CHAPTER XVIII

1844–52

ARGYLL LODGE—LONDON SOCIETY AND FRIENDS

BEFORE I proceed, however, to give an account of the memorable political events which followed, I must retrace my steps for a little to recall some of those aspects and incidents of private and social life on which, after all, the interest of an autobiography must largely depend.

My first entrance on official life involved a very considerable modification of my previous habits. Ever since my marriage, from 1844 to 1852, we had never stayed long enough in London to make it worth our while to take a house. The Sutherlands had a very large one, always half empty, and they were delighted to have us as long as we cared to stay. When, however, I took an office of high rank in the Government, I was obliged to live in London during the whole session, and in order to exercise some hospitality, it became necessary to have a house of our own. This we provided for, during a few years, by taking a house for the season only. The inconveniences, however, of these constant changes of abode, and the increasing number of our family, determined us to look out for a permanent residence.

Just at that time we heard that a villa at Campden Hill, which had long been well known in London as the residence of the Dowager-Duchess of Bedford, was for sale. It had four acres of land about it. It was beautifully planted, and had two very old oaks in the grounds which would have done no discredit to any

ancient chase in England. It was next to Holland Park, and absolutely removed from all noise of traffic. We went to see it, and the first thing I saw out of the late Duke of Bedford's room was a fine lawn covered with starlings, hunting for grubs and insects in their very peculiar fashion; moreover, there were other birds in abundance. To my amazement, I saw nut-hatches moving over the trees as if they were in some deep English woodland. Fly-catchers and warblers were also visible to my accustomed eye. There were objections: distance was to be considered. But the birds settled everything. All doubts and difficulties vanished before the rummaging of the starlings, the darting of the fly-catchers, and the agile climbing of the nut-hatches. Under such stimulus from birds it seemed quite a subordinate consideration that the lawn would be perfect for the children, and perfect, too, for breakfast-parties, as in the Duchess of Bedford's time. I returned to town, and instructed my agent at once to purchase Bedford Lodge. It has been my London House ever since, up to the present day. Some birds, alas! have ceased to tolerate our somewhat more smoky atmosphere. The reed-wren no longer hangs its beautiful pensile nest amongst our lilac-bushes. The black-cap and the willow-wren and the nut-hatches have all deserted us. But the starlings are as lively and busy as ever, and the cushat has become so tame and so familiar that its delicious voice is soothing at almost all hours to those who wish to escape from the 'fumum strepitumque Romæ.'

Casting the eyes of memory back to some of the recollections of my earlier years in London, before this quiet home had been acquired, and a somewhat new course of life had been begun, there are some persons and some incidents which I cannot omit to recall in this narrative with something of the vividness which belongs to them in my impressions of the past.

I have spoken of some of my new political colleagues in 1851 as links of great interest with statesmen long

passed away. There were at least two more such links with vanished generations which had no concern with politics. One of these was the poet Samuel Rogers. I do not recollect when or where I first made acquaintance with him, but this is not surprising. He had been a man of society in London for more than half a century. He went to every conceivable party, besides giving agreeable dinners and breakfasts at his own house. He was a lion wherever he went. His poems had at one time a great reputation. He had preceded Wordsworth, and had long preceded Byron, but that savage critic had belauded him when he was abusing others. His first poem had been published in 1786, and his latest in 1834. One edition of his collected works had been splendidly illustrated by the incomparable pencil of Turner. I confess I never cared for the poetry of Rogers, though seeing and feeling its immense polish and refinement. A single solitary line of all I had read, and this alone, ever remained in my memory, because of its graphic touch on one of the wonders of Nature, the economy of ants:

'And watched the emmet to her grainy nest.'

But I was always interested in meeting him. I cannot say I liked him, even as much as I could like his smooth and mellifluous lines. He was hideous to behold. When I first knew him in 1841 he was seventy-eight years of age, and he continued leading the same ubiquitous social life for ten years longer, till he was in his eighty-eighth year, but he had none of the venerable aspect of age in his appearance. He was a small man with a bald head, a very flat face, and a complexion perfectly cadaverous. His eyes were sharp and observant, but amiability was not conspicuous in the expression. His speech was slow, and always apparently premeditated. He was famous for his sharp sayings, not infrequently bitter. His temper was jealous and irritable. Yet with all this he was liked by those who knew him well, and he was said to

be generous to his poorer brethren of the pen. He had a charming house, looking on the Green Park, St. James's, where I had the honour of being a guest at one of his famous breakfasts. I remember nothing except the fine pictures, marbles, and furniture of the room, all showing very clearly the classic taste of the old poet.

There was another human link with the past connected with this period—another very old man, who was older than Rogers, and conspicuous for all the charms of age which were deficient in the poet. This was the Right Honourable Thomas Grenville. He was the second son of that George Grenville who was Prime Minister in 1735, and to whom the evil memory attaches of having passed the American Stamp Act, and of having so been the first cause of the loss of our American colonies. And yet there was in my mind no breath of disparagement attaching to the inheritance of this paternal name. In my early political education there was nothing that surprised me more than the discovery, in reading the debates and writings of the time, that the denial of any right in the Imperial Parliament to tax the colonies was founded on no law and on no authority previously acknowledged. That right had been long assumed and practised in a variety of forms. George Grenville acted on an impression of right so universal in his day that his Bill for raising a revenue on stamps to be expended on colonial defence passed through both Houses of Parliament with hardly any opposition. The claim, which to us now seems so monstrous, is a right, like many others, which was first created and established by successful fighting. George Grenville was personally one of the best men among his contemporaries. He had been intimately acquainted with, and a colleague of, Chatham, and to the last he was a friend of Burke. When he died this great man pronounced on him in the House of Commons one of those splendid eulogiums which we read and read again because of the

beauty of the diction, and because of that glow of tender and appreciative feeling which suffuses all his records of the illustrious dead.

George Grenville's second son, Thomas, of whom I have now to speak, was born in 1756, and when I first knew him had attained the great age of eighty-eight. This was in 1844. He had been at one time high in political office, having been First Lord of the Admiralty in the Administration of 1807. The Duke of Wellington told Lord Ellesmere he had never heard a clearer speaker. But his soul was in literature, and, retiring from public life, he had collected one of the finest libraries ever formed by a private person. Physically, he was a splendid old man, with a countenance of extraordinary dignity, benignity, and repose. On one occasion I dined at his house, where I met Rogers the poet; Sydney Smith the celebrated wit, Canon of St. Paul's; and Sir David Dundas, a Scottish lawyer, a good conversationalist, and, like Mr. Grenville, a great lover of books. This was the only time I ever met or even saw Sydney Smith. He was a bulky man with a large and powerful head, a curved nose, and a tremendous chin. He was evidently unwell, and as regards any expected contribution to the conversation from him, the dinner was a complete failure. He hardly spoke, and seemed dull and oppressed. Otherwise our party was agreeable enough, and would have been much more so but for an outbreak of Rogers' characteristic temper. Dundas told us some story—very well—as he always did. But Rogers never could bear to see those around him listening to anyone but himself. He therefore slowly lifted his cadaverous face, and, with a most vicious expression, said: 'I have been waiting a long time till Dundas had ended. May I be allowed now to get in one word edgeways?' Dundas could not reply, of course, to such an antiquity as Rogers, and could only look, as he did, very much annoyed. I am not sure that Mr. Grenville heard what Rogers said. Whether he did or not, he took not

the slightest notice of it, and his cheery and genial manner to all his guests soon restored our disturbed conversation to its former flow. Mr. Grenville lived about two years longer, dying in the end of 1846 at the age of ninety-one. He left to the nation his splendid collection of books, and at the British Museum his name is unmatched as the donor of 'the Grenville Library.'

Turning the eyes of memory to remarkable men of a much later generation with whom I made a friendship in those years, I find them first arrested by the great name of Wilberforce, son of that illustrious father who was one of the most intimate friends of Mr. Pitt, and the earliest champion in Parliament of negro emancipation. Samuel Wilberforce was appointed to the deanery of Westminster in 1845, and my wife and I then made a friendship with him which lasted till his death. We used to go almost every Sunday afternoon to hear his sermons in the Abbey. It was impossible at that time not to be struck with the great charm of his countenance, the earnestness of his eloquence, and the singular beauty of his voice. These were much more remarkable then than at later periods of his life, so much so that I often thought that, great as the attractions of his conversation always continued to be, those who saw him only in his later years could hardly understand the fascination he exerted over others at that earlier time. He looked younger than he really was. He was then forty years of age, and had been for some years Archdeacon of Surrey, and Vicar of one of the most populous parishes in Sussex. He was already a widower, and the marks of sorrow were conspicuous among the multitudinous expressions of his face. He was one of the Queen's chaplains, and enjoyed great favour at Court. He was the most many-sided character I have ever known, not even excepting the character of Gladstone. I believe him to have been from first to last a thoroughly good man, anxious to use his great gifts for the best in his Master's service. But his love of approbation and of admira-

tion was intense, and so also was his ambition. Too literally and too much he was 'all things to all men,' and the life in London did not improve him, or, at least, did not exhibit him at his best. He seemed to like shining in society as a man of the world, almost as much as he liked shining in the pulpit as a great preacher, or in the House of Lords as a great orator and debater.

Wilberforce became very soon a power in the Church, and imparted quite a new tone to the ecclesiastical and social work of the Bishops in their dioceses. He was the leader in the movement which ended in the revival of Convocation. His exact attitude to the great religious movement of his day at Oxford was never very clearly defined, nor, perhaps, quite consistently maintained. Before his elevation to the See of Oxford in 1855 he was believed to be strongly opposed to the Tractarian party, and this belief seems justified now when we read in his Life such passages as this: 'I confess I feel furious at the craving of men for union with idolatrous, material, sensual, domineering Rome, and their squeamish anathematizing hatred of Protestant reformed men.' This sort of language was all very well. I, for one, never could wholly believe in a great Prelate—for this he was before all other things—feeling otherwise than greatly attracted by doctrines which made almost the whole system of Christianity depend on their own particular order in the ministry of the Church. Such a magnification of the office is well-nigh irresistible to an extremely ambitious priest, but he and I never got upon the subject in private life. Once we came into collision in the House of Lords on some question which I now forget, and I was immensely amused by my friend Bishop Samuel turning upon me rather savagely, and saying: 'The noble Duke has the word "Presbyterian" written in large letters all down his back.' But we were the best of friends always. He stayed with us several times at Inveraray, and he

was coming again to visit us in a few weeks when we heard of the deplorable riding accident which, in 1873, deprived the Church of England of one of the ablest and most distinguished of her sons. His love of natural history was a great bond with me. It made him a charming companion out of doors. When he was with us it was delightful to see the quickness and eagerness of eye with which he pounced on every rare fern or moss in the luxuriant greenery of our woods and rocks, all washed by the tepid vapours of the Atlantic.

There was one other clergyman of the Church of England with whom I had some personal relations, in those years between 1845 and 1853, which have left a lasting impression on my memory. He was in everything an absolute contrast to Bishop Wilberforce. Except that he was in Orders, he was as little as possible an ecclesiastic. He had no ambition, no social gifts, no brilliant eloquence. He had no attraction of manner or of conversation. Even his appearance was against him. He was a short man, with broad shoulders and a short neck. He had a pale face, deeply scored with the lines of meditation and thought. His eyes alone were striking, when well looked into. They were large and fine eyes, with a very earnest and a somewhat perplexed expression. They seemed to be always saying, 'Open Thou my eyes, that I may behold the wondrous things contained in Thy law.' Such was Frederick D. Maurice, than whom few writers had a greater influence on the theology of thoughtful Englishmen at that time. He concerned himself little with the sphere of ideas within which the Tractarian party moved, and almost as little with the host of its opponents. His abode was in the higher conceptions of Christian belief, and his delight was to set forth the purest spiritual meaning which they contained. I used to attend his services frequently when he was preacher at Lincoln's Inn Fields.

The audience in that chapel was remarkable. It was a small congregation, but consisting almost entirely of highly-educated and intellectual men, connected with the Inns of Court. Maurice's sermons were always interesting, and some of them most impressive. I always listened to them with great attention, although on coming away I was generally conscious of a certain feeling of incompleteness, as of a want unsatisfied. He was the first English clergyman who directed Christian thought to the social problems of political economy, in this line of action being associated with Charles Kingsley. Maurice founded a working men's college in London, and in connection with it he used to hold meetings with the Artisan College, in which free discussion was encouraged. At his invitation I attended one, where an incident occurred which arrested all my attention at the time, and was of use to me in later years. A workman got up in the middle of the meeting and addressed the chairman in some such words as these: 'Mr. Chairman, I wish you could explain to me a question I have never been able to understand. Why should any other man be entitled to make a profit out of my labour? Surely the whole product of that labour ought to be my own, and not a part of it only. Why should another man take a large share of it for himself?' I had not at that time studied political economy as a science. Of course, I knew the commonplaces of the Protectionist and of the Free Trade schools, in so far as they had become stereotyped in political contention, but as a branch of abstract philosophy I had never really grasped its fundamental principles, and I had been repelled rather than attracted by the little reading I had attempted on the subject. I felt at once that the question put by the working man was a question which I could not really answer. Of course, it was easy to see a rejoinder which might silence the man without satisfying him. For example, it would have been easy to tell him that, if no other man could be allowed to make a profit out

of his labour, neither would any other man ever offer to employ him. But I felt how unsatisfactory this rejoinder would have been, both to him and to myself, what a very little way it went towards explaining the reason and philosophy of an assumed law. I forget the answer that was actually given, but that question has come back upon me again and again in after-years as one which goes very deep indeed, and explains much of the inarticulate discontent which lies at the root of what we call our labour troubles.

I often wished to see more of Maurice than I did, but he never entered into what is called society in London, and when he called at my house he was very shy and reserved. On the high themes on which his mind was set it was, indeed, impossible to enter in general conversation. The only place in which one can form an intimate friendship with such a man is a country house, and one such there was in England where he was deeply loved. That was Farringford, the house of Tennyson in the Isle of Wight. The charming lines addressed to him by the Laureate in 1854 are a splendid monument to the fascination of his character, and the virtuous independence of his intellect. Like all men who deal honestly with the stereotyped phrases of technical orthodoxy, Maurice suffered from the accusations of heresy, which are always at the call of ignorance and malice. But among all the theologians of my time, I suspect that no one has had a wider influence than Maurice on the religious thought of England, from the time he began to publish his works in 1840, till his death in 1872, a period of more than thirty years.

In recalling the years between 1844 and my entering upon official life in the end of 1852, there is no circumstance of my life in London which I recall with greater pleasure than the habit which then, and for some years later, prevailed among literary men, of giving each other breakfasts—I mean real breakfasts, the first meal of the day—to which they invited a certain

limited number of their friends, enough to afford some variety, but never so many as to prevent the conversation from being general. The hour was usually 9.30 or 10 a.m., and the gathering generally lasted for an hour and a half or two hours. Of course, there are drawbacks to this custom. It breaks into some of the best hours of the day for the business of life; it is incompatible with late hours in Parliament, and to men not in robust health it is often inconvenient. But under all other conditions, breakfast-parties are charming additions to the opportunities of social life. They had this great advantage: that men who could not afford to give dinners could always give breakfasts. I used to be very fond of them, and had the satisfaction of being often asked by those whose society was most agreeable.

The principal breakfast-givers were Bishop Samuel Wilberforce; Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton; Henry Hallam, the historian, and the father of that Arthur who has been immortalized by Tennyson; Macaulay; Lord Mahon, afterwards Earl Stanhope; Sir Charles Lyell, the geologist; and a few others. Some of them had a certain speciality about their guests. At Monckton Milnes' table one was pretty sure to meet some political refugee from the storms of Continental revolution, amongst whom his selection was not conventional. Milnes was not particular. I doubt if there were many kinds of political crime which would have excluded any refugee from Milnes' hospitality. He received all men with the same jovial and rollicking geniality. Delighting in paradox, he made his parties very lively and entertaining, whilst there was seldom wanting some man of heavier calibre than the rest. It was at his table that I met Herbert Spencer the philosopher. Lord Mahon was pretty sure to have any distinguished foreigner of the higher class that might be caught in London. There I met two illustrious Frenchmen, both literary men of the highest eminence, and both,

in very different spheres, also politicians. One was Guizot, the fallen Minister of a fallen dynasty; the other was Alexis de Tocqueville, author of the celebrated book upon democracy, which had then an immense reputation in the world. I had no opportunity of personal conversation with either of them, but both struck me as quite typical Frenchmen of the highest intellectual class. Guizot was a short man, with a very high, rather pyramidal forehead, scanty grey hair, aquiline nose, and quick, rather haughty eyes. De Tocqueville was a still smaller man, delicate, almost fragile, in general appearance, with a small, pale face, quick eyes, and a general look of great refinement. Breakfast-parties almost always consisted of men only. Those who gave them were generally bachelors. But there were two exceptions—Lord Mahon and Sir Charles Lyell. Both had pretty and charming wives, and they generally invited some ladies to their breakfasts. My wife was on one occasion Lady Mahon's guest, and she was much captivated by De Tocqueville, whose gentleness of manner, great refinement of character, and high intellectual power, all shone through his attenuated face and frame. Soon after his return to France he was attacked by hæmorrhage from the lungs, and a hasty retreat to the delicious Riviera, with its beauty and its sunshine, was too late to save that most distinguished life.

Bishop Wilberforce's breakfasts were always most agreeable. The first I ever attended in London was at his house in 1845, just after his promotion from the Deanery of Westminster to the See of Oxford. There I met for the first and last time in social intercourse Mr. (afterwards the famous Cardinal) Manning, who had been married to a sister of the Bishop's wife. The little rift within the lute, which by-and-by made that music mute, did not seem to have as yet arisen between the two widowers, and both were equally attached, I noted, to their old mother-in-law, Mrs.

Sargent, who was present at the breakfast. I was rather struck with Manning, at that time little known, whose stiff but grave and ascetic face was even then remarkable, and presented a curious contrast to the lively and playful countenance of the Bishop. Soon after I heard him preach in St. Margaret's Church at Westminster, when his sermon struck me as one of decided power and of a peculiar character, unusually simple, serious, and severe.

Sir Charles Lyell's breakfasts were always a great pleasure to me. Of course, they were largely scientific as well as literary in their character, and it was interesting to hear Lyell talk when he was full of some new fact in his special science, which bore on his favourite theory of the uniformity of geological causation from the earliest to the latest time. Of that theory I had always a profound distrust, except under such limitations of meaning as greatly affected the whole conception. But Lyell was always most faithful to facts, and his eagerness in gathering and recording them made his company to me a perpetual delight. Lyell thoroughly deserved the great reputation of his books, and especially of his first, 'The Principles of Geology.' He had a theory without being a mere theorist. That theory never was accepted on the Continent as it was to a great extent in England. But, however great may be the deductions to be made from its truth—and I think they are very large—he never was himself at all a dogmatist. He used his theory as scientific hypotheses ought always to be used — as a string of thought by which the gems of ascertained fact could be connected with each other. It was, moreover, a theory which was invaluable in leading men to watch and see how much is being done or prepared, even now, in the way of geological causation. Lyell was himself always open to the significance of new facts, and no man was ever more eager in searching for them. He had a curious but very agreeable way of speaking in a half-whisper, when he had anything new to tell, as if he

was almost in awe of the immensities of time and of the mysteries of creation with which his science dealt, and on which the new fact might be found to tell. Lady Lyell was a very pretty and clever little woman, his efficient helpmate in all his literary works. She was a sister of Leonard Horner, a man of whom much had been expected by his college friends, from his eminent abilities.

Macaulay threw out a wider net in selecting his guests for breakfast. His political as well as his literary friends figured largely there. But it mattered little who formed the party, so far as conversation was concerned, for nobody listened to anyone except to Macaulay himself. Macaulay was the only great conversationalist I have ever heard. Of course, it was peculiar. There was very little 'give and take.' It was more like soliloquy than conversation. If anyone did interfere, perhaps to ask a question, Macaulay would instantly reply, 'Don't you remember?' and then recommence with endless quotations in illustration of his reply. Some people thought it oppressive, and Sydney Smith's famous joke about Macaulay's brilliant 'flashes of silence' was as true as it was witty. This must have been the feeling of men who, like Sydney Smith, wished themselves to talk. But as I never had the least ambition of this kind, I confess that Macaulay's conversation was as delightful as it was wonderful to me. It was the outpouring of an inexhaustible memory, illuminated by a brilliant intellect. And there was one characteristic especially enjoyable in Macaulay's conversation, and that was its spontaneity. There never was the least possibility of suspecting at his table that any subject was introduced in order that he might hold forth upon it. Anything and everything that turned up on any branch of history or of literature drew forth from him the lively flow of his abundant stores. The criticism might have been made that there was in his conversation the same fault as in his writings—that he drew always

in strong lines and in somewhat violent colours, that the nicer shadows were wanting. But the strength and vigour of his language always carried one away with unceasing surprise and admiration.

It was at one of Macaulay's breakfasts, when he lived in the Albany, that I saw an incident which was a curious physical counterpart of the mental phenomena I had seen in connection with mesmerism in Professor Gregory's house in Edinburgh. The party was unusually large for a breakfast. I think there were a dozen or more guests. The eatables had nearly disappeared, and over coffee and tea we were enjoying a quiet and serious general conversation, when someone introduced the subject of mesmeric table-turning. Macaulay was always perfectly intolerant on the subject. He was vociferous in his expressions of ridicule and contempt. Whereupon one of the guests said: 'Well, now, here we are, more than a dozen people, all knowing each other, and all sitting round one table. Why should we not join hands round it, and make one continuous chain, and then see if anything happens.' 'By all means,' said Macaulay, 'but on one condition only—that we don't cease talking.' Amid much laughter this was universally agreed to, and we all joined hands on the surface of the table, resuming conversation as before. Before we had sat thus more than a very few minutes—less than five certainly—we all felt the table give a sudden jolt or jump in an upward direction. I shall never forget Macaulay's face. I was sitting next him, and my hand of course was touching his. He betrayed in his expression astonishment, bordering on alarm. He let go my hand, jumped up on his feet, pushed back his chair, and, lifting the tablecloth, peered under the table to see if anyone was there who could have caused the motion by lifting it on his shoulders for a moment. There was nothing there. Macaulay then resumed his seat, and proceeded to ask each of the guests: 'Did you give a shove to the table?' All

replied in the negative, till he came to Bishop Wilberforce, who said: 'Well, I am not quite sure that I may not unconsciously have given it a little push.' On this ridiculous reply Macaulay rode off—'Ah, there it is; I thought so'—and he would hear no more upon the subject. This was a curious exhibition of character on the part of Wilberforce. I felt at the time, and I feel equally sure now, that he was tempted to say what he did by his invincible love of saying what would please. He saw that Macaulay was taking the matter rather seriously, and was annoyed as well as much surprised. He knew the explanation current at the time, that table movements were due to the unconscious pressure exerted by a number of hands and arms in some particular direction. So, wishing to let Macaulay 'down easy,' he gave the ambiguous answer which just afforded the requisite loophole of escape. I do not say this because I was then, or am now, either a determined believer or a determined disbeliever in the effects produced by that unknown agency which went by the name of mesmerism: I say it because I was quite certain that the Bishop's half-suggested explanation was absolutely inapplicable to the case. The table at which we sat was not one of those small and light tables at which the experiment was often tried. It was a large and heavy dining-table, resting on several legs, upon a carpet offering much friction to any movement upon its surface. If all the guests at the table had agreed to push or shove in any one direction at one and the same time, they could never have produced the motion we all felt, even if they could have produced any motion at all. The movement was not one of sliding or slipping along the floor: it was a movement of sudden lifting and as sudden dropping—a heaving, and a jolt in falling again. Something had overcome the weight of the table, had lifted it through a small space, and let it fall again with a thump. I have no theory to offer, any more than I had any theory to explain the strange mental phenomena I

have described in connection with the same subject at Edinburgh. I was then, and I still am, content to believe that there are agencies of great and subtle power of which we know nothing, and the instances of which it is immaterial to discuss, because the laws and conditions of their working are as yet unknown.

I only recollect once breakfasting with the venerable Henry Hallam, the eminent historian. I found it somewhat difficult to distinguish between the atmosphere of feeling in which I then regarded him and that in which he came to be surrounded in later years, by an inseparable association with the immortal poem dedicated to his lost elder son. As it so happened, I had derived more knowledge from the works of Hallam—his 'Constitutional History of England' and his 'Literature of Europe'—than from any others I could have named, and I felt anxious to know him better personally. I had been told that in private conversation he was disposed to be antagonistic and contradictious. I found him, on the contrary, everything that was gentle and agreeable. He had then suffered that first great loss which all the world has been led to mourn with him. But his second loss of the same kind, that of his only remaining son, had not yet occurred, and that son was at the table with us. Even then there was an air of melancholy submission about the old man which was touching, and which seemed almost the presage of further sorrows. I recollect being told that he could not bear any talk on the subject of mesmerism, and that on one occasion, when it had been introduced in his presence, he became somewhat agitated, and said abruptly: 'I've heard a voice.' Of course, the subject was immediately changed. Hallam was a man of middle size, with a square head, a very massive brow, rather small blue eyes, deeply set, with a slightly aquiline nose, and a very strong chin, with a projecting under-jaw and lip. His hair was very grey, but was not white. He was considered pre-eminently

the Whig historian. We had great pleasure at a later date in persuading him to visit us at Inveraray. He had none of Macaulay's extraordinary conversational powers. But before I knew him his sorrows had much weighed him down, and I was told that a few years earlier, when he and Macaulay met, there was often a splendid display of fighting between the two, Hallam's utterance being often too fast for distinct pronunciation of his eager and rapid words.

It is needless here to say much about Gladstone's breakfasts, both because they continued far into later years, and because they formed a very small part of my social intimacy with him. I may say, however, that they were always most agreeable, from his own great charm and wealth of conversation, and from the variety of the sources from which the guests were drawn. They were widely miscellaneous. Art and Theology, as well as mere literature, sent their contingents, whilst of course the ranks of politicians were often represented. It was at one of these parties that I first saw Arthur Balfour, of whom our host spoke to me in highly appreciative terms.

It was during the same early years in London that I made a rather intimate acquaintance with Professor Owen. He was then Curator of the Hunterian Museum in Lincoln's Inn Square, and besides frequent visits there, I occasionally attended his lectures on the growing science of paleontology. In his lecture-room, long before the publication of Darwin's 'Origin of Species,' which did not take place till 1859, I became familiar with the significant but mysterious fact of the gradual appearance in the course of time of our domesticable animals, that they had been late introductions before the advent of man, and that approaches to their peculiar structure could be traced through an advancing series of pre-existing forms, as if these were being gradually prepared. He particularly mentioned a creature which for several ages was making a gradual approach to the special and quite peculiar organiza-

tion of the horse. Owen did not connect this series of forms with any theory as to its physical cause, whether of hereditary descent or otherwise: he was content with indicating the indisputable fact. These facts, however dim and vague in their details, delighted me, as indications of that same element of preparation and design for a future destiny which had been so long familiar to me in the growth of the elements out of which wings are made in existing birds. I thought much on this subject and on the problems which it suggests. These problems are, indeed, innumerable, and although they may be for ever insoluble, yet every thought about them is so full of suggestiveness that reflecting on the subject is an education in itself. I cannot say that I did this in the pursuance of any deliberate plan of study; I did it in pursuance of an instinctive tendency of my own mind, of which I have been conscious from very early years, never to feel contented with the knowledge of mere facts, but always to think and speculate on what follows from them—that is to say, on what they lead up to or involve. By dint of this tendency and constant habit, I found that I was gaining more or less a grasp at least of principles, and a power of referring to its proper place in science any new fact or discovery which was being brought to light.

It was curious to me to note how very few hearers ever attended those lectures, delivered by a man then already of great reputation, nearly connected by discipleship with the illustrious Cuvier, and his only representative and successor in the wide sphere of comparative anatomy. In Scotland such lectures would have been crowded by men of very different classes. But in England the habit of attending scientific lectures has never been formed, and I used to sit with some half-dozen, or at most a score, of listeners when facts and ideas of the highest mystery and interest were being communicated by a very accomplished lecturer. I soon became very fond of

Owen. He was a very singular-looking man—tall, raw-boned, and gaunt, with an immense head. His face was very large, with a prodigious forehead, and very large eyes, which seemed highly speculative and pondering in thought, as well as watchful of all external things. He had very high and broad cheekbones; the mouth was small; but the most peculiar feature of Owen's frame was his hand. He used to tell us that the 'opposable digit' of the human hand —the thumb—was the great peculiarity of man's structure, being the member which gave to the hand its special powers of various manipulation, a peculiarity in which none of the lower animals, not even the highest apes, have any share. But Owen had fingers and a thumb which seemed to me to be 'opposable' through arcs of movement larger and wider than were attainable by other men. His fingers seemed to lap round the objects he handled, so as completely to invest them with a soft but universal application. It was beautiful to see him holding some delicate articulation of bones, so round and round that the whole of it was embraced, and yet so tenderly that not the most delicate portions could be crushed. Owen was reputed among scientific men to be not without some faults of jealousy, but to outsiders generally, and to me in particular, he was always most charming and instructive. I persuaded him to come to Inveraray, and there I had the happiness of introducing him to a living creature which he had never seen before, and the continued existence of which in our time is connected with one of the great mysteries in the history of organic life. That mystery is the substitution of one kind and pattern of creature for another pattern, which becomes obsolete and extinct. Thus, in the secondary ages, the shell-fish of the ocean were in large proportion of a very peculiar form and structure, called brachiopods. Other shell-fish, widely different both in structure and in form, have now usurped their place. But here and there the old brachiopods

survive, and it happens that one of these places is Loch Fyne. I took Owen out in a boat, and we dredged up at a certain spot some ten or a dozen specimens of living brachiopods, closely resembling the antique and almost vanished forms, with which he was so well acquainted in the museums. He was much interested and delighted. I was a close reader of all Owen's books, and he seldom wrote any important scientific paper without sending me an early copy. His book on the 'Nature of Limbs' was an education in itself to me. I had been accustomed from childhood to look at the wings of a bird as in the nature of an elaborate apparatus for the accomplishment of flight. I saw that this explanation of them was in no way superseded, but that another and larger question was raised by Owen—namely, What were wings in relation to the arms of men and to the legs of dogs, even to the fins of fishes, and to the limbs of all other creatures having a vertebrate skeleton?

When Professor Owen rose above the horizon, I soon made acquaintance with him, and I read with intense interest his celebrated book 'On the Homologies of the Vertebrate Skeleton.' This dealt with the same question in still larger and more fundamental aspects. By this course of reading, which included, of course, all the relative papers in the scientific journals, I felt myself comparatively well furnished with data, both of facts and of inferences from them, to deal with the memorable book of Darwin when it was published in 1859.

It was in London in the years 1848 and 1849 that my wife and I first made acquaintance with a number of Americans, some of whom became fast friends for life, and all of whom contributed no small share to our social enjoyments. Lord Carlisle had met them when he was in America, and, of course, they were most cordially received at Stafford House, and, indeed, in London society generally. The first who came was Charles Sumner, the leader of the Abolitionist party

in the American Senate. He was a tall, good-looking man, very erect in attitude, with a genial smile and a very intellectual expression. We became very intimate friends, and he visited us repeatedly at Inveraray. I always found his conversation full of charm, not only from his devotion to one great cause, but from his wide and cultivated interest in literature and in art. Prescott, the historian of Ferdinand and Isabella, was another of this group of Americans, a man of quite singular charm of countenance, of manners, and of conversation. All but a very few of the Americans I speak of were in favour of the abolition of slavery, and we forget now what that opinion exposed them to at that time. The fierce passions which it aroused, not only in the Southern States, but in the North, permeated all the relations of society and of private life. The result, of course, was that only minds of the highest moral fibre were able to confront the blast. And to this fibre, in greater or less proportion, every human character must owe any charm it can possess. Americans of the highly cultured class appear to have an openness and artlessness of nature which give and invite confidential friendship. There could not be two more different men than Sumner and Prescott—Sumner immersed in politics and engrossed with one great subject of fierce contention; Prescott a typical man of letters, a quiet student, and a calm and reflective writer. Yet they both had in an eminent degree that tenderness and gentleness of manners that surely and speedily turns acquaintance into affection.

Among the Americans who came to London in 1849 was Emerson, the celebrated essayist. In some respects he was the analogue of our own Thomas Carlyle. They both held the same aberrant place in the literature of their time—a place which defied classification—voices like those of prophets crying in the wilderness, and when listened to, dimly understood. And yet nothing could be more absolutely different than those

two men personally. Carlyle was eruptive, loud, and often violent and even coarse in his sentiments and in his language, with an expression sometimes almost diabolical. Emerson was calm, peaceful, reflective, and had always the countenance and expression of a seraph. I went with Lord Carlisle to hear one of Emerson's lectures in London. It was full of a dreamy beauty, delivered slowly, in an equable and pleasant voice, and with perfect calmness of countenance and expression. There was no continuous thread of thought nor central principle of intellectual conception. It was one continuous flow of sentiment, of precept, of imagery, and of exhortation. It was like watching some beautiful butterfly in its flight over a boundless prairie, picking out and lighting upon all the flowers, and then passing on with some little sip of honey. I recollect well one sentence, typical of many others: 'Crowd as many virtues as you can into the soft fresco of the present, for it is hourly hardening into an immortal picture.' This is a fine image, finely expressed, and there were many other passages of a similar kind of beauty. But when this sort of thing went on for an hour, ranging over the whole field of sentiment and benevolence, it did rather begin to cloy. Above all, one felt at the end that it was wanting in bone and gristle. It was like the diffused perfume of Christian ethics, but without its doctrine or its teaching, and therefore without its power. I found that Carlisle entirely agreed with me on its vagueness and want of grip. I met Emerson afterwards at Stafford House, and he gave me personally the same impression. His countenance was beautiful in a way. It was full of a sweet tranquillity, as if we were all living in the best possible of worlds, and had nothing to do but to interpret it aright in order to realise that it was so. He had none of the sadness of the old Stoics, but all that was loftier in him than in them seemed to be simply borrowed from Christianity, only without acknowledgment.

There was one other solitary figure which passes vividly across the stage of memory as I recall those days—the figure of one who left a deep impression on her time and a lasting blessing to the generations following. I refer to Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, the great Quakeress philanthropist-reformer. The story of her entering, alone and entirely undefended, into a prison reserved for abandoned and vicious women, of whom even the keepers were so afraid that they never could go except in company, is a story which used to thrill me with admiration and astonishment. It was a great pleasure, therefore, to meet this illustrious woman. She was the only really very great human being I have ever met with whom it was impossible to be disappointed. She was, in the fullest sense of the word, a majestic woman. She was already advanced in years, and had a very tall and stately figure. But it was her countenance that was so striking. Her features were handsome, in the sense of being well-proportioned, but they were not in the usual sense beautiful. Her eyes were not large, or brilliant, or transparent. They were only calm and wise and steady. But over the whole countenance there was an ineffable expression of sweetness, dignity, and power. It was impossible not to feel some awe before her, as before some superior being. I understood in a moment the story of the prison. She needed no defence but that of her own noble and almost divine countenance. A few well-known words came to my mind the moment I saw her: 'The peace of God that passeth all understanding.' They summarized the whole expression of her face. It is a rare thing indeed, in this poor world of ours, to see any man or any woman whose personality responds perfectly to the ideal conception formed of an heroic character and an heroic life.

At this time I often met Sir Robert Inglis, the President of the Literary Society I have mentioned, whose dinners were held at the Thatched House Tavern in St. James's Street, where I spent many

pleasant evenings. This club, although not confined to authors, was composed of men with some flavour of literature about them. There was no great celebrity in it during the few years I continued to be a member, but it was frequented by a number of very clever and agreeable men. Our chairman, Sir Robert Inglis, was the best-known man among us. I had known him well—at least, by sight and by reputation—ever since I had attended the House of Commons debates as a boy. There was no man more familiar or more respected in that Assembly. He was a man rather below the middle height, stout and rotund in figure, with head of the most shining and polished baldness. He had a rubicund face, a profile gently aquiline, rather small eyes, and a most mild and benevolent expression. The perfect blandness and courtesy of his address was in strange contrast with the rigidity of his opinions. As regards these, he was a perfect, and almost the only remaining, specimen of the old High Tory and of the old-fashioned High Churchman. He had never detected the slightest difference between the Articles and certain parts of the devotional forms of the Liturgy. The 'New Oxford Movement,' then called Puseyism or Tractarianism, passed under Sir Robert Inglis's feet without making him budge one inch. The affectation of translating the well-known word 'Roman' into 'Catholic,' and the endeavour to make the Church of England more 'Catholic' than it was, revolted him. He was what would now be called an Ultra-Protestant. He hugged those large and characteristic parts of the English Prayer-Book which repudiated and condemned Romanism in all its leading ideas, and he resisted every movement of Liberalism which weakened, as he thought, the defences of the Protestant Constitution in Church and State. His well-known and uncompromising opinions on all these subjects were vividly brought before me during the performance of a ceremony shortly after the formation of the Aberdeen Government.

Sir Robert Inglis was included in a new batch of Privy Councillors. For the purpose of swearing in new members, meetings of the Privy Council with the Queen were then generally held at Buckingham Palace. The Queen sat at one end of a long green baize table, with the Prince Consort in a chair at her right hand. On Her Majesty's left hand stood the Clerk of the Council with the documents requiring the Queen's signature and the Book of the Oaths, which a new Privy Councillor was required to take whilst kneeling on a cushion beside the Queen's chair, before kissing Her Majesty's hand. The Queen always maintained the utmost dignity and gravity of demeanour, although the terms of the oath then administered somewhat grated on the ear, redolent as it was of old revolutionary times, when Roman doctrines were a real danger, were denounced as 'damnable,' and were solemnly repudiated by the new member of Her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council. When Sir Robert Inglis's rubicund face and bald head were seen surmounting the table close to the Queen's left hand, and when he came to the most spicy words in the oath, repudiating the old Jacobite heresies, it seemed as if the worthy Baronet repeated them with special unction: 'I renounce and abhor the damnable doctrine.' Whereupon Lord Aberdeen, who was sitting next to me, only some two or three chairs down the right-hand side of the table, leaned over towards me and said emphatically, in rather a loud whisper: 'That he does.' It was very naughty of him, for I was really afraid that the quick eyes and even ears of the Queen might catch the interposition of her Prime Minister.

Before returning now to the main stream of my life as a member of the new Government, I may mention, as a lasting source of regret, that in social intercourse I never met Charles Dickens, although I was a great admirer of his writings, and although some of my own friends were friends of his. I heard him make one speech at the annual dinner of the Royal

Academy, and at a later date I heard him read and act from one of his own tales. As a speaker he was quite peculiar. It was the very perfection of neatness and precision in language—the speaking of a man who knew exactly what he was going to say, and how best to say it. But it was without fire, or tones of enthusiasm, or flights of fancy; there was nothing that makes the orator. On the other hand, in dramatic reading and in acting, he was really wonderful, full of the most various powers in the expression of humour, and of pathos, and of ferocious villainy. Dickens had the faculty, which many great actors have had, of somehow getting rid of their own physical identity, and appearing with a wholly different face and a wholly different voice. I never saw this power so astonishingly exerted as by Charles Dickens.