

CHAPTER XXXII

1858-59

THE DERBY ADMINISTRATION

LORD DERBY was faced by considerable difficulties in forming a Government, and, as he was in a substantial minority in the House of Commons, he had to frame his policy accordingly. The Conspiracy Bill was quietly dropped, and the intention of the Government to introduce an India Bill and a Bill for the Reform of the Franchise was announced.

The India Bill was introduced by Mr. Disraeli on March 26th. Like Lord Palmerston's Bill, it provided for an Indian Council, but with a larger number of members, only half of whom were to be nominated and the rest elected, partly by certain British constituencies, and partly by residents in England who had interests in India. A letter to Lord Granville shows what the Duke thought of this Bill :

‘CLIEVEDEN, MAIDENHEAD,

‘*March 28th, 1858.*

‘I am boiling over—foaming at the mouth—about this new India Bill with its Council, and I shall speedily perish unless I get out a speech for the assault thereof.

‘I have seen nobody but Grey, who agreed with me on the mischievous nature of the proposal, but thought it should not be opposed, on second reading. We in

the Lords have nothing to do with that question, but we cannot possibly wait till July in silence on such a Bill ; and what occurs to me is to move, as soon as the House meets again, for certain returns, which will open a discussion, that is to say, that would serve as a peg for a speech upon the general question.'

In reply, Lord Granville wrote :

' *March 28th, 1858.*

' Very many thanks for your letter. How little one must believe accounts of predictions ! The India Bill seems to meet universal reprobation. I believe you are more thoroughly versed in the subject than anyone, therefore one should be slow of offering counsel to you. Abstractly one should say that it might be questionable policy to raise the question in the House, where, with Derby and Ellenborough for speakers, they would probably cut a much better figure than in the other House. You will naturally, however, confer about this with others. I wonder what the result will be. As to future arrangements, I think that naturally Palmerston is head of the position ; if he is sent for, he ought to offer Johnny the next place to his own, and if it is not accepted, it cannot be helped.'

From Lord Granville.

' LONDON,

' *March 29th, 1858.*

' MY ARGYLL,

' This beginning is unintentional, but I rather like it !

' Lord Lansdowne, the Chancellor, Clarendon, Labouchere, G. Lewis, and I met at Pam's. They were all against anything being done in the Lords till the second reading of the Bill in the Commons. There was a division of opinion as to rejecting the Bill, which is detestable, on the second reading : Palmerston, Vernon Smith, Gladstone, and Chancellor for rejection ; Lans-

downe, Clarendon, Labouchere, and I doubting the expediency of it, unless we were certain of a majority, and that Derby would not resign upon defeat. It was resolved to settle nothing till the end of the holidays. When I got home, I found G. Byng, with a message from Ivanowitch.* John the son of John had first thought it would not do to oppose the India Bill, but now thinks it imperative to do so. He is inclined to move the rejection himself, but will not commit himself till he knows whether he would be supported by the late Government.

‘I called on Pam, over whose noble countenance a shade had passed when I first mentioned the proposition; but he agreed that it was the best way of doing it, and I am going to write to that effect to G. Byng.’

From Lord Palmerston, 31st March, 1858.

‘MY DEAR DUKE OF ARGYLL,

‘Lansdowne, Cranworth, Clarendon, Granville, Lewis, Labouchere, Vernon Smith, met here yesterday. We all agreed in an opinion similar to yours about the Government India Bill, and our conclusions pointed towards rejection on second reading, dependent upon communication with Lord John Russell. After our meeting, Granville saw young G. Byng, who came with a message from John Russell to ask whether we would support him if he were to move rejection of the Bill on the second reading upon the ground of insurmountable objection to the new constitutional principles which it would introduce. This seemed to me an offer which we could not refuse without implying either personal objection to John Russell or predilection for the Bill. Granville, Lewis, and Lansdowne concurred (we were not able to consult the others), and we agreed to send word to John Russell that we are ready to support him. Such a combination will insure defeat

* Lord John Russell.

of the objectionable measure, and combined action between us and John Russell will please the Liberal party in the House of Commons. My belief, however, is that the Government will not wait to be attacked, but that, hearing how universally their scheme is laughed at and condemned, they will of their own accord withdraw and alter it.

‘I do not believe that even if they stood by their measure and were beat they would on that account resign, but I should not be uneasy if I thought they would. Till lately I thought that there would perhaps be an advantage in their remaining in till next year, so that they might bring in and carry a moderate and reasonable Reform Bill; but the specimen we have now had of their absurd and fantastic style of legislation leads me to the opinion that it would be better that the present session should be their last.

‘It is desirable that we should say nothing about our arrangement with John Russell for the present.’

To Lord Granville.

‘CLIEVEDEN, MAIDENHEAD,

‘April 6th, 1858.

‘MY DEAR GRANVILLE,

‘Have you yet heard anything more of Johnny’s intentions on the India Bill?

‘I have heard from pretty good authority that the Government means to give up the city-election.* Indeed, the tone of Derby’s speech leads one to suppose that they mean to give up anything and everything that may be requisite to secure a majority.

‘We must be cautious what we do, else there can be no doubt that the Bill, in spite of future promised concessions, should be opposed on second reading. Because it is not as if no other Bill were before the

* The Bill provided that the elected members of the Indian Council should be partly chosen by five constituencies—viz., London, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Belfast.

House. There is another Bill, and wherein No. 2 differs from No. 1 it is essentially wrong in principle. Pam sent me a letter from Bethell, in which that legal dignitary took, I think, rather too high ground against any mixture of the elective principle in the Council. I prefer greatly pure Crown nomination, but we should use no argument which would preclude us from adopting, if necessary, some mode of election other than Ellenborough's.

From Lord Palmerston, 6th April, 1858.

‘MY DEAR DUKE OF ARGYLL,†

‘I have received your letter of the 1st inst., but I own I go the whole length of Bethell's arguments, and think that it would be at variance with a fundamental principle of our constitution that any persons who form part of the executive Government of the country should be appointed by any authority except that of the Crown, or of some officer appointed by the Crown; and I see nothing in the nature and circumstances of India which would require or justify a departure from that elementary principle.

‘The only difference between India and any other beyond-sea possession of the Crown is that peculiarities of races, habits, and religions render necessary on the part of the Cabinet (that is to say, the executive and responsible Administration) local knowledge which can scarcely be possessed by persons who have never been to India; and therefore the Minister for the Indian Department ought to have advisers to furnish him with such local knowledge, and with opinions founded on that knowledge, to be submitted for his judgment and for that of his colleagues.

‘For this purpose the Crown should have the power of appointing a Council; but as that Council is to advise the responsible advisers of the Crown, it is right that the choice of those advisers should rest with the Crown and its responsible Ministers, and should not be vested

in other persons, who have a less interest in choosing good men, and less means of judging who would be the fittest for the duty.

‘In giving to the Crown the appointment of the Councillors, we are not only conforming to the principles of the British constitution, but we are following exactly the precedent of the hitherto existing state of things.

‘The directors are appointed, and not elected. It is a complete mistake to consider the directors as an elected body in the sense in which it is proposed that a portion of the Councillors should be elected. The Crown gave to the East India Company a lease of the Sovereignty of India, and during that time the Company became the *pro tempore* Sovereign of India. The Company would not as an aggregate body administer and govern. The Company, therefore, was empowered by law to appoint an executive and administrative body to govern India ; but the only way in which the Company could make such appointments was the way in which all associations consisting of a number of persons must necessarily act—that is to say, by the majority of the votes of the members of the association or Company itself. It was, then, the Sovereign of India for the time being that appointed the directors ; and now that the Queen is to become the direct ruler of India, it is the Queen who ought to appoint all the persons concerned in the administration of Indian affairs. If the Court of Directors, or any part of them, had been appointed by election by any other body, such as the voters of great towns, or the holders of 3 per cent., or the shareholders of canals or railways in England, then, indeed, such a state of things might have formed a precedent (though one to be avoided and not to be followed) for continuing a similar state of things when India is transferred to the Crown ; but the precedent and analogy go quite the other way.

‘Nor can the arrangement of 1853 be quoted in favour of the elective principle, because what was done in 1853

was simply this : The Crown—that is, the owner of the fee simple of India—though it continued during the pleasure of itself and Parliament the lease of India to the Company, yet introduced into the governing body an additional element of its own, over and above the control of the India Board, and obtained the right of appointing a certain number of the directors. But the change then made went in the direction of nomination by the Crown, and not in the direction of election by any third party. I shall certainly be prepared to argue strongly against giving to any extraneous body, constituted as it may be, the power of deciding who shall be the persons whom the Crown and its Ministers shall look to for advice to assist them in performing the duties for which those Ministers are to be responsible to Parliament.

‘ Yours sincerely,

‘ PALMERSTON.

‘ P.S.—I believe Ayrton will move the rejection of the Government Bill, but the Government will not go out merely because their Bill is thrown out.’

To Lord Palmerston.

‘ CLIEVEDEN, MAIDENHEAD,

‘ April 8th, 1858.

‘ MY DEAR LORD PALMERSTON,

‘ I am so entirely satisfied that Crown nomination is by far the best and almost the only practical mode of selecting the Indian Council that I am very little disposed to question any argument among the many which may be urged in favour of that plan. If you can succeed in convincing the House of Commons that, besides being useless for any one purpose and injurious in many respects, the plan of election is also unconstitutional, so much the better. It is of great advantage in this argument that the only constituency which has been proposed is manifestly absurd. All I mean to say is, that if there were any body of men whose

choice would probably tend to secure fit selections for the Council, you might find it difficult to prevent their being employed for that purpose on the somewhat abstract argument of constitutional principle.

‘The distinction you point out between election as applied to the present directory and election as applied to any part of the new Council is very important, and I quite agree with you that election in the latter case would involve quite a new principle.

‘The fundamental error of these schemes is the idea that the Indian Council is to check and control the Minister, whereas the only real object is that the Council should advise and assist the Minister. If this were clearly seen, the clamours for election would cease, unless it could be shown that better advice could be secured for the Minister by some mode of elections. If that could be shown, Parliament might be disposed to waive the strictly constitutional argument which Bethell urges, on the ground that the Indian Council partakes of a legislative as well as of a purely executive character.

‘The intrusion of any sort of popular election by English popular constituencies seems to me perfectly monstrous. This would clearly imply a total misconception of the whole object and functions of the Council, which is not to represent either home interests or English opinions, but to afford Indian experience and Indian advice. It is the intention of the Government, I know, to throw over the plan as to the city constituencies; but I can’t well understand how they are to go on if they are beat on the second reading. That vote will imply that in all respects in which their scheme differs from ours it differs for the worse. Surely no Government can go on with any honour or credit after such a vote. I am glad to know the line of argument, as well as the line of action, you propose to take, as we shall soon have discussions in the Lords. Many persons were till lately disposed to look favourably upon some kind of selection for a part of the

Council, without having considered how or for what purpose.

‘Ellenborough’s absurd scheme will have done much to diminish this feeling, and I think we can attack the principle of election from many different sides.

‘Yours very sincerely,

‘ARGYLL.’

The India Bill met with general disapproval. At the meeting of Parliament after the Easter recess (April 12th), Lord John Russell brought forward a proposal to proceed with legislation for India by way of Resolutions. This afforded the Derby Government an opportunity for withdrawing their own Bill, and the India Bill, as amended and reconstructed in terms of Lord John Russell’s Resolutions, finally became law on August 2nd, 1858. The subject may be fittingly closed with an extract from a letter to the Duke from Mr. Gladstone (June 21st) :

‘The political sky looks quiet. The Government, after obtaining strong majorities against nomination in the Indian Council, has ended by proposing what very little differs from it. They thus give a fair handle to Lord Palmerston, who says, “Why, for so small a matter, depart from the common practice?” Lord John, on the other hand, says it is so near nomination that he will take it as a substitute.’

On May 25th the Duke started for Carlsbad, where he had been recommended to go, in order to take a course of the waters. He travelled with the Duchess by Antwerp and Brussels, and broke his journey at Heidelberg to visit his friend Baron de Bunsen, of whom he wrote to Lord Aberdeen from Carlsbad :

‘Bunsen especially desired to be remembered to you. He has grown older : his hair is now quite white, which

it was not when he left England ; but he seems tolerably well, and very busy with his new translation of the Bible. I am always struck with the amazing amount of his knowledge, and with its variety and accuracy, in contrast with which the vagueness and theoretical character of his opinions on all practical questions is not less remarkable. On this account he was very little appreciated in England, but he is surely one of the most remarkable men of our time.'

Turning to home affairs, he continued :

' I am not sorry to be away from England just now, where there is little in public affairs to give anyone any satisfaction. . . . If Gladstone had joined them, the Derby Government would have become really good enough for all practical purposes. I rather shocked Bunsen by telling him I hoped Gladstone would join Derby. He thought it would be a great fall on Mr. Gladstone's part. But I hold that whatever injury to himself Gladstone might do in this way is done by his supporting Disraeli ; and if he supports him, I cannot see why he should not serve with him. I am indeed amazed at Gladstone's high moral sense of feeling being able to bear with Dizzy. But he does so, however strange it may be. I can only account for it on the supposition, which I suppose to be a true one, that personal dislike and distrust of Palmerston is the one absorbing feeling with him, and that he is willing to sacrifice every other consideration to keeping him, if he can, out of office. Admitting all that can with any justice be said of Palmerston, I hold this feeling to be not even rational. I have no hesitation in saying that, comparing Lord John with Lord Palmerston, the latter is, in very many respects, the safer man of the two, inasmuch as he is more amenable to the opinion of his colleagues. During the last three years I have several times differed materially from Palmerston on several points of importance, and I have had occasion to ex-

press that difference to himself; and I must say I have always been struck with his willingness to be guided by the common opinion of the Cabinet, with his candour and his perfect good-humour. Now, with Lord John, though he is superior to Palmerston in knowledge of most home politics, one never can be sure for twenty-four hours that he will adhere to what has been agreed upon, or that he will not be guided rather by personal advisers than by his colleagues. In short, I see no good ground for the violent personal prejudice which is the sole ruling motive of Gladstone and Graham's course.'

The Duke left Carlsbad on July 12th, and spent a few weeks travelling in Germany and Austria, returning to London on August 6th.

For some time negotiations had been going on among the members of the Liberal party with a view to determining upon some united policy, especially with regard to the question of Parliamentary Reform. On March 15th, 1858, Mr. Sidney Herbert had written to the Duke as follows :

'What I wish is that disagreements should cease. I look forward to a gloomy future. I had rather make no contrasts between the faults of possible Prime Ministers. There is too much material of that kind to make it either difficult or pleasant.

'In the meanwhile the present people seem inclined to try and outbid the Liberal party—a course which will be justly fatal to themselves, and, what is more important, will be fatal to the country too. Whatever they propose our friends must cap. If Derby goes for universal suffrage, Palmerston or Johnny will produce the women and children.

'It will require cautious steering on the part of those who prefer the interests of the country to the interests of the party to prevent mischief being done

between them all. I look upon you as one able and willing to take an important part in so regulating matters; and I, though wearied and disquieted with politics and politicians, would contribute what I can towards this desirable but, I fear, unattainable object.'

The Duke's thoughts were at this time much engrossed by the consideration of some scheme of domestic reform which he believed would forestall the policy of the extreme Radical party; but he was willing to accept an adequate measure even from the Conservative Government, in preference to leaving the question to be dealt with by the extremists. On the 9th of August he wrote to Lord Aberdeen :

'I have spoken to no one on this subject yet, and I know many would consider it a sort of treason. I wished Palmerston to settle it, and believed I saw a way of doing it; but now that we have lost the opportunity, I rather wish to see it settled by Derby, if he can with such colleagues produce an honest measure.'

To Lord Aberdeen (August 19th, 1858).

'I know Grey's hostility to Reform. But it must come, and I am not afraid of it, provided the Government which deals with it is united and the measure be an honest one.

'I took an active part in the late Government on the question, and with some success. I have a plan which I am satisfied would be attended with many advantages, especially this: that it carries within itself a tendency to render much further change impossible as regards distribution of seats—a most important object to aim at.

'But every scheme propounded and not carried is one added to the list of schemes damaged and rendered impossible, and I am not willing to see this plan proposed

at all unless under such circumstances as are likely to secure success. I would far rather help Derby against the Radicals than work with the latter, by whose help I fear some of our Liberal friends would seek to recover power at any sacrifice of their principles.'

A rumour reached the Duke, who was then at Inveraray, that Lord John Russell and Sir James Graham had been drafting a Reform Bill, and on August 31st he wrote to Lord Aberdeen :

'It is all very well to feel one's way to what each other would support, but I am against any sort of move on this subject until we shall have seen *what* the Government means to propose. If Dizzy has his way, infinite evil may be done by a "Conservative Government" proposing what others will have to bid up to, if not beyond. But we can't now help this. Such is the position of the Opposition that the evil would only be aggravated by any premature move on our side of the House. I hear Lord Grey is "all over of a shake" as to what will happen when Dizzy has Reform in his hands. But we must not follow Grey's line. He is far too nervous, and too full of grand "compensatory" schemes which will never be carried, though not in theory otherwise than reasonable. "Representation of minorities," which I recollect you called a "conundrum," is one of such items. The English people are too practical and unideal ever to understand that sort of thing. I am persuaded, which is more important, that it is not necessary, and that the advantage aimed at can be otherwise attained.

'I wish to have some communication among ourselves, yet I hardly know how to set about it. You can advise better than anybody else.'

Some political significance had been attributed to a visit which Lord John Russell had paid to Lord Derby at Knowsley, but the Duke, being himself willing to

co-operate with the Conservatives to secure a moderate measure of Reform, did not disapprove of the idea of an approach being made to their leader. He alludes to the subject in a letter to Lord Aberdeen on 12th October, 1858 :

‘ Lord John going to Knowsley is like him. I dare say he is indignant at the *Morning Post* article, and would go in spite of the world. This is just his kind of pluck. But, to say the truth, although the form in which the report is put is absurd, I suspect there is some sort of foundation for a suspicion. Nor can I say that I object. For the public interest, this Reform question ought not to be made the shuttlecock of party ; and if Lord John sees his way to any combination that may secure a settlement, I see no blame to him. He is free of his former party, as they seem to have loosed themselves from him. I happen to know that Lord John has been talking of “ some fusion of parties ” as necessary. But this is in confidence.’

On the same subject the Duke wrote to Sir George Grey (October 21st, 1858) :

‘ MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

‘ INVERARAY.

‘ As far as I can make out since I came home from abroad, we are still in chaos, and no prospect of an end to this condition of things “ without form and void.”

‘ Lord Aberdeen seems to think it more than possible that the Government may decline attempting Reform altogether. But this I do not believe. They will propose something ; and after our experience of the India Bill, it is impossible to say how far it may not be an extremely Radical Reform in at least some things, while aimed in others at strengthening the Tory interests.

‘ I am not in the least disposed to wish that we should play into Bright’s hands by proposing democratic

amendments, if the Bill of the Government is a tolerably fair one. On the contrary, I should be glad to see the question settled, at least for a time, by them.

‘But in any case, whether for moderate changes or for total opposition, we ought to have some understanding among ourselves as to the line we should take, and in order to do this we should have some definite idea of what we should ourselves aim at as regards the principle of any measure. I am all against making any definite proposal or propounding any definite plan when we have no prospect of carrying it into effect with the authority of a Government. But this is quite a different thing from basing our opposition, or our criticism of actual amendments, on definite views as to the object to be attained, and, so to speak, the direction of our fire.

‘We know perfectly well the main conditions of the problem which every Reform Bill must deal with. We know that to some extent both county and borough franchise must be dealt with, and we know, too, that the existing distribution of seats must undergo modification.

‘That the latter should be well and wisely dealt with I regard as even more important than the first, and if we are agreed on the outline which we had sketched for ourselves, we have, to a certain degree and in an important respect, a base-line of operations.’

To Sir George Grey (October 25th).

‘Many thanks for your letter. I agree very much with you, save that, though no Reform Bill can, or ought to be, aristocratic in tendency, it may be essentially Conservative as regards the great principles of our representation; and as large meanings are attached to the word “democracy,” I am against assenting to the proposition that any Bill “must be democratic.”

‘If we keep firm hold of the great middle class of constituencies which lie between those purely city

(commercial or manufacturing) and those purely agricultural, we shall keep what will save us to a great extent from mere democracy. But I shall write more fully on this subject afterwards. Meanwhile, I write chiefly to say that I feel sure Lord Aberdeen will give you every information in his power. He is on the move just now. I don't quite know the day he is to be in London, but he is going there immediately. He writes as clearly as ever, though perhaps the manual part of it may be sometimes a little fatiguing to him. But I shall tell him that you have thoughts of consulting him.'

In the autumn Mr. Bright had been very active delivering speeches throughout the country—speeches which the Duke characterized as containing 'some fallacies, but marked by considerable oratorical power; speeches that will, no doubt, do some mischief with the ignorant and unreflecting; and, as Carlyle says, "there is an immense plurality of blockheads."'

While on a visit to Lord and Lady Kinnaird at Rossie Priory, the Duke performed the ceremony of opening the Dundee Corn Exchange and Public Hall. His speech on this occasion was a direct answer to Mr. Bright's attacks on landowners and on the House of Lords. It is impossible to give an adequate idea of this speech without quoting at too great length, but an extract is added here:

'Mr. Bright was good enough the other day to turn his eyes northwards to this poor naked land of Scotland, and he mentioned as one of the great evils of our condition that there were various persons in this country whose mainstay was oatmeal porridge. Now, I remember Dr. Johnson, who always hated Scotland and Scotsmen, used to talk about that kind of grain which was food for horses in England and for men in

Scotland, and Mr. Bright seems very much to partake of the same feeling. Now, I can only say to Mr. Bright that I wish he had one-half the chance of good health and long life and vigour of many of those healthy mountaineers whom I have seen bred up on oatmeal porridge. But I freely admit that, without counting oatmeal porridge among them, we have many evils affecting our social state. . . .

‘ I see that the various classes of society are uniting together, as I see them united here to-night, for the purpose of rectifying those evils and of endeavouring to meet them. . . .

‘ The distinguished orator to whom I lately referred, speaking in the name of peace and progress, and taking, as I think, these great names in vain, has been endeavouring to raise animosities which are now extinct, and to divide those whom the good providence of God and the course of events have year by year been bringing more and more close together. . . .

‘ I do earnestly trust—no man trusts more earnestly or hopes more anxiously—that for the purpose of prosecuting those great works of social and political improvement in this country we may long continue to enjoy the blessings of peace. . . .

‘ I repudiate the doctrine which has been held by Mr. Bright that the wars of this country have been mainly due to any one class of the community. I appeal to himself—was it not but three or four weeks ago that he directed his observations against the working classes of this country for those generous sympathies which made them unite heart and soul in the late great war with Russia ?

* * * * *

‘ I hold it to be a false and narrow philosophy which, whether in domestic or foreign politics, sees no hope for the future except in a wild and indiscriminate denunciation of the past. How different is the feeling with which our history and our institutions are re-

garded by foreigners, who are earnestly longing to enjoy some portion of the liberty which we have so long enjoyed. I remember some four years ago being present at the opening of the British Parliament at a period of great excitement, and standing close beside one of the most distinguished foreigners who has ever lived in our country—one of the many who is longing to impart into his own some part of those noble institutions under which we have so long flourished as a nation—and as he saw that great spectacle, all orders of the State represented in the assembling of the British Parliament, I heard him say, far more to himself than to me, in language of deep emotion: “Happy is that people between whose past and whose present no gulf of forgetfulness has been fixed, whose progress has been a steady progress under the guidance and protection of their ancient laws—no national element of life rejected, no national memory forgotten.” And such, I say, may be our progress still.

‘It is one of the many evils of violent language, addressed either to one section or to another section of the community, that, acting by irritation upon the minds of some and by timidity on the minds of others, it induces some men to doubt the end and others to mistake the way; but I see in such evidences as this great meeting a clear proof of the social progress of our people.’

This speech was received with enthusiasm throughout the country. Congratulatory letters poured in upon the Duke, and an extract from a letter of Lord Clarendon’s (November 27th, 1858) may be quoted here:

‘I read with great pleasure and admiration your speech the other day in answer to Bright, who, it must be admitted, has done service by showing how little steam is to be got up for Reform. It may be said of him, as Lord Byron once said of his mother-in-law,

Lady Noel: "She has been dangerously ill—she is now dangerously well again."

'Derby talked to me in glowing gratitude of the service Bright had rendered him at Birmingham, and said that, though there was no such man as a real reformer, and though no one wanted a measure of Reform, yet that a measure there must be, and that it must not be a sham one, which would only irritate and lead to extensive demands.

'I heard that you were very unwell after you returned, and am rejoiced that you can now give a good report of yourself.'

From Lord Aberdeen (November 24th, 1858).

'You have taken the field with good effect against Bright, and the Press of all degrees seems to be with you.'

The Duke refers to this speech in a letter to Lord Dufferin, written from Lauriston Castle, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, which he had taken for the winter :

'December 12th, 1858.

'We often wonder what has become of you and the little mother—bless her and preserve her, dragged about by a wild Irish boy! I know no sadder fate in the wide range of ills which flesh is heir to.

'Here we are, all in a pie, in a castle overlooking the Firth of Forth on one side, and the regal towers and outlines of Edinburgh on the other. Our great first parent, the mother of us all, and the Duke are here, soon to disperse, they to Trentham, we to Rosneath, for Christmas. We return when the boys go to school again. They are getting on very well. . . .

'Since you left these shores I have been spouting at no allowance—a speech *de omnibus rebus* at a new hall in Dundee, which was rather a success, and another on

India here, which I think will have been useful in its way. I am next going to lecture on geology in Glasgow. We shall remain chiefly here, to be with the boys, till Parliament meets, when I must go up to be present at the general scrimmage which doubtless will be. How I envy you the blue skies and the bluer seas of the Mediterranean! I used never to tire looking into that wonderful water, its softness and intense colour. But it can be an angry sea, and I should like to hear of you safe, not having implicit confidence either in the machinery or in those who manage it. There's for ye!

'Have you heard of the infamous behaviour of Uncle Graham, the big Baronet of Netherby? Last autumn Johnny Campbell came to Inveraray and reported the big Baronet as having, along with him, landed at the pier and gone to the inn without saying one word to me, an old colleague. I walked down, fuming. He had gone out walking; I followed and chased. At last, in the deep dusk of the evening, I looked down the long avenue; no one but I or a bat could have seen, but I did fancy that far, far down in the shade of the old beeches I could discern what, nearer, must have been an "ample presence"; so I walked down, and sure enough came on the delinquent walking with Lady Hermione. He had no good excuse, but about clothes and a pilgrimage to Ardkinglas. So he came, and the next morning went off—very bad conduct. . . .

'I hear various little bits of gossip and scandal, but I should tell them all wrong if I were to try. I trust to the little mother's correspondence to keep you going on *that* subject. Has she really got all her dogs and parrots with her?—that odious, deceitful beast of a poll that invited the end of my finger, and then bit it. I hope it is drowned; give it my malediction. As for the mother, tell her how sorry I am for her. Let us hear from you.

'Ever thine,

'ARGYLL.'

On November 24th, 1858, the Duke received a letter from Lord John Russell on the subject of Reform :

‘ I believe we should agree very well on the important subject of Reform ; but while agreeing in Bright’s ends, I cannot approve of his means. I know not, however, that any measure can be devised which shall prevent a further extension of it twenty years hence. I shall be glad to know your views upon this.

‘ My view is a very simple one. I wish to amend and preserve the Reform Act, not to build up a new system of representation. The Bill of 1854 was consistent with this opinion, but I must own that the necessary omission of the minority clause would change its aspect very considerably.

‘ I imagine Bright has no expectation of carrying his measure, and that if he introduces it, or tries to introduce it, he looks to the future and not to the present. He admits, I understand, that the best he can expect is to have no legislation next year. Thus, the field is open to Derby, who, I hear, is working upon the details himself. When we have seen his scheme, we can nurse it or strangle it, as the majority may think proper. Any previous action would, I fear, be time and trouble thrown away.

‘ When I say this, however, I by no means intend to say that it will not be useful to exchange views on the subject on terms of perfect reciprocity. I have been in correspondence myself with G. Lewis and C. Wood on this subject. I shall be delighted to hear anything you can suggest. Other issues will rise up before Parliament meets, and I cannot imagine that the present Ministry will be able to dodge through the session.’

From Lord John Russell (December 1st, 1858).

‘ I think with you that it is very desirable to turn our minds to the consideration of some substitute for

Derby's measure, in case his Bill should not prove acceptable to the House of Commons or to the country. I am sorry to say, however, that those with whom I have communicated show in general an indisposition to discuss what they call details. Graham, Gladstone, and G. Lewis are all of this mind. C. Wood alone has intimated an opinion similar to yours, and founded on the same reason—viz., the prospect of permanency. I cannot say I have at all made up my mind; but, agreeing in the object you have in view, I have my doubts whether you will attain it by the proposed method. For (1) the small boroughs themselves hate their neighbours most intensely, and would generally prefer a place in Schedule A, in which case they belong to the county at large. (2) One of my main reasons for preserving small boroughs is that Tamworth, Tiverton, Morpeth, Midhurst, Huntingdon, etc., have sent some of the best members, and I fear that in destroying local influence you would lose such men. The canvass of four or five small towns leads to intrigue and compromise. (3) In Scotland, though clusters of boroughs exist, I do not believe they are popular; you know this, however, better than I do. (4) Roebuck's objection of the expense of agency goes for something.

'Of course, with opinions so unfinished as mine, I expect to be to a great degree guided by the nature of Derby's measure and the reception it meets with. I will only say, therefore, that your proposal is a better one than mine of 1852, for the reasons you give. . . . Gladstone says Reform cannot be blinked.'

The Duke was inclined to take a favourable view of the intentions of the Government, but he began to doubt the ability of the Ministry to produce a satisfactory measure, and on 29th December he wrote to Lord Aberdeen :

'So you think the Government will carry their Reform Bill easily. If it is a reasonable Bill, I hope

they will, for I am not anxious to see this question kept open, or, as Derby called it, "dangling" any longer. But I fear the Government is incapable of producing anything but some cross between Toryism and Radicalism, and that won't succeed.

'Charles Howard the other day met Bright on his return from the Scottish campaign. He was in great good-humour, and pretended to think he had said nothing at all violent—urged the opportunity for the Whigs to come forward and "do it handsome"; thought Lord John ought to write another letter—on the Durham pattern! I suppose he meant rather the famous Corn Law letter from Edinburgh, which, I recollect, Peel said "did not tend to diminish the difficulties of his position." Lord John, I hope, will keep quiet and watch. That is clearly his game, and not bad cards in his hand, either.

'There is a rumour that Derby means to allow the ballot—I mean to make it optional with constituencies. . . . Have you heard this? I have a very strong feeling—I think a strong opinion also—against the ballot. . . . The motives under which men act in secret are, as a general rule, always inferior to those under which they act in public.

'I see no sort of reason to suppose that this rule will be reversed in respect to the more ignorant and less reasoning classes. It seems to me that it might succeed in counteracting some of the most legitimate influences exerted by one class of society over another, but that it will leave the poorer classes open to all the influences of corruption by which they can be moved.'

The Reform Bill was introduced on the last day of February, 1859, by Mr. Disraeli, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It had the effect of reuniting the Liberal party in a common cause, and Lord John Russell, Mr. John Bright, and the Duke, from different points of view, were equally opposed to it. On the 8th of March the Duke wrote to Sir George Grey on the situation :

‘Your letter, which from some mistake at the P.O. did not reach me till this morning, was a great relief ; for, from what Palmerston had said to me when I saw him on Monday, I was in great fear that he had made up his mind to oppose Lord John and support the Government. Nothing but the folly of the Government in insisting on the forty-shilling clause would have saved us from this, because Palmerston made no secret to me that he dreaded any course which might lead to Lord John being called on to form a Government which he could not join, and should be obliged to oppose. So far as this is founded on a personal feeling that he could not serve under Lord John, there is nothing to be said ; but as regards the public question, I urged that there need not be any insuperable difficulty, because, in spite of Lord John’s alarming words about “the great body of the working classes,” I believed him to entertain moderate opinions as to the lowering of the borough franchise, as well as on the disfranchisement of seats. On the first point I thought an £8 occupancy would probably satisfy him, and on the latter that he would not insist on more than we ourselves had half agreed to propose ; but that if Lord John were opposed by his old friends he might be easily driven into Radical hands. Palmerston, as I have always found him, was straightforward and reasonable enough, but I could see that, behind, there lay a settled resolution that, if possible, he would checkmate any movement for the overthrow of the Government on the question of Reform. He spoke, however, in decided opposition to the forty-shilling clause, and this now turns out to be virtually the principle of the Bill.

‘I feel convinced that the Bill will be thrown out. The secret or half-avowed desire of many of our friends to help the Government in passing a Bill less Liberal than we ourselves could have ventured to propose, is a feeling which can never be brought into successful action on such great Parliamentary questions in the face of public discussion, especially when the main

objection is one so formidable and affects so large a part of the constituencies. In one or two it is nearly one-half; in a great many more one-third; and in a still larger number one-fifth.

'I hear the paragraph in the *Times* about Lord John's resolution, or, at least, his meeting, is not true. Yet it sets forth a course of action which I think good and safe.'

On the second reading of the Bill (March 21st), Lord John Russell brought forward an amendment, to the effect that freehold franchise in counties should not be interfered with, and that the £10 household suffrage in boroughs should be lowered. The Duke wrote to Mr. Gladstone (March 22nd):

'This Government can't possibly survive long—at least, such is my firm belief—and however glad I should be, as would many others, to see Reform settled at once, I can see no reason in pretending that Lord John's resolution is more directly aimed against the Government than any amendment would be, which the Government cannot admit. Lord John's opponents argue as if the Bill could be "licked" into any shape in Committee. But concession on the part of the Government must find some limit. They have pretty clearly indicated a line beyond which they dare not and cannot go; and if the amendments which people assume might be carried in Committee are really admissible, then the Government might as well accept the resolution at once. So that, in truth, the result comes to be the same, and the Bill must fall—a great opportunity lost irrecoverably as regards this Government, and perhaps as regards every other.'

After a debate extending over several nights, Lord John Russell's amendment was carried against the Government by a majority of thirty-nine (April 1st),

and on April 5th it was announced that the Ministry would dissolve Parliament and appeal to the country. At the General Election which followed, the Conservatives gained some seats, but when the new Parliament met, the Derby Administration was again in a minority. In the meantime the Liberal leaders had sunk their differences, and were acting together loyally. The first effect of this reunion was the defeat of the Government. Lord Hartington, on the meeting of Parliament, proposed an amendment to the Address, which was virtually equivalent to a vote of want of confidence, and it was carried by a majority of thirteen. Lord Derby resigned office, and the question of the choice of a Liberal leader was in the hands of Her Majesty for solution.

The compromise concluded among the members of the Liberal party had been to the effect that either Lord Palmerston or Lord John Russell would be willing to serve under whichever of them should be sent for by the Queen. Her Majesty endeavoured to evade the difficulty by sending for Lord Granville, and he, as in duty bound, tried to form a Government, and failed. The Queen then sent for Lord Palmerston, and Lord John Russell loyally accepted the decision, and took office as Foreign Secretary.