury has laid the country under a heavy debt of gratitude. He has made it plain to all men that the hereditary principle and the representative principle in government are absolutely antagonistic. He has arrayed the aristocracy against the people, the patricians against plebeians, the privileged few against the unprivileged many. Since the Revolution of 1688 it has been the cue of our hereditary rulers to absorb the energies of the English people in crushing the freedom of foreign States. They have now happily had the hardihood to call on us to fight for our own liberties at home. It is a battle worth fighting, and it behoves all good democrats to buckle on their armour for the fray.

Let us see, then, who are our antagonists. Whence their origin? What their antecedents? According to themselves, they "came over at the Conquest" with Norman William, and, for the nonce, I shall take them at their word.

In "The New Book of Kings," to which this booklet is a sequel, it was shown that this William was a blood-stained ruffian of the deepest dye, who seized on the throne of England without a jot or tittle of legal or moral right. He pretended that the last English king—Edward the Confessor—had left him his heir by will, but he never could be induced to produce the document, and it is certain that Edward, with his last breath, recommended Harold as his successor to the Witan, or National Council, by whom he was unanimously elected king.

To begin with, therefore, every man who accompanied William in his filibustering expedition was simply an undisguised robber. Plunder was the sole object.

But were they not high-class robbers? Were they not Norman chivalry? To this the answer is that, as a rule, they were neither Normans nor chivalrous. An entire wing of William's army at Senlac consisted of Bretons, another was composed of Gascons. Thierry, in his "Histoire de la Conquête de l'Angleterre," throws a flood of light on the origin of our "Old Nobility." "William," he tells us, "looked far beyond the confines of Normandy for soldiers of fortune to assist him in his great attempt. He had his ban of war published in all the neighbouring countries. He offered good pay to every tall, robust man who would serve him with lance, sword, or crossbow. A multitude flocked to him from all parts, from far and near, from the north and from the south. They came from Maine and Anjou; from Poitou and Bretagne; from the country of the French king and from Flanders; from Aquitaine and from Burgundy; from Piedmont beyond the Alps, and from the banks of the Rhine. Adventurers by profession, the idle, the dissipated, the profligate, the *enfants perdus* of Europe, hurried at the summons. Of these some were knights and chiefs in war, others simple foot-soldiers. Some demanded regular pay in money, others merely their passage across the Channel, and all the booty they might take. Some demanded territory in England—a domain, a castle, a town; while others simply wished to receive a rich Saxon lady in marriage. All wild wishes, all the pretensions of human avarice, were awakened into activity. William repulsed no one, but promised and pleased all so far as he could."

But though the bulk of the invaders thus consisted of the moral *debris* of Europe, it is undoubtedly true that the nucleus of the expedition was Norman, or, to be strictly accurate, Danish. For centuries the Danish pirates had been the scourge of Christendom. They were justly dreaded more than wolves, famine, and pestilence combined, and the Conquest of England was in reality their greatest and most disastrous outrage on humanity. "Make up your minds to fight valiantly," William told his followers at Hastings, "and slay your enemies. A great booty is before us; for if we conquer, we shall all be rich. What I gain, you will gain. If I take this land, you will have it in lots among you. Know ye, however, that I am not come hither solely to take what is my due, but also to avenge our whole nation for the felonies, perjuries, and treacheries of these English. They massacred our kinsmen, the Danes—men, women, and children—on the night of St. Bryce," &c.

From the bloody Danes, then—a name of horror and detestation throughout Christendom—our hereditary rulers, according to their own showing, are descended. Credulous historians—and no country was ever cursed with a body of more incompetent and self-deluded annalists than England—of course contrive to conceal this damning fact in regard to the origin of the peerage. They pretend that in their Neustrian home these incarnate Danish fiends suddenly acquired the humanity of Christians and the refinement of gentlemen. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Mr. Freeman, who is not altogether free from the superstition that the Normans were "chivalrous," gives the following account of William de Belesme, surnamed Talvas, a typical specimen of the people "whose peculiar mission it was," according to Mr. Froude, "to govern men;"—"With Ivo the virtue of his race seems to have died out, and his descendants appear in Norman and English history as monsters of cruelty and perfidy, whose deeds aroused the horror even of that not over-scrupulous age. Open robbery and treacherous assassination seem to have been their daily occupation. The second of the line of William of Belesme had rebelled against

Duke Robert, and had defended his fortress of Alencon against him. His eldest son, Warren, murdered a harmless and unsuspecting friend, and was for this crime, so the men of the age said, openly seized and strangled by the fiend. Of his other sons, Fulk, presuming to ravage the ducal territory, was killed in battle. Robert was taken prisoner by the men of Le Mans, and beheaded by way of reprisal for a murder committed by his followers. The surviving heir of the possessions and of the wickedness of his race was his one remaining son, William Talvas. This man, we are told, being displeased with the piety and good manners of his first wife, Hildeburgis, hired ruffians to murder her on her way to church. At his second wedding feast he put out the eyes and cut off the nose and ears of an unsuspecting guest. This was William, the son of Geroy. A local war ensued, in which William Talvas suffered an inadequate punishment for his crimes in the constant devastation of his lands. At last a more appropriate avenger rose from his own house. The hereditary wickedness of his line passed on to his daughter Mabel and his son Arnulf. Arnulf rebelled against his father, and left him to die wretchedly in exile. An act of wanton rapacity was presently punished by a supernatural avenger. Arnulf, like his uncle Warren, was strangled by a demon in his bed. Such was the character of the family whose chief, first in power and in crime among the nobility of Normandy, stood forth as the mouthpiece of that nobility to express the feelings with which the descendants of the comrades of Rolf looked on the possible promotion of the tanner's grandson to be their lord." *Ab uno disce omnes*.

No just writer would voluntarily dwell on the infamous origin and history of the hereditary branch of the legislature. Birth implies neither merit nor demerit on the part of him that is born. It is an event for which the Lord of Hatfield and the meanest beggar that ever ventured to knock at his gate—if any beggar ever had the presumption—are equally irresponsible. "'Tis only *noble* to be good," as Lord Tennyson has most truly taught us.

"Not all that heralds rake from coffined clay,
Nor florid prose nor honied lies of rhyme,
Can blazon evil deeds or consecrate a crime."

Still, though 'the Grand old Gardener and his wife may smile at Lady Clara Vere de Vere's claims of long descent,' they are an exceptionally rational British couple. Suffice it for such to know that "God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth;" that there is no family in the land that can lay claim to a higher antiquity than Adam or the anthropomorphic ape; and that he is indeed a wise child who knows his own father.

But unfortunately even now the Executive Government of the country, when it summons a man for the first time to the Upper House of the Legislature, ignores every dictate of reason, experience, and common sense. It not only creates one more irresponsible legislator, but it is stoutly affirmed by lords and lawyers that not even the Crown can prevent the new peer's representatives, be they fools or knaves, from ruling over the people as hereditary legislators down to the latest generation. In these singular circumstances it becomes a public duty to show that the lordly offspring of this extraordinary State arrangement have for the most part been fools or knaves, totally unworthy of the respect of any thinking man or woman.

There is not a crime against public liberty nor an offence against private morality that cannot be laid at the door of the Peers in their collective or individual capacity. It would puzzle the cleverest advocate of the hereditary principle to point to a single act of self-sacrifice or disinterested patriotism that can fairly be ascribed to the Peers during their long monopoly of power and place from the Conquest down to the present day.

"Long prescription," so far as individual families are concerned, is a fiction; the pride of birth is a mere childish conceit; pedigrees are the fables of the College of Heraldry. We know the history of 2,500 peerages which neither the ingenuity of the heralds nor the theory of Malthus has been able to save from extinction.

Every man for certain has had one mother, two grandmothers, four great grandmothers, eight great-great-grandmothers, and so on. Indeed, if the progression is worked backwards for a few thousand years, it will be pretty evident that all the daughters of Adam have been powerfully co-operating to bring any individual man of this generation into being. But as to fathers—or, at all events, as to grandfathers—it is no cynicism to affirm that there is nothing but profound uncertainty. Where are the Miltons, Shaksperes, Bacons, Newtons—nay, whither have the Carlyles and Mills vanished? Talk of coming over at the Conquest! There is not an English peerage in existence that has any but the most fanciful or mendacious claim to come within five centuries of that disastrous event. George III. alone was responsible for 522 creations!

According to a current analysis of the peerage, 5 creations are of the thirteenth century; 6 of the fourteenth; 11 of the fifteenth; 18 of the sixteenth; 45 of the seventeenth; 126 of the eighteenth; and 293 of the nineteenth. But such reputedly old peerages as those of Hastings and De Ros (1264) are in reality quite modern creations. The true De Ros line, after the most extraordinary wanderings and pirouettings among Mannerses, Cecils, and Villierses, was so completely extinguished with the second Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, that even the heralds

of that day could not discover an heir to the title. George III., however, in 1806 was equal to the occasion. He found the long-lost De Ros straying about disconsolate somewhere, and restored him to his functions of hereditary ruler. His descendant was convicted of card-cheating thirty years ago.

The Hastings imposture was even more flagrant. The true Hastings had disappeared for centuries of usurping Le Stranges, Yelvertons, Stubbses, Cokes, Calthorps, Norths, Pratts, Stylemans, and Watlingtons, when Queen Victoria had the sagacity to detect in one Jacob Astley a descendant of a certain Sir John Hastings, who was favoured with a writ from Edward I. Indeed the antiquity of the peers is from beginning to end a gigantic hoax, credited by none but the most credulous, foolish, and vain of mankind. Like other superstitions of a less mundane character, it dies hard.

"Almost the whole town," observes Mr. Byends in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, "are my kindred, but in particular my Lord Turnabout, my Lord Time-server, my Lord Fair-speech; also Mr. Smoothman, Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Anything; and the parson of our parish, Mr. Two Tongues, was my mother's own brother by father's side; and to tell you the truth, I am become a gentleman of good quality; yet my great-grandfather was but a waterman, looking one way and rowing another, and I got most of my estate by the same occupation."

decorative feature

Chapter III.

Our Oldest Nobility at Work.

*Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee!*

FOR more than eight centuries of dishonour the story of our Old Nobility is one of all but uninterrupted and, alas! generally successful crime. It divides itself naturally into four well-marked epochs.

In the first period, covering the times of Norman and Plantagenet royalty, they struggled fiercely to subjugate the monarchy to their purposes, and while thus engaged they occasionally forgot to oppress the people. Nay, they were even at times constrained to invoke their aid when the royal tyrant of the day proved too strong for them. At this stage in their career they were cruel, fierce, and bloody, like the robber horde from which they sprang. Eventually, in the War of the Roses, they succeeded in completely exterminating each other, literally verifying the profound saying of Christ, "He that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword."

A very different order of men were the lords of the Tudor and Stuart *régimes*. These were mostly parchment-made nobles, mean, crawling courtiers, who lived to register royal decrees, and to go cringingly to the block for any offence, real or imaginary, which it pleased royalty to lay to their charge. The kings oppressed them, and they in turn avenged themselves, to the best of their ability, by oppressing the people. When the latter rose against the tyranny of Charles Stuart, the peers had neither the courage to strike for the Crown nor for national freedom. They were the veriest poltroons that ever figured in a great constitutional crisis. Howbeit, adversity taught them not manly wisdom, but a species of low, aristocratic craft, which has stood them in good stead ever since. In 1688, when the third epoch began, they ventured on a make-believe, rose-water Revolution of their own. They contrived to convince the soft-headed mass that they were their best friends—the champions of every rational liberty. The power which they could not retain by force they rendered doubly secure by fraud. They stripped the Crown of nearly all its possessions, and made it a pauper on the bounty of the people. They pensioned themselves almost to a man for their services, and monopolised nearly every office of honour and emolument in Church, State, army and navy. To conceal their rogueries at home they plunged the nation into endless wars abroad.

In the fourth era, *i.e.*, since the Reform Act of 1832, they have persistently obstructed and minimised every good measure, while intensifying the worst features of the worst Bills that have come before them. At all times they have been the unswerving foes of freedom to the full limit of their capacity. It is impossible for any one who knows their story and loves his country to regard them as other than public enemies of the most malignant type.

FIRST EPOCH (1066—1485).

William the Conqueror was not merely a man of blood and iron, he was one of the craftiest villains that ever breathed. When he invaded England, he actually contrived to figure in the character of a Crusader. He brought with him a banner consecrated by the Pope and a ring containing a hair of St. Peter! How he managed to possess himself of these important credentials it is not difficult to fathom. Edward the Confessor had an unfortunate early contracted partiality for Norman priests, whom he promoted with little discrimination to English benefices. They were animated by all the predatory instincts of their race, and soon became so universally odious that the Witan or Parliament met and outlawed the whole tribe. Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury, and William, Bishop of London, armed their retainers and fought their way to the coast "with apostolic blows and knocks." They carried their grievances to Rome, where they had no difficulty in inducing Christ's vicegerent to bestow his blessing on William's unhallowed enterprise. Had Christ himself been addressed on the subject he would probably have replied. "He that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword"—"My kingdom is not of this world." But then the Divine Democrat was so very unlike any of his professed followers that his judgments hardly count.

After the battle of Hastings and the death of Harold, William proceeded to carry fire and sword through the land in true Danish style. He burned Romney and massacred the inhabitants; he set fire to Dover and advanced on London. The great city, however would not open its gates. In revenge he burned down Southwark, and then proceeded to devastate Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, and Berkshire with merciless fury.

Even his coronation in Westminster Abbey was a scene of massacre and arson. His followers set fire to the houses in the neighbourhood, and robbed and murdered the inhabitants to give due solemnity to the ceremonial.

Though deprived of all effective leadership by the death of Harold, the English were still formidable foes, and William had to proceed with caution. He did not confiscate the entire soil of England at a blow, as his rapacious horde urged him to do. He at first seized just enough to make the people revolt, and then he plundered them of their remaining possessions for revolting. To goad the people into insurrection he made his half-brother, Odo, Bishop of Bayeux—a more atrocious ruffian than himself, if that were possible—viceroys, and retired to Normandy, taking good care to carry with him as hostages all the leading Englishmen on whom he could lay his hands. To his accomplice, the Pope, he sent Harold's banner and a handsome share of the spoil.

William's plan worked well. Odo and his advisers soon succeeded in driving the miserable English into insurrection. Their men-at-arms scoured the land from end to end, killing and robbing and offering such insults to the women as "turn the coward's heart to steel, the sluggard's blood to flame." Presently William returned with a fresh gang of Continental cut-throats, and what Ordericus Vitalis, William's panegyrist, aptly calls the "*feralis occisio*"—the dismal slaughter—began in earnest. The Norman "chivalry" were let loose on Northumbria. One honest Norman writer calls them a horde of "Normans, Burgolouns, thieves, and felons," and he was in a position to judge. From Durham to Hexham, from Wear to Tyne, William, surrounded by these choice originals of our Old Nobility, passed like another Tamerlane or Attila. Men, women, and children, and even the cattle, were indiscriminately butchered. From Durham to York not a town or hamlet escaped conflagration. Eighty years afterwards, when William of Malmesbury wrote, the whole region was one vast wilderness. "It was a horrible spectacle," says Roger Hoveden, "to see on the high roads and public places, and at the doors of houses, human bodies eaten by the worms; for there remained no one to cover them with a little earth." In their utter misery the people fed on putrid horseflesh, and even became cannibals. To escape from the pangs of hunger, they sold themselves and their wives and little ones as slaves to the very men who had robbed them of their all.

The churches shared the fate of less sacred edifices. They were laid in ashes, and the unhappy clergy fled to Holy Island. The monastery of Jarrow, hallowed by the memory of the Venerable Bede, was burned to the ground by this brigand king with the consecrated banner. Holinshed thus describes the terrible straits to which the country was reduced:—"He (William) nothing regarded the English nobility. They did now see themselves trodden under foot, to be despised and to be mocked on all sides, insomuch that many of them were constrained, as it were, for a further testimony of servitude and bondage, to shave their beards, to cut their hair, and to frame themselves as well in apparel as in service and diet at their tables after the Norman manner—very strange, and far differing from the ancient customs and old usages of their country. Others utterly refusing to sustain such an intolerable yoke of thralldom as was daily laid upon them by the Normans, chose rather to leave all, both goods and lands, and after the manner of outlaws get them to the woods, with their wives, children, and servants, meaning from thenceforth to live on the spoil of the country adjoining, and to take whatever came to hand. Whereupon it came to pass within a while that no man might tread in safety from his own house or town to his next neighbour; and every quiet and honest man's house became, as it were, a hold and fortress, furnished for defence with bows and arrows, bills, pole-axes, swords, clubs, and staves, and other weapons, the

doors being kept locked and strongly bolted in the night season, as it had been in time of war and amongst public enemies. Prayers were said also by the master of the house, as though they had been in the midst of the seas in some stormy tempest; and when the windows, and doors should be shut in and closed, they used to say *Benedicite*, and others to answer *Dominus* in like manner, as the priest and his penitent were wont to do at confession in the church."

Among the miscreants who had worked this terrible ruin William parcelled out the fair soil of England. To his half-brother he gave no fewer than four hundred manors. William de Percy was made lord of eighty manors in wasted Northumbria; while William de Garenne was presented with twenty-eight villages. By the close of the Conqueror's reign nearly the whole country had passed into the hands of the filibusterers, who literally gorged themselves with spoil.

But, like thieves in general, they could not avoid quarrelling among themselves. William's authority was precisely that of a pirate chief—he ruled his felon gang by sheer terror. Many conspiracies were hatched against him. One broke-out at Norwich on the occasion of a famous wedding. "He is a bastard man of base extraction," shouted the Normans. "It is in vain that he calls himself a king; it is easy to see that he was never made to be one; and God has him not in his grace." "He poisoned our Conan, that brave Count of Brittany," yelled the Bretons. "He has invaded our noble kingdom, and massacred the legitimate heirs to it," cried the English.

Surfeited with spoil, and reeking with blood, many of William's principal followers deserted him, and returned to Normandy; among others being his brother-in-law, Hugh de Grantmesnil, Earl of Norfolk, and Humphrey Tilleuil, Warden of Hastings Castle. William promptly branded them as traitors, confiscated the immense estates he had given them, and called to his aid a new band of continental marauders. His half-brother, Odo, he was obliged to imprison; and against his son Robert he was compelled to wage incessant war for the possession of Normandy. In all the doings of William and his wicked crew there is not to be found a single trace of patriotism, or regard for the interests of the English people. Their motives were in the last degree base. They are well illustrated by what the Conqueror's Secretary relates of his death:—"Barons, priests, and dukes mounted their horses and away almost before he was dead, to serve their interests with the living. The minor attendants rifled the apartments, and even carried off the royal clothes; and the body was left almost naked on the bare boards for a whole day." Their conduct was precisely that of a pack of hungry wolves, which, the moment one of their number is killed or disabled, turn upon the unfortunate and devour it. If "noble lords" find any comfort in being descended from such reprobates as William and his barons, they are truly strangely constituted.

But, happily, hardly one of them is so unfortunate in his ancestry. William Rufus, the Conqueror's successor, laid a heavy hand on those families that had profited most by his father's crimes. They conspired against him, and he cut them off without mercy. Among some of his victims were William of Alderic, the Earl of Shrewsbury, Walter de Lacy, and Odo, Earl of Holderness.

Henry I., who succeeded Rufus, all but completed the good work which his brother had begun. His title was defective, and he was obliged to lean on the vanquished English for support. He drove from the kingdom his deceased brother's boon companions, on the pretext that their lives were a public scandal. The supporters of his brother, Duke Robert of Normandy—the Surreys, the Lancasters, and Shrewsburies—he pursued with relentless rigour as disaffected subjects until it came to this—that scarcely a single representative of the desperadoes who had triumphed at Hastings was left alive or remained un-outlawed. They had taken the sword, and they had perished by the sword.

Such of our nobility, therefore, as have any claim to antiquity ought at once, for shame's cause, to say nothing more about their Norman extraction. It is a lie, to begin with; and, were it true, it would certainly not be a thing to boast of. It is as if one were to glory in descent from the impenitent thief or Judas Iscariot.

But though the Rufuscs and the Henrys rid the country of the first gang of masterful robbers, they by no means abated the evils of aristocracy. In place of the outlawed Claude Duvals, they imported a baser stock of equally greedy and unscrupulous adventurers, whom they quartered on the un-happy people. This process went on for centuries; and so long as we have Saxe Weimars, Leiningens, and Battenbergs swarming into the country, we can hardly flatter ourselves that the era of spoliation has closed. England has been conquered, not once, but half a dozen times, in this way.

During the struggle between Stephen and Matilda for the throne the evil rose to an intolerable height. Henry II. ordered a whole legion of these beasts of prey to quit the kingdom in one day; and "we saw," says a contemporary writer with delight, "the Brabançons and Flemings cross the sea to return to the plough-tail, and become serfs after having been lords."

King John's noble companions were nearly all imported. Among these were Manleon the Bloody; Falco without Bowels; Godeschal the Iron-hearted; Sottim the Merciless; and Walter Buch the Murderer. The very names of these savages are sufficient to make one shudder. Yet they are unquestionably among the ancestors of our old nobility. John gave them large estates as rewards for their unheard-of barbarities, and they grew and

flourished like a green bay-tree.

In all ages of the world kings and aristocrats have necessarily been public enemies. Their interests are ever opposed to the general welfare. The reason is obvious.

The watchword of democracy is equality of rights; the watchword of aristocracy is inequality. The English aristocracy is to-day what it has ever been—a predatory band. They are not permitted to murder, burn, and rob as in the good old times of Sottim the Merciless and Falco without Bowels. But they levy tribute on the whole people of these islands with merciless rigour. What they call *rent* is simply a private tax laid on the industry of the nation by a small gang of peers and other inheritors of the spoils of the Conquest, *Rent* is brigandage reduced to a system. So long as the English people are content to be tenants-at-will on their own soil and to pay for the privilege, they will remain virtually slaves, and the less they talk about freedom the better. America laughs at our delusions and ridiculous pretensions.

Aristocracy has eventually ruined every nation which has tolerated it, and there are many signs that England is not to escape the common fate. Already we are notoriously behind the age in many respects. There is but one remedy. By a supreme effort the intolerable incubus of kings and aristocrats must be thrown off once and for all. Thanks to the leader of the aristocracy, Lord Salisbury, a clear issue has at last been put before the nation. The peers have fairly thrown down the gauntlet to the people, and it is for the people to take it up. It is not now a question of No Surrender to noble lords; it is a question of No Quarter.

decorative feature

Chapter IV.

Runnymede and Magna Charta.

Shall the vile fox-earth awe the race
That stormed the lion's den?
Shall we who could not brook one lord
Crouch to the wicked ten?

To understand the History of England from the Norman Conqueror to the first Tudor, Henry VII., is not difficult if we keep one fact steadily before our minds, viz., that the Government had fallen into the hands of a gang of thieves, a leading aristocratic thief calling himself king, and a number of less fortunate aristocratic thieves who envied the leading thief his pre-eminence. The minor aristocratic thieves had two great objects in view during the whole of this period. Firstly, they wanted each in his own domain to exercise kingly authority; and secondly, there being but one England to divide among them, they constantly strove by conspiracies against the Crown to have it reconfiscated. If they could but dethrone one king and set up another, then the adherents of the defeated prince had their lands confiscated, and the successful faction divided the spoil. As for the interests of the governed, they were never for a moment consulted, except in so far as their support was indispensable to Crown or nobles. Down to the reign of King John that support was almost invariably, and with good reason, given to the Crown. It was better to be afflicted by one grand vulture than by a host of minor harpies under no control whatever. It was, moreover, the cue of the conquered English to side with the king with the worst title, because from him they were sure to secure the largest concessions.

William the Conqueror understood the character of his fellow-robbers perfectly, and to retain his hold over them he, contrary to feudal usage, exacted oaths of allegiance not merely from them, the direct tenants of the Crown, but from their sub-tenants also. By this means he hoped to cripple the barons whenever they should attempt to levy war against the monarchy, and the expedient was partly successful. It was, moreover, a measure favourable, undesignedly favourable, to liberty. In proportion as the sub-tenants were made dependent on the distant royal tyrant, they were rendered independent of the immediate local tyrant. The popularity of the English monarchy, a thing so unnatural in itself, may, in some measure, be accounted for in this way. As a bulwark against the nobles it possessed negative virtues, which the unthinking mass foolishly came to regard as positive advantages.

The great conspiracy against William in 1076 by the Norman Earls of Norfolk and Hereford and the English Wal the of had for its object the division of the entire kingdom among the three conspirators, one of whom was to be king.

The conspiracies against William Rufus in 1088 and 1096, the former headed by Odo of Bayeux, and the latter by Mowbray of Northumberland, were equally attempts on the part of the barons to free themselves from the restraints of the Crown. Had they succeeded there can hardly be a doubt that the country would have been ruined beyond the possibility of recovery. Ruffianly as were the Norman kings, they were gentlemen as compared with their leading nobles.

In the Reign of Henry I. the leader of these miscreants was one Robert de Belesme, of whom Henry happily rid the country after storming four of his robber strongholds, Nottingham and Tickhill, Bridgenorth and Shrewsbury. This choice specimen of our old nobility was about the only great inventor the aristocracy ever produced. He devoted his attention to the manufacture of new and ingenious instruments of torture, and delighted to witness the exquisite death-agonies of his numerous victims. In the art of impaling, the most "unspeakable Turk" would have had some- thing to learn from this fiend. "He was a man," says William of Malmesbury, "intolerable for the barbarity of his manners, remarkable besides for cruelty." Among other instances, he relates how for some trifling offence by its father he blinded his godchild, his hostage, by tearing out the helpless infant's eyes "with his accursed nails."

During the reign of Stephen our old nobility actually succeeded in establishing in England their ideal of good government. During the struggle for the throne between the king and the Empress Matilda, every baron did what was good in his own eyes. Their hour was come. The Bishop of Winchester alternately cursed his brother Stephen and Matilda. "Neither King nor Empress," says William of Newbury, "was able to act in a masterful way or show vigorous discipline. But each kept their own followers in good temper by refusing them nothing lest they should desert them. . . And because they were worn out by daily strife, and acted less vigorously, local disturbances of hostile lords grew the more vehement; castles, too, rose in great numbers in the several districts, and there were in England, so to speak, as many kings, or rather tyrants, as lords of castles. Individuals took the right of coining their private money and of private jurisdiction." "All England," say the *Gesta Stephani*, "wore a face of woe and desolation. Multitudes abandoned their beloved country to wander in a foreign land; others, forsaking their houses, built wretched huts in the churchyard, hoping that the sacredness of the place would afford them some protection." "Every powerful man," says the Saxon Chronicle, "made his castles and held them against him (Stephen), and they filled the land with castles. They cruelly oppressed the wretched men of the land with castle works. When the castles were made they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took those men that they imagined had any property, both by night and by day, peasant men and women, and put them in prison for their gold and silver, and tortured them with unutterable torture; for never were martyrs so tortured as they were. They hanged them up by the feet and smoked them with foul smoke; they hanged them up by their thumbs or by the head and hung fires on their feet; they put knotted strings about their heads, and writhed them so that it went to the brain. They put them in dungeons, in which were adders, and snakes, and toads, and killed them so. Some they put in a 'cruset hus,'—that is, in a chest that was short and narrow and shallow, and put sharp stones therein, and pressed the man therein, so that they break all his limbs. In many of the castles were instruments called a 'lao (loathly) and grim;' these were neck-bonds, of which two or three men had enough to bear one. It was so made,—that is, it was fastened to a beam, and they put a sharp iron about the man's throat and his neck, so that he could not in any direction sit, or lie, or sleep, but must bear all that iron. Many thousands they killed with hunger; I neither can nor may tell all the wounds or all the tortures which they inflicted on wretched men in this land; and that lasted the nineteen winters while Stephen was King; and ever it was worse and worse. They laid imposts on the towns continually, and when the wretched men had no more to give, they robbed and burned all the towns, so that thou mightest well go all a day's journey, and thou shouldest never find a man sitting in a town, or the land tilled. Then was corn dear, and flesh, and cheese, and butter; for there was none in the land. Wretched men died of hunger; some went seeking alms who at one while were rich men; some fled out of the land. Never yet had more wretchedness been in the land, nor did the heathen man ever do worse than they did; for everywhere at times they forebore neither church or churchyard, but took all the property that was therein, and then burned the church and all together. Nor forbore they a bishop's land, nor an abbot's nor a priest's, but robbed monks and clerks, and every man another who anywhere could. If two or three men came riding to a town, all the township fled before them, imagining them to be robbers. The bishops and clergy constantly cursed them, but nothing came of it, for they were all accursed, and foresworn, and lost. However a man tilled, the earth bore no corn; for the land was all foredone by such deeds, and they said openly that Christ and His saints slept."

"As another instance of these bitter fruits of conquest," says that great glorifier of antiquity, Sir Walter Scott, "and perhaps the strongest that can be quoted, we may mention that the Empress Matilda, though a daughter of the King of Scotland, and afterwards both Queen of England and Empress of Germany, the daughter, the wife, and the mother of monarchs, was obliged, during her early residence in England, to assume the veil of a nun as the only means of escaping the licentious pursuit of the Norman nobles. ... It was a matter of public knowledge that, after the conquest of King William, his Norman followers, elated by so great a victory,

acknowledged no law but their own wicked pleasure, and not only despoiled the conquered Saxons of their lands and goods, but invaded the honour of their wives and of their daughters with the most unbridled license."

Had these days of unlimited aristocratic tribulation not been providentially shortened, all English flesh must have perished. It was in memory of the chief actors that Lord John Manners devoutly wrote his ever memorable lines:—

*Let wealth and commerce, laws and learning die,
But leave us still our old nobility.*

No sooner did Henry II. ascend the throne than he set himself determinedly to demolish the numerous strongholds—some 1,100, it is said—that had been erected in his predecessor's reign. The people backed him manfully, and something like order and settled government was again restored. The people and the king together were more than a match for the barons.

But a time speedily came when the overgrown power of the Crown made its wearer, King John, equally intolerable to people, clergy, and barons. Then, for the first time since the Conquest, was seen the strange spectacle of the barons figuring as patriots, and obtaining the credit of wresting from the royal tyrant that Magna Charta which has sent our historians into such ecstasies. It was but the other day that the Earl of Carnarvon told us that this achievement of theirs entitled the peers to rank as the champions and perpetual guardians of English liberty. Let us see, therefore, how far this contention has any basis in fact.

In the first place, Magna Charta was not a new Bill of popular rights. It was little more than an embodiment of the Charters of King Canute, of Edward the Confessor, and more particularly of Henry I. The last-named instrument was even in some respects more liberal.

The soul of the whole business was Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, a very different sort of Primate to any of our modern successors of St. Augustine. John had driven him with contumely from his see, and Langton never forgave him. But he had public injuries to redress as well as private, and it would be utterly unjust to say that he was spurred to action by sentiments of private resentment alone. Indeed, like Simon, Earl of Leicester, he was a statesman whose conceptions of popular right and just government were ages ahead of his time and order. The clergy were very largely recruited from the lower ranks of the free-men and even of the villeins, and it was impossible for them to be altogether negligent of the interests of the class from which they sprang.

Langton read and explained the Charter of Henry I. to the rude, unlettered barons, and urged them to take vengeance on the common tyrant. They had only too good cause. On them even more than on Holy Church had John's hand been unendurably heavy. He had heaped on them injuries worse than death. Not merely had he seized their castles and gifted their estates to his foreign mercenaries, his Merciless Sottims, his Bowel-less Falcos and Company, but he had outraged their wives and daughters without number, and boasted of his licentious achievements. Yet they exhibited no real pluck or patriotism in bringing this second Nero to book. John they knew was a ruffian of the highest ability, and they quailed before him.

Their first effort against the tyrant was a complete failure, though they appeared in the field as the army of God and Holy Church. John withstood their assault in Northampton Castle, and in a fortnight's time they retired with their retainers to Bedford, crestfallen and humiliated. But here came the turning-point. John had already in vain appealed to the freemen for aid against the barons. With a correct instinct, the people for the first time sided with the barons against the Crown. Bedford received them with open arms, and London enthusiastically proffered succour. The Scots in the north made a powerful diversion, as they have so often done when English freedom has hung in the balance, and the cause was won by the English people. The barons had in reality behaved with great pusillanimity, and their subsequent conduct showed how Utterly unpatriotic their motives really were. The important rights guaranteed by the Charter to the freemen were the price of their indispensable support. As for the sole provision benefiting the villeins—benefiting them to the extent of not fining them for petty offences—to the deprivation of their tools—its insertion may be fairly set down to the credit of the good Langton.

But though John quailed before this great uprising of the nation, and signed the Great Charter, he never had the smallest intention of observing its provisions. He at once sent off to the Pope, whose feudatory he had ignominiously become, with the approval of most of the baronial heroes of Runnymede, and induced his over-lord to cancel the entire Charter and lay the City of London under an interdict. Langton was ordered to excommunicate the king's enemies, but this the great statesman flatly declined to do.

From Poitou, Gascony, and Brabant a horde of ruthless mercenaries was summoned, and with these John proceeded to efface the provisions of the Charter in blood. He swept the country from end to end, and even drove back the King of Scots to the gates of Edinburgh. London alone maintained the cause of freedom with a

noble constancy.

Again the wretched barons lost heart. The sight of their lands and castles in the grasp of John's mercenaries made them lose every sentiment of patriotism, if ever they had any. In their despair, they offered the crown of England to Louis, the son of the French king. The offer was accepted, and Louis landed with a strong force. The barons joined his; standard, but the people wisely held aloof.

At this critical moment King John providentially expired, and England was saved from an occupation which must have ended in her becoming an appanage of the French crown. The people determined to set Prince Henry, John's son, on the throne, and in a year's time Louis and the barons were thoroughly beaten, the Charter reaffirmed, and the nation saved from a greater misfortune than even the Norman Conquest.

It was afterwards divulged that, if Louis had succeeded in his enterprise, he meant to destroy the entire English baronage, after the manner of the Conqueror. From this well-merited fate they were saved by the patriotism of Hugh de Burgh's sailors and William de Collingham's bowmen. Their conduct, in truth, was as unintelligent as it was unpatriotic. In their haste to get out of the frying-pan of King John, they merely leapt into the fire of King Louis without the least regard for the national welfare.

So much for the achievements of the deathless heroes of Runnymede, about which so much nonsense has been said and sung. Never, in point of fact, was there a more selfish or mean-spirited pack of fellows, if we except the Scots nobles in the struggle for Independence against Edward I. While Wallace and the Scottish people were fighting with unsurpassed gallantry to save Scotland from the fate of unhappy Ireland, the whole of the nobles, with the single exception of Lord Soulis, sold their country, not once, but several times, to preserve their private estates. The "Ragman's Roll" is a record of such infamy that one can only wonder how liberty-loving Scotsmen have allowed themselves to be rack-rented and evicted by "lairds" and "factors" so long. If they had ever suffered from a calamity like the Norman Conquest, one could understand such unmanly tolerance; but though they never bowed to the Conqueror's yoke, they have yet tamely accepted from their rascally lawyers the Conqueror's feudal law. For a people that have justly earned a world-wide reputation for shrewdness, the facility with which they have permitted themselves to be robbed by goose-quills of a soil that swords could never wrest from them, is one of the most unaccountable facts in modern history. A Highland crofter, who will fight like a lion in the ranks of the Black Watch against any odds, in any quarter of the globe, will cringe like a beaten hound before the eye of an evicting "laird's factor." This by the way.

But if our Old Nobility had no other virtue, personal courage and prowess have generally been conceded to them without demur. Now, like predatory animals in general, it is perfectly certain that at all stages of their history the aristocracy have exhibited the strongest taste for blood. But a taste for blood does not necessarily imply love of danger, and I am disposed to think that there is a good deal of the cowardly prairie cayote in our Old Nobility. Nothing but cowardice, or, at all events, a very commendable regard for a whole skin, could have induced anyone with the faintest sense of the ridiculous to don an ancient coat of mail. Rather than appear in such a garb, really courageous men would have run any reasonable risk of being killed on the spot. Once down, they could not get up for the sheer weight of iron in which they were encased. When they attempted charges, before the archers had done their deadly work, as they did at Falkirk and in several of the battles in France, they failed and floundered most ignominiously. Nor have the scions of aristocracy ever been good for much in the more recent days of the "gunpowder and glory business." In the Crimean War they were sorely incommoded, as we all know, "by urgent private business." One Lord Forth declared himself a coward, and refused to enter the trenches. The British Army the First Napoleon described as a host of lions led by asses, and his verdict has been confirmed by all subsequent experience. Yet H.R.H. the Prince of Wales is a field-marshal, and cousin George is Commander-in-Chief! "Always a wonderful people, the English!"

In the years 1348 and 1349 the Black Death visited England, and carried off, it is estimated, from one third to one half of the entire population. The immediate result was an enormous increase in the value of labour. The demand far exceeded the supply, but noble lords were equal to the occasion. A royal proclamation was issued "by the advice of our prelates, and nobles, and other skilled persons, that every able-bodied man and woman of our kingdom, bond or free, under sixty years of age, not living by trading, shall, if so required, serve another for the same wages as were the custom in the twentieth of our (Edward III.'s) reign." By a subsequent *Statute of Labourers*, the nobles and other skilled persons established a regular scale of wages and ordered stocks to be set up "betwixt this and the Feast of Pentecost," in every town in England, to enforce the penalties of the Act.

Nor was this enough; the labourers were so unreasonable as to escape from one county to another in quest of better hire. To cure this evil there was passed, in 1361, a downright Fugitive Slave Act, which ordained, among other severities, that fugitive workmen, "in token of falsity, should be burned in the forehead with an iron formed and made to the letter F." This being so, it is not difficult to understand that working men were forbidden to hunt, hawk, or joust, or appear in any dress not suitable to their lowly condition. Noble lords actually supervised the tailoring of the working class by Act of Parliament. But all would not do.

In the beginning of Richard the Second's reign, rural England rose in insurrection under the heroic Wat

Tyler, and the aristocracy were for a time beside themselves with terror. Their cowardice was only exceeded by their treachery and cruelty. The demands of the insurgents were most reasonable. They were only four in number:—

- The total abolition of serfdom.
- The reduction of the rent of arable land to fourpence per acre—then a good price.
- Full freedom to buy and sell like other men in fair or mart.
- A general pardon.

Tyler perished by the hand of the assassin Mayor of London, Walworth, and the boy-king undertook to be the leader of the simple-hearted peasants. By the advice of the panic-stricken nobles, Richard gave the people a Charter guaranteeing them all they asked, a general pardon included. They dispersed, trusting to the honour of Richard and his aristocratic advisers. They had but too good reason to repent of their credulity. The nobles rallied, and the mask was dropped. "Rustics ye have been and are," the perfidious Richard declared, "and in bondage shall ye remain; not such as ye have heretofore known, but in a condition incomparably more vile." In spite of Charter, in spite of pardon, no fewer than 15,000 good men and true were hanged, drawn, and quartered, according to Holinshed, by this perjured boy and the vile crew of Old Nobility that surrounded his throne. Richard, it appears, had some qualms about the heinous part he was made to play, but his noble lords had none. He asked them if they would consent to enfranchise the serfs. "Consent," they replied, "we have never given, and never will give, were we all to die in one day." Nevertheless, by the mere pressure of economic laws, both villeinage and the statutes regulating wages were practically at an end within fifty years of Tyler's rising. The change was great and beneficent. The Black Death was stronger than our Old Nobility. Indeed, it is not too much to say that no page of English history records a single triumph of civilization that has not been achieved in spite of the aristocracy.

In the Wars of the Roses we have such a revolting picture of aristocracy as fills the soul with loathing and horror. In all the other struggles in which the aristocracy have been engaged they have generally managed to reap some advantage at the expense either of the people or the monarch; but in the York *versus* Lancaster episode they positively laid violent hands on themselves. They literally committed suicide, like the swine in the Gospel, rushing headlong down a steep place into the sea, where they perished almost to a man.

The prime object of Warwick the King-maker was, of course, to lay hold of the Crown, which he really overshadowed. No fewer than 30,000 persons are said to have lived habitually at his board in the numerous castles which were his by inheritance or by skilful matrimonial alliances. His ruling passion was a mad ambition, in the pursuit of which he displayed an unmatched disregard of every principle of justice, of every sentiment of humanity. In Warwick aristocracy attained its apotheosis, or rather its supreme diablery.

He pulled down Henry VI. and set up Edward IV. Then he pulled down Edward and set up Henry again. Eventually he died fighting against that very Edward for whom he had deluged England in blood. In all the windings of this bloody tragedy Warwick's one discernible motive seems to have been to get his daughters so united to royalty by matrimonial alliances as to ensure that some grandchild of his, some Neville, should be monarch of England. To accomplish this paltry end, he tried first to exterminate the Lancastrian barons, and then in turn to extirpate the Yorkists. He acted on the horrible principle of giving no quarter in the field, and the opposing side, of course, adopted his tactics.

In the sickening shambles of St. Albans, Bloreheath, Northampton, Wakefield, Mortimer's Cross, the first and second battles of Barnet, Towton, Hedgeley Moor, Hexham, Edgecote, Erpingham, and Tewkesbury, there perished over 100,000 Englishmen, literally sacrificed to this devouring demon of aristocracy. We read in ancient fable of fearful monsters who exacted such tribute from men; but here we have an aristocratic ogre, with a maw more capacious and gory than any conception of myth or legend.

Warwick, his father Salisbury, and his brother Lord Montacute, all perished. In the battle of Wakefield the Duke of York was slain, and his son, the Earl of Rutland—a boy of thirteen—was brutally murdered by Lord Clifford. Somersets, Exeters, Buckingham, Northumberlands, Devons, Shewsburys, Pembrokes, and scores on scores of similar bloodthirsty miscreants, died sword in hand, or were sent to the block. In the battle of Northampton alone three hundred knights bit the dust.

Public slaughter was amply supplemented by private murder. Henry VI. was privately murdered. His only son Edward was murdered. Clarence—"false, fleeting, perjured Clarence"—was murdered by his brother, Edward IV. Richard III. murdered his two nephews, the sons of Edward IV. He subsequently wanted to marry their sister, his niece, and the young woman was in raptures with the prospect. The amiable Richard she called "the master of her heart and thoughts." She sighed for the death of Anne (Richard's wife), the daughter of the King-maker. "The better part of February is past, and the queen still alive. Will she never die?"—and allow her to be Queen of England, and her uncle's wife!

With the Wars of the Roses the first era of English aristocracy comes to an end—an era of blood and iron, tyranny and rapine, cruelty and treachery, almost without a parallel in the annals of mankind.

decorative feature

Chapter V.

Creeping Things.

*And the Devil quoted Genesis,
Like a very learned clerk,
How Noah and his creeping things
Went up into the Ark.*

*"Poor race of man," said the pitying Spirit,
"Dearly ye pay for your primal fall;
Some flow'rets of Eden ye still inherit,
But the trail of the serpent is over them all."*

SECOND EPOCH (1485—1688).

DURING the period just described the trail of the aristocratic serpent was easy to track in all its bloodstained windings; but with the advent of the first Tudor king it suddenly assumes a more intangible and altogether more labyrinthine character. Their deeds being evil they studiously shunned the light. From being the peers, and often the rivals of the monarch, our Old Nobility suddenly sank into a herd of cowardly, cringing courtiers, doing all the dirty work of royalty with incredible submissiveness, and going meekly to the block when the reigning tyrant was dissatisfied with their performance.

During the Tudor period the lords may be said to have had two functions: they registered royal decrees in their Upper Chamber, and gave employment to the Calcrafts and Marwoods of the day. Henry VII., with good reason, dreaded such straggling specimens of the older aristocracy as had escaped the Wars of the Roses, and as his reign abounded in small plots and impostures, he had an excellent excuse for cutting them off one by one and seizing their estates. He was a Louis XI. in craft, and no man could tell whose turn it would be next to undergo decapitation. He even managed to behead his chancellor, Sir William Stanley, to whom more than anyone else he owed the throne. Sir William's chief fault was that he was very rich, and Henry had always an eye to a fat confiscation. Surreys, Lovels, Ferrerses, De La Poles, Audleys, Ratcliffes, Fitzwalters, and more than thirty of Richard the Third's chief supporters, among them being the Duke of Norfolk, were attainted, with the usual consequences.

But, dexterous as the Seventh Henry was in the use of the aristocratic pruning-hook, he was a mere tyro compared with his ever-memorable son, Henry the Eighth. He began with a will. His first victims were the Dukes of Suffolk and Buckingham. Then came the venerable Bishop Fisher, and the illustrious Sir Thomas More—four alleged lovers of Anne Boleyn; and the chief actors in the Pilgrimage of Grace, Lords Darcey and Hussey, Robert Aske, and others. Montacutes, Exeters, Nevilles, Fortescues, Dingleys, Cromwells, the aged Countess of Salisbury, and scores of others, reddened the scaffold with their blood.

The women showed more courage than the men. The Countess of Salisbury, whose only offence was that she was Cardinal Pole's mother, had to be held forcibly down on the scaffold, and was frightfully gashed and mangled. During Henry's reign the political and ecclesiastical executions were to be counted by the thousand. The Defender of the Faith, as has been well said, spared no man in his anger or woman in his lust. He made England an Aceldama, and yet he met with scarcely anything but abject servility from the successors of the "barons bold." The remorseless Earl of Essex, when his own turn came, whined piteously for mercy.

To please the tyrant, the Duke of Norfolk urged on the ruin of both his nieces, Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard. "He had learned," he told the King, "that his ungracious mother-in-law, his unhappy brother and wife, and his lewd sister of Bridge water, are in the Tower, which, from his long experience of his majesty's equity

and justice, he felt sure was not done but for false and traitorous proceedings." Henry's last victim was Norfolk's son, the accomplished Earl of Surrey. Norfolk himself escaped by a miracle. He was in the Tower, but Henry had not time to sign his death-warrant when his own span of life was cut short by the levelling Power that removes kings and beggars, saints and sinners, with perfect indifference.

One of the causes which reduced our Old Nobility to this abject state of servility in Henry the Eighth's reign was the hope of plunder. Henry was all the while *reforming* the Church, as he was pleased to call it. About one-third of the national soil was vested in the Church, or rather in the great monastic institutions, and Henry resolved to seize on this rich inheritance and divide it among the vile upstart instruments of his will. It was a huge bribe to give stability to his despotism, and it succeeded well; so true it is that "a gift corrupteth the heart." Fear, fortified by avarice, is an all but irresistible motive-power even in the case of honourable men; in the case of courtiers it has never been known to fail.

As to particular aristocratic families, who, like the Russells, Cavendishes, Cecils, and other Church Robbers, have monopolized political authority over this much-enduring people, I shall have something to say subsequently. For the present, let us glance at the effects of their aggrandizement. The Church lands were really the patrimony of the poor. The monks may have cultivated gastronomy more than theology, but it is certain that they were not exacting landlords. They lived and let live; the poor they cherished, the traveller they entertained. They were the best husbandmen in England. No sooner had their lands passed into the hands of the rapacious gang of courtiers, than the poor were reduced to the utmost extremity. The land was filled with beggars, thieves, and vagabonds. Henry and Elizabeth without avail covered the Statute Book with Acts of repression. The poor had been robbed of their all, and this was how the robbers made provision for them.

Anyone might seize them and set them to work. If they made off, and were caught, they might be branded with a V on the breast, and be adjudged slaves for two years. If they went off again, they were to be chained and beaten, branded on the cheek with the letter S, and made slaves for life. Beggars' children might be kidnapped and made slaves till they were four-and-twenty. If they ran away they were to have their ear bored through with a hot iron an inch wide: if they absconded again, they were adjudged felons, and for a third offence they were to be put to death.

Henry the Eighth is said by Harrison to have hanged no fewer than 72,000 of these victims of his own and his courtiers' pillage. Elizabeth hanged them at the rate of from three to four hundred per annum. With a diabolical cynicism, Henry actually demanded from parliament compensation for his sacrifices in the reform of the Church!

And all through our unhappy annals it has been the same. When our hereditary rulers have not been plundering and maltreating us in one way, they have been doing it in another. When they have not been chastising us with whips, it has been because they have found scorpions more effective.

"When wilt Thou save the people, Lord—
Oh, God of mercy, when?
Not kings and thrones, but nations;
Not chiefs and lords, but men."

The history of our Old Nobility during the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, and James I. is without a parallel for meanness, rapacity, and cowardice. "A Court," said Talleyrand, "is an assemblage of noble and distinguished beggars." They were nearly all "new men," mere creatures of royalty, raised by reason of their subserviency, their intrigues, and their crimes to great dignities and estates. Henry the Eighth had carved out fortunes for them from the Church lands and the confiscated possessions of the older nobles whom he had so sedulously sent to the block.

But the ring of upstarts only felt their hour really come when Henry expired and Edward VI., a boy of nine, came to the throne. They were now without a master, and they soon showed themselves in their true colours. "Set a beggar on horseback, and he will ride to the devil," says the proverb. The truth of this adage they illustrated to perfection. The Russells, Cavendishes, Wriothesleys, Fitzwilliams, Seymours, Dudleys, Petres, Bakers, Browns, Saddlers, Parrs, Wingfields, Dennys, Pagets, have been justly compared to fungi, which grow up luxuriantly wherever decaying or putrescent matter is to be found.

The ring at once proceeded to bestow on themselves fresh honours and emoluments by forgery and by an unscrupulous use of the boy-king's name. The Earl of Hertford (Seymour), the king's uncle, the leader of the gang, conferred on himself this extraordinary title:—"The Most High, Noble, and Victorious Prince Edward, Duke of Somerset, Earl of Hert- fort, Viscount Beauchamp, Lord Seymour, Guardian of the Person of the King's Majesty and Protector of all his Realms, his Lieutenant-General of all his Armies, both by land and sea; Lord High Treasurer and Earl Marshal of England, Governor of the Isles of Guernsey and Jersey, and Knight of

the Most Noble Order of the Garter." The king was in reality a prisoner in his hands, and presently he designated himself, "Duke of Somerset by the grace of God!" His brother, Sir Thomas Seymour, became at a bound Baron Seymour of Sudley and Lord High Admiral of England; Wriothesley was successfully metamorphosed into Earl of Winchester and Earl of Southampton; Dudley, into Earl of Coventry and Earl of Warwick; John Russell, into Earl of Bedford; and, indeed, the most insignificant of the gang blossomed out into barons with corresponding incomes secured to them from what remained of the spoils of the Church and the estates of Henry's numerous lay victims.

And their warrant for most of these wonderful transformations—what was it? A clause, almost certainly a forgery, in the will of the libidinous murderer, Henry VIII.! We know that it was Henry's object to effect some sort of balance in the Council of Regency between the old and the new nobility. It was not in the least likely, therefore, that he would at the last moment deliberately commit the interests of the Crown to the sole custody of men whom he well knew to be the most unscrupulous rogues in the kingdom. Besides, the Seymour version of Henry's dying behests could not be made to tally with the date of the will—a fatal defect in the instrument, which shows that forgers, like liars, should have long memories.

As it was, however, this vile herd of Church-robbers took the affairs of the State into their own hands, and in a very short time the flames of insurrection broke out in a score of counties. They were, needless to say, quenched in blood; and then the thieves, as usual, took to quarrelling among themselves. Baron Seymour, the Protector's brother, plotted to supplant him. He married the queen-dowager, Catherine Parr, and on that lady's death he secured the custody of Elizabeth, whom he proposed next to make his wife, obviously with the design of laying hands on the crown itself. The Duke of Somerset by the grace of God was, however, too many for him. He was arrested and executed, Somerset being the first to sign his death-warrant.

Then came Somerset's own turn. Warwick also had designs on the crown, and with the aid of Wriothesley, Russell, and St. John, he conspired successfully against the Protector, who was arrested and sent to that ancient slaughterhouse, the Tower, where his head was chopped off on the same block on which his brother's had fallen. Warwick then proceeded to decree himself and his followers fresh honours. He became Duke of Northumberland, Great Master of the Household, Warden of the Scottish Marches, Lord High Admiral, &c. He married his son, Lord Guildford Dudley, to Lady Jane Grey, whom he persuaded the dying boy-king—dying of poison, most probably—to make, by will, heir to the throne. The attempt failed, and scores of noble heads paid the penalty—those of Lady Jane Grey, Lord Guildford Dudley, Lord Robert Dudley, Lord Thomas Grey, the Duke of Suffolk, and others.

This Duke of Northumberland was the son of Henry the Seventh's hated jackal, Dudley, whom Henry the Eighth beheaded for extortion and embezzlement. His grandson was that infamous Leicester who aspired to marry Elizabeth after the murder of his wife, the hapless Amy Robsart. Elizabeth's "Sweet Robin" was well worthy of his ancestry.

Under Queen Mary the Bloody there was not the least difficulty in bringing the House of Lords back to Catholicism. On a promise from Philip and Cardinal Pole that they should not be asked to disgorge the Church lands, they knelt at the feet of the Papal Legate, and were absolved collectively from the sins of heresy and schism. The cause of religious freedom was fought out chiefly by obscure sectaries and a few faithful ecclesiastics sprung from the commonalty. Their sufferings by the rack and at the stake were an indelible disgrace to the English name. During Mary's reign, royalty, aristocracy, and priestcraft—the three great scourges of humanity—coalesced to crush the English people, and they nearly succeeded. England was within an ace of becoming a province of Spain and of the Holy Inquisition.

But if Mary's reign was surcharged with public horrors, that of Queen Elizabeth abounds in secret misdeeds of the most revolting description. Her ministers, ambassadors, and lovers, recent investigations have shown, were worthy of their mistress: that is to say, like her, they were utterly conscienceless, hesitating at no crime however wicked, no lie however mean, no treachery however base. A trio of more consummate rogues than Cecil (from whom Lord Salisbury professes to be descended), Walsingham, and Saddler, the chief instruments of the queen's will, it is impossible to conceive. Their whole time seems to have been spent in forging plots, applying the rack, administering bribes, and planning murders.

How to destroy Mary Queen of Scots was the main object of Elizabethan diplomacy. Mary was beautiful and Elizabeth was not. This influenced the feminine jealousy of Elizabeth beyond measure. Again, Anne Boleyn had been married to Henry VIII. several months before the divorce of Catherine of Arragon. Hence Elizabeth felt that her own claim to the throne was barred, and that the unfortunate Queen of Scots was the legitimist heir.

In these circumstances she stuck at no hypocrisy or villany that promised to rid her of her cousin Mary. The Scottish Protestant lords, who had just gorged themselves after the manner of the English Russells, Cavendishes, and Wriothesleys, with the spoils of the Catholic Church, occasionally roasting refractory abbots to make them part with title deeds, were all instigated to rebellion by secret subsidies judiciously supplied by

Sir Ralph Saddler, Argyle, Montrose, Arran, Glencairn, Murray (Mary's half-brother), and even the reformer, Knox, were heavily bribed. The murderers of Rizzio and of Darnley were in the pay of Elizabeth, just as were those of Cardinal Beaton in that of her father, the Defender of the Faith. In all the troubles that befell Scotland and Queen Mary in that wretched period, the finger of Elizabeth's agents can be distinctly traced, bribing and stimulating to deeds of violence and wrong.

Eventually driven to seek asylum in England by the machinations of Elizabeth and her Cecils, Walsinghams, Saddlers, and Davisons, Mary was first subjected to many years' rigorous confinement, and then beheaded in defiance of the sacred obligations of hospitality and the law of nations. "Sweet Robin" of Leicester had suggested poison as a good specific, while other courtiers held that slow torture would be more difficult of detection. Even after Mary's death-warrant had been signed, the preferability of private assassination was vividly before the mind of the "Virgin Queen." Walsingham and the scapegoat Davison were instructed to write to Mary's keepers to say that Her Majesty "wondered, with all their professed zeal in her service, that they had not in all this time found out some way to shorten the life of that queen."

Sir Amyas Paulet, who was served with this precious document, replied in the utmost trepidation that "his goods, his life, were at her majesty's disposal—he was ready to lose them the next minute if it should so please her—but God forbid that he should make so foul a shipwreck of his conscience or leave so great a blot on his posterity, as to shed blood without law and warrant." For this creditable aversion to murder, the "Virgin Queen" stigmatized Paulet as "a precise and dainty fellow," and named less scrupulous agents.

Finally, however, she struck out a brilliant idea—Mary was to be executed by accident! Davison was instructed to deliver the death-warrant to the Lord Chancellor. He did so, and, to his amazement, was thrown into the Tower, where he perished after years of misery. Elizabeth mendaciously alleged that she had ordered the secretary to keep Mary's death-warrant in secret. All Elizabeth's leading nobles and ministers participated in this infamous judicial murder of a princess whom they, by their plots, had compelled to seek asylum in England.

All the while Burghley kept the rack hard at work, and the consequence was a rich crop of Papist plots. Most of them, we now know, were pure inventions, to escape the exquisite tortures to which the suspects were subjected. The groundlessness of the charges of disloyalty urged against the Catholics was fully attested by their courage and fidelity when England was put in real peril—

*When that great Fleet Invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts in Spain.*

Two samples of Burghley's statecraft will suffice. Francis Throgmorton, a Cheshire gentleman of honourable repute, was thrice racked, and to escape a fourth application of the infernal instrument, made a confession which enabled him to enjoy the comparative luxury of the gallows and disembowelment at Tyburn. With his latest breath he protested his entire innocence, which there was no reason to doubt.

Dr. Parry, a member of parliament, took exception to certain peculiarly atrocious penal enactments. He was thrown into the Tower, from which he emerged so altered in demeanour that his friends were satisfied that the horrors of his prison-house had overthrown his intellect. He was even ready to aver that he had been employed by His Holiness the Pope to murder the queen. Nevertheless, he was ordered to the gallows forthwith. Like Throgmorton, he earnestly protested that his confession was an absolute fabrication to escape the rack, and that Burghley, Walsingham, and Elizabeth were well aware that such was the case. Burghley and the queen were alike deaf to his frenzied appeal, and he was hanged out of hand.

Under James I. there was no improvement in the character of our Old Nobility. The great rack-master, Cecil *père*, was succeeded by Cecil *fils*. There was nothing to choose between these remorseless and coldblooded men. Bacon, a man of high intellect, was steeped in corruption, and tireless in his laudation of "privilege." The brilliant Raleigh was a shameless adulator of royalty, and had his reward. The Somersets and Buckingham were insolent royal favourites, with nothing to recommend them but their unspeakable vices and dandified exteriors.

The first Stuart made anybody a noble who was willing to pay for a title, and some he even compelled to pay for such honours against their will. Before he had been three months in England he had made seven hundred knights. He invented the order of baronets, so much coveted by City aldermen and such like rank weeds of our social life. The price of this hereditary dignity was fixed at £1,000; a simple knighthood was knocked down at from £60 to £300. Peerages, of course, cost a good deal more even than baronetcies. Of the former there were but fifty-six in Queen Elizabeth's time. James speedily added sixty-two more. £10,000 were customarily paid by men who aspired to become hereditary legislators. Our Fanes, Spencers, Cavendishes, Montagues, Peters, Tuftons, Stanhopes, Sackvilles, all paid down lump sums to the British Solomon, for the

privilege of perpetually misgoverning the people. To the peers by Church robbery were now added peers by purchase, and the latter process of manufacture is still actively persevered with under somewhat altered conditions. A great landowner who, by lavish and corrupt expenditure, is able to control a county or two in the interests of his party, is almost certain, sooner or later, to secure a seat in the irresponsible house.

During the whole of this absurd king's reign, the peers, as in Elizabeth's time, crawled and fawned in the most loathsome manner. When the British Solomon talked some unusual nonsense at the Hampton Court Conference in regard to the royal prerogative, Bancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, declared that he was inspired by the Holy Ghost. Bacon almost went as far. "The king," he declared, "was the voice of God in the mouth of man." Such language, coming from the lips of such a man, were enough to make angels weep. Nor are we yet emancipated from this degrading lip-service of royalty. In Scotland, Mr. Gladstone recently strove to magnify the throne in a manner utterly unworthy of so great a man. Such exhibitions of hypocritical loyalty by statesmen are a degradation to them-selves, and ruinous to our political veracity as a nation. They almost tempt one to doubt whether we are not, after all, as Thackeray held, a nation of snobs, unworthy of the political martyrs, who have perished on scaffold and field and in vilest dungeons, that we might enjoy an inheritance of freedom.

The part played by the Peers in the great Revolution of 1648 and the sham Revolution of 1688 was equally unpatriotic and contemptible. In the former they ruined the Crown by their pusillanimity; in the latter they ruined the people by fraud. In neither crisis did they exhibit the smallest regard for any interests but their own. Had they joined the Commons in resisting the despotism of Charles I., constitutional liberty might have been secured to the nation without a single drop of bloodshed. Such a combination the king could not possibly have resisted.

What, then, was their action while the freedom of England—nay, of the world—hung in the balance? Charles demanded from his first parliament enormous supplies for life. These the Commons refused, because they well knew that they were to be used for the suppression of the nation's liberties. They declined to grant him tonnage and poundage for more than one year. The peers resented this indignity put upon royalty, and threw out the Bill. The king gave them thanks, while the Commons were branded as "vipers." "For you, my lords," said he, "I am glad to take this opportunity, and all other occasions, by which you may clearly understand both my words and actions; for, as you are nearest in degree, so are you the fittest witnesses of kings. The complaint I speak of is in staying men's goods that deny tonnage and poundage." In dissolving parliament, he said: "I declare to you, my lords, and all the world, that it is only the disobedient carriage of the Lower House that hath caused the dissolution at this time, and that you, my lords, are so far from causers of it, that I have as much comfort in your lordships' carriage as I have cause to distaste their proceedings."

Again, in a subsequent parliament, we find the Lords treacherously urging the Commons to grant the king supplies without the previous redress of national grievances. "Having the word not only of a king, but a gentleman," said they, "they would no more be capable of distrusting him than they would be capable of the highest undutifulness to him." The Representative House, however, knew full well that Charles, though a king, was not a gentleman in the observance of his plighted word, and paid no heed to the lordly advice. The Upper House then had recourse to another and entirely unconstitutional expedient—they usurped the function of regulating the course of business in the elected chamber, by voting that "supply should take precedence of all other business." This was not quite so bad as the present claim of the Peers to dissolve parliament; but the Commons, justly incensed, demanded an apology for so gross a breach of privilege, and the hereditary legislators were fain to express contrition. As usual, Charles angrily dismissed parliament, thanking the traitors in the Upper House "for their willing ear and great affection!"

When eventually the Long Parliament met and the royal banner was unfurled, noble lords found themselves in a position of supreme difficulty. Such of them, some forty in number, as had any stomach for fighting—a very meagre list indeed when it is recollected how many noble lords owed their patents to Charles and his father—hastened to the royal standard, which they believed would prove victorious. Some remained in London, terrified lest the people should triumph and their estates be confiscated. Others simply skulked, ignominiously hiding in holes at home and abroad—holes from which they did not emerge till the Restoration brought them again into political life in much the same way as summer suns revivify adders, snakes, vipers, and other venomous and un-clean reptiles.

Pym had well warned them of their fate. "Whether the the kingdom be lost or saved," said he, "they should be sorry that the story of the present parliament should tell posterity that in so great a danger and extremity the House of Commons should be found to save the kingdom alone, and the House of Peers should have no part in the honour of the preservation of it, you having so great an interest in the good success of their endeavours in respect of your great estates and high degree of nobility. My lords, consider what the present necessities and dangers of the commonweal require; what the Commons have reason to expect; to what endeavours and counsels the concurrent desires of all the people do invite you, so that applying yourselves to the preservation

of the king and kingdom I may be bold to assure you, in the name of the Commons of England, that you shall be bravely seconded."

Of all our old nobility but one man, Lord Fairfax, really preferred the interests of the nation to those of his order. The Commons had to save England alone.

After the proclamation of the Republic, a number of peers had the assurance to return to their posts and endeavour to resume their legislative functions, but the Commons would not so much as deign to receive a messenger from them. They were promptly voted "useless and dangerous," and for nine years—from January 6th, 1649, to January 20th, 1658, when Cromwell made an abortive effort to constitute an Upper House—England was without a Second Chamber.

During this period the high-water mark of national greatness was indisputably attained. So rich did the people become under the vigorous rule of the Commonwealth that in 1653 the then vast sum of £900,000 a-year was offered for the Customs and Excise, and offered in vain. The English flag floated triumphant on every sea, and commerce expanded by leaps and bounds. Princes, popes, and cardinals did suit and service to the majestic people that had put down kings, peers, and prelates, and dared to assert its own unlettered sovereignty.

Are these glories incapable of revival? Did the Restoration of 1660 and the sham aristocratic Revolution of 1688 extinguish for good all that is noble, chivalrous, and patriotic in the bosoms of Englishmen? Let us hope not. Why should not 1888 witness as genuine a revolution as 1648? Heaven knows we have suffered enough for our backsliding since the restoration of kings and peers to their ancient functions of national oppressors.

At the Restoration our Old Nobility enjoyed their own again, and speedily reduced the country to a depth of infamy hitherto unknown. In league with the astute traitor, Monk, who was made Duke of Albemarle for laying the country helpless at the feet of Charles the Second and his lewd crew, there was no enormity at which they hesitated. Not content with judicially murdering Sir Harry Vane, Major-General Harrison, and more than twenty other unflinching champions of freedom, they even had recourse to cowardly assassinations. Two "cavaliers," shouting "God save the king!" shot Mr. Lisle, the husband of Alice Lisle, as he was about to enter the door of a church in Lausanne, one peaceful Sunday morning, and scampered off. General Ludlow had to obtain a body-guard from the authorities of Vevey to preserve him from a similar fate. Milton, the sublime poet, the deathless advocate of freedom, was within an ace of being hanged.

Nor did the aristocratic poltroons in the day of their prosperity confine their attention to the living. They wreaked their vengeance on the mighty dead, They dug up the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw; and gibbeted them at Tyburn. Those of Blake, the heroic Republican admiral, who made England the first naval power in the world; of Pym, a statesman as accomplished as Gladstone and assuredly not less honest; of May, the learned historian of the Long Parliament; and even the corpses of the unoffending mother and daughter of Cromwell were disinterred and "cast like dogs into a vile pit." Not a single trace of magnanimity marks the career of the restored aristocracy. They were as insolent and cruel in their unmerited prosperity as they had been craven in their merited adversity.

At the Restoration, feudal land dues, mostly commuted into money payments, yielded about one-half the national revenue. This was not to be endured. At a blow our old nobility divested themselves of their undoubted obligations, which they transferred to the shoulders of the people, whom they have scourged with intolerable Customs and Excise Duties ever since. They subsequently found it necessary to promise to pay a State rent of 4s. in the pound on *true annual value* as some compensation to the nation for this intolerable swindle. But they have with unblushing dishonesty substituted the original assessment of William the Third's reign for *true annual value*, with the result that the landlords are now paying little more than one million sterling, when they should be paying forty millions. "The Financial Reform Almanack" estimates that from 1688 to 1884 they have by non-payment of land-tax cheated the country out of the stupendous sum of £1,250,827,734! Of all modern aristocratic frauds this is the greatest, and if there were a reformer in the House of Commons worth his salt he would seize the very first opportunity of bringing the Peers to their senses by moving that the land-tax be levied on *true annual value*. The Peers possess about one-fifth of the national soil, yielding them nearly twelve millions sterling in rent. Of this huge sum the 4s. tax would relieve them of two millions and two-fifths, and as their friends and relations hold most of the remainder of the soil, the forty millions would mostly come out of the pockets of those who have so long benefited by the original fraud. Were not the House of Commons crammed with aristocrats and landowners such a palpable swindle would not be endured for a day.

decorative feature

Chapter VI.

Burrowing Animals.

"Sir, this vermin of court reporters when they are forced into day upon one point are sure to burrow into another."

—BURKE.

"We owe the English peerage to three sources—the spoliation of the Church, the open and flagrant sale of its honours by the elder Stuarts, and the borough-mongering of our own times. These are the three main sources of the existing peerage of England, and, in my opinion, disgraceful ones."

—LORD BEACONSFIELD,

"His Majesty then taking me into his hands and stroking me gently used these words, which I shall never forget:—My little friend Grildrig (who had given a laudatory account of the Peers, Spiritual and Temporal), you have made a most valuable panegyric. You have clearly proved that ignorance, idleness, and vice may be sometimes the only ingredients for qualifying a legislator. I observe among you some lines of an institution, which, in the original might have been tolerable; but those half erased and the rest wholly blurred and blotted by corruption. It doth not appear that men were ennobled on account of their virtue, or that priests were advanced for their piety or learning; and by what I have gathered from your answers, you are the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl on the surface of the earth."

—SWIFT. *Gulliver in Brobdignag.*

"That which the palmer-worm hath left the locust hath eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which the canker-worm hath left the caterpillar hath eaten."

—JOEL.

THIRD EPOCH (1688—1832).

THE "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 was almost as disastrous an event for the English People as the "Blessed Restoration." It was made by the Anglican bishops and a handful of noble lords, who dreaded that if James the Second should proceed further in his Romanizing policy they might be called upon to disgorge their estates, which had been carved out of church property. In the whole history of ecclesiastical hypocrisy there is nothing to match the effrontery of the passive-obedience-preaching Churchmen, the cruel persecutions of Dissenters, the bigots and authors of Uniformity Acts, Five Mile Acts, and Non-Resistance Bills, coming forward as the champions of civil and religious liberty. The moment they saw their livings and sees in danger from James's Romans, passive obedience was cast off like a worn surplice.

The noble lay conspirators likewise saw their opportunity. Dutch William cared nothing for royal sway in England, provided he could bleed the country to his heart's content of men and money for his continental wars. This suited the "Revolution Houses" exactly. Having relieved themselves of the land tax, which was practically a war tax, they were the only class in the community who had nothing to lose, but everything to gain, by foreign wars. War provided younger sons with army and navy commissions, and the more ports that were closed to commerce, the higher rose the price of agricultural produce, and the higher rent. "A long war and a short crop!" became the favourite toast of peers and country gentlemen. In 1688 wheat, which had occasionally valued 26s. per quarter, stood at 46s. By 1773, under the fostering care of the "Revolution Houses," the price had mounted up to 127s. At the close of the long struggle it was still 116s. The price of meat was sextupled; of cheese quintupled; of butter quadrupled; of shoes trebled; and of all other articles of food and clothing in proportion.

From the accession of William and Mary, down to the Reform Bill of 1832, there was literally no check on the unbridled sway of the aristocracy. For all the bloody wars waged against liberty in the New World and the Old, during that calamitous period, they, and they alone, were responsible. The House of Commons was merely an outpost of the Lords, almost wholly manned by brothers and brothers-in-law, uncles and nephews. They might very well have sat in one chamber. "All were John Thompson's bairns" Five-sixths of the Lower were directly or indirectly "placed" by the "Upper" House.

The wars waged by the aristocracy from 1688 downwards, it has been estimated, have cost the nation the inconceivable sum of £3,430,000,000 in payments; £2,790,000,000 in interest on Debt; while £750,000,000 odd remain to be paid, to say nothing of the sacrifice of more than Two MILLIONS of precious British lives, Every one of these barbarous enterprises, of which the National Debt is a perpetual reminder, posterity will condemn, has indeed already condemned, as a flagrant crime. Mr. Labouchere has been rallied for affirming at the Great St. James's Hall meeting at the end of last session that the House of Lords has inflicted greater calamities on the

nation than all the thieves' kitchens in the land; but really he greatly understated the facts. To let loose five thousand panthers among us would be a trifle to being saddled with five hundred peers.

Marlborough's famous victories all ended in—Blenheim Park and the perpetual pension which the Government recently commuted for the shameful sum of £107,000, administering to Mr. Bradlaugh a studied insult in the process. John Churchill was not merely repeatedly guilty of high treason; but he was convicted by Parliament of embezzling public moneys to the extent of £400,000 and upwards. He escaped punishment. Why marvel at the assurance of the descendants of such a successful rogue? The American war cost us £136,000,000, and the grandest heritage on the planet—the now United States. We spent a billion and a quarter to restore the Bourbons, and lo! M. Grèvy is President of the French Republic! So much for the statesmanlike foresight of our Old Nobility! Is it not time that this incorrigible ring of evil-doers should be rooted out once and for all? Were one to impugn the moral government of this world, what stronger argument could be found than the continued existence of the House of Lords?

The "glorious Revolution" of 1688, from which we are wont to date so many imaginary national blessings, really had the effect of subjecting both the People and the Crown to the aristocracy. From 1688 to 1832 their power was simply unlimited. They brought in Dutch William, but with very few exceptions the "pure patriots" of the Revolution maintained a clandestine correspondence with the exiled James II. This William III. knew full well, and to keep them to their allegiance he was obliged to bribe his aristocratic supporters with gifts of nearly the whole of the Crown lands and of vast estates of outlawed Jacobites in Ireland and England. When William died it was found that the revenue of all the Crown lands that remained unalienated did not amount to more than £15,000 per annum. Even as late as Charles II.'s reign they were rented at £263,000. The Sidneys, Bentincks, Pellings, Ginckels, Rouvignys, and other native and foreign cormorants, robbed the nation of this magnificent heritage, and to compensate the Crown for its losses they invented the Civil List. In a word, the people were saddled directly with the cost of royalty, which at this moment amounts to a round million sterling per annum.

One result of this nefarious transaction they were unable to foresee. Paupers are never popular, and royal pauperism is infinitely more objectionable than proletariat pauperism. Even "the Divinity that doth hedge a king" is not a very imposing figure begging-box in hand. By this notorious robbery, however, the aristocracy contrived thoroughly to manipulate the Crown.

It remains to be seen how they were able to subjugate the people. Their chief weapons were parliamentary corruption and foreign wars. In 1785 it was shown beyond cavil that in a population of 30,000,000 only 15,000 enjoyed the franchise. Thirty-five constituencies having no electors at all returned seventy-five hon. members to parliament. Forty-six other places, each with less than fifty electors, returned ninety members. Ninety-seven members were actually nominated; seventy were indirectly appointed by peers and the Treasury; 139 more were placed by individual commoners; in a word, a clear majority of the House of Commons were the nominees of 160 persons. It was to preserve this monstrous state of things intact that the aristocracy, down to 1832, the year of the Reform Bill, strained every nerve. It was for this intolerable régime that the Duke of Wellington was willing to risk a bloody revolution had he but been able to satisfy himself that the military would fire on the people. It was the dread that the soldiers would fraternise with the reformers when the crisis culminated that alone saved England from the horrors of a civil war.

Attempts, gallant attempts, there had been before 1832 to deprive the aristocracy of some portion of the unbounded power which they had contrived to concentrate in their hands. Sir Francis Dashwood in 1745; the younger Pitt in 1782; Mr. Grey in 1785 and again in 1795 and 1797; and Sir Francis Burdett in 1819, had raised the question of reform, but raised it in vain. Bribery completely stifled the voice of the nation.

The aristocratic revolutionists of 1688 were nearly all bribers or bribees. Mr. Speaker received one thousand pounds for expediting the passage of an Orphans Bill through the House, and was expelled for his clumsiness in the transaction; so also was the Chairman of Committees, who was equally imprudent. Danby, the Duke of Leeds, Lord President of the Council, was likewise convicted of accepting large bribes from the old East India Company, which in a single year spent no less than £167,000 in secret service money. Danby contended that the interests of the glorious Revolution were involved in his pocketing the money of the East India Company!

Wyndham thus faithfully summarised the situation:—"A minister possessed of immense wealth, the plunder of the nation, with a parliament chiefly composed of men whose seats are purchased, and whose votes are bought at the expense of the public treasure." In ten years Walpole spent £1,453,000 of "Secret-service" money!

The bursting of the South Sea Bubble was an event which revealed to the meanest intelligence the true character of government by aristocracy. The Prime Minister, Sunderland, pocketed bribes amounting to £50,000; Mr. Secretary Craggs, £30,000; the King's German mistresses, £30,000, and so on, from the greatest even to the least.

But if the aristocracy thus shamelessly pillaged the nation for themselves, what is still more astonishing is that they were almost equally generous with their country's money in their dealings with Continental despots and princelings. Wherever freedom dared to lift its head abroad, there was the purse of England open for its suppression. We not merely fought for despotism everywhere, but we paid the despots to fight for themselves. The long war waged against Louis XIV., as has been said, practically ended in the *status quo ante helium*—plus Blenheim Park and the Marlborough Perpetual Pension. The Tory aristocrats, to spite the Whig aristocrats, stepped in at the very nick of time, and by the Treaty of Utrecht, secured to the Grand Monarque in his defeat almost all the fruits of victory.

We then undertook to prevent the seizure of Silesia by that unprincipled Prussian, Frederick, whom even Carlyle's genius could not convert into other than an unmitigated scamp. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle formally secured to the Prussian robber his booty.

After this we thought well to become the ally of such a successful thief. Having outraged Austria, it was time for Frederick to attack almost equally unoffending Saxony. We not merely lent him troops, but paid the ruffian £670,000 per annum by way of subsidy. This step brought down on us Russia, France, Spain, and Austria, and ultimately lost us the United States; for it is very doubtful if, without French aid, the colonists would have been able single handed to make head against the heavy odds opposed to them. After a long struggle with Spain we contrived by treaty to secure a great and honourable triumph. The "Assienta," a monopoly to supply the South American slave-markets with kidnapped Africans, was conceded to us for a period of four years!

True, the petty German despots came to our aid in the fratricidal struggle with our "kin beyond sea." That was to be expected in so bad a cause, but, as usual, they did nothing without ample *backsheesh*. The Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel had his £10,000 per annum, the Duke of Brunswick his £15,000, and the Prince of Hesse, who kidnapped a paltry 688 of his subjects for us, his £6,000.

It was even worse in the dreadful struggle to restore the Bourbons and to keep the worn-out monarchies and aristocracies of Europe on their feet. France rose in her might, and proclaimed to an astonished world the Rights of Man. England paid every tyrant, great and small, who would raise or promise to raise an armed hand against the Revolution. The Austrian Autocrat was encouraged to defend his throne by an annual subsidy, varying from a million and a half to two millions. The Russian Autocrat generally got from two to three millions yearly to enable him to maintain intact in his dominions the sacred heritage of serfdom. The Duke of Brunswick, for a miserable contingent of 2,200 men, was allowed £16,000 per annum; and even the services of the pirate Dey of Algiers were eagerly secured in this unholy crusade against liberty. In a single year the despots of the Continent were glutted with £14,000,000 of British gold to encourage them to keep their wretched subjects in thralldom.

These enormous sums, the pillage of the English Treasury, on which the toilers of this unhappy country are still paying interest in the shape of national debt, were almost wholly lost or fraudulently misapplied. When Napoleon made a conquest, he also made a "requisition," and the requisition was generally satisfied out of English subsidies. His majesty of Prussia peremptorily demanded upwards of two millions to enable him to take the field against the French in the Netherlands in conjunction with a British force. The sum was paid, and no sooner had he clutched the money than he set off to assist Russia in suppressing "Warsaw's last champion," Kosciusko. Poland was finally partitioned with British gold. Nice allies these Prussian vultures and Russian bears, but exactly such as our old nobility might have been expected to honour with their friendship and glut with gold which it was theirs to spend, but not to earn.

The whole of this dreadful period of unbridled aristocracy is marked by a long train of bloodshed, corruption, debt, and protectionist legislation. The Corn-laws kept the people's stomachs empty of food, and the pockets of the peers and their relations full of rent. And yet, strange to say, even in those halcyon days it was found then, as always, difficult to keep our Old Nobility alive. George the Third had to recruit the diminishing brood of vampires by the creation, or restoration, as it was euphemistically called in some cases, of no fewer than 522 brand new peerages.

If ever the English people can be aroused to an adequate sense of the terrible crimes which the aristocracy have perpetrated in their name and at their expense, they will either repudiate the National Debt altogether or lay its burden wholly on the shoulders of the class who have so long befooled and plundered them. If ever the National Debt—her Majesty's Debt, as it ought to be called—is to be paid off, let rent and not industry be the sufferer. As soon as the Land Restoration Leagues of England and Scotland have attained their object, as soon as rent begins to flow into the local treasuries or the imperial Exchequer instead of the pockets of noble lords and their squirearchical satellities, it will be easy to liquidate the national debt and to solve a good many other knotty problems at present insoluble,

decorative feature

Chapter VII.

Temporary Rejectors.

"Since the Revolution of 1688 cruelty and oppression have been legalized, but the interior history, the social proceedings and everyday life of our rulers since that time would hardly appear less frightful than the horrors of ancient days. A more despicable set of wretches cannot be found than the nobles of England under the Georges. Licentious, mean, in every way thoroughly corrupt and cruel, it would be difficult to find their superiors in vice in the world's history. The history that would fairly state all these things has yet to be written."
—J. A. ROEBUCK.

"Since the Reform Act the House of Lords has become a revising and suspending house. The house has ceased to be one of latent directors, and has become one of temporary rejectors and palpable alterers."
—WALTER BAGEHOT.

FOURTH EPOCH (1832—1884).

TEMPORARY rejectors and palpable alterers! This truly is the miserable function fulfilled by the Peers since the Reform Act of 1832. By that Act their power for mischief was curtailed, but their will to do harm has undergone no change whatever. Formerly they did evil, now they prevent good. Irish patriots we have seen dragged from their seats in the Commons because they obstructed Coercion Bills which were a disgrace to the Gladstone Ministry and the entire Liberal party; but here we have a House of arch-obstructionists, with no other visible object in life but to arrest the march of civilization—to prevent the emancipation of the oppressed. And strange to say, until the other day it has never been seriously proposed for more than two centuries to rid the country once and for all of this mediaeval hulk so inconveniently stranded in the mid-channel of nineteenth century progress.

The oft-told tale of lordly opposition to the Reform Bill of 1832 it is not necessary to repeat. Suffice it to say, that at a time when there were not more than 15,000 electors in a population of 30,000,000, and when more than half the House of Commons were the simple nominees of peers, the Duke of Wellington, as Prime Minister and leader of the Upper Chamber, declared, "I am fully convinced that the country now possesses a legislature which answers all the good purposes of legislation, and this to a greater degree than any legislature ever has answered in any other country whatever. I will go further, and say that the legislature and the system of representation deservedly possess the full and entire confidence of the country." Lord Kenyon tersely summed up the sentiments of his brother peers, when he prophesied a few days before the passing of the Act, "The Bill will be the destruction of the monarchy. (Would it had!) By forcing this measure on his reluctant sovereign, the noble Earl (Grey) has placed the king in a situation in which he could make no choice of a minister; and his advice to exercise his prerogative in so unconstitutional a manner as to destroy the independence of the House is abandoned and atrocious."

Howbeit, this atrocity had the effect of saving the nation from all the horrors of revolution. Twenty-four hours' further delay, and crown and coronet would have rolled in bloody dust. If the king had not been induced to sanction a fresh creation of peers, the madness of the Lords would certainly have carried them on to destruction. On October 7th, 1831, they had rejected the Reform Bill by a majority of 199 to 158. Out of twenty-two Christian bishops only one could be induced to vote for the enfranchisement of the people.

But though cowed by the formidable attitude of the people, the Lords were by no means reconciled to parliamentary reform. In 1833 they rejected with very little ceremony Bills for the disfranchisement of the corrupt "freemen" of Stafford, Liverpool, Warwick, and Carrickfergus. In the same session they "amended" an excellent Bribery Prevention Bill out of existence, and in 1848 they threw out another similar measure bodily because it iniquitously proposed to disfranchise for life anyone convicted by an election commission of unblushing corruption. Men who could thus shield corruption were not likely to do aught to diminish the scandalous cost of elections. Accordingly, in 1852, they rejected a measure for limiting the poll in counties to a single day.

The Lords have always been singularly vigilant in rendering the electoral register as inaccessible as possible. In 1857 it was proposed to allow an elector who had paid his rates to within six months of voting to exercise his right. The Lords held that the voter must have paid up to the date of election. They likewise

disqualified electors who had changed their residence between registration and registration, and in 1838 they caused the loss of a useful Bill because it sought to enable trustees, as such, to exercise the franchise.

In the Reform Bill of 1867, which probably escaped rejection because it was the handiwork of a Conservative Government, they contrived to insert the abomination of three-cornered constituencies, and but for the firmness of the Commons they would otherwise have disfigured that measure even more seriously.

In 1871 the peers threw out the Ballot Bill by a majority of forty-nine. The following year they read the Bill a second time, but insisted that secrecy should be optional. Eventually they reluctantly permitted secret voting to become the law of the land.

As regards the Reform Bill of 1884, they have assumed such an attitude of insolent defiance that it is not too much to say that a large majority of the people have determined not to mend, but to end them. Disguise it as they may, they have deliberately attempted to usurp the Crown's prerogative to dissolve parliament, in the hope that a Conservative majority may be returned to the House of Commons—a majority prepared to aid them in manipulating the constituencies in the interests of Toryism. So much for the peers and reform.

Next in importance to the relation of the people to the suffrage—nay, perhaps first in importance—comes their relation to the land. Let us see how the peers have dealt with this great question. The House of Lords is really a House of Landlords. The noble five hundred share among them nearly a fifth of the available soil of the country, and their brothers and nephews, uncles and aunts, hold most of the remainder. The peers alone extract from the toilers and spinners of the nation nearly £12,000,000 per annum in the shape of rent. But for this unearned and unheard-of wealth, their pretended blue blood would avail them but little. Were it not for their bread acres they would have been ignominiously drummed out of St. Stephen's long ago.

It may be true that "knowledge is power," but it is still truer that acres are power. This truth the aristocracy of England, at every stage of their shameful history, have appreciated so keenly, that in order to illustrate the proposition they have not hesitated to rob successively the People, the Church, and the Crown of nearly all that once was theirs. The theft of the commons by Enclosure Acts was a mere matter of detail.

And theoretically, as well as historically, the Lords are merely a chamber of robbers. Land is the free gift of God to all men, as much as the air we breathe. Hence its ownership is necessarily in society as a whole, and not in individuals, let the process of acquisition be never so innocent. This being so, the land robbers of the Upper Chamber, as might have been expected, have dealt with their booty in much the same way as a crew of pirates would treat a captured merchantman. Rent is the cargo of the prize: eviction is equivalent to walking the plank; tenancy-at-will is the slavery into which buccaneers were wont to sell their victims. In a word, the House of Landlords have from first to last regarded the national soil of Great Britain and Ireland—of Ireland more particularly—not as the property of the people, but as *their* property.

The dealings of the peers with the Irish land question will best illustrate the manner in which noble lords hold that it is competent for them "to do as they like with their own." In 1845 the Devon Commission, composed exclusively of landlords, reported that the Irish tenants were subject to "greater sufferings than the people of any other country in Europe," and recommended compensation for improvements and for disturbance. Lord Stanley framed a Bill in harmony with the report, but notwithstanding that it was backed by a Conservative Government, it was successfully strangled in the Lords, and for five-and-twenty years more, Irishmen continued to endure "greater sufferings than the people of any other country in Europe."

In 1854 several Bills were introduced by Lord Aberdeen's Government to give compensation to Irish tenants for the reclamation of bog, the construction of roads and fences, the building of homesteads, of outbuildings, &c. The Lords "amended" or ended them all out of existence. "It is notorious," said Sir J. Napier in 1855, "that the House of Lords will pass no such measure, and that for a Government to propose it to them or pretend to support it is an imposture and a sham."

In 1860 an Irish Land Act was passed simply because it did not contain a single provision of the least use to the tenant. Subsequent attempts in 1865, and 1867 to legislate on the lines of the Devon Commission were defeated without difficulty, and it was not till 1870 that a little headway was made.

In that year Mr. Gladstone brought in a Bill which, but for the "amendments" on which noble lords insisted, might have spared us the terrible experiences that culminated in the butchery of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke. The Bill, as it left the Commons, empowered the farmers to sub-let small portions of their farms to their labourers. It moreover secured to tenants not in arrears compensation for eviction not exceeding seven years' rent; and what was still more important, it allowed compensation to tenants in arrear in such *special* cases as a failure of crops, &c. Both these provisions the peers obdurately struck out of the Bill, with most disastrous results.

In 1878 and 1879 the crops were all but a complete failure, and the tenants necessarily fell into arrears by the thousand. A tenant two years in arrear of rent might be entitled in equity to five years' compensation for disturbance, but it mattered not. The provision for his protection in the Bill of 1870 had been deleted by the Peers, and he and his were at the mercy of the merciless evictor. There was yet time to repent. In 1880 Mr.

Gladstone introduced a short Compensation for Disturbance Bill, practically reviving the clauses eliminated from the Bill of 1870. But his solemn warning to the Peers availed nothing. By a majority of 282 votes to 51 they rejected the measure. In sheer despair the downtrodden people determined to 'temper such intolerable despotism by assassination.' It is easy to lift up hands of holy horror; but "death by starvation" cannot be endured by mortal men with equanimity. Besides, it ought never to be forgotten that Irishmen, unlike Englishmen and Scotsmen, are forbidden the legitimate use of arms. They are as brave as any race under the sun, and but for the Arms Act would almost certainly have fought us gallantly in the open against whatever odds. The existence of this Act explains if it does not justify some of the worst deeds of violence. "Beware," cried these ruined men,

"Lest when our latest hope is fled
Ye taste of our despair,
And learn by proof in some wild hour
How much the wretched dare."

The lesson they taught was not lost. It required such strong medicine to secure the passage of the Irish Land Act of 1881 and the Arrears Act of 1882. Then the Lords showed once more that though they will yield nothing to reason or a sense of justice, they will concede almost anything to fear. They of course "amended" both the Land Bill and the Arrears Bill; but the Commons, with an incensed nation at their back; were resolute, and, nolens volens, they had to swallow both these bitter pills with many wry faces. They were small, inadequate pills, it is true; but they were the most nauseous that have ever been administered to the Landlords' House. Fair rents and fixity of tenure wrested from us, and the luxury of eviction rapidly going! Alas! alas! what next—and next?

Since the beginning of the century England and Scotland may be said, generally speaking, to have been governed by the House of Commons. Ireland, on the contrary, has been ruled by the Lords, and we have only to "look on this picture and on that," to apprehend how great is the difference between the responsible and the irresponsible control of a people. "Why are the Irish discontented?" asked O'Connell, in the House of Commons. "Because," said he, "for seven hundred years England has governed them by a faction and for a faction."

In 1829 the peers yielded to the demand for Catholic emancipation, only on condition that the Irish forty-shilling free-holders should be disfranchised.

The Reform Bill of 1832 gave the suffrage to nineteen out of every hundred adult males in England; in Ireland the percentage was not over five. Ministers admitted the glaring inequality; but in the face of a hostile majority in the Lords they were powerless.

In 1835, 1880, and in 1883 a Bill to assimilate the Irish to the English registration system passed the Commons, and was presented to the Lords. The measure would, to some extent, have increased the Irish electorate by the removal of galling impediments, but on each occasion the hereditary chamber threw it out. On the first opportunity it was rejected on a division by three to one; on the last by fifty-two votes to thirty-two.

In 1837 a Bill to afford Irish electors better polling facilities in large towns was extinguished by a hostile lordly majority of seventy-four to thirty-six.

In 1850, when twenty-eight out of every hundred adult Englishmen had the franchise, the percentage in Ireland was two. To remove this inequality a Bill with an eight pound ratable qualification was sent up to the Lords. They fixed the rating at fifteen pounds, and it was not without the greatest difficulty that they could be induced to agree to a twelve pound rating compromise. As it was, they managed to exclude 90,000 "capable citizens" from the suffrage. As matters now stand, while the population of an English borough has the suffrage in the ratio of one in seven, in Ireland it is in the proportion of one in eighteen.

In 1835, in 1836, in 1837, in 1838, in 1839, and in 1840 strenuous attempts were made to reform, as in England and Scotland, the close municipal corporations of Ireland, but to no purpose. The Lords defied the Commons, and Irish municipal reform had finally to be abandoned. One Bill, that of 1836, contained 140 clauses. The Lords struck out 106 of them, and wrecked the measure beyond recognition.

In 1834, 1835, 1836, and 1837, an Irish Tithe Abatement Bill heartily supported by O'Connell and an immense majority of the Commons—a majority, in 1837, of 229 to 13—suffered shipwreck in the Lords. In 1838, they permitted it to pass on condition that the Appropriation Clause, the most important in the Bill, should be struck out. Why? Because their lordships held that it would be sacrilege to devote any portion of the revenues of the Church to national purposes. It was not till 1869 that eventual retribution came in the disendowment of the alien Church in Ireland.

Is it possible that even the treacherous Whigs, with all their hollow compromises—nay that even the Grand

Old Man himself—can much longer preserve this "hospital for incurables," as Chesterfield justly called the House of Lords, from destruction? Their fate is vividly portrayed in the Scottish Kirk's metrical paraphrase of Job xiv. 1—15:—

*"Guilty and frail, how shalt thou stand
Before thy Sovereign Lord? (the people)
Can troubled and polluted springs
A hallowed stream afford?
Determined are the days that fly
Successive o'er thy head;
The numbered hour is on the wing.
That lays thee with the dead."*

"March without the people," says Ledru Rollin, "and you march into night; their instincts are a finger-pointing of Providence always turned towards real benefit." It is the one function of the Peers to "march into night." Privilege afflicts them with a second nature, which causes them, like bats and owls, to prefer the darkness to light. They are politically reprobate, and incapable of repentance. In small things, as in great, it is their constant habit to devise illiberal things. They are not pious, as their frequent appearances in divorce and police-courts fully testify; yet they are uniformly orthodox. They are not permitted to burn heretics as of old, but they never miss a favourable chance of harassing and insulting their Nonconformist fellow-countrymen.

In 1834 it was proposed to permit more than twenty persons to meet in any private house for divine worship, without exacting from the worshippers any declaration of their religious tenets. This latitudinarianism shocked their lordships beyond measure, and they made haste to throw out the Bill.

In 1834 a modest measure enabling Nonconformist students who had studied in their own "private colleges" within a university to take degrees, was thrown out by noble lords on the ground that such a concession would poison the wells of religion and virtue," and it was not till 1854 that the virus of dissent was permitted to contaminate the pure springs of Anglican sanctity. In that year relief was granted on condition that non-juring students should enjoy no university emoluments, and it was not till 1871 that religious tests for fellowships, scholarships, &c., were finally abolished. Twice did the Peers reject the Test Abolition Bill by overwhelming majorities after it had been read a second time without a division in the House of Commons. Justice delayed for forty years in such a matter is enough to make the heart even of a lukewarm friend of freedom of conscience grow sick.

The agitation for the abolition of church-rates had been active since 1843, but it was not till 1858 that the question got fairly before the legislature. Then a Bill passed the Commons by a majority of more than sixty. The Peers threw it out by a majority of fifty-one. In 1860 their majority was even more decisive—viz., ninety-one. In 1867 they still held out with a majority of fifty-eight, but in 1869 their lordships were fain to capitulate without any of the honours of war. How any body of men can be so utterly devoid of self-respect as to be perpetually sacrificing their most cherished convictions on compulsion is past all understanding.

In trying to preserve for the Civil Service Church, which is largely manned by their relations, the solid pudding of university fellowships and church-rates, some excuse maybe made for the peers. Even Radicals are found not to despise the loaves and fishes of office. But what can be said for gratuitous insults that bring no grist to the mill? Two samples of these lordly affronts to Dissenters will suffice to show the malignant spirit of caste.

In 1836 noble lords in the Dissenters' Marriage Act stipulated that whoever should take exception to the Church service should be condemned to have their marriage banns read before the board of guardians! Two years previously they had amended a Poor-law Bill so as to prevent Nonconformist pastors from obtaining access to workhouses, be the inmates of whatever religious persuasion they might. "Poison the wells of pauper religion and virtue," would you, ye impenitent offspring of the Roundheads! Mr. Chamberlain told us but yesterday that as a Dissenter he has an account to settle with the peers, and that he will not forget the reckoning. More power to his elbow! England at this moment requires a leader like Pym, who will lead public opinion, and not be content reluctantly to follow it.

Not satisfied with harassing the Dissenters while alive, noble lords have even carried their animosity into the silent graveyard, "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." They have striven hard to convert "God's Acre" into a Church monopoly. For ten years they successfully opposed the Burials Bill, which became law in 1880, and even then they contrived to exclude Jews and all non-Christians from the benefit of the measure.

Hebrew Tories, of whom we have so many odious specimens, are really the most ungrateful of men. For

five-and-twenty years—till 1858—the Lords, session after session, spurned their claims to sit in parliament after they had been recognised by immense majorities in the Commons. One would naturally have expected the chosen people to have much the same feelings towards noble lords as their ancestors entertained for Philistines, Hivites, and Hittites. Howbeit they lick the hand that smote, and they know best.

It was hardly to be expected that the relentless foes of religious liberty would be much enamoured of educational enlightenment. When the first grant for national education (£30,000) was passed by the Commons, the Lords' condemnation of the proposal was unequivocal, 229 votes to 118. They did all they dared to spoil the Education Act of 1870, expunging in particular a clause permitting school boards to give free education in certain cases. Free education, as in the American Republic, is a necessity almost as pressing as suffrage extension or the solution of the land question. The sagacious peers saw the danger lurking under the clause. It was the thin end of the wedge of free national education, and they peremptorily declined to sanction its insertion.

Against every extension of the principle of local self-government the Peers have invariably set their faces, maiming remorselessly when they dared not kill. The Great Municipal Corporation Bill (1835), as originally "amended" by the House of Lords, was a sight to see. They restored the corrupt "freemen" to the register; they made town clerks irremovable; they gave indirectly-elected aldermen life tenure of office; they excluded Nonconformist councillors from the exercise of Church patronage; they insisted on a high property qualification; and they deprived corporations of the right to nominate justices. The country indignantly refused to accept most of these and other "amendments;" but whatever blemishes there are in the statesman-like Corporations Act are to be laid to the door of the Peers. The loss of right to nominate justices, and 'the vicious system of electing aldermen, are among the worst results of their mischievous interference.

In 1838 they rejected a Bill empowering municipal justices to exercise the same control over town gaols as county justices possessed in counties. They took particular exception to a clause sanctioning the appointment of chaplains other than Anglican parsons. Study any recent statute, and if you stumble on a section limiting its usefulness, ten to one you will discover, on reference to Hansard, that it is the handiwork of the Lords.

The Peers have always exerted themselves with peculiar energy to retain on the statute book as many barbarities of the penal code as they conveniently could. Their love of the hangman was, and is, ardent. With the utmost reluctance were they induced to restrict the death-penalty to cases of wilful murder. But blood they must have in some form. The revolting torture of domestic pigeons commended itself to the noble lords in 1883 as a manly British "sport." Mr. Anderson's humane Pigeon Shooting Bill was thrown out by a majority of two to one, Lord Fortescue remarking that it was "a frivolous Bill which it was trifling with the time of the House to bring forward."

For the weak, the peers have no bowels of compassion. Witness their rejection, in 1838, of the Custody of Infants Bill, giving a woman separated from her husband, through no fault of her own, access to her children; their mutilation in 1842, of the Children Regulation Bill, protecting women and children from toil more crushing than was ever inflicted on negro slaves; their elimination from the Mines Bill (1860) of the clauses securing the pit-boys of tender years fixed hours of instruction; and their futile attempt in 1880 to delete from the Employers' Liability Bill the clause rendering employers responsible for the acts of those to whom they delegate authority.

There is in the House of Lords, a non-hereditary element—the Spiritual Peers—the twenty-six representatives of the Civil Service Church. They are a "survival" from those early common-sense times when men were summoned to the *Commune Concilium Regni*, not because they had "taken the trouble to be born," but because by reason of their piety and superior learning they were, or were supposed to be, the fittest councillors of the monarch. However this may once have been, it is very certain that for centuries they have out-Heroded their strictly hereditary co-legislators in trampling on every popular right, in violating every precept of the Christian religion.

"It is a melancholy thing," says Sidney Smith, "to see men clothed in soft raiment, lodged in a public palace, endowed with a rich portion of other men's industry using their influence to deepen the ignorance and inflame the fury of their fellow-creatures."

A bare record of some of their more recent enormities ought to satisfy even Churchmen that their career as legislators should at once be terminated.

In 1807 power was sought by Bill to enable magistrates to provide rate-supported schools wherever they were wanted. It was a highly necessary, moderate, and efficient measure. The Archbishop of Canterbury lifted up his testimony against it, and it was rejected without a division. "Their lordships would feel," he unctuously said, "how dangerous it might be to innovate in such matters. Their lordships' prudence would, no doubt, guard against innovations that might shake the foundations of our religion."

In 1810, "shop-lifting" to the extent of five shillings and upwards was punishable by death. It was proposed by Bill to substitute for the death-penalty transportation for life. The measure was rejected by a vote of 31 to

11. Not a single bishop was found in the minority; seven voted in the majority. It is almost incredible to conceive that at the beginning of this century 223 offences required the intervention of the hangman. Whenever it was proposed by Sir Samuel Romilly, Lord Holland, and other humane men to disestablish this hideous functionary, the bishops by voice and vote sedulously "guarded against innovations that might shake the foundations of religion."

In 1821 it was proposed to enable Roman Catholics to sit in parliament. Twenty-five bishops voted against the Bill, which was thrown out by a vote of 159 to 120.

In 1822 a Bill was brought in to enable Roman Catholic peers to take their seats in the Upper House. Twenty-three bishops voted against it, and it was rejected.

In 1829 a Catholic Emancipation Bill was eventually got through the Lords by a majority of 213 to 104; but small were the thanks due to the successors of the apostles, to the professed disciples of the Great Teacher who told the woman at the well of Samaria that the hour had come when the true worshippers should worship God in spirit and in truth—the hour when Samaritan mountains and Jewish Jerusalems, Anglican Establishments, and Papal Infallibilities should avail nothing. Twenty bishops voted against the third reading of the Catholic Emancipation Bill.

In 1831 the Lords threw out the great Reform Bill by 199 votes to 158. Twenty-one bishops voted in the majority, his Grace of Canterbury declaring that it was "mischievous in its tendency, and would be extremely dangerous to the fabric of the constitution."

In 1831 the Reform Bill passed the second reading in the Upper House by a vote of 184 to 175. Fifteen bishops were found in the minority.

In 1833 the Jewish Disabilities Repeal Bill was introduced, and it was not till after a struggle of twenty-five years, not till 1858, that the Lords permitted it to become law. Twenty bishops voted against it in 1833, and eleven in 1858. Archbishop Howley held that "the moral and intellectual capacity of the Jews" disqualified them for all legislative duties.

In 1834 twenty-two bishops voted to exclude the Dissenters from the universities. The Bill was lost, 187 to 85 noble lords voting against it.

In 1839 it was proposed to appoint a committee of Privy Council to deal with matters affecting the education of the people. Fifteen bishops voted against the proposal, and it was rejected by 229 to 118 votes. Archbishop Howley led the opposition.

In 1867, and again in 1869, the University Tests Abolition Bill was rejected by the Lords. On both occasions a majority of the bishops who voted opposed the measure.

In 1858 twenty-four bishops, as was to be expected, voted against the abolition of Church rates. The Bill was lost, there being a majority of 187 to 36 against it. Archbishop Sumner declared that Church rates were "essential to the permanent welfare of the Church."

In 1860 the Bill was again thrown out by a majority of 128 to 31. Sixteen bishops were in the majority.

In 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863, and in 1865, a Bill was brought in to abolish the declaration exacted from office-holders not to seek "to interfere with or weaken the Church, or disturb the said Church, or the bishops and clergy of the said Church, in the possession of any rights or privileges to which they are or may be by law entitled." On no occasion could more than one bishop be got to vote for the Bill. In 1865, the year before it was finally passed, ten episcopal legislators voted in the majority against it, In 1867 it was rejected for the third time. Seven bishops voted in the majority of eighty-two to twenty-four, and none in the minority.

In 1876 sixteen, and in 1877 eleven bishops voted to restrict the privilege of "Christian and orderly" funeral services in churchyards to Churchmen exclusively.

In 1883 the Deceased's Wife's Sister Bill was lost on the third reading for the want of five votes. Seventeen bishops were in the majority.

In 1883 one would naturally have expected the disciples of the gentle Nazarene who broke not the bruised reed, and whose mighty compassion embraced at once the "lilies of the field" and the "fowl of the air," would have had a word to say in favour of Mr. Anderson's Anti-Pigeon Torture Bill. But no; not a man of them thought it worth his while to speak or vote for the measure.

The Prelates, it would appear, have aggregate salaries, &c., amounting to £166,771 with the patronage of 2,649 Benefices of the net annual value of £887,733. A singular commentary is this truly on the pastoral equipments prescribed by Him who had not where to lay his head. "They should take nothing for their journey save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purses: but be shod with sandals and not put on two coats."

Mr. Russell Lowell in one of his finest poems—perhaps his finest—has admirably conceived a dialogue between the returned Christ and such caricaturist exponents of his doctrines as our Anglican Prelates:—

*"With gates of silver and bars of gold
Ye have forced my sheep from their Father's fold;
I have heard the dropping of their tears
In heaven these eighteen hundred years."*

*"O Lord and Master, not ours the guilt
We build but as our father's built;
Behold thine images how they stand
Sovereign and sole through all our land."*

*Then Christ sought out an artisan
A low-browed, stunted, haggard man
And a motherless girl whose fingers thin
Pushed from her faintly want and sin,*

*These set he in the midst of them,
And as they draw back their garment-hem
For fear of defilement, "Lo, here," said he,
"The images ye have made of me!"*

It is not too much to say that there is not a good cause nor a respectable class in the whole community that has not experienced some injury or some contumely at the hands of our hereditary Episcopal legislators. In theory and in practice they are alike beyond endurance. Lord Salisbury recognises this and sighs for the creation of a Senate after the American model. He would "Americanize our institutions," the wicked innovator! But perchance even this fond wish of his heart will be found unattainable. The torrent of democracy is not to be repelled even by a respectable senatorial breakwater. In one of the ablest works (Mr. Lock-wood's volume, which appeared in New York the other day) on the American Constitution it is seriously proposed to abolish both the Presidency and the Senate as filthy monarchical rags. We recommend the book to Lord Salisbury, for early and careful perusal.

It may be well at this stage to say a word or two on the utility of Second Chambers in general.

Most countries, it is true, have imitated us in the division of their Legislatures into two Houses, but that proves nothing more than that man is a foolishly gregarious animal, ever prone to follow bell-wethers. If England had started not merely with a Second but with a Third and Fourth Legislative Chamber, there is no reason to doubt that it would have been generally discovered that the eternal fitness of things demanded that every legislature should consist of four houses. But if we were the first to start on a false track, let us also be the first to retrace our steps. I can see no better reason for a two-chambered Parliament than for two Town Councils with co-ordinate powers say in Birmingham or Manchester.

The United States Senate is admittedly the giant of the whole forest of bi-cameral superstition and if I can effectually dispose of it, it will not matter much about the other senatorial brambles whether in Europe, South America or the Colonies.

The origin of the American Senate was, everything considered, almost as haphazard and irrational as that of the House of Lords. The original Articles of Confederation of the thirteen States correctly enough provided only for a single House, with an Executive Committee, the Committee to administer the affairs of the State while the House was out of Session. But this rational arrangement was too good to last. The National Convention which gave the Constitution of the United States its present form contained a majority of politicians who, though they had been able to throw off the military yoke of England, were unable to divest themselves of the yoke of pernicious English precedents. They must have a King, Lords, and Commons in some shape. Accordingly, Article I., Section 3, was submitted: "The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof for six years, and each Senator shall have one vote."

Of the debate that followed we know little, the Convention sitting with closed doors, as did likewise the Senate for the first five years of its existence; but we know enough of the proceedings to point the moral of the wise Swede, Oxenstiern, "Behold, my son, with how little wisdom this world is governed!" Chief Justice Yates, of New York, made the following profound memorandum in his note-book:—"May 31st, 1787.—The 3rd resolve, to wit: 'That the National Legislature ought to consist of two branches.' N.B. As a previous resolution had already been agreed to, to have a Supreme Legislature, I could not see any objection to its being in two branches." Mr. Dickenson held that the Senate should be as like the British House of Lords as possible, and consist of men of rank and property. The celebrated Alexander Hamilton was a great stickler for English forms, and wrote eloquently against "an improper consolidation of the States into a simple Republic." At the same time there were not lacking far-sighted men, like David Brearly, who advocated the complete obliteration of State lines, and the division of the whole country into equal parts based on population. Jefferson, also, was a One House man; and out of the thirteen States the delegates of three—the great State of New York being one of them—voted against the institution of a Second Chamber. The deliberations were naturally expedited by certain gnats, which infested the Convention Hall. In those days gentlemen encased their legs in silk stockings, which gave the pestiferous insects great advantages.

The Senate met, and its members made the most ludicrous attempts to ape their hereditary English prototypes. Mr. Maclay kept a journal in which he describes the ceremony of the inauguration of President Washington:—"The President (of the Senate), Mr. Adams, rose in the most solemn manner. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I wish for the direction of the Senate. The President will, I suppose, address the Congress. How shall I behave? How shall we receive it? Shall it be standing or sitting?' Mr. Lee began with the House of Commons, as is usual with him, then the House of Lords, then the King, and then back again. The result of his information was that the Lords *sat* and the Commons *stood* on the delivery of the King's Speech. Mr. Izard got up, and told how often he had been in the Houses of Parliament. He said a great deal of what he had seen there; made, however, this sage discovery: that the Commons stood because they had no seats to sit in on being arrived at the House of Lords," &c.

But dearly was America to pay for this thoughtless adoption of English Monarchical forms, for this servile compromise of Republican principles. By giving power and dignity to the Senate, the House of Representatives has been degraded. Wherever two Chambers exist one must be master, and, unfortunately for the Western Republic, the master is the Aristocratic Upper Chamber. Hence Lord Salisbury's admiration for the American Senate, in which the little State of Delaware is put on a footing of equality with that of New York, with more than thirty times its population.

The American Senators are individually superior to Members of the House of Representatives, but collectively they have ever been worse legislators. Take the crucial test of the Slavery Question. After the Mexican War the Representative House, by a majority of fourteen, passed a Bill admitting the conquered region as a territory, on condition that it should never be polluted by Slavery. The Senate would not so much as look at it. Again, in 1848, a Bill excluding Slavery from the territory of California passed the House by a majority of thirty-nine. The Senate scornfully declined to consider it. By a majority of ninety-nine the House prohibited Slavery in Oregon. The Senate laid the Bill on the table, from which it was never lifted. In 1849 the Senate made an attempt to extend Slavery into the new territories by the daring expedient of affixing an enabling provision to the Appropriation Bill. The House, however, sternly rejected the amendment, and the Senate retreated. The idea of arresting the entire machinery of government in order to further the ends of slaveholders ought to have attractions for the mind of the descendant of that Cecil of whom Lord Clarendon wrote; "No act of power was ever proposed which he did not advance and advocate with the utmost rigour. No man so great a tyrant in this country."

Suffice it to say that, but for the existence of the American Second Chamber, the Republic might have been spared all the horrors of the Civil War, with its holocaust of 900,000 lives and its loss of £1,400,000,000 of treasure. What is wanted in the United States, in this country, and every other self-governing State, is a single Democratic Assembly, with an Executive Committee elected by and responsible to that Assembly. "Useless and dangerous" is stamped on the face of every other more complex arrangement.

The problem how the Lords are to be abolished is of easy solution. They cannot present themselves at the Gilded Chamber without writs, and these a Democratic Ministry could and would peremptorily stop. Should they come without writs, Inspector Denning could be instructed to take charge of them. Or the House of Commons could simply revive its resolution of 6th January, 1649, decreeing their abolition.

Some fears have been expressed lest if this were done the Peers should find their way into the House of Commons by the legitimate door of election. But why not? If the people desire to be represented by gentlemen who neither "toil nor spin" let them. They will have none but themselves to blame if they are misrepresented. Besides, a sprinkling of Salisburys would give colour and variety to the popular assembly. We may have too much undiluted Grand Old Man; and I can even conceive of greater boons than a House of Commons

exclusively composed of Broadhursts and Howells.
decorative feature

Chapter VIII.

Bright Examples.

*"Not all that heralds rake from confined clay,
Nor florid prose, nor honied lies of rhyme,
Can blazon evil deeds or consecrate a crime."*

—BYRON.

*"The widow is gathering nettles for her children's dinner: a perfumed seigneur, delicately lounging in the
Œil de Beuf, hath an alchemy whereby he will extract from her the third nettle, and call it rent."*

—CARLYLE.

It has been shown pretty conclusively in previous chapters that the British aristocracy collectively have, from first to last, been public enemies of the most malignant type. It may now be well to glance at the achievements of a few of the more prominent families individually.

Take the Churchills to begin with. How did they come to be hereditary rulers of England? In this wise:—The Duke of York, afterwards James II., had an extraordinary taste for ugly mistresses; so much so, that one of them observed, "There are none of us handsome; and if we had wit, he (James) would not have the sense to find it out." Charles II. accounted for the plainness of his brother's harlots by maintaining that they were selected for him by his Father Confessor by way of penance. However, this singular love of female ugliness was the making of the Churchills. Arabella Churchill found her way into James's harem, and the fortunes of her brother, John Churchill, a penniless ensign, at once began to look up. He was a man of great intellectual ability, and undoubted physical courage, and being absolutely without the impediment of a conscience, he rapidly improved his opportunities.

The infamous Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland, the mistress of Charles II., conceived a violent passion for "handsome Jack," and on one occasion, when they were together, the king surprised them, and Churchill had to take a break-neck leap from her ladyship's bedroom window. The duchess rewarded this feat with a present of £5,000, which the young man invested with the utmost prudence. This was the foundation of the family fortunes, which were subsequently augmented by contributions from other court ladies, not less frail than Barbara Palmer. Virtue, it is affirmed, is its own exceeding great reward. This proposition can hardly be gainsaid, for the history of our old nobility conclusively shows that vice secures so many of the loaves and fishes, that hardly anything is left over to save virtue from penury.

The career of John Churchill is one unbroken record of successful crime. Starting with hardly a sixpence in the world, he was a major-general and a peer, both of England and Scotland, before he was forty. "Faithful, but unfortunate," is the singularly inappropriate family motto. If it had run, "Faithless and fortunate," the mark would have been hit exactly. James II. reposed such complete confidence in the traitor, that he made him lieutenant-general of the kingdom. The very day before he deserted to William of Orange, he drew his sword in a council of war, and protested that he would shed the last drop of his blood in defence of his royal master. Marshal Schomberg told him roundly that he "was the first lieutenant-general he had ever heard of that had deserted his colours." Churchill had the effrontery to appeal to "the inviolable dictates of his conscience and a necessary concern for his religion" as his excuse! Great Powers! Churchill's conscience! Churchill's religion!

For this abominable treachery he was made Earl of Marlborough by the Dutch king, who, however, was under no misapprehension as to the scoundrel's real character. Churchill, he held, "was a vile man, and he hated him, for though he could profit of treason, he could not bear the traitor." As a matter of fact, the earl was as faithless to William as to James. He was the centre of a conspiracy to bring back the exiled tyrant, to whom he systematically betrayed the secrets of the Cabinet and the strength and dispositions of the military forces of Great Britain. Suspicion however fell on him, and he was arrested on a charge of high treason. By dint of the most unblushing falsehoods he soon contrived not merely to recover his liberty, but his command also. He at once plunged into fresh enormities. It was determined to send a secret expedition under General Talmash, to destroy Brest. Thereupon Churchill wrote to Tames, under date 4th May, 1694:—"It came to my knowledge

what I now send you that the bomb vessels and the twelve regiments which are now encamped at Portsmouth, together with two marine regiments, are to be commanded by Talmash, and designed to burn the harbour of Brest, and to destroy the men-of-war there. This would be a great advantage to England, but no consideration can, or ever shall, hinder me from letting you know what I think may be for your service, so that you may make what use you please of this intelligence."

Thus advised James warned Louis XIV., who at once rewarded the traitor with the gold for which he was ever clamorous, and prepared a warm reception for Talmash's force. The surprisers were the surprised. Eight hundred British soldiers fell, and their murderer enjoyed the recompense of his unheard-of villany!

When Queen Anne came to the throne, Marlborough and his wife, Sarah Jennings, were the *de facto* rulers of England, and of course the worthy couple took care to make ample provision for themselves in the distribution of public plunder. Between them they monopolized offices worth £46,000 per annum. But even this vast income could not satisfy the rapacity of the man who "loved money better than woman or fame." He took to wholesale embezzlement—the worst form of theft. The Commissioners of Public Accounts reported that, as commander-in-chief, he had pocketed £63,000 from army bread contractors, besides corruptly receiving two and a half per cent, on the pay of foreign troops subsidized by England. Altogether, his defalcations amounted to more than £400,000. The House of Commons resolved (1), "That the taking the several sums of money annually by the Duke of Marlborough, from the contractors for furnishing the bread and bread-waggons for 'the army in the Low Countries was unwarrantable and illegal;" and (2), "That the before mentioned two sums of £282,366 9s. 7d., and £177,695 17s. deducted from the troops in her majesty's pay, are public moneys, and ought to be accounted for." But though men called out to him in public places "Stop thief!" Churchill stuck to his plunder like a limpet, and not a penny could be recovered from him. Instead of being compelled to disgorge his shameless gains, he was rewarded with that infamous perpetual pension which the present pattern duke commuted the other day for £107,000!

Against Queen Anne, as against Kings James and William, he plotted as he found occasion. Anne suspected him, and consulted the sagacious Lord Somers regarding him. Lord Somers told her that "Marlborough was the worst man that God Almighty ever made; that his ambition was boundless and his avarice insatiable; and that he had neither honour nor conscience to restrain him from any wicked attempt even against her person as well as against the country."

Such, then, was the founder of this house of Marlborough. He had great ability, but it was the ability of the devil—ability divorced from honour, conscience, humanity. He was one of the greatest generals and one of the worst men Europe ever produced.

The tendency to steal did not die out with John Churchill. The Dukes of Marlborough managed to secure the rangership of Wychwood Forest, in Oxfordshire, and when the Land Revenue Commissioners visited it they found that the then duke had practically made it his own in defiance of the terms of the grant. "The greatest part of the timber had been cut at much waste, and there is now very little left," was the Commissioners' plaintive report. The duke had, moreover, it was shown, "pocketed" in hard cash £862 6s. 3d., the property of the Crown. If, instead of being a duke, he had been a starving City clerk, he would have been speedily initiated into the mysteries of oakum-picking.

Take next a family of British Brahmins of far more reputable antecedents—the Cecils. The founder of this haughty family was one Richard Cecil, who, though Groom of the Robes to Henry VIII., contrived not merely to keep his head on his shoulders, but even to fill his pockets. His father had been water bailiff of Whittlesea, and his grandfather, it is said, was a "publican" At all events, Lord Salisbury did not "come over at the Conquest." Dick Cecil did well in the courtier business. He first got hold of some Crown lands in Northamptonshire; then he annexed the priory of St. Michael, Stamford; next he absorbed the manor of Essendine, in Rutland; Tinwell manor, in Northamptonshire; to say nothing of grants made to him in Kent and Lincolnshire.

William Cecil, the son of this robber, afterwards Lord Burghley, was still more successful in the trade of courtier. He began by devouring a hospital at Lincoln; a monastery at Stamford; Ladybrigg Close, in Northamptonshire; the manors of Geddings and Boxe, in Hertfordshire, as well as the Hundreds of Hertford and Braughling. Burghley was a statesman who must have profited by the doctrines of Macchiavelli's Prince. He lived in plots, and has been justly described as "Spider" Cecil. He incessantly wove nets, from the meshes of which his victims rarely escaped. The rack was his great instrument of government, and he applied it with the utmost diligence.

His son Robert Cecil, James the First's "little beagle," was, if possible, a more unprincipled upholder of despotism than his father. His unscrupulous abuse of power even shocked Lord Clarendon, the Tory and High Church historian. "No act of power," he bewails, "was ever proposed that he did not advance and execute with the utmost rigour. No man so great a tyrant in this country." He literally revelled in offices and sinecures of all kinds, and annexed manor after manor with unappeasable voracity. His talons were everywhere—in York,

Sussex, Kent, Norfolk, Essex. Nothing came wrong to him—abbeys, tithes, imposts on mines, glebe lands, advowsons, chases, warrens, profits of fairs, demesne lands and coppices in endless array.

In the present Marquis of Salisbury all the tyrannical traditions of the Cecils have received re-embodiment. The hard bargains he has driven with the Metropolitan Board of Works while endeavouring to improve his London property, and the costly litigation to which he has subjected the public, are simply scandalous. "Horrible Hatfield" is the outcome of his patriarchal notions of society and government. What bitter irony it was to put this man on the Commission for the Better Housing of the Poor! Truly, Sir Charles Dilke has much to account for.

"A king can make a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that,
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Good faith he canna' fa' that."

An exhaustive analysis of the peerage would show (1) how many noble lords owe their rank and estates to the rapine of conquest; (2) to royal favouritism; (3) to Church pillage; (4) to royal debauchery; (5) to purchase under the Stuarts; (6) to marriages of convenience; (7) to success in war; (8) to success in law, &c. The late Lord Beaconsfield held that all the chief sources of the peerage have been "disgraceful," and it would be difficult, out of the five hundred existing creations, to point to five that can be set down to real merit. This proposition it would not be difficult to prove in detail; but I must be content with samples of the most and least creditable peerages.

Having investigated the origin of two leading families of Tory aristocrats—the Churchills and the Cecils, it is but fair that I should now glance at two leading Whig families—the Cavendishes and the Russells.

The Cavendishes are an old family—that is to say, they have a record, more or less genuine, for the last three centuries and a-half. It is also held to be a peculiarly honourable record. Be that as it may, such virtues as the Cavendishes possess have unquestionably been well rewarded. They have three peerages among them, and more than 220,000 acres of the national soil, yielding them £172,000 per annum.

The first Cavendish, an obscure man, about whose origin very little is known, was employed by Henry VIII. as a well-qualified church-robber. He was Auditor of the Court of Augmentations, and he of course took very good care, like the rest of the Commissioners, not to augment the royal revenues alone.

In 1540 he laid hold of the monastic lands of Cailde-wicke, Cuffley, and Northawe, in Herefordshire. This was a promising start, which he promptly followed up by annexing Northawberry (Lincoln), and the site of Cardigan Priory, to say nothing of extensive raids into Cornwall and other counties. He was great in "exchanges," and generally appears to have had the best of the bargains he made, especially in his dealings with the Crown.

He did not speculate in Church lands alone. He was almost as provident in the matter of wives. His third spouse, "Bess of Hardwicke," was a much-married lady, who even excelled her husband in the art of adding field to field. She had induced both her first husband and her brother to leave her their estates, and after the death of Cavendish, to whom she had several children, she married first Sir William St. Loe, and then the Earl of Shrewsbury. She stipulated that St. Loe's estates—he had daughters by a former marriage—should in default of issue by her go to the Cavendishes. Her son she married to Shrewsbury's daughter, her daughter to Shrewsbury's son.

These mercenary marriages, intrinsically more immoral than prostitution, were the making of the great house of Cavendish. "Bess's" second son became Earl of Devonshire, and her grandson, the son of her third son, the Royalist Marquis of Newcastle, of Civil War fame.

Till after the Restoration the Cavendishes were mere sequacious courtiers and matrimonial speculators. Then came a change over the spirit of their dream. They had lost immensely in purse in their unsuccessful efforts to uphold the Stuart tyranny. Newcastle, it is said, alone spent a million sterling in the Royalist cause, and they prudently determined not to do it again. They foresaw fresh troubles brewing, and they resolved to turn patriots. The fourth earl supported the claims of the Dutch Deliverer, and reaped his reward in a dukedom. It would be the height of credulity to suppose that any regard for the public good influenced his conduct.

Since "the glorious Revolution," the Cavendishes have literally revelled in public appointments of all kinds, though displaying very little capacity for public affairs. And they have not forgotten their old trick of profitably marrying and giving in marriage. The fourth duke married the only daughter of the Earl of Burlington—the heiress of the Cliffords and the Boyles—and thus contrived to add immensely to the patrimonial estates. The family motto, "*Cavendo Tutus*"—"By Caution Safe"—is eminently appropriate.

The Marquis of Hartington, the ablest, perhaps, of all his race, is yet an exceedingly "dull man." Still there

is no saying at what he may arrive by sedulously taking care and rowing with the stream. The founder of the family was what has been called an "agrarian Protestant"—he promptly turned Catholic when Mary came to the throne—and it is not impossible that the noble lord may yet figure as a ducal Republican. "Anybody's dog for a bone," Would be an excellent motto for some of our old aristocratic Whig houses.

Let us next consider the case of the Russells. Like the Cavendishes, they owe their greatness to the favour of the Crown and the spoliation of the Church. "The political merit of the first pensioner of the house of Bedford," says Burke, "was that of being concerned as a councillor of state in advising, and in his person executing, the conditions of a dishonourable peace with France, by instigating a tyrant to injustice to provoke a people to rebellion by giving his hand to the work and partaking the spoil with a prince who plundered a part of the National Church of his time and country, by being a prompt and greedy instrument of a levelling tyrant who oppressed all descriptions of his people. His grants were from the aggregated and consolidated funds of judgments iniquitously legal, and from possessions voluntarily surrendered by their lawful proprietors with the gibbet at the door. . . . His merits were by acts in which he served his master and made his fortune, to bring poverty, wretchedness, and depopulation on his country." Such was the founder of the great house of Russell whose praises have been in the mouths of all manner of Liberal publicists for generations.

John Russell was in truth one of the wildest and most unscrupulous courtiers of his time. In 1540 he was little more than a needy adventurer, when there fell to his bow and spear twenty-five manors in Devonshire, being the whole circuit of the Abbey of Tavistock, In quick succession he fixed his talons on Dunkeswell, Devon, and Aston Abbots, Bucks. Later he laid hold of Hagh, Lincolnshire, and Castle Hymel, Northamptonshire. In the reign of the boy-king, Edward VI., Russell was a member of the Council, and he and the ring that composed it fraudulently produced a clause in Henry VIII.'s will ordering that certain alleged promises of the defunct Bluebeard to the Seymours, Russells, Wriotheslys, and Company, should be made good forthwith. Thus armed, Russell proceeded successively to lay hands on Woburn Abbey, Melchburn Priory, Beds, and Thornhaugh, Northamptonshire. Later he absorbed Long-acre and Covent-garden, the property of the monks of Westminster. Truly did Burke call this outrageous despoiler "the Leviathan of all the creatures of the Crown."

In our own day another John Russell—"Wee Johnny" of reforming zeal—did his best to emulate the rapacity of the founder of the family. Mr. Grenville Murray thus truthfully summarized the results of his statesmanship:—"So the Reformers having conquered made Johnny Russell a Secretary of State, and by-and-by a Premier; and Johnny, looking on the horny handed men who had laboured to hoist him so high, told them to rest and be thankful, while he parted all the spoils of victory among his kinsfolk and acquaintances. He forgot not a cousin or a nephew in this royal distribution, which was carried on, with but few intermissions, for six-and-thirty years. All the great plum-devouring connection was installed in every post where public moneys could be fingered. They became lords spiritual and temporal, commanders of armies and fleets, governors of colonies, and ambassadors; they sucked the udders of the nation through every teat; nothing was done in Great Britain and her dependencies but by them and for them, so that it seemed in truth as if the greatest empire in the world had been created to no other end than to make them all fat. As for the thinkers and workers who had made the pulse of the nation beat at the name of Reform—the Tom Moores and Sydney Smiths, the Leigh Hunts and the Landors—they were left to suck their thumbs in the shadow."

A fortunate marriage with the heiress of Wriothesly, another insatiable Church robber, brought into the Russell family the immense Bloomsbury and Hampshire estates. No wonder that the Russells were active in promoting the "glorious Revolution." James II. and his Romans would have had something to say to such an unparalleled crew of sacrilegious cormorants as the Russells had they had their way.

Outside London the Russell domain consists of more than eighty-six thousand acres—rent, £142,000. Inside London yards are as valuable as acres outside, and the income is consequently perhaps nearly as great. The last penny is wrung from the people for ground-rents, and building leases are granted on the iniquitous principle that both the solum and that which has been erected on it revert entail to the lessor at the expiry of the term of occupation—ninety-nine years. A 'glorious Revolution' truly was that of 1688 for the Russells. Londoners are as badly off as Highland Crofters, if they had the wit to see it.

Let us now, by way of change, take an example of a law-made house of hereditary rulers—the Scotts, of Eldon.

John Scott, the founder of the Eldon family, was the son of a Newcastle coal merchant. He eloped with a banker's daughter, and betook himself to the bar. Being a perfect embodiment of self-seeking and political illiberality, he soon found his way into the House of Commons through the portal of the rotten borough of Weobly. He was an unblushing "king's friend," and Pitt had to reward him with the office of Solicitor-General. Speedily he rose to be Attorney-General, and in that capacity his peculiar merits soon came to light.

He was the most zealous prosecutor of political offenders who ever disgraced the English bar. For nine mortal hours he strained every nerve to induce a jury to convict Thomas Hardy, the secretary of the

Corresponding Society, of treason. Hardy was an intelligent and patriotic shoemaker, and the coalman's son was shocked beyond measure that one of such humble station should venture to hold opinions on the questions of the day adverse to the Government. In this prosecution as well as in that of the celebrated Home Tooke, he failed ignominiously.

At the trial of the latter, the unblushing professional hypocrite professed to weep because the defence had challenged the purity of his motives. He could willingly part with life itself for the sake of his country; but the aspersion of his good name he could not endure. For why? It was the little patrimony he had to leave to his children. Thereupon Mitford, the Solicitor-General, thinking that professional etiquette required that he also should produce his handkerchief, began to sob. "What in the world is Mitford crying for?" asked a bystander of Tooke. "Ah," replied the wit, "he is weeping to think what a slender patrimony Sir John Scott's children will have to divide among them."

In several similar prosecutions against good men and true he was unfortunately more successful, and in 1801 he reaped the highest reward attainable—the Lord Chancellorship.

In this great office he had ample opportunities of wrongdoing, and he exercised them most sedulously. He contrived to throw out the Slavery Abolition Bill; He obstinately insisted on hanging for thefts of 5s. and upwards. He successfully resisted Lord Holland's Parochial School Bill, and enthusiastically applauded the Peterloo massacre. He bitterly opposed Catholic Emancipation, the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, the abolition of the Corn-laws, the Reform Bill, municipal reform, the introduction of railways—in a word, of every enlightened measure he was the implacable and relentless enemy.

He loaded his son with sinecure offices, and himself so completely neglected the duties of his court that Joseph Hume declared "that the greatest curse that ever fell on any nation was having such a chancellor."

In his lifetime he bought large estates in Durham and Dorset: notwithstanding, he was able to leave behind him half a million in hard cash. How he came by such a prodigious sum is not apparent. He was an accomplished liar, whose habit it was to complain of the losses he sustained in the discharge of his public duties. When Solicitor-General he told the king that the office had entailed on him a sacrifice of £2,000 a-year. His fee-book showed that he was a gainer by £1,000 at the least. As Lord Chancellor, with an income of £17,000 per annum, he complained that his elevation had impoverished him. His fee-book showed that his receipts as Attorney-General had not averaged more than £10,000 a-year. Such was the founder of this family of hereditary rulers.

John Scott of Eldon's career forcibly recalls one of the sights which the arch-enemy of mankind saw in "the Devil's Walk:"—

*"He saw a lawyer killing an adder
On a dung-hill beside his stable;
And the Devil smiled, for it put him in mind
Of Cain and his brother Abel."*

Yet another specimen of the law-made noble Lord. Take the Dundases.

The first of the Dundas gang with whom we need specially concern ourselves was made Lord Advocate for Scotland in 1775. In 1802 he was raised to the peerage as Lord Melville. His father was Lord President of the Supreme Court of Scotland. The family fortunes had been made by one Sir Lawrence Dundas, a leviathan army contractor, a synonym in those days for great public robber.

Lord Melville was the bosom friend of Pitt, who, if he was an honourable man, selected his confidants with an extraordinary disregard of their reputation. Fox said of Melville—and Fox was a most lenient critic—that he "ever showed an eagerness to heap up emoluments and to systematize corruption." He generally held three or four offices at the same time. He was Privy Seal of Scotland and Steward of Fife-shire. When he received the latter appointment, he exacted "arrears" amounting to £3,000. Of what the arrears consisted no one ever knew. For his wife he managed to secure a pension of £1,500 per annum. The wherefore was neither family poverty nor public desert. Shameless greed alone prompted to this raid on the public purse.

Melville's hatred of liberty in every form was, if possible, greater even than Eldon's. Both were alike steeped in corruption, but Melville was the more audacious of the two. Indeed, he disregarded the third injunction of the Dantean precept, "Be bold, be bold, be not too bold," and came to grief, though by no means adequate grief. Being at the same time Minister of War, Treasurer of the Navy, and President of the Board of Control, he had unsurpassed opportunities for robbing the national till. How far he actually improved them it is impossible to say. His instrument and accomplice was one Alexander Trotter, a Navy-office clerk, who started with the munificent salary of £50 per annum. This fellow was ultimately promoted to be Dundas's deputy, and during their connection the frauds perpetrated on the nation were legion. Contrary to law, Trotter kept balances

of public funds with Coutts, the banker, amounting to £100,000 and upwards, and with these he did an enormous bill-discounting business. In 1802 his dividends from stock were over £11,000, and when he came to be examined by the House of Lords he admitted that he was worth £65,000. Trotter steadily refused, when under examination, to answer questions incriminating Melville; but it was proved that he had been in the habit of advancing to his chief, from time to time, sums of £10,000 and even of £20,000. Some of these advances had been invested in stock in Melville's name.

But the damning fact against Melville was this—Parliament appointed a Commission of Naval Inquiry, and the worthy couple took the alarm. They met, gave mutual releases, and burned accounts for public monies amounting to £134,000,000! Do honest men who wish to be exonerated from charges disgraceful to them hasten to destroy the very vouchers of their integrity? At the bar of the House of Commons Melville made a defence which the philanthropic Wilberforce declared was "an aggravation of his guilt." He was compelled to resign all his public appointments, and his name was struck off the list of Privy Councillors. He was subsequently tried by the House of Lords on ten counts, and acquitted! One crow does not pick out another crow's eyes. Fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind. No serious doubt has ever been raised as to Dundas's guilt. Miss Martineau held that it was "impossible that many, if any, should believe him actually innocent of the charges brought against him."

Such, then, was the founder of the Dundas family. He was a miracle of tyranny and corruption, yet his widow was adjudged worthy of a pension of £1,000 per annum. His descendants and collaterals have quartered themselves on the public with unsurpassed effrontery. Nothing in Church or State has ever come wrong to a Dundas.

There are two peerages in the family, that of Zetland being the more important. The earl has a rent-roll of £49,000, with estates in Yorkshire, as well as in Fife, Dumbarton, Stirling, and Clackmannan. In Orkney and Shetland (Zetland) he possesses 43,400 acres. This last domain was held by the inhabitants down to 1643, not feudally, but allodially—that is to say, every man was his own landlord, like the American homesteaders of the present day. The tenure was Norwegian, not British. The Zetland title is therefore one of confiscation—confiscation not finally confirmed till 1742. Happily, however, what parliament has done parliament can undo. If ever we do come to have a thoroughly Democratic House of Commons there will be such an examination of title-deeds to estates as will give our Old Nobility serious ground for reflection.

The Fitzroys, Dukes of Grafton, may be taken as a specimen of the peerages which owe their origin to royal debauchery. The first of this family was the son of Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland, by "the most religious King" Charles II., if Barbara was to be believe'd. But this infamous woman was so shamelessly vile that no reliance whatever was to be placed on her word. Her husband, Lord Castlemaine, was well aware of her infidelities, and did not scruple to profit handsomely by them. Pepys relates how Charles and his brother James both paid court to her at the same time; while her young affections were bestowed impartially on "handsome Jack Churchill" and other courtiers, with an occasional actor thrown in by way of variety. But whether the first of the Graftons was a Fitzroy (King's son), or a Fitz-Churchill, or a Fitz-Actor, is of no great consequence. Charles was pleased to saddle the nation with the Grafton incubus of hereditary rulers, and that is the point to be considered.

Barbara Palmer's son was splendidly provided for. The Earl of Arlington had an only daughter, to whom, at the age of twelve, Fitzroy was married. Charles heaped estates on Arlington, or rather, his son-in-law, Fitzroy, as Arlington's heir. The manors of Grafton, Hartwell, Alderton, Blisworth, Stoke-Bruerne, Green's Norton, Pollersbury, Ashton, and Paulers-bury; lands in Grimscolt, Northampton, Hardington, Shuttle-hanger, Houghton Parva; parcel of Chacomb Priory and of Swardsley Priory; the forests of Salcey and Whittlebury, and several other substantial gifts were the rewards of Barbara Palmer's easy virtue. Arlington was indefatigable in the acquisition of spoil in every shape. He formed one of the hated Cabal Ministry, and like his colleagues and royal master, he was in the pay of the French King. Through Arlington came the Suffolk estates of the Fitzroys. He was Secretary of State, Privy Purse, and Postmaster-General. Hence, he had always money for the purchase of fresh estates when no further accessions of Crown lands were to be secured.

But not content with these enormous grants of land, the Duke of Grafton contrived to secure two hereditary pensions, one of £9,000 a-year, charged on the Excise, and the other of £4,700 on the Post-office. The former was commuted in 1855 for £193,777, the latter in 1856 for £91,181. These vast sums, produced by the sweat and tears of honest English toilers, were paid to the Duke of Grafton for no better reason than that their ancestor "took the trouble to be born," and discreditably born too. "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

As hereditary rangers of Whittlebury Forest the malversations of the Graftons have been most unblushing. In 1608 the forest contained 51,000 stately oaks, reserved by the Crown as suitable for navy construction. In 1783, when timber was sorely needed for this purpose, it was found that 5,200 trees alone remained. A Treasury warrant was issued to cut down a quantity of what remained. The deputy surveyor charged with this duty,

unfortunately for himself, forgot to put the warrant in his pocket when he set about the work. He was pounced on by the hereditary ranger, who procured his dismissal from the service, and heartlessly accomplished his ruin. Was not this a touching example of ducal patriotism?

The Graftons have 13,600 acres in Suffolk; 8,400 in North-ampton; 7,300 in Bucks, and 2,700 in Banffshire—total 32,000 acres, with a rent-roll of £34,000. Their motto is simply delicious: "The ornament and reward of virtue"! The "reward," alas! is only too painfully real; but as for the "ornament"—great heavens! the ornament! Where does it come in?

In one respect the aristocracy paint themselves in their true colours. The coats of arms on which they pride themselves are hideously symbolic of their innate character. Wolves, tigers, panthers, lions; hawks, vultures, eagles; snakes, adders, vipers; swords, spears, daggers, arrows; griffins, ghouls, demons—everything horrible in nature and in the realm of imagination—grace the escutcheons of our "Old Nobility."

decorative feature

Chapter IX.

Summary.

"Undoubtedly we are drawing towards great changes. The time has arrived when it is becoming impossible for the aristocracy of England to wield the English nation any longer."

—Matthew Arnold.

"WHAT then," asked Cromwell of Pym, "is the great root of all our grievances?" "The Aristocracy," said Pym, "Give us their true history and you unriddle the secret of every national embarrassment."

Surely truer oracle than this was never uttered. For more than eight centuries of dishonour the story of our Old Nobility is one of all but uninterrupted and, alas! generally successful crime. It divides itself naturally into four well marked epochs.

FIRST EPOCH (1066—1485).

In the first period covering the era of Norman and Plantagenet Royalty, our Old Nobility were simply a gang of merciless bandits who had unfortunately succeeded in garrotting the entire English people. M. Thierry truly describes the Conqueror's companions among whom he divided the fair soil of England, as "adventurers by profession, the idle, the dissipated, the profligate, the *enfants perdus* of Europe." "Normans, Burgolauns, thieves and felons," is the summing up of a contemporary Norman writer. Of the de Belesmes, the leading Anglo-Norman house, Mr. Freeman says they were "monsters of cruelty and perfidy—open robbery and treacherous assassination seem to have been their daily occupation." Delightful ancestors these to have!

In Stephen's reign they all but compassed the complete overthrow of the State. "Castles," says William of Newbury, "rose in great numbers, and there were in England, so to speak, as many kings or rather tyrants, as lords of castles." These robber strongholds "they filled with devils and evil men." Life in England became intolerable, and in the words of the Saxon Chronicle, "men said openly that Christ and the Saints had gone to sleep."

One vigorous popular protest was made in the reign of Richard II. The serfs rose in arms under Wat Tyler. The nobles were panic-stricken and induced the boy-king to grant a Charter of Rights and a general pardon. Presently however, they rallied, assassinated Tyler, tore up the Charter and hanged fifteen thousand of the duped peasantry! Asked by the King to give their consent to the emancipation of the serfs they replied: "Consent we will never give, were we all to die in one day!"

But what of Magna Charta and the deathless heroes of Runnymede? Was not the Great Charter their handiwork? Not at all. A more preposterous claim was never preferred. The Charter was the achievement of the freemen of England in general and of the citizens of London in particular. In fact the part played by the Barons was pusillanimous in the last degree. True, they made a stand in order to save their ill-gotten estates from the grasp of John's mercenary captains, but it was a stand feeble indeed. John defied them in Northampton Castle, and in a fortnight's time they and their retainers had ignominiously to seek refuge within the walls of Bedford. In reality the Charter was wrung from John by a great national movement, supported by a Scottish army in the north—London alone put twenty thousand men under arms. The true motives of the Barons became apparent when John rescinded the Charter, and with an army of imported mercenaries sent them flying in every direction. What did they then do? To save their estates they openly sold their country to France. Louis landed

with a strong force, and after John's death it cost the English much hard fighting to dislodge him. Had the baronial patriots had their way, England would have been reduced to the position of a French province—a greater calamity even than the Norman Conquest. True patriots these barons bold!

During the reign of the Conqueror and his immediate successors our Old Nobility, it is calculated, cut off by famine and the sword one-third of the English race! Eventually, in the faction fights of the Red and White Roses, they all but exterminated each other. Unhappily they did not perish alone. In the laudable work of self-destruction they contrived to immolate more than a hundred thousand Englishmen who had not the least interest in their wicked quarrels.

SECOND EPOCH (1485—1688).

In the Second Epoch, embracing the times of the Tudors and Stuarts, there grew up an entirely new order of noble *fungi*—parchment-made peers—base crawling courtiers, perfect prodigies of avarice, cowardice, servility, lying, forgery, plotting and all the meaner and meanest human vices. Henry VII. and Henry VIII. sent them to the block by the score for any reason or none. The "Virgin Queen" thought nothing of boxing the ears of a great nobleman, or even of spitting in his face. The craven Duke of Norfolk with "the blood of all the Howards" in his veins, was a party to the execution of both his nieces, Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard, and congratulated the Royal Bluebeard on throwing his "ungracious mother-in-law, his unhappy brother and wife, and his lewd sister of Bridgewater," into the Tower. He and his fellow peers showed their respect for public liberty by decreeing that royal proclamations should have the force of law!

This was the hey-day of the notorious Church robbers—the Russells, the Cavendishes, Cecils and Co. The immense Monastery Lands were the mainstay of the poor. Deprived of these, they were reduced to vagrancy by thousands. To repress mendicancy the despoilers by statute visited their victims with branding, slavery, and death. In Henry the Eighth's reign seventy-two thousand lord-made beggars were hanged out of hand. Elizabeth was content with hanging a modest three or four hundred per annum. The "Virgin Queen's" ministers—the Cecils, father and son—(from whom Lord Salisbury claims descent)—literally governed England by—*the rack*. Even Lord Clarendon, the Tory historian, could hardly tolerate the younger Cecil. "No act of power," he writes, "was ever proposed which he did not advance and execute with the utmost rigour. No man so great a tyrant in this country." When the boy Edward VI., came to the throne the ring of upstart courtiers that got hold of him forged a clause in his father's will decreeing themselves immense estates and extraordinary titles. One fellow, Seymour, called himself Duke of *Somerset by the grace of God!* To save their estates they all punctually changed their religion with every change of government. In James the First's reign peerages were sold at the rate of £10,000 each, rich men being occasionally compelled to become hereditary legislators against their will.

When the storm-clouds of revolution finally burst about the head of Charles Stuart, the Peers showed scarcely a trace of capacity, civil or military. If they had helped the Commons to curb the royal prerogative not a drop of blood need have been shed. But they did not. In the hour of danger most of them slunk like rats into holes, whence they only emerged at the Restoration. But if they had none of the instincts of the lion, they had certainly some of those of the hyaena. They tore up and exposed to obloquy the dead bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, Bradshaw, Pym, Admiral Blake, and even those of Cromwell's mother and daughter! *Noblesse oblige!*

At this time land yielded the State nearly half its revenue. Of this most just obligation the nobles relieved themselves at a blow in 1660 by substituting Customs and Excise duties for the Land Tax. They subsequently undertook to pay 4s. in the pound on *true annual rental*, but they have since fraudulently kept to the original valuation of 1692, with the result that they are now paying one million per annum when they should be paying forty. Mr. W. A. Hunter, than whom there is no better authority, has calculated that whereas forty working men with aggregate wages amounting to £2,000 (£50 a year for each) contribute £12 to the revenue out of every £100 of their wages, one man—an absolute non-producer, perchance—with an income of £2,000 contributes but £3 out of every £100 of income. So much for the effects of the notorious Land Tax Swindle which has already caused the loss of £1,250,000,000 of state revenue.

THIRD EPOCH (1688—1832).

The third period of aristocracy extends from the "Glorious Revolution" to the first Reform Bill. This was the halcyon era of noble lords, of Continental Wars, Standing Armies, National Debts, and Pensions. They now wielded the prerogatives of Royalty, and usurped the functions of the Commons. In Dutch William's time they robbed the Crown of nearly all its vast estates, and made it a pauper on the bounty of the People by the invention of the Civil List. There being in the Georgian era but some 15,000 electors in a population of 30,000,000 they were able by unblushing corruption to take complete possession of the Representative Chamber. Nearly five-sixths of the members were their direct or indirect nominees. Their diabolical toast and

watchword during this miserable period was, "A long war and a short crop!" Both tended to raise rents. They fought everywhere—in Europe, in Asia, in America—and always against Liberty. Every European despot, great and small, from the Autocrat of Russia to the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, was subsidised with British gold in the vain attempt to restore the Bourbons, and to undo the beneficent work of the French Revolution. A subsidy of £2,400,000 enabled Prussia to partition Poland. America was lost, to say nothing of the sacrifice of nearly two millions of precious English lives. Since 1688 we have paid in interest on lord-begotten war debt £2,790,000,000, and in reduction of the same £3,430,000,000, while £750,000,000 remain to pay! Strict economists these noble lords in handling other people's money!

FOURTH EPOCH (1832—1884).

The fourth epoch of aristocracy extends from the Reform Bill to the present day. "Since the Reform Act," says the discriminating Bagehot, "the House of Lords has ceased to be one of latent directors, and has become one of temporary rejectors and palpable alterers." Of this truth the following imperfect epitome of their recent achievements is sufficiently convincing evidence:—

- 1832—Refuse to open Universities to Dissenters.
- 1834—Refuse to allow more than 20 persons to meet for worship in a private house.
- 1834—Refuse to allow Nonconformist Ministers access to Workhouses.
- 1835—Population of Ireland 8 millions—voters 60,000! Lords refuse reform. Prevented for 40 years after.
- 1836—Lords try to defeat Municipal Reform Act. Choice of Magistrates denied to Town Councils. So ever since.
- 1836—Order Dissenters' Marriage Banns to be read before Board of Guardians.
- 1839—Continue death penalty for sheep stealing against the will of the Commons.
- 1842—Mines' Regulation. Lords refuse to give women and children working in mines the full relief of Commons' Bill. Protection of miners against preventive accidents not obtained for 30 years through Lords.
- 1845—Compensation for Tenants' Improvements (Ireland) refused, and so for 25 years.
- 1858—Church Rates Abolition refused. Put off 11 years.
- 1860—Mr. Gladstone takes Taxes (£660,000) off Paper. This meant a Cheap Press. Lords throw out the Bill.
- 1860—Refuse Education to Miners' Children. 12 years of darkness follow.
- 1867—Lords rob electors of city of London, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, &c., of the third vote.
- 1868—Throw out the Irish Church Disestablishment Resolutions.
- 1868—Emasculate Artisans' Dwellings Bill.
- 1867-70—University Tests Abolition thrice refused.
- 1870—Irish Land Act. Lords refuse Compensation, and insist on their right to evict distressed tenants.
- 1871—Ballot Bill thrown out.
- 1873-6—Refuse to amend Burial Laws.
- 1880—Reject Compensation for Disturbance Bill (Ireland). Ireland given up to anarchy and crime in consequence. Civil war at a "measurable distance."
- 1883—Throw out Marriage Law Amendment Bill.
- 1883—Lord Salisbury spoils English Agricultural Holdings Bill—but retreats.
- 1884—Refuse the Franchise to 2,000,000 County Householders!

What then, in brief, is the case against the Peers? In the first epoch of their career they robbed the People; in the second they robbed the Church; in the third they robbed the Crown; in the fourth, as always, they have been the steady foes of suffrage reform, of Nonconformists, of Roman Catholics, of Ireland, of Agriculture, of Trade, of Education. "The Peers," says Lord Rosebery, "have no friends." This news is too good to be true; but it is strange indeed that they should have any. All good legislation they retard, all bad legislation they expedite. Whatever progress we have made has been made in spite of them. They represent political privilege and social injustice. The Peers alone possess nearly a fifth of the whole soil of the country, for the restricted use of which they levy on the cultivators a private tax called rent of nearly twelve millions per annum. Not content with this, our Dukes, Marquises, Earls, and their relatives have within the last thirty-three years looted the Exchequer of more than sixty-six million sterling in salaries and pensions. Noble lords divide among them annually in the shape of annuities, pensions, salaries, &c., £639,865! They are a House of Landlords, and until they are abolished root and branch no solution of the great Land Question is to be dreamed of. They are the veriest octopuses of civilisation. Every State that has tolerated an aristocracy has eventually been ruined by it—witness

Greece, Rome, Carthage, Venice, Spain, Austria. *Latifundio, perdidere Italiam immo et provincias.*

And when the Hereditary House is abolished, the demand which will be made by reactionaries for a Representative Second Chamber must be sternly resisted. True, most nations have Second Chambers in imitation of our pernicious example; but there is not one of them, however constituted, whose history is not a conclusive argument against such institutions. The Second Chambers of Europe and America are nothing more than standing monuments of the gregarious folly of mankind. Nations can no more have two wills than individuals. A Second Chamber at one with the First is superfluous; in opposition it is noxious. Lord Salisbury wishes to import here the American Senate (the last stronghold of the slaveholders) at a moment when that body stands condemned by the ablest political thinkers in the Republic as a filthy rag of aristocracy. No, no, my Lord of Hatfield, you cannot be permitted thus recklessly to "Americanise our our institutions." The fiat has gone forth—*Delenda est Carthago.*

Clear the way, my lords and lackeys! You have had your day
Here you have your answer—England's yea against your nay.
Long enough your House has held you; out, and clear the way!

[Reprinted from the WEEKLY ECHO.]
decorative feature

Appendix I.

ADDRESS OF THE PEOPLE'S LEAGUE TO ABOLISH THE PEERS.

Recently the question of the hour was the enfranchisement of "Two Millions of Capable Citizens." Now it is the disfranchisement of Five Hundred Irresponsible Hereditary Legislators.

To effect this object, it has been determined to form a National League, which all patriotic citizens are earnestly invited to join.

The reasons for this step hardly require enumeration. They are obvious to every reflecting mind—known to every student of history.

In ante-Norman times, the Witan or National Council was essentially democratic. In the years following the Conquest it was rendered first oligarchic and then hereditary. The means used were force and fraud. Our House of Lords, the survival of a barbarous feudalism, is the offspring of that force and that fraud.

We owe the absurd principle of heredity in legislation—as might have been expected—not to statute, but to the lawyers. In the fourteenth century they made the astonishing discovery that, if the Crown once summoned a man to the National Councils, it must go on summoning his representatives, be they fools or knaves, down to the latest generation!

The results have been such as might readily have been expected. By substituting the idea of birth for that of merit, the whole stream of social life has been poisoned at its source. Instead of producing freemen and public-spirited citizens, the tendency has been to breed flunkeys.

And the political evils flowing from the hereditary principle are not less serious. When there is a Tory majority in the Commons, the Lords simply register the decrees of that majority. When there is a Liberal majority in the Commons, the Lords habitually veto whatever useful measures they dare, and mangle beyond identification such as they dare not wholly reject. Oftener than once within the century has OBSTRUCTION BY PRIVILEGE brought the country to the BRINK OF A BLOODY REVOLUTION.

In no Free State can a Hereditary Legislative Chamber be a permanent institution. We do not now raise the wider question of the utility of Second Chambers in general, though the gravest doubts have been started on that head. But we do emphatically affirm—and we trust we shall have many intelligent adherents—what the Long Parliament expressed with such decisive brevity—viz., "THAT A HOUSE OF PEERS IN PARLIAMENT IS USELESS AND DANGEROUS, AND OUGHT TO BE ABOLISHED."

(Drawn up by the Author.)
decorative feature

Appendix II.

CONSTITUTION OF THE PEOPLE'S LEAGUE.

Title.

THE PEOPLE'S LEAGUE FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE HEREDITARY LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER.

Object.

Its Object shall be to abolish the Hereditary Legislative Chamber.

Means.

The Means employed for carrying out the Object of the League shall be:—(1) The holding of Public Meetings in the Metropolis and the Provinces; (2) The delivery of Lectures by Members and Agents of the League; (3) The Circulation of suitable Literature; (4) the Formation of Local Branches; (5) The affiliation of existing Radical Associations and Clubs and other working-class Associations; and (6) the support of Parliamentary Candidates in favour of the Object of the League.

Membership.

Personal membership shall be constituted by avowed sympathy with the object of the League, and the contribution of not less than *One Shilling* per annum to its Funds.

Radical Associations and Clubs and other working-class Associations may be affiliated to the League upon signifying their desire in writing, and contributing not less than Five Shillings per annum to its funds.

Branches shall contribute to the Central Fund not less than One Guinea per annum, or Sixpence per annum per member, as they shall select,

Executive.

The affairs of the League shall be governed by a General Council, consisting:

- Of 20 members of the League elected annually at the General Meeting.
- Of two representatives from, and elected annually by each Branch of the League.
- Of two representatives from, and elected annually by each affiliated Radical Association or Club or other working-class Association.

The General Council shall appoint a Finance Committee, consisting of not more than 21 persons. This Committee shall meet fortnightly, or oftener if required, and all the details of management and of finance shall be in its hands.

Officers.

There shall be a President of the League, twenty-one Vice-presidents, one or more Honorary Treasurers. These shall be elected annually at the May Meeting.

The President shall not hold office for two consecutive years.

The above referred to Honorary Officers shall be *ex-officio* members of the General Council.

Rules.

- The League shall have its Head Offices in London
- The Annual Meeting of the League shall be held in the month of May.
- The General Council shall arrange for the Annual Business Meeting.
- The General Council shall give not less than 14 clear days' notice of the Annual Meeting to Members.
- At the Annual Meeting the Secretary shall submit a Report of the year's proceedings, and the Hon. Treasurer a Financial Statement.
- The financial year shall end on the 31st of March, and the Statement shall be audited by two Auditors appointed by the General Council.
- The General Council shall issue cards of Membership.
- Funds over £25 shall be lodged in a Bank in the name of the Treasurer as representing the League.
- The General Committee shall have power to appoint either Standing or Occasional Committees and such Officers, honorary or otherwise, as may be required for the business of the League—such Officers or Agents to hold office at the pleasure of the General Council.
- The General Council shall meet on the first Friday of every month, when the Secretary shall submit a Business Report, and the Hon. Treasurer a Financial Statement. The President, Treasurer, and Secretary, or any two of them, shall have power to call a Special Meeting at any intermediate date.

- The Finance Committee shall have power to call Special Meetings of the General Council of the League.
- Branches of the League shall elect their own Officers and Representatives, and draw up such Rules for their own guidance as they may deem proper, so long as they strictly adhere to the Object of the League.
- The General Council shall have power to call on any Member to resign, or Branch or affiliated Association to withdraw, provided that not less than two-thirds of the General Council consider the interests of the League are being sacrificed by such Member, Branch, or Association, and upon such resolution being passed and communicated to those concerned, they shall cease to belong to the League accordingly.
- These Rules shall only be altered upon fourteen days notice at a General Meeting of the League.

The First General Meeting shall be held in the month of December, 1884

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Appendix III.

PETITION FORM TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

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

THE Petition of _____ humbly sheweth:—

- THAT there is in Parliament a House of irresponsible lawmakers generally known as "Peers;"
- THAT the members of the said House are mostly hereditary, succeeding each other by reason of pedigree, or mere animal succession;
- THAT such qualification for the serious business of legislation renders Englishmen ridiculous in the eyes of rational persons all over the world;
- THAT the said anomalous House has for centuries grievously oppressed the People of these Islands by the framing of bad laws, and the rejection or mutilation of such as have been of the clearest public utility;
- THAT, during the happy period of the Commonwealth, your Honourable House wisely passed an Act abolishing hereditary legislators as "useless and dangerous," and that the Nation in consequence reaped the greatest moral and material advantages at home and abroad.

May it therefore please your Honourable House forthwith to revive said Statute of Abolition, permitting such Peers as the People in their wisdom may duly elect to serve them in Parliament to take their seats in your Honourable House.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

(Signed,)

[Drawn up by the Author.]

The New Book of Kings.

Crown 8vo., 128 pp. Prices—Paper, 6d., cloth, 1s. 6d.

THE MODERN PRESS, 13 & 14, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.; JOHN HEYWOOD, MANCHESTER; AND OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

Opinions of the Press.

The "New Book of Kings" is nothing more nor less than a "scandalous chronicle" of the English Monarchy which under ordinary circumstances would be consigned with a feeling of disgust to the waste-paper basket. The denunciatory paragraphs now going the rounds of nearly the whole English, Irish and Scottish press are but gratuitous advertisements of a book which ought never to have been printed.

—*Dublin Mail.*

The "New Book of Kings" embraces a travesty of history as unscrupulous, served up in a sauce of rhetorical malignity as base, as the most zealous foe of the monarchy could desire. To the entire satisfaction of his own insolence he (the author) shows that from the time of William the Conqueror to that of William IV. the career of royalty was one of consistent cruelty, fraud and debauchery.

—*Fifeshire Journal.*

Among literary items be it recorded that Mr. Morrison Davidson, Barrister and Journalist, has just published the "New Book of Kings" which is as fiercely revolutionary as Diderot himself could desire.

—*Irish Times.*

The "New Book of Kings" is an interesting and cleverly written little book by an Universal Iconoclast who not only pulverises all our English Kings, but even attempts to drag Oliver Cromwell from his grave and to

gibbet him once more. There is a terrific amount of truth in Mr. Davidson's impeachment of Crowned Heads; but we do most certainly challenge the assertion that Cromwell was a 'beast of prey.' What we do admire about the author is his consistency; he has no mercy even for those who might be presumed to be his friends.—*Daylight*. (Norwich).

This is a very clever little book. The best point in Mr. Davidson's work is that he seems to have shaken himself clear almost if not altogether from middle-class prejudices. The history of the great Middle-Class Revolution of the seventeenth century has yet to be written. Mr. Davidson's sympathy with the Levellers and genuine Republicans is so manifest that he would start with much in his favour. It needs some pluck even now to write this sentence, "judging of such a beast of prey as Cromwell we should never regard for an instant what he said but mark intently what he did."

—*Justice*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson describes the war in Egypt, carried on by the noble Mr. Gladstone for whom Mr. Davidson worked in 1880 as "the most iniquitous of modern times."

—*Yorkshire Post*.

The blackest of all the black marks is set against Cromwell, the hero of Carlyle and the demigod of English democracy. It is needless to say that Froude's affection for "Bluff King Hal" and Macaulay's enthusiasm for William III. find no place in these ruthless pages.

—*Eastern Evening News*.

Altogether it is an awful story, as pungent as a clever writer can make it, and perhaps the telling it in blunt language is not without its uses. I would advise any bad bold Radical who believes neither in king nor lord, to buy it and harden his wicked heart therewith.

—*Suffolk Mercury*.

The author of that very spirited book "Eminent Radicals" has issued from the Modern Press another very powerful Radical publication characteristically called the "New Book of Kings." It is written in Mr. Davidson's most trenchant style.

—*Hull Express*.

The "New Book of Kings" is a ferocious attack on Monarchy which is certain to have a great circulation both in this country and America. It has as much interest as a sensational novel and far more solidity.

—*The Galloway Free Press*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson has published his "New Book of Kings." Its author has not a word to say in favour of any English sovereign from William the Conqueror to Victoria. This monotony of turpitude would be wearisome were it not for the vivacious and trenchant style. It is calculated to serve the useful purpose of opening the eyes of people who now worship Monarchy as a fetish.

—*London Echo*.

The "New Book of Kings" would be justified in its tone if Queen Victoria were like King Bomba. It is a long libel on the sovereigns of England.

—*Western Morning News*.

I have hardly seen a book of this character since the days of Ernest Jones and Feargus O'Connor, Frost, Williams, and Jones. Such a book should be a sign to the Tories that society may want saving again. The "New Book of Kings" must be set down as a very advanced and thoroughly Republican production.

—*Rochdale Observer*.

If I wanted to convert any friend from the errors of Republicanism I should give him Mr. Davidson's book. "Nothing could be so bad as that," he would say. One can hardly criticise a volume written in this extraordinary style.

—*Liverpool Mercury*.

The Duke of Connaught, it is hinted, may not care to go back to India. While here he can compare notes with his royal relatives holding similar cosy positions with respect to a book published recently entitled the "New Book of Kings."

—*Belfast Morning News*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson's "New Book of Kings" is causing something of a flutter in the Ministerialist dovecots. His writings read like the cry of the injured spirit of Liberalism coming to earth to indict false leaders and traitorous followers.

—*Wolverhampton Evening Star*.

The "New Book of Kings" is an astounding one and in any other country would be almost certainly suppressed. It is a savage attack on the Monarchy and strange to say on the present government.

—*Dublin Daily Express*.

The "New Book of Kings," by Mr. Morrison Davidson who wrote the smart sketches in the *Echo* "Senators in Harness" is written in too cantankerous a spirit. The book dwells on the bad side of each monarch's character

and ignores the good.

—*Manchester Evening News*.

The style of the "New Book of Kings" is able and agreeable but its rampant Radicalism is calculated to appal even the followers of Mr. Chamberlain.

—*Newcastle Daily Journal*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson's "New Book of Kings" is a curious specimen of the literature with which extreme politicians occasionally favour us. Written with masculine vigour and no want of that it is yet about the most remarkable perversion of history that one could reasonably expect to see.

—*Glasgow Herald*.

The object of this Radical writer is to show that the sovereigns of England have been the vilest wretches that ever crawled.

—*Middlesbro' Daily Exchange*.

The "New Book of Kings" is simply a violent attack on the memory of the rulers of England from the time of the Conquest down to the present reign. It has the merit of being well written, but it is cruelly plain-spoken. There are passages in the book savouring of rank disloyalty.

—*Belfast News Letter*.

Mr. Davidson is the unblushing accuser of all the Kings and Queens that ever reigned over England. His little book is a veritable "bloody circuit" by a modern Judge Jeffries. It is a collection of short and pithy condemnations of their acts, their characters and their lives written with sarcastic force and unsparing hate.

—*Norfolk News*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson—a gentleman well and honourably known in connection with the London Press—has published a short, severe and somewhat satirical sketch of the English Kings. The sketches are done with great skill and smartness and the declamation is trenchant and effective. It is a scathing criticism of modern Liberalism interwoven and illustrated by facts and arguments drawn from the lives of our monarchs.

—*Newcastle Daily Chronicle*.

It is a history of Royal blackguardism; eloquent and spirited but not always logical or even fair.

—*Sheffield Independent*.

Mr. Davidson is, however, an able and vigorous writer, and those who do not share his opinions will read his criticism on the Royalties of England with interest.

—*Dundee Advertiser*.

It is written from a thoroughly democratic and revolutionary standpoint; and even those who do not adopt its views may appreciate its vigorous treatment of the topic with which it deals.

—*Leeds Mercury*.

Mr. Morrison Davidson shows up with merciless severity the shortcomings of our Kings and Queens. The book is written with great ability, but the tone is characterised more by the vehemence of the pleader than by the calmness of the judge.

—*Northern Ensign*.

Its thoroughness raises a doubt as to its honesty. It should be read, but read with reserve and inquiry.

—*Eastern Morning News*.

A wholesome spirit runs through the whole work. Every line should be read by all who either believe or believe not in Kings.

—*The Centaur*.

Now and again efforts have been made to bring to light the real characteristics of the Kings and Queens of England. Possibly the most vigorous and truthful work upon the subject is the "New Book of Kings." Mr. Morrison Davidson spares no one; and he gives evidence of his statements. Every political or historical student should have the "New Book of Kings."

—*Boston Guardian*.

A perusal of "The New Book of Kings" will astonish the student of political history as to the number of evil things which can be raked together to the prejudice of Monarchs.

—*Edinburgh Daily Review*.

His criticism of past and present English Royalty is often fair enough but it is often coarse and altogether out of proportion.

—*Bradford Observer*.

Whilst perhaps a little one-sided it exhibits seriatim the principal defects in the character and conduct of the Kings from William I. to William IV.

—*Burnley Gazette*.

Most people would prefer to regard the work more as a huge satire than in the light of a reliable history. Its strong Republican tone may be objectionable to many.

—*Sussex Daily News*.

Royalty in the past offers him (the author) nothing but a dark picture of an outraged Decalogue; royalty in the present is merely a highly-paid incompetency. "The Book of Kings" is a valuable contribution to Republican literature.

—*Dundee Advertiser*.

Mr. Davidson furnishes a concise history of the Royal Families who have successively ruled over this realm, and is not anxious to be complimentary to any at the sacrifice of truth.

—*Halifax Courier*.

Mr. Davidson has presented a strong indictment against Royalty, and given some valuable information as to the Civil List.

—*Secular Review*.

The "New Book of Kings"—This little brochure should find its way into the homes of all Radicals, and should be read by the most extreme Tories. . . . Unpleasant truths in plain straight-forward language.

—*Midland Free Press, Leicester*.

The "New Book of Kings" is full of facts founded on historical research, and these are well calculated to open the eyes of even the most fanatic worshippers of royalty to the utter worthlessness of their fetish.

—*Reynold's Newspaper*.

Mr. Davidson founds himself on Scripture, and sets himself by an examination of the operation of royalty in this country, to prove that the Word of the Lord stands firm, and that monarchs have ever been a scourge to their people. The book is sure to be read even by those who are far from agreeing with its conclusions.

—*Cambridge Independent Press*.

The New Book of Kings "is perhaps the heaviest bill of indictment against monarchs that ever was written. Whatever may be thought of Mr. Davidson's extreme opinions, this one-sided book is a remarkable and a clever one.

—*Bury Times*.

Two or three years ago Mr. Davidson published "Eminent Radicals," a work which we rated at a high value when it appeared. His present volume is even better written in point of style, being exceedingly terse, pointed, and at times richly epigrammatic. The record he gives is a terrible one.

—*Dumfries Standard*.

Mr. Davidson is a vigorous writer at his weakest, and here he is by no means weak. The book is a political tonic for reading by timid Radicals. Liberals will regard it with some terror, and Tories if they look will turn away with real affright. The book is likely to have a wide sale.

—*The National Reformer*.

A very caustic commentary on the lives of the Kings and Queens of England, in which their weaknesses are engraved on rock, and their virtues written on sand, to be washed away by the first tide.

—*Nottingham Daily Express*.

Would you like some exceedingly strong and pungent Republican reading for a change? If so, invest sixpence in the new and exceedingly readable and compact History of England, called by the stern author the "New Book of Kings." His trenchant philippics are very refreshing in an age not free from sycophancy toward the Blood Royal.

—*Penny Illustrated Paper*,

The Peer and the Prophet. Being the Duke of Argyll's

Article on

"The Prophet of San Fran Cisco,"

And the Reply of

Henry George,

Entitled,

"The Reduction to Iniquity."

Reprinted, by Permission, from

"The Nineteenth Century."

London: William Reeves, 185, FLEET STREET, E.C. Glasgow: The Scottish Land Restoration League, 80, Renfield Street.

The Reduction to Iniquity.

"In this paper it has not been my aim to argue," says the Duke of Argyll, in concluding his article entitled "The Prophet of San Francisco." It is generally waste of time to reply to those who do not argue. Yet, partly

because of my respect for other writings of his, and partly because of the ground to which he invites me, I take the first opportunity I have had to reply to the Duke.

In doing so, let me explain the personal incident to which he refers, and which he has seemingly misunderstood. In sending the Duke of Argyll a copy of "Progress and Poverty" I intended no impertinence, and was unconscious of any impropriety. Instead, I paid him a high compliment. For, as I stated in an accompanying note, I sent him my book, not only to mark my esteem for the author of the "Reign of Law," but because I thought him a man superior to his accidents.

I am still conscious of the profit I derived from the "Reign of Law," and can still recall the pleasure it gave me. What attracted me, however, was not, as the Duke seems to think, what he styles his "nonsense chapter." On the contrary, the notion that it is necessary to impose restrictions upon labour seems to me strangely incongruous, not only with free trade, but with the idea of the dominance and harmony of natural laws, which in preceding chapters he so well develops. Where such restrictions as Factory Acts seem needed in the interests of labour, the seeming need, to my mind, arises from previous restrictions, in the removal of which, and not in further restrictions, the true remedy is to be sought. What attracted me in the "Reign of Law" was the manner in which the Duke points out the existence of physical laws and adaptations which compel the mind that thinks upon them to the recognition of creative purpose. In this way the Duke's book was to me useful and grateful, as I doubt not it has been to many others.

My book, I thought, might, in return, be useful and grateful to the Duke—might give him something of that "immense and instinctive pleasure" of which he has spoken as arising from the recognition of the grand simplicity and unspeakable harmony of universal law. And in the domain in which I had, as I believed, done something to point out the reign of law, this pleasure is, perhaps, even more intense than in that of which he had written. For in physical laws we recognise only intelligence, and can but trust that infinite wisdom implies infinite goodness. But in social laws he who looks may recognise beneficence as well as intelligence; may see that the moral perceptions of men are perceptions of realities; and find ground for an abiding faith that this short life does not bound the destiny of the human soul. I then knew the Duke of Argyll, only by his book. I had never been in Scotland, or learned the character as a landlord he bears there. I intended to pay a tribute and give a pleasure to a citizen of the republic of letters, not to irritate a land-owner. I did not think a trumpery title and a patch of ground could fetter a mind that had communed with Nature, and busied itself with causes and beginnings. My mistake was that of ignorance. Since the Duke of Argyll has publicly called attention to it, I thus publicly apologise.

The Duke declares it has not been his aim to argue. This is clear. I wish it were as clear it had not been his aim to misrepresent. He seems to have written for those who have never read the books he criticises. But as those who have done so constitute a very respectable part of the reading world, I can leave his mis-representations to take care of themselves, confident that the in-credible absurdity he attributes to my reasonings will be seen, by whoever reads my books, to belong really to the Duke's distortions. In what I have here to say I prefer to meet him upon his own ground, and to hold to the main question.

It is unnecessary for me to say anything of India further than to remark that the essence of "naturalisation" is not in governmental collection of rent, but in its utilisation for the benefit of the people. Nor as to public debts is it worth while to add anything here to what I have said in "Social Problems."

I accept the reduction to iniquity.

Strangely enough, the Duke expresses distrust of the very tribunal to which he appeals. "It is a fact," he tells us, "that none of us should ever forget, that the moral faculties do not as certainly revolt against iniquity as the reasoning faculties do against absurdity." If that be the case, why, then, may I ask, is the Duke's whole article addressed to the moral faculties? Why does he talk about right and wrong, about justice and injustice, about honour and dishonour, about my "immoral doctrines" and "profligate conclusions," "the unutterable meanness of the gigantic villainy" I advocate? Why style me "such a preacher of unrighteousness as the world has never seen," and so on? If the Duke will permit me, I will tell him, for in all probability he does not know—he himself, to paraphrase his own words, being a good example of how men who sometimes set up as philosophers and deny laws of the human mind are themselves unconsciously subject to those very laws. The Duke appeals to moral perceptions for the same reason that impels men, good or bad, learned or simple, to appeal to moral perceptions whenever they become warm in argument; and this reason is, the instinctive feeling that the moral sense *is* higher and truer than the intellectual sense; that the moral faculties *do* more certainly revolt against iniquity than the intellectual faculties against absurdity. The Duke appeals to the moral sense, because he instinctively feels that with all men its decisions have the highest sanction; and if he afterwards seeks to weaken its authority, it is because this very moral sense whispers to him that his case is not a good one.

My opinion as to the relative superiority of the moral and intellectual perceptions is the reverse of that stated by the Duke. It seems to me certain that the moral faculties constitute a truer guide than the intellectual faculties, and that what, in reality, we should never forget, is not that the moral faculties are untrustworthy, but

that those faculties may be dulled by refusal to heed them, and distorted by the promptings of selfishness. So true, so ineradicable is the moral sense, that where selfishness or passion would outrage it, the intellectual faculties are always called upon to supply excuse. No unjust war was ever begun without some pretence of asserting right or redressing wrong, or, despite themselves, of doing some good to the conquered. No petty thief but makes for himself some justification. It is doubtful if any deliberate wrong is ever committed, it is certain no wrongful course of action is ever continued, without the framing of some theory which may dull or placate the moral sense.

And while, as to things apprehended solely by the intellectual faculties, the greatest diversities of perception have obtained and still obtain among men, and those perceptions constantly change with the growth of knowledge, there is a striking consensus of moral perceptions. In all stages of moral development, and under all forms of religion, no matter how distorted by selfish motives and intellectual perversions, truth, justice, and benevolence have ever been esteemed, and all our intellectual progress has given us no higher moral ideals than have obtained among primitive peoples. The very distortions of the moral sense, the apparent differences in the moral standards of different times and peoples, do but show essential unity. Wherever moral perceptions have differed or do differ, the disturbance may be traced to causes which, originating in selfishness and perpetuated by intellectual perversions have distorted or dulled the moral faculty. It seems to me that the Creator, whom both the Duke of Argyll and myself recognise behind physical and mental laws, has not left us to grope our way in darkness, but has, indeed, given us a light by which our steps may be safely guided—a compass by which, in all degrees of intellectual development, the way to the highest good may be surely traced. But just as the compass by which the mariner steers his course over the trackless sea in the blackest night may be disturbed by other attractions, may be misread or clogged, so is it with the moral sense. This evidently is not a world in which men must be either wise or good, but a world in which they may bring about good or evil as they use the faculties given them.

I speak of this because the recognition of the supremacy and certainty of the moral faculties seems to me to throw light upon problems otherwise dark, rather than because it is necessary here, since I admit even more unreservedly than the Duke the competence of the tribunal before which he cites me. I am willing to submit every question of political economy to the tests of ethics. So far as I can see, there is no social law which does not conform to moral law, and no social question which cannot be determined more quickly and certainly by appeal to moral perceptions than by appeal to intellectual perceptions. Nor can there be any dispute between us as to the issue to be joined. He charges me with advocating violation of the moral law in proposing robbery. I agree that robbery is a violation of the moral law, and is therefore, without further inquiry, to be condemned.

As to what constitutes robbery, it is, we will both agree, the taking or withholding from another of that which rightfully belongs to him. That which *rightfully* belongs to him, be it observed, not that which legally belongs to him. As to what extent human law may create rights is beside this discussion, for what I propose is to change, not to violate, human law. Such change the Duke declares would be unrighteous. He thus appeals to that moral law which is before and above all human laws, and by which all human laws are to be judged. Let me insist upon this point. Landholders must elect to try their case either by human law or by moral law. If they say that land is rightfully property because made so by human law, they cannot charge those who would change that law with advocating robbery. But if they charge that such change in human law would be robbery, then they must show that land is rightfully property irrespective of human law.

For land is not of that species of things to which the presumption of rightful property attaches. This does attach to things that are properly termed wealth, and that are the produce of labour. Such things in their beginning must have an owner, as they originate in human exertion, and the right of property which attaches to them springs from the manifest natural right of every individual to himself and to the benefit of his own exertions. This is the moral basis of property, which makes certain things rightfully property totally irrespective of human law. The Eighth Commandment does not derive its validity from human enactment. It is written upon the facts of Nature, and self-evident to the perceptions of men. If there were but two men in the world, the fish which either of them took from the sea, the beast which he captured in the chase, the fruit which he gathered, or the hut which he erected, would be his rightful property, which the other could not take from him without violation of the moral law. But how could either of them claim the world as his rightful property? Or if they agreed to divide the world between them, what moral right could their compact give as against the next man who came into the world?

It is needless, however, to insist that property in land rests only on human enactment, which may at any time be changed without violation of moral law. No one seriously asserts any other derivation. It is sometimes said that property in land is derived from appropriation. But those who say this do not really believe it. Appropriation can give no right. The man who raises a cupful of water from the river acquires a right to that cupful, and no one may rightfully snatch it from his hand; but this right is derived from labour, not from appropriation. How could he acquire a right to the river, by merely appropriating it? Columbus did not dream of

appropriating the New World to himself and his heirs, and would have been deemed a lunatic had he done so. Nations and princes divided America between them, but by "right of strength." This, and this alone, it is that gives any validity to appropriation. And this, evidently, is what they really mean who talk of the right given by appropriation.

This "right of conquest," this power of the strong, is the only basis of property in land to which the Duke ventures to refer. He does so in asking whether the exclusive right of ownership to the territory of California, which, according to him, I attribute to the existing people of California, does not rest upon conquest, and "if so, may it not be as rightfully acquired by any who are strong enough to seize it?" To this I reply in the affirmative. *If* exclusive ownership is conferred by conquest, then, not merely, as the Duke says, has it "been open to every conquering army and every occupying host in all ages and in all countries of the world to establish a similar ownership," but *it is now open*; and when the masses of Scotland, who have the power, choose to take from the Duke the estates he now holds, he cannot, if this be the basis of his claims, consistently complain.

But I have never admitted that conquest or any other exertion of force can give right. Nor have I ever asserted, but, on the contrary, have expressly denied, that the present population of California, or any other country, have any exclusive right of ownership in the soil, or can in any way acquire such a right. I hold that the present, the past, or the future population of California, or of any other country, have not, have not had, and cannot have, any right save to the use of the soil, and that as to this their rights are equal. I hold with Thomas Jefferson, "that the earth belongs in usufruct to the living, and that the dead have no power or right over it." I hold that the land was not created for one generation to dispose of, but as a dwelling-place for all generations; that the men of the present are not bound by any grants of land the men of the past may have made, and cannot grant away the rights of the men of the future. I hold that if all the people of California, or any other country, were to unite in any disposition of the land which ignored the equal right of one of their number, they would be doing a wrong; and that if they could even grant away their own rights, they are powerless to impair the natural rights of their children. And it is for this reason that I hold the titles to the ownership of land which the Government of the United States is now granting are of no greater moral validity than the land-titles of the British Isles, which rest historically upon the forcible spoliation of the masses.

How ownership of land was acquired in the past can have no bearing upon the question of how we should treat land now; yet the inquiry is interesting, as showing the nature of the institution. The Duke of Argyll has written a great deal about the rights of landowners, but has never, I think, told us anything of the historical derivation of these rights. He has spoken of his estates, own but has nowhere told us how they came to be his estates. This, I know, is a delicate question, and on that account I will not press it. But while a man ought not to be taunted with the sins of his ancestors, neither ought he to profit by them. And the general fact is, that the exclusive ownership of land has everywhere had its beginning in force and fraud, in selfish greed and unscrupulous cunning. It originated, as all evil institutions originate, in the bad passions of men, not in their perceptions of what is right or their experience of what is wise. "Human laws," the Duke tells us, "are evolved out of human instincts, and, in direct proportion as the accepted ideas on which they rest are really universal, in that same proportion have they a claim to be regarded as really natural, and as the legitimate expression of fundamental truths." If he would thus found on the widespread existence of exclusive property in land an argument for its righteousness, what, may I ask him, will he say to the much stronger argument that might thus be made for the righteousness of polygamy or chattel slavery? But it is a fact, of which I need hardly more than remind him, though less well-informed people may be ignorant of it, that the treatment of land as individual property is comparatively recent, and by at least nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand of those who have lived on this world has never been dreamed of. It is only within the last two centuries that it has, by the abolition of feudal tenures and the suppression of tribal customs, fully obtained among our own people. In fact, even among us it has hardly yet reached full development. For not only are we still spreading over land yet unreduced to individual ownership, but in the fragments of common rights which yet remain in Great Britain, as well as in laws and customs, are there survivals of the older system. The first and universal perception of mankind is that declared by the American Indian chief Black Hawk: "The Great Spirit has told me that land is not to be made property like other property. The earth is our mother!" And this primitive perception of the right of all men to the use of the soil from which all must live has never been obscured save by a long course of usurpation and oppression.

But it is needless for me to discuss such questions with the Duke. There is higher ground on which we may meet. He believes in an intelligent Creator; he sees in Nature contrivance and intent; he realises that it is only by conforming his actions to universal law that man can master his conditions and fulfil his destiny.

Let me, then, ask the Duke to look around him in the richest country of the world, where art, science, and the power that comes from the utilisation of physical laws have been carried to the highest point yet attained, and note how few of this population can avail themselves fully of the advantages of civilisation. Among the masses the struggle for existence is so intense that the Duke himself declares it necessary by law to restrain

parents from working their children to disease and death! Let him consider the conditions of life involved in such facts as this—conditions, alas! obvious on every side—and then ask himself whether this is in accordance with the intent of Nature.

The Duke of Argyll has explained to me in his "Reign of Law" with what nice adaptations the feathers on a bird's wing are designed to give it the power of flight; he has told me that the claw on the wing of a bat is intended for it to climb by. Will he let me ask him to look in the same way at the human beings around him? I will ask him to consider the little children growing up in city slums, toiling in mines, working in noisome rooms; the young girls chained to machinery all day or walking the streets by night; the women bending over forges in the Black Country or turned into beasts of burden in the Scottish Highlands; the men who all life long must spend life's energies in the effort to maintain life! He should consider them as he has considered the bat and the bird. If the hook of the bat be intended to climb by and the wing of the bird be intended to fly by, with what intent have human creatures been given capabilities of body and mind which under conditions that exist in such countries as Great Britain only a few of them can use and enjoy?

They who see in Nature no evidences of conscious, planning intelligence may think that all this is as it must be; but who that recognises in His works an infinitely wise Creator can for a moment hesitate to infer that the wide difference between obvious intent and actual accomplishment is due, not to the clash of natural laws, but to our ignoring them? Nor need we go far to confirm this inference. The moment we consider in the largest way what kind of an animal man is, we see in the most important of social adjustments a violation of Nature's intent sufficient to account for want and misery and aborted development.

Given a ship sent to sea with abundant provisions for all her company, what must happen if some of that company take possession of the provisions and deny to the rest any share?

Given a world so made and ordered that intelligent beings placed upon it may draw from its substance an abundant supply for all physical needs, must there not be want and misery in such a world if some of those beings make its surface and substance their exclusive property, and deny the right of the others to its use? Here, as on any other world we can conceive of, two and two make four, and when all is taken from anything nothing remains. What we see clearly would happen on any other world does happen on this.

The Duke sees intent in Nature. So do I. That which conforms to this intent is natural, wise, and righteous. That which contravenes it is unnatural, foolish, and iniquitous. In this we agree. Let us then bring to this test the institution which I arraign and he defends.

Place, stripped of clothes, a landowner's baby among a dozen workhouse babies, and who that you call in can tell the one from the others? Is the human law which declares the one born to the possession of a hundred thousand acres of land, while the others have no right to a single square inch, conformable to the intent of Nature or not? Is it, judged by this appeal, natural or unnatural, wise or foolish, righteous or iniquitous? Put the bodies of a duke and a peasant on a dissecting table, and bring, if you can, the surgeon who, by laying bare the brain, or examining the viscera, can tell which is duke and which is peasant. Are not both land animals of the same kind, with like organs and like needs? Is it not evidently the intent of Nature that both shall live on land and use land, in the same way, and to the same degree? Is there not, therefore, a violation of the intent of Nature in human laws which give to one more land than he can possibly use, and deny any land to the other?

Let me ask the Duke to consider, from the point of view of an observer of Nature, a landless man—a being fitted in all his parts and powers for the use of land, compelled by all his needs to the use of land, and yet denied all right to land. Is he not as unnatural as a bird without air, a fish without water? And can anything more clearly violate the intent of Nature than the human laws which produce such anomalies?

I call upon the Duke to observe that what Nature teaches us is not merely that men *were* equally intended to live on land, and to use land, and therefore had originally equal rights to land, but that they are *now* equally intended to live on and use land, and, therefore, that present rights to land are equal. It is said that fish deprived of light will, in the course of generations, lose their eyes, and, within certain narrow limits, it is certain that Nature does conform some of her living creatures to conditions imposed by man. In such cases the intent of Nature may be said to have conformed to that of man, or rather to embrace that of man. But there is no such conforming in this case. The intent of Nature, that all human beings should use land, is as clearly seen in children born to-day as it could have been seen in any past generation. How foolish, then, are those who say that although the right to land was originally equal, this equality of right has been lost by the action or sufferance of intermediate generations. How illogical those who declare that, while it would be just to assert this equality of right in the laws of a new country where people are now coming to live, it would be unjust to conform to it the laws of a country where people long have lived! Has Nature anywhere or in anything shown any disposition to conform to what we call vested interests? Does the child born in an old country differ from the child born in a new country?

Moral right and wrong, the Duke must agree with me, are not matters of precedent. The repetition of a wrong may dull the moral sense, but will not make it right. A robbery is no less a robbery the thousand

millionth time it is committed than it was the first time. This they forgot who, declaring the slave trade piracy, still legalise the enslavement of those already enslaved. This they forget who, admitting the equality of natural rights to the soil, declare that it would be unjust now to assert them. For as the keeping of a man in slavery is as much a violation of natural right as the seizure of his remote ancestor, so is the robbery involved in the present denial of natural rights to the soil as much a robbery as was the first act of fraud or force which violated those rights. Those who say it would be unjust for the people to resume their natural rights in the land without compensating present holders confound right and wrong as flagrantly as did they who held it a crime in the slave to run away without first paying his owner his market value. They have never formed a clear idea of what property in land means. It means not merely a continuous exclusion of some people from the element which it is plainly the intent of Nature that all should enjoy, but it involves a continuous confiscation of labour and the results of labour. The Duke of Argyll has, we say, a large income drawn from land. But is this income really drawn from land? Were there no men on his land, what income could the Duke get from it, save such as his own hands produced? Precisely as if drawn from slaves, this income represents an appropriation of the earnings of labour. The effect of permitting the Duke to treat the land as his property is to make so many other Scotsmen, in whole or in part, his serfs—to compel them to labour for him without pay, or to enable him to take from them their earnings without return. Surely, if the Duke will look at the matter in this way, he must see that the iniquity is not in abolishing an institution which permits one man to plunder others, but in continuing it. He must see that any claim of landowners to compensation is not a claim to payment for what they have previously taken, but to payment for what they might yet take, precisely as would be the claim of the slaveholder—the true character of which appears in the fact that he would demand more compensation for a strong slave, out of whom he might yet get much work, than for a decrepit one, out of whom he had already forced nearly all the labour he could yield.

In assuming that denial of the justice of property in land is the prelude to an attack upon all rights of property, the Duke ignores the essential distinction between land and things rightfully property. The things which constitute wealth or capital (which is wealth used in production), and to which the right of property justly attaches, are produced by human exertion. Their material is matter, which existed before man, and which man can neither create nor destroy; but their essence—that which gives them the character of wealth—is labour impressed upon or modifying the conditions of matter. Their existence is due to the physical exertion of man, and, like his physical frame, they tend constantly to return again to Nature's reservoirs of matter and force. Land, on the contrary, is that part of the external universe on which and from which alone man can live; that reservoir of matter and force on which he must draw for all his needs. Its existence is not due to man, but is referable only to that Power from which man himself proceeds. It continues while he comes and goes, and will continue, so far as we can see, after he and his works shall disappear. Both species of things have value, but the value of the one species depends upon the amount of labour required for their production; the value of the other upon the power which its reduction to ownership gives of commanding labour or the results of labour without paying any equivalent. The recognition of the right of property in wealth, or things produced by labour, is thus but a recognition of the right of each human being to himself and to the result of his own exertion; but the recognition of a similar right of property in land is necessarily the impairment and denial of this true right of property.

Turn from principles to facts. Whether as to national strength or national character, whether as to the number of people or as to their physical and moral health, whether as to the production of wealth or as to its equitable distribution, the fruits of the primary injustice involved in making the land, on which and from which a whole people must live, the property of but a portion of their number, are everywhere evil, and nothing but evil.

If this seems to any too strong a statement, it is only because they associate individual ownership of land with permanence of possession and security of improvement. These *are* necessary to the proper use of land, but so far from being dependent upon individual ownership of land they can be secured without it in greater degree than with it. This will be evident upon reflection. That the existing system does not secure permanence of possession and security of improvements in anything like the degree necessary to the best use of land is obvious everywhere, but especially obvious in Great Britain, where the owners of land and the users of land are for the most part distinct persons. In many cases the users of land have no security from year to year—a logical development of individual ownership in land so flagrantly unjust to the user and so manifestly detrimental to the community, that in Ireland, where this system most largely prevailed, it has been deemed necessary for the State to interfere in the most arbitrary manner. In other cases, where land is let for years, the user is often hampered with restrictions that prevent improvement and interfere with use, and at the expiration of the lease he is not merely deprived of his improvements, but is frequently subjected to a blackmail calculated upon the inconvenience and loss which removal would cost him. Wherever I have been in Great Britain, from Land's End to John o' Groat's and from Liverpool to Hull, I have heard of improvements prevented and production

curtailed from this cause—in instances which run from the prevention of the building of an outhouse, the painting of a dwelling, the enlargement of a chapel, the widening of a street, or the excavation of a dock, to the shutting up of a mine, the demolition of a village, the tearing up of a railway track, or the turning of land from the support of men to the breeding of wild beasts. I could cite case after case, each typical of a class, but it is unnecessary. How largely use and improvement are restricted and prevented by private ownership of land may be appreciated only by a few, but specific cases are known to all. How insecurity of improvement and possession prevents the proper maintenance of dwellings in the cities, how it hampers the farmer, how it fills the shopkeeper with dread as the expiration of his lease draws nigh, have been, to some extent at least, brought out by recent discussions, and in all these directions propositions are being made for State interference more or less violent, arbitrary, and destructive of the sound principle that men should be left free to manage their own property as they deem best.

Does not all this interference and demand for interference show that private property in land does not produce good results, that it does not give the necessary permanence of possession and security of improvements? Is not an institution that needs such tinkering fundamentally wrong? That property in land must have different treatment from other property, all, or nearly all, are now agreed. Does not this prove that land ought not to be made individual property at all; that to treat it as individual property is to weaken and endanger the true rights of property?

The Duke of Argyll asserts that in the United States we have made land private property because we have found it necessary to secure settlement and improvement. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Duke might as well urge that our protective tariff is proof of the necessity of "protection." We have made land private property because we are but transplanted Europeans, wedded to custom, and have followed it in this matter more readily, because in a new country the evils that at length spring from private property in land are less obvious, while a much larger portion of the people seemingly profit by it—those on the ground gaining at the expense of those who come afterwards. But so far from this treatment of land in the United States having promoted settlement and reclamation, the very reverse is true. What it has promoted is the scattering of population in the country and its undue concentration in cities, to the disadvantage of production and the lessening of comfort. It has forced into the wilderness families for whom there was plenty of room in well-settled neighbourhoods, and raised tenement houses amid vacant lots, led to waste of labour and capital in roads and railways not really needed, locked up natural opportunities that otherwise would have been improved, made tramps and idlers of men who, had they found it in time, would gladly have been at work, and given to our agriculture a character that is rapidly and steadily decreasing the productiveness of the soil.

As to political corruption in the United States, of which I have spoken in "Social Problems," and to which the Duke refers, it springs, as I have shown in that book, not from excess, but from deficiency of democracy, and mainly from our failure to recognise the equality of natural rights as well as of political rights. In comparing the two countries, it may be well to note that the exposure of abuses is quicker and sharper in the United States than in England, and that to some extent abuses which in the one country appear in naked deformity are in the other hidden by the ivy of custom and respectability. But be this as it may, the reforms I propose, instead of adding to corruptive forces, would destroy prolific sources of corruption. Our "protective tariff, our excise taxes, and demoralising system of local taxation would, in their direct and indirect effects, corrupt any government, even if not aided by the corrupting effects of the grabbing for public lands. But the first step I propose would sweep away these corruptive influences, and it is to governments thus reformed, in a state of society in which the reckless struggle for wealth would be lessened by the elimination of the fear of want, that I would give, not the management of land or the direction of enterprise, but the administration of the funds arising from the appropriation of economic rent.

The Duke styles me a pessimist. But, however pessimistic I may be as to present social tendencies, I have a firm faith in human nature. I am convinced that the attainment of pure government is merely a matter of conforming social institutions to moral law. If we do this, there is, to my mind, no reason why in the proper sphere of public administration we should not find men as honest and as faithful as when acting in private capacities.

But to return to the reduction to iniquity. Test the institution of private property in land by its fruits in any country where it exists. Take Scotland. What, there, are its results? That wild beasts have supplanted human beings; that glens which once sent forth, their thousand fighting men are now tenanted by a couple of gamekeepers; that there is destitution and degradation that would shame savages; that little children are stunted and starved for want of proper nourishment; that women are compelled to do the work of animals; that young girls who ought to be fitting themselves for wifehood and motherhood are held to monotonous toil in factories; while others, whose fate is sadder still, prowl the streets; that while a few Scotsmen have castles and palaces, more than a third of Scottish families live in one room each, and more than two-thirds in not more than two rooms each; that thousands of acres are kept as playgrounds for strangers, while the masses have not enough of

their native soil to grow a flower, are shut out even from moor and mountain, dare not take a trout from a loch or a salmon from a stream!

If the Duke thinks all classes have gained by the advance in civilisation, let him go into the huts of the Highlands. There he may find countrymen of his, men and women the equals in natural ability and in moral character of any peer or peeress in the land, to whom the advance of our wondrous age has brought no gain. He may find them tilling the ground with the crookit spade, cutting grain with the sickle, threshing it with the flail, winnowing it by tossing it in the air, grinding it as their forefathers did a thousand years ago. He may see spinning-wheel and distaff yet in use, and the smoke from the fire in the centre of the hut ascending as it can through the thatch, that the precious heat, which costs so much labour to procure, may be economised to the utmost. These human beings are in natural parts and powers just such human beings as may be met at a royal levee, at a gathering of scientific men or inventors, or captains of industry. That they so live and work is not because of their stupidity, but because of their poverty—the direct and indisputable result of the denial of their natural rights. They have not merely been prevented from participating in the "general advance," but are positively worse off than were their ancestors before commerce had penetrated the Highlands or the modern era of labour-saving inventions had begun. They have been driven from the good land to the poor land. While their rents have been increased, their holdings have been diminished, and their pasturage cut off. Where they once had beasts, they cannot now eat a chicken or keep a donkey, and their women must do work once done by animals. With the same thoughtful attention he has given to "the way of an eagle in the air," let the Duke consider a sight he must have seen many times—a Scottish woman toiling uphill with a load of manure on her back. Then let him apply "the reduction to iniquity."

Let the Duke not be content with feasting his eyes upon those comfortable houses of the large farmers which so excite his admiration. Let him visit the bothies in which farm servants are herded together like cattle, and learn, as he may learn, that the lot of the Scottish farm servant—a lot from which no industry or thrift can release him—is to die in the workhouse, or in the receipt of a parish dole if he be so unfortunate as to outlive his ability to work. Or let him visit those poor broken-down creatures who, enduring everything rather than accept the humiliation of the workhouse, are eking out their last days upon a few shillings from the parish, supplemented by the charity of people nearly as poor as themselves. Let him consider them, and, if he has imagination enough, put himself in their place. Then let him try "the reduction to iniquity."

Let the Duke go to Glasgow, the metropolis of Scotland, where, in underground cellars and miserable rooms, he will find crowded together families who (some of them, lest they might offend the deer) have been driven from their native soil into the great city to compete with each other for employment at any price, to have their children debauched by daily contact with all that is vile. Let him some Saturday evening leave the districts where the richer classes live, wander for a while through the streets tenanted by working people, and note the stunted forms, the pinched features. Vice, drunkenness, the recklessness that comes when hope goes, he will see too. How should not such conditions produce such effects? But he will also see, if he chooses to look, hard, brave, stubborn struggling—the workman who, do his best, cannot find steady employment; the bread-winner stricken with illness; the widow straining to keep her children from the work-house. Let the Duke observe and reflect upon these things, and then apply the reduction to iniquity.

Or let him go to Edinburgh, the modern "Athens," of which Scotsmen speak with pride, and in buildings from whose roofs a bowman might strike the spires of twenty churches he will find human beings living as he would not keep his meanest dog. Let him toil up the stairs of one of these monstrous buildings, let him enter one of those "dark houses," let him close the door, and in the blackness think what life must be in such a place. Then let him try the reduction to iniquity. And if he go to that good charity (but, alas! how futile is Charity without Justice!) where little children are kept while their mothers are at work, and children are fed who would otherwise go hungry, he may see infants whose limbs are shrunken from want of nourishment. Perhaps they may tell him, as they told me, of that little girl, barefooted, ragged, and hungry, who, when they gave her bread, raised her eyes and clasped her hands, and thanked our Father in Heaven for his bounty to her. They who told me that never dreamed, I think, of its terrible meaning. But I ask the Duke of Argyll, did that little child, thankful for that poor dole, get what our Father provided for her? Is He so niggard? If not, what is it, who is it, that stands between such children and our Father's bounty? If it be an institution, is it not our duty to God and to our neighbour to rest not till we destroy it? If it be a man, were it not better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the depths of the sea?

There can be no question of over-population—no pretence that Nature has brought more men into being than she has made provision for. Scotland surely is not over-populated. Much land is unused; much land is devoted to lower uses, such as the breeding of game, that might be devoted to higher uses; there are mineral resources untouched; the wealth drawn from the sea is but a small part of what might be drawn. But it is idle to argue this point. Neither in Scotland, nor in any other country, can any excess of population over the power of Nature to provide for them be shown. The poverty so painful in Scotland is manifestly no more due to

over-population than the crowding of two-thirds of the families into houses of one or two rooms is due to want of space to build houses upon. And just as the crowding of people into insufficient lodgings is directly due to institutions which permit men to hold vacant land needed for buildings until they can force a monopoly price from those wishing to build, so is the poverty of the masses due to the fact that they are in like manner shut out from the opportunities Nature has provided for the employment of their labour in the satisfaction of their wants.

Take the island of Skye as illustrating on a small scale the cause of poverty throughout Scotland. The people of Skye are poor—very poor. Is it because there are too many of them? An explanation lies nearer—an explanation which would account for poverty, no matter how small the population. If there were but one man in Skye, and if all that he produced, save enough to give him a bare living, were periodically taken from him and carried off, he would necessarily be poor. That is the condition of the people of Skye. With a population of some seventeen thousand there are, if my memory serves me, twenty-four landowners. The few proprietors who live upon the island, though they do nothing to produce wealth, have fine houses, and live luxuriously, while the greater portion of the rents are carried off to be spent abroad. It is not merely that there is thus a constant drain upon the wealth produced, but that there the power of producing wealth is enormously lessened. As the people are deprived of the power to accumulate capital, production is carried on in the most primitive style, and at the greatest disadvantage.

If there are really too many people in Scotland, why not make the landlords emigrate? They are not merely best fitted to emigrate, but would give the greatest relief. They consume most, waste most, carry off most, while they produce least. As landlords, in fact, they produce nothing. They merely consume and destroy. Economically considered, they have the same effect upon production as bands of robbers or pirate fleets. To national wealth they are as weevils in the grain, as rats in the storehouse, as ferrets in the poultry-yard.

The Duke of Argyll complains of what he calls my "assumption that owners of land are not producers, and that rent does not represent, or represents in a very minor degree, the interest of capital." The Duke will justify his complaint if he will show how the owning of land can produce anything. Failing in this, he must admit that though the same person may be a labourer, capitalist, and landowner, the owner of land, as an owner of land, is not a producer. And surely he knows that the term "rent" as used in political economy, and as I use it in the books he criticises, never represents the interest on capital, but refers alone to the sum paid for the use of the inherent capabilities of the soil.

As illustrating the usefulness of landlords, the Duke says:—

My own experience now extends over the best part of forty years. During that time I have built over fifty homesteads, complete for man and beast. I have drained and reclaimed many hundreds, and inclosed some thousands of acres. In this sense I have added house to house, and field to field, not—as pulpit orators have assumed in similar cases—that I might dwell alone in the land, but that the cultivating class may live more comfortably and with better appliances for increasing the produce of the soil.

And again, he says that during the last, four years he has spent on one property £40,000 in the improvement of the soil.

I fear that in Scotland the Duke of Argyll has been "hiding his light under a bushel," for his version of the way in which he has "added house to house and field to field" differs much from that which common Scotsmen give. But this is a matter into which I do not wish to enter. What I would like to ask the Duke is, how he built the fifty homesteads and reclaimed the thousands of acres. Not with his own hands, of course, but with his money. Where, then, did he get that money? Was it not taken as rent from the cultivator's of the soil? And might not they, had it been left to them, have devoted it to the building of homesteads and the improvement of the soil as well as he? Suppose the Duke spends on such improvements all he draws in rent, minus what it costs him to live, is not the cost of his living so much waste as far as the improvement of the land is concerned? Would there not be a considerably greater fund to devote to this purpose if the Duke got no rent, and had to work for a living?

But all Scottish landholders are not even such improvers as the Duke. There are landlords who spend their incomes in racing, in profligacy, in doing things which when not injurious are quite as useless to man or beast as the works of that English Duke, recently dead, who spent vast sums in burrowing underground like a mole. What the Scottish landlords call their "improvements" have, for the most part, consisted in building castles, laying out pleasure-grounds, raising rents, and evicting their kinsmen. But the encouragement given to agriculture, by even such improving owners as the Duke of Argyll, is very much like the encouragement given to traffic by the Duke of Bedford, who keeps two or three old men to open and shut gates he and his have erected across the streets of London. That much the greater part of the incomes drawn by landlords is as completely lost for all productive purposes as though it were thrown into the sea, there can be no doubt. But that even the small part which *is* devoted to reproductive improvement is largely wasted, the Duke of Argyll himself clearly shows in stating, what I have learned from other sources, that the large outlays of the great landholders yield little interest, and, in many cases, no interest at all. Clearly, the stock of wealth would have

been much greater had this capital been left in the hands of the cultivators, who, in most cases, suffer from lack of capital, and in many cases have to pay the most usurious interest.

In fact, the plea of the landlords that they, as landlords, assist in production, is very much like the plea of the slaveholders that they gave a living to the slaves. And I am convinced that if the Duke of Argyll will consider the matter as a philosopher rather than as a landlord, he will see the gross inconsistency between the views he expresses as to negro slavery and the position he assumes as to property in land.

In principle the two systems of appropriating the labour of other men are essentially the same. Since it is from land and on land that man must live, if he is to live at all, a human being is as completely enslaved when the land on which he must live is made the property of another, as when his own flesh and blood are made the property of that other. And at least, after a certain point in social development is reached, the slavery that results from depriving men of all legal right to land is, for the very reason that the relation between master and slave is not so direct and obvious, more cruel and more demoralising than that which makes property of their bodies.

And turning to facts, the Duke must see, if he will look, that the effects of the two systems are substantially the same. He is, for instance, an hereditary legislator, with power in making laws which other Scotsmen, who have little or no voice in making laws, must obey under penalty of being fined, imprisoned, or hanged. He has this power, which is essentially that of the master to compel the slave, not because anyone thinks that Nature gives wisdom and patriotism to eldest sons more than to younger sons, or to some families more than to other families, but because as the legal owner of a considerable part of Scotland he is deemed to have greater rights in making laws than other Scotsmen, who can live in their native land only by paying some of the legal owners of Scotland for the privilege.

That power over men arises from ownership of land as well as from ownership of their bodies the Duke may see in varied manifestations if he will look. The power of the Scottish landlords over even the large farmers, and, in the smaller towns, over even the well-to-do shopkeepers and professional men, is enormous. Even where it is the custom to let on lease, and large capital is required, competition, aided in many cases by the law of hypothec, enables the landlord to exert a direct power over even the large farmer. That many substantial farmers have been driven from their homes and ruined because they voted or were supposed to have voted against the wishes of their landlords is well known. A man whose reputation was that of the best farmer in Scotland was driven from his home in this way a few years since for having politically offended his landlord. In Leeds (England) I was told of a Scottish physician who died there lately. He had been in comfortable practice in a village on the estate of a Scottish duke. Because he voted for a Liberal candidate, word was given by the landlord's agent that he was no longer to be employed, and, as the people feared to disobey the hint, he was obliged to leave. He came to Leeds, and, not succeeding in establishing himself, pined away, and would have died in utter destitution but that some friends he had made in Leeds wrote to the candidate for supporting whom he had been boycotted, who came to Leeds, provided for his few days of life, and assumed the care of his children. I mention to his honour the name of that gentleman as it was given to me. It was Sir Sydney Waterlow.

During my recent visit to the Highlands I was over and over again told by well-to-do men that they did not dare to let their opinions be known, or to take any action the landlords or their agents might dislike. In one town such men came to me by-night and asked me to speak, but, telling me frankly that they did not dare to apply for a hall, requested me to do that for myself, as I was beyond the tyranny they feared. If this be the condition of the well-to-do, the condition of the crofters can be imagined. One of them said to me, "We have feared the landlord more than we have feared God Almighty; we have feared the factor more than the landlord, and the ground officer more than the factor." But there is a class lower still than even the crofters—the cotters—who, on forty-eight hours' notice, can be turned out of what by courtesy are called their homes, and who are at the mercy of the large farmers or tacksmen, who in turn fear the landlord or agent. Take this class, or the class of farm servants who are kept in bothies. Can the Duke tell me of any American slaves who were lodged and fed as these white slaves are lodged and fed, or who had less of all the comforts and enjoyments of life?

The slaveholders of the South never, in any case that I have heard of, interfered with the religion of the slaves; and the Duke of Argyll will doubtless admit that this is a power which one man ought not to have over another. Yet he must know that at the disruption of the Scottish Church, some forty years ago, Scottish proprietors not merely evicted tenants who joined the Free Church (and in many cases eviction meant ruin and death), but absolutely refused sites for churches, and even permission for the people to stand upon the land and worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. Hugh Miller has told, in the "Cruise of the Betsy," how one minister, denied permission to live on the land, had to make his home on the sea in a small boat. Large congregations had to worship on mountain roadsides without shelter from storm and sleet, and even on the sea-shore, where the tide flowed around their feet as they took the communion. But perhaps the slavishness which has been engendered in Scotland by land monopoly is not better illustrated than in the case where, after keeping them off his land for more than six years, a Scottish duke allowed a congregation the use of a gravel-pit

for purposes of worship, whereupon they sent him a resolution of thanks!

In the large cities tyranny of this kind cannot, of course, be exercised, but it is in the large cities that the slavery resulting from the reduction of land to private ownership assumes the darkest shades. Negro slavery had its horrors, but they were not so many or so black as those constantly occurring in such cities. Their own selfish interests, if not their human sympathies or the restraint of public opinion, would have prevented the owners of negro slaves from lodging and feeding and working them as many of the so-called free people in the centres of civilisation are lodged and fed and worked.

With all allowance for the prepossessions of a great landlord, it is difficult to understand how the Duke of Argyll can regard as an animating scene the history of agricultural improvement in Scotland since 1745. From the date mentioned, and the fact that he is a Highlander, I presume that he refers mainly to the Highlands. But as a parallel to calling this history "animating," I can think of nothing so close as the observation of an economist of the Duke's school, who, in an account of a visit to Scotland a generation or so ago, spoke of the pleasure with which, in a workhouse, he had seen "both sexes and all ages, even to infants of two and three years, earning their living by picking oakum," or as the expression of pride with which a Polish noble, in the last century, pointed out to an English visitor some miserable looking creatures who, he said, were samples of the serfs, any one of whom he could kick as he pleased!

"Thousands and thousands of acres," says the Duke, "have been reclaimed from barren wastes; ignorance has given place to science, and barbarous customs of immemorial strength have been replaced by habits of intelligence and business." This is one side of the picture; but unfortunately there is another side—chieftains taking advantage of the reverential affection of their clansmen, and their ignorance of a foreign language and a foreign law, to reduce those clansmen to a condition of virtual slavery; to rob them of the land which by immemorial custom they had enjoyed; to substitute for the mutual tie that bound chief to vassal and vassal to chief the cold maxims of money-making greed; to drive them from their homes that sheep might have place, or to hand them over to the tender mercies of a great farmer.

"There has been grown," says the Duke, "more corn, more potatoes, more turnips; there has been produced more milk, more butter, more cheese, more beef, more mutton, more pork, more fowls and eggs." But what becomes of them? The Duke must know that the ordinary food of the common people is meal and potatoes; that of these many do not get enough, that many would starve outright if they were not kept alive by charity. Even the wild meat which their fathers took freely, the common people cannot now touch. A Highland poor-law doctor, whose district is on the estate of a prominent member of the Liberal party, was telling me recently of the miserable poverty of the people among whom his official duties lie, and how insufficient and monotonous food was beginning to produce among them diseases like the *pellagra* in Italy, when I asked him if they could not, despite the gamekeepers, take for themselves enough fish and game to vary their diet. "They never think of it," he replied; "they are too cowed. Why, the moment any one of them was even suspected of cultivating a taste for trout or grouse, he would be driven off the estate like a mad dog."

Besides the essays and journals referred to by the Duke of Argyll, there is another publication, which any one wishing to be informed on the subject may read with advantage, though not with pleasure. It is entitled "Highland Clearances," and is published in Inverness by A. McKenzie. There is nothing in savage life more cold-bloodedly atrocious than the warfare here recorded as carried on against the clansmen by those who were their hereditary protectors. The burning of houses; the ejection of old and young; the tearing down of shelters put up to protect women with child and tender infants from the bitter night blast; the threats of similar treatment against all who should give them hospitality; the forcing of poor helpless creatures into emigrant ships which carried them to strange lands and among a people of whose tongues they were utterly ignorant, to die in many cases like rotten sheep, or to be reduced to utter degradation. An animated scene truly! Great districts once peopled with a race, rude it may be and slavish to their chiefs, but still a race of manly virtues, brave, kind, and hospitable—now tenanted only by sheep or cattle, by grouse or deer! No one can read of the atrocities perpetrated upon the Scottish people, during what is called "the improvement of the Highlands," without feeling something like utter contempt for men, who, lions abroad, were such sheep at home that they suffered these outrages without striking a blow, even if an ineffectual one. But the explanation of this reveals a lower depth in the "reduction to iniquity" The reason of the tame submission of the Highland people to outrages which should have nerved the most timid is to be found in the prostitution of their religion. The Highland people are a deeply religious people, and during these evictions their preachers preached to them that their trials were the visitation of the Almighty, and must be submitted to under the penalty of eternal damnation!

I met accidentally in Scotland, recently, a lady of the small landlord class, and the conversation turned upon the poverty of the Highland people. "Yes, they are poor," she said, "but they deserve to be poor; they are so dirty. I have no sympathy with women who won't keep their houses neat and their children tidy."

I suggested that neatness could hardly be expected from women who every day had to trudge for miles with creels of peat and seaweed on their backs.

"Yes," she said, "they have to work hard. But that is not so sad as the hard lives of the horses. Did you ever think of the horses? They have to work all their lives—till they can't work any longer. It makes me sad to think of it. There ought to be big farms where horses should be turned out after they had worked some years, so that they might have time to enjoy themselves before they died."

"But the people?" I interposed. "They, too, have to work till they can't work longer."

"Oh yes!" she replied, "but the people have souls, and even if they have a hard time of it here, they will, if they are good, go to heaven when they die, and be happy hereafter. But the poor beasts have no souls, and if they don't enjoy themselves here they have no chance of enjoying themselves at all. It is too bad!"

The woman was in sober earnest. And I question if she did not fairly represent much that has been taught in Scotland as Christianity. But at last, thank God! the day is breaking, and the blasphemy that has been preached as religion will not be heard much longer. The manifesto of the Scottish Land Restoration League, calling upon the Scottish people to bind themselves together in solemn league and covenant for the extirpation of the sin and shame of landlordism, is a lark's note in the dawn.

As in Scotland so elsewhere. I have spoken particularly of Scotland only, because the Duke does so. But everywhere that our civilisation extends the same primary injustice is bearing the same evil fruit. And everywhere the same spirit is rising, the same truth is beginning to force its way.

HENRY GEORGE.

The Prophet of San Francisco.

There are some advantages in being a citizen—even a very humble citizen—in the Republic of Letters. If any man has ever written anything on matters of serious concern, which others have read with interest, he will very soon find himself in contact with curious diversities of mind. Subtle sources of sympathy will open up before him in contrast with sources, not less subtle, of antipathy, and both of them are often interesting and instructive in the highest degree.

A good many years ago a friend of mine, whose opinion I greatly value, was kind enough to tell me of his approval of a little book which I had then lately published. As he was a man of pure taste, and naturally much more inclined to criticism than assent, his approval gave me pleasure. But being a man also very honest and outspoken, he took care to explain that his approval was not unqualified. He liked the whole book except one chapter, "in which," he added, "it seems to me there is a good deal of nonsense."

There was no need to ask him what that chapter was. I knew it very well. It could be none other than a chapter called "Law in Politics," which was devoted to the question how far, in human conduct and affairs, we can trice the Reign of Law in the same sense, or in a sense very closely analogous to that in which we can trace it in the physical sciences. There were several things in that chapter which my friend was not predisposed to like. In the first place he was an active politician, and such men are sure to feel the reasoning to be unnatural and unjust which tends to represent all the activities of their life as more or less the results of circumstances. In the second place, he was above all other things a Free Trader, and the governing idea of that school is that every attempt to interfere by law with anything connected with trade or manufacture is a folly, if not a crime. Now, one main object of my "nonsense" chapter was to show that this doctrine is not true as an absolute proposition. It drew a line between two provinces of legislation, in one of which such interference had indeed been proved to be mischievous, but in the other of which interference had been equally proved to be absolutely required. Protection, it was shown, had been found to be wrong in all attempts to regulate the value or the price of anything. But Protection, it was also shown, had been found to be right and necessary in defending the interests of life, health, and morals. As a matter of historical fact, it was pointed out that during the present century there had been two steady movements on the part of Parliament—one a movement of retreat, the other a movement of advance. Step by step legislation had been abandoned in all endeavours to regulate interests purely economic; whilst, step by step, not less steadily, legislation had been adopted more and more extensively for the regulation of matters in which those higher interests were concerned. Moreover, I had ventured to represent both these movements as equally important—the movement in favour of Protection in one direction being quite as valuable as the movement against Protection in another direction. It was not in the nature of things that my friend should admit this equality, or even any approach to a comparison between the two movements. In promoting one of them he had spent his life, and the truths it represented were to him the subject of passionate conviction. Of the other movement he had been at best only a passive spectator, or had followed its steps with cold and critical toleration. To place them on anything like the same level as steps of advance in the science of government could not but appear to him as a proposition involving "a good deal of nonsense." But critics may themselves be criticised; and sometimes authors are in the happy position of seeing behind both the praise and the blame they get. In this case I am unrepentant. I am firmly convinced that the social and political value of the

principle which has led to the repeal of all laws for the regulation of price is not greater than the value of the principle which has led to the enactment of many laws for the regulation of labour. If the Factory Acts and many others of the like kind had not been passed we should for many years have been hearing a hundred "bitter cries" for every one which assails us now, and the social problems which still confront us would have been much more difficult and dangerous than they are.

Certain it is that if the train of thought which led up to this conclusion was distasteful to some minds, it turned out to be eminently attractive to many others. And of this, some years later, I had a curious proof. From the other side of the world, and from a perfect stranger, there came a courteous letter accompanied by the present of a book. The author had read mine, and he sent his own. In spite of prepossessions he had confidence in a candid hearing. The letter was from Mr. Henry George, and the book was "Progress and Poverty." Both were then unknown to fame; nor was it possible for me fully to appreciate the compliment conveyed until I found that the book was directed to prove that almost all the evils of humanity are to be traced to the very existence of landowners, and that by Divine right land could only belong to everybody in general and nobody in particular.

The credit of being open to conviction is a great credit, and even the heaviest drafts upon it cannot well be made the subject of complaint. And so I could not be otherwise than flattered when this appeal in the sphere of politics was followed by another in the sphere of science. Another author was good enough to present me with his book; and I found that it was directed to prove that all the errors of modern physical philosophy arise from the prevalent belief that our planet is a globe. In reality it is flat. Elaborate chapters, and equally elaborate diagrams are devoted to the proof. At first I thought that the argument was a joke, like Archbishop Whately's "Historic Doubts." But I soon saw that the author was quite as earnest as Mr. Henry George. Lately I have seen that both these authors have been addressing public meetings with great success; and considering that all obvious appearances and the language of common life are against the accepted doctrine of Copernicus, it is perhaps not surprising that the popular audiences which have listened to the two reformers have evidently been almost as incompetent to detect the blunders of the one as to see through the logical fallacies of the other. But the Californian philosopher has an immense advantage. Nobody has any personal interest in believing that the world is flat. But many persons may have an interest, very personal indeed, in believing that they have a right to appropriate a share in their neighbour's vineyard.

There are, at least, a few axioms in life on which we are entitled to decline discussion. Even the most sceptical minds have done so. The mind of Voltaire was certainly not disposed to accept without question any of the beliefs that underlay the rotten political system which he saw and hated. He was one of those who assailed it with every weapon, and who ultimately overthrew it. Amongst his fellows in that work there was a perfect revelry of rebellion and of unbelief. In the grotesque procession of new opinions which have begun to pass across the stage whilst he was still upon it, this particular opinion against property in land had been advocated by the famous "Jean Jacques." Voltaire turned his powerful glance upon it, and this is how he treated it

"Dictionnaire Philosophique," 1764, art. "Loi Naturelle."

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B. Avez-vous oublié que Jean-Jacques, un des pères de l'Eglise Moderne a dit, que le premier qui osa clore et cultiver un terrain fut l'ennemi du genre humain, qu'il fallait l'exterminer, et que les fruits sont à tous, et que la terre n'est à personne? N'avons-nous pas déjà examiné ensemble cette belle proposition si utile à la Société?

A. Quel est ce Jean-Jacques? Il faut que ce soit quelque Hun, bel esprit, qui ait écrit cette impertinence abominable, ou quelque mauvais plaisant, buffo magro, qui ait voulu rire de ce que le monde entier a de plus sérieux. . . .

For my own part, however, I confess that the mocking spirit of Voltaire is not the spirit in which I am ever tempted to look at the fallacies of Communism. Apart altogether from the appeal which was made to me by this author, I have always felt the high interest which belongs to those fallacies, because of the protean forms in which they tend to revive and reappear, and because of the call they make upon us from time to time to examine and identify the fundamental facts which do really govern the condition of mankind. Never, perhaps, have communistic theories assumed a form more curious, or lent themselves to more fruitful processes of analysis, than in the writings of Mr. Henry George. These writings now include a volume on "Social Problems," published recently. It represents the same ideas as those which inspire the work on "Progress and Poverty." They are often expressed in almost the same words, but they exhibit some development and applications which are of high interest and importance. In this paper I shall refer to both, but for the present I am do no more than group together some of the more prominent features of this new political philosophy.

In the first place, it is not a little remarkable to find one of the most extreme doctrines of Communism advocated by a man who is a citizen of the United States. We have been accustomed to associate that country with boundless resources, and an almost inexhaustible future. It has been for two centuries, and it still is, the

land of refuge and the land of promise to millions of the human race. And among all the states which are there "united," those which occupy the Far West are credited with the largest share in this abundant present, and still more abundant future. Yet it is out of these United States, and out of the one State which, perhaps, above all others, has this fame of opulence, that we have a solitary voice, prophesying a future of intolerable woes. He declares that all the miseries of the Old World are already firmly established in the New. He declares that they are increasing in an ever-accelerating ratio, growing with the growth of the people, and strengthening with its apparent strength. He tells us of crowded cities, of pestilential rooms, of men and women struggling for employments however mean, of the breathlessness of competition, of the extremes of poverty and of wealth—in short, of all the inequalities of condition, of all the pressures and suffocations which accompany the struggle for existence in the oldest and most crowded societies in the world.

I do not pretend to accept this picture as an accurate representation of the truth. At the best it is a picture only of the darkest shadows with a complete omission of the lights. The author is above all things a Pessimist, and he is under obvious temptations to adopt this kind of colouring. He has a theory of his own as to the only remedy for all the evils of humanity; and this remedy he knows to be regarded with aversion both by the intellect and by the conscience of his countrymen. He can only hope for success by trying to convince Society that it is the grasp of some deadly malady. Large allowance must be made for this temptation. Still, after making every allowance, it remains a most remarkable fact that such a picture can be drawn by a citizen of the United States. There can be no doubt whatever that at least as regards many of the great cities of the Union, it is quite as true a picture of them as it would be of the great cities of Europe. And even as regards the population of the States as a whole, other observers have reported on the feverish atmosphere which accompanies its eager pursuit of wealth, and on the strain which is everywhere manifest for the attainment of standards of living and of enjoyment which are never reached except by a very few. So far, at least, we may accept Mr. George's representations as borne out by independent evidence.

But here we encounter another most remarkable circumstance in Mr. George's books. The man who gives this dark—this almost black—picture of the tendencies of American progress, is the same man who rejects with indignation the doctrine that population does everywhere tend to press in the same way upon the limits of subsistence. This, as is well known, is the general proposition which is historically connected with the name of Malthus, although other writers before him had unconsciously felt and assumed its truth. Since his time it has been almost universally admitted not as a theory but as a fact, and one of the most clearly ascertained of all the facts of economic science. But, like all Communists, Mr. George hates the very name of Malthus. He admits and even exaggerates the fact of pressure as applicable to the people of America. He admits it as applicable to the people of Europe, and of India, and of China. He admits it as a fact as applicable more or less obviously to every existing population of the globe. But he will not allow the fact to be generalised into a law. He will not allow this—because the generalisation suggests a cause which he denies, and shuts out another cause which he asserts. But this is not a legitimate reason for refusing to express phenomena in terms as wide and general as their actual occurrence. Never mind causes until we have clearly ascertained facts; but when these are clearly ascertained let us record them fearlessly in terms as wide as the truth demands. If there is not a single population on the globe which does not exhibit the fact of pressure more or less severe on the limits of their actual subsistence, let us at least recognise this fact in all its breadth and sweep. The diversities of laws and institutions, of habits and of manners, are almost infinite. Yet amidst all these diversities this one fact is universal. Mr. George himself is the latest witness. He sees it to be a fact—a terrible and alarming fact, in his opinion—as applicable to the young and hopeful society of the New World. In a country where there is no monarch, no aristocracy, no ancient families, no entails of land, no standing armies worthy of the name, no pensions, no courtiers, where all are absolutely equal before the law, there, even there—in this paradise of Democracy, Mr. George tells us that the pressure of the masses upon the means of living and enjoyment which are open to them is becoming more and more severe, and that the inequalities of men are becoming as wide and glaring as in the oldest societies of Asia and of Europe.

The contrast between this wonderful confirmation of Malthusian facts, and the vehement denunciation of Malthusian law," is surely one of the curiosities of literature. But the explanation is clear enough. Mr. George sees that facts common to so many nations must be due to some cause as common as the result. But, on the other hand, it would not suit his theory to admit that this cause can possibly be anything inherent in the constitution of Man, or in the natural System under which he lives. From this region, therefore, he steadily averts his face. There are a good many other facts in human nature and in human conditions that have this common and universal character. There are a number of such facts connected with the mind, another number connected with the body, and still another number connected with the opportunities of men. But all of these Mr. George passes over—in order that he may fix attention upon one solitary fact—namely, that in all nations individual men, and individual communities of men, have hitherto been allowed to acquire bits of land and to deal with them as their own.

The distinction between Natural Law and Positive Institution is indeed a distinction not to be neglected. But it is one of the very deepest subjects in all philosophy, and there are many indications that Mr. George has dipped into its abysmal waters with the very shortest of sounding lines. Human laws are evolved out of human instincts, and these are among the gifts of Nature. Reason may pervert them, and Reason is all the more apt to do so when it begins to spin logical webs out of its own bowels. But it may be safely said that in direct proportion as human laws, and the accepted ideas on which they rest, are really universal, in that same proportion they have a claim to be regarded as really natural, and as the legitimate expression of fundamental truths. Sometimes the very men who set up as reformers against such laws, and denounce as "stupid"

This is the epithet applied by Mr. George to the English people, because they will persist in allowing what all other nations have equally allowed.

even the greatest nations which have abided by them, are themselves unconsciously subject to the same ideas, and are only working out of them some perverted application.

For here, again, we come upon another wonderful circumstance affecting Mr. George's writings. I have spoken of Mr. George as a citizen of the United States, and also as a citizen of the particular State of California. In this latter capacity, as the citizen of a democratic government, he is a member of that government, which is the government of the whole people. Now, what is the most striking feature about the power claimed by that government, and actually exercised by it every day? It is the power of excluding the whole human race absolutely, except on its own conditions, from a large portion of the earth's surface—a portion so large that it embraces no less than ninety-nine millions of acres, or 150,000 square miles of plain and valley, of mountain and of hill, of lake and river, and of estuaries of the sea. Yet the community which claims and exercises this exclusive ownership over this enormous territory is, as compared with its extent, a mere handful of men. The whole population of the State of California represents only the fractional number of 5.5 to the square mile. It is less than one quarter the population of London. If the whole of it could be collected into one place they would hardly make a black spot in the enormous landscape if it were swept by a telescope. Such is the little company of men which claims to own absolutely and exclusively this enormous territory. Yet it is a member of this community who goes about the world preaching the doctrine, as a doctrine of Divine right, that land is to be as free as the atmosphere, which is the common property of all, and in which no exclusive ownership can be claimed by any. It is true that Mr. George does denounce the conduct of his own Government in the matter of its disposal of land. But strange to say, he does not denounce it because it claims this exclusive ownership. On the contrary, he denounces it because it ever consents to part with it. Not the land only, but the very atmosphere of California—to use his own phraseology—is to be held so absolutely and so exclusively as the property of this community, that it is never to be parted with except on lease and for such annual rent as the government may determine. Who gave this exclusive ownership over this immense territory to this particular community? Was it conquest? And if so, may it not be as rightfully acquired by any who are strong enough to seize it? And if exclusive ownership is conferred by conquest, then has it not been open to every conquering army, and to every occupying host in all ages and in all countries of the world, to establish a similar ownership, and to deal with it as they please?

It is at this point that we catch sight of one aspect of Mr. George's theory in which it is capable of at least a rational explanation. The question how a comparatively small community of men like the first gold-diggers of California and their descendants can with best advantage use or employ its exclusive claims of ownership over so vast an area is clearly quite an open question. It is one thing for any given political society to refuse to divide its vacant territory among individual owners. It is quite another thing for a political society, which for ages has recognised such ownership and encouraged it, to break faith with those who have acquired such ownership, and have lived and laboured, and bought and sold, and willed upon the faith of it. If Mr. George can persuade the State of which he is a citizen, and the Government of which he is in this sense a member, that it would be best never any more to sell any bit of its unoccupied territory to any individual, by all means let him try to do so, and some plausible arguments might be used in favour of such a course. But there is a strong presumption against it and him. The question of the best method of disposing of such territory has been before every one of our great colonies, and before the United States for several generations; and the universal instinct of them all has been that the individual ownership of land is the one great attraction which they can hold out to the settlers whom it is their highest interest to invite and to establish. They know that the land of a country is never so well "nationalised" as when it is committed to the ownership of men whose interest it is to make the most of it. They know that under no other inducement could men be found to clear the soil from stifling forests, or to water it from arid wastes, or to drain it from pestilential swamps, or to enclose it from the access of wild animals, or to defend it from the assaults of savage tribes. Accordingly their verdict has been unanimous; and it has been given under conditions in which they were free from all traditions except those which they carried with them as parts of their own nature, in harmony and correspondence with the nature of things around them. I do not stop to argue this question here; but I do stop to point out that both solutions of it—the one quite as much as the

other—involve the exclusive occupation of land by individuals, and the doctrine of absolute ownership vested in particular communities, as against all the rest of mankind. Both are equally incompatible with the fustian which compares the exclusive occupation of land to exclusive occupation of the atmosphere. Supposing that settlers could be found willing to devote the years of labour and of skill which are necessary to make wild soils productive, under no other tenure than that of a long "improvement lease," paying, of course, for some long period either no rent at all, or else a rent which must be purely nominal; supposing this to be true, still equally the whole area of any given region would soon be in the exclusive possession for long periods of time of a certain number of individual fanners, and would not be open to the occupation by the poor of all the world. Thus the absolute ownership which Mr. George declares to be blasphemous against God and Nature, is still asserted on behalf of some mere fraction of the human race, and this absolute ownership is again doled out to the members of this small community, and to them alone, in such shares as it considers to be most remunerative to itself.

And here again, for the third time, we come upon a most remarkable testimony to facts in Mr. George's book, the import and bearing of which he does not apparently perceive. Of course the question whether it is most advantageous to any given society of men to own and cultivate its own lands in severalty or in common is a question largely depending on the conduct and the motives and the character of governments, as compared with the conduct and the character and the motives of individual men. In the disposal and application of wealth, as well as in the acquisition of it, are men more pure and honest when they act in public capacities as members of a Government or a Legislature, than when they act in private capacities towards their fellow-men? Is it not notoriously the reverse? Is it not obvious that men will do, and are constantly seen doing, as politicians, what they would be ashamed to do in private life? And has not this been proved under all the forms which government has taken in the history of political societies? Lastly, I will ask one other question—Is it not true that, to say the very least, this inherent tendency to corruption has received no check from the democratic constitutions of those many "new worlds" in which kings were left behind, and aristocracies have not had time to be established?

These are the very questions which Mr. George answers with no faltering voice; and it is impossible to disregard his evidence. He declared over and over again, in language of virtuous indignation, that government in the United States is everywhere becoming more and more corrupt. Not only are the Legislatures corrupt, but that last refuge of virtue even in the worst societies—the Judiciary—is corrupt also. In none of the old countries of the world has the very name of politician fallen so low as in the democratic communities of America. Nor would it be true to say that it is the wealthy classes who have corrupted the constituencies. These—at least to a very large extent—are themselves corrupt. Probably there is no sample of the Demos more infected with corruption than the Demos of New York. Its management of the municipal rates is alleged to be a system of scandalous jobbery. Now, the wonderful thing is that of all this Mr. George is thoroughly aware. He sees it, he repeats it in every variety of form. Let us hear a single passage

"Social Problems'," p. 22.

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It behoves us to look facts in the face. The experiment of popular government in the United States is clearly a failure. Not that it is a failure everywhere and in everything. An experiment of this kind does not have to be fully worked out to be proved a failure. But, speaking generally of the whole country, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Lakes to the Gulf, our government by the people has in large degree become, is in larger degree becoming, government by the strong and unscrupulous.

Again, I say that it is fair to remember that Mr. George is a Pessimist. But whilst remembering this, and making every possible allowance for it, we must not less remember that his evidence does not stand alone. In the United States, from citizens still proud of their country, and out of the United States from representative Americans, I have been told of transactions from personal knowledge which conclusively indicated a condition of things closely corresponding to the indictment of Mr. George. At all events, we cannot be wrong in our conclusion that it is not among the public bodies and Governments of the States of America that we are to look in that country for the best exhibitions of purity or of virtue.

Yet it is to these bodies—legislative, administrative, and judicial, of which he gives us such an account—that Mr. George would confine the rights of absolute ownership in the soil. It is these bodies that he would constitute the sole and universal landlord, and it is to them he would confide the duty of assessing and of spending the rents of everybody all over the area of every State. He tells us that a great revenue, fit for the support of some such great rulers as have been common in the Old World, could be afforded out of one-half the "waste and stealages" of such Municipalities as his own at San Francisco. What would be the "waste and stealages" of a governing body having at its disposal the whole agricultural and mining wealth of such States as California and Texas, of Illinois and Colorado?

But this is not all. The testimony which is borne by Mr. George as to what the governing bodies of America

now are is as nothing to the testimony of his own writings as to what they would be—if they were ever to adopt his system, and if they were ever to listen to his teaching. Like all Communists, he regards Society not as consisting of individuals whose separate welfare is to be the basis of the welfare of the whole, but as a great abstract Personality, in which all power is to be centred, and to which all separate rights and interests are to be subordinate. If this is to be the doctrine, we might at least have hoped that with such powers committed to Governments, as against the individual, corresponding duties and responsibilities, towards the individual, would have been recognised as an indispensable accompaniment. If, for example, every political society as a whole is an abiding Personality, with a continuity of rights over all its members, we might at least have expected that the continuous obligation of honour and good faith would have been recognised as equally binding on this Personality in all its relations with those who are subject to its rule. But this is not at all Mr. George's view. On the contrary, he preaches systematically not only the high privilege, but the positive duty of repudiation. He is not content with urging that no more bits of unoccupied land should be ever sold, but he insists upon it that the ownership of every bit already sold shall be resumed without compensation to the settler who has bought it, who has spent upon it years of labour, and who from first to last has relied on the security of the State and on the honour of its Government. There is no mere practice of corruption which has ever been alleged against the worst administrative body in any country that can be compared in corruption with the desolating dishonour of this teaching. In olden times, under violent and rapacious rulers, the Prophets of Israel and of Judah used to raise their voices against all forms of wrong and robbery, and they pronounced a special benediction upon him who sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not. But the new Prophet of San Francisco is of a different opinion. Ahab would have been saved all his trouble, and Jezebel would have been saved all her tortuous intrigues if only they could have had beside them the voice of Mr. Henry George. Elijah was a fool. What right could Naboth have to talk about the "inheritance of his fathers"?

1 Kings xxi. 3.

His fathers could have no more right to acquire the ownership of those acres on the Hill of Jezreel than he could have to continue in the usurpation of it. No matter what might be his pretended title, no man and no body of men could give it—not Joshua nor the Judges; not Saul nor David; not Solomon in all his glory—could "make sure" to Naboth's fathers that portion of God's earth against the undying claims of the head of the State, and of the representative of the whole people of Israel.

But now another vista of consequence opens up before us. If the doctrine be established that no faith is to be kept with the owners of land, will the same principle not apply to tenancy as well as ownership? If one generation cannot bind the next to recognise a purchase, can one generation bind another to recognise a lease? If the one promise can be broken and ought to be broken, why should the other be admitted to be binding? If the accumulated value arising out of many years, or even generations, of labour, can be and ought to be appropriated, is there any just impediment against seizing that value every year as it comes to be? If this new gospel be indeed gospel, why should not this Californian form of "faith unfaithful" keep us perennially, and forever "falsely true"?

Nay, more, is there any reason why the doctrine of repudiation should be confined to pledges respecting either the tenancy or the ownership of land? This question naturally arose in the minds of all who read with any intelligence "Progress and Poverty" when it first appeared. But the extent to which its immoral doctrines might be applied was then a matter of inference only, however clear that inference might be. If all owners of land, great and small, might be robbed, and ought to be robbed of that which Society had from time immemorial allowed them and encouraged them to acquire and call their own; if the thousands of men, women, and children who directly and indirectly live on rent, whether in the form of returns to the improver, or of mortgage to the capitalist, or jointure to the widow, or portion to the children, are all equally to be ruined by the confiscation of the fund on which they depend—are there not other funds which would be all swept into the same net of envy and of violence? In particular, what is to become of that great fund on which also thousands and thousands depend—men, women, and children, the aged, the widow, and the orphan—the fund which the State has borrowed and which constitutes the Debt of Nations? Even in "Progress and Poverty" there were dark hints and individual passages which indicated the goal of all its reasoning in this direction. But men's intellects just now are so flabby on these subjects, and they are so fond of shaking their heads when property in land is compared with property in other things, that such suspicions and forebodings as to the issue of Mr. George's arguments would to many have seemed overstrained. Fortunately, in his latter book he has had the courage of his opinions, and the logic of false premises has steeled his moral sense against the iniquity of even the most dishonourable conclusions. All National Debts are as unjust as property in land; all such Debts are to be treated with the sponge. As no faith is due to landowners, or to any who depend on their sources of income, so neither is any faith to be kept with bondholders, or with any who depend on the revenues which have been pledged to them. The Jew who may have lent a million, and the small tradesman who may have lent his little savings to the State—the trust-funds of children and of widows which have been similarly lent—are all equally to be the

victims of repudiation. When we remember the enormous amount of the national debts of Europe and of the American States, and the vast number of persons of all kinds and degrees of wealth whose property is invested in these "promises to pay," we can perhaps faintly imagine the ruin which would be caused by the gigantic fraud recommended by Mr. George. Take England alone. About seven hundred and fifty millions is the amount of her Public Debt. This great sum is held by about 181,721 persons, of whom the immense majority—about 111,000—receive dividends amounting to £400 a-year and under. Of these, again, by far the greater part enjoy incomes of less than £100 a-year. And then the same principle is of course applicable to the debt of all public bodies; those of the Municipalities alone which are rapidly increasing, would now amount to something like 150 millions more.

Everything in America is on a gigantic scale, even its forms of villainy, and the villainy advocated by Mr. George is an illustration of this as striking as the Mammoth Caves of Kentucky, or the frauds of the celebrated "Tammany Ring" in New York. The world has never seen such a Preacher of Unrighteousness as Mr. Henry George. For he goes to the roots of things, and shows us how unfounded are the rules of probity, and what mere senseless superstitions are the obligations which have been only too long acknowledged. Let us hear him on National Debts, for it is an excellent specimen of his childish logic, and of his profligate conclusions:—

The institution of public debts, like the institution of private property in land, rests upon the preposterous assumption that one generation may bind another generation. If a man were to come to me and say, "Here is a promissory note which your great-grandfather gave to my great-grandfather, and which you will oblige me by paying," I would laugh at him and tell him that if he wanted to collect his note he had better hunt up the man who made it: that I had nothing to do with my great-grandfather's promises.

And if he were to insist upon payment, and to call my attention to the terms of the bond in which my great-grandfather expressly stipulated with his great-grandfather that I should pay him, I would only laugh the more, and be more certain that he was a lunatic. To such a demand any one of us would reply in effect, "My great-grandfather was evidently a knave or a joker, and your great-grandfather was certainly a fool, which quality you surely have inherited if you expect me to pay you money because my great-grandfather promised that I should do so. He might as well have given your great-grandfather a draft upon Adam, or a cheque upon the First National Bank of the Moon."

Yet upon this assumption that ascendants may bind descendants, that one generation may legislate for another generation, rests the assumed validity of our land titles and public debts.

"Social Problems," pp. 213-14.

Yet even in this wonderful passage we have not touched the bottom of Mr. George's lessons in the philosophy of spoliation. If we may take the property of those who have trusted to our honour, surely it must be still more legitimate to take the property of those who have placed in us no such confidence. If we may fleece the public creditor, it must be at least equally open to us to fleece all those who have invested otherwise their private fortunes. All the other accumulations of industry must be as rightfully liable to confiscation. Whenever "the people" see any large handful in the hands of anyone, they have a right to have it—in order to save themselves from any necessity of submitting to taxation.

Accordingly we find, as usual, that Mr. George has a wonderful honesty in avowing what hitherto the uninstructed world has been agreed upon considering as dishonesty. But this time the avowal comes out under circumstances which are deserving of special notice. We all know that not many years ago the United States was engaged in a civil war of long duration, at one time apparently of doubtful issue, and on which the national existence hung. I was one of those—not too many in this country—who held from the beginning of that terrible contest that "the North" were right in fighting it. Lord Russell, on a celebrated occasion, said that they were fighting for "dominion." Yes; and for what else have nations ever fought, and by what else than dominion, in one sense or another, have great nations ever come to be? The Demos has no greater right to fight for dominion than Kings; but it has the same. But behind and above the existence of the Union as a nation there was the further question involved whether, in this nineteenth century of the Christian era, there was to be established a great dominion of civilised men which was to have negro slavery as its fundamental doctrine and as the cherished basis of its constitution. On both of these great questions the people of the Northern States—in whatever proportions the one or the other issue might affect individual minds—had before them as noble a cause as any which has ever called men to arms. It is a cause which will be forever associated in the memory of mankind with one great figure—the figure of Abraham Lincoln, the best and highest representative of the American people in that tremendous crisis. In nothing has the bearing of that people been more admirable than in the patient and willing submission of the masses, as of one man, not only to the desolating sacrifice of life which it entailed, but to the heavy and lasting burden of taxation which was inseparable from it. It is indeed deplorable—nothing I have ever read in all literature has struck me as so deplorable—than that at this time of day, when by patient continuance in well doing the burden has become comparatively light, and there is a near prospect of its final disappearance, one single American citizen should be found who appreciates so little the

glory of his country as to express his regret that they did not begin this great contest by an act of stealing. Yet this is the case with Mr. Henry George. In strict pursuance of his dishonest doctrines of repudiation respecting public debts, and knowing that the war could not have been prosecuted without funds, he speaks with absolute bitterness of the folly which led the Government to "shrink" from at once seizing the whole, or all but a mere fraction, of the property of the few individual citizens who had the reputation of being exceptionally rich. If, for example, it were known that any man had made a fortune of £200,000, the Washington Government ought not to have "shrunk" from taking the whole—except some £200, which remainder might, perhaps, by a great favour, be left for such support as it might afford to the former owner. And so by a number of seizures of this kind, all over the States, the war might possibly have been conducted for the benefit of all at the cost of a very few.

Mr. George's words are these: "If when we called on men to die for their country, we had not shrunk from taking, if necessary, nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand dollars from every millionaire, we need not have created any debt."—"Social Problems," p. 216.

It may be worthwhile to illustrate how this would have worked in a single instance. When I was in New York, a few years ago, one of the sights which was pointed out to me was a house of great size and of great beauty both in respect to material and to workmanship. In these respects at least, if not in its architecture, it was equal to any of the palaces which are owned by private citizens in any of the richest capitals of the Old World. It was built wholly of pure white marble, and the owner, not having been satisfied with any of the marbles of America, had gone to the expense of importing Italian marble for the building. This beautiful and costly house was, I was further told, the property of a Scotchman who had emigrated to America with no other fortune and no other capital than his own good brains. He had begun by selling ribbons. By selling cheap, and for ready money, but always also goods of the best quality, he had soon acquired a reputation for dealings which were eminently advantageous to those who bought. But those who bought were the public, and so a larger and larger portion of the public became eager to secure the advantages of this exceptionally moderate and honest dealer. With the industry of his race he had also its thrift, and the constant turning of his capital on an ever-increasing scale, coupled with his own limited expenditure, had soon led to larger and larger savings. These, again, had been judiciously invested in promoting every public undertaking which promised advantage to his adopted country, and which, by fulfilling that promise, could alone become remunerative. And so by a process which, in every step of it, was an eminent service to the community of which he was a member, he became what is called a millionaire. Nor in the spending of his wealth had he done otherwise than contribute to the taste and splendour of his country, as well as to the lucrative employment of its people. All Nature is full of the love of ornament, and the habitations of creatures, even the lowest in the scale of being, are rich in colouring and in carving of the most exquisite and elaborate decoration. It is only an ignorant and uncultured spirit which denounces the same love of ornament in Man, and it is a stupid doctrine which sees in it nothing but a waste of means. The great merchant of New York had indeed built his house at great cost; but this is only another form of saying that he had spent among the artificers of that city a great sum of money, and had in the same proportion contributed to the only employment by which they live. In every way, therefore, both as regards the getting and the spending of his wealth, this millionaire was an honour and benefactor to his country. This is the man on whom that same country would have been incited by Mr. Henry George to turn the big eyes of brutal envy, and to rob of all his earnings. It is not so much the dishonesty or the violence of such teachings that strikes us most, but its unutterable meanness. That a great nation, having a great cause at stake, and representing in the history of the world a life-and-death struggle against barbarous institutions, ought to have begun its memorable war by plundering a few of its own citizens—this is surely the very lowest depth which has ever been reached by any political philosophy.

And not less instructive than the results of this philosophy are the methods of its reasoning, its methods of illustration, and its way of representing facts. Of these we cannot have a better example than the passage before quoted, in which Mr. Henry George explains the right of nations and the right of individuals to repudiate an hereditary debt. It is well to see that the man who defends the most dishonourable conduct on the part of Governments defends it equally on the part of private persons. The passage is a typical specimen of the kind of stuff of which Mr. George's works are full. The element of plausibility in it is the idea that a man should not be held responsible for promises to which he was not himself a consenting party. This idea is presented by itself, with a careful suppression of the conditions which make it inapplicable to the case in hand. Hereditary debts do not attach to persons except in respect to hereditary possessions. Are these possessions to be kept whilst the corresponding obligations are to be denied? Mr. George is loud on the absurdity of calling upon him to honour any promise which his great-grandfather may have made, but he is silent about giving up any resources which his great-grandfather may have left. Possibly he might get out of this difficulty by avowing that he would allow no property to pass from one generation to another—not even from father to son—that upon every death all the savings of every individual should be confiscated by the State. Such a proposal would not be one whit more

violent, or more destructive to society, than other proposals which he does avow. But so far as I have observed, this particular consequence of his reasoning is either not seen, or is kept in the dark. With all his apparent and occasional honesty in confronting results, however anarchical, there is a good deal of evidence that he knows how to conceal his hand. The prominence given in his agitation to an attack on the particular class of capitalists who are owners of land, and the total or comparative silence which he maintains on his desire to rob fundholders of all kinds, and especially the public creditor, is a clear indication of a strategy which is more dexterous than honest. And so it may really be true that he repudiates all hereditary debt because he will also destroy all hereditary succession in savings of any kind. But it must be observed that even thus he cannot escape from the inconsistency I have pointed out, as it affects all public debts. These have all been contracted for the purpose of effecting great national objects, such as the preservation of national independence, or the acquisition of national territory, or the preparations needed for national defence. The State cannot be disinherited of the benefits and possessions thus secured, as individuals may be disinherited of their fathers' gains. In the case of national debts, therefore, it is quite clear that the immorality of Mr. George's argument is as conspicuous as the childishness of its reasoning.

But there are other examples, quite as striking, of the incredible absurdity of his reasoning, which are immediately connected with his dominant idea about property in land. Thus the notion that because all the natural and elementary substances which constitute the raw material of human wealth are substances derived from the ground, therefore all forms of that wealth must ultimately tend to concentration in the hands of those who own the land; this notion must strike a landowner as one worthy only of Bedlam. He may not be able at a moment's notice to unravel all the fallacies on which it rests, and he may even be able to see in it the mad mimicry of logic which deceives the ignorant. But it does not need to be a landowner to see immediately that the conclusion is an absurdity. "We have only to apply this notion in detail in order to see more and more clearly its discrepancy with fact. Thus, for example, we may put one application of it thus : All houses are built of materials derived from the soil, of stone, of lime, of brick, or of wood, or of all three combined. But of these materials three are not only products of the soil, but parts of its very substance and material. Clearly it must follow that the whole value of house property must end in passing into the hands of those who own these materials quarries of building-stone, beds of brick earth, beds of lime, and forests. Unfortunately for landowners, this wonderful demonstration does not, somehow, take effect.

But Mr. Henry George's processes in matters of reasoning are not more absurd than his assumptions in matters of fact. The whole tone is based on the assumption that owners of land are not producers, and that rent does not represent, or represents only in a very minor degree, the interest of capital. Even an American ought to know better than this; because, although there are in some parts of the United States immense areas of prairie land which are ready for the plough with almost no preliminary labour, yet even in the New World the areas are still more immense in which the soil can only be made capable of producing human food by the hardest labour, and the most prolonged. But in the old countries of Europe, and especially in our own, every landowner knows well, and others ought to know a little, that the present condition of the soil is the result of generations of costly improvements, and of renewed and reiterated outlays to keep these improvements in effective order. Yet on this subject I fear that many persons are almost as ignorant as Mr. Henry George. My own experience now extends over a period of the best part of forty years. During that time I have built more than fifty homesteads, complete for man and beast; I have drained and reclaimed many hundreds, and enclosed some thousands, of acres. In this sense I have "added house to house, and field to field," not—as pulpit orators have assumed in similar cases—that I might "dwell alone in the land," but that the cultivating class might live more comfortably, and with better appliances for increasing the produce of the soil. I know no more animating scene than that presented to us in the essays and journals which give an account of the agricultural improvements effected in Scotland since the close of the Civil Wars in 1745. Thousands and thousands of acres have been reclaimed from bog and waste. Ignorance has given place to science, and barbarous customs of immemorial strength have been replaced by habits of intelligence and of business. In every county the great landowners, and very often the smaller, were the great pioneers in a process which has transformed the whole face of the country. And this process is still in full career. If I mention again my own case, it is because I know it to be only a specimen, and that others have been working on a still larger scale. During the four years since Mr. George did me the honour of sending to me a book assuming that landowners are not producers, I find that I have spent on one property alone the sum of £40,000, entirely on the improvement of the soil. Moreover, I know that this outlay on my own part, and similar outlay on the part of my neighbours, so far from having power to absorb and concentrate in our hands all other forms of wealth, is unable to secure anything like the return which the same capital would have won—and won easily—in many other kinds of enterprise. I am in possession of authentic information that on one great estate in England the outlay on improvements purely agricultural has, for twenty-one years past, been at the rate of £35,000 a-year, whilst including outlay on churches and schools, it has amounted in the last forty years to nearly 2,000,000/ sterling. To such outlays landowners are incited very often, and to a great

extent, by the mere love of seeing a happier landscape and a more prosperous people. From much of the capital so invested they often seek no return at all, and from very little of it indeed do they ever get a high rate of interest. And yet the whole—every farthing of it—goes directly to the public advantage. Production is increased in full proportion, although the profit on that production is small to the owner. There has been grown more corn, more potatoes, more turnips; there has been produced more milk, more butter, more cheese, more beef, more mutton, more pork, more fowls, and eggs, and all these articles in direct proportion to their abundance have been sold at lower prices to the people. When a man tells me, and argues on steps of logic which he boasts as irrefutable, that in all this, I and others have been serving no interests but our own—nay, more, that we have been but making "the poor poorer" than they were—I know very well that, whether I can unravel his fallacies or not, he is talking the most arrant nonsense, and must have in his composition, however ingenious and however eloquent, a rich combination, and a very large percentage of the fanatic and of the goose.

And here, again, we have a new indication of these elements in one great assumption of fact, and that is the assumption that wealth has been becoming less and less diffused—"the rich richer, the poor poorer." It did not require the recent elaborate and able statistical examination of Mr. Giffen to convince me that this assumption is altogether false. It is impossible for any man to have been a considerable employer of labour during a period embracing one full generation, without his seeing and feeling abundant evidence that all classes have partaken in the progress of the country, and no class more extensively than that which lives by labour. He must know that wages have more than doubled—sometimes a great deal more—whilst the continuous remission of taxes has tended to make, and has actually made, almost every article of subsistence a great deal cheaper than it was thirty years ago. And outside the province of mere muscular labour, amongst all the classes who are concerned in the work of distribution or of manufacture, I have seen around me, and on my own property, the enormous increase of those whose incomes must be comfortable without being large. The houses that are built for their weeks of rest and leisure, the furniture with which these houses are provided, the gardens and shrubberies which are planted for the ornament of them; all of these indications, and a thousand more, tell of increasing comfort far more widely if not universally diffused.

And if personal experience enables me to contradict absolutely one of Mr. George's assumptions, official experience enables me not less certainly to contradict another. Personally I know what private ownership has done for one country. Officially I have had only too good cause to know what State ownership has not done for another country. India is a country in which, theoretically at least, the State is the only and the universal landowner, and over a large part of it the State does actually take to itself a share of the gross produce which fully represents ordinary rent. Yet this is the very country in which the poverty of the masses is so abject that millions live only from hand to mouth, and when there is any—even a partial—failure of the crops, thousands and hundreds of thousands are in danger of actual starvation. The Indian Government is not corrupt—whatever other failings it may have—and the rents of a vast territory can be far more safe if left to its disposal than they could be left at the disposal of such popular governments as those which Mr. George has denounced on the American Continent. Yet somehow the functions and duties which in more civilised countries are discharged by the institution of private ownership in land are not as adequately discharged by the Indian Administration. Moreover, I could not fail to observe, when I was connected with the Government of India, that the portion of that country which has most grown in wealth is precisely that part of it in which the Government has parted with its power of absorbing rent by having agreed to a Permanent Settlement. Many Anglo-Indian statesmen have looked with envious eyes at the wealth which has been developed in Lower Bengal, and have mourned over the policy by which the State has been withheld from taking it into the hands of Government. There are two questions, however, which have always occurred to me when this mourning has been expressed—the first is whether we are quite sure that the wealth of Lower Bengal would ever have arisen if its sources had not been thus protected; and the second is whether even now it is quite certain that any Governments, even the best, spend wealth better for the public interests than those to whom it belongs by the natural processes of acquisition. These questions have never, I think, been adequately considered. But whatever may be the true answer to either of them, there is at least one question on which all English statesmen have been unanimous—and that is, that promises once given by the Government, however long ago, must be absolutely kept. When landed property has been bought and sold and inherited in Bengal for some three generations—since 1793—under the guarantee of the Government that the Rent Tax upon it is to remain at a fixed amount, no public man, so far as I know, has ever suggested that the public faith should be violated. And not only so, but there has been a disposition even to put upon the engagement of the Government an overstrained interpretation, and to claim for the landowners who are protected under it an immunity from all other taxes affecting the same sources of income. As Secretary of State for India I had to deal with this question along with my colleagues in the Indian Council, and the result we arrived at was embodied in a despatch which laid down the principles applicable to the case so clearly that in India it appeals to have been accepted as conclusive. The Land Tax was a special impost upon rent. The promise was that this special impost should

never be increased; or, in its own words, that there should be no "augmentation of the public assessment in consequence of the improvement of their estates." It was not a promise that no other taxes should ever be raised affecting the same sources of income, provided such taxes were not special, but affected all other sources of income equally. On this interpretation the growing wealth of Bengal accruing under the Permanent Settlement would remain accessible to taxation along with the growing wealth derived from all other kinds of property, but not otherwise. There was to be no confiscation by the State of the increased value of land, any more than of the increased value of other kinds of property, on the pretext that this increase was unearned. On the other hand, the State did not exempt that increased value from any taxation which might be levied also and equally from all the rest of the community. In this way we reconciled and established two great principles which to shortsighted theorists may seem antagonistic. One of these principles is that it is the interest of every community to give equal and absolute security to every one of its members in his pursuit of wealth; the other is, that when the public interests demand a public revenue all forms of wealth should be equally accessible to taxation.

It would have saved us all, both in London and Calcutta, much anxious and careful reasoning if we could only have persuaded ourselves that the Government of 1793 could not possibly bind the Government of 1870. It would have given us a still wider margin if we had been able to believe that no faith can be pledged to landowners, and that we had a Divine right to seize not only all the wealth of the Zemindars of Bengal, but also all the property derived from the same source which had grown up since 1793, and has now become distributed and absorbed among a great number of intermediate shares, standing between the actual cultivator and the representatives of those to whom the promise was originally given. But one doctrine has been tenaciously held by the "stupid English people" in the government of their Eastern Empire, and that is, that our honour is the greatest of our possessions, and that absolute trust in that honour is one of the strongest foundations of our power.

In this paper it has not been my aim to argue. A simple record and exposure of a few of the results arrived at by Mr. Henry George has been, all that I intended to accomplish. To see what are the practical consequences of any train of reasoning is so much gained. And there are cases in which this gain is everything. In mathematical reasoning the "reduction to absurdity" is one of the most familiar methods of disproof. In political reasoning the "reduction to iniquity" ought to be of equal value. And if it is not found to be so with all minds, this is because of a peculiarity in human character which is the secret of all its corruption, and of the most dreadful forms in which that corruption has been exhibited. In pursuing another investigation I have lately had occasion to observe upon the contrast which, in this respect, exists between our moral and our purely intellectual faculties.

"Unity of Nature," chap. x., pp. 440-5.

Our Reason is so constituted in respect to certain fundamental truths that those truths are intuitively perceived, and any rejection of them is at once seen to be absurd. But in the far higher sphere of Morals and Religion, it would seem that we have no equally secure moorings to duty and to truth. There is no consequence, however hideous or cruel its application may be, that men have been prevented from accepting because of such hideousness or of such cruelty. Nothing, however shocking, is quite sure to shock them. If it follows from some false belief, or from some fallacious verbal proposition, they will entertain it, and sometimes will even rejoice in it with a savage fanaticism. It is a fact that none of us should ever forget that the moral faculties of Man do not as certainly revolt against iniquity as his reasoning faculties do revolt against absurdity. All history is crowded with illustrations of this distinction, and it is the only explanation of a thousand horrors. There has seldom been such a curious example as the immoral teachings of Mr. Henry George. Here we have a man who probably sincerely thinks he is a Christian, and who sets up as a philosopher, but who is not the least shocked by consequences which abolish the Decalogue and deny the primary obligations both of public and of private honour. This is a very curious phenomenon, and well deserving of some closer investigation. What are the erroneous data—what are the abstract propositions—which so overpower the Moral Sense, and coming from the sphere of Speculation dictate such flagitious recommendations in the sphere of Conduct? To this question I may perhaps return, not with exclusive reference to the writings of one man, but with reference to the writings of many others who have tried to reduce to scientific form the laws which govern the social developments of our race, and who in doing so have forgotten—strangely for-gotten—some of the most fundamental facts of Nature.

ARGYLL.

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Manifesto.

Scottish Land Restoration League.

To the 'People of Scotland.

GREETING,

We, the Committee appointed at a great meeting of the citizens of Glasgow, held in the City Hall, on the evening of 25th February, at which the Scottish Land Restoration League was formed, deem it fitting, in asking the co-operation of our fellow-countrymen, to make a brief statement of our principles and our aims.

We hold that the earth was created by Almighty God as a dwelling-place for the children of men; that it belongs and can belong to no one class or generation, but is a gift fresh from the Creator to each generation whom he calls into being.

We hold that He Who thus gives the earth to the children of men is no respecter of persons, but that, as shown by the facts of Nature no less than by Holy Writ, he has intended all His creatures to be sharers in His bounty, to the end that by their labour, in the manner He has ordained, they may provide for their wants and the wants of those He has made dependent upon them.

We hold that the Equal Right which every man thus derives from his Creator *to the use of the earth* upon which that Creator has called him, is a Right which *no human power* can abrogate or impair; and which exists and must continue to exist despite any or all laws, grants, devices, or bargains which men have made or may make.

We hold that the denial of this First and Most Important of all Human Rights, *the Equal Right to the Possession and Use of the Natural Elements necessary to Life*, is the primary cause of the frightful poverty and misery that, in spite of all our advances in civilisation, exist in our country, and of the vice, crime, and degradation that spring from this poverty.

We hold that the fact that the Land of Scotland—the rightful heritage of the whole people of Scotland—having by a long course of usurpation and fraud been made the private and exclusive property of a few of their number, is the reason why more than two-thirds of Scottish families are compelled to live in houses of one or two rooms; why wages are so pitifully low in every department of industry; and why producers of wealth—those who earn their bread in the sweat of their brow—eat scant and bitter bread, while many of those who do nothing to produce wealth revel in profuse and wanton luxury, drawing from the Scottish people immense sums to be spent in riotous living abroad—the reason why Scotsmen are compelled to emigrate, while great tracts of their native land, from which men have been driven, are given up to beasts and sport.

We hold that those evils which are the result of transgressing and thwarting the declared purpose and benevolent intention of the Creator can be cured only by such a full and complete Restoration of the Land of

Scotland to the Scottish People as will secure to the humblest and weakest of our number his *just share* in the land which the Lord our God has given us. To this end we have banded ourselves together, and we hereby call upon the Scottish People everywhere to follow our example and unite with us in a Solemn League and Covenant to spare no effort and no sacrifice to Restore the Soil of Scotland to the People for whom it was intended, and to remove this great shame and crime from the land we love.

This is a question of vital importance to every class in the community; it affects the operative, the miner, the fisherman, the shopkeeper, the merchant, and the professional man as certainly and directly as it does the farmer.

We draw *a clear distinction* between *Property in Land* and *Property in the Results of Labour*. The former, we hold, belongs *in usufruct* to the Whole Community; the latter, we hold, belongs rightfully to those who have produced it, or to those to whom the producers have transferred their right. The one we propose to Restore to the Scottish People; the other to leave with those to whom it properly belongs. And although it may be justly held that those who have so long enjoyed the proceeds of the common property should be made not merely to restore it, but to pay proper compensation to those who have been unjustly disinherited, we will not raise this question of compensation, but will be content with the Restoration of the Land to the People.

We propose to effect this Restoration by the simple and obvious expedient of *Shifting all Taxation on to the Value of Land*, irrespective of its use or improvement, and finally *taking all Ground Rent for public purposes*. As a first step to this end we shall demand of our representatives in Parliament a re-imposition of the Tax of FOUR SHILLINGS in the Pound on the Current Value of Land, whether it be renter], or used, or kept idle by its holder; and we shall also demand a measure giving all Towns, Boroughs, and Cities the owner to Collect *all Rates* from an Assessment upon the Letting or Rental Value of Land, exclusive of buildings or improvements, and irrespective of use.

These measures can be carried only by such an agitation as will Educate the masses of the People in their Rights and Duties. For this purpose Organisation is necessary; and we therefore call upon all who may be disposed to join with us, to Establish Branches of the Scottish Land Restoration League in all parts of the country.

To carry on the work as it must be carried on funds also will be necessary.. These we cannot expect from those animated by the selfish motives which usually induce men to contribute to political funds, and we therefore urge upon those disposed to co-operate with us the necessity of making the Organisation self-supporting.

But while there must be Organisation wherever possible, there is a great field of action, outside of any Organisation, in *personal inquiry* and *private discussion*, in which every one may engage. To this work we earnestly call every Patriot and Lover of Justice, and we would especially urge upon the Ministers of the Gospel of every denomination the importance and religious character of this question—*the Relation between the Soil and the People who live upon it*.

Alexander Webster, CHAIRMAN,
David M'Lardy, SECRETARY,

GLASGOW,

27th February, 1884.

For Provisional Committee.

Constitution.

I.—TITLE.

THE SCOTTISH LAND RESTORATION LEAGUE.

II.—OBJECT.

Its Object shall be the Restoration of the Land to the People by the abolition of all private property in land, the appropriation of the rent thereof for public purposes, and the relief of the people thereby from all Imperial and local taxation.

III.—MEANS.

The Means employed for the carrying out of the Object of the League shall be the holding of public meetings, the circulation of literature, and such other constitutional means as shall be deemed necessary to create a public sentiment against the evil of Landlordism, and to arouse and organise the people for the purpose of asserting their right to, and recovering possession of, the land.

IV.—MEMBERSHIP.

The Membership of the League shall consist of those who are in sympathy with its object, and who contribute One Shilling Annually.

V.—BRANCHES.

Branches of the League may be formed in any district by any number of persons, not less than ten, who are in sympathy with its object.

Scotland and Scotchmen,

By

Henry George,

Author of "Progress and Poverty,"

Being an Address Delivered in the City Hall Glasgow, Feb. 18, 1884.

Startling Facts

About

Perpetual Pensions and Land Tenure,

Being a Full Report of the Proceedings at the Public Meeting held under the Auspices of the Scottish Land Restoration League, in the City Hall, Glasgow, on Wednesday, 11th June, 1884.

The Rights of Man,

By Henry George,

Author of "Progress and Poverty," "The Land Question : what it involves and how alone it can be settled," etc.

Reprinted from "Social Problems."

The Blight of Landlordism:

A Letter

To the Right Hon. Henry Fawcett, M.P.

By a Scottish Land Restorer.

No Compensation to Landlords

A Not Unjust Condition.

By John P. M'Laurin,

A Member of the Executive, of the Scottish Land Restoration League.

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