CHAPTER XLV

1885–96

SCOTTISH DISESTABLISHMENT—THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

After Mr. Gladstone's resignation in June, 1885, he was out of office for a period of eight months, and during this time he delivered a number of speeches in Scotland in which he foreshadowed his future policy. The impression he gave that it was his intention to bring forward the question of the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland created a feeling of alarm in the country, and meetings were held to protest against the principle. The Duke was asked to speak on the subject at a meeting in Glasgow on October 20th, 1885. The Earl of Stair occupied the chair on the occasion, when the Duke opened his address by proposing the following resolution:

'That, in the opinion of this meeting, there is no desire on the part of the people of Scotland for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of their National Church.'

In the course of his speech the Duke said:

'The Government of this country is a Christian Government, and when a man passes from his private house into the council chamber of the city, into the Cabinet-room of the Queen, or into the Houses of Parliament, he is bound to carry his Christianity with

him. And he uses his powers as best he may in considerations of wise Christian expediency for the furtherance of the interests of the Church of Christ. . . .

'I know no nobler characteristic in man's mind than that of keeping his mind open to be taught by the teachings of Providence and life. I desire for myself to maintain that attitude of mind, and I rather rejoice to remember that all the opinions I have held most strongly in life have been opinions taken up against first impressions, and not in unison with them. But I say that there are certain universal instincts of the human mind against which, if any given doctrine sins, there is the highest probability that it is false. I say that, looking back in the history of the world, I know no age and no country in which nations have not considered their religions an intimate part of their civic and public policy. Even heathens raised temples to the gods, and opened and shut their gates in peace or war. Is the great instinct to fail under the Christian religion? This feeling has no root in the history of Scotland, or in the hearts of the Scottish people. Nor is it the doctrine of any one of the Presbyterian Churches as Churches. Before I depart from this subject, I wish to say one word in regard to the principles of voluntaryism regarded from rather a higher point of view. I have been spending much time during the past few years in tracing the bonds of communication between different departments of human thought, and I declare to you, as the result of my investigation and my thought, that I know no doctrine in the world so absolutely opposed to the truth of Nature and to the truth of God as any doctrine which establishes a sharp and absolute line of separation between the sacred and the profane, between the natural and the supernatural, between the material and the spiritual, between the duties of our religious and the duties of our daily life. . . .

'Now I pass from abstract principles, and I ask, Why is it that we are here to-night to defend the

Church of Scotland? I have come here to defend the Church of Scotland because, as matter of historical fact, the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland has been the glory of our national history.

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'I wish to impress upon the people of Scotland the national character of this Church. Let me put a case. Suppose some foreigner were to come to this country with something of a sympathetic historical mind, a mind like the late Dean Stanley. Suppose such a man were to come to me and say: "Show me something which is typical of the national history and the national character." Where should I take him? Not to our mountains, beautiful as they are, for there are finer mountains in other parts of the world. Not to our medieval castles, interesting as some of these are, for there are finer elsewhere. I should take him, beyond all doubt, if I wished to show him something which should interpret to his eyes the history and the character of the Scottish people—I should take him to that long historical street which stretches from the ancient palace of Holyrood to the Castle Hill, and I should show him the procession of the Royal Commissioner coming to open the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. I can conceive him saying: "What is this procession?" I would answer that it is the visible symbol and the homage paid by the Imperial Crown of this realm to the noblest and purest popular triumph ever gained in any Christian country in the world. And when we had followed that procession outside the walls of the General Assembly, I am not sure but I would present him inside with another spectacle. I could conceive him to say: "I suppose this is an assembly of the clergy?" My answer would be: "Not at all. It is an assembly of the Church, but not of the clergy. In our country the foundation-stone of the Presbyterian Church is that the character of the people is the Church, and the

Church is the character of the people. These are the ministers of the Church, but they are in large proportion laymen, and so thoroughly are these men representative of the Scottish people that actually every borough in Scotland, by foundation and immemorial usage, has a right to send its representatives to that assembly, as it did to the ancient Parliaments of the country. There is the Royal Commissioner paying the imperial homage of the Crown; not interfering with its business, having no power to do so, but simply recognising the constitutional triumph of the people of Scotland, ratified by repeated Acts of Parliament." I appeal through this great meeting to the people of Scotland to remember what an absolutely significant and peculiar privilege they have in this great august ceremony—the consummation of some hundreds of years of bitter and laborious strife, in which the people of Scotland secured this great homage to the Church of their country.

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'Our nation is free, our Church is free, and we realize that dream of the great Italian statesman Cavour, who, on receiving extreme unction on his death-bed, said: "I wish to see a free Church in a free State." That is what Scotland has long realized. Now, gentlemen, I have one word more to say. We are told that we must give up this Church in the name of religious equality. Well, I am for equality too, in so far as you find it in Nature, in the providence of God, or in the history of man. I am for this equality, that I would give to every man and to every Church that which he or it has fairly earned. Well, are we to say that there are other Churches in this country the equal in our history, the equal in our regard, the equal in the power of building up our national constitution, of the Presbyterian Church? Do not think that I am wishing to revive sectarian jealousies when I remind you simply of historical facts. What is the

equality of the Roman Catholic Church? What has the Roman Catholic Church done for Scotland? She burned our martyrs. What did the Episcopal Church do for Scotland? She tried to suppress our liberties. What has the Presbyterian Church of Scotland done? She has done for Scotland that which I have endeavoured to describe—she has married civil with religious freedom. She has given to the world a sample of a Church, free as the winds and yet connected with the State, such as has never existed before, and will be a model for future time. Well, gentlemen, I know what your voice is. Your voice and my voice may be overborne, but let us say for ourselves, and for all whom we can influence or affect, that we will take our part: we will not help to haul down this great flag of Scotland, we will not help to haul down this great national flag. We will, on the contrary, resist to the last.'

Alluding to this speech, in reply to a letter from Mr. Bosworth Smith, the Duke wrote (November 5th, 1885):

'I will send you a copy of my speech in Glasgow when it is separately published, as I expect it to be in a few days. Mr. Gladstone's reply is, of course, quite valueless for the future.* He speaks only for himself and for the day after to-morrow. He is now a mere "opportunist," as every man must be who seeks no more than to lead for a short time so very motley a crew. The friends of the Established Church should relax no exertions, although, of course, I fully admit that, if her position is really so strong as to be unassailable, it would be best to sit absolutely still, saying, "Let them rave." That I don't think is quite her position. An adverse vote in a disorganized House of Commons might easily be got on a "Resolution,"

* Speech on Disestablishment, delivered by Mr. Gladstone in the Free Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, November 11th, 1885.

and this would have a bad effect on the future of the question. The two Established Churches rest on different bases, and are open to different kinds of attack. But pure "voluntaryism," as a principle and almost as a dogma, is equally fatal to both, and this is the strongest enemy in Scotland.'

Mr. Gladstone's third Administration was formed on February 3rd, 1886, when the Conservative Government was overthrown on an amendment to the Address. Four months later the Liberal party was defeated on the Irish Home Rule Bill, June 8th, 1886, and, for the moment, the danger of Disestablishment ceased to be imminent.

A few years later (1892) the Duke made a speech in Edinburgh, at a large meeting of the Laymen's League, which had been organized to oppose the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland. In this speech the Duke, who spoke for upwards of an hour, sketched the history of the Church from the days of the Reformation. In concluding, he said:

'I have a very few more words to say. I do not know whether my appeal to the people of Scotland which I have made to-night, which I endeavoured to make wholly unsectarian, addressed to all branches of the Presbyterian Church—for I should freely communicate with them all—I do not know what the results of that appeal may be; but I must tell you that, for myself, my part is taken. The doctrine of the Reformation in Scotland, in regard to the nature and functions of the Christian Church, and, as a consequence of it, the doctrine of the Reformers upon the relations between the Church and the State, when I first learned them and understood them, awoke the interest and enthusiasm of my early life. They hold the homage of my declining years. If I did not hear the voices of the living saying to me,

"Do not scatter the religious patrimony of the poor," I should still hear the voices of the illustrious dead saying, "Do not sacrifice that which it cost us so many tears and so much blood to gain." And, if I did not hear those two voices, I should hear a Voice greater than them all, calling on us not to sacrifice in Scotland that living embodiment of an eternal truth, and that possession by Scotland of an everlasting faith.'

For the Duke, freedom from office did not imply freedom from work. His life was as full as ever of occupation and interest. Constant demands were made upon him to speak in public on questions of national importance. He was consulted by men of all classes upon a great variety of subjects—political, scientific, and theological. To all who sought his counsel he responded without fail, to the working-man as readily and promptly as to his personal friends: one working-man alone claimed to have received a hundred letters from him. He never spared himself if he thought a word from him could bring help to another, or advance the cause of truth.

Literary work occupied his spare moments, and in 1886 he was engaged in the preparation of a book on Scotland, which was published the following year, under the title of 'Scotland as It Was and as It Is.' With reference to a point in ecclesiastical history in connection with this work, the Duke consulted Lord Acton, who, in replying, assured him of the accuracy of his knowledge of the history of the early Church, and added:

'I shall look out for your volumes with much interest, but I will say quite frankly that I regret you are not in Downing Street at the head of a coalition.'

In sending Mr. Bright a copy of his book on Scotland, the Duke alludes to the political situation at the time :

'INVERARAY,
'*November 22nd*, 1887.

'MY DEAR MR. BRIGHT,

'When you are called to form a Cabinet, you may offer me a seat !

'I almost *entirely* agree with your last two excellent letters. I recollect saying to you in 1881 that I would do anything to *increase owners*, but I would not agree to *destroy ownership*.

'That is what the Act of 1880 did.

'Still, I agree with you that the multiplication of full owners should now be left to natural causes, with the enormous help of the Ashbourne Act.

'I was on the point of writing in the same sense to the *Times* when your letter appeared, and only delayed doing so till I had got off my hands a little book on the Irish question, which will be published shortly.

'Meantime, I send for your acceptance my late volume on Scotland.

'You may find a good deal with which you don't sympathize, but also, I hope, a good deal that you will at least *understand*.

'If such an Act as the Irish Act of 1880 had been passed 150 years ago, Scotland would have been a rabbit warren of paupers worse than any part of Ireland.

'The worst fallacies of PROTECTION are embalmed —alas ! not mummified—in the Act of 1880. The stupid, the idle, and the lazy are all protected, not against foreigners, but against the more intelligent and capable and industrious of their own neighbours.

'Meantime, let me thank you for your wise and timely counsels. . . .'

Mr. Bright, in thanking the Duke for his book, wrote:

'. . . I have found it highly interesting and instructive. It contains a history of Scotland, economic, social, and agricultural, as interesting and important as any portion of its political history.'

The Duke's position at this time with regard to the policy of Mr. Gladstone is very clearly defined in a letter to Lord Granville, in which he briefly reviews his own political career:

'*June 22nd*, 1887.

'MY DEAR GRANVILLE,

'If you will look back thirty years, you will see that I have as often acted apart from Gladstone as with him.

'I began as a *Peelite;* but I left the Peelites when I thought them unreasonable, and stuck to Palmerston. We were then daily in expectation that he—Gladstone—would have joined Derby, and he *would*, if others had gone with him.

'In his own Cabinets I stuck to him "like a brick" till our final severance on the merits of a great measure. I have a note from him saying, "Constancy is too weak a word for the support you have always given me."

'But latterly I have felt more and more that his "drift" was simply anarchical. He did not *lead.* He simply allowed others to *commit* "the party" to this, that, and the other; and then fell in, and called it "leading."

'His wheel upon Irish Home Rule has been accompanied by circumstances—by a violence of language, by a contemptuous treatment of all who could not follow him, by perversions of historical fact, and by the free use of all the Irish revolutionary cant—which constitute together an unequalled series of provocations.

'In all purely personal relations Gladstone is as perfect as a man can be. But *he* never allows those relations to interfere with his policy—on the contrary, he treats all opponents as dirt under his feet. Look at his last speech to Nonconformists! He told them that the Crimes Bill was carried by a *servile spirit* in the Commons!

'Assuredly the "servile spirit" is with those who HAVE followed him, not with those who have been revolted. Why should I, or others, do what *he* never does—allow private friendship to interfere with public duty? That duty calls on all now to speak out what they think. You say I never lose an opportunity of attacking him—you mean his TEACHING. Quite true. Yet I have said *far less* than I think, and have been restrained in much that I feel. But I look on his *teaching* as reckless, passionate, and destructive. I don't doubt his sincerity, but it is a fanatical sincerity, largely tinctured by dislike of opposition and the mere spirit of "fight." You are not in a position to enable you to understand my course. You think far more of "party" than I ever did, or could. Moreover, you have had a chief part in persuading Gladstone to keep to his leadership when he ought to have retired, and I quite see that you *can't* desert him now.

'I did not leave the Cabinet of 1881 to subside into a back-bench nonentity—dissenting, but silent. I wish to influence opinion if I can, and I am besieged by applications to write and to speak far more. It is odious work. I would much rather be in Scotland writing on other subjects. But, being quite as convinced as Gladstone, and hardly less eager in my convictions, I am afraid I must continue to act as I have done—feeling that I am not only entitled, but bound to do so—considering the interests that are at stake.

'I am, my dear Granville,

'Yours very truly,

'ARGYLL.'

The Duke had been asked to speak at a banquet in Westminster Hall, which was to follow a Unionist meeting in London on December 8th, 1887. He was rather reluctant, for several reasons, to leave Inveraray at the time, but he received very urgent letters from Sir Henry James and Lord Hartington, who pointed out that the Duke's name having been announced as one of the speakers on the occasion had resulted in 'hundreds of applications for seats,' and that without his presence 'the whole affair would be a failure.' He therefore arranged his plans so as to enable him to attend the banquet, where he replied to the toast of 'The Unionist Cause.'

The following year the Duke spoke at a large political meeting at Cambridge (March 14th, 1888). The weather was unusually severe for the season, and the train by which he travelled to the North, after the meeting, was stopped by a snowdrift. The Duke was rescued from his unpleasant position by the hospitality of a fellow-traveller—Sir James Joicey—at whose house, which was not far off, he spent the night; but the cold journey resulted in a chill, which brought on a bad attack of gout after his return to Inveraray. During his convalescence he wrote the following letter to Lady Verney (May 8th, 1888):

'INVERARAY,
'*May 8th*, 1888.

'I have not yet thanked you for your last letter, with Sir A. Clark's *diagnosis* of me, which amused me much. He is quite wrong on one point—my not being able to understand opponents. He little knows! Most of my opinions have been reached *against* early prepossessions, and after having seen and felt, only too painfully, "the other side."

'But, of course, convictions thus reached are the firmest of all.

'Still, it is a fault to leave this impression on the minds of others.

'I am getting slowly over a very tedious attack of gout. Not sorry to be kept here to see the glories of the spring on woods hung up on hills, so as to exhibit every separate top as the opening touches reach it. I am not able to move yet.

'I was glad to see your husband at the Westminster Hall banquet last December. He seemed to me the youngest man there!

'We have been reading "Layard,"* and shut the book much in love with Khatun-jan Khanum,† a striking portrait of an Aryan wife and mother.'

During the months of June and July, the Duke took part in the debates in the House of Lords on several occasions, and on his return to Scotland he delivered some lectures in his own county, on scientific subjects, in the course of the autumn.

Early in 1889 the Duke's great friend, Lord Dufferin, returned from India, having resigned the position of Viceroy at the conclusion of four years of office. The Duke wrote on the 19th of February to welcome him on his return to England:

'I have not written to you, nor you to me, for an age. And now I have to hail you as a sort of retired Alexander, the conqueror of millions and the absorber of new empires! Well, I knew you would do right well. But I did not expect this. What a destiny it is, "The policy of annexations," as it used to be called. . . .

* 'Early Adventures in Persia, Lusiana, and Babylonia,' by Sir Henry Layard, 1887.

† Khatun-jan Khanum was the principal wife of Mehemet Taki Khan, the Bakhtiyari chieftain, whose guest Sir Henry Layard was in 1840–1842.

'I wonder *what* I shall see you? You will see me old and lame. Yet I feel as young as ever in spirit, and if I had only legs would be as active as ever; but gout has lamed me much. I am off to-morrow to Edinburgh to address the students of the University in a lecture course. My subject is the *small* one of "The Love of Truth, and on some methods of attaining it." It is to advise the analysis of words.

'I have had much to trouble me since we met, and consequently my hair has lost that glorious tinge that used to dazzle all my friends. It is "betwixt and between"—a bad mixture.

'Dear old Tennyson has been dangerously ill. I hope you will see him. He looms larger and larger upon me every time I open his books, as one of the great poets of the world. . . .

'I am longing to see you, but I don't know if, or when, I shall. I am not going to town.'

The Duke, with his intense love of Nature, always greatly enjoyed spending the early springtime in the country, and watching the renewal of the earth. Writing to Lady Tennyson in April, 1889, he says:

'I must go South to oppose the Wife's Sister Bill on May 9th, whereon I am sorry to know that your husband is *not* orthodox.

'I am so delighted your husband has seen the primroses again. They are the joy of the year—no scent so delicately delicious, I think.'

In May the Duke went to London to attend the House of Lords, where he spoke against the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, a measure to which he was always strongly opposed. Later in the session he made a long speech on the question of evictions in Ireland in connection with the Olphert estates.

In the month of February, 1890, the Duke delivered

a lecture to the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, of which he was president, on 'The Border-lands between Geology and Geography.' A member of the society, alluding to this lecture, said that the Duke was 'an admirable scientific lecturer,' and that he 'described diagrams with a facility which showed that public lecturing was to him as easy as to any University professor.'

A letter from the Duke to Dr. Schmidt (who had at one time acted as tutor to his sons) gives some details of his daily life at that time:

'INVERARAY,
'*February 28th*, 1890.

'MY DEAR HERR PRELAT!

'I am delighted to hear of all your new dignities, although I do not exactly know all their import. I presume you are practically a *Bishop*, or an *Archbishop*, or a Protestant *Cardinal*—if there be such a creation—for you appear to join secular dignity and functions with spiritual offices and authority.

'I am now going off to London for a week to deliver an address to the students of the University of London, at the urgent request of my friend Mr. Goschen, who is now Chancellor of the Exchequer. My subject is to be "Economic Science in its Relations to Historic Study." If it is separately printed I shall send you a copy of it. But I am not writing it out, intending to speak from notes only. I find that reading is wearisome both to reader and hearer, and one can't keep the attention of an audience as one can by speaking.

'I have been much interested this winter in tracing the ghosts of organisms in our rocks here. Hitherto I have only found worm borings or tubes, which can be proved. But we find limestones very crystalline—marbles—in which we see ghostly outlines of organisms most difficult to determine. Hitherto we have not

been able to identify any distinct forms. But I go to London with one which I think cannot be accidental. . . .

'Your old vivarium is still standing in its old place under the larch-tree in the garden. But it is generally empty now. It stands only "in memoriam." But you must come and see us when your prelatical functions allow you, and then we shall get it filled. Our loch has now been found to be full of wonderful luminous shrimps, living at great depths. I don't know that they would live in shallow water full of light. Luminosity appears in two little discs on each segment of the body, with one also behind each eye. These discs are exactly like the eyes of the pecten, which you will remember well.'

The Duke mentions in this letter that he proposed to deliver his lecture on political economy merely from notes, without writing it out beforehand. This was the method he invariably adopted, except when addressing societies where the custom was that the lecture should be read. He always felt that, in public speaking, a set form of words hampered the development of thought, and words came so readily at his bidding that it was unnecessary for him to give previous consideration to the language in which his ideas should find expression.

In the summer of 1891 the Duke spoke in the House of Lords on the question of the most advisable manner of legislating on behalf of the crofter population in the congested districts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The speech was delivered to a very full House, there being a general desire to hear the views of the Duke on a subject which he had had such exceptional opportunities of studying.

Towards the close of the year (November 10th) the Duke was present at a meeting of the National

Liberal Union at Manchester, where he was the principal speaker. The subject discussed was Home Rule, and his address was characterized at the time as not only 'closely reasoned,' but 'brilliantly epigrammatic and statesmanlike.'

The Liberal Unionist party relied so much on the Duke's assistance in fighting the battle against Home Rule, that his time was greatly occupied in addressing meetings in different parts of the country, in defence of the Union. In 1892 he addressed a large meeting in Edinburgh on the subject, in which he described the contest as 'the greatest that has taken place in this country since the Revolution of 1688,' and his concluding words were:

'We fight for the authority of the Crown, for the power of Parliament, for the integrity of the Empire. Yes, we fight for all these, but we fight for something better. We fight for honour and truthfulness and openness and candour among public men. We fight for the fundamental principles of liberty, on which all our rights depend. We fight for everything by which "Kings reign and Princes decree justice."'

Professor Knight, of St. Andrew's University, one of the presidents of the Liberal Unionist Association, wrote to the Duke after the meeting:

'Will you allow me to express to you the enthusiastic delight with which I listened to your noble speech in Edinburgh on Friday night?

'I have heard many speeches on this great question of the century, but *nothing I ever listened to* was so good as your plea, both from a historical, an ethical, and a political point of view.

'I sincerely trust that your speech will be published in a pamphlet form and circulated broadcast over the country.'

Professor Butcher, Edinburgh University, wrote with regard to the same speech:

'Much as I have now heard said upon Ireland, I never listened to anything which seemed to me so eloquent and impressive at the moment, and so worthy of being read and thought upon afterwards. All whom I have spoken to who were among your audience feel it an occasion to be remembered. Some have said they never before realized the full gravity of the question.'

On August 9th, 1892, Lord Salisbury's Government was defeated on a vote of want of confidence, and Mr. Gladstone then formed his fourth Administration, which lasted until March, 1894, when he finally resigned office. He was succeeded as Prime Minister by the Earl of Rosebery, under whose leadership the Government remained in power until the following year (June 22nd, 1895), when it was defeated on a question concerning the Estimates, with reference to the War Department, and Lord Salisbury was again called upon to form a Ministry.

One of the first measures brought forward by Mr. Gladstone's Government was an Employers' Liability Bill. This Bill provided that employers should be liable for injuries sustained by their workmen in the course of their employment, unless 'contributory negligence' on the part of the workmen could be proved. After the measure reached the House of Lords, Lord Dudley moved an amendment, to the effect that, when a mutual agreement for insurance against injury existed between employers and workmen, the arrangement should be allowed to stand if desired. The Duke of Argyll cordially supported this amendment, which was carried by a majority of 120,

but its subsequent rejection by the House of Commons led to the withdrawal of the Bill the following year.

The Duke received a number of deputations of working men on the subject of the Bill. He was especially impressed by the clear and just view of the question expressed by Mr. Foreman, the spokesman representing the Elswick Mutual Insurance Company, with whom he afterwards had some correspondence. In replying to the Elswick deputation, the Duke said:

'The figures and facts which you laid before me proved conclusively that the free contracts you have made, and which you advocate, are not relinquishments on your part of any valuable privilege which the law secures, but are, on the contrary, contracts securing for yourselves and your families, in a better form and more adequate degree, those very advantages which the law aims at providing for you, but is wholly unable to afford in anything like an equal degree.

'I venture to suggest to you the necessity of your now taking such steps as you may think right, to make your voice heard on this question in some public form.

'The House of Lords has done what it could to retain for you those personal liberties which we all value so much, and which you are so well competent to use for your own benefit, and for the benefit of the great industrial system in which you discharge most important functions. I have no right to speak in the name of any political party, but I have a right to tell you of my own personal opinion that the Peers cannot maintain this contest on your behalf, unless they are supported and unless you make it apparent that we have been acting faithfully in the interests of a great mass of the most skilled, the most educated, and the most intelligent of the working classes.'

From Mr. Foreman to the Duke (*March 2nd*, 1894).

'Feeling that you have shown the spirit of a true friend toward us, in that you have gone out of your way to help us in the furtherance of our claim for a contracting clause to be added to the "Bill," so that there should be freedom of action on the part of workmen with their employers, we tender you our thanks for the kind and especial interest thus shown on our behalf. We feel that we owe you much for the trouble and pains you have taken, not only to make yourself acquainted with the question, but also for your efforts to establish equity and justice thereon.

'The letters you have written to us reveal your earnest desire to assist us in obtaining what we so much wanted. Although the efforts thus made failed to persuade the Government to add such a clause, yet the pressure was so strong and the arguments so convincing that what was asked was also right, it resulted in the withdrawal of the "Bill," and, of course, the continuance of "freedom of contract." This leads us to hope that if another Bill is brought forward, we can rely on your practical sympathy with us to have it so framed that "freedom of contract" shall continue to exist.'

From Mr. Foreman (*August 3rd*, 1895).

'Permit me to express the gratification I feel that the country has so completely and definitely sustained the action of the House of Lords in refusing to yield to the dictates of the late Government, which endeavoured to force on the people of this country measures that it did not want, and which were not in harmony with justice and liberty.'

During the last weeks of the year 1893, the Duchess of Argyll, who had been for many years an invalid, had an attack of acute illness, produced by a chill,

and the New Year had hardly dawned when her death brought a new sorrow to the Duke. In the month of April he went for a short cruise in the Mediterranean, but while at Corfu he was laid up with a touch of fever; he therefore gave up the idea of prolonging his tour, and returned to London early in May.

The Duke spoke in the House of Lords in the course of the summer of 1894 on the Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Bill, the Budget Bill, Tenants' Arbitration (Ireland) Bill, and the Local Government (Scotland) Bill.

In July, 1894, massacres by the Turks of the Christian population again broke out in the Armenian provinces, and much indignation was, in consequence, aroused in England. Mr. Gladstone and the Duke were united in their efforts on behalf of the persecuted Armenians, with whose cause they were both much in sympathy.

It had been arranged that a meeting on the subject of Armenia should be held in St. James's Hall on May 7th, 1895, at which the Duke was asked to preside. On April 18th he wrote to Mr. Gladstone:

'I should be delighted to pay you a visit were it not that I am still in an invalidish condition, due chiefly to an attack of influenza, and I am hardly fit to inflict myself on others as a country guest. I consented reluctantly to take the chair at the Armenian meeting, mainly because, as one of the only two survivors of the Crimean War Cabinet, I wish to testify to my strong feeling of our absolute responsibility for insisting on reforms in Turkey, since we did then, and again at a later date, interfere to keep up Turkey as a ruling Power.

'The few words you have felt yourself at liberty to say imply and involve a great deal. When you have

said that no promise from Turkey is worth the breath with which it is made, you say all, if it be only a little unfolded.'

To this Mr. Gladstone replied (May 5th) in a letter which was read at the meeting:

'I hope that the meeting over which you have kindly undertaken to preside will produce an effect proportioned to the gravity of the causes which have led to its being summoned.

'What I desire is peace and tranquillity through the whole world, and it is with most sincere grief that now, when it appears that the extremes of shameful outrage in Armenia can no longer be treated as matter of doubt, I for one contemplate the infatuation of the Turkish Government, determined, it would seem, to do everything it can to produce its own ruin.

'It seemed reasonable to hope that the crimes in Bulgaria of the year 1876, together with the signal retribution they brought upon Turkey, would have the effect of preventing a repetition of like, and perhaps even more flagrant, horrors in Armenia.

'The duty incumbent on all Europe, to place no reliance upon mere words, but to prevent by effectual measures any further recurrence of such terrible delinquencies, seems clear enough. I feel confident that this country will not shrink from her duty, and I trust also in her having the firm co-operation of France and of Russia. If other great Governments remain inactive, it is perhaps most of all to be regretted on their own account.

'I will not trouble you with many words, but I could not help sending an expression of my strong sympathy, and of my hope that by the use of moral means, if possible, and if not, then by other means, rather than not at all, ample security will now be taken against any fresh resort in the future by the Sultan and his advisers to their deeds of shame.'

From the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Benson (April 3rd, 1895).

'I hope very earnestly that in your great effort, so important politically, religiously, and socially, on which you solemnly enter, you will make it absolute that *all* the Eastern Christians shall be brought under protection along with the Armenians.

'The "Assyrians," or Nestorians, whom you so materially aided some years ago, live in no less danger than the Armenians. One word from headquarters to the Kurds, and the possibly *oldest* of national Churches would be extinguished in Turkey.'

In the course of his speech at the meeting in St. James's Hall, the Duke said:

'There is a party in this country—I will not say a party, but a great number of persons—who do not fully understand what the responsibility of this country is with regard to all these atrocities in the Turkish Empire. I have come here mainly to impress upon you this conviction, which is deeply impressed upon my own mind—that we, the people of this country, as a nation, are directly responsible for the government or misgovernment of Turkey. . . .

'I stand before you as one of the only two survivors of the Cabinet which waged the Crimean War (my right honourable friend Mr. Gladstone is the other), and I wish to set right a very common popular misapprehension as regards the objects of that war. I believe there are very many persons who say—I have even read some articles in reviews written by educated men lately—who say we waged the Crimean War in order to support the Turks and the Turkish Empire, and for no other purpose.

'Well, that is a complete mistake. The whole object of the Crimean War was, not to support Turkey as an empire at any cost, but to establish this as a European principle: that, whatever might be the fate

or the future of Turkey, that fate and that future were to be in the hands of Europe, and not in the hands of Russia alone. . . .

'Now, I want to read to you three short documents which will place on an absolute certainty the statement that I have just made as to our object in the Crimean War. Here is what Lord Aberdeen said, who was the head of the Government:

'"Notwithstanding the favourable opinion of many, it is difficult to believe in the improvement of the Turks. It is true that, under the pressure of the moment, benevolent decrees may be issued; but these, except under the eye of some foreign Minister, are entirely neglected. Their whole system is radically vicious and inhuman. I do not refer to fables which may be invented at St. Petersburg or Vienna, but to numerous despatches of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe himself and of our own Consuls, who describe a frightful picture of lawless oppression and cruelty."

'Can there be a stronger expression than that, so far as concerns the head of the Government which waged the Crimean War? Well, I come to the next authority on this subject, and that is Lord Russell, who was Foreign Minister during part of the time, and took an active part in all the negotiations connected with that war. Having read to you the opinion of Lord Aberdeen, which shows what the object of the Cabinet was not, I now come to what that object really was.

'"The Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen," says Lord Russell, "while actively defending the independence of Turkey, felt that in objecting to the separate interference of Russia they were bound to obtain some guarantee for the security of the subjects of the Porte professing the Christian faith, whether Greek, or Roman Catholic, or Protestant, whether Christians by descent or Turkish converts."

'Here the doctrine is laid down distinctly that the object of England in waging that war was to set up

a European protectorate over all Christian subjects of the Porte—not, observe, the Armenians only, but over all Christian subjects. Then I come to the third authority, which, you will admit, is a remarkable one. The great Prince who stood nearest and dearest to the throne at that time, and who regarded everything with a thoroughly intellectual and philosophical mind, wrote this, which has since been made public; I do not recollect having seen it at the time: "The cancelling of all previous Russian treaties, and the substitution of a European for a Russian protectorate of the Christians, or, rather, of European protection for a Russian protectorate. . . ."

'But the real truth is that our responsibility does not depend on the words of any treaty. It depends upon the broad fact that we did intervene, and saved the Turks from complete defeat and ruin by Russia. After the destruction of the Turkish fleet at Sinope, Turkey was practically in the hands of Russia; and when we stepped in and saved her and gave her a new lease of life, we undertook a responsibility from which we cannot possibly escape. If there had not been a single line of treaty, a single intimation given to us, a single promise vouchsafed to us, the responsibility would have been just the same. It arose out of the fact of our position, and the action we took in a great Russian crisis.'

In alluding to the war of 1876, the Duke said:

'That war arose distinctly out of the crimes of the Turks. The Bulgarian atrocities excited all Europe, and Russia especially; and Russia, as the other Powers did not seem willing to come forward and act as protectors of the Christians of Turkey, waged war upon Turkey. Well, after a very gallant resistance—for the Turks are brave soldiers—Russia was at the gates of Constantinople, and forced upon Turkey the Treaty of San Stefano. In that treaty Russia bound herself

alone to protect the Christians. Russia would have had the right to an exclusive protectorate of Turkey, and would have acquired for herself that rich and glorious inheritance of the East. At this moment our British Government intervened, and said: "You shall not have this treaty. It is true you overcame the Turks; you have wrung from them this treaty; but we say you shall not have it. We will take it out of your hands, and insist that Turkey shall give these promises to all of us which you intended should be given to you alone." That was our attitude at that time. There, again, we saved Turkey, and gave her a new lease of life, restored her power, and that, if there were not a single word of treaty, imposed upon us a solemn obligation to defend the Christians of Turkey. After that we have rested on our oars. That promise was given by Turkey, and you observe the terms of it—that the Porte was periodically to make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application. Now, the Turks have never fulfilled that promise, and I am sorry to say we have never fulfilled our part of the obligation to the Christians of Turkey. . . .

'Mr. Gladstone says in his letter he wishes peace and tranquillity all over the world. So do we all, but not at any cost. And I must say I think it the absolute duty of this Government to keep the people of this country informed upon the facts of the case. Open the windows, open the doors; let in the light! Whatever other action we take, let us at least make the people of this country know what they have to deal with, and the horrors for which they are individually and collectively responsible. . . .

'I have the honour of addressing a great many who were not born forty-five years ago, a great many more who were very young at that time, and perhaps a very small number of men who remember all the circumstances of the case. They are burnt in upon my heart and memory, and this I may say—that we did

not urge this country into that war. On the contrary, the country urged us on into that war. . . .

'I have only further to say that it is to me a very special and painful recollection to look back to that period when all those with whom I acted, except Mr. Gladstone, are dead and gone. It is the fate of those who have arrived at my time of life to have that sadness very often forced upon them.

> '"The clouds that gather round the setting sun
> Do take a sober colouring from an eye
> That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality."

But, looking back to that time, I say distinctly that I cannot see that we took any step at that time that we ought not to have taken, or that we failed to establish any principle which was not right and just. The words I often find myself repeating, the touching words of our late Laureate, are:

> '"Come memory, with sad eye,
> Holding the folded annals of my youth."

Yes, they are folded—folded in much sorrow for those we have lost, for the remarkable men with whom I have worked, and who are now gone; but they would be folded not in sorrow and regret only, but in remorse and shame, if to the last hour of my life I did not tell the people of this country of the immense responsibilities which they took with us, and which they forced us to impose upon them.'

The Duke wrote to Mr. Gladstone (May 8th), giving an account of the meeting:

'We had a large meeting, and your letter was received with great applause. We had an Archbishop and some Bishops, but the meeting was predominantly Nonconformist, as was shown when a Mr. Clifford rose. He was received as if he were a demi-god. . . . I

went this morning to read all the political morning papers, and I found that all were favourable to us except the *Morning Post*.'

To Mr. Gladstone (*August 5th*, 1895).

'I am glad to see you are to speak on the Armenian question this week.

'I have felt it due to the Foreign Office to be silent till we could know what it had done or was doing, and until one could see the correspondence it was impossible to judge. I felt sure of at least one good result—it was impossible to have such a negotiation going on at all without the Powers being committed more and more to some express acknowledgment of responsibility, and this acknowledgment will carry inevitably its own result.

'But, so far as we can judge by published documents, I thought the scheme of the Foreign Office hopelessly complex. It was a scheme which would be unworkable even with goodwill on both sides, and futile where there is no goodwill at all or honesty on the part of the Turks. Of course, my own belief is that no remedy can ever be effectual till the Turks fall "bag and baggage," as regards the Government. But the time is not ripe for this, I suppose; and in the meantime some one good governor for those provinces seems the simplest solution.'

To Mr. Gladstone (*December 10th*, 1895).

'I know nothing of the diplomatic situation as it now stands on the Eastern Question; but privately I have no doubt of the chief elements in the situation.

'1. We cannot get at the seat of trouble by a military force of our own. It is inland, and we have no army to undertake an Asiatic campaign. Even if we had, the Turk could cut every Christian throat before we could reach the country.

'2. Consequently, we can only exert the pressure of physical force at headquarters at Constantinople.

'3. But Russia will not concur—nay, even threatens to oppose any act of force—at least, at present.

'4. The Turk, if backed by Russia, will certainly resist, and a Russian army is near enough to occupy Constantinople and hold it—nominally for the Turk, really for herself.

'These are as ugly cards to play with as were ever placed in the hands of any Government.

'I suspect and believe that Salisbury is practically compelled to drag in other Powers from step to step, towards some joint form of action at Constantinople. The Turk knows only too well how Russia is disposed to back him against force—at least, at present. I am afraid he counts, only too securely, on a purely selfish policy on the part of that Power.

'For myself, I would greatly prefer allowing, and even inviting, Russia to take possession of all the Armenian provinces of Asiatic Turkey. Would you not? . . .

'I ought to add that I thought Kimberley's plan of protection for the Christians utterly unworkable. Probably he had the same difficulty in getting Russia and the other Powers to agree on anything. I have not seen the utterance of the Emperor of Germany to which you allude. But all the Powers except ourselves are as cold as ice on the score of humanity. They are thinking of nothing but of their own mutual jealousies, and of the postponement of a war of territorial redistribution in the East.'

To this Mr. Gladstone replied (December 15th, 1895):

'I agree with you that we cannot send an army to Armenia, and cannot—*i.e.*, ought not to—go to war with the great Powers.

'There is a third course, which we followed in 1880 with complete success. We threatened to seize Smyrna

and stop its revenues. This brought about the extension of Montenegro, and gave Thessaly to Greece. But Russia then behaved very well.

'The horror of the whole case is beyond belief, and the Sultan is the man who does it.'

To Mr. Gladstone (*June 22nd*, 1896).

'The only thing I recollect was being much amused by the "pussy" way in which Granville had got Bright to consent to the naval demonstration on the Albanian coast, because I felt that when fleets are sent they must fire in certain contingencies, and Bright might have been committed to an act of war. Of all the rest I recollect nothing, and probably, as you say, never knew. In the Armenian case force could only have been applied in the Sea of Marmora, and that was a much more formidable thing than laying an embargo on Smyrna. Still, I have a feeling that greater determination on our part would, or might, have dragged all the other Powers with us. Meantime, we are not at the end, and I have some hope that my argument may be of a little use in giving direction to public opinion.

'Eruptions seem to be breaking out all over the corrupt Turkish body, and things will not easily be composed without great changes. But we ought to make friends with Russia as far as possible.'

On August 17th, 1896, the Duke wrote to Mr. Gladstone, expressing his estimate of Austria:

'I did not say anything in my last letter about the Eastern question, to which you referred. I assume it to be true that Salisbury refused the infamous proposal that we should join in a blockade to prevent the Cretans getting outside help. That would have been indeed intolerable.

'But, further, I hope it is also true that Salisbury has approached Russia in some friendly way, and I

flatter myself that my pamphlet has had some influence upon him.

'He dined with me a few weeks ago. I did not like to "speak shop" to him, but he volunteered to tell me that he had read my pamphlet, and "that he did not know anything in it from which he differed, except about the Crimean War." I said that was ancient history now, and irrelevant.

'But what has surprised me most, and disgusted me, has been the part played by Austria. Russia has temptations about all popular movements, however righteous; but Austria has acted with incredible baseness and cowardice. Her Minister has expressed his horror of the Armenian massacres, but always coolly adds that such sacrifices for the peace of the East and for the postponement of a break-up of Turkey must just be endured.

'What she is afraid of, I don't know. She governs Bosnia (so lately Turkish) admirably, and the Mahomedans and Christians are living now together in perfect peace. A recent book by a Scottish archæologist (Brown) gives a most satisfactory account of the country. Why can't other provinces be equally well managed? I used to think Austria the most respectable of all the old Governments of Europe, but she has been really infamous in this last Eastern crisis. I met her Minister* here lately, a gentleman, but cynical, I suspect, as regards any question of humanity.

'Our foolish seizure of Cyprus in 1878 damages us seriously now. The Powers are suspicious of our intentions to grab more. If we could persuade them all that we don't want another acre for ourselves, they would be more amenable.'

It was at this time that the Duke published his book, 'Our Responsibilities for Turkey.' Regarding this little volume, he wrote to Mr. Gladstone (June 13th, 1896):

* Count Deym.