

Mr. Gladstone's Visitors' Book.

BY WILLIAM G. FITZGERALD.

[With the special permission and approval of Mr. Gladstone.]



KNOW a fascinating book, in two volumes, written and illustrated by the noblest and greatest and brightest "Immortals" that have adorned the Victorian—or any other—era. It is a manuscript book, with no binding to speak of. But I must climb down to mere matter of fact. This priceless work is the Visitors' Book at Hawarden Castle—the beautiful old home of the Gladstone family, whereto the great ones of this earth gravitate naturally, as devout Moslems do to the Arabian shrines.

The Visitors' Book, then, was placed at our disposal by Mr. Gladstone—"a special favour to THE STRAND MAGAZINE"—as

Glynne." And, of course, that gentle knight ran the book on his own account, and on original lines. This first page consists mainly of signatures cut from letters and pasted in; perhaps Sir Stephen forgot to ask the visitors to sign in the book on leaving the Castle. Howbeit, some of the pasted-in signatures are not particularly legible; wherefore has Sir Stephen Glynne written the full name beneath each *with his own hand*.

At the same time, there are a few exceptions to this rule on the first page—for example, Lord Lyttelton's signature and that of his charming daughter, who afterwards became Lady Frederick Cavendish. Both signatures are reproduced here (No. 1). Mrs. Drew tells me that the ill-fated Irish

Lyttelton
Lucy Caroline Lyttelton } Oct. 27 1860.

NO. 1.

Mrs. Drew gracefully put it. But why two volumes? Well, there is the "active" book and the "passive."

The first of these is extremely active; it is kept by Mrs. Drew herself, and travels about from place to place on visits with the family. In it we find the more exuberant entries. The "passive" volume never leaves the Castle, and its pages are becomingly quiet, if weighty. Only those who have slept at Hawarden sign their names in this book.

Now we are ready to turn over the pages of both books simultaneously. The first signatures in the Hawarden book are dated New Year's Day, 1860. "In those days," remarked Mrs. Drew to me, "visitors to Hawarden were the guests of Sir Stephen

Secretary first met Miss Lyttelton at Hawarden Castle in December, 1861, and she was married from Mr. Gladstone's residence.

Turning over the pages in search of something striking, the very next thing that catches one's eye is No. 2. We now see that Miss Lyttelton has become Lady Frederick Cavendish, and the first visit she paid with her noble husband to Hawarden was about Christmas, 1864. This signature (No. 2) is a year later. Much later we light on the pathetic solitary signature, "Lucy C. F. Cavendish," that recurs so frequently throughout the book.

But let us not dwell on the melancholy story this suggests; turn we rather to a certain merry Christmas, which saw gathered

Frederick Cavendish } Dec 15 .. 1865
Lucy Caroline F. Cavendish } do. do.

NO. 2.

Hawarden Castle.

Stephen Glynne Dec. 1867

Wylluborne Christmas 1867

Catherine Gladstone

W. Gladstone

J. Gladstone

Helen Gladstone. December 1867.

Mary Gladstone. Dec. 1867.

Agnes Gladstone Christmas 1867

Herbert J. Gladstone

Henry N. Gladstone Xmas 1867.

NO. 3.

together the entire Gladstone family. One loves to think they were all gathered round a roaring fire in the fine dining-room (would its panelled walls could speak!). At any rate, somebody suggested that one and all should sign their names in the Visitors' Book, thereby compelling absent-minded guests who neglected that important volume to "turn over a new leaf" in more senses than

opening of the new town-hall belonging to the ancient and beautiful city. These signatures are in Mrs. Drew's book. The Prince of Wales comes first; always methodical, His Royal Highness gives the name of the place and the full date. The humour of the situation evidently appealed in the first place to Lady Constance Grosvenor (the late Duchess of Westminster);

one. No. 3 shows this most interesting page. They are all there, you see, commencing with Sir Stephen Glynne and Mr. Gladstone himself. How wonderfully like his illustrious father the late Mr. W. H. Gladstone wrote! Notice also the unobtrusive signature of the Rev. Stephen, the rector of Hawarden. Obviously, this was a Christmas family gathering of the fine old English sort.

No. 4 is part of an interesting page. "Landlord Grosvenor" is none other than the present Duke of Westminster, who at this time took the whole of the Grosvenor Hotel at Chester in which to entertain the Prince of Wales and a big house party; the occasion was the

Abbey Wood.Christie October 16th 1869

Constance Grosvenor (Landlady)

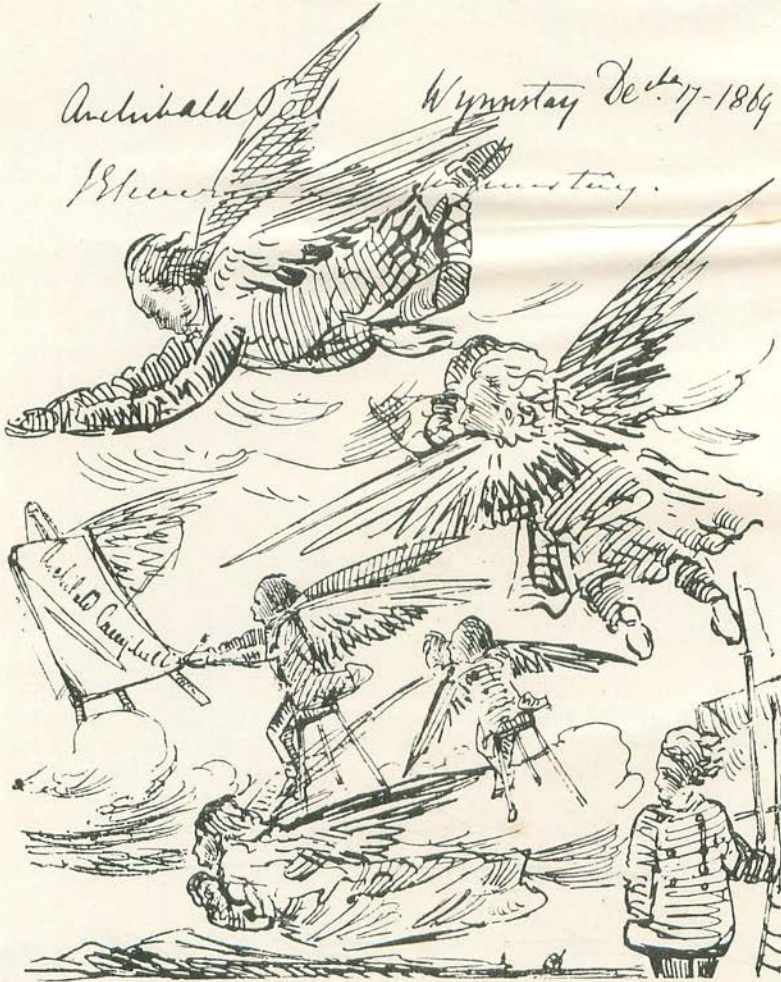
Grosvenor (Landlord)

and her noble husband was also struck by the idea of entertaining the Heir Apparent whilst playing the rôle of temporary landlord of an hotel.

The pages of Mrs. Drew's own book are enlivened with many a sketch and cartoon "with a history." Foremost among these comes No. 5—a full-page drawing by Lord Archibald Campbell. It is, Mrs. Drew tells

represent Commerce (the "stool-polisher"); the Sea (the figure in the bottom right-hand corner); and happy Maternity.

Elsewhere I have mentioned that Mrs. Drew takes the "active" Visitors' Book from place to place with her, so that it gathers far more interesting material than its more sedate and stay-at-home companion. No. 6 shows a particularly attractive half-page of Mrs.



NO. 5.

me, a kind of pictorial allegory, representing the Argyll family. Poised over all in seeming benediction floats that grand old man, the Macallum More himself; next is seen his eldest son, the Marquis of Lorne, following closely in his wake. Then come the minor figures pursuing their own bent. Lord Archibald, the author of the sketch, is seen at an easel, and other members of the family

Drew's book. Mrs. Drew was staying at The Grove, Watford, Lord Clarendon's place, and had for her fellow-guests, among others, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. A. H. Layard, John Bright, and Lord Odo Russell—surely a distinguished quartet to be staying under one roof at the same time.

The name of Sir Austen Layard, G.C.B., P.C., etc., sometime our Ambassador in

J. V. Harman The Grove
W. Maynard The Grove. Nov. 7. 1869

John Bright The Grove. Nov. 7. 1869

Ernest Layard The Grove. Nov. 1869.

Emily Theresa Russell The Grove. Dec. 7th 1869
Edw. Russell 7 August 7 November 1869



NO. 6.

Constantinople, will for ever be memorable as the discoverer of Nineveh. English, Spanish, French, and Italian blood flowed in his veins—a mixture of nationalities that would have cost him his seat in Parliament on one occasion had he not won over the wit-loving electors by indignantly inquiring whether, if a man were born in a stable, they would call him a horse!

Lord Odo Russell, afterwards Baron Amptill, is the brilliant diplomatist and linguist who, for thirteen years, represented Her Britannic Majesty at Berlin. In '78, he was chosen as England's third representative at the Berlin Congress, his associates being Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury. It was to Lord Odo that Mrs. Drew was indebted for the quaint little sketch shown in No. 6.

That distinguished statesman simply cut the stamped heading from a sheet of his host's notepaper, and then drew about it a wayside sign-post, on which is perched an artful owl. Below, a rotund rabbit is surveying the landscape with evident complacency.

Facsimile No. 7 represents the signature of the Archbishop of Syra and Paros, who visited Hawarden, accompanied by two other distinguished ecclesiastics and an interpreter. The last-named gentleman not being handy at the moment of writing, we can only survey the autographs with becoming respect. Somehow, one is reminded of the "simple fractions" of one's school-days, together with a suggestion of an attempt to depict the Hampton Court maze. Let it be whispered gently: The most remarkable thing about

Εὐγένιος Δρασάκης 29 Δεκεμβρίου 1869
 10 Ιανουαρίου 1870

Εὐγένιος Δρασάκης 29 Δεκεμβρίου 1869
 10 Ιανουαρίου 1870.

Πατριάρχης Κωνσταντινουπόλεως 29 Δεκεμβρίου 1869
 10 Ιανουαρίου 1870

NO. 7.

Eustace J. A. Balfour Whittingham Aug 13
 Francis Maitland Balfour Aug. 14
 J. J. William Balfour Whittingham Aug 14



NO. 8.

these imposing visitors to Hawarden was—*that they arrived without any luggage.* The interpreter signed lower down the page—just at a respectful distance, in fact—and in less heavy characters.

We next find Mrs. Drew and her book at Whittingham, the East Lothian seat of the Balfours. The two signatures most readily recognised in No. 8 will be those of the Chief Secretary for Ireland and his sister, Miss Alice Balfour, who—an ardent amateur entomologist—has decorated her autograph in an unmistakable manner. Two butterflies support the border, while moths and caterpillars and things are vainly striving outside. The Conservative Leader of the House of Commons comes on the scene (and the page) a little later.

But do not overlook "Francis Maitland Balfour." A man is not necessarily a dull dog because he

happens to be Professor of Animal Morphology at Cambridge. And many people will remember how this brilliant scholar met with a violent and untimely death on the Alps in 1882.

Mr. Gladstone's breakfasts at 11, Carlton House Terrace, must have been impressive functions judging from the casual list of guests shown in Nos. 9 and 10. What a galaxy, to be sure! There are, besides the esteemed editor of the *Times* (Mr. Delane), Professor Tyndall and Mr. Lecky—who forgot the date, you see, precisely as you or I might do. Next come Leopold, the King of the Belgians

John J. Delane

March 5-1870

John Tyndall 5th March 1870

Miss Alice Balfour April 10th 1870

Francis Maitland Balfour

Miss Alice Balfour April 10th 1870

W. G. Lecky April May 13. 1870

NO. 9.

Limpold

John Everett Millais

May 21st 1870

Derby.

Dufferin

Sat. May. 21 /70

Caroline Elizabeth Gordon

NO. 10.

(who could, in those days, eat his breakfast without worrying about the Congo); the late President of the Royal Academy, the Earl of Derby, the Marquis of Dufferin, and Miss Gordon.

No. 11 indicates Mr. Arthur Balfour's very first visit to Hawarden. Mrs. Drew herself

is not—only a page or two; look at No. 12. "Professor Mozley and Professor Huxley were breakfasting with Mr. Gladstone at Carlton House Terrace," remarked Mrs. Drew, "and when Huxley signed in my book he added a monkey, to testify his Darwinian sympathies." It were impossible

Arthur James Balfour
John W. StruttDec. 6th 1870

NO. 11.

specially suggested the insertion of this facsimile—"because," she said, "at that time Mr. Arthur Balfour was a young, unknown man. His visit lasted from the 4th to the 14th of December. And certainly it is more than interesting to compare this visit with the one shown in No. 26, which set all the quidnuncs gossiping. Between these two visits there is more than a quarter of a century. It will be seen that that most brilliant of scientists (and Senior Wranglers) Lord Rayleigh ("John W. Strutt"), accom-

panied Mr. Balfour on his first visit to Hawarden in 1870, becoming his brother-in-law a year later. Mr. Strutt succeeded to the title in 1873, two years after his marriage to Miss Evelyn Balfour. As Tyndall turned up in No. 9, it is safe to assume that Huxley is not far away. He

J. B. Mozley July 6 /71

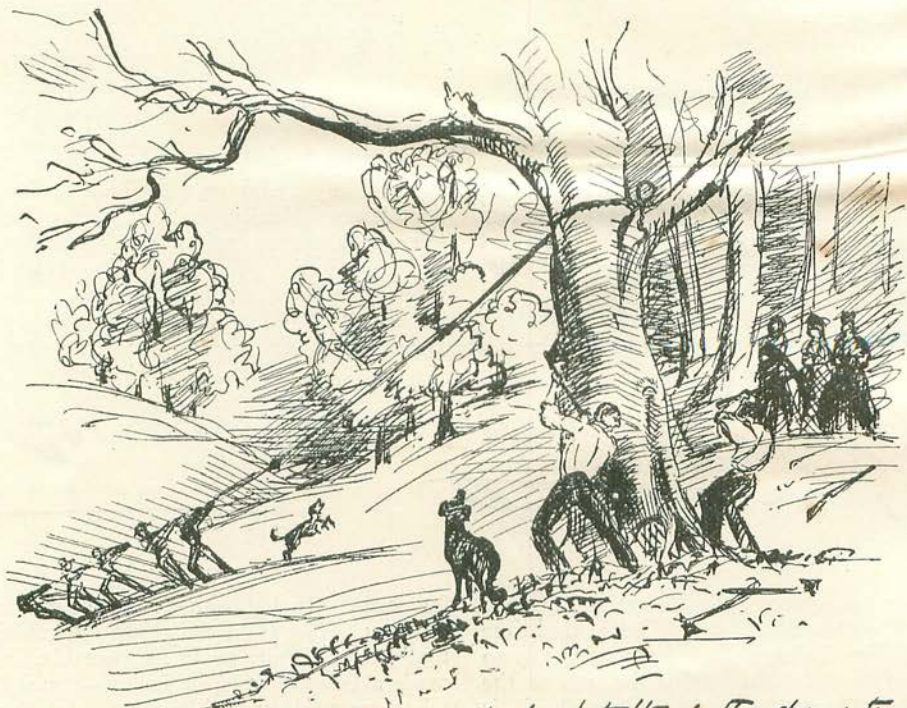
J. H. Huxley July 6th 1871

NO. 12.

hanging from a forked branch, the supposed simian is manifestly uncomfortable. Then, again, it is obvious there was no blotting paper handy; but these be the touches that lend the highest human interest to these delightful signatures. Who does not love to think of Carlyle running after his hat in a high wind? Or Aristotle pacing backwards and forwards philosophizing and aiding his digestion at one and the same time?

The artist who drew No. 13 was Edward

and Charles Lyttelton cutting down a tree," but Mr. Lyttelton is plainly unused to the work. It is not conspicuously clear why the five stalwarts on the left should be giving a "strong, strong pull" at this early stage of the felling; but all will readily recognise the dog which is encouraging everybody present. It is obviously a Derby Dog—quite a different stamp from the more dignified animal which is directing things at close quarters. One recognises Mrs. Gladstone in the background; and all concerned are clearly



Mr Gladstone & Charles Lyttelton cutting down a tree

Hagley 22^d December 1871. ER

Caroline In. Cust. — Belton Easton 1872

Robert Browning, Belton House, '72.

NO. 13.

Ross, the famous crack shot, and it depicts a typical Christmas incident in the G.O.M.'s life. The sub-title reads: "Mr. Gladstone

straining every nerve, knowing that the eyes of the ladies are upon them. Just beneath this sketch, the page bears the name of

Marlborough. Quisachaw
James B. Swinton quisachaw



Strathconan Oct. 10. 1872 Alice Balfour.
 House Northumberland, Strathconan
Northumberland

NO. 14.

"Robert Browning, Belton House, '72." "We were staying with him at Lord Brownlow's," explained Mrs. Drew.

Another sketch, by Miss Balfour, is shown in No. 14. "Marlborough," by the way, is, of course, the late Duke. Beneath the sketch are the signatures of the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland. Now, as to Miss Balfour's drawing. "Strathconan," writes Mrs. Drew, "was Mr. A. J. Balfour's deer forest; and Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone and party were staying with him at Strathconan Lodge, in October, 1872, when Mr. Gladstone was Prime Minister." Observe the significance of the notes of music at the bottom right-hand corner. They form the fair artist's initials—A. B. B.

When asked by Mrs. Drew to sign his name in her book, Sir Edward (then plain Mr.) Burne-Jones made a little sketch of himself instead; this is shown in No. 15. We are extremely glad that the sketch is by



Mr Burne Jones by himself

NO. 15.

Mme Norman Néruda

June the 26th 1873.

Whose marvelous expression on the violin has filled me with wonder and delight, even with penitence.

J R Herbert.

NO. 16.

Sir Edward Burne-Jones himself, and our reasons for this are twofold, but need not be expressed. Consider the sketch for a moment. The great painter seems to be at his easel, but not at his ease. Unfortunately, too, we are left in some doubt as to which of his masterpieces he is actually engaged upon. Mayhap it is "Love Among the Ruins," "Le Chant d'Amour," or "The Mirror of Venus."

"But no matter," as the Adelphi villain says; let us get on to something less inscrutable. No. 16 shows an interesting signature of Mme. Norman Néruda (now Lady Hallé). Mr. J. R. Herbert, R.A., has taken up the story, so to speak, and struck out "on his own"—entirely on his own. "—Whose marvelous (*sic*—two l's, Mr. Herbert, please) expression on the violin has filled me with wonder and delight, even *with*

penitence." "Mme. Norman Néruda," explains Mrs. Drew, "came to play to Mr. Gladstone at 11, Carlton House Terrace, and I accompanied her on the piano." Of course, Mrs. Drew was at that time Miss Mary Gladstone. Mr. Walter Sneyd, of Keel Hall, made the sketch that



NO. 18.

Walter Sneyd
Harvard
Aug. 16th 1873.



NO. 17.

figures in No. 17. He excelled in depicting Her Majesty's judges; but I leave to others the task of identifying the legal luminary that adorns Mrs. Drew's book. Obviously, Mr. Sneyd was a clever amateur artist.

No. 18 brings us back to the penitent Mr. Herbert, who

of Tennyson

Hawarden.

Nov 12th /76

My dear Mrs Gladstone
 Here we are returned to our winter quarters
 which however we find at present colder
 than Aldworth. We retain golden memories
 of our visit to Hawarden, & your statement
 not like discretion among his cabbages, but
 among his oats, etc in hand. Had he any-
 thing to say about my drama? if so, let
 him say it quickly before Harold peeped
 into stereotype, & then turn or return the
 profit.

I am very glad that Hallam made a
 favourable impression. I do not think any
 man ever had a better son than I have
 in him

With our best remembrances to all of you
 believe me always yours
 of Tennyson

"Collins" from Mr. Tennyson.

NO. 19.

has here executed a capital drawing of the late Mr. W. H. Gladstone, which he has signed and dated. "Mr. Herbert, R.A., was staying at Hawarden, and asked leave to sketch Mr. W. H. Gladstone in my book."

A particularly interesting letter of the late Lord Tennyson's is reproduced in No. 19. The great poet "retains golden memories of his visit to Hawarden" (who among the

favoured few does not?). Then note what Tennyson has to say about his second historic drama, "Harold," about which he evidently consulted his scholarly host. The tribute to his son, Hallam, is very fine. Readers of Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" will understand the allusion, "'Collins' from Mr. Tennyson."

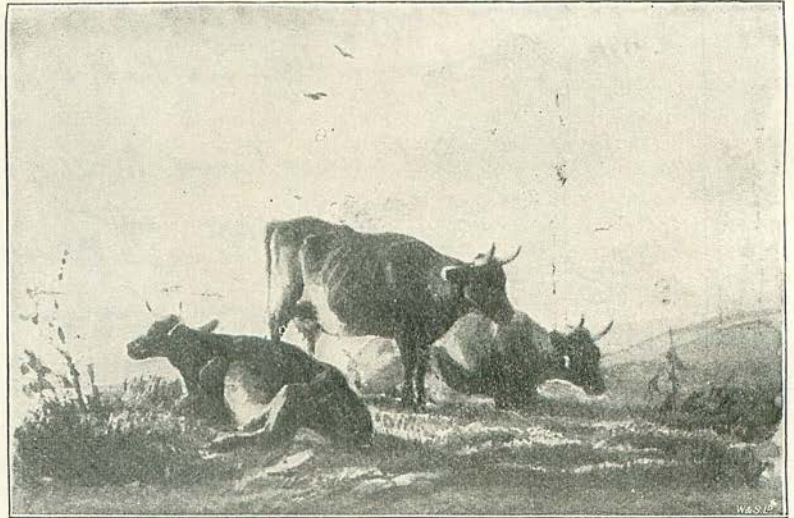
Perhaps the most interesting item in the



NO. 20.

Gladstone Visitors' Books is the sketch by Sir Edgar Boehm (No. 20). This sketch was drawn at Dalmeny by the famous sculptor during that oratorical *tour de force* — Mr. Gladstone's first Midlothian campaign. The Reform Bill being the question of the hour, Sir Edgar conceived the notion, on being asked by Mrs. Drew to sign her book, of drawing a portrait of Lady Sybil Primrose, Lord Rosebery's baby daughter. "She was then about six weeks old," remarked Mrs. Drew to me, "and is now just seventeen. You see, Sir Edgar Boehm has playfully dubbed the infant, 'The Suffrage Babe'; so that Lady Sybil may be said to have made her entry into politics at an extremely early age."

opened for him. Mr. Cooper measured down with his eye about four inches, and then wrote the signature seen in No. 21. He told Mrs. Drew he would do a little sketch for her, so, taking a small piece of cartridge paper, he made the exquisite sepia study



When Mr. Sidney Cooper, R.A., the veteran animal painter, was asked to sign the Visitors' Book, a blank page was coaxingly

Sidney Cooper

NO. 21.

Goldwin Smith. Nov 5.
 Francis Cairns. Nov 5.
 J B Dunelm Nov 5
 Lucy F. Zennesh. Nov 5
 R B Whiting. Nov 5
 W V Gamm. Nov 5
 J. O. H. Nov. 17
 Louise Nov. 17
 Bentley Nov 20 1881

NO. 22.

which our artist has also photographed from the Visitors' Book, in which it is pasted. Curiously enough, Mr. Cooper miscalculated the size of his sketch, so that on turning to this page one finds the eminent artist's signature *underneath* the loose flap of the bottom right-hand corner of the drawing. In this case, therefore, two photos. were necessary. The rapidity with which this beautiful little study of cows was executed would amaze anyone not acquainted with Mr. Sidney Cooper's leading characteristic. Standing one day before one of his own inimitable landscapes, which was hanging in the Royal Academy (it was varnishing day), it suddenly occurred to the eminent artist that the picture would be improved by the introduction of a flock of sheep. He instantly procured palette and brushes, and touched in forthwith the

necessary decorative "mutations." In No. 22 I show part of a unique page of the Hawarden book. First comes Professor Goldwin Smith, the famous historian, and then Lord Frederick Cavendish. Lady Frederick is there also; and Mrs. Drew mentions a pathetic fact in this connection: "This was Lord Frederick's last visit—six months before his assassination in Phoenix Park." Between the two comes the puzzling signature of Dr. Lightfoot, Bishop of Durham. Sir William Harcourt, the Marquis of Lorne and Princess Louise, and Lord Rosebery complete the very distinguished list.

There are, scattered throughout the Gladstone Visitors' Books, many interesting little touches which render superfluous a book of reference, and give an instantaneous clue to the "ruling passion" of the eminent signatory. No. 23 illustrates what I mean. The first signature is, I think, in Sanscrit, and is—almost needless to say—that of the

greatest living philologist—Professor Max Müller. It may not be out of place here to mention this great man's passion for music. Weber was his godfather, and young Max often sat, as a boy, on Mendelssohn's knee. The Professor has himself recorded how his youthful days were spent at Dessau, the capital of the Duchy of Anhalt-Dessau, of which his grandfather was Prime Minister, at the un-Prime Ministerial "screw" of £300 a year. The second signature in No. 23 is that of Lord Granville.

Next is seen a remarkable signature (No. 24). I learn from Mrs. Drew that this was Parnell's first and only visit to Hawarden.

मोक्षमूलरमदुः ॥ Dec 18 1884.
 Granville Dec 18/84

NO. 23.

Charles Stewart Parnell
Hawarden: Dec. 19/89

NO. 24.

"He was on his way to Mr. Evans, at Spittal Old Hall, Bromborough, and only remained with us one night." The date tells us that at the moment of signing here the Great Crash was not far off. Without sententiousness or prolixity, it may be remarked that the Gladstone Visitors' Books provide ample food for reflection. One may pore for quite a long time over a single entry, lost in reflections about the mighty dead.

Elsewhere I have hinted that Hawarden is the Mecca of the Mighty. From the ends of the earth come potentates to commune with the greatest Englishman of his age. Take Li Hung Chang (No. 25)—or Chung Tong, as the Tweedledees would have us call him—*Mais, qu'allait-il faire dans cette galère?* And cheek by jowl with Parnell, too. Oh, most wonderful of books!

We all know that Li wouldn't leave the country until he had seen the G.O.M. Not even a free gift of all the heavy ordnance at Elswick or Essen would induce China's only statesman to forego his visit to Hawarden. But we are only concerned here with Li's signature in the Visitors' Book. Like

NO. 25.

his smile, it is expansive; and, like himself, there is no reading it. The indiscreet may ask, "Which way up?" and the frivolous, "How was it done?" To the latter we will reply. First of all, little Miss Dorothy Drew approached Li, holding in one hand the book, open at a fine large full page, and in the other her own paint-box, which was cleaned up for the occasion. Li beamed, and did not shrink from the task. In a few minutes the work of art was brushed in in sepia, to the immense relief of everybody.

"One of the characters," says Mrs. Drew, "means 'Written by,'" as if any other than Li could possibly have done it! Which of the characters means "Written by" and which stand for "Li Chung Tong," is a problem far too abstruse for this festive season.

No. 26 shows Mr. Balfour's latest visit to Hawarden, and it is interesting to compare this entry with No. 11, and reflect on the vast difference between "then and now." The signature of Lady Frederick Cavendish is seen after Mr. Balfour's. Just above the latter's signature is that of his sister, and it is curious to see the striking similarity between the two hands.

One signature possesses a melancholy interest by its absence—if I may be pardoned so Hibernian an expression. I refer to that of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had not signed the Hawarden book when he was stricken down in the little village church. The Rev. Stephen Gladstone says that this was the first and only visit of the late Primate to his father's ancestral home.

Arthur James Balfour Aug. 20. 1886

NO. 26.