CHAPTER XV

1849–51

THE RYLAND CASE—EXHIBITION OF 1851—VISIT TO THE HEBRIDES—WINTER IN EDINBURGH

A GOOD deal of my spare time during the two following years—1849 and 1850—was much and most disagreeably taken up with a case of personal grievance which fell into my hands by accident. It is so entirely unconnected with any general question of future interest that I should be disposed to pass it over altogether, were it not for circumstances which cast a curious light on the peculiar characteristics of several distinguished men. A gentleman of the name of Ryland had been appointed by the Crown to a lucrative office in Canada before the union of the Provinces, and before the concession of self-government to the colony. Colonial Governments never have the same feelings of consideration for private rights which prevail at home; and the new Government in Canada proceeded to deal with Mr. Ryland's office in a manner which was almost ruinous to him. After vain appeals to their justice and consideration, he came to England, urging that his office had been held under the Imperial Crown, and that the honour of that Crown was involved in due compensation being paid to him, if political necessities had rendered inevitable the changes from which he suffered. On coming to London, he placed his case in the hands of Lord Lyndhurst, whose American origin, added to his great reputation as a

speaker, made him naturally occur to all who came from the other side of the Atlantic. Lyndhurst was now getting to be a very old man, and he was naturally indisposed to take new work in hand. But he read Ryland's papers, expressed a favourable opinion of the justice of his claim, and recommended him to come to me. Having a great respect and admiration for Lord Lyndhurst, I read the papers, and, although disliking extremely the nature of the work, I felt so strongly the gross injustice with which Mr. Ryland had been treated that I told him I would do whatever I could on his behalf. After prolonged communications with the Colonial Office, I found that Lord Grey, long better known as Lord Howick, who was then Colonial Minister, was intractably obstinate and unreasonable. There was nothing to be done with him. My only recourse, then, was to bring the case before the House of Lords and move a Resolution or an Address to the Crown, recommending a favourable consideration of Mr. Ryland's case. Of course I had no chance of succeeding in this without the help of some political leader in the House. I applied to Lord Derby, laying the case before him. At that time the political future was very uncertain, and the leaders of both parties were not indisposed to conciliate or secure independent members such as I then was. Lord Derby finally promised to support me; but there was one man whose support or approbation would have been worth that of all others put together, and that man was the Duke of Wellington. He was nearly all-powerful in the House of Lords, and every motion having his vote would have carried a weight which no mere majority could give. I therefore determined to ask for an interview, and try what I could do with him. Just as I was full of this intention, I happened to meet him at an evening party in the house of my old friends, Lord and Lady Wemyss. On my approaching, I confess with some fear and trembling, the old Duke saw that I wished to speak

to him, and at once put his hand on my shoulder as a kindly invitation to do so. 'Duke,' I said, 'I am very anxious to have a few minutes' conversation with you on a public matter, and if you would be so kind as to name any hour that is most convenient, I should make a point of attending at Apsley House.' His reply was prompt. 'I'll call on you to-morrow at twelve o'clock at Stafford House.' Of course I replied as promptly: 'Oh no, Duke, I can't allow that. I must go to you, and not you to me. I'll call at Apsley House at whatever hour you name.' 'Very well,' he answered; 'then, come to me to-morrow at eleven o'clock.' I need not say I was absolutely punctual. I was shown into a large room on the ground-floor, to the eastern side of the Piccadilly front. It was full of articles in much confusion—of writing-tables with Blue-books, of articles of clothing hung on screens, and of furniture with no definite arrangement. The Duke presently entered by a side-door, and, after shaking hands, he set me down on a comfortable arm-chair whilst he himself drew up in front of me and close to me, and sat down upon, a small cane-bottomed chair as comfortless as possible. When we were both seated, he folded his arms across his chest, inclined himself forward towards me, dropped his chin upon his chest, and sat motionless in the attitude of attentive listening. It was a formidable ordeal for me. I felt I had before me the greatest man in Europe, and I had to speak to him without the guidance of one single leading question from him or observation of any sort or kind. There was but one encouragement, the great one, however, of close and absolute attention on the Duke's part. His eyes were not wandering, for they were fixed upon the ground. It seemed as if he felt it a duty to listen, and to listen carefully. This, no doubt, was encouraging. But, on the other hand, it was very formidable. I could not look upon that 'good grey head that all men knew,' inclined before me, with its massive forehead and brain—on the

working of which the fate of Europe had so often hung —without need of all the pluck I could command in telling him my story. However, I did it as clearly and shortly as I could. When I had finished, the old Duke raised his eyes from the floor, and, looking straight at me, said: 'It's a very hard case—a very hard case indeed. But now let me ask you a question. You are going to make a motion in the House of Lords in favour of this gentleman's claims. Now, suppose you carry your motion, I want to know what will you do then? Because,' added the Duke after a moment's pause—'because through my whole life I have always asked myself, "What's the next step?"' My reply was: 'Oh, Duke, I think that if such a motion is carried in the Lords—and especially if it is carried with your approval—the Government will feel compelled to do something for this poor man.' 'I'm not so sure of that,' said the Duke; 'and, besides, I have to consider my position in relation to the Queen's Government. I shall probably not be able to vote at all, but I'll go down to the House and hear you.' I had nothing to do but to thank him for his kindness and to retire. I did so feeling that any trouble I had had in this case was well rewarded by hearing from the Duke of Wellington's own lips that terse description of those habits of forethought and careful calculation which no doubt were among the great secrets of his glorious career.

Before I pass from this interview with the Duke, I must say a few words of personal description in respect to some features of his person which I have never seen portrayed. His figure was even then perfectly erect and soldier-like, but his head drooped a little on his chest. What struck one most in his appearance was, not his high aquiline nose, which is so prominent in all the pictures, but his splendid eyes. They were blue in colour, and very round and very large. Of course, all eyeballs are equally round, but they are cut across in varying degrees by the eyelids covering

a larger or a smaller part of them. When the eyelids hardly touch the top of the eyeballs at all, or are even lifted clear above them, a staring effect is given, as in owls. This form of eye is essentially expressionless. On the other hand, in some persons, the open part of the eye is a mere slit, and this is almost equally hostile to expressiveness. The Duke's eyes were very large, the eyelids cutting across them very high up, but not leaving them uncovered. They arrested all one's attention in a moment. One thought no more of the beaky nose or of the small and firm mouth. I do not think that the softer emotions of humanity were prominent. Self-possession, calmness, circumspection, firmness, truthfulness, and wisdom—these were the speaking characteristics, blended in one calm and impressive whole. His head was not a high one—I mean that it was not a domed head. It was only moderately high, but very broad and massive. It was, as it were, a battlemented forehead, 'foursquare to all the winds that blew.' His voice was powerful, deep-toned, and with a military imperativeness of enunciation. I need not say, after my one experience of his personal conversation, how I felt the truth of Tennyson's later couplet:

> 'His language rife
> With rugged maxims hewed from life.'

Of his gentleness and courtesy and kindness of manner in private life I need give no other illustration than his treatment of me in 1850. I was then only twenty-seven years old, and in no political position. Yet if I had been one of his own contemporaries, or high in office, he could not have paid me more attention and respect.

I brought on my motion in Ryland's case in the Lords, and by the help of Lord Derby I carried it against the Government by a majority of three. The Duke of Wellington did not vote, and the Government did nothing. But I bided my time, and some years

later, when I was a colleague of Lord John Russell and when he was Colonial Secretary, I brought the case before him. We were then intimate friends, and he was kind enough to place considerable reliance on my opinion. So he said to me one day, after I had again told him how strongly I felt the injustice of the case: 'Well, do you write the despatch to the Colonial Government, and I'll sign it.' What a different spirit, I thought, from Lord Grey's! So this was done, and at last my efforts were crowned with at least a small measure of success. It got for Ryland the very inadequate sum of £5,000 as compensation for his losses.

In following, however, this little episode to its close, I am anticipating the order of time, and must return for a little on my steps. In 1850 London was full of talk about the great Industrial Exhibition which Prince Albert had designed for the following year, and for the preparation of which he had associated together many of the most distinguished men in politics, in science, and in arts. It was then an entirely new idea, and it amuses me now to recollect the absurd fears and the not less absurd hopes which were conjured up by opposing parties in society.

This would appear to be the proper place to introduce what I then knew of that remarkable young German Prince who had become the husband of our young Queen. His Royal Highness had been kind enough at one time to arrange that an intimation should be made to me that he would be pleased if I were to accept an official place in his Court. But this would have been so entirely out of my natural line of life and of occupation that I could not possibly accept the position, although I regarded the proposal as a great personal compliment, on which I set a high value. I knew a great deal more about the Prince than was known to the public, and, indeed, to any but a very few persons who enjoyed a real intimacy with

the Queen. One of those was my mother-in-law, the Duchess of Sutherland, who had been in the Queen's service as Mistress of the Robes ever since Her Majesty's accession to the throne. The Duchess was a woman who had as quick an eye for every form of human excellence as for every kind of beauty in Nature or in Art. Everything that was pure and noble secured her immediate recognition, by whatever drapery it might be covered. She had met Prince Albert at Rome, and had been then struck by the beauty of his countenance. When he married the Queen, the Duchess had abundant opportunities of observing his pure and conscientious life, and the unselfish devotion with which he laboured systematically in the service of the monarchy and of its people. The insular dislike of all foreigners, which is almost a feature in the English character, told against any general popularity. The classes most interested in science and in art were all impressed by his knowledge and ability when they came into contact with him; and the long and intricate preparations which were necessary to bring to a successful issue his great scheme of an International Exhibition were the first transactions which spread widely among the middle classes some knowledge of this very remarkable man. The Prince had a countenance modelled on the type of beauty conceived by the great masters as representing souls that have reached the spiritual world. There was great sweetness and great gentleness in his face, but he had a powerful forehead, and a calm, penetrating eye, where moments of reflection were interchanged with glances which bespoke the frequent suggestions of humour and amusement.

As there was nothing to interest me much in the session of 1850, my wife and I determined to spend some of the midsummer weeks in visiting my island estates in the Hebrides, and particularly Tiree, which had been the source of so much anxiety ever since 1846, and where the work of reform was still going on

to such an extent that the whole rental of the estate was absorbed. Accordingly, we hired a steamer and made our way to that lovely island. The only house we could inhabit was one used by the local factor. It was in the singular position of being built on a promontory projecting into a small and sheltered lake, at some distance from the sea. I do not doubt that this was a traditional site where a crannog or lake-dwelling had once existed, and that its connection with the shores of the lake had been effected by subsequent filling in of the isolating channel.

It is very difficult to make others understand the immense enjoyment I have always had in the scenery of the Hebrides. In the last century this scenery was unappreciated by Samuel Johnson, and more recently we have seen, in his 'Monks of the West,' how insensible to its beauties was even the refined and poetic temperament of Montalembert. I suppose that in this case, as in many others, Walter Scott has been the great revealer. And yet much of the Hebridean scenery has every element of lofty grandeur and of beauty. Its precipices are magnificent, its mountains lofty, rugged, and highly suggestive of the most tremendous forces which have made our world. Its sunsets are unequalled in any part of the world, because the rainy climate secures an extraordinary richness and variety in the clouds. A large part of the island of Tiree is not raised 50 feet above the waves. But all the more completely are we delivered over to the two great dominions of the ocean and of the sky, with just enough of earth to indicate the relation of both to its abundance of life and joy. The sea comes in on every variety of beach, but chiefly on great curved bays of pure white sand, sometimes in the gentlest ripples, sometimes in rollers which are magnificent. The grass pastures are rich in clovers and full of larks. The skies in the evening are often gorgeous beyond description, the clouds

imitating sometimes towers and battlements, and even mountain ranges, so solid, apparently, that I have seen strangers convinced of their substantiality. Much of the glory of the sky and of the long after-glow which succeeds the sunset, and in that latitude 'lies in heaven half the night,' was reflected in the little lake underneath our windows; whilst terns and plovers of various species came to roost on the boulder-stones which were above the water. Coots and water-hens floated among the reeds, busy with their peaceful quest of water-weeds.

My enjoyment in this peculiar scenery was greatly enhanced by seeing the happy effects upon the people of the policy which I had entered upon four years ago. The emigration of several hundreds of half-starving tenants, and the annexation of their wretched little possessions to those held by their most capable neighbours, together with systematic draining of large areas of land, were measures which were already bearing most satisfactory fruit. The interest chargeable on capital laid out on these improvements seemed to be met with ease out of increased produce, and other tenants were eager to have their land drained on the same terms. The people throughout the island were most cordial in the reception they gave us, for as yet the 'Epoch of the Fools' was far away, when they were to be taught that every power which had been exercised by me and my ancestors for their benefit was a power which we never ought to have possessed.

On our return to Inveraray, we were shocked and grieved by the news of the death of Sir Robert Peel, from a riding accident on Constitution Hill. Even those who had never belonged to his party now felt that a great pillar of the State had fallen, and that the country had suffered an irreparable loss. It was quite possible that Peel might never again have been at the head of a Government, but the weight attached to his opinion by all his contemporaries was not less,

but greater, than it had ever been before. He enjoyed the favour of his Sovereign, and he had seen and appreciated the wisdom of the Prince Consort, who in his turn had not less thoroughly trusted in the honesty and sagacity of Peel.

I had long given up my old habit of going to hear debates in the House of Commons, so that even if I had been in London I might probably have missed hearing one of the most remarkable speeches ever delivered in that House. That was the speech delivered by Lord Palmerston, in defence of his conduct towards the Greek Government in the affair of Don Pacifico. In itself it was an affair of the smallest possible importance, but it brought to a head the long-prevailing impression that Lord Palmerston's mode of conducting the foreign policy of the country was overbearing and bullying, and offensive to other nations. It was not pleasant to see the overwhelming power of England brought to bear with violence on the microscopic little kingdom of Greece, in order to extract extravagant compensation for a Gibraltar Jew. I shared the unfavourable impression of Palmerston's conduct which was universal with the Peelites and widespread even in his own party ; but it was admitted that the speech in which he made his defence in June, 1850, placed him at one bound among the greatest speakers of his time. It lasted for four and a half hours. It was delivered without the aid of a single note. It was wonderful for clearness, for connected narrative, for fiery appeals to sentiment, and for cogent reasoning on the principles he assumed. 'We are all proud of him,' was the tribute of Sir Robert Peel in the last speech he ever delivered in the House of Commons, not many hours before that fatal accident which caused his death.

Between two and three months of this winter, 1850-51, we spent in Edinburgh. I had taken there the charming old residence of Bruntsfield House, for the purpose of putting my wife during her confinement

under the charge of Dr. (afterwards Sir James) Simpson. I can hardly, without seeming to exaggerate, convey to others the pleasure which we both had in our personal intercourse with that distinguished man. His name will ever be inseparably connected with one of the most blessed discoveries of our age — that of anæsthetics. He was then in the full flush of his first great joy over the relief to human suffering which it had been given to him to introduce to the knowledge and practice of his great profession. For a long time he had had floating before his mind's eye the possibility of some agent which would produce a temporary and harmless insensibility to pain. Chloroform was not, as such discoveries generally are, the result of a happy accident turned to good account. The possibility of such a substance existing was deliberately conceived by Simpson, and tested by experiments systematically pursued among the volatile ethers, till one was found both safe and effective. Incredible as it may seem now, this most blessed discovery was met at first by an ebullition of every conceivable folly that could be suggested by personal envy, by professional and provincial jealousy, and even by religious superstition. The London School of Medicine was jealous of the Edinburgh School, whilst, locally, the pre-eminence of Simpson did not recommend the splendour of this individual achievement to all his contemporaries. There was a war of pamphlets and of scientific papers, in which Simpson took his part with a powerful and slashing pen. That great army of suffering mortality which was yearly passing under the surgeon's knife was continually present before him—silent for the most part, since few of them were writers or speakers, but eloquent none the less to those who in the course of their professional education had seen the agonies of the operating-table.

There was, however, one of these sufferers then in Edinburgh who held a high place in physiological science, and who wielded a pen of extraordinary power

and pathos. This was Professor George Wilson, author of biographies of Cavendish and of Dr. John Reid, and other charming books. He had been born a delicate child, with a constitution full of the seeds of hereditary disease, but also, as not unfrequently happens, with a mind rich in the highest qualities of intellect and heart. Deadly mischief at last settled in the bones and joints of one leg, and he was told by the surgeons that amputation was the only hope of life. He was therefore now able to tell the world what an anæsthetic would have done for him, not merely in saving him from the agonies of the operation, but in saving him from the more terrible and prolonged agonies of the anticipation. Being an eminent physiologist, he knew only too well the delicacy of his own organism, its extreme sensitiveness to even ordinary pain. He knew all the great nerves and great vessels that would have to be rudely cut, and the bones that would have to be sawn asunder—rendered more than usually sensitive by the inflammation and degeneration of disease. All this was before his mind by night and by day. Black whirlwinds of horror used to come over him at times, during which death would have been a mercy. It is the high, but also at evil times the sad, prerogative of man to live mainly in the future. Anticipation is the atmosphere he breathes. He has a power and a habit of anticipation which removes the physical sufferings of the lower animals into an altogether different category from his. George Wilson could not but feel intensely what it would have been to him if someone, during those days of habitual agony, had suddenly told him that an ether had been discovered which, when inhaled for a few seconds, would render the body as insensible to pain as if it were inorganic—that the knife, and the saw, and the pincers, and the forceps might all do their dreadful work among the tenderest tissues of his poor quivering body, yet without causing the smallest suffering,

and that consciousness would return without a trace in it of the dreadful ordeal. Wilson's paper on this subject was written with such power and pathos that the impression it made upon me remains as vivid as it was forty-eight years ago. We found the author as charming as his pen, and we knew better than ever how to cherish our intercourse with Simpson as one of the very greatest among the benefactors of mankind.

Simpson's own enthusiasm was delightful. I do not know that I have ever met any man in whom genius was written more visibly in face and voice and manner. His spirit seemed to be always quivering in the presence of Nature, as if conscious of her immense suggestiveness, and trembling lest he should miss even the slightest of her hints. It was most interesting to watch the movements of his expression when he or anyone else mentioned in conversation any curious or singular fact—anything unusual or apparently anomalous, however trivial. His spirit seemed always to withdraw into its own recesses and to be following the trail of some footprint too faint for others to observe, and too slight even for himself to follow to any conclusion. Then it would return from its excursion, breaking into smiles, radiant with the hope that an explanation would come at last. It was not only in physiology that his conversation was so delightful. Immense as that subject is, and having branches which lead into the empyrean, it was not large enough to engross that eager nature. On many other sciences he was deeply read, and watchful of every new step, whether of discovery or in speculation. In archæology he was an expert, and waged war with the Astronomer Royal on a strange theory about the original purpose of the Pyramids of Gizeh. In appearance Simpson had great peculiarities, not altogether favourable to a first impression. He was very short in stature, very fat and round, with small legs, which moved in a short and rapid shuffle, so that he seemed to roll into

a room like a black rabbit. His head was enormous—like the classical busts of Jupiter. It was covered with a shock of long and thick hair, which fell over his forehead so as often to obscure his eyes. His features, underneath a brow of immense breadth, were small and refined—a finely-curved nose, sagacious eyes, with a smile of great kindness and benevolence, and most movable and expressive lips. When one had got to know it, and to see its working in thought and in expression, it was a most noble and spiritual countenance.

Our intercourse with Simpson was not my only resource at that time in Edinburgh. Finding myself so near the University, I used to walk across Bruntsfield Links every morning after breakfast to attend the class of chemistry. That Chair was then held by Professor James Gregory, the last representative of a very distinguished family, whose members had made for themselves a name in more than one branch of science. One of them was the inventor of the 'Gregorian telescope,' a discovery without which astronomy would not now be what it has become. Another member was for a long time the leading doctor in Edinburgh, and his familiar name was 'the beloved physician.' His famous 'mixture' was the terror of my childhood, not yet erased from the horrors of the Pharmacopœia.

Professor James Gregory in 1850 was an elderly man, in very bad health; but he had much charm as a lecturer, and my daily attendance soon established a warm friendship between us. He was afflicted with elephantiasis in the legs, and could not without great difficulty rise from his chair. Chained thus to a sedentary life, he took to microscopy, as an occupation which he could pursue under such conditions. He was at that time devoted to the forms and structure of the Diatomaceæ. I had never before seen them. The beauty and the definiteness of their ornamentation delighted me, and the position they hold as organisms

belonging to the vegetable kingdom, whilst they are certainly endowed with the power of voluntary motion, excited all my curiosity. It became one of my favourite amusements to gather them, and I was able to supply my friend with some new and curious specimens from a lake deposit at Inveraray, which was rich in both marine and fresh-water species.

The most interesting incident in my intercourse with Professor Gregory arose out of another of his pursuits, for which he was much laughed at in Edinburgh at that time—namely, mesmerism, or animal magnetism. I soon found out that, whether Gregory was right or wrong in some of his reasonings and conclusions, he was not a man to be laughed at, but simply one of those who felt as a living truth that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy. Although London society had been full for some years of the talk about mesmerism, I had never given myself any occupation concerning it. I had a profound distrust of all the public exhibitions and exhibitors, whilst the complete lawlessness and senselessness of the alleged results were no inducements to serious inquiry. On the other hand, I had never made up my mind that it was all nonsense or all imposture. The physical effects of the mesmeric sleep were indubitable, and we heard from India that those effects were perfect anæsthesia under the most severe surgical operations. I was therefore always willing to see what could be seen, under conditions of real security against imposture or deceit of any kind. Such conditions were afforded by Professor Gregory. He was a scientific man, devoted to strictly scientific methods, and an expert in one science, which was at once most rigid in its laws and most mysterious in its effects. When he invited me to his house to see certain experiments on servants and friends of his own, I gladly accepted. They were experiments in two only out of the many classes

of phenomena attributed to mesmerism. One was what was then called the phenomena of suggestion. The other was the phenomena of thought-reading. In the first of these the mesmerized person (being thrown into that state by passes of the mesmerizer's hands) was in such a condition of absolute passivity that he received any impression suggested to him by speech, and acted on that impression in the appropriate manner. The scene suggested became to him the scene in which he lived, however different from his actual surroundings. I saw this effect produced and exhibited in perfection in the case of a fine handsome young officer of a regiment then stationed in the Castle of Edinburgh. He was made to believe that he was at a horse-market, and had to choose a horse. He took the piano for the horse, and felt down one leg to the castor, as men feel down the leg of a horse to the fetlock. He was then made to believe he was on a grouse moor, shooting grouse over dogs. His handling of an imaginary gun was most curious, and if he had not been stopped by those near him, he would have walked out of the window to pick up the fallen birds.

Beyond the certainty I felt that such an effect could not be produced by a purely imaginary agency, I saw no light in this exhibition. But what followed was a phenomenon of a very different character, and it has remained vividly impressed on my memory as the strangest and most mysterious I have encountered in life. One of the women servants in Gregory's house was very sensitive to mesmeric influence, and when under it she was said to see, and to be able to describe, any scene which was vividly depicted in the memory of the person who was trying the experiment, and who was placed in close proximity to her. Gregory invited me to try the experiment, and in assenting, I determined to imagine myself in a very peculiar room at Trentham with which I was familiar, and all the details of which I could recall with the vividness

and reality of life. It was a room so peculiar in its decorations that no one who had not seen it could possibly imagine it. The walls were panelled with fine large pictures of Venice by Stanfield, the great marine painter of the day, and the wall spaces between the panels were covered with a rich red velvet, over which was cast an open trellis-work of a gold moulding. The woman at once began by identifying what she saw in my vision as a room. She then proceeded, as if she saw dimly through obscurities or obstacles, but still continued with firm steps, so far as each of them carried her. The next step was that in the room she saw 'pictures,' then 'large pictures.' At this point she paused, as if puzzled, and said: 'What is it that I see between the pictures?' Then she went on slowly: 'Oh, it's velvet, with a net of goldwork over it.' She proceeded with other details in the same way, including a description of an old gentleman walking in the garden outside the window, which corresponded well with the personal appearance of my father-in-law, the Duke of Sutherland. But what she had already said was enough for me. I could not then doubt, nor have I doubted ever since, that she had seen and read the vision which I had recalled, and by recalling had printed afresh on my mental, if not also on my physical, retina. This is an idea which was not my own, for it had been suggested to me by my friend Sir David Brewster—a man of great eminence in those days, especially in the optical sciences. He always maintained that when we recall with the eye of memory any familiar object whatever—whether a face, or a house, or a tree—and when we dwell on it steadily with our mental vision, as we may easily do, so that every characteristic line and colour and expression is reproduced in our imagination, the result is produced by an actual reprinting on our bodily retina of the picture originally impressed on that same retina by the rays of light. I often asked him whether he could give me any proof of this as a fact. But I never could get

from him more than strong reassertions that it must be so; that the vivid reproduction of remembered scenes could only be effected by the same machinery as that by which perception had been originally produced. But this idea of necessity depends on the assumption that purely mental images are impossible, and that organic machinery of some kind is an invariable and necessary part of all perception, whether at first or second hand. It may be so; but it obviously is not a doctrine applicable to remembered thoughts and reasonings, but only to remembered scenes. And this would seem to supply a law, at least of limitation, to the phenomena of mesmeric clairvoyance. Not thought-reading, but only picture-seeing, would be the boundary of its powers. And undoubtedly such an idea was welcome to my mind in thinking on the mysterious facts which had come before me. That the woman did see the scene I had vividly and consciously reproduced on what we call the tablets of memory seemed to me certain; that she could have anticipated the selection I was to make of all the scenes I could have recalled with equal ease was, I felt, an absolute impossibility. That she could have described characteristic details which are absolutely unique was equally impossible, without some actual seeing of them on her own part. The total impression left on me was that human beings in certain states of mental sensitiveness may and do sometimes see what other human beings are vividly redepicting on the retina of their eyes.

As soon as my wife's convalescence enabled us to leave Edinburgh, we returned to Rosneath, where we stayed during the early spring of 1851. And this suggests to me the opportunity of picking up a few scattered strands of life which I should not like to leave altogether aside, since they entered not immaterially into the tissue which it is the business of a biographer to weave. Among the very few

foreigners in London with whom I had any acquaintance, there was one with whom my wife and myself had now made an intimate friendship. We both had the same introduction — namely, the 'Life and Letters of Dr. Arnold,' by Arthur Stanley. All who have read that delightful and instructive book must remember the terms of enthusiastic admiration in which Arnold always spoke of Chevalier Bunsen, who had been the successor of the great Niebuhr as Prussian Minister at Rome, and was now in the same capacity in London. Full of learning and knowledge, especially on all historical subjects, whether in secular or religious history, he was not less remarkable for an eager and enthusiastic temperament, a most genial manner, and, in conversation, an acute sense of fun. Like all Germans, especially at that time, he had an intense love of the Fatherland, and was one of those who most eagerly believed that the unsettlement of all its thrones and peoples, consequent on the still unexhausted heavings of the Revolutions of 1848, would somehow end in a consolidated German Empire and a politically united people. Of course, as a good Prussian subject, and as representative of Prussia, he desired above all things that this union should be effected under the leadership of the Prussian monarchy. At one moment it seemed about to be accomplished, for the Imperial Crown was offered to the King of Prussia. Bunsen was in the highest state of excitement. He mounted the German tricolour upon the Embassy; he decorated his carriage with its rosettes, and even mounted one on his own breast. Of course, he was made the laughing-stock of political society in London, which, for the most part, is incapable of understanding such faith in a future which still seemed so distant and improbable. To all sceptics Bunsen used to open his fine large speculative eyes, and, looking as at a vision, he would say, 'It comes—you will see—it is coming.'

Palmerston, who was our Foreign Minister, was the

very incarnation of ridiculing disbelief. But more than this: he hated Prussia, and had the worst opinion of the motives of Prussian statesmen. They were playing a game for the hegemony of Germany, and not at all for the establishment of constitutional liberty amongst the German people. At that moment, and since his triumph in the House of Commons on the Greek claims, Palmerston seemed the most powerful member of the Cabinet. Distrusted by many of his own party, he was detested by every foreign Government, and especially by the German Unionists. I well recollect standing with Bunsen outside his Embassy at Carlton Terrace when a procession was passing by along the Mall below us. When Palmerston passed there was some cheering of the spectators ranged on each side. Bunsen turned his eyes away slowly, saying, half to himself, half to me: 'He has no principle, and he has no heart.' In the sense in which these words were spoken, they were founded on truth; but they were wrong in the sense they conveyed in our language. Palmerston was not, in the ordinary meaning of the word, an unprincipled politician. He was honest in his purposes, and truthful in his prosecution of them. That 'honesty is the best policy' was his favourite adage in diplomacy; but what Bunsen meant was true—he had no high ideals for the future of the world, and had a profound distrust of those who professed to be guided by such ideals. To them he seemed to be, and he really was, heartless and unsympathetic. Palmerston's nature and Bunsen's were pretty nearly at the poles of human character.

Bunsen had much to endure at that time in English society. He and I were both members of a club which met once a week to dine at the Thatched House Tavern in St. James's Street. It was a very miscellaneous society, presided over by old Sir Robert Inglis, the old-fashioned Tory High Churchman, who so long represented the University of Oxford in the

House of Commons. On one evening I recollect only too well one of our number was a certain Dr. Croll, who had been a notorious and very violent political writer. He was a coarse man, but clever and forcible in his talk. As bad luck would have it, the conversation turned, as it often did at that time, on the state of affairs in Germany, and Dr. Croll most improperly said something very contemptuous of the policy of the then King of Prussia. Considering that the Ambassador of that Sovereign was sitting opposite, this was certainly a gross breach of the courtesies of a literary society, at which men of all parties were understood to meet on friendly terms. Bunsen flew into a violent passion—one so violent as almost to choke his utterance. Poor Sir Robert Inglis, the most gentle and courteous of men, was greatly distressed and shocked—as, indeed, we all were—for the scene was discreditable to English manners. I mention it as an illustration of the state of feeling at the time, and of the total want of sympathy with the aspirations of the German people which was certainly conspicuous in this country. When that movement for unity collapsed, because the King of Prussia could not accept an offer which came from only a portion of the German people, and was supported by none of the Princes, Bunsen felt bitterly the apparent vanishing of his hopes and of his dreams. He shut himself up in his Embassy with his books, and went as little as possible into a society so little in harmony with his feelings.

And yet, when I look back upon that time now, I cannot but feel that Bunsen was far nearer to the truth than those who ridiculed him. The unity of Germany was not a dream, neither was the leadership of Prussia. Her aspirations were as legitimate as those of any other people in seeking for empire. She had, indeed, been slow and laggard when Pitt had tried to rally Europe in its own self-defence. But she had now passed through the fire of a terrible retribution, and the dis-

astrous days which followed Jena had taught her at last the duty of the greatest German kingdom towards the rest of Europe. It was scarcely either rational or grateful in the British public to forget so soon the timely advance of Blücher on our left at Waterloo. Neither Bunsen nor Palmerston could then see the steps of consequence which were already preparing the way for a Prussian-German Empire. Bunsen was right: 'it was coming'; only Prussia had to prove herself the leader in another and a terrible baptism of fire and blood. No new page had been turned over in the history of political causes by the Revolution of 1848. Plebiscites and votes by acclamation in Parliaments of doubtful authority were of as little avail as ever in making nations. The gallant Crown Prince of Prussia, brother of the King, who arrived one day in Bunsen's house in Carlton Terrace alone, in plain clothes, and a refugee from revolutionary violence in Berlin—this, if Bunsen could have foreseen the future, was the herald of all his hopes. Well do I remember seeing and admiring the fine military bearing of that Prince at a ball in Buckingham Palace. Only by the restoration of legitimate authority, and by the restoration of the army to its self-respect, did that Prince, when he became King, succeed in again building up a Prussia capable of fulfilling Bunsen's hopes and more than verifying his dreams.

My wife and I cultivated our friendship with Bunsen to the last hour of his residence in England. The Sutherlands had him as a guest at Trentham, and we had a happy visit from him at Inveraray. He was indeed a delightful companion—the most genial and warm-hearted of men, bubbling over with humour, and full at the same time of an absorbing interest in all the greatest questions of intellectual speculation. Often have I wished that he had lived to see the day when the Imperial Crown of Germany was offered with universal acclaim to the refugee Prince to whom he gave shelter in Carlton Terrace, and when that Prince,

as King of Prussia, was in the Palace of Versailles, at the head of the triumphant armies of Germany. Not seldom in this world are we tempted to entertain such wishes, when prophetic men die apparently before their time, and when the visions that excited nothing but ridicule in their contemporaries are realized at last in the sight of all the world.