From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

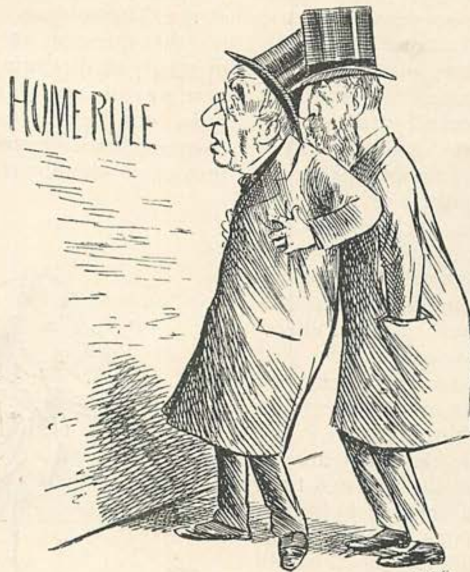
XLV.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE RENT IN THE LIBERAL TEMPLE: BEHIND THE VEIL.

THE publication in the April Number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE of certain facts connected with the early appearance of the rift in the Liberal lute which, slowly widening, made its music mute, has brought me several communications of historical interest. From these I am permitted to frame a fuller narrative of a political event which in national importance, in influence on the careers of individuals, and in dramatic effect finds its nearest parallel in Sir Robert Peel's conversion to Free Trade and what followed thereupon.

In the middle of December, 1885, what was subsequently recognised as a *ballon d'essai* was sent up from Leeds announcing that Mr. Gladstone had determined to celebrate the Liberal triumph at the General Election by bringing in a measure conferring Home Rule upon Ireland. This was circumspectly denied. But the Whig section of the Liberal Party, of whom Lord Hartington and Mr Goschen were representatives, took fright. Lord Hartington found an opportunity of publicly announcing that "no proposals on the policy to be adopted by the Liberal Party in reference to the demand of a large number of Irish representatives for the legislative independence of Ireland" had been communicated to him. As the weeks slipped by doubt deepened into certainty. The Whig wing of the Liberal Party drew farther apart from Mr. Gladstone. The situation was accentuated when, on the 26th of January, 1886, Lord Salisbury, who, in spite of heavy defeat at the poll, had met the new Parliament as Premier, was with his Government overthrown.



THE WHIGS TAKE FRIGHT.

It was Mr. Jesse Collings who led the attack, his battle flag proudly emblazoned with the famous design of three acres and a cow. Behind him stood Mr. Chamberlain. Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen spoke against the amendment, and were accompanied into the Ministerial division lobby by Sir Henry James. When, a week later, Mr. Gladstone formed his Administration, Lord Hartington and Sir Henry James declined to join it, the latter sacrificing for conscience' sake the prize of the Woolsack. Mr. Chamberlain and Sir George Trevelyan, accepting what they understood as assurances that the now inevitable Home Rule Bill would not imperil the unity of the Empire, joined Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet, one as President of the Local Government Board, the other as Secretary for Scotland.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS LEADS THE ATTACK.

On the 27th of March these two Ministers resigned. In Cabinet Council they had learned the full truth about the Home Rule Bill. When it was first drafted it contained a clause establishing the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, and retaining at Westminster the collaboration of the Irish members. In a slightly modified form this clause appeared in the second draft of the Bill. In the third and final form Mr. Gladstone, yielding to the imperative conditions of Mr. Parnell, master of eighty-six votes, eliminated the clause. Whereupon Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan withdrew.

WHIG AND RADICAL DISSENTIENTS.

This brief *résumé* of events is necessary for the full understanding of the narrative that follows. The public have during the past ten years grown so accustomed to finding Mr. Chamberlain and the peer who was Lord Hartington working together in the unity of Liberal Unionism, that they are apt to suppose the same conditions existed from the first. As a matter of fact, in February, 1886, Mr. Chamberlain was as widely dissevered from Lord Hartington as a month later he came to be parted from Mr. Gladstone. The Radical Anti-Home Rulers, following his lead, were bitterly resentful of the Whig Anti-Home Rulers, captained by Lord Hartington, a feeling accentuated by the vote given by them on Mr. Jesse Collings's amendment to the Address, which made an end of Lord Salisbury's foredoomed Administration.

This was Mr. Gladstone's opportunity, used in the fitful negotiations that almost recaptured the Radicals. Lord Hartington and his friends in council didn't want Home Rule on any terms. Mr. Chamberlain and his more than half-hundred Radical followers were quite willing to give Ireland Home Rule if the control of the Imperial Parliament were jealously conserved.

A FLAG OF TRUCE.

This state of things existed up to Monday, the 10th of May, 1886, on which day Mr. Gladstone rose to move the second reading of his Bill. The position of the Government was critical. There were ninety-three Liberals who had declared against the Bill. If they carried their objection as far as the division lobby it would be thrown out, and Mr. Gladstone and his Government must go with it. Many discerned the dire peril of the Liberal Party. One perceived a way of averting it. This was Mr. Labouchere, who, whilst an uncompromising Home Ruler, at the time enjoyed the confidence of Mr. Chamberlain. He appointed to himself the task of reuniting the Radical section of the Liberal Unionists with what later came to be known as the Gladstonians. The fissure had opened on the question of the retention of Irish members at Westminster. If Mr. Gladstone gave way on that point all might be well.

In conference with his colleagues the Premier finally agreed to the adoption of provisions whereby the Irish members should

MR. LABOUCHERE AS THE MESSENGER OF THE GODS.

sit and vote on questions of Imperial range, including matters of finance. On Saturday, the 8th of May, Mr. Labouchere, having obtained this assurance in Downing Street, sought an interview with Mr. Chamberlain, who after some hesitation consented to accept this understanding as a basis of reconciliation. The agreement was put in writing, Mr. Chamberlain dictating the terms, Mr. Labouchere acting as scribe—an arrangement which recalls the circumstances under which what is known in history as the Benedetti Treaty was committed to paper. Mr. Labouchere, having carried this flag of truce to Downing Street, went off to the country for a Sunday's rest, which he felt he had well earned.

A HITCH.

Coming back to town on the memorable Monday, the morn of the day on which the second reading of the Home Rule Bill was to be moved in terms and upon conditions that would bring back to the fold the strayed sheep, Mr. Labouchere discovered that his patriotic labour was undone. A note from Mr. Chamberlain awaited him, bitterly complaining that Mr. Gladstone was backing out, an assurance based on what purported to be an authorized paragraph in one of the London papers, in which Mr. Gladstone was represented as protesting that he had yielded on no point connected with his Bill. Mr. Labouchere made haste to communicate with the Liberal Whip, and learned what had happened whilst he was spending a peaceful Sabbath day on the banks of the Thames. It had been brought to Mr. Gladstone's knowledge that Mr. Chamberlain, after his interview with Mr. Labouchere on the Saturday, sent round to his friends a telegram announcing "absolute surrender" on the part of the Premier. Captain O'Shea received one of these messages. He showed it to Parnell, who sent it on to Mr. Gladstone.

CAPTAIN O'SHEA.
From a Sketch made at the Parnell Commission.

The great statesman was, after all, only human. At this epoch he had been convinced of the impossibility of carrying, against the defection of a powerful section of his followers, the Home Rule Bill in its original form. He was ready to compromise. But those familiar with his constitutional tendencies will understand how desperately he struggled against any appearance of being overcome in fight, more especially by a former lieutenant, and that lieutenant Mr. Chamberlain. When the emissary of the newspaper brought him news of the currency of this telegram, and asked if it were true, the temptation to Mr. Gladstone to convince himself that he had yielded nothing would be irresistible.

MORE NEGOTIATIONS.

When this bolt from the blue swiftly descended, threatening to destroy the edifice of peace carefully built up, the architect turned to Mr. Gladstone. He found the Premier was staying with a friend at Sheen. Thither was dispatched a messenger on a swift horse with an account of the new dilemma and request for instructions. Mr. Gladstone replied, it was quite true he had agreed to two alterations in his Bill—(1) allowing Irish members to vote on Imperial matters; (2) on finance of an Imperial character. The first amendment he undertook to draw up himself. The second he said he did not fully comprehend. If Mr. Chamberlain would formulate his demand in the shape of a clause, he did not doubt that he would be able to accept it. Mr. Labouchere brought this proposal to Mr. Chamberlain, who plainly denounced it as an effort to shirk the question, reading into Mr. Gladstone's letter a determination not to adopt the second amendment.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

Mr. Labouchere, industrious, indomitable, did not despair. All was not lost as long as the Bill awaited the second reading. If Mr. Gladstone would only announce intention of dropping the Bill after its broad principle had been approved by a vote on the second reading, it might be brought up again next Session, with reconstruction of the 24th and 39th Clauses meeting the objection of Mr. Chamberlain and his friends. On such understanding the fifty-five Radicals who followed Mr. Chamberlain would vote for the second reading, crisis would be averted, the Ministry would be saved, the Session might be appropriated for other business, and the work approached on safer grounds in 1887.

On the eve of the motion for the second

reading, Mr. Labouchere believed he had Mr. Gladstone's definite and distinct assurance that he would take this course. It is difficult to believe that so shrewd a man, one so well versed in affairs, can have been deceived on this important point. What happened in the interval between Mr. Labouchere's last message from the Premier and the delivery of the speech in the House of Commons? Perhaps if Mr. Parnell were alive and in communicative mood, he might tell. However it be, the Radicals below the Gangway sat straining their ears for the promised words of concession and conciliation. They were not spoken, and when Mr. Gladstone resumed his seat after moving the second reading of his Bill, it was felt that all was over.

SIR LEWIS MCIVER.

This is the scene described in the April Number. I may add that the member deputed by Mr. Chamberlain to follow Mr. Gladstone, and accept the flag of truce he was expected to hold out, was Sir Lewis McIver, then Radical member for Torquay, a member who, in a quiet, effective way, had much to do with the Radical revolt against the Bill. Mr. Labouchere, through the Whip, sent Mr. Gladstone a message on the Treasury Bench to inform him that the ambiguity of his phrase had wrought final and fatal mischief. Mr. Gladstone privily replied that he had meant it to be clearly understood that the Irish members were to sit at Westminster. Somehow or other the accustomed master of plain English had failed to make himself understood. Prepared to yield, he wanted things to look as little as possible like surrender, and so the opportunity of building the golden bridge sped. Mr. Gladstone suggested that Lord Herschell should have an interview with Mr. Chamberlain, when all would be explained. Mr. Chamberlain hotly replied that he would have no more negotiation, but would vote against the Bill.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE MEETING.

At a meeting of the Liberal Party, held at the Foreign Office, on the 27th of May, the second reading debate being still in progress, Mr. Gladstone said what he surprisingly omitted to say on moving the second reading. He asserted in the most emphatic manner the supremacy of the Imperial Legislature, and promised to frame a plan that would entitle Irish members to sit and vote at Westminster when Imperial questions arose, or when any proposal for taxation affecting the condition of Ireland was submitted. He even offered to withdraw the Bill before going to a second reading.

These were the points of his concession. Wrapped up in a speech an hour long, they still had about them a disquieting air of mistiness. Desiring to put the matter in a nutshell, Mr. Whitbread, at the conclusion of the speech, rose and said, "Then we understand that the Irish will sit at Westminster?"

"Mr. Gladstone positively glared upon his interrogator" (I quote from the private notes of a member who was present). "'I do not,' he said, 'understand the technicalities of drafting, so I will read again what I am prepared to do.' Then he re-read the passage laboriously turned so that it might appear that, whilst conceding the demands of Chamberlain and his party, he was really doing nothing more than what he had contemplated from the first, the alterations in the Bill being quite immaterial. In short, having been right in proposing that Irish members should not sit at Westminster, he was equally right in now promising that they should."

MR. WHITBREAD.

TOO LATE!

On the 31st of May a meeting of the Radical Party was held in one of the Committee-rooms of the House of Commons in order to decide what course they should adopt in the approaching division. Rarely has so momentous a meeting been held under the roof of the Palace at Westminster. These fifty-five men held the fate of the Government in their hands. If they voted with Mr. Gladstone, the second reading of the Home Rule Bill would be triumphantly carried. If they abstained, it would creep through and the Ministry would be saved. If they voted against it, the Bill must go and the Ministry with it.

All this was clear enough. None in the room, nor any waiting at the doors to hear the decision, had the slightest forecast of the momentous events hanging on their decision; changes amounting to a revolution of English political parties, accompanied by far-reaching consequences at home and abroad.

Mr. Chamberlain submitted the issue in a speech which one present tells me was a model of judicial impartiality. There were open to them, he said, the familiar three courses. They might vote for the Bill; they might vote against it; they might abstain from the division lobby. He advocated no one of the three, confining himself to the task of summarizing the consequences that would severally follow. He suggested that in coming to a decision the process of the second ballot should be adopted. On the first division of the fifty-five members present three voted in favour of the Bill, thirty-nine against it, thirteen electing to abstain. On a second vote, the three who had voted in favour of the Bill stood by their guns. Of the abstainers nine went over to the stalwarts, and the die was cast.

JOSEPH ADDRESSING HIS BRETHREN. A HISTORICAL FRAGMENT.

DIVISION ON THE SECOND READING.

Shortly after the stroke of one o'clock on the morning of June 8th the House divided, and a second reading was refused the Home Rule Bill by 343 votes against 313. Of the majority there were 250 Conservatives and ninety-three Dissentient Liberals. Of these last fifty-five were followers of Mr. Chamberlain, forty-eight men whom on other platforms and in times not long past they angrily denounced as Whigs. They were now united under a common flag, and have to this day, with few notable defections, remained in unity.

It is important to note that the two sections came together for the first time in avowed alliance at a meeting held at Devonshire House on the 14th of May, 1886, some time after the secret negotiations with Mr. Gladstone, which were conducted exclusively with Mr. Chamberlain's section. I have the best reason to know that these began and ended without the personal knowledge of Lord Hartington and his inner council, who learned the facts for the first time from the April Number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

MR. BRIGHT'S LETTER.

On referring to "Annals of Our Time," I find under date 31st May, 1886, that the figures in the divisions taken at the fateful meeting of Radical Dissentients, presided over by Mr. Chamberlain on the eve of the second reading, slightly vary from my account. It was rumoured in the Lobby of the House of Commons that fifty-four members met; that three declared for the second reading; twelve would abstain; and that thirty-eight were in favour of voting against it. This it will be observed accounts for only fifty-three. The figures I give are supplied by a member who took a leading part in the revolt.

"A great impression," it is written in the "Annals," "was made by a letter from Mr. Bright, who stated that though he would not speak he would vote against the Bill." I have had communicated to me some curious particulars about that unpublished letter, the importance of which upon the history of the country can scarcely be exaggerated. In those troubled times, on the eve of the dissolution of life-long friendships, one surpassing all, Mr. Bright could not bring himself to resume his attendance at the House of Commons. He spent his evenings at the Reform Club, an arrangement being made that Mr. W. S. Caine, who acted as Whip of the inchoate party, should see him every evening about nine o'clock, and report progress. The final meeting of the Chamberlainites having been decided upon—by a striking coincidence it was held in

MR. CAINE KEEPING MR. BRIGHT ADVISED.

Committee-room No. 15, at a later stage famous in connection with another episode of the Irish question—Mr. Caine saw Mr. Bright, and begged him to attend it. Mr. Bright declined, but agreed to write a letter that might be read at the gathering. After it had been read it was destroyed, no copy being kept. There was a report current at the time that an enterprising journal had offered Mr. Caine £100 for the text of the letter.

THE FRIENDLY BROKER.

Mr. Bright was not permitted to receive exclusive information from Mr. Caine of what was going forward at this crisis. Mr. Labouchere, the friendly broker throughout the whole business, posted off to the Reform Club as soon as he heard the decision arrived at by the Radical meeting on the 31st May.

THE FRIENDLY BROKER.

"What have they done?" eagerly asked Mr. Bright, as he entered.

"They have resolved to vote against the Bill," said Mr. Labouchere.

According to Mr. Labouchere's account of this interview, given at the time to a friend who permits me to use his notes, Mr. Bright expressed regret at this conclusion. The purport of Mr. Bright's letter was that, whilst he distrusted the compromise Mr. Gladstone was at this date prepared to make—to withdraw the Bill after the second reading, re-introducing it the following Session amended in the direction of the views of Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain—he would fall in with whatever conclusion the meeting arrived at. That is the summary of the letter given by one who heard it read at the meeting. Mr. Labouchere, on the contrary, was under the impression that Mr. Bright had announced his intention to vote against the Bill. Mr. Labouchere reminding him that he had earlier stated he would abstain from voting, Mr. Bright answered that he had been grossly insulted in public by Mr. Sexton, an incident in his long connection with Ireland which had decided him finally to break with the Nationalist party.

STORMING DOWN TO DOWNING STREET.

Mr. Labouchere, who suspected that only a portion of the letter had been read to the meeting, asked Mr. Bright to give him a copy for publication. Mr. Bright consented to the publication, but said he had kept no copy. Mr. Caine arriving at this moment, Mr. Bright said, "Give Labouchere my letter to go to the papers." Mr. Caine had already destroyed it.

WHO KILLED COCK ROBIN?

This narrative of the inner history of the historical epoch, compiled from letters and oral communications made to me from leading members in the various camps, will enable the judicious reader to form his own opinion as to who killed the Home Rule Bill.

"Who defeated the Bill?" one of the fifty-five meeting in Committee-room No. 15, still a trusted member of the Unionist party, writes. He answers himself with ascending notes of admiration, preserved from his text: "Hussey Vivian! W. S. Caine!! Winterbotham!!! George Trevelyan!!!! These, following in succession with bitter non-surrender speeches, turned the feeling which Chamberlain's speech had left in a condition of icy impartiality."

"The man who was bitterest against any compromise," writes another leading member of the fifty-five, who has since found salvation, "and was most determined that the Bill should be thrown out, was not Bright, but George Trevelyan, who made a vehement speech, which undoubtedly settled the line the meeting took."

A third correspondent, going back earlier to the date of the first negotiation conducted by Mr. Labouchere between Downing Street and Prince's Gardens, writes: "It having leaked out that negotiations were going forward on the basis of retaining Irish members at Westminster, and in other directions securing the supremacy of the British Parliament, Parnell went storming down to Downing Street, about two o'clock on the Saturday afternoon before the second reading speech, and knocked the whole arrangement into pie."

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLVI.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

MR. GLADSTONE'S RESIGNATION.

WHEN the world grew accustomed to the near prospect of Mr. Gladstone's retirement from the Premiership there was curious inquiry as to how long previous to its disclosure the determination had been reached. Did Mr. Gladstone mean to resign the Premiership when he set out for Biarritz? If so, were his colleagues in the Cabinet aware of the fact?

I recently had opportunity of making inquiry on the point, and found the momentous decision was arrived at shortly after the defeat of the Home Rule Bill, and was made known to his colleagues in the Cabinet some time before he set out on the journey to Biarritz. There are some among them who retain the conviction that for Mr. Gladstone's dignity and the appropriate rounding off of his illustrious career it would have been more appropriate that he should have quitted the stage when the curtain fell on his last great drama. To go pottering along with the Parish Councils Bill in their opinion partook something of the nature of an anti-climax. It was whilst struggling under the burden of this Bill that he dropped the first hint of necessity for retirement. It was characteristic of him that, having one time gone so far as directly and unmistakably to announce his decision, he shrank back from its fulfilment.

A GLOWING GLANCE.

A SURPRISE DINNER.

There is a delightful and true story of a Cabinet dinner that may some day be told in fuller detail than is permissible here. A Cabinet dinner is distinct in several ways from a Cabinet Council. At the latter, the Sovereign presumably presides, and all proceedings are conducted with strict routine, surrounded by an impenetrable wall of secrecy. Though in these days the Sovereign no longer attends Cabinet Councils, her communication with it is closely maintained, the Prime Minister sending to her at the close of each sitting a full account of what has taken place. The Cabinet dinner, at which much important work is often done, is established on more informal, not to say more convivial, lines.

A short time after the Home Rule Bill was thrown out, Mr. Gladstone issued invitations for a Cabinet dinner. It was understood that the occasion was specially devised in order that he might make a final announcement of his pending resignation. The guests assembled in the subdued mood proper to the melancholy event. Conversation on ordinary topics flagged whilst the dinner dragged on. At length a noble lord, specially in Mr. Gladstone's favour and confidence, ventured to ask the host whether it was not time the servants left the room.

"Why?" said Mr. Gladstone, turning quickly upon him with the glowing glance sometimes flashed upon an interlocutor. "Have you anything private to say?"

The embarrassed Councillors thus learned that since the dinner invitations were issued, possibly since he had entered the room, Mr. Gladstone had changed his mind about taking the irrevocable step, and indefinitely deferred its announcement.

WHO TOLD?

It did not come for at least a fortnight later. But it pre-dated his departure for Biarritz, and when he set out on that journey, his colleagues in the Cabinet knew that his Ministerial career would close with the dying Session. They loyally kept the secret, which was not disclosed from London. Who betrayed it to the advantage of an evening newspaper is one of the minor mysteries of the piece. When I think of it, I recall Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler's words of wisdom:—

> A woman's tongue is ever slow
> To tell the thing she does not know.

LORD PLAYFAIR. The late Lord Playfair's occupation of the Chair in Committees was contemporaneous with the wildest Parliamentary orgies of modern times. Those were the days of the Bradlaugh scenes, of the growth and full vigour of the Fourth Party, of Mr. Parnell in his prime, with Mr. Biggar in the proud flush of his imitation sealskin waistcoat. On the whole, Dr. Lyon Playfair, as he then was, did tolerably well. But he was sorely tried. There was something righteously impressive in his manner when, rising to full height and adjusting his spectacles, he invested with Scotch accent the familiar cry of "Order! Order!" Doing this one night when Mr. Callan was on the rampage, that hon. gentleman retorted emphatically, if inconclusively, "Dr. Playfair, sir, I will not be dictated to by a Scotchman!" Why he took exception on that particular ground has ever remained a mystery.

It once fell to Dr. Playfair's lot to "name" twenty-five Irish members right off. He also took part in the more historic all-night sittings which led up to the suspension of thirty-seven members, including Mr. Parnell. That was the occasion when the House, meeting on a Monday to debate the question of leave to introduce a Protection Bill, uninterruptedly sat till Wednesday. At midnight on Tuesday the worn-out Speaker left the Chair, and Dr. Playfair, acting as Deputy Speaker, took it, remaining at his post all night. The hapless Chairman had to struggle not only with the Irish members, but with the Leaders of the Opposition, who had no patience with his long-suffering. Thirsting for the blood of Mr. Parnell, they insisted that he should be "named." Dr. Playfair declining to accede to the request, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir M. Hicks-Beach, and his colleagues on the front bench rose and, shaking the dust of the House from off their feet, quitted its precincts. There was a suspicion at the time that this was a cunningly devised scheme whose principal object was to secure a night's rest without the appearance of neglecting duty. But it was a little hard on a sufficiently battered Chairman.

At nine o'clock on the Wednesday morning the Speaker returned, peremptorily stopped Mr. Biggar, who was on his legs, and for the first time in Parliamentary history put the closure in force.

THE HIGHLY RESPECTABLE JOURNAL OF WAYS AND MEANS. In considering Dr. Playfair's career as Chairman of Ways and Means, there should be taken into account the fact that not only did he live in stormy times, but the Chair was unprotected by those disciplinary rules which now fortify it. Speaker and Chairman alike were ludicrously at the mercy of astute practitioners, whether they sat in the Irish camp or were ranged in the scanty column of the Fourth Party. But Lord Playfair had no claim to be regarded as a great Parliament man, whether in the Chair or out of it. When he took part in debate he learned his speeches off by heart, and delivered them much as if he were addressing the audience in a lecture-room. His most successful speech was reeled off in the course of debate arising on the sale of margarine. There the ex-Professor was at home, charming and instructing a crowded House. When he sat down members felt they knew more about margarine than ever they had dreamt about butter.

THE LATE LORD PLAYFAIR.

Three years' experience of the Chair was sufficient for Dr. Playfair. Whilst he filled it he stuck closely to his work, and liked it. I have a letter from him dated 21st July, 1882, in which he writes: "My reading at present is chiefly confined to 'the highly respectable Journal of Ways and Means,' into which a grower of champagne has asked me to insert a commendatory notice of his vintage."

"PLIMSOLL'S MARK." Mr. Plimsoll, who survived Lord Playfair only a few days, was the hero of one of the most dramatic scenes ever witnessed in the House of Commons. It broke the almost somnolent peace of the second Session of the Parliament that saw Mr. Disraeli in power as well as in office. The Govern-

ment had been induced to bring in a Merchant Shipping Bill. It did not arouse enthusiasm in Ministerial circles, and as the end of the Session approached was quietly displaced by a measure dealing with agricultural holdings. The Premier having announced its abandonment, Mr. Plimsoll passionately interposed, entreating Disraeli "not to consign some thousands of men to death." In the excitement of the moment he had risen to address the House from the cross bench before the chair of the Serjeant-at-Arms. That is, technically, out of the House, and Mr. Plimsoll was committing a breach of order in endeavouring to speak from it. Amid stormy cries of "Order," he went on shouting at the top of his voice.

"Name! Name!" shocked members cried, meaning that Mr. Plimsoll should be "named" for disorderly conduct. He, mistaking their intent, cried out, "Oh, I'll give names!" Rushing forward into the midst of the House, wildly gesticulating, he pointed at a well-known shipowner sitting behind the Treasury Bench, and reading out a long list of ships lost at sea, gave notice that he would ask the President of the Board of Trade whether those ships belonged to the member whom he named.

MR. PLIMSOLL'S OUTBURST.

The turmoil now reached stormy heights. Members on both sides added to it by shouting "Order! Order!" Mr. Plimsoll, ordinarily the mildest-mannered of men, developed a strange passion for standing on one leg, perhaps dimly feeling that that was only half as bad as standing on two in the middle of the House, where no member should halt when the Speaker is in the Chair. First he stood on the right leg, then on the left, shaking his fist impartially at the Speaker, the Premier, and at the shipowning member whom he denounced.

"I am determined," he cried, his voice audible amid the uproar, "to unmask the villain who sent these men to their graves."

It was all very wrong. Mr. Plimsoll was compelled to apologize. But Mr. Disraeli, a keen judge of signs of the times, found it necessary to set aside all other work in order to add the Merchant Shipping Bill to the Statute-book. Formal notification of Mr. Plimsoll's indiscretion is written in the journals of the House. At the same time he wrote with indelible ink his mark on the side of every ship that carries the British flag, and the overloading of ships, whether criminal or careless, became a thing of the past.

THE PEEL PORTRAIT.

The fine portrait of the ex-Speaker, which has formed a principal attraction of the Royal Academy this season, was painted for addition to the unique collection in Speaker's House at Westminster. In the stately dining-room hang counterfeit presentments of Speakers from earliest Parliamentary times. By a curious accident Lord Peel's portrait will not hang in the same room with the long line of his predecessors in the Chair. It is too big for the place. When Mr. Orchardson undertook the commission, he sent a man down to measure the allotted space. Through some miscalculation the canvas was planned on too large a scale. The picture completed and sent down to Speaker's House to await the opening of the Academy, the mistake was discovered. The bold British workmen in charge of the treasure were equal to the emergency. The picture was too large for the wall. The wall could not be extended, but the canvas might be cut down. They were preparing to carry out this simple design when the opportune entrance of a member of Mr. Gully's household discovered the intent and frustrated it. The picture in its untrimmed proportions will, as soon as it is returned from the Academy, be hung in a room adjoining that in which the other portraits stare from the walls at successive groups of Her Majesty's Ministers once a year dining in full dress with the Speaker.

"MOVING THE SPEAKER INTO THE CHAIR."

Amongst other claims to distinction Mr. Orchardson is the only man, not being a member of the House of Commons, who ever "moved the Speaker into the Chair." In this particular case it was an ex-Speaker. That is a mere

detail, not affecting the unique distinction. Lord Peel, after the ordinary fashion, gave sittings to the artist at his studio. It was necessary to the completeness of the situation that the ex-Speaker, arrayed in wig and gown, should be seated in the Chair of the House of Commons. The Chair could not be spared for transport to Portland Place, even if it were practicable to move it. Accordingly, Mr. Orchardson sketched the ordinary chair in which, in his studio, Lord Peel sat. When the work was nearly finished, Lord Peel made tryst with the artist at the House of Commons, and there Mr. Orchardson literally "moved him into the Chair."

AN UNRECORDED SITTING IN THE COMMONS.

A curious incident befell during the operation. One morning a member of the Press Gallery, on duty in one of the Committee-rooms, bethought him of a paper he had left in his drawer in the Gallery of the House of Commons. Proceeding thither he was amazed, even shocked, on glancing down from behind the Speaker's Chair to observe a newspaper held in an unseen hand projecting from the edge of the sacred edifice! Was it possible that one of the workmen — peradventure the charwoman—suspending his (or her) labours, handsomely remunerated by a vote on the Civil Service Estimates, was lolling in the Speaker's Chair reading the morning newspaper?

Moving softly towards the left so as to come in full side view of the Chair, the startled Pressman discovered Mr. Orchardson sitting at his easel, quietly working away at his picture, whilst Lord Peel sat in the Chair occupied by him through twelve memorable Sessions, quietly reading his *Times*.

THE PICTURE AS A PORTRAIT.

Out of the artist's studio the portrait was first seen by House of Commons men on the occasion of Mrs. Gully's "At Homes" in the early weeks of the present Session. Among the company gathered round it on both nights it was astonishing to find how few there were to praise. It might be a picture, they said, but it was no portrait. Particular objection was taken to the alleged fact that the Speaker had only one eye. Someone, probably Mr. Caldwell, having "caught" the other had permanently appropriated it.

That and other seeming defects were attributable simply to the height at which the picture was hung. Spectators were fain to throw back the head and look up at it, thus getting curious and fatal foreshortening effect.

A similar drawback attached to Lord Randolph Churchill's bust when placed in the corridor leading to the central lobby of the House of Commons. It was stuck on a pedestal at least a foot too high. When Lord Randolph was still with us, in the flesh, men were not accustomed to regard him from the point of view of looking up at his chin and nostrils—except, indeed, on the historic occasion when, on the defeat of Mr. Gladstone's Government on the 8th of June, 1885, he jumped on the corner seat below the gangway and, uproariously cheering, wildly waved his hat. Much disappointment was expressed, a feeling that will be removed when the authorities consent to place a really clever work of art in a suitable position. Lord Peel's portrait being hung on the line at the Academy became quite another thing. It is not only a great painting worthy of an old master—it is the living portrait of a great man. When Lord Randolph's bust is dropped a foot in height it will be equally advantaged.

THE BUST OF LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.

It is striking evidence of the intuition of genius that Mr. Orchardson has preserved the look of Speaker Peel on one of those not infrequent occasions during his turbulent times when he only partially succeeded in repressing feelings of stormy indignation. He was not, for example, present when Mr. Peel admonished the Cambrian Railway directors, with "John William" at their head, for breach of privilege in their dealings with a station-master who had given embarrassing evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons. Nor did he a year later see and hear the Speaker turn and rend Mr. Conybeare, who, in supplement of newspaper attacks on the Speaker, had kept for weeks on the paper an offensive resolution directed against him. Yet looking at the portrait, memory recalls the spectacle of the affrighted directors at the Bar, as Mr. Peel "admonished" them.

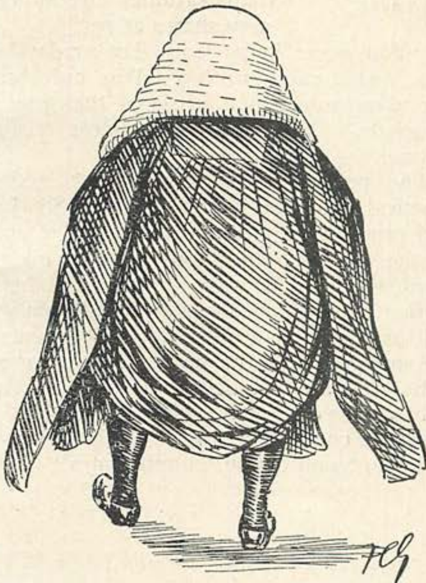
Or one can hear him as, trembling in every fibre with indignation, he rose to full height and, turning upon the member for Cambourne seated below the gangway, with head hung down and arms sullenly folded, thundered forth, "And now, forsooth! under the guise of performing a public duty, he charges me with the grossest offence possible to a man in my position."

THE EX-SPEAKER—SCATHING INDIGNATION.

Mr. Orchardson saw neither of these things, and yet he has preserved for all time Mr. Speaker Peel as he then looked.

THE LORDS AT PRAYER.

Through the Session the House of Lords meet four days a week at four o'clock in the afternoon. The doors are not open till a quarter past four, the interval understood to be occupied by their lordships in devotion. As a matter of fact, it often happens that during this period the House is empty and silent. The House sometimes sits in its capacity as the final Court of Appeal. In such case it is regarded as an ordinary meeting of the House. In the morning the Lord Chancellor takes his seat on the Woolsack with customary ceremony, and the proceedings open with prayer. When the judicial business is finished the House does not adjourn. The sitting is "suspended," being resumed at the customary hour in the afternoon. But there are no more prayers, nor does the Lord Chancellor again enter in State, quietly dropping in from the doorway by the Throne to take his seat on the Woolsack.



THE LORD CHANCELLOR QUIETLY DROPS IN.

The identity of the House of Lords sitting as a Court of Appeal and as a legislative assembly is perfect in theory. In the great betting appeal case, which came before the House in May, the whole body of peers—six Princes of the Blood, two archbishops, twenty-two dukes, twenty-two marquises, 121 earls, thirty viscounts, twenty-four bishops, 387 barons, sixteen Scottish and twenty-eight Irish representative peers—might, had they pleased, have met to take part in deciding the momentous question, "What is a place?" The late Lord Denman, jealous of the privileges of a peer, on one occasion not only insisted upon his right to sit in an appeal case, but ventured to offer a few observations in supplement of the judgment of the learned lords. He did not repeat the experiment.

The Court of Appeal is ordinarily composed of the Lord Chancellor for the time being, and other peers who have sat on the Woolsack or the judicial Bench, or have served as Law Officers of the Crown. The most frequent attendants are Lord Ashbourne, Lord Herschell, Lord Watson, Lord Hobhouse, Lord Macnaghten, Lord Shand, Lord Davey, and Lord James of Hereford. What these pundits do not know about law is, perhaps, not worth mentioning.

THE YOUNGEST BISHOP STRIKES.

Up to a recent period, it was the custom for the junior bishop last admitted to a seat in the House of Lords daily to officiate at prayer-time. It was Dr. Ridding, the Bishop of Southwell, who freed the neck of the youngest bishop from this intolerable yoke. The newly-appointed Bishop of Southwell was son-in-law of Lord Selborne, at the time

Lord Chancellor. He effectively pleaded his hard case, and at the instance of the Lord Chancellor a new arrangement was made whereby the bishops take weekly turns at prayer-time. As there are twenty-four of them, it does not often happen that a bishop gets more than one turn in a Session.

"THE HON. AND REVEREND MEMBER."

Once a clergyman always a clergyman, is an old saying, meaning that a man admitted to holy orders cannot divest himself of them. This particularly affects reverend gentlemen so far as the House of Commons is concerned, since they may not offer themselves as Parliamentary candidates. Nevertheless, there is in the present House at least one member who has been in the Church, and who, having left it, availed himself of a recent statute to clear his disability. He was, indeed, rector of a plump parish, and proudly preserves the record that he restored its church at an outlay of £10,000. I rather fancy that early in his rectorial career his attention was diverted by the attraction of dogs. There is no reason why a parish parson shall not keep a dog or two. When it comes to three hundred, the number seems to exceed the area of the pale of the Church.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER: "NO, THANKS, I DON'T WANT ANY IRONCLADS TO-DAY."

The rector was a born dog fancier, with hereditary skill in training, and to this day is the proud possessor of a multitude of prize medals, gold and otherwise. He may possibly have begun to drift away from the Church drawn by the dogs. What directly decided his fate was an accident in the discharge of his rectorial functions. Being called upon to officiate at a wedding, he, somehow or other, married the wrong man. How it came about is not at this day clearly explained. Probably, whilst the bridegroom-elect was of a retiring disposition, the best man was what in politics is called of pushful tendencies. However that be, when the ceremony was over and the rector was benevolently regarding his handiwork, his error was pointed out to him.

It was very awkward; but nothing could be better than the conduct of the whole party. Above all things they desired to save their beloved pastor from annoyance, so they frankly accepted the situation. The best man went off with the bride. What became of the bridegroom, and what relations he subsequently held with the unexpectedly established household, I have never heard.

A PRIVATE IRONCLAD.

Sir John Brunner modestly disclaims the sole conception of the idea with which, at the outbreak of the Hispano-American War, he fascinated the civilized world. His suggestion was that, instead of the Great Powers each having its own Navy, adding vastly to national taxation by systematic competition, they should provide out of a joint purse two Navies of equal strength, hiring them out to any two nations bent upon fighting. Sir John tells me the germ of the idea lies in a proposal once actually made to him by a well-known naval constructor. He wanted Sir John to give him a commission to build an ironclad as his private property. Sir John pointed out that he did not particularly want an ironclad. But the naval constructor demonstrated that, regarded strictly as an investment, it was better even than Brunner Mond ordinary shares at par.

"You never know from day to day," he said, "what may turn up. War may break out to-morrow, when up goes the price of ironclads. You sell out; clear a little fortune."

The prospect was alluring, but nothing practical came of the interview. Sir John had nowhere to put the ironclad, the space at the back of the houses in Ennismore Gardens being limited. "And," as he remarked, "you can't leave an ironclad in your hall as if it were a bicycle." The events of the spring showed the naval constructor was right. If Sir John Brunner had in April only chanced to have had an ironclad in stock, he could have sold it at his own price either to Spain or the United States.

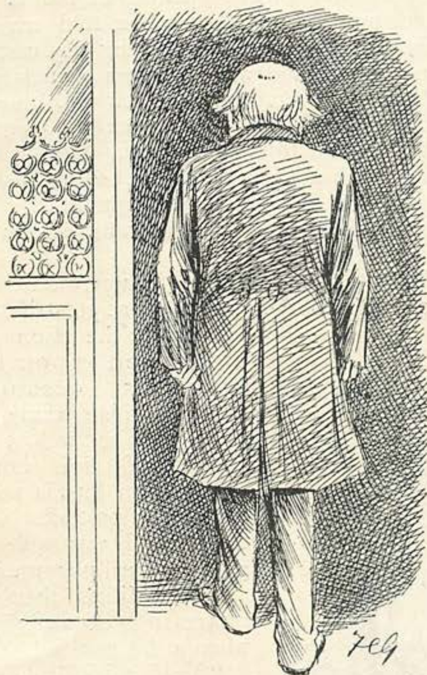
From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLVII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

A VACANT PLACE.

MORE than four years have elapsed since, viewing the House of Commons from behind the Speaker's Chair, one's glance instinctively turned to, and lingered upon, the noble figure on the Treasury Bench seated opposite the brass-bound box. No man is indispensable to mankind. But in the interval since, on the 1st of March, 1894, Mr. Gladstone finally walked out of the House of Commons, members have frequently had occasion to realize how irreparable is their loss. When he spoke, Mr. Gladstone uplifted debate from whatever rut of mediocrity it may have fallen into. That was the power of the orator. When he sat silent, his mere presence communicated to the House a sense of dignity and a moral strength easier to feel than to describe. That was the quality of the man.



WALKING OUT FOR THE LAST TIME.

I do not propose in this paper to attempt to add to the far-sounding tribute of applause and admiration which resounded over the death-bed and the grave of the great Englishman. I have, rather, strung together some reminiscences such as may be discreetly withdrawn from a record of personal association with which I was for some years honoured.

A "PUNCH" DINNER.

One day at luncheon at Dalmeny, during the campaign of 1885, Mr. Gladstone, talking with me, turned the conversation upon *Punch* work, showing keen interest in the Wednesday dinner, and in the *personnel* of the staff. A year or two later, when, being in Opposition, he was at fuller leisure, I asked him to dinner to meet a few of my colleagues. He replied :—

"4, Whitehall Gardens,
"Nov. 14, '88.

"DEAR MR. LUCY,—I thank you much for the invitation to join the goodly company to be assembled round your table on the 11th of Dec. But I am living in hope of escape to the country before that date, and therefore I fear I am precluded from accepting your kind invitation. At the same time, if the dinner is in any case to come off, and if it were allowed me in the event of my being in or near London to offer myself, I should thankfully accept such a reservation."

"Faithfully yours,
"W. E. GLADSTONE."

HE TOOK A GREAT INTEREST IN "PUNCH."

The dinner came off in May of the following year. In addition to the editor and the artists of *Punch*, the company included Earl Granville and Lord Charles Beresford. Mr. Gladstone evidently enjoyed the company, and was in bounding spirits. We were all struck on this close view with surprise at his amazing physical and mental virility, at that epoch noted by every observer of the veteran statesman in public life. He had just entered upon that term of fourscore years at which, according to the Psalmist, man's days are but labour and sorrow. Yet the only indications of advanced age were observable in increasing deafness and a slight huskiness of voice.

Deafness was at this time a failing shared by Lord Granville. Talking to either, it was desirable to raise the voice above conversational level. Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville, though separated by the breadth of the table, and both deaf, were able to make each other hear without exceptional effort in raising or modulating the voice.

A notable thing about Mr. Gladstone's face at that date, a marvel to the end, was the brightness of his eyes. They were fuller, more unclouded, than those of many a man under fifty. As he talked—and his talk was like the bubbling of an illimitable waterspring—the huskiness of his voice wore off. To everyone's delight, he did most of the talking. But there was not then—nor on any other of the occasions when I have been privileged to sit within the circle of his company was there—any appearance of his monopolizing conversation. As Du Maurier wittily said, he was "a most attractive listener."

"AN ATTRACTIVE LISTENER."

He had never been in Du Maurier's company before, but took to him with quick appreciation aud evident delight. Almost immediately after Du Maurier had been presented to him, the conversation turned upon Homer. For ten minutes Mr. Gladstone talked about Homer, with glowing glance and the deep, rich tones of voice that accompanied any unusual emotion. Homer, he insisted, evidently did not like Venus—Aphrodite, as Mr. Gladstone preferred to call her. He cited half-a-dozen evidences of Homer's distaste for a goddess usually fascinating to mankind.

MILLAIS.

Pictures and artists he discussed, with special reference to the picture shows at the time open in London. He said he always liked to go round a picture gallery in the company of an artist.

"Artists," he said, "looking at a picture always see in it less to criticise, more to admire, than is possible to ordinary people. An artist sees more in a man's face than you or I can."

For many years preceding his retirement to Hawarden, Mr. Gladstone was accustomed to make tryst with Sir William Agnew in the early morning of the opening of the Royal Academy. Sir William once told me he insisted upon seeing everything, his critical remarks upon the varied pictures being singularly acute. At the date of this dinner Mr. Gladstone had had his portrait painted not less than thirty-five times. How many times he has been photographed is a sum beyond even his power of computation. He spoke with warm admiration and esteem of Millais.

"I have had the good fortune," he said, "to fall into the hands of a great artist, who made the minimum of demand upon my somewhat occupied time. Millais came to know me so well that sittings of five hours sufficed him for his most elaborate portrait, and this time I was able to give with real pleasure."

"Is Millais then a charming companion when at his work?"

"Yes," said Mr. Gladstone, "but not only because he talks. Just to watch him at his easel is a delight. He throws his whole heart and soul into his canvas."

MR. BRIGHT.

Talking about Mr. Bright, he spoke regretfully of the carelessness with which his old friend dealt with himself in the matter of health.

"Bright," he said, emphatically, "did nothing he should do to preserve his health and everything he should not."

If he had only been wise, and wise in time, there was, in Mr. Gladstone's opinion, no reason in the world why he should not,

on that May Day, 1889, have been alive, hale and strong. But he would never listen to advice about himself. Mr. Gladstone told a funny little story about his habits in this respect. Up to within a period of ten years preceding his death Mr. Bright had no regular, at least no recognised, medical attendant. There was some mysterious anonymous person to whom he occasionally went for advice, and of whom he spoke oracularly.

"But," said Mr. Gladstone, with that curious approach to a wink that sometimes varied his grave aspect, "he would never tell his name."

Somewhere about the year 1879 Mr. Bright surprised Sir Andrew Clark by one morning appearing in his consultation-room. Sir Andrew, who knew all about his eccentricities in the matter of medical attendance, asked him how it was he came to see him.

"Oh," said Mr. Bright, "it's Gladstone. He never will let me rest about the state of my health."

Long neglect had irretrievably wrought mischief, but Mr. Bright acknowledged the immense benefit derived from following the directions of Mr. Gladstone's friend and physician, and nothing more was heard of the anonymous doctor.

A LITTLE FRIENDLY ADVICE.

SLEEPING HABITS.

Mr. Gladstone seems to have been always on the look-out for opportunity to give a little friendly advice to Mr. Bright. One thing he strongly recommended was never to think of political affairs on getting into bed or immediately on waking in the morning.

"I never do that," Mr. Gladstone said. "I never allow myself to do it. In the most exciting political crises I absolutely dismiss current controversies from my mind when I get into bed. I will not take up the line of thought again till I am up and dressing in the morning. I told Bright about this. He said, 'That is all very well for you. But my way is exactly the reverse. I think over all my speeches when I am in bed.'"

Like Sancho Panza, Mr. Gladstone had a great gift of sleep. Seven hours he insisted upon getting, "and," he added, with a smile, "I should like to have eight. I detest getting up in the morning, and every morning I hate it just as sharply. But one can do everything by habit. When I have had my seven hours' sleep, my habit is to get out of bed."

AN EARLY APPRECIATION.

His memory was amazingly minute, more particularly for events that took place half a century ago. Oddly enough, where memory failed him was in the matter of human faces. This gift precious to, indispensable for, Princes was withheld from him. He told how somewhere in the late thirties there lived in London a man with a system, now sunk into oblivion, by which he brought electricity to bear in the direction of reading character.

"There were three faculties he told me wherein I was lacking," said Mr. Gladstone. "One of them was that I had no memory for faces; I am sorry to say it was, and remains, quite true."

It would have been interesting to hear what were the other two faculties absence of which the wise man detected. Mr. Gladstone did not say. But forgetfulness of faces he admitted and lamented, probably recognising in the failing occasion of some personal misunderstandings.

OLD DAYS IN THE COMMONS.

He talked a good deal about old Parliamentary days, lapsing into that gentle tone of charming reminiscence which on quiet Tuesday evenings or Friday nights sometimes delighted the House of Commons. One scene he recalled with as much ease and fulness of detail as if it had happened the week before. Its date was the 4th of June, 1841. Sir Robert Peel had moved a resolution of No Confidence in Her Majesty's Government.

"You were there," said Mr. Gladstone, pointing eagerly across the table to Lord Granville. "You had not left the Commons then. Didn't you vote in the division?"

Lord Granville smilingly shook his head, and to Mr. Gladstone's pained amazement

positively could not remember what had taken place in the House of Commons on a particular night sped forty-eight years earlier. To Mr. Gladstone the scene was as vivid as if it had taken place at the morning sitting he had quitted to join us at dinner. Naturally, as the issue of the pending division involved the fate of the Ministry, party passion ran high. Forces were so evenly divided that every member seemed to hold in the hollow of his hand the fate of the Ministry.

WHAT! NOT REMEMBER IT? IT WAS ONLY FORTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO.

"The Whips of those days," he observed, parenthetically, "somehow or other seemed to know more precisely than they do now how a division would go. It was positively known that there would be a majority of one. On which side it would be was the only doubt. There was a member of the Opposition almost at death's door. He *was* dead," Mr. Gladstone added, emphatically, "except that he had just a little breath left in him. The question was, could he be brought to the House? The Whips said he must come, and so they carried him down. He was wheeled in in a Bath chair. To this day I never forget the look on his face. His glassy eyes were upturned, his jaws stiff. We, a lot of young Conservatives clustered round the door, seeing the Bath chair, thought at first they had brought down a corpse. But he voted, and the resolution which turned out Lord Melbourne's Government was carried by a majority of one."

THE NEWS-PAPERS.

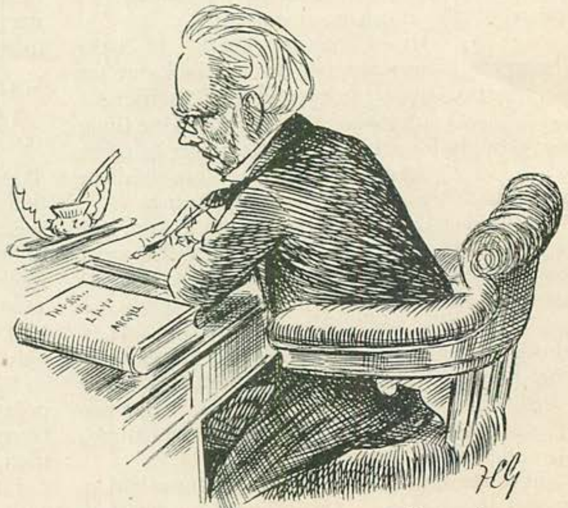
Mr Gladstone did not affect that indifference to the written word in the newspapers with which Mr. Arthur Balfour is equipped. He had his favourites among the dailies and weeklies. Of the latter was for many years the *Spectator*, a paper abandoned, as stated in a published record of private conversation, because in its new manner, soured by the Home Rule controversy, it "touched him on the raw."

For many years I contributed a London Letter to the columns of a Liverpool paper, edited by my old friend and, as Mr. Pumblechook used to describe himself in connection with Pip, "early Benefactor," now Sir Edward Russell. Mr. Gladstone once surprised, and, I need hardly add, highly honoured me by saying that when in residence at Hawarden, the *Liverpool Daily Post* being the earliest paper to reach him, the first thing he turned to was the London Letter.

"Dear Mr. Lucy," he writes under date Jan. 14th, 1890—"I hope we may meet in town, and I can then speak to you more freely than I like to write respecting a gentleman with whom I have been intimate for thirty years, and in whose uprightness of intention I fully believe, but who has exposed himself deplorably by his last effusion to the *Times*. I had read your comparison with great interest where I read you daily, viz., in the *Liverpool Daily Post*."

HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF.

The gentleness and lingering affection with which Mr. Gladstone, even in the white heat of personal political controversy, speaks of an old friend makes it possible to mention that the one he alludes to in this connection was the Duke of Argyll. The comparison which attracted him was attempted to be established between himself in this year 1890 and Sir Robert Walpole in 1742. At the period Mr. Gladstone wrote Mr. Chamberlain had not finally made up his mind to throw in his lot with his old foemen the Tories. He dreamed a dream of what


THE DUKE OF ARGYLL WRITES TO THE "TIMES."

he called "a National Party." In the article to which Mr. Gladstone refers it was pointed out that a hundred and fifty years earlier an almost exactly parallel case was set forth in English history. In 1742, at the close of a Ministry that had run a splendid career of twenty years, the factions arrayed against Sir Robert Walpole gained force sufficient to encourage his arch-enemies to strike the long impending blow. The Opposition of the day was divided into two parties diametrically opposed to each other in political opinion, just as were the Dissentient Liberals and the Conservatives of 1890. And as these latter were each all one in their hatred of Mr. Gladstone, so the manifold opposition of 1742 were united in animosity towards Walpole.

"Hatred of Walpole," Macaulay writes, "was almost the only feeling common to them. On this one point they concentrated their whole strength. So much did they narrow the disputed ground, so purely personal did they make the question, that they threw out friendly hints to other members of the Administration, and declared that they refused quarter to the Prime Minister alone."

By precision of coincidence the leading part in the cabal against Walpole was the then Duke of Argyll, whose successor in the title a hundred and fifty years later took a leading part in the revolt against a greater than Walpole.

THE "DAILY NEWS."

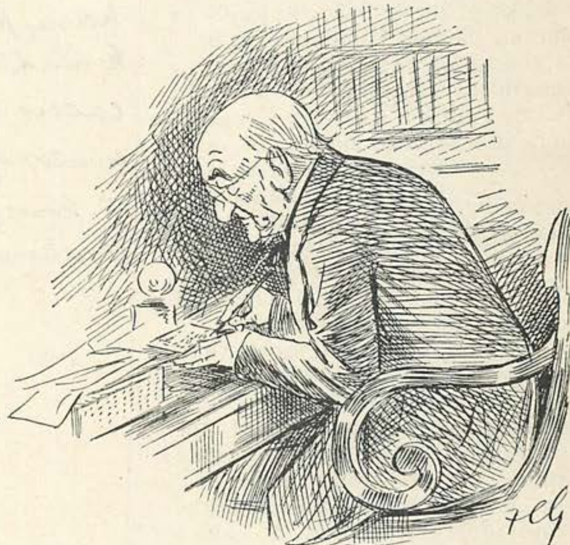
In January, 1886, I was called upon to undertake the Editorship of the leading Liberal paper in London. In ordinary times the post is one involving incessant labour and grave responsibility. But at least the party whose views are represented are pretty fairly decided as to what those views are, and moderately united in giving them expression. Within a few weeks of my assuming the Editorship, the *Daily News* was faced by the problem of taking instant decision as to whether it would stand by Mr. Gladstone in the matter of Home Rule, or whether it would join its colleagues of the Liberal Press which, without exception among London morning papers, went over to the other side. What happened is picturesquely set forth in the subjoined letter, one of the last, if not absolutely the last, written by Mr. Gladstone from the Premier's room in Downing Street :—

"10, Downing Street,
"Whitehall, March 5, '94.

"DEAR MR. LUCY,—Though under very great pressure I must thank you for your kind letter.

"I must *add* a word to your statement of the solitude in which the *Daily News* took and gallantly maintained its post. I remember a day on which the *Pall Mall Gazette* under its clever, but queer, erratic Editor published an object-lesson of the field of battle on the Irish question. On one side were *D.N.* and *P.M.G.*—on the other the rest. I took my *P.M.G.*, drew a noose round the fighting figure, and with a long line with a ^ at the end of it, carried it over to the other side, and by this verifying process placed the support of the *P.M.G.* at its true value, and left *D.N.* occupying absolutely alone its place of honour. I hope my account is intelligible.

"I remain,
"Faithfully yours,
"W. E. GLADSTONE."



WRITING A POST-CARD.

"DISSENTIENT LIBERALS."

When the split in the Liberal Party occasioned by the Home Rule movement showed itself there was among other difficulties that of denominating the seceders from the main body of Liberals. The delicacy of the situation was increased by the natural desire of those concerned for the welfare of the Liberal Party not to widen the rift by use of opprobrious names. Otherwise there was a term ready to hand in the phrase applied

by the Northerners when the Southern States withdrew from the Union. After much cogitation I hit upon the phrase "Dissentient Liberals," which, used in the leading columns of the *Daily News*, became generally adopted.

The following memorandum from Mr. Gladstone, written to me during the progress of the General Election of 1886, shows how anxious was his care in the matter :—

"I am really desirous that the newspapers should not go on representing as D.L. those who are distinctly L., like Talbot. If there is doubt about Sir H. Vivian, Villiers, and others, that ought rather to be given in our favour than against us. Further, the old division into Liberals and Tories ought to be regularly given, *as well as* the division into Irish and anti-Irish. At any rate, as soon as total L. overtops C., which at first it does not —but best, I think, without waiting for this."

That phrase, "as soon as total L. overtops C.," shows how sanguine he was up to the last that the country would respond to his appeal. As history records, the achievement was never completed, the poll finally made up showing the new House of Commons to consist of 317 Conservatives, 74 Dissentient Liberals, 191 Liberals, and 84 Parnellites, leaving Mr. Gladstone in a hopeless minority of 116.

A GENEROUS COMPLIMENT.

Even with the fresh soreness of the wounding, Mr. Gladstone habitually refrained from public resentment of the Thanes who in 1886 fled from him. If occasion arose to answer them in debate, he was even more than usually courteous in his address. No one present will forget the touching scene that softened the acrimony of debate on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill. Mr. Austen Chamberlain found the opportunity to deliver a maiden speech, a flower of promise which has since richly budded. Mr. Gladstone spoke on the twelfth night of the debate, following Mr. Balfour. Close at hand lay the momentous issue of the division. Behind him was the mass of argument to be answered, assertion to be confuted. Yet he did not forget the maiden speech of the young member, son of an old colleague now his most potent foeman. Commenting on the essay and its reception by the House, he turned towards his old colleague, seated at the corner bench below the gangway, still on the Liberal side, and, with gracious bow, said, "It was dear and refreshing to a father's heart.'

MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

There was one memorable occasion when Mr. Gladstone could not resist an invitation to fall upon and rend his severed friend. I am reminded of the incident by a post-card, here reproduced in facsimile, as illustrating not only Mr. Gladstone's familiar use of this medium of communication, but his characteristic prevision in beginning at the very top in small handwriting, so that if the spirit moved him he might utilize every scrap of space.

"One word of thanks, however hasty," he writes from 1, Carlton Gardens, April 12th, 1892, "for the brilliant article. It had but one fault, that of excess with reference to the merits of the principal subject of it."

One word of thanks however hasty for the brilliant article. It had but one fault, that of excess with reference to the merits of the [principal] subject of it. Yours faithfully WEG. 1 Carlton Gardens Ap. 12. 92 –

FACSIMILE OF ONE OF MR. GLADSTONE'S POST-CARDS.

The article alluded to appeared in the "Cross Bench" series of the *Observer*. It dealt with a memorable scene in the House on the 8th of April, 1892, when, in the course of debate, Mr. Gladstone, rising without a note of preparation, fell upon Mr. Chamberlain and belaboured him with effect all the greater since the onslaught was free from slightest display of brutal force. It is difficult to say on which side of the House the joy of the sport was more acutely felt and unreservedly displayed. There dwells still in the memory recollection of the scene in which the little comedy was set—the crowded House; the laughing faces all turned upon the picturesque figure standing at the table; Mr. Chamberlain gallantly trying to smile back on the benevolent visage turned upon him with just a flash of malice in the gleaming eyes; and, that no touch might be missing to complete the perfectness of the scene, just behind Mr. Chamberlain, sitting well forward on the bench with folded arms, and on his face a mechanical grin of perhaps qualified appreciation, Mr. Jesse Collings, "the hon. member for Bordesley, the faithful henchman of my right hon. friend, who would cordially re-echo that or any other opinion."

A HOLIDAY TASK.

Immediately after the result of the General Election of 1886 was made known, Mr. Gladstone betook himself to Hawarden and cheerfully entered on a quite new field of labour, his ordinary fashion of seeking recreation. A letter dated December 18th, 1886, gives an interesting peep at him holiday making:—

"DEAR MR. LUCY,

"Thanks for the proof. I read the article in the *D.N.*, and thought it clever, entertaining, and quite fair: the one in the *P.M. Gazette*, the secret of which I think I know, rather brutal. My ambition during my 'holiday' has been to give eighteen hours a week out of seventy, or one-fourth, to the prosecution of a study of which the Olympian Religion is *a* central part. But the O.R. of your articles is not mine. Mine is the religion of the Homeric Poems, and a totally different affair. For thirty years I have had this on hand. But of this appropriation I have fallen very far short. It has been my maximum.

"You may like to have the enclosed, from a special correspondent of the *Journal des Débats*.

"Faithfully yours,
"W. E. GLADSTONE."

MR. PARNELL'S OFFER TO RETIRE FROM POLITICAL LIFE.

The following letter, dated from Dollis Hill, April 28th, 1887, is interesting for its reference to Mr. Parnell. There was communicated to the *Daily News* a report of a statement made by Mr. Gladstone at a dinner given by Mr. Armitstead. To this he alludes in the postscript:—

"DEAR MR. LUCY,

"1. Will you, if you think proper, print the enclosed letter from me as a reply to an Edinburgh Correspondent, and let it be posted?

"2. Mr. W—— is an excellent man, but is behind the world. To the Eighty Club that I had long desired, and had made efforts for Liberal co-operation, outside the Irish question, but *without effect*.

"A *pointed* effort of that kind was made many weeks, nay, I think, several *months*, ago.

"Yours faithfully,
"W. E. GLADSTONE.

"The Editor, *Daily News*.

"The account given you of the Armitstead dinner goes beyond the mark, and evidently mixes the writer's impressions with my statement, which was simply that Mr. P. offered to retire from Parliament if I thought it right to desire it. I spoke from recollection."

Paragraph two of this letter is a little obscure, suggesting accidental omission of a phrase. I give it as it was written. The fault is redeemed by the delightfully brief but perfect description of Mr. W——, who is still alive, as excellent and as far behind the world as ever. I saw him looking reverently on from the fringe of the crowd of personal friends gathered in Westminster Hall round the bier of the lost Leader.

IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

Of all the touching episodes in the progress from the death-bed at Hawarden Castle to the graveside at Westminster Abbey, this last muster of old friends and colleagues round the coffin in Westminster Hall was the most pathetic, the grandest in its simplicity. When Eleanor, wife of Edward I., was borne from Lincoln to the same burial ground, her husband erected at various places Crosses to mark where she had rested on the way. For those present in Westminster Hall on Saturday, the 28th of May, 1898, there will ever live among the storied recollections of the fane the remembrance that its roof for a while enshrined the coffin of Mr. Gladstone, making his last halt on the way to his final dwelling-place.