Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman

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TWO of the great and mournful summaries of life—familiar to the world—naturally rise to one's thoughts in presence of such a tragedy as the death of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman within a brief period of his reaching almost the highest and most potent of earthly dignities. "Vanity of Vanities" is the one; "Youth a blunder; manhood a struggle; old age a regret," is the other. The second epitaph of life comes as the first from one of the Jewish race and is a faithful echo of the original through the many thousands of years which separate the two philosophers and the two epochs.

A youth of obscurity—a manhood of unrecognised struggle; and then, when every gift of fortune crowned the old age, first a devasta-

ting domestic sorrow and then a sudden striking down followed by the slow but sure approach of death; this is a summary of the career of the late Prime Minister. That dramatic irony in which Life is so much richer than the most daring dramatists, almost obtrudes itself in the sight of this man at the very height of fame and power, seated in a chair, propped up by pillows, and with the outwork of his frame first assailed and then the centre citadel taken by slow assault in a top room in the plain building which is the core of a world-wide Empire. The splendour of the general environment—in the very centre of the house from which the Rulers of the Empire reach their historic and world-moving decisions—with the haughty palaces all around from which India is ruled and our Foreign relations touching every nation in the world are inspired—and then this room of sickness and pain and death: here is a new text for those who preach the futility in which all things are crumpled up in face of the approach of the

fell sergeant Death. Though the record has to be a career of great and unexpected prosperity and success, there is room here for tears and the wringing of hands. It is the tragedy of final and mighty success coming when it can no longer be enjoyed; the goal reached, but after the struggler has ceased to have the power to keep or to relish its sweetness of taste.

If there be anything that might appear as some compensation for this tragic contrast in which the life of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman finally culminated, it would be in the national outburst of grief and sympathy which his taking-off has evoked. It would be foolish—even in the softening presence of the pallid and appealing face of the dead—to compare Campbell-Bannerman in intellectual gifts with the greater men who have been his predecessors in his high office; but in one respect he stood, perhaps, above any of them; and that was in his extraordinary personal popularity.

Foe as well as friend loved him. In times of fierce political excitement, of course, he had to endure the passionate resentment which must always be felt by one party against another, and especially against its chief figurehead; but the feeling in his case was never personal. That constitutes the difference between him and many other men who have held the same high place. For instance, there were people who would have been delighted at any day to hear of the departure from life of Mr. Gladstone at certain stormy moments in his career; and though no man could inspire such vast multitudes of men with such infectious and stormy enthusiasm as Mr. Gladstone, there was no man, also of his time, who could inspire such devastating and even cruel resentment.

Men of my generation who went all through the storm of the controversy when Russia and Turkey were at war, will remember the terrible Sunday when stones were thrown at the house

in Harley Street which Mr. Gladstone then occupied; and when doubtless he himself would have been assaulted if he could have been caught hold of by the exasperated mob. And here let me tell a little bit of secret history which I think has never appeared in print before about that very occurrence on that very Sunday. Among those who were in entire sympathy with that anti-Gladstone mob were Charles Stewart Parnell and one of his sisters. Parnell was then quite a young and inexperienced man, but he had an idea that one of the first things he had to do to bring into being the fighting independent Irish Party, which afterwards he created, was to break down all faith in any English Party or any English statesman; and that as Gladstone and his party were the most trusted, Gladstone and his party were to be the most feared and the most violently attacked. And thus it was that he and his sister—who entirely shared his views—walked along Harley Street

with their pockets bulging with stones they were prepared to throw at the windows of the hated Liberal leader.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman excited none of those fierce feelings in any section either in public or Parliamentary opinion. On the other hand, he enjoyed among his own followers an intimacy, so to speak, of personal affection which Mr. Gladstone did not command even in the days of his power. There is the difference between the attitude of the ordinary man to the two leaders which you feel towards the different beauties of the Alps and the Pyrenees. As you gaze on the bleak and lonely and gigantic splendour of the Jungfrau or the Matterhorn, there is a certain awe in your admiration; when you gaze on those mountains between the south of France and the north of Spain, which gradually and slowly rise from sunlit meadows and short trees to the craggy and snow-clad heights, there is a certain homeliness in your

affection—it is free from the stunning emotion of grandeur and of awe. And so Gladstone had the power to awe the men near him rather than to win them, and fear always casteth out a little of the love. There was no sense of awe with regard to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. He was too brotherly, too gentle, too familiar a spirit to suggest any such feeling. And this was one of the reasons why he was regarded as so extraordinarily powerful an asset of his party, and why he exercised such a strange ascendency in the present House of Commons.

That ascendency was one of the most remarkable experiences of even the oldest Parliamentarian. And, indeed, if it had not been for Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman it is very hard to know what would have become of the present House of Commons in its first hours of inexperience and intolerant exultation. With a huge majority, which is always a danger; with groups divided from each

other by tremendous differences, especially as to tactics; with men new to Parliamentary life, and dreaming great dreams of impossible things, the Liberal Party might well have been shattered into a score of fragments if it had not been for the immense cohesive influence which radiated all around from the personality of its leader. Even the sternest member of the Independent Labour Party relaxed his grimness when the Premier got on his feet. The Irish Nationalist had an affection for him, such, probably, as he never felt for any Prime Minister before. The most difficult man in this House is the ultra-Nonconformist, but even he could be brought to something like reason by a smile and a humorous word from Sir Henry.

What was the secret of this ascendency? It was mainly the transparent honesty of the man. This transparent honesty was written by Nature's legible hand all over the face. The broad and somewhat short and

typical Scotch face, with good humour and shrewdness combined; the stout, robust, well-knit figure, above all, the large eyes—light blue or grey, and open, lucid, fearless, and steady; all these things proclaimed that this was not one of those subtle, complex, and uncertain spirits that are never to be trusted to give the direct Aye or the direct Nay. Everybody knew what Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman thought about every great question of public interest; and when he had taken up a position he was never known to abandon it.

When, therefore, he recommended a certain course to the House of Commons, he started out with the enormous advantage of his big reserve of faith and confidence in the breasts of the men he addressed. Then his modesty helped a lot. He once described himself as a politician devoid of ambition; and that was a fair, though a self-applied, description of his place and part in politics. He never did push

himself forward; for years after he had become a member of the Cabinet he was content to be known simply as a head of a department; and when he did attain to the leadership, it was because it was almost thrust upon him, and because all other competitors had got out of the way. And few people then realised that the leadership was one which would ultimately land him in the lofty position of the Premiership.

Indeed, up to almost the last moment it seemed still possible that he would not have attained the great prize. I have heard of efforts being made within a few moments of the last General Election to boycott him and to refuse him all recognition. This is also one of the secret, though perhaps unconscious, reasons of the hold he had on his followers. They knew how he continued to lead the Liberal Party through those days of darkness and division which followed the disappearance of Gladstone and the terrible fissures created in the ranks by

the Boer War. They knew, too, of the attempts to rob him of the place he had won so gallantly; and this gave his friends the temptation to try and pay him back by the abounding gratitude of to-day for all the rebuffs, the soreness, the hardships of the bitter past.

The ancestry of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was as essentially Scotch as his own character. The father of the future Prime Minister was one of those hardy and daring Scotch provincials who early in the nineteenth century migrated to Glasgow, in some dim anticipation of the gigantic size and wealth to which the city was by and by to attain. He came from the Port of Monteith in 1805, and with his brother William, started the firm of James and William Campbell. This old James Campbell was a man of force, of initiative, and of something of the same kind of obstinate self-will which characterised his son in higher spheres. He was a draper by trade; he found that drapery shops in those far-off

days still stuck to the spirit of haggling which was universal once in Europe and still subsists in Oriental lands. Old James Campbell introduced a reform; the way in which he was induced to do so is characteristic of him and of his race. He and his brother sat under the great Presbyterian preacher, Dr. Chalmers, and one of the topics which Dr. Chalmers chose for one of his Sunday deliverances, was the system of haggling. He roundly denounced it as dishonest—especially to the poor. The two young tradesmen listening to him were deeply impressed, went back to their shops, and from that time forward set forth the exact prices of their goods, and neither asked more nor took less. They were rewarded by a great increase in their business, and soon they became one of the great houses of Glasgow—removing from street to street as their business prospered and new and more central quarters became necessary.

In time James Campbell entered the Munici-

pal Council, and in time became Lord Provost of his adopted city. Again, in the public career of the father, one can trace some of the dominating features in that of his son. Twice in succession Lord Provost Campbell was censured by the Council of which he was the chief officer Once it was in connection with his efforts to improve the water supply of Glasgow; on another occasion it was because he had the good sense and the courage to defy the narrow and irrational formalities of the law. He was one of those who had agitated for the extension of the boundaries of the city; but before he could attain his purpose, a fire broke out in a large mill just outside the then city boundaries. When application was made for the assistance of the fire brigade it was refused on the ground that the brigade had no right to do duty beyond the city boundaries. Application was made to the Lord Provost at his private residence; he brushed aside the cobwebs of the law, ordered out the fire brigade on his own

responsibility, and, to make assurance doubly sure, mounted himself the first of the engines to go to the burning mill. He was severely censured, one Town Councillor declaring that if the Lord Provost repeated his offence, he should be taken into custody.

Of this stock Henry Campbell—as the Premier was known in his young days—was born in the year 1836. His place of birth was in Kelvinside, then a rural suburb considered far enough from the centre of the city as to be a retreat in almost full country. Indeed, Sir James Campbell—as the prosperous Lord Provost had become—used annually to remove his family in the summer from his place of business in Bath Street to Kelvinside, as a Londoner does from London to Margate. Kelvinside House was the name of the mansion where the future Premier first saw the light; it was demolished some years ago. The boundaries of Glasgow extend several miles now beyond that spot which sixty or seventy

years ago was considered a country resort. The early years of young Henry Campbell were like those of millions of other Glasgow boys that have preceded and succeeded him. His education became the prime duty of his parents, and his width of reading in after-life was one of the many proofs how well his parents performed this work. He started at the High School of Glasgow—an excellent school, with numerous and industrious and ambitious young students preparing for their future struggles with the thoroughness of their race. It is some testimony to the ability and the industry of young Campbell that, though already destined to great wealth, he became the dux—as the leading boy is called in Scotland—of most of his classes. Then when he entered the University of Glasgow, he was equally distinguished: he took a high place in classics; Greek, curiously enough, was one of his strongest subjects; he won the Cowan gold medal at a Blackstone examination—a prize

which was considered by Glasgow University students the blue ribbon of the Greek class of those times.

The Scotch student, if he be the child of wealth, generally emigrates to one of the English universities to complete his education. Young Henry Campbell followed the tradition; he went to Cambridge University. Here again he proved that he was no idle or perfunctory student; and he took up mathematical as well as classical studies. In 1858 he was a Senior Optime in the mathematical tripos, and took classical honours at the same time. But this stay in the University of Cambridge had effects much more decisive than a mere increase of his knowledge; it was then that he was "converted" —in the political, not the religious sense. Sir James Campbell, his father, remained throughout his life an ardent and uncompromising Conservative, and so long as his son had been under home influences in Glas-

gow he adhered to the paternal faith. But in Cambridge he and two Glasgow friends, who had accompanied him, were transformed, and it was then that Campbell-Bannerman adopted the political creed to which he adhered all his days afterwards.

Evidently the difference thus created in their political opinions did not alter the relations of father and son. It did not affect their relations even when the son resolved to enter political life. And yet the two were for years in close contact, for immediately after the close of his university career Campbell-Bannerman entered his father's house of business, and was at his desk there every morning for nearly ten years, with the same punctuality as the typical Scotch man of business. One of the little things in which the young man differed from the old, was that at this epoch of his existence, young Campbell followed the mode then among young men by wearing a single eyeglass. He was short-sighted in his

youth, and when he was old he had to hold his notes close to his eyes after the manner of the short-sighted ; he had, however, the compensation of the short-sighted in being able to read without glasses at a time of life when most men require such aid to read anything.

A significant glimpse is given into the character of both father and son, and into their relations with each other, by the terms of the first election address which young Campbell addressed to his fellow-countrymen. Here is an extract :

" I am the son of a staunch Tory, and I am not here to say a word in excuse for that fact, or to apologise for being the son of my father. On the contrary, there is nothing I am prouder of than my close connection with one who has always been respected in Scotland even by those who have been most bitterly opposed to him. But if you wish to draw any augury from my close connection

with Sir James Campbell, this I would have you believe—that possibly the staunchness may run in the blood, that I may inherit his tenacity without his principles, and that as my father, through a long public life, through good report and evil report, in fair weather and foul, has stuck to his party and his principles, so his son, in like manner, will stick to his."

Everybody will admit the candour and the courage of this declaration of the young politician; it is a proof that in politics, as elsewhere, the boy is father to the man. Whatever were the demerits of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman as a politician, nobody ever denied him courage and consistency.

This first attempt to gain a seat in Parliament failed, but a few months afterwards came the General Election of 1868; the young man was then elected for the Stirling Burghs, and for the Stirling Burghs he remained member to the end of his days. This be-

ginning of his Parliamentary career was the end of his career as a business man; he retired from his father's place, and from that time forward he was a politician, pure and simple. This career he was able to pursue the more easily as he inherited not one but several fortunes—a fortune from his father, another from his uncle on the paternal, a third from an uncle on the maternal side. His addition of Bannerman to his original name of Campbell was due to the last fortune, as Bannerman was the name of one of his benefactors. Among other possessions he inherited from an uncle a beautiful country seat in Kent.

So far, therefore, as pecuniary circumstances were concerned, his life had always been one of ease; and that, perhaps, partly accounted for the geniality and equanimity of temper which were so characteristic of him. Throughout his life he never knew the small and squalid wants and the bitter personal struggle which so

often darken the early, and sometimes even blight the closing, years of so many politicians.

Campbell-Bannerman was just the man who was pointed out for office at an early age. He was rich, he was well married, he was eminently discreet, he entertained largely. He was but three years in Parliament when he was appointed Financial Secretary of the War Office, thus beginning an association with that department which was destined to be renewed several times later on. With his party, he retired in 1874, and again when his party returned to power in 1880 he went back to the War Office. When Sir George Trevelyan was foolish enough to leave the Secretaryship of the Admiralty in order to take up the killing and thankless office of Chief Secretary for Ireland, Sir Henry was chosen to succeed him at the Admiralty. Another change in the fortunes of Sir George Trevelyan produced a change in those of Sir Henry. When Sir George left Ireland, a prematurely broken and grizzled man, and at the

very moment when things looked nearly as black as they could be, Campbell-Bannerman stepped into the place.

The office is one which, as everybody knows, severely tests men, and this was still more true some years ago, when Ireland was fiercely disturbed, and when a powerful and united Irish Party, under Mr. Parnell, was so effective a force in the House of Commons. Considering his love of ease, his geniality of temper, his hatred of violent measures, Campbell-Bannerman showed enormous public spirit in accepting this office. There are several amusing stories told of the feeling with which the Irish members received the news of the new appointment. At that period one of the most prominent and able of the Irish members was the late Edmund Dwyer Gray, proprietor of the Dublin *Freeman's Journal*, then, as now, the most important Nationalist organ in Ireland. Absorbed in other occupations, Mr. Gray's attendance in the House of Commons

was rather irregular, with the result that he did not know well-known colleagues, even by sight. One afternoon he formed a group of three men, who were discussing the new Chief Secretary. "At all events," said Gray, "everybody seems agreed that he is a sufficiently dull man." One of the group of three was Campbell-Bannerman himself! There was nobody, however, who would more heartily laugh at such a joke at his own expense as Campbell-Bannerman; he was certainly a good deal happier over it than poor Gray, who never told the story afterwards without visibly colouring, in his vivid recollection of his confusion when he heard of his mistake. Another Irish member put the prevalent feeling of the party even in stronger language. In the very first Irish debate at which Campbell-Bannerman appeared, this member said the Government reminded him of a beleaguered capital. First they tried stone fortifications, then they tried guns; finally they resorted at the last ex-

tremity to a sandbag. For a while the nickname stuck, and Campbell-Bannerman was known as the sandbag Chief Secretary. That Irish member lived to regret the incident, and became one of Campbell-Bannerman's warm friends and admirers. It is he whose hand has written this memoir.

In spite of these things, however, the Irishmen found that they had met with a very tough antagonist in the new man. When they were confronting Mr. Forster, they could make even that rough and rude giant writhe as they denounced his *régime*. Mr. Trevelyan's face would shrivel up almost with visible pain—he himself said that he would sooner face a battery than these furious and eloquent Irish benches—and it was expected that Campbell-Bannerman, much less known, with a much smaller reputation, would prove a far easier prey. But the real Campbell-Bannerman was unknown to the Irishmen and to the House generally. Up to this time people had

thought of him simply as one of the industrious, painstaking, eminently respectable, and eminently dull officials who are chosen by every Government for the smaller places in the official hierarchy. It was expected that he would meet Irish wit with dull, unimaginative answers, and that he would be, so to speak, roasted alive. What turned out to be the fact was that Campbell-Bannerman had wit as ready as that of any of his opponents, that he had immense force of character; above all, that he had unfathomable, unreachable depths of imperturbability. It might have been self-confidence, it was probably indifference; but there was no human being who seemed so absolutely impervious to attack. One night, for instance, after the Irish members had been hammering away at him for hours, he calmly got up and described the position of Chief Secretary as one eminently calculated to improve one's moral discipline. One was taught to penetrate through one's own self-esteem, and to discover

one's hidden iniquities; and then he proceeded to give a plain, unvarnished account of the transaction which had evoked thunders of denunciation from his opponents opposite. There was nothing to be done with a Chief Secretary like this. He laughed at vituperation; he was jaunty under a cyclone of attack.

What would have been the end of the duel it is impossible to say, for it was brought to a sudden and abrupt conclusion by the defeat of the Gladstone Government on the night of June 8, 1885, by the famous combination between the Conservatives and the Parnellites against the Budget of Mr. Childers. When next Campbell-Bannerman and the Irishmen met, it was as allies and not as foes. It may have been his experiences in Ireland, it may have been his strong and instinctive love of free institutions; whatever the reason, he was one of the very first to give in his adhesion to Mr. Gladstone's policy of Home Rule. He was, indeed, the inventor of a phrase which

became popular. Asked by the late Mr. Mundella, whose views with regard to Home Rule were undergoing a transformation, what he thought about it all, his answer was that he "had found salvation" six months before. It was a phrase quite characteristic of the man, and it so aptly described the curious, and in some cases rapid, conversion of many Liberals, that it was caught up, and became the familiar cry of the platform — especially among the enemies of Home Rule. Another consequence of his Irish experience was that for ever afterwards Campbell-Bannerman remained an inflexible Home Ruler. One who knew him well declared that there was no subject which seemed to make so strong and so prompt an appeal to his innermost convictions and warmest sympathies as the subject of Ireland, of which central fact in Campbell-Bannerman's political life proof will often appear in the course of this narrative.

In the new Cabinet which Mr. Gladstone

formed after the General Election of 1885 Campbell-Bannerman became Secretary for War, and that office he continued to hold in the next Liberal Administrations as well. He was a highly popular administrator—partly, probably, because he was entirely free from any wild eagerness for change. Fuss, worry, loquacious zeal—all these things to him were a torment and a bore.

In the Government of Lord Rosebery, Campbell-Bannerman again was a prominent figure. He had been rather on the side of Sir William Harcourt in the domestic quarrel which rent the Liberal leaders when the moment came for choosing the successor to Mr. Gladstone; but when the decision was made, he loyally stood by Lord Rosebery. The strong tie of a common nationality—as well as, perhaps, a strong sense of the maintenance of discipline—made him get over the initial difference with his chief, and he became one of Lord Rosebery's most confiden-

tial friends and advisers. There are several scenes from that period between the two men which are characteristic of them. When, speaking on the Home Rule question, and dependent on the Irish votes for existence, Lord Rosebery made the famous and infelicitous utterance as to the predominant partner, Campbell-Bannerman was one of the friends to whom he unburdened himself, and whom he asked, in some bewilderment, the meaning of the unexpected storm which had begun to rage about his ears. The younger politician pointed out that what he had said was, after all, true. Campbell-Bannerman used to recount the story with great amusement as an instance of the ingenuousness of the Peer not trained in the atmosphere of the House of Commons. It showed, he said, how small a distance Lord Rosebery had gone in his political and Parliamentary education when he thought it a sufficient defence of any public utterance that it was true!

Another scene between them took place on a more eventful occasion. The Government of Lord Rosebery was in a very difficult position, as everybody will remember. Their majority, which began with a nominal forty, had gradually diminished until it sometimes ran down to ten or even seven. In addition, it was honeycombed by disaffection, the struggle between Lord Rosebery and Sir William Harcourt having descended down to the rank and file, and there being besides, among the unofficial members of the party, plenty of men who had their own scores to pay off with Lord Rosebery. Under these circumstances, it was evident that the doom of the Government was sealed, and that some fine night it would wake up and find itself in a minority. Until the memoirs of this generation are published, the whole story of the intrigues which followed will not be known, but sufficient is known already to justify the statement that there was a very clear, if unspoken, and a very definite, though

a certainly unwritten, understanding between the enemies of the Government of Lord Rosebery and some of its supposed friends, to bring about the defeat of the Government. The end came in a very unexpected way, and on a small affair. Among the items in the War Estimates was one for cordite. Cordite was a form of ammunition on which there had been a good deal of litigation and a good deal of newspaper controversy. Nobody felt very keenly about the subject except, perhaps, the inventor, who was supposed to have suffered by the action of the War Office experts; but, all the same, the idea got abroad that it would be a good subject on which to try a throw with the Government. The plans were well laid. In that terrible Parliament of 1892–95 members had to attend to their duties with an assiduity unknown and unprecedented. Any division might mean the end of the Government, and divisions were taking place every hour of the day and night. Members who

found themselves entering Palace Yard at a quarter-past three o'clock, went to their places with their hearts in their mouths lest their absence for even a quarter of an hour might mean the destruction or the escape of the Government. A surprise division was prepared on cordite; but it was not an easy matter, under such circumstances, to escape the vigilance of the Government Whips. It is said that, in order to do so, a number of Unionists whose presence was not expected, were taken into the House through an unusual and a back entrance; that when the division was unexpectedly called, they appeared as if they had sprung from the earth, and so put the Government in a minority of seven.

The fatal division took place comparatively early in the evening, and when the Liberal leaders met immediately after to decide on their course in this crisis, it was Campbell-Bannerman who made the observation that probably the one man in London at that

moment who did not know of the fall of the Government, was the head of the Government! The justice of the observation was immediately seen, and Campbell-Bannerman was immediately sent off to discover Lord Rosebery. It was Campbell-Bannerman's voice, it is generally understood, which finally decided the Government on resignation. He certainly was resolved to take the vote on cordite as a vote of censure on himself, and if the Government went on, it would have had to go on without him. This decided the question, and the resignation of the Government followed. It may have been that Campbell-Bannerman had himself joined the ranks of those who were comparatively indifferent to the fate of the Administration. He had been baulked in an ambition which he cherished warmly—an ambition the existence of which was not even suspected by his closest friends. When Lord Peel announced that he could no longer delay his resignation of the laborious

office of Speaker, it was announced that Campbell-Bannerman was one of the candidates for the vacant place. Everybody was astounded. For the Campbell-Bannerman of serious purpose, strong convictions, iron will, had not yet revealed himself to the world. As he was then judged, he was a man of wealth, a lover of ease, a cool and cynical man of the world, fond of his dinner, of his friends, of his vacation, of his persiflage, secure in all the gifts that fortune can bestow, and it seemed incredible that such a man should crave the laborious duties, the terrible hours, the awful boredom, the solemnities of the Speaker's chair! And yet it turned out to be quite true. The report was circulated at the time that Campbell-Bannerman was not eager for the place, and that his name had been put forward, not by himself, but by over-zealous friends. But this report was not true. Campbell-Bannerman let it be distinctly understood by all those who were intimates

and whom he trusted that he wanted the office, and even that he wanted it badly. And there was no doubt that he could easily have had it. The Liberals would have voted for him to a man, the Unionists would not have opposed him; there was but one obstacle, and that was Sir William Harcourt. The Leader of the House took the view that it was inconsistent with the position of a Cabinet Minister to accept the office of Speaker, and he stuck to Mr. Courtney as his candidate, until Mr. Courtney in his turn was prevented from accepting the office by the action of his own friends.

Campbell-Bannerman may have resented the action of his leader, but he was too easy-going and too good-tempered a man to allow this or anything else to rankle; and when his party was in opposition, he attended regularly in his place and took his share of all the work that was going. He adopted in opposition the same attitude to the War

Office as in office. In one of his speeches he poured considerable ridicule on the Committee of Public Safety, by which he meant what was called the Service Committee, that had appointed itself to watch and to criticise the conduct of the War Office; and he gave but a lukewarm support to the many and varied projects of reform on which his successors had entered.

Up to this the career of Campbell-Bannerman had been steady, prosperous, and somewhat undistinguished. People thought of him as a Minister who attended to his own Department, and did not worry himself or others about anything else. His social position and reputation were stronger, perhaps, than his political. Here is how he was described at the time by one who knew and liked him; though the description is somewhat inapplicable to him in his final phases, it is worth reproducing as indicating what was thought of him generally—even by those

who belonged to his circle and shared his opinions:—

"He is said to be fond of the pleasures of the table, but he is gourmet rather than gourmand; that is to say, he loves quality much more than quantity in both his food and his wines. He has a splendid and spacious house in Grosvenor Gardens, and his little dinners and big receptions are well-known features in every London season. He is admirably assisted by his wife, a most kind-hearted and hospitable lady, to whom he is greatly attached. In appearance he is rather like his inner character. His head would have been called a bullet head if it were not large enough to be almost called a cannon head. The face is broad and short; he wears the mutton-chop whiskers of the official; his eyes are large, deep blue, and bright; he is somewhat above the middle height, and of large but not stout build; he walks with the slow stride of the easy-going man of the

world. He has not a particle of snobbery in his disposition; he enjoys life and laughs at it, and perhaps a little despises it."

In politics, as every active politician knows, it is the great god Chance that ultimately decides the destinies of politicians. Never was that central fact of political adventure more remarkably brought out than in the sudden turn which the career of Campbell-Bannerman took at the epoch in his life which has now been reached. Seated on the Front Opposition Bench, regularly but not too frequently, speaking only when a War Office vote was under discussion, and then speaking with hesitancy, without much emphasis, and without any of the prestige of great position and commanding oratory, he never attracted to the House a large audience, never raised a ripple of disturbance or enthusiasm on its surface; and when the dinner-hour came, and there was nothing associated with his old departmental activities

under discussion, he quietly slipped away and went off to his home and his friends. The prevalent opinion about him may be further illustrated by a quotation from an article which was written about him by Mr. W. T. Stead. Mr. Stead—who is always famous for almost brutal frankness of speech—wrote that Campbell-Bannerman ought to be put on a vegetarian diet for some years, and that then he might be expected to do some really active work for his party. As a matter of fact, there was considerable exaggeration in these ideas of C.-B.'s devotion to the pleasures of the table. As has been said, he was gourmet rather than gourmand—liked a good cook and good cookery, liked a good glass of wine, and liked, above all, the intellectual commerce of the good dinner party. But he rarely indulged in champagne, and when he did, he suffered immediately, and for many years he either abstained from stimulants altogether or confined himself to those light

and sour wines which come from the Moselle or the Danube. But still the idea of his indolence and love of pleasure was universal; and, in fact, it was probably true to the extent that he was one of the men who require the pressure of opportunity and of responsibility to bring out their qualities. Left to himself, he would have ambled on in his easy-going, modest, unambitious Scotch way—too rational for impossible, too modest for exalted, hopes.

The condition in which the Liberal Party was left by the disappearance of Gladstone, gave the stimulus which Campbell-Bannerman required. For the division in the Liberal Party, which began in the Home Rule struggle, and in the disappearance of the dominating and, therefore, reconciling personality of Gladstone, was opened wider rather than healed by the disastrous and short lived Administration of Lord Rosebery. Sir William Harcourt, who never ceased to resent his failure to reach

the Premiership—and it was natural that a politician of so many and such brilliant and prolonged services to his party should look to the highest reward—Sir William Harcourt, I say, found that his personal differences with Lord Rosebery were aggravated and widened by difference of political opinion, or, to be more correct, political tendencies. Sir William Harcourt—brought up in the old school of the Whigs—was what would be called a Little Englander. He always repudiated the term himself, but it will suffice as an indication of political tendencies as they were understood in his day. Lord Rosebery was quite as emphatically a Liberal Imperialist; he believed in Democracy at home and Imperialism abroad; in other words, while in most domestic affairs he was in favour of the most advanced reforms, he differed very slightly in foreign affairs from the views of his political opponents.

These differences were accentuated by events

as time went on—all such cleavages have always the tendency to grow greater. It was the Armenian massacres which brought the crisis. Mr. Gladstone—retired, old, dying slowly from a painful disease—was dragged out of his retreat by the old appeal of the Christians subject to the Turkish Power; and he began an agitation against Turkey which bore some faint and spectral resemblance to the agitation which swept like a cyclone over England in the 'seventies and the 'eighties. Lord Rosebery, sympathising with the denunciations of the massacres, thought that the agitation was fraught with great perils to the peace of Europe; and finally, in a great meeting in Edinburgh, resigned from the leadership of the Liberal Party.

These fissures in a party do not always or usually end with a single resignation. Sir William Harcourt felt that his position also had become impossible; that he was left responsibility without power; and that the effect

of Lord Rosebery's resignation would be to leave him the leadership of a divided and broken party, and therefore to throw upon him the responsibility and the odium of the defeat which would undoubtedly overcome the Liberal Party at a General Election. Mr. Morley, sharing Sir William Harcourt's views of antagonism, both to the policy and the action of Lord Rosebery, united his forces with those of his old friend, and the world was startled one day by the announcement on the part of both these distinguished politicians that they had retired from the leadership of the Liberal Party, and would no longer be responsible for its policy or its action. And then it was that C.-B.'s great chance came.

Looking round, the Liberal rank and file were puzzled to know whom they should raise to the vacant throne. Mr. Asquith and other men who afterwards became notable in the Liberal ranks, were as yet too young and too little known to command the adhesion of the

whole party; and by a process of elimination rather than of choice, Campbell-Bannerman was elected. It is significant of the general impression held with regard to him at the time that one of the things which was noticed and was afterwards commented upon as almost a phenomenon, was the fact that in making his speech in reply after his election, he raised his right arm and brought it down with some emphasis on the table in the room of the Reform Club where the election took place. For a speaker to raise his arm is no great muscular or intellectual strain, nor any very eloquent proof of abounding activity, but it was held to be something wonderful in the case of a man so easy-going, and, as it was thought, so incurably indolent. It might be also urged in favour of the election of Campbell-Bannerman at the time that the crown which was placed on his head was a pretty empty one. His party had been in Opposition for years; seemed destined to remain in

Opposition for many years more; was helplessly divided at the moment—in fact, passing through the valley of the shadow. Never did it stand lower in present fortune or future hope than it did at the moment when, in a spirit, half of despair and half of exhaustion, it put Campbell-Bannerman at its head.

The estimate prevalent with regard to him, even among his own friends, was proved afterwards to be inaccurate; but for several years after his election it seemed to be only too well justified by events. For, on top of other sources of division, came the Boer War. Such a national emergency is always calculated to divide men even of the same party; national passion submerges all minor emotions. But in the case of the Boer War this division was made the more natural and inevitable by the tendencies which had already shown themselves so distinctly and had already produced such strange and momentous manifestations as the resignation from leadership of three

such important figures as Lord Rosebery, Sir William Harcourt, and Mr. John Morley. Though he was detached from active party life, Lord Rosebery was still a great force, even in the ranks of Liberalism, and his view was consistently that the Boer War was inevitable; or at least that if it had been provoked, it was not through the fault of the British people, but of the Boer Government. It was a further personal factor in the situation which then arose that Lord Milner, on whom so much of the brunt of the war and the events before the war fell, was a personal friend, and to some extent even a political friend, of the group of Liberals who followed the lead of Lord Rosebery. He was entertained by them when he went out to take up the position of High Commissioner in South Africa, and he was entertained again by them when he rushed home for a short vacation during the agony of the struggle.

This original difference of opinion was only

accentuated by the disasters in which the war began. John Bull set his teeth, and resolved to see the thing out to the bitter end. And whatever were the merits of the contest at the start, everything was forgotten by the majority of the people in the idea that the war should be pushed until the prestige and the might of the Empire were restored. Then there came a twofold influence to divide the Liberal ranks. There were some who, like Lord Rosebery and others, thought both that the war was justified and that it should be fought out to a finish; there were others who, though they might have their doubts on the first issue, were quite clear with regard to the second.

This scission of opinion was aggravated by the violence of view taken by the other section—the section numerically very much the stronger—in favour of the ending of the war. This section was indicated sufficiently by the name—or, rather, the nickname—of pro-Boers,

which was bestowed upon it in the heated nomenclature of the time. Between opinions so clear and so fierce on both sides, it was impossible to make any compromise ; and thus it was that the Liberal Party became publicly and violently divided. A proclamation of this fact—if proclamation were required—was given to the public by the foundation, under the auspices of Lord Rosebery, of the Liberal League. This was open mutiny, for it meant that, in addition to difference of opinion, there was also to be conflict and rivalry of organisations within the Liberal Party. These differences spread themselves, like an infectious disease—as is the rule with internecine struggles—over all the operations of the Liberal forces. Whenever there was a by-election the two sections fought over the choice of a candidate ; and even before that contingency arose, the constituencies were approached by the organisations of the two sections, and over a considerable area of country the Imperialists

succeeded in getting their nominees accepted. This success naturally exasperated the other section; and such a success was made, of course, the more intolerable, from their point of view, because it represented a minority of votes but a majority of wealth.

This was the party which was left to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman when he took on the duties of leadership. It will be seen that it would be very hard to have had a more difficult or a more thankless task. If in his later years Campbell-Bannerman seemed to be raised, honoured, and magnified beyond his deserts, it is to be attributed to the fact that he had so many years of stress and difficulty to pass through; that he showed in these years extraordinary courage, tenacity, and consistency; and that when he did at last reach victory, he had more than earned the palm. To understand these difficulties it was only necessary to drop into the House of Commons during any of the evenings when the Boer War

was still proceeding. The front benches, by the unwritten rules of the House of Commons, supply open object-lessons as to the condition of parties and Parliamentary leaders. Superficially, there is no such thing as a settled place for one leader more than for another. Broad and long, the front benches stretch with no sign or partition or anything else to mark off one man's place from another; the Ministers who occupy the Treasury bench, the leaders of the Opposition who occupy the front Opposition bench, hustle against each other as though they were strap-hangers in a District train. But there are, nevertheless, enormous distinctions which at once strike the eye of those accustomed to the inner life of the House of Commons. It is always easy, for instance, to tell who is either the leader of the House or the leader of the Opposition; each sits in front of one of the two boxes which stand on the table in front of the Speaker's chair. When you looked at the Front Opposition bench

during the epoch of the Boer War, you saw Campbell-Bannerman opposite the box; that marked him out as leader of the Opposition. A short time before that seat had been occupied by the mantling form of Sir William Harcourt —a figure both physically and mentally bulky enough to fill a great space and to leave a great void. It was indicative, however, not only of his departure from the place of leader, but also of his detachment—self-imposed—from any share in guiding the policy of the Liberal Party that Sir William Harcourt, instead of taking a seat immediately at the side of Campbell-Bannerman, had taken a seat just last but one on the Front Opposition. He had as his next-door neighbour—occupying the very last seat on the front bench—Mr John Morley. The manifest, avowed, conspicuous isolation of these two former Liberal leaders from the existing leadership could not be proclaimed more openly to the inner world of politics. It might be added that the

largeness of Sir William Harcourt's figure—his head, with his six-foot three or four of height, rising above those of all the men around him, and a certain characteristic pose of Mr. Morley's head which seemed to suggest a persistent air of rebuke and isolation—added a further proclamation, if that were possible.

But this was not all ;- Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Morley were detached, but they were not hostile. There were others of those who were supposed to be Campbell-Bannerman's colleagues in the Liberal leadership who were not only detached, but openly hostile. The most notable of these was Mr. Asquith. Mr. Asquith had held the high office of Home Secretary in the administration of Mr. Gladstone and of Lord Rosebery; had already marked himself out for the greater distinction he has since attained by the great oratorical and debating gifts which he had displayed; and, as we now know, was destined later on to be one of Campbell-Bannerman's most powerful

lieutenants and universally accepted successor. But for the moment he belonged heart and soul to the Rosebery and Liberal Imperial section of the Liberal Party, declared over and over that the hands of his country were clean, and defended the Boer War and the continuance of the war till the Boers were conquered. A second and equally important member of the Liberal Imperialist group was Sir Edward Grey—an able, self-restrained, and eminently House of Commons figure who had his following. A third was Mr. Haldane—a barrister in large practice at the Chancery Bar—a great student and scholar, speaking the language of Germany as fluently as his own, and credited even with the power of understanding Hegel and Schopenhauer, and, what was more important for Parliamentary purposes, credited also with unrivalled powers in the art of political wire-pulling.

There were others—less important but also to be seriously reckoned with—as is every

man in politics who happens to be the enemy of the particular policy or particular leader for the time being of his own party. Against Campbell-Bannerman were Mr. Perks, a solicitor of large practice and immense wealth; Sir Henry Fowler, a former Cabinet Minister—a former partner of Mr. Perks in his law business, and, also like Mr. Perks, a man of widespread influence among Nonconformists; and there were men also of such known powers and promising future as Mr. Lawson Walton and Mr. Robson—as they were then—destined later on to be Campbell-Bannerman's law officers. Finally, the mutiny had reached even the subordinate men who were around Campbell-Bannerman on the Front Opposition Bench; Mr. McArthur and Mr. Munro Fergusson, two ex-Whips, separated themselves from their nominal leader and refused now and then to "tell" in divisions for which Campbell-Bannerman was responsible.

When a debate took place under these con-

ditions in reference to the South African War, the Liberal Party, and especially its unfortunate leader, were placed in a very humiliating position. Campbell-Bannerman had by his side but one of the many colleagues of olden times —Mr. Bryce; and Mr. Bryce, though a man of very high gifts and acquirements, had not, up to that time, shown any distinguished Parliamentary debating powers. It was always possible that Mr. Asquith, or some other of the Liberal Imperialists, would rise and say the very opposite to what Campbell-Bannerman himself had laid down. If, on the other hand, he displayed any lack of fervour in denouncing the war, he had to count with Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Loreburn, as well as with Mr. Morley, who were as vehement on the one side as Mr. Asquith and his friends on the other. The result, of course, was that when the division came the weakness of the Liberal Opposition was proclaimed more loudly than ever; there were abstentions to lower still lower the number

of the small Opposition and to augment still higher the majority of the Ministerialists.

By and by differences developed on other subjects. The question of Home Rule for Ireland, which had first rent the Liberal Party in twain, threatened its integrity even again, years after Gladstone had committed the party to the principle as a whole. Lord Rosebery had announced a change of conviction which had practically converted him into an opponent of Home Rule. His followers in the Liberal Imperialist camp did not adopt the same policy, but they advocated a change of tactics; in other words, they suggested that Home Rule should be proposed by instalments instead of at once, as Gladstone had done. Mr. Asquith, Mr. Haldane, Sir Edward Grey, all made speeches in the country which pledged them against taking any part in proposing a full Home Rule measure in any Parliament that was to be elected for some time. This brought the Liberal Imperialists into serious conflict with

the Liberal Home Rulers, and Campbell-Bannerman had to try and repair the further scission in his ranks which such a quarrel was calculated to produce.

It is not surprising that, under the circumstances, he and his friends should have been ignominiously beaten when the General Election came in 1900. Each Liberal leader gave to his supporters a different policy. A divided army is nearly always a beaten army, and this fact alone—apart altogether from the fever of the war still going on—would have been sufficient to account for the great defeat which Campbell-Bannerman sustained. In the end the defeat became such a complete rout that it grew to be almost farcical. Everybody said that it was an electoral disaster which could never be repeated—one of the many political prophecies which stand out in history by their falsification. Campbell-Bannerman became the chief object of attack in this campaign, and, indeed, throughout the whole of the struggle

over the Boer War. The Liberal Imperialists could claim to be on the same side as the majority of their countrymen for the moment, but it was different with Campbell-Bannerman. He not only was hostile to the war, but once or twice uttered words of condemnation which were bitterly resented. In one case he spoke of "methods of barbarism" in reference to some acts of the British troops. The phrase was caught up, and for the time being the man who uttered it was visited with fierce reprobation. The history of the phrase is characteristic, and throws light on Campbell-Bannerman's character. Before he used it he had had an interview with Miss Hobhouse, a lady with strong pro-Boer sympathies who had visited the concentration camps. She recounted to Sir Henry what she had seen and felt; the recital worked upon his emotions, and his emotions, for all his outward phlegm, were always prompt and ready in response to any story of wrong or suffering; and while fresh under the impres-

sion of Miss Hobhouse's narrative he made his speech, and dropped on the phrase which created so much angry comment. As a matter of fact, his long association with the War Office would have prevented him from passing any condemnation on British soldiers as a whole, and it was understood afterwards that he was talking only of certain duties—such as house-burnings and the concentration camps—which the grim necessities of war and the commands of the officers had forced upon them. The episode is valuable as a glimpse into the other side of Campbell-Bannerman, which was so long ignored—his strength of conviction, his power of profound emotion and a certain impulsiveness, not altogether usual in his tone or suspected in him.

It seems curious, considering the sequel, but it is true that at that particular moment the star of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was at its nadir, and that, on the other hand, the one man on his side who at that moment

had any hold on the confidence of the nation was Lord Rosebery. When, for instance, it was announced that Lord Rosebery was to address a meeting at Chesterfield, that little Derbyshire town became the centre of attraction and interest for all parts of the kingdom. An audience ten times as large as that which any hall in the town could accommodate would have been glad to get admission, and the speech was reported verbatim in every journal in the kingdom. For a time it seemed as if the Boer War were destined to force back upon Lord Rosebery the crown which he had once worn and then thrown away. In Liverpool, after Lord Rosebery had made a speech of commanding eloquence, Sir Edward Russell, editor of the *Liverpool Daily Post*, and a consistent as well as brilliant Liberal writer, had voiced the general feeling among Liberals at the time, when he rose up and said, "Let us acclaim him as our leader." At once a critic of the methods of the Unionist Government in

dealing with the war—and their mistakes, or the mistakes for which they had the responsibility, laid them open to abundant attack—at once a critic of the methods of the Government and an advocate of the war and of its continuance to final victory, Lord Rosebery seemed to hit the *via media* on which the minds of most of the people were set—that is to say, a continuance of the war, but a change of the men and the methods by which it was being conducted.

It was only natural under these circumstances that attempts should be made to bring together the two men. No Liberal was forgetful of the fact that Lord Rosebery exercised an enormous influence on his countrymen. His social station, his wealth, his great gifts—especially as an orator—and his fervid patriotism, seemed to plainly mark him out as just the figure which might exercise a magnetic and inspiring influence on a democracy—and especially a democracy which largely consists of

that vast middle class that still retains something of the old respect for title, station, and wealth. There was no idea at that time that Campbell-Bannerman could ever be anything like a strong rallying-point for the masses. His powers, though they had developed, had yet shown none of the strikingly popular forms which dazzle a crowd, and the divisions in his party and its weakness were naturally thrown back upon his head. The two men themselves had no personal feeling against co-operation. They remained on friendly terms always. They were both Scotchmen; they were both endowed with some of the characteristic virtues of their countrymen. But though they addressed to each other from the platforms friendly messages and polite invitations, they never seemed to get to close quarters. Adopting the theological phraseology dear to their countrymen, they spoke of worshipping in different tabernacles. The truth was that they were separated by irreconcilable opinions

on some things and by irreconcilable tendencies on nearly everything.

It is impossible to say what might have been the issue of their friendly duels if it had not been for the advent of the great Free Trade issue. When, amid that deadly and almost visible silence that marks the sense of an audience that it is hearing and witnessing epoch-making events, Mr. Chamberlain avowed his conversion one afternoon in 1905 to the doctrine of Tariff Reform, a whole new chapter was opened in the history of English political parties. It divided for the moment the Unionist Party, and it divided, more than all, the Unionist Ministry. Before many months had passed Mr. Chamberlain himself had left the Ministry; he was followed in succession by Mr. Ritchie, Lord George Hamilton, and later on, by the Duke of Devonshire; and there came into the camp of the Conservatives that division into sections—Free Fooders, as they were called, and

Tariff Reformers—which corresponded to the differences between the pro-Boers and the Liberal Imperialists in the Liberal Party.

On the Liberal Party, of course, the effect was quite different. The Boer War had by this time been concluded; what divisions of opinion there had been among Liberals on that great issue had been healed; and this new issue on which they were all in complete agreement, gave to them a welcome opportunity to emerge from their divisions into the full and blazing day of perfect accord. Between Lord Rosebery and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, between Mr. Morley and Mr. Asquith, there was not one particle of difference of opinion or tendency; they could go now together, honestly, whole-heartedly, to the end of the struggle. This change in their own position, this closing up of their ranks, was a natural incitement to greater, more united, more enthusiastic effort among the Liberals; and this tendency was, of course,

enormously helped by the spectacle of the divisions among their political opponents, divisions which broke up a combination of different elements that had withstood the test of stormy times for quite twenty years. The promised land of office and power was at last in sight, after years of weary and apparently hopeless wanderings in the chilly and sandy deserts of Opposition.

For a time it looked as if there were no reason why this combination between Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Lord Rosebery, which had been sighed for during so many years, should not come to pass; they spoke with equal fervour in denunciation of Tariff Reform, in advocacy of Free Trade. It was still a possibility that Lord Rosebery would be chosen as Commander-in-Chief of the Liberal forces, with Campbell-Bannerman as his lieutenant in the House of Commons. Thus it happened that, up to almost the last moment, Campbell-Bannerman's future lay

trembling in the balance; either he might get the dazzling supremacy of the first place or the comparative mediocrity of the second; between the two there yawns a very wide gulf.

There was one other rival who stood in Campbell-Bannerman's way—in some respects as formidable even as Lord Rosebery. Lord Spencer had served the Liberal Party in posts of great difficulty and terrible peril for many years. He had twice in succession taken his life in his hands by accepting the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland at a moment when disturbance in that unhappy country had reached almost to the proportions of civil war; he had never swerved from Liberal principles with regard to Ireland once he had thrown in his lot with Mr. Gladstone in the great Home Rule upheaval of 1885; he was universally esteemed for his simplicity, his honesty, his consistency; and he had the advantage of a great title, great possessions,

great traditions from former Liberal chiefs; and, unlike Campbell-Bannerman, had said nothing during the Boer War which anybody could resent as unpatriotic. In that desire for compromising on an individual which is characteristic of all political parties, there was a strong set for Lord Spencer. But just about the time when his claims were to come up for consideration Lord Spencer—unexpectedly, suddenly—was struck down by illness, and he was removed thus from the running in a race where with many he was first favourite.

What illness had done in the shape of removing one rival, difference of conviction and his own hand did with the other. In the course of the speech-making which preceded the General Election, Lord Rosebery carried on an active campaign in the West of England. There were many circumstances in this very campaign which seemed to point to him as destined to be the leader and the

Prime Minister. Everywhere Lord Rosebery got a reception which was regal in its enthusiasm, in the multitudes who took part in it, in the fanatical admiration which his inspired utterances excited everywhere he spoke. The intoxication in the air which always precedes and accompanies a General Election inclines men to dream dreams, and already many saw Lord Rosebery once more in the Premiership —but in the Premiership, not as the helpless slave of impossible conditions and rebellious and hostile chief lieutenants as in 1903, but as commander of a great party and as acknowledged and powerful chief of a body of assistants rather than colleagues. Anyhow Lord Rosebery's star was in the ascendant, and the struggle between him and Campbell-Bannerman for supreme power seemed to be leaning towards his side.

A good many other things, besides the merely personal struggle between the two men, lay trembling in the balance at that moment.

For the success of Lord Rosebery would have involved an entirely different attitude on many subjects, but most of all on the question of Ireland. As has been seen, Lord Rosebery had virtually changed his opinions on the question of Home Rule; to all intents and purposes he had become a Unionist. It was true that some of his most powerful friends and associates had not imitated him in this respect; they had joined him in thinking that Home Rule should be approached by very different methods from those of Mr. Gladstone, but none of them had shown any desire to withdraw from the position that Home Rule must be the ultimate solution of the Irish difficulty. At the same time, one can see what a difference it would have made in the political situation and in the whole temper of the Government if the Prime Minister had been Lord Rosebery and not Campbell - Bannerman. The head of any organisation, and especially of such an organisation as the British Cabinet, must

always exercise a powerful and even dominating influence on the whole policy and temper of the organisation. This is especially and peculiarly the case with such a body as the British Cabinet. Bismarck used constantly to complain that his position as head of the Ministry in Germany contrasted unfavourably with that of the head of the Government in England; and the chief reason he gave for this complaint was that in Germany the Prime Minister was only one of several other Ministers, practically independent of him; while in England the Prime Minister was given the right to choose his own colleagues, and if they differed from him, had the right to ask that they should go while he could remain. It will be seen, therefore, that if Lord Rosebery had been called to the headship of the Government, the Government would have had to wear his colours; and one of these colours was hostility to the Gladstonian policy of Home Rule.

With Campbell-Bannerman as its head, on the other hand; the Ministry, of course, would have been of an entirely different complexion. There were several of the old comrades of Lord Rosebery who would have found it impossible to serve under him again, especially if the abandonment of Home Rule were one of the conditions. And there would have been a further complication in the situation by the effect which a Rosebery Premiership would be certain to have had on the Irish Nationalist Party. That party, as is known, has a considerable following in Great Britain as well as in Ireland. It is computed that there are something like two millions of an Irish population in Great Britain; and most of these are dwellers in great populous centres. In several constituencies they have a large voting power; and that power would certainly have been doubtful, if not hostile, if a Rosebery Premiership had been created. The Irish Nationalists had already become restive. For,

while not repudiating Home Rule as an ultimate solution, several of the friends and adherents of Lord Rosebery among the leaders of the Liberal Party had proclaimed that they would not only not support but would resist any attempt to introduce a Home Rule measure in the Parliament that was about to be elected by the constituencies in the coming Election.

It was under these circumstances that I had an interview with Campbell-Bannerman of any length for the last time. He invited a friend and me to breakfast with him. It is but a little over two years since that meeting; and yet how remote it seems now! Campbell-Bannerman had just moved into Belgrave Square. For years he had occupied the vast mansion which stands at one of the corners in Grosvenor Place—just close to Hyde Park Gate. For some reason or other he had moved into a house in Belgrave Square. The house was still, more or less, in the hands of the decorators; and this gave a certain air of

preparation and of setting up housekeeping under new conditions, which corresponded with the coming change in the fortunes of the owner. There was, further, that air of rush which always proclaims the rising of a new sun, and all the crowds of satellites that seek to be gathered into the orbit. There were constant knockings at the door; telegrams seemed to be coming every second; and cards were piling themselves up in the hall. It seemed as if one were entering not a private dwelling-house, but a great public department.

Campbell-Bannerman in vacation times had the early hours and the plenteous breakfasts which are characteristic of his countrymen. It is needless to say that he was an ideal host—simple, cordial, and, when it came to an exchange of views, frank. This exchange of views was brief, for there was complete agreement as to both policy and tactics. There was no need for discussing any such possibility as the abandonment of Home Rule

by Campbell-Bannerman; to have done so would have been an insult to his intelligence and to his honesty. One point only could be suggested for discussion, and a few words showed that even that required little if indeed any discussion. A smile, half-amused, half-canny, showed that Campbell - Bannerman had not the slightest idea of embarrassing himself and his friends and all the friends of the National cause of Ireland by such self-denying ordinances against a Home Rule proposal in the coming Parliament as had been uttered by some of his future colleagues. One little personal and curious incident of that to me memorable breakfast I recall. When we had all disposed of the excellent dishes which make up the Scotch breakfast, Campbell-Bannerman, looking at me wistfully, and evidently with a desire to show to me the generous and amiable hospitality of a Scotchman to an Irishman, remarked that when he was at Cambridge there was a

curious custom of finishing up breakfast with a glass of strong old ale. Would I like to revive the custom? I am sure that poor C.-B. would have suffered if I had accepted the invitation; so I had to refuse, and C.-B. then remarked that he had never repeated the Cambridge tradition since he had left the University, and I am sure was quite grateful that I had not compelled him to do so on this occasion.

It was shortly after this that he made his historic speech in Stirling. That was the speech in which he laid down the policy that while Ireland might not expect to get at once a measure of complete Home Rule, any measure brought in should be consistent with and leading up to the larger policy. Such a declaration was all that the Irish Nationalist Party could have expected at that moment, and it enabled them to give their full support at the elections to the Liberal Party. But down in Cornwall and on Lord Rosebery the speech had quite the opposite effect.

In one quarter of an hour the whole situation for him and for Campbell-Bannerman was changed, and changed for ever. Taking up the speech which Campbell-Bannerman had made in Scotland, Lord Rosebery denounced it as meaning the advocacy again of Home Rule, and " under that banner," added Lord Rosebery emphatically, " I will not serve." Lord Rosebery either singularly miscalculated or was carried away by the intensity of his convictions into over-emphatic utterance ; whatever was the reason, this little speech sealed his fate as the leader of the Liberal Party and as Prime Minister for that epoch ; the Liberal leaders were all against him in principle, however much some of them may have sympathised with him in tactics, and Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Morley, and other powerful men, as well as the rank and file of the Liberal Party, would never have consented to the abandonment of Home Rule. In addition, there was the formidable body of eighty-two Irish Nationalist

members, without whose assistance it seemed impossible for any Liberal Government to be carried on, and, in short, Lord Rosebery cut himself, by his speech, adrift from the Liberal Party and from the Liberal leadership.

Thus, then, by a series of events, some of them accidental, some of them unexpected —by certain gifts which were unsuspected for three-fourths of his political life—above all, by the ultimate throw of the dice by the great god Chance—Campbell-Bannerman was pointed to as the man who had to be summoned by the King, when the duty devolved on the monarch of calling for the formation of a new Cabinet. That duty came, in the end, unexpectedly. Mr. Balfour had shown such extraordinary power of conducting an Administration in the face of almost impossible conditions, had survived so many separations of powerful colleagues, had so obstinately refused to be forced by his political opponents into the resignation of power until a majority of the House of Com-

mons decided against him, that it seemed quite likely that he would face yet another session of Parliament. He had closed the session of 1905 with the announcement that he would bring in during the following session a new Redistribution Bill, one of the chief features of which was to be a considerable reduction in the representation of Ireland. But this proposal did not suit his party. It was, in fact, almost as unwelcome to his own friends as it was to his political foes; not so much, indeed, that they disagreed with the policy of such a proposal in itself as with the timeliness of the moment when it was brought forward. The view of those who had given their adhesion to Tariff Reform was that that question had been placed in the very forefront of the Unionist programme, and that to introduce any other question—especially of so provocative and difficult a character as Redistribution—was to divert the attention of the party from the great and supreme to the minor and the un-

essential. This section of the Unionist Party besides, had already come to the conclusion that the longer the appeal to the country was postponed, the more complete would be the defeat of the Government. To this conviction Mr. Chamberlain, with his immense knowledge and instinct in electioneering, gave utterance several times while Mr. Balfour still held on to office. This period in the career of Mr. Balfour will always be one of the most interesting psychological studies even in his interesting life. The general theory accepted at the time was that, having been deserted by so many people, he was resolved to show that he could get on without them; and certainly he did surprise everybody by the tenacity and the power he displayed. But in the end his Cabinet had been reduced to something very like a Cabinet of head clerks and private friends. Some of these, too, were not very much enamoured of Tariff Reform, and were partly responsible for the attempt to "side-

track" that issue by raising the Irish Question in an acute form. But an end was put to these dilatory and tangled tactics by a speech of Mr. Chamberlain's, which so clearly called for the clearing of the situation that Mr. Balfour was left no choice but to hand in his resignation. This he did on December 4, 1905.

Thus it was that England found herself in the middle of a Ministerial crisis just at the epoch when the festivities and the family gatherings of the Christmastide dispose all men to forget the struggles of public life. The Liberal leaders had been lectured by many of their followers for months on the evil of taking office before the appeal to the country; it was pointed out in a thousand leading articles that this would be a tactical mistake; that it would give the Conservative Party the advantage of changing from the place of responsibility and attack into that of irresponsibility and criticism, and it was even reported that Mr. Balfour

himself had justified his resignation, and the consequent exchange of *rôles* with his opponents, on the ground that he would thereby gain or save thirty seats.

But all these arguments were not even heard of when the King sent to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman the request that he would form an Administration. Sir Henry at once accepted the task, and set to work. His task was not very easy—that of forming a Government never is. Mr. Gladstone, who could sleep anywhere and at any time in normal circumstances, declared that this task was the only one which ever cost him a night's sleep. In the case of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman that difficult task was made more difficult by the existence of the two sections among his nearest comrades. The Free Trade controversy—which now rushed to the front as the main political issue—had, it is true, done much to unite the scattered and broken ranks of the Liberals. They had found an even more effective and potent bond in the

prospect of a great victory, with all that such a victory involved of fame, and salary, and power. But still, the recollections of the split over the Boer War were still fresh, and the feelings of exasperation between the two sections had all the bitterness which is always conspicuous in the quarrels of friends. And the Irish Question raised above the gestation of the new Government its menacing and haggard form. The result was that the formation of the new Government by Campbell-Bannerman proceeded somewhat slowly, and for some three days it was almost at a standstill. The chief difficulty was the Liberal Imperialists. Small in number among the rank and file of the Liberal Party, the Liberal Imperialists had, on the other hand, the enormous advantage of having as leaders the most powerful and formidable Parliamentarians of the whole party, and it is well known to all students of political manœuvres that a body of politicians, though they have comparatively few adherents in the

rank and file, is often disproportionately powerful from the fact that it has its leaders within the very heart of the citadel, or, to use the less reverent American expression, that its leaders have more or less control of the "machine." Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Haldane—here were three powerful men, whose absence from the leadership and counsels of the Liberal Party might exercise an extremely prejudicial effect. And all the negotiations, it must be remembered, were overshadowed by the supreme and dominating fact of the moment, that the new Government would have to enter immediately on all the perils, uncertainties, and "hecklings" of a great General Election, and that nothing could be more calculated to damage their chances than to present to the world the spectacle of a party divided against itself. A party divided against itself is never as sure to fall as when it reaches to a pitched battle, either in the field or at the polling booths.

If it had not been for this decisive fact it is quite possible that the Government of Campbell-Bannerman would have been of quite a different character. Neither section was particularly enamoured of the other, either personally or politically, and there was, indeed, even an approach to strong personal dislike between Campbell-Bannerman and one of the most prominent of the Liberal Imperialist group. Sir Edward Grey—who was in manner the most mild, in speech the most discreet, in demeanour the most correct of all the group—turned out to be the one who gave the most trouble, and for days the question was at issue whether or not he would join the Ministry. If he had not joined the Ministry it would have been difficult for either Mr. Asquith or Mr. Haldane to have done so, and in that case, though the Government would, of course, have been ultimately formed, it would have been of quite a different complexion. It might have been more powerful, or less—that is a matter

of conjecture—but it would certainly have been different. The fact also remains—it must be dwelt upon, for it governed the whole situation—that the Government was formed before the General Election was fought.

In the last resort a politician, even more than the average man, is controlled by his personal and his party interests more than by his private sentiments ; and men who are true politicians are able to work for a common political purpose even with men they dislike. As anybody might have anticipated, the tangled web of negotiation and intrigue was unravelled in the end, and the Liberal Imperialists received some of the highest places in the new Ministry. Mr. Haldane was supposed to look to the Lord Chancellorship ; but Campbell-Bannerman had no intention of leaving the charge of his personal and political views in one House of the Legislature in the hands of anybody whom he could not implicitly trust as both a personal and political adherent ; and such a man he found

in Sir Robert Reid—an even more pronounced Radical than himself, and one who during the war had expressed even more pronouncedly his views. But Mr. Haldane found consolation in the great office of Secretary for War. Mr. Asquith was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, which meant among other high privileges that of being Deputy Leader of the House of Commons, while Sir Edward Grey obtained the great office of Foreign Secretary.

There was a sigh of relief in all Liberal circles when at last the long negotiations came to an end, and it was known that the King once more had a Government to carry on the affairs of the country. There was an outburst of enthusiasm in all Liberal ranks, and never did a new commander-in-chief approach a decisive battle with troops more wildly enthusiastic for their chief. Then came the splendid sunset of Campbell-Bannerman's career. At once discovered and revealed—discovered by others, revealed by himself—energetic, not easy-going;

serious, not insouciant; with hot, not tepid, conviction; triumphant over powerful enemies and powerful friends, over years of neglect, misunderstanding, underrating; he was personally, as well as officially, the great outstanding personality of the new Ministry, dwarfing and submerging all the others. Sir Henry was not long in justifying this enthusiasm by announcing some measures on which the voice of the Liberal rank and file had been thunderous. The first of these questions which most deeply excited their fiercest feelings was that of Chinese Labour. This comparatively small question was elevated by the hereditary hatred of Englishmen for anything that may be regarded as even approaching slavery—by the vindictive dislike of the mining magnates who had amassed huge fortunes, and were credited with having dragged the country into the gigantic expense and the many humiliations and the futile issue of the war—by many other facts, including brilliant speeches, writings and inspired cartoons—this

question was elevated into almost as great an issue of the General Election as Free Trade. Less important than Free Trade, it was, however, more picturesque, more lurid, had made a more direct appeal to the popular imagination and the popular heart and passion ; and it thus loomed so large upon the horizon as to almost blot out all other issues. This fact must be remembered to account for the almost frenzied excitement of the first great popular meeting which Campbell-Bannerman attended. It took place at the Albert Hall, and the vast hall was filled in every seat, while enthusiasm reigned almost to frenzy. This gathering went almost beside itself when Campbell-Bannerman announced that the importation of Chinese labour into South Africa had been already brought to an end. It turned out that the announcement was to some extent premature or exaggerated, for permits had been given for the admission of a further and a big batch of coolies in the final hours of the late Government, and the new

Secretary for the Colonies—Lord Elgin—found that he could not interfere with these warrants; and so the entrance of Chinese labour continued for some time after the creation of the new Government. But for the moment people did not stop to inquire, and the new Premier was acclaimed as the man who had, at the first possible moment, righted a great wrong.

The position to which Campbell-Bannerman had now attained in his party is an interesting study of the vicissitudes and the uncertainties, the ever-ready surprises, of political life. For years derided as a small, feeble, ineffective politician, now and then lifted from this contemptuous level to one of fierce national resentment, regarded even by some of his own friends as lacking in force and magnetism, and looked down upon by some of the men he afterwards chose as colleagues, with none of the qualities which are showy and inspiring, he had for years been underrated. Now that he had reached the pinnacle almost of human power and human

glory, there was a violent reaction, and he came to be eulogised and appraised with something of the same exaggeration as had been formerly shown in deriding and underrating him. Without, of course, Gladstone's imperious, commanding, and almost affrighting personality, the new Prime Minister made an appeal to the man in the street by the qualities which appeal most to the man in the street. Simplicity, candour, honesty, and good humour—just that little touch of commonplaceness which makes the whole world of men in the street kin; he was able to inspire a personal devotion and affection which might have been impossible to men of more commanding and dominating powers.

To the Radical section of his supporters he made a more special appeal. Born to wealth, son of a Tory father, highly educated, cosmopolitan in some of his tastes, he was by instinct a Radical; and on all questions in which the always conflicting sections of Liberalism confront and oppose each other,

Campbell-Bannerman, it was known, would come down on the Radical side. There thus arose the Campbell-Bannerman legend, what the Germans call a certain *schwärmerei* about his personality; and, like all popular legends and enthusiasms, it gave to him a power which other men could not possess, and which was more effective and useful than any intellectual gifts.

This was the attitude of the public to Campbell-Bannerman when he entered on the General Election which was to decide whether he was to have office with or without real power. It was quite different with his rivals. The length of the years during which they had held office, the bitter aftermath of the Boer War, the division in their ranks over Tariff Reform, the vast accumulation of mistakes, real or imaginary, which can always be laid at the door of the Government of the day, the partial disablement of Mr. Chamberlain, the somewhat cryptic utterances of Mr. Balfour, the dread

of the dear loaf which Protection was expected to bring, the fanatical hatred of Chinese labour —all these things combined to make the Unionists extremely unpopular, and when the General Election was over, it was found that the Liberal Party had gained a victory more crushing, more overwhelming, more widespread, than even they had anticipated in their most sanguine anticipations. There was no doubt about it; the country had determined to give the new Prime Minister not only office but power. On the other hand, of his opponents, never were so many chiefs of a party laid in the dust. Mr. Balfour was beaten at Manchester, Mr. Lyttelton at Warwick, Mr. Long in Bristol, Mr. Brodrick in Surrey. The one region that remained faithful to the Unionist party was the small region of Birmingham, where once more Mr. Chamberlain vindicated his extraordinary ascendancy above his neighbours and townsmen. Every single constituency in Birmingham was retained by him and his friends.

Rarely had a leader to face a more difficult assembly than that which confronted the new Prime Minister after the wondrous victory of the elections. All Parliamentarians dread an excessive majority. It has not the cohesion which keeps a small majority together. It tends to the fissiparousness which comes from over-confidence and from the sense that a man may safely rebel, an attitude which combines the Parliamentary advantages of personal self-advancement without injury to the party or flagrant disregard of party discipline. In addition, the majority was composed, not only of different, but even of conflicting elements. There came into this House of Commons a new portent, and with such force as to make the whole old world of politics and Parliament aghast, and to place all normal processes out of date and out of calculation. This was the sixty to seventy Labour Members. Here, indeed, was an upheaval which made it impossible for anybody to foretell the future of

the new Assembly from any precedents of the past. And this new portent was further complicated by the fact that it also was divided against itself, and the two sections, as always, of the same party, were farther apart from each other than from outsiders and avowed opponents. One section followed the traditional lines of Trades Unionism, not avowing Socialist opinions, and generally relying on the Liberal Party to carry out its purposes. The other section, called the Independent Labour Party, was for the most part avowedly Socialistic, and instead of regarding itself as the ally of the Liberal Party, ranged itself in opposition to it, and, indeed, spoke of it generally as the more formidable enemy in the two great middle-class parties. This Independent Labour section signified sufficiently its view by opposing several Liberals at elections; and in the House of Commons followed the example set many years ago by the Irish Party, which Parnell created, in

taking its place on the Opposition side of the House. Like the Irish Nationalist Party, it thereby proclaimed itself as always "agin the Government," and without any distinction between a Government that was Liberal and one that was Conservative.

It was this state of things in the House of Commons which brought out the qualities of Campbell-Bannerman and gave him his very peculiar position. His personality never was capable of exciting any really violent personal antipathies. It was supposed that there was no love lost between him and Mr. Balfour, but neither man was capable of anything like fierce and active personal hostility. Then Campbell-Bannerman had the enormous advantage of being regarded as honest and straightforward; and this counts for a good deal in an assembly like the House of Commons, where men are constantly making little deals, bargains, understandings, compromises, the possibility and the potency of which are largely dependent on

mutual trust and goodwill. Finally, Campbell-Bannerman was always inclined to compromise, having his own opinions pretty deeply laid on some questions, but by temperament and long years of Parliamentary training, always ready for a deal.

It was a curious and almost incredible sight that when this plain, uninspired, easy-going man got up in the House of Commons, immediately many of the difficulties of an apparently perilous and impossible situation disappeared. The discontented became reconciled; the rancorous were transformed into geniality; the rebels came back to the fold. Of course, this would have been impossible if there had not been the conviction that Campbell-Bannerman was more advanced as a politician than some of his colleagues—if, in other words, the Prime Minister was not considered better than his Cabinet—that is to say, better from the Radical point of view. Besides, with the more irreconcilable groups,

he had greater influence than any other man. Even the Independent Labour Party had a certain softness of heart towards him, and they are not soft-hearted politicians. The Irish Nationalist Party was even more devoted to him. The consistency and the daring with which he had adhered to their cause in season and out of season, had given him certainly the right to their loyal trust. Sometimes he was able, accordingly, to make drafts on these natural-born rebels, which would not have been honoured if put forward by any other politician. In the very first session of the new Parliament Mr. Haldane was attacked by the extreme economists, led by Colonel Seely—a very brilliant and resolute young Parliamentarian, with a splendid military record; and Mr. Haldane certainly would have been defeated, and perhaps even driven from office, if Campbell-Bannerman had not intervened. There was something comic in Mr. Haldane having to rely for Parliamentary rescue on a man whom

he had opposed for so many years, but politics is full of these comic ironies. Even the speech of Campbell-Bannerman, strong though it was as a plea, would not have saved the situation if it had not been for the additional fact that a private appeal was made in his name to the Irish members not to intervene in this struggle of the War Secretary for existence. The Irish members—anti-militarist to a man—did not intervene; but it was only Campbell-Bannerman that could have induced them to adopt this self-denying ordinance.

The leadership of the House of Commons is a position which makes an immense tax on the qualities of even an able and experienced Parliamentarian. The physical task alone is sufficient to shatter the health of any man who is not a robust man. The intellectual gifts which are required are great and peculiar—readiness, perfect command of temper, good humour, a certain dash of wit, a facility and promptitude in repartee. At question time

every evening all these qualities are put to a very severe strain. For an hour or so every Minister—but most of all the Minister who is Leader of the House—is in the position of a witness under cross-examination by a merciless advocate on the other side. The Leader of the House has to fight not merely the open attack, but the ambush; or, in other words, he has not only to answer the printed question on the paper, but also any question arising out of it on the spur of the moment, and therefore not to be anticipated or responded to with a well-prepared impromptu.

No Leader of the House ever performed this portion of the Leader's duties with greater success. This man, with the characteristic broad and serious Scotch face, had, as a matter of fact, a very deep and, indeed, inexhaustible fund of the peculiar kind of humour which his countrymen call "pawky." The humour, like so many other things about him, had a certain eighteenth-century, Edinburgh, and, in

a sense, Voltairian quality. It is difficult to give in print specimens of wit, even when they have roused everybody to laughter on both sides, when spoken ; but the following is a fair specimen of the kind of thing Campbell-Bannerman used to say. When he formed his Ministry he issued an order that all Ministers should surrender their directorships of public companies. There were some exceptions, and two of these were Mr. Hudson Kearley and Mr. Lough, both chairmen of prosperous provision and grocery companies, in which tea was the chief article of consumption. When Campbell-Bannerman was pressed as to exceptions, he replied that, of course, a Minister could not be expected to give up a family directorship or a directorship in a philanthropic institution. Is the sale of tea a philanthropic business? asked the persistent Unionist questioner. "That," replied Campbell-Bannerman promptly, "depends on the tea." No assembly of human beings in the world is so grateful for

a little amusement as the House of Commons; no member, whatever his position, is so popular as the humourist; and such an answer as that just recorded, makes a whole House of Commons kin; it reconciles all enemies; it confounds all attack. Some of Campbell-Bannerman's witticisms did not disdain to be at the expense of some of his colleagues. When a great controversy was thrilling and rending Scotland in reference to what were known as "The Frees" and the "Wee Frees," Campbell-Bannerman asked why so and so—an eminent colleague—had not been heard of; the colleague referred to was supposed to be very fond of the gentle art of intrigue. "Oh," was the reply, "his heavy footfall was heard descending the back stairs." This was an answer over the terms of which Campbell-Bannerman would linger with almost unctuous fondness.

Undoubtedly, then, Campbell-Bannerman justified his success, and proved equal in many

respects to the great position to which he had attained. Whether he was equal to the higher, graver, more difficult, and less seen responsibilities of his great position, nobody outside his Cabinet can as yet tell. It is only when the memoirs which still lie hidden in drawers are given to the world that the inside history on this point will be revealed to the world. At the same time, it is already possible to say that the vices which pursue all coalitions of somewhat discordant elements marked the action of the Government on several critical occasions. Indeed, it is nearly always impossible for any Government to be strong which has not at its head a man of almost domineering personality. The whole tendency of our system of government is to confine each Minister more or less to his own Department; as a result to keep his colleagues from any real influence on him and on his working within his own sphere, and, at the same time, to rob him of much interest in what is

taking place outside his own office. There is a certain disinclination for anything like the common action which would imply frank, free, and general criticism of each Minister and each Department by his colleagues. This, again, implies that there is a tendency that a Government, instead of being a unit, is departmentalised, which, again, means cliques, groups, general fissiparousness. The one thing which can make such a body work in harmony, in unity, and with adequate strength and uniformity of purpose, is a strong man who, as Prime Minister, stands above all Departments and can control all Ministers. Such a man was Gladstone ; such a man was Disraeli ; nobody could say that Campbell-Bannerman quite reached that position. He was firm and obstinate enough when he had made up his mind, and he could fight when he thought it was necessary to fight ; but he did not think every subject worth worrying much about, and he much preferred a deal to a fight. And

thus it came to pass that though its members claimed that his Cabinet was—as Cabinets go—one of the most united and harmonious that ever consulted in Downing Street, there was the subtle sense of divided purpose and conflicting elements in its composition and its proposals.

One of the great duties of the Leader of the House is to open or to wind up the great party debates. Campbell-Bannerman was better in opening than in closing, partly because he had a larger opportunity of preparing himself. He was never a ready speaker; he himself used to often remark that he had not the "gift of the gab." He was so conscious of this defect that he never spoke without notes. Whether the speech was to be long or short, whether official, social, or partisan, he always drew out from his pocket, when his time came, a small bundle of sheets of notepaper. These were written on in a small, rather shaky handwriting. Probably in few cases did he write

out his sentences in full; the diction, however, was very carefully thought out, and it was always appropriate, simple, vigorous, sometimes it reached even high literary merit. He was, as has been seen, a hard-working student both in Glasgow and Cambridge, his memory was retentive, his love of books great, with the result that he was one of the best authorities in the House of Commons on the literature of both England and France. He often surprised even men of letters by a couplet from Dryden or Pope, quoted on the spur of the moment, and appropriate to the occasion; and often he showed that even obscure characters in the great portrait gallery of Balzac were quite familiar to him. Once for instance, I spoke to him casually of "Gaudissart." "Oh," he replied at once, "you mean 'L'illustre Gaudissart,'" which is the exact title that Balzac gives to his creation. Now, Gaudissart was simply a commercial traveller and a newspaper proprietor who

figures in a short story of Balzac—not one of the characters like the Père Goriot or Vautrin, for instance, who stand out from the gallery, awful, multitudinous, and bewildering of Balzac's "Comédie Humaine." But Gaudissart was quite familiar to Campbell-Bannerman. All these characteristics bear out the thought more than once already expressed in this appreciation of him, that he was a Scotchman a little out of his time. He seemed to spring from that cynical, free-thinking, scornful coterie that gathered around Hume in the last century, and that was French rather than English in its sympathies, temperament, and opinions. It was part of his likeness to the men of that dead epoch that Campbell-Bannerman was a voracious reader of French literature; instead, however, like the men of the elder generation, of selecting the books of our neighbours on philosophy, he chose the yellow-backed volumes that tell the stories of modern French love. He was also very fond

of French caricature; indeed, of anything which appealed to his keen and constant sense of humour.

To return to his oratory, Campbell-Bannerman kept this little bundle of sheets of note-paper close up to his eyes, for, as has been said, he was short-sighted, and even this way of holding his notes tended now and then to make his speech less effective. A spoken essay never succeeds, especially in the House of Commons. It does not succeed even when it is spoken without note by an effort of memory, as a certain small minority—the late Joseph Cowen was one of them—can do, who have the curious power of committing every word of a speech to memory. But the spoken essay is the most unsuccessful of all, when it is read out from the shameless manuscript in the hands of the orator. However, the House of Commons becomes in time very tolerant of the figures which are familiar to it; and though he stuck thus closely to his notes,

Campbell-Bannerman was too old a Parliamentary hand not to be able now and then to utter his speech with some appearance at least of the spontaneity of the orator. This necessity for preparation often placed him in some difficulty. In the week when he had to propose his resolution in denunciation of the House of Lords he got a command to Windsor. Even to so frequent and welcome a visitor as Campbell-Bannerman had become, a visit to Windsor has its trials of strength and its large demands on time and attention; and Campbell-Bannerman was in despair. The King, hearing in a roundabout way of his Prime Minister's perplexity, or, perhaps, realising it by generous instinct, settled the difficulty by permitting Campbell-Bannerman to remain in Downing Street and to give to the preparation of his speech the time he had been asked to devote to the service of the King. Sometimes Campbell-Bannerman tried to jot down his necessary notes as he was

putting on his clothes hastily for a great public function. It was astonishing how he did always manage to have his little bundle of complete notes prepared, however hard he was driven.

All this would, perhaps, lead to the idea that he was never an effective speaker; but that is not true. He had a very happy knack of choosing the right word, the strong word, and the inspiring word for a great occasion. Oftentimes a very simple phrase of his sent his own party into wild outbursts of enthusiasm, partly, of course, because of the electric atmosphere which moments of great conflict create, partly because of the instinctive knowledge that he meant what he said, and partly, it must be added, because frequently he expressed his thoughts in language as appropriate to the occasion as almost any man could command.

One of the successes of those early days of Campbell-Bannerman's Premiership should

here be mentioned. His Liberalism was international as well as broad; and he took a profound interest accordingly in all the Liberal movements of the Continent. Among the movements which appealed to him was the first Parliament that had assembled in Russia, and that filled all friends of Russian freedom with the hope that Russia's dawn of free institutions and the close of all her long, black night of slavery were at hand. By a happy coincidence—as it appeared at the time—the annual Conference of the members of European Parliaments who are friends of International Peace and Arbitration had fixed on London as their place of meeting just after Campbell-Bannerman had become Prime Minister. This ensured not only a friendly but an official and a distinguished reception. And it was announced for some time before the Conference that Campbell - Bannerman would practically open it by an address in favour of International Arbitration. The

direct countenance of a Prime Minister—here was recognition of this band of enthusiasts—mostly frowned upon by official as well, of course, as by military and reactionary Europe—which advanced this particular Conference to a position never reached by any previous meetings of the body. In addition to all this, the Peace Conference at The Hague was approaching, and it was felt that this Conference might have momentous effects on the greater and more official and potent body.

It was proof of the importance and honour which Campbell-Bannerman's Government was resolved to give the Conference that its sittings were to take place in one of the many splendid halls scattered over the vast pile of buildings in the Palace of Westminster which house the Parliament of the British Empire.

Here, surrounded by all the opulence which is characteristic of everything associated with

the House of Lords—for the hall belonged to the portion of the building set apart for the House of Lords—with vast canvases recording some great moments in British history on the walls, those delegates from nearly every country of Europe sate, many of them of opinions which separated them in their own country so far from all the governing classes as to make such surroundings strange, unfamiliar, and perhaps even astounding. To one group in particular these surroundings must have been especially curious. It was the group which attracted most attention when its nationality and composition were known; this was the body of delegates that had come from Russia and from the new Duma. They sate on the benches on the left of the platform, looking even there a little isolated, lonely and fateful. With their beards, their curious look of resolve and nervousness, they suggested some of the horrors and terrors through which they had

gone, through which—as they knew—they had yet to go. Somehow or other, grave as was their purpose, and grave as was their demeanour, they recalled to me by a sort of racial resemblance some of those Russian faces you see at Monte Carlo, where the wild and still half Oriental Slav spirit brings the men ready to stake their roubles by the thousand, and to wind up with either fabulous wealth or a pistol-shot through the brain and an unmarked grave in the Suicides Cemetery in that weird city.

The attention this group received was augmented enormously by the fact that just as the Conference was to begin its sittings the alarming news came that the first Duma and all its hopes had come to an end; it had been dissolved by the Czar; and it appeared as if all the old tragedy of Russia was to begin all over again, with civil war carried on between despots and revolutionaries—between scaffolds and bombs.

It can easily be imagined how surcharged with excitement this assembly was when the Prime Minister of Great Britain came to deliver to it a message of democratic sentiment in its extreme form—a message which might well be the defiant answer of Democratic Europe to despotic Russia. Those who loved Campbell-Bannerman might well be proud of the part he played on that memorable day in that memorable gathering. He had prepared his speech in French, an admirable speech, modest and reserved as the speech of a great official had to be, and yet suffused with strong feeling; and, of course, like every speech of Campbell-Bannerman, phrased in beautiful language—simple but distinguished, clear and pointed—the speech of a great politician, of a great gentleman, as well as of a man of good heart and of love for his fellow-man.

And at one point in particular it gave vent to the feeling that was in every breast, and with a clearness and a boldness that swept

people off their feet. After some compliments to the good intentions of the Czar, Campbell-Bannerman burst out with the phrase, "La Duma est morte—vive la Duma!" There was the pause of a moment—so startling was it to hear something like the language of a revolutionary from the first Minister of an ancient and a Conservative country. And then there came a hurricane of cheers, such a burst of emotion as might welcome some great new epoch of hope and human emancipation. And the audience looked especially to those dun-complexioned and dun-bearded men who sate on the benches to the left of the Speaker. It was perhaps fancy, but one might imagine that there came from them something between a pæan and a sob. Later on one of them asked leave to address the audience, and a man—huge, almost mountainous—was seen to leave the group and ascend the tribune. It was Kovalesky—to-day one of the great thinkers of the party of

reform; in the near past associated for all students of the romance of the last century with one of the most dramatic and tragic of women's lives and women's love-stories. For he belongs to the final days of Sophy Kovalesky, the greatest woman mathematician of her time, who after many vicissitudes became Professor of Mathematics in a Swedish university, and after many wanderings fixed her affections finally on this man who now stood forth as the representative of Russian democracy, and died because he and she quarrelled. Of that tragic past, however, people there knew nothing at that moment; there was too much tragedy in the actual hour and on the grand scale of a vast struggle between despotism and democracy in a gigantic Empire.

Kovalesky said a few words of acknowledgment of the speech of the British Prime Minister, and then left the tribune. And then came the most pathetic act of this great,

strange, moving morning. The Russian group rose from the assembly; they made their exit amid sympathetic shakings of their hands and cheers and suppressed heart-aches. For on their faces, with their combination of resolution and of nervousness, one could read already the black destinies to which they were taking their first step—the scaffold, the dark cell of the fortress, the hunger and cold of Siberia, the bullet or the knife of the assassin who does for despotism its worst work.

On that occasion I noticed that Campbell-Bannerman was very well dressed in black frock-coat, low-cut waistcoat, white shirt-front, and black tie; in pleasant contrast of black and white he looked the typical British official, simple yet opulent, that combination which extorted from Talleyrand the observation at the Congress of Vienna as he looked on the unadorned breast of Castlereagh, "C'est bien distingué." I thought Campbell-Bannerman

certainly looked "very distinguished." Which reminds me of a playful and characteristic observation he made some time afterward at a dinner given by Mr. Whitelaw Reid, the American Ambassador. He playfully thanked me for some things I had written about him; but he went on to say that there was one writer who had been far more agreeable in his comments to him, and above all to his wife. "For," said Campbell-Bannerman with his usual twinkle, "he calls me handsome." And then he repeated with great unction, "Handsome, that's the man for me." I often thought afterwards, as I looked at his really beautiful eyes, with their perfect transparency, their fine colouring and size, and their wells of laughter, that the epithet might have been very well applied to him, certainly as he appeared at that memorable gathering and sent forth to startled, and I dare say shocked, official Europe the war-cry of democratic England in favour of liberty in Russia.

The first session of Campbell-Bannerman as Prime Minister, then, added very largely to his reputation. But by one of those ironies in which the history of politicians is so rich, his public success was sicklied over by private sorrow. In the year 1860 he married Charlotte, daughter of the late General Sir Charles Bruce, K.C.B. It was a marriage which was not blessed by children, but which otherwise was among the happiest. Lady Campbell-Bannerman was a woman of very remarkable gifts. It required some intimacy with her to discover her real character. Very stout, very shy, very nervous, she presented a singular contrast of great and even weak femininity, with a bulky physique and had a somewhat uncertain and nervous manner. There was, indeed, an almost flagrant and at once pathetic and somewhat grotesque contrast between the nervous, anxious manner, the nervous and anxious eyes, and the vast body; and she was throughout her life pursued by the same contrast between an

appearance of great robustness and the reality of poor health. She was, indeed, for many years almost a permanent invalid. Her husband gave to her an almost pathetic devotion and affection; and no one in the world had anything like the same influence over him. Whether she was as intelligent as he thought, may be open to question; she was certainly a very cultivated woman; like himself, was an excellent French scholar; like him, was a great reader; and she had all the gifts of a great housekeeper, who was able to create a beautiful house and an orderly household. Her good-nature and loyalty to friends were also illimitable. She was capable of getting up out of a bed of sickness to go to a party or a theatre in order to please or help or encourage a friend. The chief talent she probably had—the one that most justified the immense hold she exercised over her husband—was feminine instinct, and especially that instinct which enables a woman to scent—

almost with the blind instinct of the animal world—the presence of her husband's friend or enemy. Sometimes a woman is right, sometimes, perhaps more frequently, a woman is wrong, in her judgment of those who come in contact with her husband. As Thackeray divided all woman into either of two great classes—tyrants or slaves—so it may be said that most women are inclined to divide their world into two great camps—her husband on the one side, and a world of enemies or rivals on the other. But to a man like Campbell-Bannerman—simple amid all his shrewdness and overflowing with kindliness underneath all his eighteenth century veneer of serene and cynical outlook on life—it was a great advantage to have by his side this woman's anxious, even feverish, and, perhaps, over-suspicious, guardianship, to warn him against smooth-tongued foes and fair-seeming plots. At all events, that is what he always thought. He used humorously to confess that the

opinions of his wife, which he would reject in his masculine wisdom, turned out after some time to be more than justified, and he would with his characteristic smile add how stupid the man looked then.

This close confidence and affection were increased by constant and almost inseparable companionship. Wherever he was, she was also. Their tastes were very alike, and one of their tastes was a love of an occasional scamper on the Continent. This pastime was made the easier and pleasanter by their knowledge of the French language; indeed, in their intimate life they were accustomed to speak French to each other. One of their passions was Marienbad.

There is no place where Campbell-Bannerman and his wife will be so much missed as Marienbad. They were among the first to discover that delightful health resort in the mountains of Bohemia, and they stuck to their first admiration for it through upwards

of twenty years. Their coming, indeed, was one of the events of the place; eagerly expected by the chief hotel proprietors, and regarded as marking an epoch of the season. It was under the blue sky, and in the easy and unconstrained atmosphere of Marienbad, that Campbell-Bannerman was seen at his best. His good-humour, his equableness, his freedom from all prejudice, his quaint and cynical wit — all these things made him a favourite companion of everybody. He rarely took the cure; but he walked every morning with the other guests and with the characteristic and universal glass of the Marienbad invalid; but the glass, in his case, contained, however, whey or some other non-medicinal draught, and none of the severe waters which the other cure-guests were taking.

There is little doubt that when Campbell-Bannerman was given the great and difficult duty of forming a Cabinet, the counsels of his wife were most useful to him, and that prob-

ably he gave them the greatest attention. And they would both be more than human if, after the long years of struggle and misunderstanding, they did not rejoice in the tremendous glory in which everything had ended. But good fortune in this world is niggard ; no man can ever hope to have his cup of joy without some drop of bitterness. And there came a very big drop of bitterness into the cup of joy in the case of these two devoted people. Always more or less of an invalid, as has been said, the health of Lady Campbell-Bannerman entirely broke down immediately after the appointment of her husband to the Premiership. And the illness from which she suffered was lingering, changeable, now seeming to be bringing immediate death, and then a wonderful recovery, which seemed to promise a chance of renewed life.

It is impossible to exaggerate what mental anguish all this caused to Campbell-Bannerman ; at times it so unnerved him that he was

not able to speak to a friend for any time without bursting into tears. And the very closeness and fervour of the affection, which bound this couple together, rather aggravated the sadness and the torture of the situation. Accustomed to tender and constant care from her husband throughout their married life, and perhaps counting with the greed of affection the few moments that were left of their almost life-long companionship, the dying wife insisted that he should be near her during most of the hours of the day and often during many hours of the night. Sometimes she was kept alive by oxygen, and it was by the hands of her husband—or at least in his presence—that the oxygen had to be administered; and this sometimes happened twice in the same night. Rushed to death during the day, with a thousand and one demands on his time, his work, his temper, the Prime Minister, in 10, Downing Street, was less happy than the cottager that tramps home to his cabin, to healthy

wife and joyous children. He was visibly perishing under the double strain, looked terribly old, and some days almost seemed to be dying himself; and there was little doubt in the mind of anybody who watched him that if the double strain were prolonged, he would either die or resign.

The private sorrows of public men have to be forgotten or sacrificed to public calls so far as that is possible, but it is not altogether possible. Campbell-Bannerman did his best with his work, but the work of a Prime Minister cannot be performed effectually by a man of broken sleep and breaking heart, and for some months undoubtedly the effectiveness of his administration of the Premiership was largely prejudiced by this terrible domestic sorrow. When the end of the first session came, it was possible for him to gratify the last wish of his dying wife. Her attachment to Marienbad came back to her at the season of the year when, for so many years, she had been

accustomed to exchange its bracing mountain air for the stifling air of a summer in London, and to Marienbad she asked to be taken. Curiously enough, she bore the journey well, and it looked almost as if her hope was going to be realised, and as if Marienbad were to give her back life and spirits again, as it had done so often before. But these hopes were cheated. Shortly after her arrival in the Bohemian mountain spot, she died. There might seem to be something sad and regrettable in this death far away from her own home. As a matter of fact, it was where she and how she would have died. She was in the midst of a people who loved her for all they owed her, in the rooms which she had occupied for more than twenty-five years consecutively, and surrounded by loving care. The town had an outburst of genuine grief. All the world stretched out its two hands in sympathy to the bereaved widower, and first among them his King, who at the time was undergoing his

annual cure in Marienbad. Through a long day and night of weather of torrid heat the husband brought back the body, and she was buried close to her own beautiful home in Scotland, with that stern simplicity which marks the funeral in Scotland.

If Campbell-Bannerman had been a younger man, or if he had been in strong health, it is possible that he might have recovered in time from such a dreadful blow as the loss of a wife so profoundly loved. But he never did recover. The cessation of the nightly calls to her bedside, of course, helped to restore something of his bodily vigour; but his mind never did resume its habitual gaiety. When spoken to once by me, he put his feelings in this pathetic phrase: "It used to be always 'we'; now it is 'I'—which is very different." Joseph Parker said, as he lay dying, two years after the death of the woman as beautiful in soul as in body who had died before him, that his wife's death had killed him: "It took two years to

do it," he would say, "but it has done it." Another pathetic example of how C.-B. was haunted by his loss, was given to me by Mr. Thomas Shaw, a countryman and, as is well known, one of C.-B.'s most intimate friends. Mr. Shaw, with Mr. Morley and a few other friends, had come to Belmont, the residence of C.-B., to be present at the funeral of Lady Campbell-Bannerman, and to sustain him in his dread hour of bereavement. Mr. Shaw was preparing to return to his own home in Edinburgh when C.-B. said to him, "Thomas, is this a night to leave me alone?" And Mr. Shaw stayed. That night dining with his friends, C.-B. exercised wonderful self-control. But coming a few weeks later, when the spring had been allowed to relax a bit, Mr. Shaw found how the wound still bled. C.-B. said that when he had anything special to tell or interest his wife in reference to the news in the morning's papers, he used to rush off to her room. And even still, when he awoke in the

morning, he found himself starting out in the same way to go and speak to her; he had not yet realised that he would never again have to take that little journey from his room to hers—that there is stretched between them the long and dark journey between one world and another. I have little doubt that the death of his wife had much to do with the death of Campbell-Bannerman, too.

When, however, he had recovered somewhat from this staggering blow, Campbell-Bannerman went back to his work, and soon it became exciting. He had to face two very difficult problems; on the one side he was bound by his pledge and by the pressure of the Irish Party to bring forward a Bill dealing with the Government of Ireland; and, on the other hand, the rejection of his Education Bill by the House of Lords and the practical certainty that any measure enlarging Irish self-government in the direction of Home Rule would be rejected by the same body, brought up in

a menacing and urgent form the question of the relations between the two Houses of Legislature. Furthermore, there was a demand from his supporters for measures dealing with the land. All this promised to make his second session as Leader of the House more important and more trying than even his first. When he met Parliament, there was a change in his Ministry of an important character. Mr. Bryce had been appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland in the original formation of the Cabinet. It was no secret that the relations between Mr. Bryce and the Irish Nationalist Party were not quite cordial, and that he and they had failed to come to even an approach of agreement with regard to the details of the new Irish Bill. At the moment when the differences threatened to ripen into an open rupture, the resignation of the British Embassy in Washington by Sir Mortimer Durand fortunately placed at the disposal of Sir Henry a means of emerging from the difficulty. Mr.

Bryce's intimate acquaintance with the history and politics of America and his many friendships there, made him a very suitable representative in that country of his own, and to Washington accordingly he was sent. His place was taken by Mr. Birrell.

The change of person produced an immediate change in events and of Parliamentary conditions. Mr. Birrell proved very acceptable to the Irish Nationalists, sympathised with them whole-heartedly, and was believed to advocate generally their views in the Cabinet. But the Cabinet was divided, and Campbell-Bannerman had no very easy task in keeping the two sections in harmony with each other. It was reported that on one occasion there was something approaching to an open quarrel and an exchange of hot words between two of the leading members of the Ministry. The differences of opinion over the Boer War still haunted some memories, and it did not require much provocation now and then to bring out

the latent dislikes which had been left behind by that bitter controversy. However, the easy-going and conciliatory temper of Campbell-Bannerman managed to smooth things over ; he did not succeed in getting from the Cabinet as a whole the Bill which he, Mr. Birrell, and the Irish Members would desire to have had, but a Bill was produced. As a matter of fact it was a ghastly and almost immediate failure. The Liberal Party in the House of Commons received it coldly, and the Irish people rejected it decisively and unanimously at a convention in Dublin.

This failure, however, did not for the moment seriously interfere with the prospects of the Government. The defeat and withdrawal of the Bill left the Government an amount of Parliamentary time which otherwise would have been occupied by a long and bitter controversy over the Irish measure; and this time Campbell-Bannerman proceeded to devote to two Land Bills—one for England and one

for Scotland. Incidentally he had declared in the end of the first session of his Parliament that he contemplated action against the House of Lords. This purpose was also given a place in the Speech from the Throne. However, there was a good deal of delay, and the session had advanced a considerable period before the Prime Minister could be got to say anything more than a brief word now and then of forecast. At last, however, the question had to be faced, and to a tremendous and excited audience Campbell-Bannerman began his attack. It was the speech he delivered then which led to that kindly and considerate excuse by the King from attendance at Windsor, to which allusion has already been made.

On the great day Campbell-Bannerman came down to the House with his usual bundle of notes. His speech was just such as he made on most occasions: very clear, very well expressed, very simple, not inspired, not suffused with that glow which

could be given to such a theme by an orator with the true sacred fire. But the solemnity of the circumstances, the vast importance of the step, the sense that the history of the country was about to enter on a great new character and a great new struggle, all these things came to Sir Henry's aid, and the result was that the speech fully satisfied the necessities of the occasion and inspired great enthusiasm among his followers. There were demonstrations and counter-demonstrations, and, in short, one of those scenes of passionate excitement which start a bitter and prolonged struggle.

Occasions of this kind gave certain glimpses into the depths of Campbell-Bannerman's character, and revealed some unexpected results. On occasions of such excitement he appeared outwardly the stolid, typical, secular, phlegmatic Scotchman, and yet if one looked farther and more closely, one could see that this was not altogether the character of the

man, and that the phlegm was mixed with a certain dash of that *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum* which is as much a characteristic of his race as its caution and its sangfroid. While the cheers and the counter-cheers were hurtling around his head, and especially when there was hurled at him from across the floor some interjection of insult or defiance, he used to betray his emotion by using the bundle of notes as a sort of fan. Indeed, this was one of his mannerisms—to use his notes as a fan. He did so in hot weather to save himself from some of the effects of the heat; he did so in hot moments in the House of Commons by way of relieving the tension of his feeling, and possibly also as a sort of sign of defiance to his excited and angry opponents. He had his feelings, had this easy-going, pleasant-faced, smiling man; he was full of *bonhomie* and natural sweetness, but, like people of amiable character, he could hate and he could not forgive. His convictions,

too, with all their cold and sometimes half-laughing, half-cynic expression, were very deep, very strong, on some points almost fierce. There were men of whom he could not speak without a certain bitter resentment—which was rather a surprise in a man ordinarily so good-humoured. And little slights, small attacks, which many politicians throw off and then dismiss for ever, remained and rankled. It was said, for instance, that he never forgave the Cordite division which threw him and his colleagues out of office in 1895, and that that was one of the reasons why he did not include in his Cabinet a prominent and gifted Liberal. This Liberal was suspected by Campbell-Bannerman of having taken some part in the Cordite intrigue. This fanning of his face with his notes was another indication that beneath all the apparent calm there was intense feeling. There was another side of him revealed in receiving deputations. There it was that you realised some of the secret of

the very remarkable influence he exercised over men, an influence greater in some degree than that of more commanding personalities. His natural inclination to amiability tempted him on such occasions to be all things to all men, to be ready in his sympathy and large in his promises. But often he had to meet deputations which held views so hostile to his—or if not of his, to those at least of his colleagues—that he could not entirely fall in with their demands. Then it was that his *bonhomie* and charm of manner came to his assistance. He said a few good-humoured things, smiled benignly, left everybody under the impression that they were dealing with the kindliest of men who would do everything he could for them, waved his hands at them as though he were pronouncing an incantation, and sent them away quite happy. It was only when they got outside of Downing Street, and began to survey in retrospect, and remote from his disturbing

presence, what the Prime Minister had promised, that they realised how empty-handed they had come away. But they could not bear him resentment even then.

The relations between the two Houses of the Legislature became more embittered after Campbell-Bannerman's resolution against the House of Lords, to which he had invited the House of Commons, and which that body had passed by a huge majority. As time went on, the feeling grew even more pronounced. The two Land Bills of the Government were confronted with steady and persistent opposition in the Grand Committees, to which, in the first instance, they had been referred. When they returned to the House of Commons itself, this opposition was renewed. Ultimately the Bills reached the House of Lords, and there the Prime Minister found himself confronted by a new and more formidable opponent. Lord Rosebery had, on the whole, maintained an attitude of reserve and even

of benevolent neutrality to the new Government from which he had excluded himself. But the Scotch Land Bill was more than he was able to endure; and when the Bill was brought to the House of Lords he led the attack upon it in a speech characterised by all his various powers at their best: sarcasm, eloquence, close reasoning. And the end was that the House of Lords under Lord Rosebery's guidance, made amendments in the two Bills—but especially in the Scotch Bill—which placed Campbell-Bannerman and his colleagues in a difficult position. However, they resolved to reject the amendments to the English Bill, and they succeeded in rushing it through, but the amendments to the Scotch Bill they did not succeed in getting rid of; the House of Lords stuck to their proposals, and the Government dropped the Bill.

This gave a new fillip to the agitation against the House of Lords. The battle was

now transferred from the floor of Parliament to the platforms of the country. Campbell-Bannerman retired to his delightful house in Scotland, and there for a short time, wandered among his gardens and his beautiful furniture and works of art. Like most elderly men who take a prominent and active part in the work of Parliament, he was more dead than alive when the second of his sessions came to an end. If he had had his way, he doubtless would have remained in his gardens and with his books until the opening of a new session brought him back to London. But in the strenuous political life of England there is no such long respite for a man in the high position of Prime Minister; and it was held to be essential that the Prime Minister himself should take an active part in the agitation against the Lords in the country. Thus it was that within a few weeks of the close of the session Campbell-Bannerman came out of his seclusion and addressed a meeting in his

own country upon the twin subjects of the Scotch Land Bill and the House of Lords.

It was a curious little fact in connection with the chequered political life of this man, that he became known to the masses of the people for the first time when he had long passed the meridian of life, and long passed his Parliamentary jubilee of a quarter of a century. Never pushful, never gifted with the strong voice and the resonant and picturesque manner of the typical platform orator, he had been content to be regarded as a mere sound, conscientious, and industrious official. The War Office, in which he had done most of his official service, is not a Department which lends itself to outbursts of Parliamentary eloquence. The debates upon it remain always confined to a certain small number of experts; the normal audience for the War Office vote is twenty to thirty members. There were innumerable Parliamentary colleagues of Campbell-Bannerman who probably

might boast that they had never heard his voice, even though they had been his companions in years of Parliamentary life, for three-fourths of the members of the House would not dream of remaining for a debate on the Army Estimates. And in recent years—after the fashion of modern times, when each Minister seems to take an interest in his own Department, and in none other, and when the modern Commissioner of Works has given to Ministers rooms for their private use—Campbell-Bannerman had spent most of his time in an underground room, which was then the habitat of the War Minister of the British Empire. And thus it was that he was entirely unknown on the platform, and comparatively unknown even in the House of Commons till the great god Chance lifted him from obscurity to the dazzling notoriety first of Leader of a great party, and then Prime Minister of a great Empire.

Then there came a change, not only in the duties and position and repute of the man, but also a certain change in the man himself. To him, even when he had passed his sixtieth year, the great thrills of meetings of five or ten thousand cheering and frenzied partisans, were an entirely new sensation ; and it had the delights of novelty. The strange result followed that he did not, as so many old politicians do, reject the invitation to the crowded hall ; sometimes he seemed even to accept the invitation with a certain empressement. Those huge meetings are a very great strain on both body and mind ; far greater than speeches in the milder atmosphere, the smaller compass, of the House of Commons. To reach such meetings men have to travel considerable railway journeys ; and as Campbell-Bannerman's favourite home was in Scotland, with him these journeys were even longer and more fatiguing than with a man whose residence was in the more

southern kingdom. On one occasion he travelled by Perth down to Plymouth ; to do so he had to start at four or five o'clock in the morning, to travel incessantly all day, and to reach the hall tired, excited, after a hasty dinner. This is part of the wearing and sometimes killing servitude which has to be endured by those favourites of fortune who seem to be endowed with all the gifts that can be lavished on the human individual. But again it has to be added that these meetings had a great attraction for Campbell-Bannerman. The unusual spectacle of these thousands hanging on his words and looking up to him with a devotion that amounted to a cult, was indeed naturally exciting to a man who had lived in the cold atmosphere of a thin House of Commons debating an Army Vote or in the underground seclusion of his room in the depths of the Parliament building, or before the choice but small audiences whom he addressed

in the little group of boroughs he represented in Parliament.

It was this new passion and this new occupation which brought the first sign that his health was broken, and that his life was nearing its close. In November, 1907, the agitation against the House of Lords was in full swing. In addition to the meetings on the subject, Campbell-Bannerman had attended other meetings: the world—and especially his own world of Scotland—was anxious to do him honour, and in both Glasgow and Edinburgh they conferred the freedom of the city upon him. In Edinburgh, it should be said by way of parenthesis, there was a pleasant little episode. Lord Rosebery was in the audience which assembled to take part in the demonstration of respect. His name was not on the official list of speakers, and he had accordingly remained a silent spectator until the gathering began to disperse. But an orator of such powers is not easily allowed to escape,

and when the audience was straying out, Lord Rosebery was summoned by shouts from all parts of the hall to say a word. He readily obeyed; paid a very nice tribute to Campbell-Bannerman, and declared that in their occasional differences of opinion they had always retained their feelings of personal friendship for each other.

When November came, the hard work of the Prime Minister recommenced. That is the month in which the Cabinet Councils begin which are to decide the choice and the scope of the measures to be introduced by the different Ministers in the coming session of Parliament. This alone involved a great deal of time and some strain, especially to the Prime Minister, whose business it is to smooth over personal and political difference. In addition to these duties there are various official banquets, notably the banquet given by the new Lord Mayor, at which the presence of the Prime Minister has become an essential

feature, and of course a speech which, delivered *urbi et orbi*, and dealing with the foreign as well as the internal conditions of the country, has to be carefully prepared.

In this particular November all these heavy and ordinary duties received the enormous addition of one of those gatherings of Royalties in England which are so marked a feature of the reign of Edward VII. Such visits, with all their splendour, their enormous service to the good understanding between nations, and their high testimony to the great place of the British Empire in the councils of the world, have their trying side, especially for high-placed officials; and above all, for such an official as the Prime Minister. His office would make his absence from any of the great festivities which mark the presence of these foreign Sovereigns in our midst noticeable, and perhaps even prejudicial to the public weal. Even to a monarch, with his large retinue of servants, and his habits of

readily getting from one uniform into another, those days of festivities are trying, but they must be much more so to a great officer of State, to whom the festivities are but a small portion of the duties of his day. All these things have to be remembered to understand the catastrophe which suddenly interrupted the activities of Campbell-Bannerman.

A day came when he had to crowd together a vast number of different engagements. He had to be present at a lunch to the German Emperor in the Guildhall ; then to take a train down to Bristol, to attend a public dinner and make a speech there, and then to address one of those vast audiences which are such a strain even on a strong man. There was one further little episode which must not be omitted. The shrieking sisterhood of suffragettes were at this time pursuing every Cabinet Minister with their raucous and unfeminine interruptions, and they turned up in considerable force at the meeting in Bristol

which Sir Henry was to address. Anybody acquainted with public meetings will be familiar with the fact that it does not require a very large minority to make such a meeting difficult, if not impossible. The chief speaker of the meeting is placed in an especially difficult position. The intruders may be turned out, but that takes time, and involves many interruptions—interruptions of the speech, of the speaker, of the attention of the meeting—until the time comes when the speaker, unless he be very young and very robust, is too tired and too dispirited to go on, and the audience has also become too disheartened and too disturbed to be good listeners. There is little in the printed address of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman on this trying occasion to show that he had been seriously affected by the interruptions of the suffragettes, for the speech read like a very animated and a very successful address. But his friends and intimates always contended that this assault

upon him, with his tired body and jaded mind, was the straw that broke him down, and that the suffragettes deserve the fullest credit for having brought on the attack which followed.

He left the meeting apparently in good health and spirits, though his friends remarked that he was looking very pale and rather ill. In the middle of the night the blow fell. He found himself in the grip of one of those attacks of acute indigestion which weigh upon the heart, compress it, and for a time threaten to stop it. It was quite by accident that he did not perish in this strange room—alone, in the darkness of the night, without a friend or a witness. The accident was that a son of his host happened to have stopped up late, and to be near enough to Campbell-Bannerman's bed-chamber to hear the groans which his pain extorted from him. The house was roused, and then there was a hurry and scurry, and doctors were hastily summoned. For a while

it was a grim fight with death; but in the end the restoratives took effect, and refreshing sleep left him a good deal relieved, and all immediate danger was past. It was a grim contrast—the scene of thousands hanging in admiration and affection on this man's lips, and then, a few brief hours afterwards, this silent, lonely approach of death in the solitude and darkness of the night.

It was the first time that the world realised that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was an old and not a very strong man. Gladstone—ripe, fresh, inexhaustible at eighty-four—had set up an entirely false standard of life in Parliamentary circles; seventy began to be considered as Parliamentary youth. But it was not so; and thus it was that not till after this *memento mori* did people begin to realise that Campbell-Bannerman was an old man of seventy-two, and that he could not be regarded as equal to the duties of his laborious office unless he took the very greatest care of himself.

It was resolved that he should go abroad and take complete rest for a few months. There had always been, as has been seen, something refreshing and welcome to him in a trip to the Continent, and he chose Biarritz gladly as the scene of his rest-cure. He dawdled for a day or so in the familiar scenes of Paris, and he then started South for the paradise that lies on the frontiers of France and Spain and welcomes into its cliffs the waters of the Bay of Biscay in sunshine and in storm. It looked as if this trip to Biarritz and the rest thus imposed on Campbell-Bannerman would have restored him to health. Few then realised that the blow which had fallen so unexpectedly at Bristol was the beginning of the end. Campbell-Bannerman evidently did not realise it himself. He wrote to a friendly gathering that had sent him a sympathetic message that he had been making a fool of himself by working too hard, but that he was going to be more careful in future. But his col-

leagues had already remarked that after Bristol he was no longer the same man. When he returned, and began once more to preside over Cabinet Councils, the change was no longer to be ignored. One of his colleagues told me how he began the Cabinet looking fairly well and fairly brisk ; but how, as time went on, and after the first hour, his attention began to relax, and there came gradually over his face a look of fatigue and then that grey complexion which shows the tired and the worn-out frame. And, of course, there was aggravated then what had been the weakness of his Administration from the start—the unwillingness to face any issue, especially a difficult one—till the inevitable and last moment came when it could no longer be shirked.

When the new session began it looked, however, as if Campbell-Bannerman might still retain the Premiership for some time longer. The various groups were friendly, the Irish

especially. The rejection of the Councils Bill had produced no estrangement between the Irish Nationalists and Campbell-Bannerman. Indeed, immediately after the return from the fateful Convention in Dublin, the Irish leaders who had taken part in the conferences with regard to the Bill of the Government were agreeably surprised by the cordiality with which Campbell-Bannerman received them; there was no trace of bitterness or even of disappointment, partly, doubtless, because Campbell-Bannerman and the Irishmen had been united in pressing in vain on the Cabinet —or on a section of the Cabinet—the amendments in the measure which might have secured its acceptance. And before the opening of the session there had been an interview between Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Birrell, the new Chief Secretary, and two Irish members, at which it had been agreed that there should be two Irish Bills in the coming session—one dealing with the question of Irish University

Reform and the other with the still unsolved and still menacing question of the Congested Districts. In some respects a subject even more important had been discussed—namely, a Resolution in favour of Home Rule. The first suggestion of the Irish leaders was that this resolution should be proposed by the Prime Minister himself; the obvious reason was that a resolution proposed by a man in his position and with his tremendous influence would secure for it a larger amount of support and give to it a higher sanction than could be hoped if it was proposed by anybody else. Rather more tranquil than usual—saying he was very well, except for a cold—this was before the seizure at Bristol—Campbell-Bannerman said little during this interview, now and then, however, interjecting some observation with a dash of his quaint humour. As, for instance, in discussing such a resolution as was proposed to him, Campbell-Bannerman asked if there would not be applied to such a resolution—not to be

followed by any legislative proposal in the present Parliament—the highly original and recondite phrase, *Brutum fulmen*. In the end it was left undecided who was to propose the motion; ultimately, as is known, it was proposed by Mr. Redmond.

When the day approached for the motion in the new session, communications were frequent between Mr. Redmond and Campbell-Bannerman, and it was arranged that the Prime Minister should wind up the debate, speaking strongly, of course, in favour of the Resolution; and the debate was looked forward to by the Irish leader accordingly with great hope; it was certain that a speech from the Prime Minister, couched in the strong and unmistakable terms of his previous utterances, would have rallied the entire Liberal Party, and have brought to Home Rule a majority so decisive as to have marked a great step in advance. It was a singular and pathetic fact in the life of one of Ireland's truest and best

friends that his closing hours as an active politician should have been closely associated with the cause of Ireland, as, it will be seen, they were.

On Thursday, February 13th, he came down to the House to propose the Resolutions, sending up the Scotch Land Bill to the House of Lords, settling the amount of time to be given to the second discussion of the Scotch Land Bill, and renewing the fight with the House of Lords. It was remarked that he spoke briefly and quietly—indeed, without much spirit. But nobody—at least outside his immediate entourage—saw that there was anything specially wrong. The Irish motion was fixed to come on the following Monday, February 17th, and just before he left the House on February 13th Campbell-Bannerman had a final conversation with Mr. Redmond; indeed, it is probable that Mr. Redmond was the last man to whom he spoke before he left the House of Commons for the night—and for the last time.

He was absent the two next days, and the official explanation was that he was too fatigued. But the Irish leader and one or two of his colleagues were told the real truth, which was that Campbell-Bannerman had had another seizure like that which he had suffered at Bristol, and no attempt was made to conceal either the gravity of the attack or the panic which it inspired, though, of course, the news was told in confidence, a confidence which was solemnly observed. A day or two afterwards Campbell-Bannerman had an attack of influenza, then very prevalent, especially among Members of Parliament, and this enabled the officials to announce this malady—serious but not necessarily mortal—as the cause of Campbell-Bannerman's absence from Parliament, and to omit all mention of the renewed heart attack.

Soon, however, the truth could no longer be concealed, and it was known that the Prime Minister was stricken to death. But

he made a long and brave struggle, and for most of the time retained his wonderful brightness of spirit. He spent a part of the time in reading—choosing light books and especially novels; and Mr. Vaughan Nash, his private secretary, applied to me at his request for a list of books I would recommend. The only hints I got as to the books the dying man would like to have were that they should be distinctly non-educative and should not be too sad.

Many stories leaked out as to the demeanour of the splendid old chieftain in his closing days. There was a certain degree of surprise when it was known that one of the constant callers on him was his friend and countryman the Archbishop of Canterbury. Somehow or other there was an idea that in religious affairs Campbell-Bannerman had something of the detached spirit of the French authors he loved; though I can recollect that there were now and then passages in his speeches which

suggested a different frame of mind. His faith, whatever it was, was probably very broad and distinctly anti-sacerdotal. It was these visits of the Archbishop of Canterbury which led to one of the most pathetic of the many pathetic incidents of Campbell-Bannerman's closing hours.

As everybody knows, the Licensing Bill had attracted the support of most of the Bench of Bishops; and they had to take this course in opposition to many of their warmest and stoutest friends, and contrary to the wishes, and perhaps interests, of the political party to which most of them belong. And, again, this union on the Licensing Bill had brought about something like an approximation on another, and perhaps as thorny a question—namely, that of Education. This is what lay behind the measure which the Bishop of St. Asaph brought in—a Bill demanding something from Liberals and Nonconformists, at the same time giving them a good deal in return.

There was a striking and noticeable incident in the debate in the House of Lords on the Bill of the Bishop of St. Asaph, and that was the speech of the Archbishop. Many were surprised at the splendour and the breadth of the peroration in which it ended; it was far above anything that had ever come from the lips of the Archbishop; and it amazed many by its intensity, its feeling, its fine phrasing, and its whole spirit. The Earl of Rosebery immediately followed the Archbishop, and spoke of the speech as "noble"—which shows how effective and impressive it must have been. There is reason to believe that one of the things which inspired such a fine and generous utterance on the part of the Archbishop were those interviews of his with C.-B. The solemn and moving atmosphere of the sick-room of this brave, cheerful, generous spirit communicated its inspiration to the Archbishop as to others; and this is why the Archbishop spoke with such glowing and

genuine feeling on a controversy which has so often provoked utterance of a very different kind.

Then there came another momentous interview. Mr. Asquith was called to the bedside of the Prime Minister. C.-B. repeated to him some of the things which the Archbishop had been saying to him about the Licensing Bill. The Archbishop had said that it must be a great satisfaction to C.-B. that his name was associated with such a measure of social hope and reform as the Licensing Bill. "But," said C.-B., "Asquith, it is your Bill, after all, not mine"—a saying of characteristic modesty and generosity. And then came, I have been told, a flash of the old wit. "All the same," said the incorrigible C.-B., "one must take what credit one can for these things"; and then he gave one of his well-known smiles. But it was one of the smiles that provoke tears. And it was at that interview that C.-B. announced that he was going to resign. Was it

not a noble, touching, and characteristic valedictory, with its generous self-abnegation, its profound religious feeling, and its careful concealment of all this underneath the habitual joke?

It was reported that the news of Campbell-Bannerman's resignation came sooner than was intended through the indiscretion of a lady talking to a sharp young diplomat at a dinner-table in Biarritz. Whether that be so or not, it was announced in the late editions of the Sunday papers on April 5th that the resignation of Campbell-Bannerman had been offered to the King, and had been accepted: and the next day it was known that Mr. Asquith was summoned to the side of the monarch in Biarritz and that Campbell-Bannerman's day was over. The House when it met was at once put in possession of the facts by Mr. Asquith, who in a few well-chosen words, and with a voice that once or twice threatened to break, announced that the

Government was without a head, and that the Liberal Party had lost its revered and its beloved chief. Similar testimonies were paid by Mr. Balfour and by Mr. Redmond—the latter emphasising the special fidelity of the late chief, Campbell-Bannerman, to the cause of Home Rule.

There was a short rally, curiously enough, after Campbell-Bannerman had given up office, and there was even a hope that the relief which he now had obtained from all official cares, might give him a chance of final though slow recovery. But the hope was cheated; this revival was but the final flicker of the dying candle, and soon more alarming accounts began again to be given forth. In presence of this tragic close all voice of controversy was closed, and without distinction of party there was sent to the sick-room of the dying man messages of sympathy and affection. The first act of Mr. Asquith on his return from Biarritz was to make a call at 10, Downing

Street; soon after the King also came to make personal inquiries. Patient, courageous, and usually even cheerful, Campbell-Bannerman awaited the end. Towards the close he began now and then to lose consciousness and to wander. It was significant and touching that in these moments, when his consciousness was suspended, he went back over the past, that once more the well-beloved face and presence of his wife came back to him, and he spoke as if she were there, and by his side, and as though there flowed not between them the wide but ever-narrowing gulf of black death. And then on Wednesday, the 22nd of April, he died.

Such, then, was Campbell-Bannerman—a combination of many remarkable political gifts with few of the ordinary and besetting weaknesses of the political life; with no disordered ambition, no irritable vanity, no lasting hatreds; brave in adversity, modest in triumph; the plain, honest, kindly man

who added lustre to even the mighty position of Prime Minister by the simple virtues which brighten and adorn millions of British homes, and are the best and truest elements of the nation's honour, strength, and fame.