violent prejudices. You ought to make allowance for the temptations which beset a young man in fashionable society, especially in London."

"Make allowance for mean, dastardly, dishonourable conduct! Eleanor, you and I came very near to quarrelling about that man before; pray do not let his name be mentioned between us again."

"Very well, my dear, I have no desire to mention it. But I am glad, as you have such a prejudice against handsome men, that Grantly is so plain."

"So plain? I don't call him plain, Nelly. He has a nice face—honest, manly, and good—at least, he had when I saw him last."

"A year ago. It will be a year this week, Verna, since he was down here, though of course mamma and I saw him in May. He is coming home on the twenty-eighth," said Eleanor, much pleased with her cousin's last observation.

Verna blushed slightly, and hastened to repeat her invitation that Eleanor should remove her walking attire.

"The gong will be sounding directly," she added.

This time Eleanor acquiesced in the proposition, and followed her young hostess up-stairs.

"And I shall see the handsome tutor at luncheon, I suppose?" she inquired, as she smoothed out her hair before the mirror. "Are you going to have him in to meals, Verna, and treat him as graciously as you did old Mr. Hales?"

"Mr. Hales was a gentleman, Eleanor, and a good and intelligent man. We did not treat him *graciously*—we treated him only as he deserved to be treated."

"Very good; you have evidently imbibed Uncle Dalrymple's democratic and levelling notions, my dear. I wonder what you would say to the idea which the Chesney family seems to entertain of the correct method of behaving towards the tutor! Frank, you know, has a tutor, who has been travelling abroad with him, and is finishing his education. He is a sturdy-looking young German, who wears spectacles and smokes strong tobacco; but a very clever man—a Doctor—with all the ologies at his fingers' end. They give him a high salary, but they certainly don't treat him as an equal, and if they called him a gentleman it would be simply by courtesy. He does sit at table with the family, it is true, but he gets put away into obscure corners, and is made to feel that he is there on sufferance. No one ever speaks to him, or appears to be conscious of his existence; and once—I *was* amused at this—once whilst I was there, I was seated next to him at dinner-time, Matilda was opposite, and Sir Francis Carey, a stupid, lisping young imbecile who is paying his addresses to her, and she had been in a perpetual titter all through the dinner at his foolish attempts to be facetious. Well, all at once, apropos of some remark of his, Dr. Stöcker looked up from his plate, and made, in the quietest tone, the funniest and wittiest observation. Of course I laughed, but, would you believe it? not one of the Chesneys even smiled; and Matilda and Jessie looked at me with their eyebrows elevated in astonishment, as though I were committing a breach of decorum. I do wish you had been there; you would have been indignant."

Miss Dalrymple appeared to be indignant now.

"What vulgar pride!" she exclaimed.

"Well, for my part," returned Eleanor, "I should approve of a medium course between Uncle Dalrymple's excessive politeness to a paid subordinate, and the Chesneys' pointed manner of ignoring the very presence of their stolid German doctor. However, I'm quite excited about this new tutor of yours. I don't share your dislike of handsome men. I'm afraid, if I lived with him, I should find it rather dangerous to my peace of mind. Mind, Verna, that *you* don't fall in love with him, or what would poor Grantly do?"

"I am not in the habit of falling in love, as you call it. There is the gong, Eleanor."

END OF CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIRST.

HER MAJESTY'S OPPOSITION.

THE Emperor Nicholas is said to have been greatly puzzled with the problem of Parliamentary Government in England. A despotic form of Government he could understand, because he was autocrat of one of the mightiest despotisms the world has ever known. He imagined he could see into the working of a republic, when such a form of Government suited the genius of the people that had adopted it; but His Majesty confessed himself wholly unable to understand the meaning of a "limited monarchy." The idea of a Government by Queen *and* Parliament was altogether incomprehensible. It may be supposed that the Emperor's perplexity was not lessened when he learnt that the British Parliament itself is divided into two great parties, both of which are recognised by all modern constitutional authorities as essential forces in the machinery of Government. The despatches of His Imperial Majesty's ambassadors had made him familiar with the phrase "Her Majesty's Ministers," but who were "Her Majesty's Opposition?" Of what service could such a strangely-designated body be to the State? What useful function could an Opposition discharge, and why should they be called "Her Majesty's Opposition?" Some of our readers may have felt themselves puzzled by these questions, as well as the Emperor of Russia and other distinguished foreigners, and we shall therefore attempt to give an account of the origin of Parliamentary Opposition, and of the important place assigned to it in the working of Constitutional Government in England.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the present Constitution of the British Parliament is the growth of many centuries. It is not a "parchment" Constitution—a form settled and written down at some solemn convocation of the people or their representatives. Step by step the Legislature has assumed its present shape and character. It is the outcome of many changes and conflicts, the precious result of many a long year of strife and debate. We cannot turn to any chapter in the Statute Book and say, "*There* is the Act by which the Constitution of the British Parliament was settled." Rather must we say that its Constitution is defined by "the deep-trod footmarks of ancient custom."

The author of a curious pamphlet published in 1755 gives a quaint account of the origin and influence of Parliamentary Opposition. He says, "If there ever was any one governing principle in the affairs of this great universe, I think we may pronounce it as the spirit of opposition. The astronomer finds it in the stronger influence of the heavenly bodies; the philosopher acknowledges it in all his elementary systems; scholars find it among the arts and sciences; the painter calls it contrast; the poet, antithesis; and the churchman, infidelity. But in the world of politics its influence is universal; it actuates the whole system, and through all its parts."

The anonymous author of another pamphlet, published rather earlier, and entitled "The New Opposition Compared with the Old in Point of Principles and Practice," says, "It is now somewhat more than twenty years that a certain party hath subsisted amongst us under the title of "The Opposition." They have at certain times been composed of different people, and consequently have been considered in different lights; but the proper character of the party, and that from which it derives its name, is the opposing of power, or endeavouring to circumscribe in Parliament the grants of money and extension of authority which from time to time have been demanded by several Administrations." Lord Macaulay, following Lord Nugent, says that it was about the year 1621 that Parliamentary Opposition began to take a regular form; but, as the term is now understood, it would perhaps be more historically correct to date the origin of an organised Opposition some seventy years later.

Mr. Sheldon Amos gives the simplest explanation of the existence of an Opposition when he says, "If one of the parties contains and supports the Government of the day, the other party is spontaneously moulded into the character of what is known as an organised Opposition."

As we follow the course of Parliamentary history during the last century and a half, we seem to be witnessing a series of political duels. We see two great chiefs confronting each other during a series of years, the one at the head of the Government, the other at the head of the Opposition. As the battle goes on, and victory is lost and won, these two leaders change places: he who was chief of the Opposition becomes chief Minister of the Crown, and he who was chief Minister of the Crown becomes chief of the Opposition.

Whatever may be the faults or the virtues of party-government, the system as it exists undoubtedly invests our political struggles with much of the glow and passion of actual warfare, and causes the people to regard these struggles with deep and absorbing interest. Especially is this the case when the leaders are men of great intellectual and oratorical power. For a long period Pitt and Fox were the gladiators whose struggle for the mastery was witnessed by a whole nation: at another time Peel and Grey; later still Lords Derby and Russell, and in recent years Mr. Gladstone and Lord Beaconsfield. On the stage of politics each of these in his time has played the two parts of leader of the Government and leader of the Opposition.

It seems strange to speak of the party in Opposition as "Her Majesty's Opposition;" the title has sometimes, indeed, been objected to. Lord Melbourne is reported to have said that "he had heard gentlemen in the House of Commons called to order for using the word 'Opposition,' because nothing could be more unparliamentary than to say that gentlemen had entered Parliament pledged to an Opposition to the Government of the country." In 1841, however, Mr. Disraeli made mention in the House of Commons of "the constitutional and formal name of Opposition," and the use of the title is amply justified by the fact that Her Majesty's Opposition is as loyal as the party supporting the Government. It is, indeed, always assumed that in opposing the measures and policy of the Ministry of the day, the members of the Opposition are acting conscientiously, upon what they conceive to be their duty to Her Majesty, as well as to the constituencies they represent.

The duties of an Opposition are defined by the nature of the relation which they sustain towards the existing Government. The old maxim that "the duty of an Opposition is to oppose everything and propose nothing," has long since been discarded. The privilege of criticism is exercised by the Opposition under the restraint imposed by the reflection that, if successful in their assaults upon the Treasury Bench, they will themselves be required to attempt the formation of a Ministry. As it has been said, "the hope of acquiring office reduces the bitterness of Opposition, and the fear of a compulsory acceptance of office limits its extravagance."

The chief function of an organised Opposition is now generally admitted to be that of criticism. Her Majesty's Opposition form a sort of "standing counsel," retained by the minority of the nation, to state the case against any and all of the measures of the Administration. Whatever course the Government take or propose to take, the Opposition leader is expected to find some ground, general or specific, for disapproval or censure. He must be always on the look-out for *laches* and failings, for "weak" points in executive acts and for "bad" points in legislative proposals.

In the fulfilment of the duties thus assigned to him by the usages of party-government, the leader of the Opposition regulates his conduct according to certain well-established, though unwritten, practical maxims. It matters not which set of political opinions he advocates, or of what political creed he is the representative, he is for the time being a Professor of the Science of Objections. If white is proposed by the Government, he will go through an elaborate process of reasoning to show that white is wrong; if black is proposed, he will prove amid the applause of his friends that black is wrong. Should the party in power have chosen a road to the right, he is expected by his followers to demonstrate that they ought to have chosen a road to the left. If Her Majesty's Ministers have contemplated a declaration of war, the Opposition will dwell upon the manifest advantages of a policy of peace; they will utter indignant protests, and prophesy all manner of disasters and defeats should hostilities actually take place. On the other hand, should the Government prefer conciliation, they will be accused of cowardice; if they shrink from letting "slip the dogs of war," they will be told that they are for "peace at any price;" that they are pursuing a "penny wise and pound foolish" policy; that they care nothing for the national honour, and that they are allowing us to be humiliated and insulted by an unscrupulous and arrogant foe; and so on.

These are the tactics open to the Opposition, but a conscientious leader always keeps within due bounds, rendering every assistance to the Government when the welfare of the country demands it.

In criticising the Government's legislative proposals two lines of attack are open to the Opposition. They may choose to object that these proposals are premature; there has been no inquiry; the facts necessary to a right judgment upon the matter have not been ascertained; papers have not been printed; such-and-such Committees or Commissions have not yet reported; members have not had time to communicate with their constituencies; the country is not prepared for the measure; or, lastly, that the particular measure brought forward ought to be considered in connection with some other measure which has not been brought forward. Or the Opposition may urge that the proposals of the Ministry, though undoubtedly important in themselves, are brought forward too late; the proper time for such a measure is past; the favourable opportunity for legislation in that particular direction is now gone; when it was wanted it was not proposed, and now it is proposed it is not wanted. Whatever may be thought of these tactics on moral grounds, there can be no question that Parliamentary Opposition as carried on in modern times does serve to raise the standard of Ministerial character and conduct, supplying as it does a constitutional check against possible unwisdom in legislative and departmental action, as well as against probable extravagance in the expenditure of public funds. The Opposition is also bound by tradition to guard the privileges of Parliament against any attempts at encroachment on the part of the Government.

Her Majesty's Opposition, in objecting to the policy of the Ministry, is under no obligation to declare a counter-policy. The demand is often made by the Government, when attacked, that the Opposition should state what they would have done under the circumstances in question; but the leaders usually follow the example of Sir Robert Peel, who was wont to say that "he declined to prescribe until he was called in." Acting upon this principle, Lord Beaconsfield (then Mr. Disraeli) upon a memorable occasion boldly responded to the customary challenge by saying, "The originators of measures and inventors of a policy who come forward with their schemes and suggestions for public approbation are not the Opposition, but the Ministers of the Crown. We stand here to criticise."

Those who have enjoyed the privilege of being present in the House of Commons are aware that a great amount of hostility—sometimes very acrimonious and embittered—is engendered during the progress of a great debate. The fight waxes hotter and fiercer as the hours pass away, bitter taunts are hurled from side to side, and the "wordy warfare" is carried on with so much earnestness, and even passion, that an inexperienced observer might be excused for imagining that the combatants were sworn foes, who would be bound to rush at each other's throats whereever and whenever they might meet outside the House. It is not so, however. One of the most singular features of our party-warfare is that the heat and bitterness of the struggle are forgotten almost as soon as the forces have left the field. The amenities which usually distinguish the relations of our great Parliamentary parties have always excited the surprise of observers, especially of foreigners. A celebrated diplomatist once remarked to a great leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, "What a wonderful system of society you have in England! I have not been on speaking terms with Lord Palmerston (officially) for three weeks, and yet here I am a guest in his house!" This "wonderful system" prevails all through Parliamentary life, and politicians who might have been supposed to be "not on speaking terms," will often be found as guests at the same table, and even acting alternately as guest and host to each other. Not many years ago, the name of the leader of the Opposition was found in the list of distinguished men present at an entertainment given at the Prime Minister's official residence. While a debate is in progress, Ministerialists and Oppositionists may be seen seated at the same table in the dining-room; and it is not such an uncommon occurrence as might be supposed for a Cabinet Minister and a leading member of the Opposition to march away from St. Stephen's arm-in-arm, when the House is "up."

It is usual for the leader of the House to communicate freely and officially with leaders of the Opposition, so as to arrive at an understanding in regard to the conduct of business, which may either tend to the convenience of members generally, or to the settlement of delicate questions which are not necessarily of a party character. Even difficult political questions have sometimes been privately discussed between the leaders of the two parties; such conferences having taken place between Pitt and Fox, Addington and Pitt, and between Lord Brougham and the Duke of Wellington. The "Regency" question was settled in this way in 1840, by mutual agreement between Lord Melbourne and the leaders of the Conservative party; while, for want of such previous concert on the part of the Ministry and the Opposition, very grave difficulties have sometimes arisen. It is generally admitted that the excited debates which took place upon the question of the Prince Consort's allowance and his Naturalisation Bill (settling the question of "precedence") might have been avoided altogether, if the usual rule had been followed on those occasions.

The leader of Her Majesty's Opposition always claims the privilege of "seconding" motions made by the Leader of the House, for adopting addresses of congratulation or condolence to the Sovereign. He is also expected to express the concurrence of the Opposition in any votes of thanks proposed to be given by the House to any particular individual for meritorious services rendered to the State; likewise in any resolutions of the House recording its regret at the decease of distinguished public servants or Members of Parliament.

The leader of Her Majesty's Opposition is elected (unless he has previously been leader of the House) at a meeting of the party specially convened for the purpose. The office is, of course, purely honorary, and is generally conferred upon the ablest and most influential member of the party. He is, in fact, the general of the forces, and is entitled to the support and obedience of the whole rank and file. It would be difficult to define the qualifications which a leader of Opposition should possess. Lord Bolingbroke used to say that "people will follow like hounds the man who will show them game;" but showing his followers "game" is not the only thing a leader has to do. He certainly *must* have the wisdom of the serpent, and he must also *appear* to have the harmlessness of the dove, in relation to his party adherents. He must exhibit great promptitude in action, but he is bound to be prudent as well as energetic. For the maintenance of "discipline" among the members of the Opposition, the leader is not more dependent upon his own personal popularity and influence than upon the skill and patience and untiring devotion of the "Opposition Whips." These important functionaries occupy a recognised official position in the House, and have their office and staff of clerks within the precincts. On all occasions the "Whips" must be present, not only to carry out the arrangements made in consultation with their chiefs, but also to learn what are the intentions of Ministers in regard to the business of the House, and to keep their leaders informed of all plans and changes that may be proposed from time to time. In view of impending debates and divisions, they issue circulars to the party, requiring the attendance of its members, and upon them lies the responsibility of actually *seeing* that all are within the sound of the "division bell" when it rings. Theirs, too, is the duty of acting as "Tellers" for the Opposition when a division takes place. When a division has been taken, and members have all returned from the Lobbies into the House, the Opposition Whips take their places side by side with the Tellers for the Government. The four Tellers then march up the floor, bowing at every step, and advance to the Speaker's table. A hundred times, it may be, the Opposition Whips have reached that table empty-handed, but at length they appear there in that capacity for the last time. A simple slip of paper, having on it the magic numbers, is all they carry; but it is the sign of victory, and as soon as it is seen the result is guessed—Her Majesty's Opposition have conquered Her Majesty's Ministers.

J. T. G.

THE SUMMER HOLIDAY.

NOW for the summer holiday;
Good-bye, good-bye to every care,
Our city fifty miles away,
A sense of freedom everywhere.
From head to foot you feel a thrill
Of pleasure words cannot express;
For olden loves are potent still,
And yield their olden happiness.

The common dressed in green and gold,
The rugged moor in purple clad,
You still as gleefully behold
As when you were a little lad;
Still can you find the truest joy
In country rambles, high and low,
And sympathise with every boy
Who leaps a gate or draws a bow.

Oh! what a boon a month's release
From daily duty, daily strife;
To find a boundless world of peace
That gives you back your fading life;
To move and breathe from hour to hour
'Mid all that's beautiful and bright,
And feel each day a growing power
In brain and body, touch and sight.

What bliss to welcome every morn
With open sash the balmy breeze,
While from adjacent lime and thorn
Come soul-seducing minstrelsies;
To watch the flowers their eyes unclose,
All sparkling with refreshing dews,
Invigorate from their repose,
And clad in all their happiest hues.