

## CHAPTER XXVI

1855

### MEETING OF BRITISH ASSOCIATION AT GLASGOW— RESIGNATION OF PRIVY SEAL—APPOINTED POST- MASTER-GENERAL—PROPOSALS FOR PEACE

I MUST now, however, retrace my steps a little, to narrate and explain an episode in my life which had some permanent effects upon it. The Council of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, then still in the first flush of its public interest and renown, had in 1854 appointed Glasgow as its next place of meeting, and, by a most unexpected action, had designated me as its President for that occasion. Greatly as I valued this high honour, I knew well, of course, how much extraneous circumstances had entered into it. My territorial position in the West of Scotland, of which Glasgow is the capital, had told for much. My personal friendship with almost all the founders and early leaders of the Association told for more. There was, however, at least the shadow of a scientific excuse for the honour they did me. The discovery I had made of a fine series of tertiary leaves and ferns in the Isle of Mull, in a bed underlying typical basaltic rocks, was a discovery of real importance. It threw light on the geological date of the enormous volcanic area which stretches from Antrim to Greenland, and presented, more perfectly than anywhere else, the forms of a rich and beautiful vegetation which had

covered a country now utterly destroyed. Still, I could not but look forward with some anxiety to the duty of delivering an opening address to such an august assembly. To this duty, therefore, I had been turning my attention, and in all the intervals of political occupation and engagements during the earlier months of 1855 I read assiduously all that I could obtain on geology and comparative anatomy. On the latter subject, I used to attend as often as I could the lectures delivered by Professor Owen at the Royal College of Surgeons, to which I have already alluded.

It was the custom of the British Association that its President for the year should occupy the chair again at its next meeting, but only as a formality, and that he should then vacate it in favour of his successor. Lord Wrottesley was my predecessor, and, under the usual custom, I should have met him only for a moment in the interchange of office. I wished, however, to have some conversation with him before the delivery of my address, and gladly accepted his invitation to visit him at his place in Staffordshire, on my way to Scotland. Lord Wrottesley was an astronomer, and following, though on a much smaller scale, the example of Lord Rosse in Ireland, he had done some good work in a fine private observatory erected at his own home. I went by rail to Wolverhampton, and thence drove in an open carriage to Wrottesley. I had never before seen what is well called the Black Country—the great coal-field that stretches from Wolverhampton to Dudley. No other mineral district presents an aspect quite so odious. The bowels of the earth appear to have been lifted out, and so spread and heaped upon the surface, that agriculture seems to be destroyed, and the whole country to be given up to carelessness and waste. The air was thick with smoke, and the only objects seen through it were unsightly chimneys. I was, however, surprised and delighted to find that every stage of a drive to the west seemed to lift me more and more out of this pandemonium, and in the course of a few miles

great naval arsenal in a sea always open, by seizing or conquering the Verunger Fiord in the North Sea. Clarendon introduced it as if in principle the Cabinet had already agreed to it, and as if he expected from all of us a ready assent to its particular form. I at once challenged the assumption that the Cabinet had ever given, or had ever been asked for, its assent. Several other members joined me in saying that they had no recollection of any such agreement. We did not even know how far it went. Clarendon was then obliged to confess that it was a specific guarantee given by us, not covering the Finland Harbour alone, but the whole possessions of Norway and Sweden ; that it bound us to resist Russia, in defence of these possessions, both by sea and land ; and that it did not stipulate for any part of the cost being repaid to us. I protested against so formidable an engagement being sprung upon us in this way. Several other members of the Cabinet took the same view, and when Clarendon and Palmerston saw that we were seriously divided, they withdrew the question for the time and for further consideration. I was astonished and alarmed by the support given to so rash an undertaking by such a man as Lord Lansdowne.

On the other hand, George Lewis and George Grey were with me in opposition. At this time I wrote the following letter to Clarendon on the subject :

‘ ARGYLL LODGE,

‘ KENSINGTON.

‘ MY DEAR CLARENDON,

‘The impression on my mind at present is so strongly against the proposed Swedish Treaty that I wish to explain it to you before the matter comes more formally under the consideration of the Cabinet.

‘I do not at all doubt our interest in supporting the Scandinavian kingdoms against the aggressions of Russia. On the contrary, that interest is so direct and obvious that it gives us rights of interference even stronger than those which we are now exercising against the same Power in the East of Europe. But

enterprises are hardly free to play with those at a game of chance, and to risk everything on the unforeseen and unexpected.

The next day Lord Wrottesley gave me a fine example of that which has always been to me one of the pleasures of life—the sight of a great landscape. The sudden escape from a hideous country to one of freshness and beauty which had surprised and delighted me the day before was now scientifically explained. Many of the coal measures of England are overlaid—sometimes to a great depth—by masses of red sandstone and conglomerate. Wolverhampton and its black country lies at the eastern edge of one of those overlying masses, which forms a high tableland to the west. Wrottesley is situated on the top of this tableland, which to the west again forms a high ridge, with a sudden escarpment or declivity falling in the same direction. From a particular point, not far from Wrottesley, the whole of this part of England down to the valley of the Severn, and to the hills of Wales beyond, breaks suddenly on the view, if we penetrate a narrow belt of wood and stand at its western edge. From that point there burst upon us a fine panorama such as I have not seen elsewhere in England. It was not that sea of foliage which I had admired so much when I was a boy in Warwickshire. It was a view including a wide stretch of very various country sloping to the Severn, and beyond the Severn ranging over the hills of Wales. It must have made a great impression upon me, for now I seem to remember it distinctly, after the lapse of forty-five years. I thought it glorious. There was but one fault. There was no visible water—neither sea nor lake nor river. This was due to one curious peculiarity of the Severn—that it flows everywhere between such steep banks that it is invisible till you are upon it. Even where it flows through some level tract, as it does between Tewkesbury and Worcester, it glides between high banks of mud, generally richly foliaged with willow-bushes and wild weeds

*Europe*, when the war took off the attention of Russia for the time.

‘Farther, it appears that the Russian design has been cherished since 1774, or a period of eighty years, and that for thirty years she was nearer its attainment than there is any reason to suppose she can be for thirty years to come.

‘Surely, then, this is no case of urgency, none in which we should be justified in taking out of the hands of future Governments the freedom which ought to belong to them. We have not only no reason to fear any blindness on the part of Sweden, but we are expressly told that her eyes are open, and that she was actually about to carry her appeal to Europe and, of course, to us. When the danger again arises, we have the best ground of confidence that she will pursue the same course; or if, whenever that event should happen, England still takes the same view of her policy or her interests as that which we now take, she will be free to act upon it. If, on the contrary, her views should be changed, that change will not have happened without a good cause.

‘Lastly, we gain no immediate advantage in exchange for this burden of future inconvenience. There might be some inducement if Sweden were now to join in, in this pending war. But this is not proposed. I see no one result, except the danger of embarrassment which we shall bequeath to others. I think that in waging this war we should at least take care not to sow the seeds of future wars, in so far, at least, as we can help doing so.

‘Yours,  
‘ARGYLL.’

One of the most serious matters which weighed on me was the dispirited and dispiriting tone of the letters from our new Commander-in-Chief at Sebastopol, General Simpson. He had evidently lost heart and hope. He expected the whole expedition to be a failure—warned us that if the siege went on our army must be prepared to spend another winter in the Crimea, and doubted whether the strength and spirits of the men would stand such a trial. Moreover, he told us that, whilst the French army had regular ‘lines,’ we had none. Simpson added

which stretch along above the Dumbarton and Argyllshire road. My mother had often lived there with the Smiths, who were her earliest and most intimate friends. Mrs. Smith attended her closely during her last illness, and was with her when she died, and although now she also was gone, the whole place and the very name were full to me of tender associations. As to James Smith himself, I never could forget how his eager conversations with my father had stimulated my early intellectual activities, and how he had given me my earliest lesson in at least one great branch of natural history.

On reaching Jordanhill, I was very sorry to find that he was confined to bed, and prohibited from attending the meeting. My wife had joined me from London, and we had a most agreeable and interesting party in the house, including Sir Charles Lyell and his very pretty and clever wife, Sir Roderick Murchison, and Colonel (afterwards Sir) Edward Sabine, then President of the Royal Society. Terrestrial magnetism was his special subject, and he had done distinguished work upon it in Arctic voyages. He was a man of great modesty and refinement of manners, and an old and intimate friend of James Smith.

I delivered my presidential address in Glasgow on the 11th September. I think I may fairly say that it was successful—at least, in holding the general attention of a very large audience for more than an hour. The attention of a Glasgow audience is remarkable, but in an address on science, some ideas unfamiliar to many might make it difficult to follow with full comprehension. I felt, however, one difficulty under which of necessity I laboured. Unlike a speech and many lectures, the address was a written document, and I was, of course, obliged to read it. In any long reading the management of the voice is most difficult. The tone becomes monotonous, and induces inattention in those who listen. I tried to resist this; but I was quite conscious that I did so with very partial success.

to London. He told me on July 30th that he had seen Simpson's letters, and thought them much too desponding, and that they proceeded from a mind in some degree enervated. In its way, of course, this was a comfort; but what sort of a prospect did it hold out as regards the officer who was still in command of our army?

It was some days after these transactions, on the 20th August, that we heard for the first time in the Cabinet of an idea which ultimately took form in one of the greatest events of our time. This was the idea of cutting a canal to join the Mediterranean and Red Seas. It was a French idea, and was urged upon us by our ally, Louis Napoleon. Palmerston surprised me and others by the most vehement opposition. It would, he said, cut off Egypt from Turkey, stop the advance of the troops of the suzerain Power, and place British interests in Egypt and in India at the mercy of France. Clarendon was at that time completely under the sway of Palmerston, and took the same line. I don't think they were supported in it by one single other member of the Cabinet. All my colleagues and I thought that the proposal in itself was one which could not be creditably or successfully opposed. I suggested that all the political dangers feared by Palmerston might be averted by making the canal a joint enterprise with other nations, and by placing it under some international control. In this I was supported by the whole Cabinet, and under this influence Clarendon was moved somewhat from his original position. But Palmerston remained as hostile as ever. He seemed quite ready to risk a quarrel with France rather than to consent to any such canal. The result at that time was curious. Clarendon conveyed to Louis Napoleon how very strong a feeling on the subject existed on Palmerston's part, and the Emperor, on receiving this, said at once to Cowley: 'If you will say nothing more on the subject, I will take care that my people shall let it drop.' There could not be a more

capable of exhibiting the same results if only a long enough time is allowed to elapse. Living as I did in a country where all the hills indicate great earth movements, of which we have no experience now, I thought this theory altogether overdone, although I recognised the service it had rendered in the able hands of Lyell, in teaching us all to see, as we should not else have done, what may be the cumulative effects of causes now working everywhere around us. It was, of course, impossible for me to enter into this controversy in my presidential address. But I was determined to introduce into it some passing indication of my opinion—all the more because I was speaking in the presence of my friend Lyell. I accordingly contrived to do this incidentally in the form of an illustration. I compared the gradual advance of science generally to the slow progress of ordinary geological changes, and the occasional influence of great individual men of extraordinary genius and achievement to the sudden and violent changes which must have, as occasionally, done much to transform the surfaces of the earth.

Lyell, during our drive back to Jordanhill, told me that he had no objection to offer to anything I had said; and yet what I did say is fatal to any extreme uniformitarianism, because it brings in recurring periods of catastrophe as a part of the ordinary series of operation. It required some little pluck to read out in the presence of Sir Charles Lyell the following sentence: 'It is true, indeed, that there have been a few such men (men who have been epoch-makers), just as there have been periods of sudden geological operations which have upheaved at once stupendous and enduring monuments.'

This comparison between the building up of scientific knowledge and the building up of our habitable globe—each of them through alternations of slow changes absolutely imperceptible, and then of a few special periods distinguished by rapid and conspicuous developments—was a comparison which conciliated assent.



It seemed to support the doctrine it enforced by that strongest of all arguments in Nature—the strength of a true analogy. I afterwards came to see still more clearly that it was quite reconcilable with all that was true in Lyell's teaching. The perfect continuity of causation has no necessary connection with uniformity of effects. It is perfectly compatible with the occasional outburst of the most tremendous energies; and in later life I brought out this argument in force. Meantime it was enough for me to have challenged the great teacher of uniformitarianism in his own presence, and to find that he saw nothing in what I stated to which he could object.

There were two other passages in my address which gave me satisfaction at the time and have given me pleasure since. They both concerned questions of the greatest interest in science. One of them contained an element of definition, and the other an element of prophecy, which were in advance of their time, and which consequently have recurred to me frequently in later years. It is to be remembered that when I spoke in 1855, Darwin had not yet appeared above the horizon. The method of creation in the organic world was not even a matter of common speculation. The theories of Lamarck had never attracted much attention in England. An anonymous book, 'The Vestiges of Creation,' now known as having been the production of Robert Chambers, had indeed made a momentary noise. Hugh Miller's reply to it, 'The Footprints of the Creator,' was full of suggestiveness and of beauty of conception. But neither of them satisfied the scientific understanding that any tangible clue had been found to the mysteries of creation. Cuvier was master of the situation, and his great pupil Owen was not only in firm possession of all that was yet scientifically known of the facts of palæontology, but was the only author who had so correlated those facts as to raise of necessity questions and suggestions of a transcendental character. I had closely studied his two great works, 'On the

Homologies of the Vertebrate Skeleton' and 'On the Nature of Limbs.' I had heard many of his lectures, and all these had left on my mind an impression that he himself believed that somehow or another different races of animals had descended from each other by ordinary generation. He never said so. But I had a feeling that he was withheld from saying so by considerations akin to those which had determined Robert Chambers to write in this sense anonymously. From whatever cause, Owen's works did not raise the question, except silently, in thoughtful and speculative minds.

When I spoke at Glasgow in 1855, the voice of Science was altogether silent on the subject. It is a satisfaction, therefore, to me to remember that in my address I so stated the known facts of the case, as to give some precision to the question raised, as that question presented itself to my own mind. And my conception of that question was founded on the writings of Owen. 'In physiology,' I asked, 'what is the meaning of that great law of adherence to type and pattern, standing behind as it were and in reserve of that other law by which organic structures are specially adapted to special modes of life? What is the relation between those two laws? and can any light be cast upon it, derived from the history of extinct forms or from the conditions to which we find that existing forms are subject?' No exhaustive answer has ever been given to this question. Feeling as I did then the profound mysteries obviously involved in it, I should have been surprised indeed if I could have foreseen that, within a few years, half the scientific world would be carried off their feet by an answer which was a verbal metaphor, derived from the skill of artificial breeders. It was thus that, when the Darwinian discussion came, I was at least better prepared for it than many others. I had a strong sense of what was wanted, and a high appreciation of the intellectual elements required in any tolerable solution. The demonstration of this has been one of the chief labours of my later life.

The other passage in my address to which I have alluded is one which has given me some satisfaction, because it was a passage entirely my own—that is to say, a passage giving expression to a conviction to which I had been led by solitary thought, and without, so far as I can remember, any suggestion from an external source. From early years I had a vague but a strong impression of the unity of Nature, to the effect that all her phenomena and laws were so closely correlated with each other that every special fact, however accidental or solitary it may seem to be, is a clue to a whole range of corresponding facts, if only we could discover them. I had applied this thought to the great discovery of Dr. Jenner, and had felt and had often expressed the utmost confidence that it could not represent a solitary fact in Nature, and that other diseases would turn out to be attackable on the same principle of some variety of inoculation. The passage in my address was very short, intended merely as a hint to those who could prosecute the subject by research: ‘In medicine, what is the action of specifics? and are there no more discoveries to be made such as rewarded the observation of Jenner in the almost total extinction of a fearful and frequent scourge?’ I need not say that after the lapse of many years I have seen realized the significant anticipations of my address, delivered fifty-four years ago. The possibility of modifying the virulence of acute diseases by the previous introduction of their germs, under regulated and favourable conditions, has now been recognised as a branch of science, and some progress has been made in the investigation of it. It needs further investigation, which no doubt it will receive. Meanwhile my anticipation has been fulfilled, and a very mysterious law of Nature has been revealed, with many physiological implications.

On leaving Jordanhill, we went to Erskine, and after a short stay there with my sister-in-law, Lady Blantyre, my wife and I proceeded to Inveraray, where I had asked several scientific men to come when they left

Glasgow. I had pleasure in pointing out to them, and especially to Professor Hopkins of Cambridge, the phenomena of our crystalline rocks there, which seemed to me to be the result of great earth movements—not volcanic, but in the nature of subsidences along lines of weakness in the earth's crust. I pointed out especially the way in which the deep-seated and historic material—porphyries and granites—had oozed out between the planes of stratification in the sedimentary beds as they tumbled in, those planes of stratification having evidently been the lines of least resistance to the molten material below. In particular, I showed them a specimen of a fragment of our slaty rock, held fast in the middle of a block of the porphyry, the hard slate having evidently fallen into the hot and viscous material which was being squeezed through the subsiding beds. Hopkins was then the leading authority on dynamic geology, and my views seemed to meet with his acceptance.

I had, however, but a short holiday from politics, as I was bound to make my appearance at Balmoral, as Minister-in-Attendance on the Queen. There I found Granville, and heard from him something of what was going on among the sections in the Cabinet. He had heard of a regular agreement between Gladstone and Graham to join Disraeli, but I did not believe it. It showed, however, how men's suspicions then pointed. On the 24th an officer arrived, with the despatches of General Simpson on the capture of Sebastopol.

A few days later I saw a Memorandum from the French Emperor on the terms of peace. He was in favour of keeping Sebastopol in the hands of the allies. But the most important part of this paper was that in which he advocated our taking up the cause of the Poles, by reconstituting the Grand Duchy of Warsaw as a constitutional monarchy, as contemplated in 1815. I had a long conversation on this subject with Prince Albert, by whom it was discussed with that temperate wisdom which was quite a gift in him. I was then,

of a rapidly ascending road I found myself in a fine upland country, with a healthy vegetation and prosperous-looking farms.

I found at Wrottesley a comfortable and commodious house, whilst the near dome of the observatory gave pleasant token of the scientific tastes and pursuits of my excellent host. To my infinite surprise, the first guest to whom I was introduced was Sir John Burgoyne, the man of all others who had been so long dwelling on my mind, associated at first with many hopes, but latterly with many and terrible misgivings. I found that he was a connection by marriage of the Wrottesley family. Among the changes consequent on Lord Raglan's death, Panmure had managed to procure Burgoyne's return home, to which he was not himself averse, because the French Engineers and he were not agreed, and his position had become uncomfortable. I think he was the last of the Peninsular staff to whom recourse was considered possible for active service in the field. Of course, there was much that I should have liked to know from him, but on which I could hardly question him, without indicating impressions which might have given him pain. But there was one point on which he gave me a full and interesting explanation, and that was his answer to the loose idea to which I have already referred—that on the 'flank march' from the Alma to Balaclava, our army might have taken Sebastopol without difficulty, by an assault on its rear. Burgoyne told me that the Russian army was at least 25,000 strong; that our own army was destitute of any heavy artillery; that Sebastopol, though not defended on that side by any continuous works, was defended by separate forts; and that any failure of our attack would certainly have exposed our army to very serious danger. To my civilian understanding his explanation was sufficient, even although the possibility of an accidental success, owing to surprise, be not excluded from the case. Generals responsible for large armies aiming at great

large letter-paper—the finest specimen I had ever seen of his magnificent and characteristic handwriting :

' BROADLANDS,

' *October 13, 1855.*

' MY DEAR DUKE OF ARGYLL,

' I am glad to find by your letter of the 11th that your mind has been travelling in the same track upon the subject of the command of the army as the minds of those of your colleagues who have met from time to time in Downing Street.

' The matter stands thus : Simpson has definitely resigned, and his resignation has been accepted. There is a little sparring match still going on between him and Panmure as to the immediate cause. He says it was a rough telegraphic message, or, as we now call it, a telegram, from Panmure about his inactivity. Panmure maintains that such cannot have been the real cause, and that it must have been consciousness of want of health and strength of mind for the labour and responsibility of his command. But the question has been who should succeed him. Sir George Brown, next in seniority, has come home ill, and though he is an excellent soldier and a good General of division, nobody would advise that he should be sent out again to command. Sir Colin Campbell comes next by seniority, but we all determined some months ago that, with all his merits, which are great, he would not make a good Commander-in-Chief, and all who know him confirm this opinion ; and as nothing has happened since our decision was taken to make us think it was erroneous, we abide by it. After him come Burrard and Rokeby, two good men, but not Commanders-in-Chief. Then comes Codrington. He was pointed out by all two months ago as the fittest for chief command. Has anything happened since to alter the opinion then entertained of him ? Some people think that he did not properly manage the assault of the Redan on the 8th. We do not, on the whole, think that any real blame attaches to him for the failure on that day. The thing attempted was scarcely possible, and the only doubt is whether Simpson was justified in sacrificing so many men in an assault which the experience of the 18 June ought to have shown could not succeed, and which could only be intended as a diversion in favour of the French attack on the Malakoff. If ladders were short and tools

wanting, that was the fault of the Commander-in-Chief and of the Engineer officers; as to the handling of the force allotted for the assault, including the supports, Codrington and Markham, under whom that force was placed, are the two best Generals with the army, and it is presumable that they did the best under the circumstances of the case, and the private accounts we have received confirm that supposition. We have therefore come to the conclusion that the former decision of the Cabinet should be adhered to; and that the command should be given to Codrington. Some persons have thought of General Windham, but it is too soon to put him in so responsible a situation as Commander-in-Chief. He has never till now commanded anything but a company in the Guards. He has lately, I believe, had some regimental command or staff appointment, and he showed on the 8th courage, daring, presence of mind. These qualities go towards making a good General, but there are others equally necessary, and he has had no opportunity of showing whether he possesses them or not. At the next meeting of the Cabinet on Monday we shall probably approve Panmure's letters to Simpson to accept his resignation formally; to Codrington to inform him of his appointment; and to Colin Campbell to soothe his feelings and to assure him that his distinguished merits and great services are duly appreciated, though the Government has chosen another officer for the vacant command.

'Yours sincerely,

'PALMERSTON.'

It is needless to say that I had no positive knowledge enabling me to answer this letter critically. I could only acquiesce. But it gave me a most unsatisfactory impression. If I had no knowledge, the writer evidently had about as little. He took what was told him at the War Office by those who had designated Simpson, and who now seemed to be themselves guided by a mixed regard for mere seniority and by personal prejudices or gossip. I remember, too, that we were told at that time that Sir Colin Campbell could not speak French, whereas later we all came to know that he spoke it excellently well. There was some desperate jealousy

of Sir Colin among the military staff. When seniority pointed to Sir Colin Campbell, it was at once set aside, because some said that, although he was a good brigade officer, he could not safely be entrusted with an army. Yet he was the one officer who had done a very brilliant deed during the siege, in the repulse by a single regiment of a formidable attack of Russian cavalry on Balaclava. I did not then know Sir Colin personally. But the impression left on others who did know him had reached my ears, and it did not increase my confidence in Palmerston's decision when I came to know that the Queen had wished Sir Colin to be appointed. Events soon proved what nonsense had been allowed to stand in the way of an appointment which would undoubtedly have been the safest. Only two years later, Sir Colin's reputation led to his being appointed Commander-in-Chief during the agony of the great Indian Mutiny. If ever a soldier showed the highest capacities of command—quickness, decision, organization, and tact—it was Sir Colin Campbell in his brilliant campaign in Oudh, and I confess it still provokes me to think of what we might have lost by the choice of Codrington over him, if the war had gone on long, as, fortunately, it did not.

On the 1st of October I returned to my wife at Rosneath, enjoying intensely there, as I always did, the beautiful landscapes of my childhood and early youth, the gleaming waters of a long sea-loch, seen through the stems of stately trees fringing its shores and dropping beach-mast into tides which flowed round the world. The rare quiet and privacy of the shores was to me delightful, with no public road between us and the sea, and with winding bays and creeks, giving an intricate outline of woods, rocks, and water. And then there was the whole northern horizon only ten miles off, fringing the sky with a long, continuous chain of blue mountains, with lines of stratification so bent and broken and twisted that it was hard to trace their continuity at all. They were



perpetually raising, in the form of an exquisite picture, all the unsolved problems of dynamical geology which I had been so lately discussing with my friends at Glasgow.

My peace at Rosneath was not much disturbed by a matter which now suddenly made a great noise. This was a squabble, threatening to be a quarrel, between Stratford de Redcliffe and the Sultan. I had seen the authentic account of it when I was at Balmoral. Stratford had gone to the Crimea to present the Order of the Bath to certain officers of the army. When he was away, the Sultan had restored to office and to favour a brother-in-law of his own, who was notoriously even more corrupt than other Pashas. Stratford, on his return to Constantinople, demanded an audience of the Sultan, and began to read to him a remonstrance which he had drawn up. The Sultan showed such nearly uncontrollable anger that Stratford had to stop and to appease him as best he could. There was some talk in the Cabinet of recalling Stratford, and there were very severe articles in the *Times* against him. Stratford's hot temper and imperious disposition were a perpetual anxiety to the Foreign Minister, whilst, on the other hand, his great ability and his great power over the Turkish Government made him invaluable to us, when we could get him to run true to our instructions. The result always was, when it came to the point, that Palmerston flinched from the extreme step of recalling him; and the only incident really curious about this particular affair was that Palmerston took it into his head that Disraeli might possibly accept Stratford's place if he were recalled. The opportunity never arose, but I cannot conceive that Disraeli would ever have left his game at home for such a precarious position in the East.

I heard at this time that Gladstone had some reason to know or to suspect that Palmerston was not thinking of peace, and was even eager for an extended war. Granville had gone to Paris, and wrote to me that the

French Emperor was entirely devoted to our alliance, that his own Minister, Walewski, had no influence with him, and that he would act on the question of peace exactly as we might desire. Granville accordingly thought it a good time to come to an understanding as to what was to be demanded or accepted. But Palmerston at once objected, writing a long and able Memorandum to the effect that Russia was not yet 'half beaten enough.' I entirely agreed with Granville, as all along I had insisted on the duty of making up our own minds as soon as possible on the final objects of the war. I heard also from Canning in London that Palmerston was 'snorting and pawing' more than ever, and that it would be difficult to hold him in when it came to terms. Canning himself, however, did not think that we should make any advances to Russia at that moment, in which also I agreed.

If in Palmerston's Memorandum about peace, when he said that Russia was not yet 'beaten enough,' he referred only to the state of matters at the actual seat of war, he was entirely justified. The mere capture of one half of Sebastopol by the allies might go but a little way towards securing the objects of the war. The Crimea, with all its approaches from the north, excepting only a corner of the Sea of Azof, was still firmly in the possession of Russia. It had often been intended to make an attack on some of those approaches, but it was only now, when the siege of the great fortress was at an end, that a force sufficient for any such purpose had been available. Advantage, however, of this change was at once taken, and a general naval expedition, with a strong land force embarked, had been sent off to attack Kherson, a fortress of considerable strength, which Russia had established to protect the mouth of one of her great rivers—the Dnieper.

On the 21st and 22nd of October we heard of the complete success of this expedition. Kherson had been captured with all its garrison and stores—1,500

prisoners and 70 guns. This was a very considerable feat of arms, well calculated to produce an important moral effect. It tended at least to make up that 'sufficiency of beating' which Palmerston so much desired. I did not believe that it would enable us to get up the great inland river to Nikolaieff, which was an important Russian arsenal. It must, however, harass and annoy the Russians, and interfere with their confidence in the security of the whole Crimea.

It was at this time that the death of Molesworth occurred suddenly, causing a vacancy in one of the most important offices of the Cabinet—that of the Secretaryship for the Colonies. Palmerston, after consulting the Cabinet, determined to try again his old work of fusion, and offered the post to young Lord Stanley. In a long and excellent letter, Stanley refused to separate from his father's party and friends, but indicated that personally he had very little disagreement indeed with the policy of the Government as he understood it. His own feeling generally led him to approve of a minimum of political interference with other countries. I was strongly in favour of the offer, writing in my journal as regarded Stanley personally: 'He is able, thoughtful, and courageous, which we want above all things just now.' Granville wished now to offer the post to Sidney Herbert. But this I regarded as out of the question, seeing that if he came in he would be a source of weakness, because an object of popular suspicion, and therefore less able to represent the interests of peace than Stanley, who, I felt sure, was disposed to peace as soon as it could be obtained. It is significant of the view I then took of the political horizon that in my journal I expressed it thus: 'My belief is that Stanley has acted right, not only for his own, but for the public interest, which is deeply concerned in the reorganization of parties, and Stanley's junction with us would have tended still farther to break this down.'

I went up to London to attend a Cabinet held on the

5th of November. It was mainly concerned with a squabble between us and America, raised by the American Government, who complained that we had enlisted, under our new Foreign Enlistment Act, men who were citizens of the United States, and had thus violated their neutrality. Considering the number of filibustering classes in America, and the very loose control ever exercised over them by the Government, I thought this rather gratuitous picking of a quarrel. An American despatch I had seen at Balmoral seemed to me rather insolent, but Clarendon's reply, which I had not seen till now, had been hot and not well guarded. The American rejoinder was more moderate in tone, and, I thought, met Clarendon's points with very considerable effect. It was characteristic of Palmerston that he at once attributed the better tone of the American despatch to the effect of a naval squadron which he and the Cabinet had sent out to the West Indies about a fortnight before. When Palmerston heard the more moderate terms of the American reply, his remark was: 'The block ships have done good!' But we reminded him that when the despatch left, the squadron had not been heard of in America, and it was still doubtful whether it would not rather do harm than good.

I found in a box in the Cabinet room a series of papers on the old question of a treaty with Sweden, including a guarantee of territory against Russia. This was the first intimation I had had that the proposal was still alive, and was being conducted as secretly as before, so far as the Cabinet was concerned. Towards the end of our meeting, Clarendon referred to the matter with great shyness and obvious embarrassment, and spoke of some suggested alterations. George Grey at once raised the question, 'What is this treaty?' showing that I was not alone in being in complete ignorance of what had been going on since I had resisted stoutly the whole project as in the highest degree inexpedient. What we now heard could only increase our objections,

for the King of Sweden asked for a separate and specific clause securing that we should pay all the expenses of any forces sent to his aid. Clarendon only objected on the ground that it was needless, because it would be so as a matter of course ! I suggested that it would be more reasonable that the stipulation should be precisely the reverse. At all events, I hoped that it would be made clear that Sweden was to do something in her own behalf, and that the whole burden of defending her against Russia was not to fall on England and France. I wrote privately to Clarendon after the Cabinet on this and other points.

Clarendon read an important letter from Nesselrode, saying that the time was not yet come for Russia to propose any terms of peace, but that he could clearly indicate at least the negative side of the question, and specify some conditions that Russia never would consent to. First, she would never cede the Crimea. Secondly, she would never engage to abstain from re-fortifying Sebastopol. Lastly, she never would agree to any compulsory limitation of her fleets. This declaration put peace out of the question.

On the 15th of November I heard from Granville of a proposal which to some little extent changed the tenor of my daily life. Palmerston wished to offer the Duchy of Lancaster to a Commoner, and to this end he wished Harrowby to give it up, and to take the Post Office instead. But Harrowby was a delicate man, had illness in his family, and dreaded the work. It was then suggested that I might be willing to take the Post Office and give up the Privy Seal to Harrowby, who would thus vacate the Duchy. Granville was employed to sound me on this change in my work and position. I did not much like it. The Privy Seal exactly suited me, as it gave me as much work, and exactly the kind of work, which I preferred, without any mere departmental trouble. But, on the other hand, I considered that, for so young a man, I had already held and enjoyed it for a fair time, and that I

ought not to stand in the way of any arrangement more convenient to the Prime Minister and to the Cabinet. I therefore wrote in this sense to Granville, to Harrowby himself, and to Palmerston, saying that I was well pleased with my present office, but I felt that I had had my fair share of it, and was willing to take the Post Office. The vacancy in the Post Office was caused by the designation of Canning, who held it, to the Governor-Generalship of India.

On the 19th of November, 1855, at one of Granville's evening parties, I heard from him that Austria had again come forward as a negotiator between Russia and the Western Powers, and had advanced propositions which had just arrived. Considering the utter weariness and disgust which I had felt so long with the conduct of Austria in the recent Vienna negotiations, I confess I heard this news with some impatience, but Granville told me that the new proposals of Austria he considered excellent. They were these: First, neutralization of the Black Sea. Second, cession of one-half of Bessarabia. Third, independence of the Danubian Principalities. Fourth, prohibition of military arsenals. These terms were to be proposed to Russia, and in the event of refusal Austria was to break off diplomatic relations with Russia. The French Emperor, I was told, strongly insisted on our immediate assent. Granville added that Clarendon approved of these proposals, and had so written to Palmerston, and that the Queen also was favourably disposed. The French Ambassador (Persigny) came in, and spoke to me eagerly on the subject. He said that to his own Government he had always taken the English line, which he described as: 'Wait for the next campaign, when great things will be done in the Baltic with armaments of a new class,' etc. But the French people, he went on to say, desired peace. The Emperor dreaded the war changing its character, and, besides, he was in financial difficulties. Persigny played the old game of telling me that Russia would

of a rapidly ascending road I found myself in a fine upland country, with a healthy vegetation and prosperous-looking farms.

I found at Wrottesley a comfortable and commodious house, whilst the near dome of the observatory gave pleasant token of the scientific tastes and pursuits of my excellent host. To my infinite surprise, the first guest to whom I was introduced was Sir John Burgoyne, the man of all others who had been so long dwelling on my mind, associated at first with many hopes, but latterly with many and terrible misgivings. I found that he was a connection by marriage of the Wrottesley family. Among the changes consequent on Lord Raglan's death, Panmure had managed to procure Burgoyne's return home, to which he was not himself averse, because the French Engineers and he were not agreed, and his position had become uncomfortable. I think he was the last of the Peninsular staff to whom recourse was considered possible for active service in the field. Of course, there was much that I should have liked to know from him, but on which I could hardly question him, without indicating impressions which might have given him pain. But there was one point on which he gave me a full and interesting explanation, and that was his answer to the loose idea to which I have already referred—that on the 'flank march' from the Alma to Balaclava, our army might have taken Sebastopol without difficulty, by an assault on its rear. Burgoyne told me that the Russian army was at least 25,000 strong; that our own army was destitute of any heavy artillery; that Sebastopol, though not defended on that side by any continuous works, was defended by separate forts; and that any failure of our attack would certainly have exposed our army to very serious danger. To my civilian understanding his explanation was sufficient, even although the possibility of an accidental success, owing to surprise, be not excluded from the case. Generals responsible for large armies aiming at great

highest honour. As an illustration of this feature in his character, I may mention an act of his which, so far as my knowledge goes, stands alone. It was proposed that a new line of railway should pass through his estate, which he thought would be disagreeable and injurious. The promoting company therefore offered him a large sum as compensation, which he accepted. When the line was made, and when Labouchere had some experience of its effects, he came to the conclusion that his original fears had been groundless, and that the railway was not an injury, but a benefit. He therefore returned to the company the whole sum they had paid to him—a rare and splendid expression of a character which was the very soul of honour. He was full of the knowledge and love of art, with all the resources of a refined and cultivated intellect. I was the more glad of Labouchere's admission into our Cabinet because I knew he had been one of the Whigs who had been mortified by the exclusion which happened to so many of them when the Aberdeen Government had been formed. In private conversation at the time he told me that he thought Lord John Russell had 'sacrificed the honour of his friends.'

It was on that occasion, in combating as I did this feeling on his part, that I first realized the extreme narrowness of the old Whig party, and the almost irrational exclusiveness of the conceptions entertained by them of what constituted a Whig. This was the more remarkable since, of course, Labouchere was not himself a member of the Whig aristocracy, but only a recruit from the middle classes. Yet I found him as restricted in this matter as if he had been a Howard or a Fitzwilliam. In trying to show him how fairly and evenly divided between the two old parties the Aberdeen Cabinet had been, I included as a matter of course Clarendon among the Whigs. Labouchere at once and with some vehemence objected: 'Oh, Clarendon is not a Whig'; and to this he adhered with persistency. Never had I realized so clearly how absolutely necessary



*Europe*, when the war took off the attention of Russia for the time.

‘Farther, it appears that the Russian design has been cherished since 1774, or a period of eighty years, and that for thirty years she was nearer its attainment than there is any reason to suppose she can be for thirty years to come.

‘Surely, then, this is no case of urgency, none in which we should be justified in taking out of the hands of future Governments the freedom which ought to belong to them. We have not only no reason to fear any blindness on the part of Sweden, but we are expressly told that her eyes are open, and that she was actually about to carry her appeal to Europe and, of course, to us. When the danger again arises, we have the best ground of confidence that she will pursue the same course; or if, whenever that event should happen, England still takes the same view of her policy or her interests as that which we now take, she will be free to act upon it. If, on the contrary, her views should be changed, that change will not have happened without a good cause.

‘Lastly, we gain no immediate advantage in exchange for this burden of future inconvenience. There might be some inducement if Sweden were now to join in, in this pending war. But this is not proposed. I see no one result, except the danger of embarrassment which we shall bequeath to others. I think that in waging this war we should at least take care not to sow the seeds of future wars, in so far, at least, as we can help doing so.

‘Yours,  
‘ARGYLL.’

One of the most serious matters which weighed on me was the dispirited and dispiriting tone of the letters from our new Commander-in-Chief at Sebastopol, General Simpson. He had evidently lost heart and hope. He expected the whole expedition to be a failure—warned us that if the siege went on our army must be prepared to spend another winter in the Crimea, and doubted whether the strength and spirits of the men would stand such a trial. Moreover, he told us that, whilst the French army had regular ‘lines,’ we had none. Simpson added

the Sea of Azof must be included as part of the Black Sea. Third, that we wished to add a stipulation against the re-erection of the fortress of Bomarsund, which we had destroyed, on the Aland Islands in the Baltic. Lastly, that, among the remaining subjects on which we reserved a right to raise further discussion, we must specially mention the eastern shores of the Black Sea, or, rather, the provinces there. Several of us were against putting in this last item—I was, amongst others—because we had a good guess that this was the direction in which Palmerston had contemplated an enlargement of the area of the war, and perhaps a great campaign in the following year. However, as a mere right to raise a discussion on the subject, it was allowed to pass.

It was evident that the whole thing went much against the grain with Palmerston. But he was far too able and too wise a man not to see that he could not fight against both our French ally and the prevalent feeling of his own Cabinet, and he gave way without much fight on the proposals as a whole. He confessed, too, that the neutralization of the Black Sea was the one great condition which gave a real security.

Considering the very small weight which the French Emperor attached to Walewski's opinion, it seemed to me very strange that he kept Walewski in the position of his Foreign Minister. But his motives were purely personal. Walewski was a natural son of the great Napoleon by a beautiful Polish lady of the name of Walewska. Although a much larger man than his father, Walewski had an unmistakable look of him in his face, particularly in his eyes and forehead. But his countenance was without any intellectual power. He was pompous, too, and self-important. I recollect seeing him in a state of great offence at a concert at Buckingham Palace, where he was obliged to occupy a seat which he thought not becoming to his dignity. The swellings of his indignation were most amusing, and he seemed to think that by his attitude and stare

he could reproduce the terror which his illustrious father's indignation had been accustomed to occasion. Louis Napoleon was himself a far abler man, and it was only natural that he should place no reliance on the advice of his cousin. He took foreign affairs almost entirely into his own hands, and occasionally used his very considerable powers of speech to guide the opinion of his people. Though not an orator, he knew better than most men how to insinuate a great deal in a very few words, yet without committing himself to any definite conclusions. At this very juncture he had availed himself of this resource to indicate that he wanted peace. At a public ceremony in Paris on the 15th of November the Emperor made a speech which attracted great attention. The keynote of this speech lay in the sentence, 'France has no hatreds,' but she must have a peace which will solve *nettement* the objects for which the war has been undertaken.

It was impossible not to suspect in this sentence a very sly cut at England and at Palmerston. If it could not be fairly said that they had a hatred of Russia, because their hostile feeling to Russia was in pursuit of a justifiable policy, yet it was certainly true of the spirit animating at that time a great portion of the people and the press. The whole tone of the speech was peaceful, and Cowley, who was as decidedly warlike, spoke of it to Clarendon as having 'done all the mischief he expected.' But Cowley was so hot about the war that he seemed almost to dread peace, as in itself a horrible event and a great calamity. He saw, however, the gravity of the situation, and was disposed to counsel at least a partial acceptance, though always with a view to the ultimate defeat of the proposals.

On the 21st November, 1855, I went to Windsor to give up the Privy Seal, and to kiss hands on my acceptance of the Post Office. On my going into the royal closet, the Queen at once began to discuss the grave proposals before us, and it was a great satisfaction to

me to find that both Her Majesty and the Prince approved on the whole of the course which the Cabinet had taken. Some anxiety was expressed lest time should be lost in the discussion of details, because the French Emperor's desire for peace was so widely spread over Europe that Russia and even Austria might be induced to believe that he would accept a peace at almost any price. The Prince, too, had some very justifiable uneasiness as to our military position in the Crimea, since nothing had been done to secure its evacuation by Russia, and we were in danger of having to stand another winter there.

On the 28th we had another Cabinet. I found that this last week had been one of great uneasiness as regards the French. They objected to all our amendments and reserves more or less, and the Emperor refused absolutely to include the Sea of Azof in the stipulation, as too derogatory to the honour of Russia, and, besides, useless when all the inland waters of the Bug and Dniester must necessarily be left free to Russia. After some very disagreeable passages of correspondence, Clarendon had given way on this point, whilst the French Emperor conceded others, such as the exclusion of any separate treaty between Turkey and Russia on the subject of neutralization, unless on the details as to the exact number of coast-guard vessels to be kept by each.

The Cabinet was practically adjourned till the evening, when there was to be a Cabinet dinner at Palmerston's. A very serious point came before us. In our old 'Four Points,' the one which was always the great stumbling-block had been the third—namely, that respecting the Black Sea; this was disposed of by the new scheme of neutralization. But another of the 'Four Points,' hitherto much postponed, was that some security should be provided for the Christian subjects of the Porte. The new Austrian proposals were a little vague on this subject, but what they did indicate was a collective European guarantee. There was one obvious

danger—that Russia, being conterminous with Turkey and always ready, might at any time claim to represent Europe, and might indirectly reassert all her old claims of internal interference in Turkey. Palmerston was very jealous and suspicious on this subject, as obviously he had good reason to be. He tried hard to ‘see his way to some declaration on our part that we objected to any guarantees’ on this subject at all. But after a long debate we all agreed that something in the form of a European sanction must be given to any arrangement, both on this point and on the stipulations about the Danubian provinces, with freedom to reserve our own opinion on the ‘nature, extent, and mode of exercise’ to be provided for in regard to the action of Europe on the points in question.

I was at Windsor on the 3rd December, and had a long conversation there with Sir Colin Campbell, who had come home, and with the Duke of Cambridge, on the late campaign. The Duke had taken up the common impression that the town of Sebastopol might easily have been taken if the army had pushed on from the Alma at once, following up the routed army of the Russians. ‘Don’t you think so, my dear Colin?’ he asked. But Colin, with true Scottish caution, seemed to think that His Royal Highness went rather fast, and answered very significantly: ‘Your Royal Highness will recollect that the bodies of Russian infantry that we saw retreating when we gained the top of the hill at Alma were retiring, not as a disorderly mob, but as an organized body.’ The Duke admitted this, but said that later in the day, when they got close to the north side of Sebastopol, they were crowded in upon by the columns from the left flank, who had retired before the French, and that deserters had reported a state of great consequent confusion. Sir Colin seemed to regard all these speculations as very doubtful, and his attitude on the subject confirmed all my original impressions that Raglan and Burgoyne were right in pressing on to secure their naval base at Balaclava.

On the other hand, I gathered from Sir Colin that in our final assault on the 8th September a serious mistake had been made in not employing fresher troops than the Light Division, who had long been working so hard in the trenches. He said the French did not make their assault with the same division as that which had worked up the trenches and approaches, but brought up a fresh division from behind.

On the 5th of December I met Gladstone, and had a long talk with him. He hoped Russia would agree to the neutralization, but he also thought she would be right if she refused, and that we should be wrong if we insisted on it. It was the old story with him—that it was a deprivation to Russia of the means of self-defence, which no nation ought to agree to, and which ought not to be demanded of any nation by another. He also objected on the ground of the easiness of evasion. This was undeniable, but I urged the advantage it would give us in the beginning of any quarrel, and that all possible stipulations on the Eastern Question were open, more or less, to the same objections, from the insuperable geographical position of advantage held by Russia in the East of Europe. Gladstone's idea of a substitute was a very poor one. It was the creation of the Principalities into an independent Power, preferring this to keeping up any connection with Turkey. The idea of making of the poor little Danubian Principalities an independent Power which would be of a feather strength in resisting either the violence or the intrigues of Russia seemed to me then, as it does now, eminently ridiculous. I pointed out to him the other side of the question—the advantage to Europe of even a nominal connection of those provinces with Turkey; that it would enable us to say of any invasion of the frontier of the Principalities by Russia that she was invading Turkey, and opening up that great Eastern Question in which Europe as a whole was deeply interested. It pleased me to see how futile was the only alternative proposal to our own,

and that Gladstone was obliged to put in a caution, 'if there were sufficient materials out of which to make a State with any principle of life in it.'

After some days of further wrangling with the French Government, our joint reply to Austria was patched up.

At a Cabinet on the 13th we considered in a general way the different plans for the next campaign, if the war went on. The question was raised whether we should give up all idea of a conquest of the Crimea and undertake an attack on Georgia, or whether we should concert with France in a combined attack on Russia in the Baltic. Our sense of the great difficulty of this last course did not diminish by discussion.

On the 16th of December we heard that the Austrian Emperor had accepted all our modifications of his ultimatum to Russia, and had sent it off to St. Petersburg—good news indeed, and no inconsiderable diplomatic triumph in view of the great difficulties in the way. Two days later (December 18th) we heard of a misfortune, in the capture of Kars by the Russian army—a stronghold which we had done much to place and defend in the hands of Turkey, but which was obliged to capitulate on account of famine. This was rather a blow to us, especially in the event of the seat of war being changed to the eastern provinces of the Black Sea. Our gallant and able General Williams was among the captives.

END OF VOL. I