

My Life in Two Hemispheres Book IV

Duffy, Sir Charles Gavan (1816-1903)

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My Life in Two Hemispheres

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BOOK IV

CHAPTER I

MAKING READY FOR AUSTRALIA

I determine to quit Ireland—Edward Whitty's opinion—Inquiries as to the climate of Australia—Counsel of William and Mary Howitt, Mr. Woolner, Robert and Mrs. Lowe, Mr. Latrobe—Work before quitting Parliament — Smith O'Brien's case — Conversation with Mr. Disraeli — Letter from Sir Denham Norreys—Visit to Smith O'Brien at Brussels—The Belgian deputy and the widow MacCormack—Visit to M. de Potter, member of the Provisional Government of 1830—The Maynooth College inquiry—Letter from the Maynooth Professor—The Catholic University and Dr. Newman—Application for the Chiltern Hundreds—Alderman Plunkett's consternation—Invitations to public dinners in London and Dublin—Proposed testimonial declined—Generous help proffered by Arthur Geheoghan and Mrs. Anderson—Breakfast with Richard and Henry Doyle—Lindsey and the Civil Service Reform Movement—Louis Blanc, Julia Kavanagh—Sir Emerson Tennant and the Crimean War—Last look at the House of Lords—Death of Frederick Lucas—I decline the public dinners in consequence—Letters from Thackeray and Lord Brougham—Farewell to my friends in Dublin and London—Conversation with Stuart Mill—Dr. Madden and his “Life of Lady Blessington”—Gough the teetotal lecturer—Dr. Hughes, Archbishop of New York—Sir William Molesworth—Mr. Godley, founder of the Canterbury settlement—Letters from Rev. Charles Kingsley, Mary Howitt, and Sir Emerson Tennant.

WHEN it became necessary to retire from Parliament I determined to quit Ireland also. I could no longer promise the suffering people relief, and to witness injustice without curb and wrong without remedy would render life too painful. An Ireland where Mr. Keogh typified patriotism and Dr. Cullen the Church, was an Ireland in which I could not live, but would probably soon cease to live. Where to go was a primary question. The circumstance that I had recently taken a considerable part in resisting alterations in the constitution adopted by the colonies of Australia turned my attention to that continent. I gave it a provisional preference till I could make searching inquiries.

I communicated my intention immediately to a few intimate friends;

most of them remonstrated, but Edward Whitty declared I was right, and that he would go with me.

“The idea fills me with excitement,” he wrote. “If you go, I will go. I would presume to advise you to go without reference to the appeal to Rome—which will be resultless. There is something more than the Bishops against you—your country is in America or Australia. Your project would be historical. You would lead the colony—you would create a better Ireland there—you would become rich. I am sure you would be happier, for I think you have been long fighting without hope. I say all this with no impertinent conceit of sagacity—with profound respect, and I know you will understand it. I know nearly everything about Australia. When the gold business came up I did the whole subject—went at all the books—for the **Daily News**. I have several friends there—Filmore, correspondent of the **Times** in Sydney; Butler Cole Aspinall (whom you know) on the **Melbourne Argus**.”

I entreated Whitty not to go to Australia immediately, but only after I had made some footing there. I only knew three men on the Australian Continent; the experiment I was making was a perilous one, and I could not allow him to share the peril.

In the interval he went to Liverpool and worked ten hours a day at his father's paper, became English correspondent of the **Melbourne Argus**, and afterwards undertook the editorship of the **Northern Whig**, and published his singularly original and graphic novel, “Friends of Bohemia,” and finally he emigrated to Australia in 1858, two years after me.

Conflicting reports on the climate and social life of Australia reached me, and I determined to have information which I could rely upon. Two or three extracts from my diary will indicate with what success :—

“William Howitt's recent book describes the plague of flies in Australia as equal to any of the plagues inflicted on the Egyptians. If his story be authentic they must make life intolerable. I resolved to talk to him about it, and still more to talk to his wife, on whose sweet reasonableness I have more reliance. Yes (he said) there was a great trouble from flies in the summer months. But au contraire, during fifteen years in the country, he had not to sit up one night with the illness of any of his family or his servants. There were climatic troubles enough in England. To find a perfect climate with no drawback one must wait for Paradise. As for society, it was a little rough. Before the gold discovery there was some very nice society and some very able men in Melbourne, though they had sometimes sprung from a class whose habits were, of course, not altogether agreeable. But he referred me to his wife for details.

“I was charmed with the Howitts' house; it has an air of civilisation and

culture produced without cost by the taste of a poetess. In the drawing-room there were dwarf shelves, mounting from the floor to the height of an easy-chair, with pictures on the walls above them and flowers in various places. The corners were filled with triangular shelves for curios; the effect was charming, and gave their humble cottage a peculiarly pleasant and refined appearance. Kinkel, who lately escaped from a German prison, dined with us. He resembles John Dillon, but his face is less noble and his brow retreats. He told me the European party of revolution dislike Irish Nationalists, because their objects were exclusively local. Mitchel, whom he called *Meagre*, has disgusted them by his pro-slavery opinions. The next movement he declares will be against clerics as well as kings. After dinner Kinkel's children sang a little German serenade in the open air, under the dining-room window, which was very charming. Mrs. Howitt bade me not to be too much alarmed by William's opinions about the Australian climate; when he was in a passion he was apt to be a little unreasonable. She said this with a smile, which completely extracted the sting.

“I met Woolner, a young sculptor, at Cheyne Row (the Carlyles' house). He lived in Australia, and declares that so delightful a climate nowhere exists. The flies count for nothing; the air is exhilarating; he was always in high spirits and ready for work. There were some men of brains and culture in Melbourne, and he enjoyed life thoroughly. I laughed and inquired, ‘Why did you quit this terrestrial Paradise?’ ‘Well,’ he rejoined, ‘I am an artist, and art won't be born there for a generation or two, and meantime I must live, if possible’. I quoted Howitt's book. ‘Ah!’ he said, ‘Howitt's book is such a one as a man might be expected to write who acted against the advice of all his friends, and fared accordingly’. I spoke to Lowe in the House about the climate and social life. He said I must come and talk to his wife, who was the most enthusiastic Australian. And so she proved. She declared the climate is delightful, and the trouble from dust, of which I had also heard, not worth mentioning. Since they had lived in London she constantly entreated her husband to throw up his seat in Parliament and his political functions and return to the sunshine. I asked her about insects. Insects (she said) were probably a trouble in newly occupied districts, but she suffered no more inconvenience from them in her drawing-room in Sydney than in the one where we were conversing. Lowe said their residence was four or five miles out of town, and he rode in daily, inhaling the intoxicating air with a pleasure he could never recall in this country. Mrs. Lowe produced photographs of their Australian home, and of other favourite scenes, bathed in sunshine and gemmed with sparkling waters, which looked like glimpses of Paradise. Lowe said the comfort of Australian houses was often marred by the practice of building them after

English models, in no respect suitable to the country. They made large windows, and many for example, and then had the trouble of inventing contrivances to blind them, instead of beginning with the narrow casements suitable to hot climates. Verandahs were universally used, which was a great comfort; the verandah generally became the favourite apartment, containing drawing-room, boudoir, and study, for they sometimes surrounded the entire house, and were capable of being applied to many purposes. In Sydney there were wealthy and cultivated families in the second generation who enjoyed many of the comforts of Europe in their houses and habits of life. They had generally the good sense to live after the manner of Continental Europe rather than of England. He was in the habit of having all the doors and windows of his house opened every morning from five till seven, which kept it cool till three in the afternoon.

“I said my enjoyments in life had always been many books and a few friends, and these were indispensable to happiness. Books, he replied, were as easily had in Sydney or Melbourne as in London, only a few months later, and a few shillings dearer. As regards friends, he added, smiling a little cynically, if you insist on that luxury you must import it.

“My constant friend John Forster invited me to meet Mr. Latrobe, the first Governor of Victoria, who confirmed all the favourable statements. On the whole, I am content with this information and proceed with my preparations.”

Before quitting Parliament there was some work which it was my peculiar duty to do. After the escape of Meagher and Mitchel the Government allowed Smith O'Brien and his remaining associates to return to Europe with the sole condition that they must not revisit the United Kingdom. It is a significant tribute to the character of O'Brien among men who knew him well that I had little difficulty in obtaining the signatures of a hundred and fifty members of Parliament to a memorial requesting that this restriction might be withdrawn. Sir Fitzroy Kelly and Henry Ballie, Spooner and Alexander Hamilton, Whiteside and Napier, signed as willingly as Cobden, Bright, Lord Goderich or Milner Gibson. The Secretary of the Admiralty and the Secretary of the Board of Control felt free to urge this measure on the Cabinet of the Administration to which they belonged; but I wanted something more—the assent of the Leader of the Opposition. When I mentioned it to Mr. Disraeli in the House he asked me to come and talk it over with him in Park Lane. My diary contains this account of the interview:—

“I was received in his library, a convenient room on an upper floor and well lined with books. He spoke immediately of my intention of leaving the House of Commons. I was too impatient, he said. Human life might be

likened to a wheel; it was constantly turning round, and what was at the bottom to-day would be at the top some other day. The wheel, I said, was worked with a strong pulley by the party whips, and the Irish Nationalists never came to the top. I told him I was chiefly anxious to see him because a memorial was about to be presented to Lord Palmerston requesting that Smith O'Brien might be allowed to return to Ireland. I trusted he was not unfavourable to that design? Not at all, he said; the time has come when Mr. O'Brien might properly be allowed to reside wherever he thought fit. I inquired if I was at liberty to mention this opinion. Certainly, he said; if the Government blotted out all the penalties he should not criticise their conduct unfavourably. I said I wished we were asking the favour from him rather than Lord Palmerston who had no sympathy with a generous career, who apparently did not understand nationality, and with all his airy gaiety was at bottom a dry, hard Whig, who cared for nothing in politics but a majority. My countrymen, Mr. Disraeli observed smilingly, were not of my opinion—they constantly supported the gay old man. Yes, I said; and that disposition made the House of Commons intolerable to me. He did me the honour to speak with great openness of the Irish question and I ventured to tell him that Conservatives, by a generous policy, might make themselves more acceptable to Ireland than the Whigs, whom Lord John Russell's conduct had rendered detestable. He said he had taken great pains to induce the Cabinet to accept Napier's land reforms, and meditated other concessions, and he had sent Naas to Ireland to get rid of the old jog-trot of the Castle.

“Taking up a volume of Disraeli's early novels which lay on the table I said I would take the liberty of saying something which was permissible because I was probably seeing him for the last time. I differed widely about his books from the public, who preferred ‘Coningsby,’ but in my opinion several of the early novels were much better. They had the inspiration and enthusiasm of youth. The ‘Wondrous Tale of Alroy,’ as it used to be called, was the most entrancing romance since ‘Ivanhoe’. ‘Contarini Fleming’ could not be compared with any other English book, because it was sui generis an insight into the desires and dreams of a youth of genius; and ‘Ixion in Heaven’ was of the genre of ‘Candide’ and worthy to be set on the same shelf. His early novels, he said, had been judged hardly, and perhaps they deserve no better. He would have withdrawn the one which excited most clamour if it had been possible. Yes, I said, and nothing he had ever done or designed surprised me more than his willingness to sacrifice ‘Vivian Grey’ to ‘Mrs. Grundy’. That story painted an audacious and unscrupulous adventurer, but all his plans failed in consequence. He was not a prosperous but an unprosperous hero, and the moral of the book

plainly was that unscrupulous projects tumble down about the projector's head. The advocatus diaboli might insist indeed that the accomplished young neophyte of diplomacy was made too fascinating, and I could not deny that objection, for the first time I read 'Vivian Grey' was like the first time I drank champagne; I was intoxicated with an altogether new and mysterious enjoyment. As I spoke this last sentence, which was literally true, and spoken to a man whom I never expected to see again, I noticed a flush rise from Disraeli's cheeks to his forehead till it glowed with sudden light. The man, blasé with applause in many shapes, was moved with my manifest enjoyment of what pleased himself most, for under the mask of abstruse political profundity, which could be shifted like a domino, he was always at heart a man of letters, and the only one among his contemporaries. Other statesmen published books—he was a dreamer and a creator whose truest life was in the region of imagination."

I have not re-read "Vivian Grey" since I have reached the age of being hypercritical, but I am persuaded it will be for ever a book for ambitious boys.

Before leaving, I said, if he would allow me, I would speak for the last time of Irish affairs, without expecting any answer; and I cited rapidly the reforms which a Conservative statesman might, in my opinion, make in that country without violating the principles of his party. He listened graciously, and when I finished he clasped me warmly by the hand and accompanied me outside the library door, where he renewed his farewell.

Sir Denham Norreys, who, though a decided Whig, had affectionate remembrance of O'Brien, brought the question of his return to Ireland privately before Lord Palmerston, and reported the result to me in this note:—

"HOUSE OF COMMONS, *August 7, 1853.*

"DEAR MR. DUFFY,—I saw Lord Palmerston to-day about Wm. S. O'Brien. He spoke kindly about him—but still stated that he and Sir George Grey did not consider that they could with propriety recommend to her Majesty his free pardon *at present*—but at the same time he desired me to say that he by no means wished to convey to me that the 'door of hope' was shut upon him. He recommended that he should do nothing which would altogether separate him from this country, as it is quite possible that at a not very distant future a more favourable answer to a similar application in his favour might be attended with better success.

"In fact his case is not decided favourably, because it would rule that of others whom they don't wish to pardon.

"At any rate you have this satisfaction, that by the memorial which you alone were the means of procuring—and by the efforts which have been

made in his favour—which your untiring energy in his behalf excited, Smith O'Brien stands in a far more favourable position than he did at the commencement of the session.—Believe me, dear Mr. Duffy, ever faithfully yours,

“DENHAM NORREYS.”

Before I left Europe, perhaps for ever, I determined to shake the hand of Smith O'Brien again, and I spent a few days with him in Brussels, where he then resided. Much of our talk is chronicled in my diary, but time has made it obsolete, and I only make a couple of extracts of collateral incidents:—

“O'Brien naturally wished to know the judgment of the country on our unsuccessful experiment. I told him I believed the country was just to his character, and unjust to his policy. No one doubted that he meant generously, and made noble sacrifices, but his own class would not be persuaded that he was morally justified in attempting a revolution; the middle class, who had no such scruple, thought there ought to have been French or American officers procured to take charge of the operation, and the new secret societies declared ‘it was a pity and a crime to sacrifice a grand opportunity to sentimental humanity; he ought to have burned Widow MacCormack's house at Ballingarry, and her family, if necessary. What did a few individuals count in a revolution?’ O'Brien said with great feeling that he would not be guilty of the murder of Widow MacCormack's children for any political success whatever.

“At the table d'hôte the same evening I fell into conversation with a Belgian member of the Chamber of Deputies who took a lively interest in Irish affairs. After various questions about our institutions and notabilities, he took away my breath with surprise by suddenly demanding, ‘Connaissezvous Madame Veuve M'Cormack?’ After a good deal of wobbling we came to understand each other. He knew nothing of the Ballingarry widow, but there was an Irish lady of the name residing in the Quartier-Louise at that time whom he assumed I ought to know.

“O'Brien brought me to visit M. de Potter, leader of the Ultras in the Belgian revolution, and one of the editors of the Pays Bas, their organ of that era. When Brussels rose, De Potter was taken out of prison and made one of the Provisional Government; but when it was proposed to negotiate with France for a king, he insisted on a republic being declared; his colleagues contended that the Great Powers would not permit Belgium to create a republic in the centre of Europe, and thereupon he retired. Belgium became a monarchy, and in the quarter of a century which followed De Potter has been altogether excluded from public affairs. He is now an old man with white hair, and looks somewhat like George Petrie. He is very garrulous (which is pardonable, I suppose, in one who is visited as a

personage), and he is too deferential to his guests for our western ideas. We were introduced to him as Irish patriots by M. Deputtien, another of the Belgian National party of 1830. He was in prison with De Potter, and he affirms that the leader was not at all a practical politician. It was there he read for the first time the constitution which they were resisting. Deputtien, as secretary of the Commission, declares that he had the good fortune to strike an effective blow for liberty: he was ordered to write a letter to the Prince of Orange, then besieging Brussels, which amounted to the first step of a submission. He wrote the letter, read it to the Commissioners and had it approved, and then dropped it under the table, substituting a blank sheet of paper in the envelope. The Prince was enraged at so disrespectful an answer, and the negotiation which might have renewed the slavery of Belgium was broken off.”

Next to the return of O'Brien I felt the liveliest interest in the proposed investigation of Maynooth College, where I had friends whose interests and happiness were imperilled. A Select Committee was about to sit, and it was confidently believed that Dr. Cullen would obtain the assistance of the Whigs to bring the college completely under his personal control, to denationalise it, to Italianise it, and crush the professors who cherished some spirit of independence. The constitutional rights they enjoyed under statute were to be abolished and replaced by a purely arbitrary system of episcopal control. I wrote to one of my friends in the college asking for instructions how I could help them in Parliament, and his answer was worthy of a great ecclesiastic:—

“COLL., MAYNOOTH, *April 23, '55.*

“In the first place, and before all things, I would have you to do nothing whatever, save what you are persuaded is right, proper, and becoming to do. But, in truth, C.'s hostility to us is precisely on the points in which you agree with us. He is for centralising all management of affairs in himself, and he is for narrow views, clandestine man[oeuvres]—we are for the very opposite of all these. Our opinions on priests in politics are a mere accident as regards him and coincide with his opinion only in terms and appearance. We are opposed to clerical tyranny.

“Crolly thinks it of the first importance that we should be interrogated. Our sole object and wish in all this is to prevent C.'s and his party's interference and annoyance. I can speak for myself with the most perfect sincerity that I do not feel the least emotion of ill-will, revenge, or any other unworthy stimulus.

“This is not a matter of Crolly, Duffy, and Murray, &c., v. Cullen, &c., but of liberality, fair play, manly honour and truth v. &c., &c., &c., and therefore your heart should be in it as well as ours (over and above all

personal considerations, and therefore I need not apologise for any trouble I give you in it.”

I rejoice to think that I did my devoirs to the satisfaction of my friends. The Professors were cited before the Committee and their interests were effectually served. Another institution in which I took a strong interest was less fortunate. Dr. Newman was at the head of the Catholic University, and was perhaps among living men the one fittest for that position. Dr. Cullen was entitled to exercise a certain control over the University, and thwarted more than one of the Superior's designs. At length he produced a catastrophe. A salary had been assigned to Rev. Mr. Ford, a young man who was perhaps useful to the Archbishop, but did no service whatever to the University. Dr. Newman declined to certify for a salary which did not represent any service. The Archbishop sent him peremptory instructions to certify, which he did accordingly, but immediately sent in his resignation. By this unhappy incident the man who had most profoundly influenced the Church of England while he was one of its ministers was separated from the Irish Church, where his influence would probably have been as large and as beneficent.

My design in going to Australia was to practise at the Bar and to hold aloof from politics, but my friends insisted on anticipating for me a political career in the new world. Lucas wrote me, “John Bright, who has been to see me, says that Lowe predicts you will be member for Sydney before six months,” and Isaac Butt wrote “that you may win in the land of your adoption all that the strange fate that attends Irishmen of genius has kept from you at home is now all that your friends can wish for you.” They forecast the future more successfully than I did.

I left in the hands of my friends an application for the Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, the acceptance of an office of profit being the only method by which a seat in the House of Commons can be relinquished, the profit in this case counting by shillings, and the shillings being never paid in any instance I have heard of.

John Dillon told my steadfast friend Alderman Plunkett that I had applied for an office under the British Crown in England, and no doubt would get it. Plunkett swore that it was impossible. Dillon assured him he had seen my letter to the Secretary of the Treasury. “Well (exclaimed Plunkett) I will never believe in any man again; I'm done with politics for the rest of my life.” The jest had gone far enough, and Dillon explained the puzzle.

In these realms what event is too sombre or disheartening to be celebrated by a public dinner? My intended exile suggested two, one in Dublin projected by the Tenant Leaguers and the survivors of the Young Ireland party, the other in London by men of letters, who had only a

limited interest in Irish affairs, but were good enough to honour me with some personal sympathy. When a committee, which had John Stuart Mill for chairman and James Hannay for secretary, communicated their wishes to me, I felt that such a grace was a compensation for many disappointments. My friends, who were professors in the new University, were active in organising the Dublin dinner. A courtly ecclesiastic whispered to James M'Carthy, the Professor of the Fine Arts, when he read his name on the committee, "Don't be a fool; the Archbishop is essential to your success, you cannot build churches without bishops, and the Archbishop does not love the exiled agitator." "No," replied M'Carthy, "I believe he does not, but I do." M'Carthy had never taken any public part in politics, but while he was studding Ireland with noble gothic churches on which the genius of native art was stamped, his heart was still the heart of a boy for his early hopes and his early associates.

Some practical men insisted that before seeing me for the last time there ought to be some more permanent testimony of good will. Colonel French, who will be remembered as one of the habitués of the Reform Club for a whole generation, organised a Gavan Duffy Testimonial Fund in London, but as I always refused testimonials I brought that project to a prompt termination. Arthur Geheoghan, then a young Protestant Nationalist in the Excise Department, afterwards one of the four officials called "The Kings of Somerset House," wrote to offer me all the savings he had accumulated to be repaid without interest, and at my absolute convenience; and Mrs. Anderson, the wife of a general officer whose sympathy with Ireland made her well-known to me, proffered me the law library of her uncle, Judge Bowen, and proposed to meet me in London to hand it over. "My dear husband has just escaped with life," she said, "and is still so weak I would not leave him for any other cause on earth than that to which you have devoted your life."

It adds a flavour of rare magnanimity to Mr. Geheoghan's offer, that he did not agree with me in the contest which had brought about my exile.

"There is not on the face of God's earth," he wrote, "a more pious and self-sacrificing priesthood than yours, and as an Irishman I am proud of them. Often and often, through the by-lanes and boreens at all hours and at all seasons, I have seen the young curates hurrying to watch over, to pray beside, to cherish, and to comfort the parting hours of the wretched and the poor. But while I silently admired them on their errands of mercy, I thought that their reward should not be of this world, and grieved when I reflected that the dignitaries of your Church in return for such acts should require from a grateful peasantry the surrender into their hands of their rights as citizens or privileges as freemen.

“I differ from you on many points, but on none more so than that it is either desirable or expedient for the clergymen of your Church to take an active share in politics. That O'Connell hastened Emancipation some years by their assistance there is no doubt; but equally true it is that they have most habitually checked and retarded, either *directly* or *indirectly*, the growth of a free and manly opinion in Ireland ever since.”

Michael O'Grady, applauding my refusal of a testimonial, entreated me to accept from the Irish workmen in London the carved fittings of a library in Irish bog-oak. Of these proffered favours, I accepted only that of Mr. Geheoghan to a limited extent, because it could be repaid.

My diary at this time recalls some memorable and pleasant transactions. During the period when I had constant Parliamentary responsibility I thought of nothing else. I never went to theatres or exhibitions, and boat races and Derby Day appealed to me in vain. But when I had no longer public duties, I determined to see something more of the wonderful city which I was about to quit, perhaps for ever. The National Gallery, Westminster Abbey, and the British Museum occupied much of my leisure. Tristram Kennedy gave me a mount, and brought me to Rotten Row; Edward Whitty introduced me behind the scenes in the opera; I dined with a friend or two at the “Star and Garter,” and ate indigestible fish dinners at Greenwich; visited all the political clubs with members, and accepted more invitations in a month than during many previous sessions. “Break-fasted at the Stafford Club with Richard Doyle and his brother Henry, and Wallis (afterwards editor of the **Tablet**): I was surprised to note how familiar they were with the **Nation** and the work of the Young Irelanders, the Doyles being sons of a Unionist, and Wallis an Englishman. Dick Doyle speaks in a slow, rather drawling tone, but always admirably ad rem. Of Thackeray he said he could not get over the impression that he despised the finest of his own creations. He looked down even on Colonel Newcome because he was not a man about town. He declared that the only Parliamentary news he read or wanted to read, was Edward Whitty's ‘Stranger in Parliament’ in the **Leader**. It contained the essential oil of public transactions skilfully expressed. Henry, speaking of Cardinal Wiseman, declares that he is the tenderest and most considerate of sick nurses; he had tended him in illness like the best of fathers. Wallis referred to the insolence of James, who said Dr. Wiseman was an English gentleman, if being born in Spain of Irish parents could make him so. I said I accepted the insolence as an eulogium. Dr. Wiseman was, in fact, strikingly Irish; he looked, as some one said, like a strong parish priest with the key of the county in his pocket.

“I asked the Doyles about their father, the famous H. B. He was still living, Richard said, and was soon coming to see them. Originally he

distrusted O'Connell very much, as might be seen in his work, but latterly he came to think better of him. I spoke of **Punch** and Henry said his brother could not put up with the Exeter Hall clique into whose hands it had fallen.”

“Cobden introduced me the other evening to Lindsey, the shipowner—the virtual leader, I believe, of the Civil Service reform movement, of which Layard is the figure-head, and which has drawn Dickens and Thackeray into its current. ‘Twenty years ago,’ says Cobden, ‘he was sleeping under a dog-cart. At present he is worth £20,000 a year. I advised him,’ Cobden added, ‘that his brain was overworked, and that he ought to give up business and take to politics as a change. He took half my advice—he took to politics, but did not give up business’. His brain is active, but he has a very overworked look; his head drops on his breast, and his hands hang loose and flabby. I heard him speak at the city meeting. He has energy, pluck, and good sense, but not a touch of eloquence. If it were not unjust to Cobden I would say he was a vulgar Cobden. He has one weakness of which there is not a trace in Cobden, an affectation of intimacy with the aristocracy. ‘Among my correspondents,’ he said to me, ‘there is an old lady of great capacity and business habits, the Marchioness of Londonderry’. I believe he is really intimate with several great ladies, though he would not be a comely figure at a fancy ball. I met Bennoch, the poet, in this connection, and liked him very much. He has a more agile intellect than any other of the new reformers.

“Went to a reception which Mrs. Loudon and Mrs. Crowe gave in concert. Among the company Louis Blanc interested me most. His face is very fine and his eyes expressive, but the effect is seriously diminished by his dwarfish figure. He has not at all the air of a gentleman in the English sense. He smiles and contorts too much even for a Frenchman, and suggests an artist, play-actor, or singer rather than a politician. I spoke of the vehement promises Ledru Rollin and other democratic leaders had made of help to Ireland in '44, which compared ill with the slender performances of the Provisional Government in '48. He said Ireland and all struggling nationalities would have been helped but for Lamartine, who paralysed the good intentions of his colleagues. I expressed regret that Kossuth should have become a regular contributor to the **Sunday Times**; people were accustomed to think of him as the chief of a people. Blanc said it had become necessary for Kossuth to work for an income. ‘It was a pity; the articles would damage the reputation of the Magyar Chief, as they contained no new ideas and not many old ones. The next European revolution (he said) would be a fierce and sanguinary one. In '48 the Republicans ruined their cause by moderation, and that was not a fault they

would commit twice. Ireland (he went on to say) would find little favour with the leaders, for in Ireland everything was under the influence of the priests, and priests, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, were the sworn enemies of the revolution'. He asked about the rejection of the Tenant-Right Bill in the House of Commons. He understood the question fairly well, but predicted that we never would get anything from the British Parliament worth having.

"Later in the evening I met Julia Kavanagh. She is very small, smaller even than Louis Blanc, and, like him, has a good head and fine eyes. She is very much at home in Irish subjects, and tells me she is learning Gaelic. She proposed a volume of sketches from Irish history lately to Colburne and afterwards to Bentley, but neither of them would hear of it. She sent my small proprietors' scheme to Wills of **Household Words**, whom I met last year at Malvern, proposing to make an article about it, but that enlightened economist told her he had quite another object in view. He meant that Ireland should be colonised by Englishmen.

"Mrs. Crowe mentioned a fact which is of bad augury for English trade if it be authentic. It is impossible (she says) to get good silk in England, it has become so habitually deteriorated. French and Belgian silk, on the contrary, are excellent. A lady who was talking with us declared that the deterioration extended to almost all species of lady's dress.

"I called on Sir Emerson Tennant at his office, and had an interesting talk about the war. Admiral Dundas assured him he could not get Lord Stratford to send spies to the Crimea before the expedition. The Ambassador flew into a passion when he insisted on the necessity of it. At the Council of War before the expedition Dundas asked what they ought to do, as he objected to attacking a place of which he knew nothing. St. Arnaud exclaimed, like the hero of a melodrama from Port St. Martin, 'Let us go, let us show ourselves, let us conquer'. He then requested Lord Raglan's opinion, who mildly stated his objections; but St. Arnaud, who was half bandit, half playactor, repeated his rhodomontade. I inquired why Raglan, the Commander-in-Chief of an independent army, submitted to this gasconade. 'Because,' Tennant replied, 'he had a letter in his pocket from his Government commanding him to do so'. Baraguay d'Hilliers, according to Tennant, declared that the French fleet in the Baltic is commanded by a prosy old lady, and the English fleet by a vulgar old woman. The entente cordiale does not seem to grow.

"At the Ellenborough 'want of confidence' debate I took a last look at the House of Lords. There is as large a proportion of commonplace men as I have seen in any assembly of gentlemen—Lord Grey, far from inheriting the noble-domed forehead of his father, looks as he hobbles along shrewd

and ordinary—an attorney or land agent; Lord Panmure, with his port wine complexion and costume of a *ci-devant* jeune homme, might be a retired stockbroker; the Duke of Newcastle, a wooden mediocrity without a ray of the divine light of intellect; Lord Derby looks like a Lord John Russell with a soul, but that make a profound difference; and the Duke of Argyle a Frederick Peel ditto; Lord Derby has the unsettled eye and mien which sometimes betokens genius, but never wisdom or discretion. He looks unreliable, not from falseness, for he is open and dashing, but from recklessness. Lord Ellenborough spoke without force or fire, Lord Aberdeen, like a Puritan preacher, he is highly respectable, solemn, and discontented. But in fronta nulla fides; Cabrera, the Spanish cutthroat, was pointed out to me under the gallery one evening, and he is one of the handsomest and most gentlemanly men I have seen. Compared to him Louis Napoleon is vulgar. Napoleon's complexion is reddish brown, Cabrera's a clear, colourless pallor, his head impressive and well set. Again, Sir De Lacy Evans, the commander of the not too reputable Spanish brigade, is a noble, soldierly-looking man, whose profession immediately suggests itself; whereas Lord Hardinge, a great soldier, is nothing short of mean and ugly, and might pass for a Common Council man; and the Duke of Cambridge, illustrious by birth and courtesy, is big, brawny, and resembles a sergeant of dragoons. By the way, the House of Lords itself very much suggests a Roman Catholic church—the Throne representing the altar, and the reporters' gallery the organ loft. The likeness is rendered more complete by a picture over the Throne, and candles and stands near it.”

Though it was not unexpected, the sudden death of Frederick Lucas at this time was a painful blow. I had acted with him for many years in sunshine and shade, and loved as well as honoured him. I declined the public dinners to which I was invited and all other engagements, as a token of sympathy for my lost friend.

Shortly after, an able but singularly ungenerous article appeared in the **Times**, suggesting that the Attorney-General had probably provided a legal appointment in Australia for the Irish exile. I was going to a colony where the Attorney-General, or the Imperial Government, could not appoint or remove a policeman, where the favour of the people of Australia was the only road to office of any kind; but political criticism does not always trouble itself with the state of the facts. Edward Whitty wrote me that it was generally believed in journalistic circles that the article was written by Thackeray, and I was amazed and wounded at such an unexpected hypothesis, for I had established friendly relations with him, and I believed it impossible that he could have struck such a malign stroke. To put my

mind at ease I wrote and asked him, and promptly received his denial.

“*Thursday, September 6th,*

“36, ONSLOW SQUARE.

“MY DEAR MR. DUFFY,—There is not one word of truth in your correspondent's information. I have not written one line in the **Times**. Ye gods! when will well-informed correspondent's leave off swallowing mouches and telling fibs? I wish you a happy voyage and prosperity wherever you are; and don't think I should be the man to hiss the boat that carried you away from the shore. May we both return to it ere long, and shake hands, says, yours very sincerely,

“W. M. THACKERAY.”

A curious illustration of the feverish anxiety of Lord Brougham's life turned up at this time. Among the many articles pro and con which my retirement from Irish affairs begot, the **Liverpool Daily Post** enumerated various notable men who had spoken favourably of my literary experiments. Among others Lord Jeffrey was mentioned as having been enthusiastic over the Ballad Poetry of Ireland. A correspondent, too important to be refused a hearing, burst in with a denial that Jeffrey had ever expressed any opinion on the subject. In a subsequent number Jeffrey's language was cited from a note to his wife, and Edward Whitty sent me the following letter from the querulous correspondent:—

(PRIVATE.)

“BROUGHAM, *October 6, 1855.*

“Lord Brougham presents his compliments to Mr. Whitty. He supposed from the extract he had seen from the **LJ Journal** that it was in the **Ed. Review** Lord Jeffrey was believed to have mentioned Mr. Duffy's poetry, and he is much obliged to Mr. W. for the reference to Lord Cockburn's ‘Life of Jeffrey,’ which he finds to be quite correct.”

A levée in the **Nation** office enabled me to say farewell to my oldest and closest friends, and I made a hasty visit to London for a similar purpose. I shook the hands of Carlyle and Mrs. Carlyle, of John Forster and Mrs. Forster, of William Howitt and Mary Howitt, and many more. Stuart Mill called on me, and I find in my diary some note of our conversation:—

“Stuart Mill called to invite me to dine, but my brief time in London was all occupied. I had a very interesting talk with him. He spoke with indignation of the article in the **Times**, and strongly regretted that I had not accepted the London literary dinner. He deplored my quitting Parliament, as he was certain a party of the best men in public life were gradually getting concentrated. Speaking of Australia, he said a duty on gold was not liable to any political economy objection. It was one the least injurious to the community that could be devised. I inquired whether he thought the

bulk of the public expenditure in a new country might not be defrayed by leasing land in perpetuity for settlement instead of selling it, the State retaining the fee-simple. He replied that he considered such a method quite legitimate; but the rent reserved would be difficult to collect, and liable to Parliamentary combinations to annul it. If such a system were established the rent ought to be an ad valorem one, and be liable to be increased to meet improvements springing from the growth of society without any effort of the occupier, and the title of the occupier ought to be forfeited by a certain amount of arrears. Speaking of responsible Government, he said that in colonies where it existed the Governor ought, he thought, to be as impassive as the Queen is in England, except where Imperial interests, of which he is the guardian, were concerned.

“I met Dr. Madden in Piccadilly, and we lunched together. I suggested that the big volumes of his ‘Life of Lady Blessington’ might be squeezed into a pleasant little book containing the correspondence, which was interesting, especially the anonymous letters. The time for a new edition, he said, had not come. The anonymous correspondence was the letters of important men, whose assent to publication with their names he had not obtained. The letter rating Pencilling Willis savagely for his breaches of taste and confidence was by Lytton Bulwer, who also wrote the letter on Catholicity, in which he says that if he had been born a Catholic he would have remained one. The letters signed F. B. were by Sir Francis Burdett, and those signed P. by Sir Robert Peel. I told him the story Dr. Gully told me at Malvern, that Bulwer ran a race with his brother Henry for their mother's estate, which was to be bequeathed to whichever of them first became a peer, but Madden cannot say whether or not it is authentic.

“Apropos of the ‘Life of Lady Blessington,’ I asked him how he had avoided the glaring D'Orsay scandal. He shook his head meaningly, and said there was no evidence in the papers submitted to him, and so he kept his peace. In the evening we went to hear J. B. Gough, the teetotal lecturer, at Drury Lane. If Demosthenes said that acting was the soul of oratory, Demosthenes said well. Gough moves tears and laughter as I have never seen any orator do. He walks up and down the stage, recites dialogues, makes imitations, and, in short, *performs* a dramatic entertainment. He was originally a comic actor, and turns his experience to excellent account. His gifts are not great; he is the Henry Russell of lecturers, vulgar and clap-trap, but with genuine power over the popular heart.

“I met Dr. Hughes, the eminent Archbishop of New York, in the House of Commons lately. He has a notable Roman head, the side face of which looks like the head on a coin in the time of Caesar. He struck me as shrewd and clear rather than great or impressive. He says that Fr. Mullen's letter on

the condition of Irish Catholics in the U.S. contained exaggerated statements, but he admits the lapses from religion are numerous. Meagher, he says, might have been anything in the United States which the votes of the people could make him if he had sat down to work at a profession in a quiet, serious manner. He considers him now irretrievably lost in habits and opinions, a hard judgment surely.

“I met Sir William Molesworth at dinner for the first time to-day; he interested me as the first of the philosophical Radicals who had been called to office. He is shy and pedantic, but apparently good-natured, and undoubtedly upright and sincere. He seems to suffer habitual physical pain, which Dr. Brady, who sat near me, explained. He is very industrious, notwithstanding the popular impression to the contrary. Dr. Black, who accompanied him, is his mentor, educated him in politics, still sometimes furnishes, Brady says, the material of his speeches, and manages his affairs. Of this latter function Brady gave me a startling instance. At some public dinner, where Molesworth, who presided, put down his name for a subscription, when the paper, which passed around the table, came to Black, he altered the figures, doubling the amount his friend had proposed to give.

“I breakfasted with Godley, the founder of the Canterbury settlement in New Zealand, and had some interesting talk with him. He assumed that I must go into politics, and his theme was patience and moderation. The Colonists could get anything that they wanted or that was good for them from a Government which, whoever were in power, would regard them with feelings which were paternal. Among the letters which reached me at the last moment was a welcome one from Charles Kingsley, the friend of all who suffered in a good cause. ‘Let me say goodbye,’ he said, ‘to a man whom (deeply differing from him on many points) I have long admired for his talent and fearlessness, even where I thought those great powers misapplied. However, what is past is past; you are going now to a more wholesome atmosphere, there to mix with social problems more simple than those of this complicated and diseased Old World. I almost envy you. Yet I seem to see here still work to be done which I can do, though on the future of England and of Europe I look with sad and shuddering forebodings. Yet we must have courage. “God is the King” after all, and Right must conquer at last, not perhaps in the way which you or I might make out, but in some wider, deeper way’.

“And a final farewell from Mary Howitt:—

“ ‘You must, dear Mr. Duffy, take with you our best and kindest wishes to the Antipodes. I think of your speaking of the woes of old Ireland with deep emotion, and I trust that God will give you a beautiful and a happy

home in the new world of Australia, and that though you never can forget the old land of so many sorrows, yet that the new one may afford you and your children such abundant joy and comfort as may make the day you set foot on its shores the most fortunate day of your life'.

These sympathisers were all Liberals, but it touched me keenly to have the good word of a Conservative who judged what was done and projected by quite another standard. Emerson Tennant wrote to me:—

“And here let me say that I think in the management of the **Nation** you have done more than any living man, Moore only excepted, to elevate the national feeling of Irishmen. I don't talk of your energies in pursuit of a brilliant delusion; but I refer to the lofty spirit which has characterised that pursuit; to the bursts of eloquence and flashes of true poetry which have accompanied it, and to the pure and lofty, and at the same time gentle feeling which you have evoked in the struggle. The **Nation** has exhibited the genius of Ireland in a new and unlooked-for phase.”

On the last day in London Michael O'Grady introduced a troop of Irishmen, who wished to say goodbye. One of them uttered a saying which surely amounted to genuine spontaneous eloquence. He brought an old Prayer Book to get my autograph, and one of his companions, who was provided with a more presentable volume, said, “It's a shame, Tom, to offer such a book to Mr. Duffy for his signature.” “Arrah,” said Tom, “why shouldn't I offer it to him; isn't it like himself, tattered and torn in the service of God and the people?”

On October 8, 1855, I embarked at Liverpool on the good ship *Ocean Chief*, bound for Melbourne. My family were on board before me, and when I went to their cabin and saw them actually at sea, to sail to a country where I knew next to no one, my ribs seemed to close on my heart for a moment with a painful and perilous responsibility; but my wife bade me trust in God, and we faced the future without trepidation.

I left Ireland with the main purpose of my life unattained, but as I was persuaded, not lost, but postponed, for a belief in God's justice is incompatible with the doubt of Ireland's final deliverance from cruel and wicked misgovernment. It was my consolation that in public affairs I had always done what I believed best for Ireland, whatever penalty it involved, and that I had never accepted so much as a postage stamp by way of honorarium or compensation.

The experiment of Independent Opposition, which I had entered Parliament to test, was declared by scoffing critics to have altogether failed, but twenty years later when the ballot effectually established the power of the people, Mr. Parnell, as we have seen,¹ took it up anew under more favourable conditions, and carried it to remarkable success.

It must be recognised as a generous trait in the character of Mr. Parnell that he acknowledged so frankly where his policy had been found. It was twenty years since it had been first propounded, and it was naturally a good deal forgotten. Had Mr. Parnell used it as Mr. Mitchel did the theory of Fintan Lalor, adopted it as his own, and spoke of it as “my policy,” “the policy of me, C. P.,” no one would have questioned his claim, and by this time a host of partisans would be prepared to assert in perfect good faith that Independent Opposition had never been mooted before his day.

See vol. i. page 251.

CHAPTER II

MY RECEPTION IN THE NEW COUNTRY

Sailed in the *Occan Chief*—Religious equality established on board—Arrival at Melbourne—Deputation of eighty gentlemen come on board to welcome me—My statement of opinions—Public dinner in Melbourne—The “Backbone and Spinal Marrow” Speech—Melbourne in 1855—Public Library—University and Parliament House—Visit to the Legislative Assembly—Mr. Fellow's Bill—Public dinner in Geelong—Letter from Edward Buller—Condition of the Irish in Victoria—Letter from Orion Horne—Visit and reception at Sydney—Henry Parkes, James Martin, John Hubert Plunkett, W. B. Dalley, and Edward Butler—Public dinner—Declaration of Henry Parkes—John Macnamara—Rev. Mr. West concerning the visit—Parkes' description of all I lost by leaving Sydney—Letter from Rev. J. D. Lang—Letter from Edward Wilson—His Australian projects—Property Qualification—Villiers and Heytesbury Election—Visit to the village of Killarney—Speech of George Johnson—State of the poll—John Mooney's proposal—Letter from Edward Whitty—Letter to William Carleton—Condition of Victoria in 1856.

THERE was no mail service to Australia in 1855, and after careful inquiry I took my passage in the *Ocean Chief*, a vessel of the Black Ball Line.

The captain was a frank and friendly Nova Scotian of Irish descent, and I speedily saw that we were destined to get on comfortably. His yarns were racy; one of them still makes me smile when it recurs to my memory. A skipper of his acquaintance entered a complaint in the log-book against one of his officers. “I regret to state (so it ran) that during the greater part of this day the first mate has been intoxicated and disorderly.” Some days later the first mate made an entry in the log. “I am rejoiced to be able to state that during this entire day the captain has been sober, and his instructions for sailing the brig were quite intelligible.” Among my shipmates was Wilson Gray, who had sold his share in the **Freeman's Journal** in order to adventure in the new and happy land.

On the first Sunday at sea I may be said to have begun my Australian career. The bell was rung at ten o'clock in the morning, and the captain read passages from the Book of Common Prayer to the bulk of the cabin

passengers. When he finished I came out of my cabin and asked him if there was an Established Church on board the *Ocean Chief*. “Certainly not,” he said. “Well, have the goodness to have the bell rung again, and I will read prayers for some hundred Irish Catholics in the second class and steerage.” The captain complied, and I got through the business fairly well, and continued the practice till the end of the voyage.

For the first fortnight the good ship never got beyond a day's sail from Ireland. Up to the Equator we had as bad a passage as could be conceived—a head wind for a longer time than the captain had ever heard of in the North Atlantic, and then a longer calm than he ever remembered at sea. But when we crossed the line a favourable wind filled the sails for eight thousand miles almost without interruption, and we saw the new land lying on the lap of the Pacific within eighty days, during which we passed through two winters and two summers. All voyages are alike, and the recreations identical—bets on the day's sail, sweepstakes on the date of reaching Port Phillip, deck billiards in the morning and loo and spoil five in the evening, and in the end concerts and amateur theatricals duller than a Dutch sermon. Some of us aimed to learn a little navigation, or at least to understand the ropes, and to make some acquaintance with Jack Tar. Jack was a comical fellow; he had a quarrel with the black steward, and one morning we heard the crew hauling at the ropes with a loud chorus, “I don't love a nigger, I'll be d—d if I do. Haul, haul away for the Black Ball Line.” Daily confabulations with Wilson Gray on the destiny of the new country, and all we hoped to do and achieve there, gave a little flavour to life, and relieved the monotony of the wearisome amusements.

When we sailed into the noble land-locked harbour of Port Phillip, entered by a natural gateway called the Heads, the health officer who visited the ship brought me a letter requesting me not to land when we reached Melbourne till I received a deputation who desired to welcome me to the new country. I was much struck with a generosity which sprung forward to meet me before I set foot upon the shore.

“The deputation,” said the **Argus** next day, “was very numerous, consisting of about eighty persons, including Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, the latter naturally being in the largest proportion.” It was headed by John O'Shanassy, one of the members for the city, and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, and he was accompanied by the most conspicuous reformers in the Chamber and leading members of the Municipal Council of Melbourne, and various notable citizens. Mr. O'Shanassy, after reading a generous address from Victorians, said he had another which, he was bound to say, was of a few days earlier date, from Sydney, urging Mr. Duffy to make that city his home in the New World,

and he could not fail to note that it bore the signatures of some of the most distinguished men in New South Wales. My friends in Melbourne desired to entertain me at a public dinner *to naturalise me in my new country*.

I told the deputation that if I had been assured a little while ago that the Rock of Cashel would make a voyage to Australia it would not have appeared more incredible than that I should do so myself, but I was deeply discontented at the state of political affairs in Ireland, and determined to be no longer responsible for them. Three years ago by the labours of a few friends, of whom I was one of the humblest, an Irish Party had been formed of between forty and fifty members pledged to ask no place or patronage for themselves or others, but to give their support without party distinction to whatever Government would propose satisfactory measures for Ireland. There existed in the House of Commons officers specially appointed and salaried to wheedle, seduce, or corrupt adverse members, and unhappily they had been too successful with the Irish Party. Among the men pledged not to accept office one was now Attorney-General, another Solicitor-General for Ireland, a third Lord of the Treasury, and a fourth, when the *Ocean Chief* left England, was the only Parliamentary Secretary or all the Colonies and Dependencies of the Empire. Irish Nationalists wanted for Ireland what the reformers of Victoria had won for their colony. Victorians were not contented with having their affairs managed in a distant city by ill-informed or indifferent persons, and why should Irishmen be content? The Australians had succeeded and the Irish had failed, but let them not forget that they succeeded mainly by the aid of two potent allies, with whose aid Ireland also would have succeeded—the Atlantic and the Pacific. As respects the invitation to a public banquet, I had left home intending as soon as I felt strong enough to resume the practice of my profession, and this was still my purpose, but it was not in my nature to be indifferent to public interests or sink into any sordid apathy. I therefore gladly accepted an invitation which gave me an opportunity of becoming more familiar with the public men and interests of the colony.

The dinner was a notable success. Two hundred persons was the largest number for which accommodation could be found, and an overflow dinner had to be provided for in another chamber. Mr. O'Shanassy presided, and the attendance was very representative of the community. Of my speech I need only notice one paragraph, of which I never was allowed to hear the end: "I recognised," I said, "that this was not Ireland but Australia—Australia, where no nationality need stand on the defensive, for there was fair play for all. In such a land I could be, what I believed nature intended me to be if national injustice and fraud had not turned my blood into gall, a

man who lent a willing and cheerful obedience to the laws, as the guardian of public and private rights, and who desired no more than to be permitted to live in peace under their protection. But let me not be misunderstood," I added. "I am not here to repudiate or apologise for any part of my past life. I am still an Irish rebel to the backbone and to the spinal marrow. A rebel for the same reason that John Hampden and Algernon Sydney, that George Washington and Charles Carroll of Carrolltown were rebels—because tyranny has supplanted law in my native country. I would not be tempted by all the gold in Australia to repudiate my share in a struggle which was as just and holy a one as ever was lost or won in this world. But having been a good Irishman in my old home would not, I conceived, be a bad security for my becoming a good Australian in my new one." I added, regarding the principles of public liberty which I held, that I was a Radical reformer, but I was no more a Red Republican, as some one alleged, than a Red Indian.

Melbourne, which is now a handsome and picturesque city, was then a thriving village, in the by-streets of which primeval trees or their stumps might still be seen, and where huge chasms sometimes interrupted communication between adjoining streets. The public buildings were ultra-provincial, the Government offices were a two-storey villa, the law offices occupied a vacant corn store, the Public Works department was housed in a wooden shanty; but some progress had been made with an ambitious Custom House, and the young community had built a creditable Public Library and Museum, and the foundations and class-rooms of a University. The Legislative Council met in a small brick building known as St. Patrick's Hall, hired from the St. Patrick's Irish Society; but a new Parliament House was planned, on so great a scale that after forty years it is not yet finished.

The public library was as yet strangely unfit for its position in the capital of a new country. All the great eras of history were blank. There was not a single book on the English Commonwealth, but Clarendon and an anonymous Life of Cromwell, nor on the American Revolution but Bancroft, or on the French Revolution but Thiers, or on the Bonapartean era but the spiteful and libellous memoirs of Bourrienne. There was not a single volume on Australian affairs, and political economy was ignored. The modern poets were represented by Samuel Rogers and a single poem of Tennyson's. The modern novelists stopped with Scott. The philosophers were nowhere. Carlyle, Landor, Browning, Helps, John Wilson, De Quincey, William Hazlitt, Henry Taylor, Cornwall Lewis and Thackeray were not to be found. But the antiquities of Athens and Attica were abundantly represented. Three hundred volumes of Greek and Latin

classics and the Book of Common Prayer in German, French, Italian, Greek, modern Greek, and Spanish; twelve volumes of the Bridgewater Treatises and their antithesis, Hobbs in sixteen volumes were offered as refreshment to the weary. But in good time all this has got thoroughly mended. The stranger can now walk into this noble building without introduction of any sort, and find himself as conveniently provided with facilities for study as in the reading-room of the British Museum.

Society was existing in a state of discomfort and inconvenience difficult to realise. In the capital the ill-lighted streets were also ill-paved, and the flag-ways made in patches or left unmade at the option of the owners of adjoining property. On windy nights one stumbled through some of the chief streets of Melbourne from fragments of solid flagging into unexpected pools of slush and mud. The principal highways in the suburbs bore the same relation to the streets that highways ordinarily bear to streets; that is to say, they were worse made and worse mended. On one of the chief highways to the goldfields, now traversed by a railway, I have seen a coach company after bumping over corduroy road for which the treadmill would have been a pleasant exchange, compelled to descend from their places, wade through a river, return to the vehicle and sit for two or three hours in dripping clothes. The Western ports within twelve hours' sail of the capital have sometimes been longer without Melbourne newspapers than London was ordinarily without newspapers from New York. After a day's rain Elizabeth Street, a great business thoroughfare, was a morass, where a passage was sometimes not merely difficult but impossible. I can recall a case in which I had to forfeit a dinner engagement in the next street because the ocean of sticky slush which separated us was impassable by man or beast.

I speedily visited the Legislative Assembly and made acquaintance with the leading members.¹ They were generally men of capacity and experience, but I was assured that not one of these Legislators had ever seen a Parliament, and business was necessarily conducted somewhat at random. On my first visit to the Council an incident happened which suggested that a man of some European experience might be useful in the Legislature. There was a Bill on the notice paper introduced by Mr. Fellows, a leading lawyer, regulating the admission of barristers and establishing an Inn of Court and a Corporation of Benchers. I asked for a copy of the measure, and to my amazement found that it would exclude me and every other Catholic from the Bar of Victoria, as it was made a condition of admission to take the Oath of Supremacy, the identical oath which for more than a century English and Irish Catholics had refused to take. The exposure of the blunder, for it owed its origin to blundering not

to bigotry, was fatal to the measure, which was withdrawn; but I fear the learned author never altogether forgave me my banter on the subject. There were only three or four Irish Catholics in the Chamber, but one of them, Mr. O'Shanassy, had attained a leading position, and it was said, not without wonder and shaking of the head in the city, that he must be a member of any Responsible Government created under the new constitution. The bulk of the population were Dissenters not unlike a Nonconformist congregation in England, intelligent and alert, but often filled to the lips with prejudice. They had never seen, as indeed who had seen, a Papist exercising supreme authority, and they were perturbed by the perils of so unaccustomed a spectacle.

Geelong was at that time the angry rival of Melbourne. The question which of them should be the capital of Victoria seemed to the Westerns still unsettled, though to others it was plain that Melbourne had won the race. If the question were still open Geelong had conspicuous claims. Nature seemed to have framed Corio Bay for the seat of a great city. The semicircle of hills gently sloping to the water, the deep, secure anchorage, the Barwon behind supplying fresh water, the Barabool Hills furnishing corn, wine, and fruit: behold the essential conditions of success. My friends in this charming little town invited me to a public dinner, at which I had a farther opportunity of developing my opinions. Meantime the invitation from Sydney despatched so promptly pressed for acceptance. My friend Edward Butler was associated with Henry Parkes in the management of the **Empire**, and Parkes was the ablest man in the party of progress. Butler warned me of perils to which he believed I was liable with the cautious anxiety of a devoted friend.

“I would fain (he wrote) be present, if not the first to clasp your hand on landing where it seemed so improbable we should ever meet—improbable indeed that we should ever meet anywhere again. I have another reason for writing—to caution you not to fling yourself into the embraces of our poor countrymen, who would run away with you beyond the bounds of discretion. Only think of its needing the interference of Parkes and myself to quash an incipient movement here to put you in nomination for Sydney. You occupy a dignified position in the minds of most people out here from the motives and manner of your retirement from Parliament which Parkes has zealously joined with me in putting in the right light; indeed we are much indebted to Parkes. Well, I am very anxious that from this position you should not lapse into a natural mistake of giving yourself unreservedly to our poor enthusiastic Irishmen. You will have to answer an invitation to a public banquet in this city shortly. The invitation, however, will be managed by Parkes and some other English as well as Irish friends.

Remember these colonies are English, and any sympathy beyond that of Irishmen will be with yourself personally, not with the Irish cause. In the next place the disposition of the English is to look upon your character as recently seen by them, with wondering incredulity, reluctant to believe that you are not a demagogue of the 'reddest' school. In the next place, the upper class of English, who are our misruling Conservatives here, know your character better, and hate you for coming to disturb them as they fear in their stagnant despotism. These will decry you, if you give them a chance. In the last place there is the Irish place-men here constituting a class, and never did you see this species in so repulsive a shape. Those people, for the sake of the respectability of your character would pay you tribute in common with good Englishmen, and would welcome you in common with Irishmen for the sake of being popular with the Irish—only that they dare not. You will say naturally enough, 'Why should I trouble myself about all these people?' For several reasons. First, if you settle in this colony, it is well not to mar your entrance into it by a mistake. Next, the character of our old cause of Young Irelandism will be made or marred for ever in this part of the world by you; and, believe me, you will come to understand how this light can guide one's actions, feeling as if he should compromise his old friends and his old country the moment he compromised himself. It has been my guiding maxim many and many a lonely hour, and I hope and believe that in this respect my life here has been no subject of reproach. Then remember the future, friend and foe concur in destining you for a high career in Australia."

I had gone to the new world weary of political life, and resolved to become a successful lawyer. Some business came to me immediately, and I sat down to work. But a different course had been expected by political friends, and my natural tastes corresponded with their wishes to draw me into public life. The foundations of a new nation were to be laid, the principles for which reformers contended at home might have fair play in a country where there was no aristocracy, no large estates, no paramount authority, and to aid this development was a task which might repay endless toil.

I had been cordially received by the leaders of the Liberal Party, and their programme included the measures that seemed most urgent. Opening the public lands to the people, enlarging the basis of political freedom, and the proclamation of complete religious equality. Among the men who had been the most prompt to welcome me were a small sprinkling of squatters who insisted that I who had fought the battle of the tenants in Ireland must necessarily sympathise with the Crown tenants who were menaced in their rights by a new population who had come for gold, and would abandon the

country when they had got it. But I retained one guiding axiom of Jeremy Bentham, then and always “the greatest good of the greatest number,” and I found myself imperatively drawn to the other side. But I desired to be fair. After a little a select committee, an embryo cabinet was formed to consider the question, and met nightly in a lawyer's chambers in Temple Court. The case of the squatters was considered without passion, and with a sincere desire to be just. The position of my own race was another question to which I gave early attention. They were nearly a fourth of the population, but they exercised little or no authority. There was only one Irish Catholic magistrate in the Colony, and not half a dozen Irish Catholics in the Civil Service. To strangers at a distance who read of Murphys, Barrys, MacMahons, and Fitzgeralds in high places, it seemed the paradise of the Celt—but they were Celts whose forefathers had broken with the traditions and creed of the island. Mr. O'Shanassy was the only man of his race who occupied a distinguished political position. Aspinall, whom I had met a good deal with Edward Whitty in London, was now a working lawyer on the goldfields. Shortly after my arrival he indicated in the pleasant banter he loved what an Englishman thought of this system and the cause of it.

“Now that you have got over the exhaustion of your triumphal entry into Victoria, you must allow me to offer congratulation and welcome.

“I am living here on the Diggings at present, and have been some time, and you, I suppose, must see the diggings and the diggers very soon, whatever else you do. . . . O'Shanassy will tell you that it has long been a standing joke and grievance in this colony that every public appointment is given to Hibernians, whether it be a postman's or a judgeship. Only while Mr. Stawell holds office they should add Orange theology to the indispensable brogue. But nationality beats bigotry altogether. The most orthodox Englishman has no chance against even a ‘Papist’ if his spiritual defects be counterpoised by the temporal advantage of Hibernian descent.”

Another early welcome came from Orion Horne. The poet (who resided in Dublin as correspondent of the **Daily News** during the Young Ireland era) had been a digger an official, and was now content to be clerk to Mr. Michie, the leading advocate at the Melbourne Bar, and had the advantage of having a considerate gentleman for his employer.

“Welcome to Australia! The news of your arrival has only just reached me. How many associations with Dublin—all pleasing and full of energy—are at once conjured up with your name in my memory.

“Being ‘an author,’ of course here I come with my book! We don't think ourselves so barbarous here. What do you say to a publisher having brought out an Australian ‘Orion’ a twelvemonth ago, and found people to

purchase?

“Well, you have come to a vast new field. You can make a fortune if you choose, but may also do something much better.

“I do not at present know your address, but will do myself the pleasure of calling upon you directly I learn it.

“Since I have been here I had a five years' training at the very Siberia of the goldfields, where there are the coldest winds, heaviest rains, deepest mud, and most wretched houses (besides the ‘sweet voices’ you wot of) of any part of the inhabited colony.”¹

And Mr. Chapman, a Canadian publicist, who was now practising at the Melbourne Bar, called on me with a letter he had received from Robert Lowe, recommending me to his good offices, and through Chapman and S. H. Bindon, formerly Secretary to the Tenant League, I made acquaintance with the Melbourne Bar, the leaders of which I encountered later at the tables of the judges.

It now became necessary to determine where I should reside. The gracious welcome I received in Melbourne might seem to settle that question. But in Sydney there was a much larger Irish population, who were eager and vehement to have me among them, and this popular enthusiasm was fortified by overtures from men of position and influence. Henry Parkes, who was afterwards longer than any other man Prime Minister of his colony, urged me to make no engagement till I had seen Sydney, that would prevent me settling there. And Edward Butler, who finally rose to be Attorney-General, and but for a malign accident would have been Chief Justice, was of the same opinion. Earth, says the philosopher, has no treasure like a prudent friend, and to me Butler was a prudent and generous friend till his dying day, and has bequeathed me the love of his children. I saw many reasons for preferring Melbourne. From the spirit of the men I had encountered, and the tone of the people and of public meetings, and the Press, it seemed certain that Victoria would take the lead of the Colonies in public spirit and courageous experiment. This was a motive all but irresistible.

I sailed for Sydney by the inter-Colonial steamer **Telegraph**, and when we reached the Heads we were met by the steamer *Illalong*, decorated with Irish and Australian colours, and carrying a large number of ladies and gentlemen who came to bid me welcome. When the two steamers reached the quay there were many thousand persons there: “Irishmen, Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Australians of every sect and creed having assembled,” says the **Empire**, “to honour the patriot of Ireland.”

In Sydney I found two parties, one devoted to unrestricted popular liberty, the other Conservative Liberals; but an Australian Conservative, as

some one has said, is a man who accepts only four of the six points of the People's Charter. The head of the Government was Mr. Plunkett, an Irish Catholic, disposed to be most friendly, but though his private hospitalities were abundant, I raised an impediment which made it difficult for him to take any public part in welcoming me. The Governor at this time was Sir William Denison, who had been Governor of Tasmania when O'Brien, Meagher, and their comrades were prisoners there, and had earned the significant title of "the black snake" by his treatment of them. I positively refused to attend any banquet at which his health was proposed, and as the committee graciously yielded this point, Mr. Plunkett could not, without a violation of etiquette, attend. My hosts were very numerous, however. Mr. Flood, afterwards long a member of the Parliament created by the new constitution, announced that he had granted me a rent charge which was duly registered, to enable me to be elected for any constituency in New South Wales, and my remaining there was treated as a matter of course. But from the engagements made in Victoria, perhaps somewhat prematurely, I could not escape with good faith. In my speech I laughed at the contest between the old and the new colony, and cited some lines which were thought pertinent to the controversy:—

“Although our treacherous tapster Thomas
Hangs a new Angel three doors from us,
As fine as glittering gold can make it,
In hopes that strangers may mistake it;
We think it still a shame and sin
To quit the good old Angel Inn.”

Perhaps the most notable circumstance of the evening was that Henry Parkes had the courage to declare that if he were an Irishman, and had witnessed the same calamities and misgovernment which had befallen Ireland in recent times, he would have done all that Mr. Duffy was blamed for doing to defeat and abate them.

On a much-mooted point I took a decisive stand. Some of the Liberals thought that to amend the constitution and enlarge its powers was the first business to which the legislature must apply itself. I exhorted them to prove their fitness for government by using the powers conferred upon them to develop the great resources of the country, and increase its prosperity before enlarging their boundaries. Next morning Mr. James Martin—afterwards Prime Minister and finally Sir James Martin, Chief Justice—called on me to express his satisfaction that I had discouraged rash and irrational projects, and at his table I afterwards met many of the

more moderate politicians. I introduced two of my friends to him, whom the jealousy of political parties had hitherto prevented Martin from knowing, one was Edward Butler—afterwards his competitor at the bar, and finally for the office of Chief Justice—the other William Bede Dalley, who later became in politics his colleague, and in social life his brother-in-law. Dalley was a young man full of gaiety and badinage, and only partly awakened to the serious duties of life. But in time he grew prodigiously; he is the only Australian who has been granted a monument in St. Paul's for public services to the Empire, for it was this Irish Catholic Nationalist who, as acting Prime Minister, despatched the expedition to the Soudan, which has permanently increased the goodwill between the mother-country and her colonies.

During my stay in Sydney the first general election under the new constitution took place, and there was scarcely a constituency in which some candidate did not debate my visit and its possible consequences. John Macnamara, a merchant of wealth and intelligence, might be regarded as the leader of the Irish, and he besought me to stay in Sydney, and undertook that if I remained I should obtain professional business, to create an adequate income.¹ Parkes was more anxious for my political career, and as Parliamentary labours would necessarily engross much of my time, offered me £800 a year to write for the **Empire** whatever I found convenient. His good-will was undoubted, and was frequently tested during our public careers; but no doubt he was mainly moved by the consideration that I could be useful to the popular party. The enthusiasm of my countrymen in New South Wales was marvellous; I was bid to test it by the fact that two Gavan-Duffy hotels and a Gavan-Duffy omnibus had sprung up within the month, and that during the election the Irish voters had been everywhere placated by so many extravagant compliments to me. One man in every three in the colony was an Irishman, and if they joined the popular party under my counsel its future would be secure. But the **Sydney Morning Herald**, the prosperous organ of the Conservative Party, was then under the control of a remarkable man, the Rev. Mr. West, the historian of Tasmania. Nothing in my visit to Sydney gratified me more than his comment on its close, from which I will quote a sentence or two:—

“Mr. Duffy,” he wrote, “left this city yesterday, attended by the best wishes of thousands. He had been invited to several of the principal towns of the interior. To have gratified all his admirers would have consumed time which no man worthy of such honour could spare. In Mr. Duffy we have recognised a representative man—one who presents a view of a great section of our various population. We have found him in personal contact a

pleasant, earnest, and practical man—looking to colonial affairs with the fresh views of a statesman unacquainted with local parties and accustomed to deal with the great questions of government where rhodomontade and sham cannot gain a second hearing. We shall always look back upon our share in the reception of Mr. Duffy as a public recognition of the natural and religious equality of all the subjects of the Crown.”

The fact which most impressed me in New South Wales was that a second generation, with a larger experience, more cultivated taste, and more settled opinions, now occupied the public stage, and did not much differ from the corresponding population in England.

But I returned to Victoria, and acted with the friends whom I had found there. After my return Parkes wrote me a letter which painted very vividly and very truly all I had forfeited by that choice.

“SYDNEY, *April 30, 1856.*

“MY DEAR DUFFY,—Your decisive words leave no hope of your leaving Victoria, and I fervently hope your life may be abundantly blessed both in household happiness and public good. The wish you have so frankly and affectionately expressed—that we may work together to the end of life—will remain a perfect light of gratitude within my troubled existence. If it could have been, I should have felt it a glorious privilege to have had a spirit like yours, mourning, rejoicing, admonishing, and encouraging in the trials and wrestlings of daily life, and I think I might have grown almost great in the gentler strength of a high-principled brotherhood such as I can now only dream of. Some of these days I will come in upon you all of a sudden so that I may satisfy myself of the attractions that have fixed you in Victoria. Now I cannot help teasing you with a faint picture of some of the good things you have missed. Here you might have been at once the popular leader and the highest Minister of State, with a fairy nook on the romantic shores of our noble haven for your home and the most cultivated men in the community as your admiring friends. But what would have been of far higher interest—a more spiritual satisfaction to you—here you would have had a direct and definitely-ordered mission which there is no one else to enter upon.”

The Rev. Dr. Lang was one of the most energetic politicians in Australia. He was head of the Presbyterian College in Sydney, and had reared a generation of students destined to become public men, and he had been a member of the Sydney Legislature during its whole career. Dr. Lang had got into conflict with the Catholics on the question of immigration and of local elections, with the merits of which I was imperfectly acquainted. But there were two facts I knew of him which recommended him to my sympathy. When the Repeal agitation was at its height in '43 he was in

London, and wrote a pamphlet justifying and applauding the movement. Of the project most alarming to prejudiced minds—the Council of Three Hundred—this was the language he held:—

“The Repealers are at present electing members for a National Council of Three Hundred, and there is no reason whatever to doubt that, in the present temper of the Irish nation, they will readily find a sufficient number of resolute and devoted men to form such a body; and by whatever name we may choose to miscall the men who will thus be chosen by their country, the wise, both in Europe and America, will at once vouch for their undoubted nobility. The body that will thus be formed will therefore start into existence with the *prestige* of the original American Congress, and will thenceforth give the law to Ireland.”

And in Australian affairs he and Robert Lowe had been the only members of the Legislative Council of New South Wales who joined the Port Phillip members in demanding the erection of Victoria into a separate colony. On my return to Melbourne he addressed a public letter to me accounting for his absence from the reception at Sydney, and proposing a task which he believed to be the highest which an Australian statesman could undertake. Australian reformers, he said, regarded my arrival as an event of the deepest interest, as leading towards the end to which all these noble Colonies were tending—their entire freedom and independence. He believed it to be equally the interest of the Colonies and of the mother-country that this predestined end should be speedily realised. He held it to be equally a law of nature and an ordinance of God that full-grown communities, such as these Australian Colonies had become, should be self-governed, free, and independent. He loved his native country and deeply honoured the Queen, but his first duty was to the country in which he lived. Though he regretted as a Sydney man that I had not taken up my abode in the older colony, as an Australian he could not but rejoice that I had determined to settle in Victoria, for it was there the public battle would be fought and the victory won. I replied that I might demur to so abrupt a demand of a new-comer to stand and deliver his opinions on so grave a public interest, but as I had always believed that frankness like honesty was the best policy in the end, I would answer him at once. I did not think the course he recommended was a wise one. It was doubtless no more the destiny of Australia to remain for ever what it is than it had been the destiny of England to send subsidies for ever to the Caesars, or of the American colonies to continue to the end little quarrelsome communities rivalling and hating each other. But the practical question was whether it was proper to ripen by public agitation or other artificial methods the natural growth of events to this end. You, I said, if I understand you, think

it is; I think decidedly not. We have just attained constitutions which give the people of this country sovereign power over their own soil, their own laws, and their own institutions. Let us grow accustomed to the practice of self-government, and demonstrate our fitness for it by wise laws, wisely administered, and by a scrupulous respect for the principles of justice and liberty. Our duty at present, it seems to me, is to employ and improve the powers we possess. Let our new state, when it comes, be a man, not a blustering boy, impatient for the toga virilis. At present the rage of private gain is too intense, and the interest in public affairs too slight, to afford a security for the healthy development of this noble country into the great empire which it is destined to become. When they have turned their gold dust into broad acres of Australia Felix, we shall be in a better condition for grave experiments.

One of the most remarkable men in Victoria was Edward Wilson, founder of the **Argus**; large, sombre, silent, he was a striking figure wherever he appeared. In the time of the old Council it was his practice to ride down to St. Patrick's Hall, and frown down from the Press Gallery on the old Legislative Council. His enemies nicknamed him Edward the Black Prince. In the early days of Port Phillip, he had founded the **Argus** without any previous experience of journalism, and after many perils made it an able and prosperous daily paper. He had taken a strong course in favour of the Ballarat insurgents, and other opponents of despotic government, but when the Constitution was proclaimed he thought there were peaceful and legitimate methods of obtaining redress, and that violence was no longer admissible. When he came to see me, I was much pleased with his intelligence and liberality of spirit on all subjects but one. In my judgment he was a just and upright man, poisoned with early prejudices. There were sixty members to be elected to the new Parliament, and he wrote a series of articles entitled "Where are the Sixty?" discussing with perilous frankness the faults and merits of candidates. Mr. O'Shanassy he admitted to be one of the most useful, industrious, and disinterested of members, but he could not approve of his election for Melbourne, because he esteemed him too friendly to the Pope and Papal interests. On the relation of England with Ireland, however, he spoke with much more sympathy with the wronged. Mr. Wilson wished me to write occasionally in the **Argus**, but I told him I had little leisure to write, and I had promised to send whatever I could write to Henry Parkes for his **Empire**, and as Parkes expressed extravagant satisfaction with what I had done, I could not possibly desert him. Mr. Wilson continued to take an interest in my career. He invited me to meet his political friends at his table, and he advised me from time to time on questions which he thought ought to be taken up early. After my election,

he sent me a list of such questions which were mainly non-political and non-contentious, in a letter of general sympathy:—

“DUNSTER HOUSE, *November 8, 1856.*

“MY DEAR MR. DUFFY,—A good deal of talk, and a good deal of thought about you had nearly reached their climax in a note, when I found your card upon my table. I have to congratulate you upon your return, and upon the flattering circumstances by which it was accompanied. You were scarcely inclined to believe me when I told you that certain attacks, however irritating, did not reach very far in their effects. Do not the facts of your election rather tend to prove it? I have been thinking lately that the time is come for me to carry out my promise of supplying you with numerous suggestions for reforms. I think I promised you *fifty*. Sinnett has been staying with me for a few weeks, and we have been for some days cudgelling our brains for suggestions. And allow me to hint, my dear Mr. Duffy, that a country can scarcely be considered to be so *very* badly governed, in which two such ardent reformers as Sinnett and myself, who have been scribbling away for years on the subject, cannot scrape together at least the number I promised you. I send you, however, such as I have, and have no doubt that during the currency of the session I shall be able to make up the number. Some of them you will doubtless think wild and Utopian. I can only say that they are such as I would have a try at, were I in the House. I feel convinced that your present policy is one of practical utility. The colonists are inclined to give you a fair trial, combined with a slight shade of suspicion, and anything which may be construed into an over-eager grasping at office would be permanently injurious to you. This colony strikes me as being a singularly favourable field for the trying of enlightened experiments—in matters which a larger, older country cannot venture upon—but which, being found successful here, may be safely and with readiness adopted elsewhere. Do not you, then, imagine that because you are exiled from your favourite Ireland, you are therefore in no position to benefit Ireland. You may benefit her by proving to the British public that they may venture freely into reforms, to a greater extent than you might possibly have benefited her during a long lifetime spent amongst the more unwieldy elements of political existence of an old, stubborn, and established country. Never mourn then over ‘exile,’ but turn it to the best possible account. That is the part of the true patriot.—I am, my dear sir, yours very truly,

“EDWARD WILSON.”

The accompanying paper contained six-and-twenty projects, of which many got afterwards accomplished. These were half-a-dozen of them:—

1. Justice to the Aborigines. This should be one of the first acts of our

free Parliament. Provision for them should be the first charge upon the land fund. Hitherto we have behaved to them like cowards, tyrants, and swindlers, selling millions' worth of their land, and refusing them the most miserable pittance. We should now give them food, shelter, protection, clothing, and medical attendance, while any of them remain.

2. Agriculture ought to be made a department of the State, recognising it in the most distinguished manner, and placing it upon the most enlightened footing.

3. A properly appointed Board of Audit of Accounts, securing good value for moneys expended. A Government audit does not provide this. Money may not be actually misappropriated, but it may be grievously misspent.

4. Establishment of a mint.

5. Introduction of the ballot into municipal elections.

6. Leasing Corn Lands for cultivation; the tenants to have the right of ultimate purchase. This system is approved by Mill, and might have a fair trial here, superseding to a great extent all other taxation.

Other suggestions were an amendment of the Criminal Law, improvement of the paid and unpaid magistracy, the better regulation of public-houses, and other social reforms, and, finally, the employment of the military on public works, an experiment which was afterwards made without either economy or advantage of any sort.

I took chambers in Temple Court, the lawyers' quarters, and sat down determined to work at my profession. Business came, which I did to the best of my ability. But the men who had welcomed me so cordially insisted that I must enter the new Parliament. There was work to be done to gratify the highest patriotism or ambition, for here was to be laid the corner stone and foundation of a new empire. I was weary of politics, and would gladly have stood aside for a time. This was not Ireland, but a new country to which I owned no hereditary service or allegiance. But the old passion for public life awoke, and I at length consented. The new constitution required a qualification of £500 a year real property for the Legislative Council or Upper House, and £300 a year for the other Chamber, but the popular party, or substantially my own countrymen, created a fund in a few months, and purchased me a residence and certain other property affording a qualification for either House. I had always refused any favour like this in Ireland, but here it was the retaining fee for services which could not be undertaken without it. The title deeds were presented to me at a public dinner, and the result, representing an immense constituency in upwards of a hundred districts of this colony and New South Wales, which cordially joined in the project, made it a political demonstration of peculiar interest

and significance. It was necessary to find a constituency, and at length Villiers and Heytesbury was selected, and I went down to meet the electors. Villiers was a farming county possessing some of the best soil in the colony, notably the Farnham Survey, a district which a syndicate of Irish gentry was enabled to buy under Colonial Office regulations at £1 an acre, and which was now let at a rent which refunds the purchase money more than once every year. Heytesbury was a squatting constituency, and I had scarcely taken the field when it was announced that Mr. William Rutledge, the owner of the Farnham Survey, at that time, and Mr. John Allen, a squatter from the other county, were candidates for the two seats which the electors were entitled to fill.

A requisition was presented to me containing more signatures, it was said, than there were electors who voted on both sides in the last contest. The attempt of some screech owls in Melbourne to excite sectarian animosity naturally found imitators here; but both the contesting candidates found it convenient to declare that they gave no sanction to these malign proceedings. I announced meetings in succession in the principal centres of population. An election in Australia was very like an election in Ireland, a hustings where the candidates were proposed, and public meetings where they explained themselves.

I positively refused to make domiciliary visits to the constituents, and still more decisively to visit public men among them. But there was a village called Killarney inhabited, I was told, by Irish evicted tenants who had thriven prodigiously in their new home. This was a sight I longed to see, and my committee fixed a time for a visit. The first house we entered had all the evidence of rude careless plenty. A bottle of Martell's brandy was immediately placed on the table, flanked by a huge decanter full as it seemed of sparkling transparent water. I had slight experience in drinking raw spirits, but it was impossible to refuse pledging the prosperity of the Irish village. I poured a spoonful of brandy into a tumbler, and after drowning it in water, put it to my lips. The brandy, I concluded, must be of abnormal strength, for the water had not made it palatable, and I had recourse to the decanter a second time, and filled my tumbler to the brim.

“Is this water bewitched?” I cried, “the brandy does not grow weaker but stronger, the more I pour upon it.” The farmer and his good woman burst into a merry laugh; the transparent fluid was not water but gin. There was a similar plenty in all the houses, and a similar hospitality. In one of the last I entered I met a signal illustration of what Ireland had lost by want of education. The farmer took me aside, and asked me to look at his bank book. He could not read or write, and as he rented his land from the “Stores” in Belfast and gave them his harvest to sell, he was completely at

their mercy. There was nothing wrong in the account which I could detect, but I saw with amazement that an Irish peasant who had probably found it hard to retain potatoes enough for daily bread in Ireland had one item in his bank account of £1,500, the price of his wheat, and had more comfort and plenty about him than any ordinary squire at home. Every man here, I observed, had a horse to ride, every farm a team of bullocks, but men and women, content and thankful as they are for the prosperity of the new country, "won't forget old Ireland were it fifty times as fair."

A meeting was announced at Tower Hill, the centre of Mr. Rutledge's estate. His tenants promised to support him, but declared that they would vote for me also. Two of the local newspapers supported me and two were adverse. I was accused of various offences, especially religious bigotry. The first effectual check to this slander came from two Presbyterian ministers, who had been in Ireland during the Tenant League, and declared their intention to support me. But a more picturesque incident and one more calculated to fascinate popular opinion occurred at the Tower Hill meeting. When I had concluded my speech, a vigorous, intelligent-looking young man, with a long whip in his hand, whose team one might safely assume was at the door, entered the meeting, and when I sat down immediately came forward to speak. "You all know me, I believe," he said, "but if any one don't know me I am George Johnson, the road contractor. I never saw Mr. Duffy before, but I daresay I know a good deal more of him than any of you. My father was one of the old Protestant Corporation of Dublin, and my family high Tories; and I would probably be full of prejudice and bigotry but that I read the **Nation** from the time I was a schoolboy. You know whether I do not live on friendly terms with my neighbours, Protestant and Catholic, and keep alive the memory of old Ireland on all fitting occasions." (A peal of cheers greeted this inquiry.) "Well," he said, "what I am the **Nation** has made me." As this was the first occasion on which the principle of religious equality was plainly fought out in the colony, the result was of more than temporary or local interest.

When the poll was announced it disclosed some curious facts. I received more votes on Mr. Rutledge's estate than the proprietor. I received more votes in the Warnambool district than the Warnambool candidate, and more votes in the Belfast district than the Belfast candidate. I recall with interest that I was able to say when the election was over that I had not personally canvassed a single elector; that I had not employed a single paid agent, and that I had not spent twenty pounds on election expenses. This country was regarded in Europe as sordid and greedy, but I believe that £5,000 would not hire the amount of actual labour that had been generously expended on my election. This result was largely attributable to

the testimony of Irish Protestants and Presbyterians, but mainly to the unpurchasable zeal of countrymen who shared my religious and political convictions.

My Irish friends throughout the colony were so numerous that it is impossible to name them here, and it would be invidious to make selections. But one incident had consequences which must be specified. John Mooney was considered the richest Irish Catholic in the colony. He had come out as a soldier in an English regiment, bought his discharge, and by marvellous knowledge of cattle had gradually risen to opulence. When I arrived he vacated his residence in the city and placed his house and servants at my disposal, and he took always an active part in whatever concerned me. While I was engrossed in the business of politics he came to me one morning and said in the most frank and friendly way that I was neglecting my profession for politics, and would land myself in difficulties in the end. He wanted to be of service to O'Shanassy, and to me along with him. A very promising squattage was in the market, on which the immediate payment would amount only to £5,000. He was disposed to buy it and divide it into five shares between O'Shanassy, myself, and Messrs. Harney and Curtain, keeping one share for himself that he might watch over the experiment. He would answer for the success of the undertaking. I thanked him, but replied that I had not £1,000 to invest, having put whatever I possessed into a property qualification and shares of the Colonial Bank. Mooney replied that he had always a few thousand pounds for which he could not find immediate employment, and that it would not inconvenience him to lend me a thousand pounds to be repaid out of the profits of the run. I then told him there were objections that could not be overcome. My opinions were that the squattages ought to be broken up to make way for agricultural settlement, and that though no doubt a man might honestly hold these opinions though he possessed squatting property, the people would be slow to believe that he would sacrifice his personal interest, and it would be long before a squatter would be accepted as a safe and disinterested leader of the people. He said the public would know nothing about it, the run could be registered in the names of Curtain and Harney. I rejoined that if nobody knew it but myself the objection would remain, but in politics everything became known, and I would be certain to be asked some day in the Assembly if I was not squatting in secret, and though the transaction might be perfectly innocent its discovery would be like the revelation of a crime. It was bad enough to be an Irish Papist; if, moreover, I was a squatter, I might as well retire from Parliament unless I abandoned my convictions, which was not a practice I was accustomed to. Mooney's sincerely generous offer was accepted by the other gentlemen he

had in view, and he did not exaggerate its value, for to most of them it became the seed of a rich harvest.

At this time I received many Irish letters and newspapers congratulating me on my reception in Australia. But it is needless to return on them. Edward Whitty, a keen and sympathetic critic, wrote:—

“Congratulations. The word contains all I have got to say. Of course I've seen all the papers. Your speeches perfect.

“The **Argus** seems well done. What do they want with an editor from London? I am doing the London Correspondence, and am told that the editorship is in *futuro*, but I doubt. I'm in the thick of the Australian people here, from Wentworth downwards.”

I find in the “Life of William Carleton”¹ a letter which I wrote to him at this period. I republish it because a line written at the moment often lights up an obscure situation better than much retrospection, and I shall often borrow a vivacious sentence from a correspondent for this purpose.

“MELBOURNE, 1856.

“MY DEAR CARLETON,—I have often meditated a letter to you, and often expected one from you; but I was deep in the battle of life, and you will do anything for your friend except tell him how you are. Mrs. Callan from time to time tells me something of you, and I dare say, or swear, she does as much for me to you. The **Nation** will have kept you acquainted with my public operations, and as for private life, there is no country like the old country, and there are no friends like the old friends. You and Mrs. Callan and I have sometimes had a three-handed talk, the like of which I will enjoy no more this side the Styx.

“Do not dream of Canada, my friend; an oak of the forest will not bear transplanting. Even a shrub like myself does not take kindly all at once to the new climate and soil. I never for a moment regretted having left the Ireland where Judge Keogh and Archbishop Cullen predominate; but the slopes of Howth, the hills of Wicklow, and the friends of manhood are things not to be matched in this golden land.

“I have met your books here as common as any one's, thanks to Routledge's cheap series. But the reading public is but a little leaven in the whole mass. Perhaps what you would enjoy most here is the Irish farmhouse, with all the rude plenty of thirty years ago revived, as I have met it hundreds of times. But it would need the author of ‘Traits and Stories’ to describe the strange hybrid, an Australian-Irish farmer with the keenness and vigour of a new country infused into his body. I am just returned from my election where they fought for me like lions in the name of the poor old country; and, to do them justice, Protestants as well as Catholics. We have bigots here, but the love of country is a stronger

passion than bigotry in the heart of the exile.

“I hope you have pleasant news from Canada. If the two girls would return from that frozen swamp, it would add a zest to your life. . . .

“Goodbye, my dear Carleton, at either end of the earth I hope you will not entirely forget me. Many of the pleasantest recollections of my life have in the foreground an Irish peasant lifting a head like Slive Donard over his contemporaries.—Always yours, When I had time to look about me I made some acquaintance with the marvellous country in which I found myself. The population were only settling down from the frantic orgies which followed the discovery of gold. It was but half a dozen years since Melbourne was overrun by successful diggers, whom shopkeepers denominated “the new aristocracy.” Drunkenness was their ordinary enjoyment, and the public-houses swarmed at all hours of the day and night with roaring or maudlin toper. The mad recklessness of that time exceeds belief. I have heard from eye-witnesses stories of diggers ordering the entire stock of champagne in a public-house to be decanted into a washing tub, and stopping every passer-by with an invitation to swill; of one frantic toper, when he had made all comers drunk, insisting upon having the bar-counters washed with claret; of pier glasses smashed with a stockwhip in order to make an item worth the attention of a millionaire; of diggers throwing down nuggets to pay for a dram, and declining to accept change; of pipes lighted with a cheque; of sandwiches lined with bank-notes. A favourite recreation of the digger on his pleasure trip was to get married. A bride was not difficult to discover, who permitted herself upon short notice to be adorned with showy silks and driven in an equipage as conspicuous as the circumstances permitted to a bridal which, in many cases, bound them together only during good pleasure. The facility of cheating the digger inflamed the greed it fed; and it is said that some publicans, impatient of the slow process of intoxication, had no scruples of stupefying them with drugs into an insensibility which made robbery easy. The digger need ask in vain for no luxury of which he had ever heard, for an extensive system of forged labels prevailed, and cynical persons predicted that the digger would have his taste so perverted that he would turn with disgust from port wine if it was not drugged with bad Scotch whiskey, or brandy which had not been sprinkled with cayenne pepper.

But all this had passed away, and the diggers had settled down to steady industry. Their earnings were not greater than in the ordinary pursuits of the colony, but the employment had the unspeakable charm of not being a servile one. They began and ended work when they pleased, and there was always the chance of a great success, which gave the pursuit the subtle fascination of gaming. It was work, they were accustomed to say, in which

a gentleman or a Republican could engage without any sense of humiliation, and many gentlemen had engaged in it. From the diggings I made my way to the regions of squatting. The open country was charming, and often presented scenes which the native artist will certainly make memorable hereafter. The ordinary landscape in a pastoral district is a plain, bordered with low broken hills, and dotted with the sparkling lightwood or wild cherry, or the dingy gum-tree with fragments of its bark swinging like the rags of a tattered malion. In an agricultural district a common scene consists of undulating hills of rich chocolate soil running down into long grassy valleys, or succulent meadows, fattened by the great fertilisers, rain and sunshine. It is a blessed land, seamed with gold, fanned with healthy breezes, and bathed in a transparent atmosphere like the landscapes of Guido. When men of Northern energy and perseverance possess this gracious soil we shall see marvels. The newcomer can scarcely look upon these charming landscapes without seeing them in imagination studded with warm farmhouses, with here and there the sparkling villas for which they seem to be expressly framed; but a generation must pass, fertile in wise laws, before we shall see these results. At present a few men possess and degrade this noble territory. The squattages I have visited make a strange contrast. You may sit down to table with a sheep farmer in a dirty wooden shed which he calls his homestead, and dine, if you can, off coarse mutton killed too soon and cooked too soon, moistened by tea without milk, in the midst of a region of pasturage, or with fiery brandy and mawkish water, and bread without leaven, the whole placed on the table by a slovenly man with bare arms and uncombed hair, who has cooked the meal in an outhouse reeking with sheepskins and where half a dozen shepherds are recreating themselves with tobacco; or if fortune be kind, you may happen on a charming cottage, deeply verandahed and sheltered with plantations of European shrubs. These are the homes of squatters who settle down with their family, and show a generous desire to spend their wealth on adorning and civilising the country which produced it, but it is a more common practice to squat in the Melbourne Club and leave the run to be managed by a "super." The rural hotels are generally comfortless, though supplied with a rude abundance. Every meal is furnished with the heavy, unwholesome dainties of a bush inn, but nothing clean, wholesome, or appetising.

The gold frenzy has completely disappeared; for the last few years the streets of Melbourne have been safer than the streets of London at the same period. In the suburbs the practice of leaving windows unbarred and articles of daily use on the open verandah seems to the stranger to argue a security like that of the golden age, but means simply that the population

are almost universally in circumstances which place them above the temptation to steal.

An incident which happened on the day of my first visit to the Assembly will help to realise the vigorous and somewhat reckless spirit of the times. A gentleman with whom I was lunching undertook to drive me to St. Patrick's Hall, and on our way I was amazed at the wild bounds and gambols of his horse. I noticed the fact to my host. "Ah, poor fellow!" said he, "it is nothing. He is only a little shy because he has never been in harness before."

"There was a story current that while Mr. Horne was a warden on the goldfields he was so disgusted with the knavery of a party of diggers who brought a complaint before him that he inflicted a fine on both plaintiff and defendant. When the case was referred to the Attorney-General with an inquiry whether that was British law, that considerate official remarked that it was not, but that no doubt Mr. Horne was administering poetic justice."

In my diary of this date I find this entry:—"I was much struck by an observation of Mr. Macnamara that the history of Ireland can never be adequately written without examining the records of the convicts in Botany Bay establishment. He spoke with deep feeling of the cruelty with which the agrarian and political prisoners were treated. I wish I had time to look into this Irish episode. Muir, Palmer, and the Scottish reformers of 1793, and Joseph Holt and the Irish insurgents of 1798, and men sentenced for agrarian offences in Ireland or for seditious conspiracy in England often, he said, proved useful and estimable colonists."

"Life of William Carleton," by W. J. O'Donoghue. London: Downey and Co.

CHAPTER III

IN THE NEW PARLIAMENT

New Year's Day Levée—Opening of Parliament—The method in which the Governor should communicate with Parliament determined—Bill abolishing Property Qualification carried—Select Committee on Federation of the Colonies—Its proposal successful everywhere but in New South Wales—Controversy on the orderly conduct of Parliamentary business—Six cases cited—Errors in building the Victorian Parliament House—Motion respecting Cross Benches—Establishment of Municipal Franchise—Mr. Childers and Mr. Stawell appointed to permanent offices—Fall of the Haines Government—Mr. O'Shanassy commissioned to form an Administration—How the new Government was constituted.

THE making of Victoria now commenced, and I need not hesitate to say that for a quarter of a century I took as large a share as any man living or dead in that reproductive work. But I am not writing the history of the colony, or of its party conflicts, but my personal memoirs, and I will concern myself only with transactions in which I was engaged, and which had some permanent consequences, or which illustrate significantly the condition or growth of the country. Before the session commenced the Governor, who was now Sir Henry Barkly, held a levée of which I find a note in my diary:—

“The New Year and the new Governor held a joint levée to-day. ‘Full dress’ in Melbourne means anything from the silk stocking, buckled shoes, and unexceptional toilet of the Speaker, to the soiled white trousers and vest of old P—, and his cocked hat, of the class long abandoned to coachmen and *Leprechauns*. He was the most ludicrous figure there, and made one rejoice he has got promoted out of the assembly. The Governor looks a fairly good figurehead of the State ship, and if the engineer and sailing master have the needful skill, we shall have a prosperous voyage.”

The new Parliament opened with whatever ceremony and state the colony could furnish. The day was proclaimed a holiday; the soldiers of the 41st Regiment, the Volunteer Artillery, and Rifles were drawn out. Flags and banners streamed from the houses in the line of procession, bands enlivened the scene. The Corporation, headed by the Mayor, the Judges in their robes, the Town Councillors in their uniforms, the Foreign Consuls looking as like Ambassadors as they could contrive to do, and the

Governor, accompanied by a staff, and escorted by volunteer cavalry, arrived at a Chamber crowded with ladies. The military display was very unparliamentary, but this was a harmless blunder: a more serious one fixing the relation of the House to the Executive Government followed. The Chief Secretary announced that the Governor when he reached the Council would “command” the attendance of our House. The Speaker sent the Clerk to me with a scrap of paper on which he had written, “Are we to be commanded?” I consulted O'Shanassy and Chapman, and we frankly told the official leader of the House that this phraseology could not be permitted. After some negotiation the Governor “requested” our attendance.

The Ministry were men of respectable capacity, good character, and reasonably good intentions, but some of them were very prejudiced against popular liberty, and they were all (except the Chief Secretary) responsible for a system of government on the goldfields which had fallen with a crash but was still detested. They had been appointed from Downing Street, or by a Governor nominated from Downing Street, and the current of popular sympathy ran high against them. They brought into the Chamber a larger proportion of paid officers than I have ever seen in any legislature, and they had little other steady support but from the squatters who relied upon them to protect their tenure of the public lands, and the bankers who thought they were the only bulwark against a democratic-digger Administration with which we were constantly threatened by alarmists. The Chief Secretary, Mr. Haines, had been educated at Oxford, and was designed to be a doctor, but in Australia he purchased land and settled down to the quiet life of a gentleman farmer. He was notable for a character without stain, and the cordiality which springs from a generous nature. His position in the Legislature somewhat resembled Lord Althorp's in the House of Commons. Men did not count upon him to do anything original or striking, but they were confident he would do nothing that was vicious. The mining members were at this time a third of the House, but it is a curious and suggestive fact that though men who had lived on the goldfields came to office from time to time generally one at a time, the Digger Government which appalled the minds of capitalists neither then nor ever after came into existence.¹

It was plain to an experienced eye that there was no party organisation among the Opposition; they had elected no officers, Mr. O'Shanassy was tacitly accepted as leader, but there was no secretary to summon the party, and no Whip to secure their punctual attendance. When there are not great political passions at work the political activity of a new country is like the movements of an anthill, and the absence of permanent relations in public

or private life robs it of one of the centres round which party combinations gradually form. In other respects the meeting of the new Assembly was a pleasant surprise to me, though I had come recently from the House of Commons, and had in memory the encounters between its leaders, and the fundamental fact which is always its chief attraction, that there are men there who are experts on every subject of human interest—often men who never open their lips in debate, but can tell you, if they choose, all that it is requisite to know of the mysteries of politics, commerce, literature, and science. I was rejoiced to recognise that in this Assembly there were men who understood the interests of Australia, and, perhaps, the agencies which make a country prosperous, as well as any man in the new Palace of Westminster understood his wider range of duties. The Chamber consisted chiefly of barristers, attorneys, doctors, squatters, miners, and wholesale traders.

Shortly after this Parliament had assembled I asked the Government, who were proposing an extension of the franchise, whether they intended to accompany it by a kindred and equally urgent reform — an abolition of the property qualification for members of the Assembly. The Chief Secretary replied that they did not, and I immediately gave notice of a Bill of my own for this purpose. The reform was a very necessary one, as the qualification in Victoria was the most restricted in the world. In England, Mr. Bright had qualified out of his mill, another member out of a deposit receipt for £10,000, but in Victoria it was necessary to have an income arising out of real property situated in the colony. There was no property qualification in France, in Belgium, in the United States, or in almost any colony in the empire. Was Victoria likely to hold the foremost place she ambitioned in the march of freedom if she continued to maintain this system? It was said a member of Parliament ought to have an interest in the soil, but why, I asked, ought he? The judge, the naval or military commander, or the diplomatic agent has as serious duties to perform, but no one expected this qualification from him. A property qualification was not required in Scotland, or in English or Irish universities; it was abolished in order that competent men might not be shut out of Parliament by the want of it. This was the principle I desired to apply in Victoria. What reason was there to expect that the diggers, for example, who paid half a million to the revenue, should be owners of freehold? or the members of the learned professions? And were not both classes who ought to be in Parliament? There was another reason for desiring the reform which needed to be handled delicately, the rigid system produced, as such a system commonly does, a crop of evasions, and there were many bogus qualifications. The result of my proposal was satisfactory. A local journal

of the period, the **Age**, says: "Apropos of Mr. Duffy and Parliamentary business, it is rather remarkable that he has been the first to lead the Opposition to victory against the Government, and the first to get a Bill carried through all its stages." This was a Bill to abolish the property qualification required by members of the Assembly. The Ministry opposed it and were defeated; but though beaten on a vital point in the Constitution they did not resign office. The most important of the provincial journals which had supported the Government up to that time declared that their inane policy in this business foreshadowed their speedy fall. The Opposition were much encouraged by this success.

The next measure I took in hand was the federation of the colonies. I proposed the appointment of a select committee to consider the necessity of federation and the best means of bringing it about.¹ The Government assented on this occasion, and the Commissioner of Customs, Mr. Childers, afterwards so well-known in the House of Commons, became a member and took a genuine interest in the question. The committee was chosen judiciously, of the twelve members ten afterwards became Ministers of State, and three of them in the fulness of time Prime Ministers. The committee consisted of:—

Mr. Gavan Duffy, *Chairman*.

Mr. O'Shanassy	Mr Griffith
Mr. Childers	Dr. Evans
Mr. Moore	Mr. Harker
Mr. Michie	Mr. Smye
Mr. Foster	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Horne	

It will be convenient to pursue the subject at once to the end of the session. After deliberations extending over several months the Committee reported, specifying the motives for Federation, and the best method of bringing it about. The waste and delay created by competing tariffs, naturalisation laws, and land systems were exposed as well as the rival schemes of immigration, and of ocean postage, the clumsy and inefficient method of communicating with each other and with the Home Government on public business, by which so much time and force were wasted, and the distant and expensive system of judicial appeal. By becoming confederates so early in their career the Australian Colonies, it was manifest, would immensely economise their strength and resources, and each of the existing States would be enabled earlier to apply itself, without conflict or jealousy, to the special industry which its position and resources rendered most profitable. It was recommended that the colonies possessing Responsible

Government should be invited to select delegates to consider the necessity of a Federal Union and the best means of accomplishing it. I submitted the report and the resolution arising out of it to the Assembly, and carried them with general assent, and they were afterwards communicated to the Legislative Council, which concurred in them. We then communicated with the other colonies. In New South Wales a Select Committee of the Legislative Council, including some of the most experienced statesmen in that colony, reported on the question generally, and recommended that the method of proceeding suggested in the Victorian Report should be adopted. They sent their report to the Legislative Assembly requesting its concurrence. In South Australia Select Committees of the two Houses accepted the invitation of Victoria, and appointed delegates to attend the proposed conference. In Tasmania a similar course was adopted, and delegates were selected. This was regarded as a triumphant success, as we had obtained the assent of all the colonies possessing Responsible Government, for Queensland had not yet come into existence, and Western Australia was a Crown colony. But there was one fatal impediment to action. The Legislative Assembly in New South Wales had not responded either to our invitation or to that of their own Legislative Council. Mr. Cowper, the Colonial Secretary, was unwilling, as my friends informed me, to allow Victoria the initiative, and we were unwilling to begin with the aid of only two small colonies. My friends, Parkes and Butler, were of opinion that Mr. Cowper would not long be an impediment, and that it would be better to wait for his successor, and this was the course we took.

I applied myself early to the task of getting the public business conducted after the method of the House of Commons. Our Constitution required us to act under British standing orders until we had framed standing orders of our own. As men going to battle first sharpen their weapons, so it seemed to me our first duty was to make Parliament, which was the weapon whereby we must defend our liberty and prosperity, as effective as possible; but the Government, to whom these formularies were new, were impatient under what they regarded as offensive tuition, though it was in fact a simple insistence on the actual law. The need of reform was urgent. In the old Council a competent critic described the proceedings as sometimes resembling a tandem, where the first horse suddenly bolts round and faces the wheeler. It was told as a good joke that when Mr. Fawcner was called to order with the cry "Chair, chair," he responded contemptuously by vociferating "Stool, stool." The pro-Government Press, however, and especially the **Argus**, accused me of impeding the public business, and thwarting the Government by mere pedantry. In later years the **Argus** has adopted the practice of the London **Times** with opponents—

the practice of reporting them fairly and censuring them whenever it thinks fit—but at this time it was shamefully unfair, and made its reports of Parliament a vehicle of its prejudice.¹ On the question of supporting the Victorian Hansard—a reprint of the **Argus**—the subject of fair reporting turned up, and I took up the charge of having impeded the public business and thwarted the Government, and answered it in a manner which I can still recall with satisfaction, as it proved I had done the exact reverse. There were six cases, I said, in which the Government Press had complained of my conduct, and I would glance at them in succession.

“On the day Parliament opened I recommended that we should adopt the House of Commons practice of adjourning for two hours before taking the Governor's speech into consideration, in order to enable the Opposition to determine what course they would take in relation to it. The Government would not consent to any adjournment, and what was the consequence? Why, that they found it necessary to adjourn four-and-twenty hours a little later for the same purpose. This was the first point of practice I raised, and I need scarcely insist that it was not impeding public business to recommend a course that would have saved the waste of a day. On the second occasion the leader of the House gave notice of a motion to make five a quorum in committees, and he very graciously indicated that he did so at my suggestion. I might ask the House to consider the bearing and significance of that fact. No select committee can proceed to business in the absence of any of its members, unless a quorum has been fixed, and if I had desired, as had been shamefully alleged, to thwart the Government I had only to hold my tongue, and all the committees appointed would be paralysed until a complete attendance was obtained, but I crossed the floor, and mentioned the difficulty and its remedy to the leader of the House, and to no other person whatever. This is the course I would have taken on all similar occasions, but that on the debate on Cross Benches an arrangement unknown in the House of Commons and established here in total ignorance of Parliamentary usage, the gentlemen on the Treasury Benches took a tone of contemptuous indifference to Parliamentary usages which demanded a signal lesson, and they got the lesson they needed. Under the Parliamentary practice which we were bound by the Constitution to follow, some class of Bills must originate in Committee of the whole House, and if by mistake this form has been omitted all subsequent proceedings are void, and must be commenced again. Would any man venture to say I retarded public business by preventing Bills being carried through several stages in error, which in the end would have to be withdrawn and commenced anew? The Commissioner of Customs, in fact, did introduce a Money Bill without the necessary preliminary, and when I pointed out the consequences he silently

withdrew it and introduced it anew. One other instance is the last I would mention. On the day of the Budget speech, Mr. Michie very properly insisted that the financial statement should be made in Committee, and the Government were in consternation, as they had not yet appointed their Chairman of Ways and Means, and thought it could not be done without formal notice, and once for all. Well, how did I exhibit my propensity to impede public business and thwart the Government? I pointed out that they were entitled to move a gentleman into the chair for that occasion only, and without any previous nomination or any obligation to continue him in the office, which was immediately done, and the public business proceeded. The duty of a member of the House is sufficiently onerous without being driven in self-defence to review cases like these. I had hardly time to look hastily into the facts that day. At ten o'clock in the morning, I was sitting in a committee on the completion of Parliament House; at twelve o'clock I was sitting in a committee on the Postal System; at two o'clock in a committee on Standing Orders; at half-past three in the committee of Elections and Qualifications, and the House met at four, and sat till seven o'clock, leaving barely time to read the Parliamentary papers when I went home."

Looking back at these transactions through the serener light of experience, I cannot but admit that I was sometimes too peremptory and brusque in these controversies. I had taken a fierce part against the Administration at the General Election, and it was not easy for them to look on me with a friendly eye, a relation which ought to have suggested more courtesy and forbearance on my part. In the Parliamentary Buildings Committee, to which I have alluded, the Commissioner of Public Works produced his plan for the new Parliament Houses. I pointed out several errors in it, and one most serious one; in the House of Commons no one can enter or leave except by a single porch where the door-keeper is on duty, but the Chamber itself may be entered from the lobbies at various points. In the Victorian House it was proposed to have three entrances, and the Chamber itself was reached by folding doors on each side through which a carriage might be driven. With a little more suavity on my part these errors would no doubt have been amended, but party spirit was now awake, and the supporters of the Government on the committee thought it their duty to insist on the unamended plan. The result was that the two clumsy and useless entrances to the Chamber were locked up at my instance a few weeks after the House was occupied, and in five-and-twenty years after I never once saw them opened.

The other error, of making several entrances to the House instead of one, did not admit of so easy a remedy, and during forty years the country has

been paying the salary of messengers to guard entrances which ought never to have existed.

The earliest question on which the Opposition took issue with the Government was on a manifest departure from convenient Parliamentary usage, which had been the result of long experience.

The Continental legislative chambers are circular—a method convenient for seeing and hearing. The seats in the House of Commons, on the contrary, are arranged for two parties, who sit face to face. But in the Victorian chamber the seats were arranged for three parties, though Responsible Government contemplates only two; there was no bar, though a bar might at any moment be necessary for the examination of witnesses or prisoners; and instead of one entrance there were four.

Under Responsible Government those entrusted with the conduct of public affairs, who must maintain a constant majority in the House, ought to have a reasonable means of estimating the number of their supporters present, which was ascertained by their position in the House. The present practice of cross benches might result in establishing a Pretorian band ready to make a majority for either party for an adequate consideration. The Government in reply offered to establish a bar, and to consider the other objections, and the motion was defeated; but after a little while all the arrangements which the Opposition objected to were silently amended as far as it was practicable.

The most important work done in the session was the establishment of a municipal system for the towns of the colony, carried through the House by Captain Clarke,¹ and a system of assisted emigration with a Chief Commissioner resident in London. This office was undertaken by Mr. Childers and developed in time into an office, entitled Agent-General with certain diplomatic functions, which has since been imitated by all the Australian colonies. Mr. Childers's retirement was a serious blow to the prestige of the Government, but when Mr. Stawell, the Attorney-General, became Chief Justice it suffered a graver loss. The official party was outnumbered by the Opposition, and in the temper of the times the fall of the Government was inevitable; it only remained uncertain which of the two or three opposition groups it had to encounter would succeed it. It fell by a chance stroke, and as Australian Governments have been scrupulous in the promptitude of resignation after defeat, Mr. Haines and his remaining colleagues immediately requested the Governor to relieve them from office.

The Governor sent for Mr. O'Shanassy and authorised him to form an Administration,¹ and as he consulted me throughout, I can speak freely of the errors which I think we committed in creating the first free government

under the new Constitution. The vote against Mr. Haines was carried by the democratic opposition, eager to see new opinions in power, and by moderate, or as they were called respectable, reformers, who thought they could govern better than the men in possession on principles not widely different. Mr. O'Shanassy sought the assistance of the latter class in the first instance, but their prejudices were stronger than their convictions. Nobody had ever seen Irish Catholics in Cabinet office under the British Crown. There were French Catholics in office in Canada, and Italian Catholics in the Mediterranean possessions, but Irish nowhere, and they were not prepared to countenance so startling a novelty. He met refusals to an extent which amazed him, and he had recourse in the next instance not to the democrats, but to the remainder of the party who had declined office. He got together an Administration not deficient in ability or experience, but who represented very inadequately the spirit which overthrew the Haines Government. The new Treasurer was a man who had been Colonial Secretary before Responsible Government existed, and who had been sacrificed by Governor Hotham without any resistance by his colleagues. The Attorney-General had held office in Canada and New Zealand, and was the doyen of the new Administration. The Solicitor-General occupied a good position at the bar, and was a debater of great efficiency. The Commissioner of Lands was a solicitor in good practice; the Commissioner of Customs an old colonist of undoubted capacity and experience, but who unfortunately had not succeeded in securing the confidence of his class, and I was Minister of Public Works and Commissioner of Roads and Bridges.

The House adjourned for a month to provide for the new elections.

The admission of mining members was a reform effected in the old Council; originally there were no members conferred on the goldfields.

January 16, 1857.

I should state that before this time Mr. Edward Wilson had relinquished the management of the **Argus**, appointing an editor to whom he left a free hand, but he had not lost his interest in my career, and wrote to me occasionally such notes as the following in relation to an early pre-Parliamentary speech:— “**Argus OFFICE.** “MY DEAR SIR,—It would be less than justice towards you to abstain from conveying to you a hint that your speech is very much approved of indeed by those with whom I more immediately associate. Stick to that, and avoid damaging alliances, and there is an Australian future for you which will not be unworthy of a place beside your Irish past. And all this Mr. J. P. Fawkner notwithstanding.—Yours very truly, “EDWARD WILSON.”

Now Lieutenant-General Sir Andrew Clarke.

An incident which excited a good deal of quiet laughter occurred at this time. While the new Government was in course of formation Mr. O'Shanassy and I dined with the Speaker, on an invitation issued before that event, and Mr. Haines and some of his colleagues were among the guests. The genial old habit of taking wine with any one to whom you desired to express friendly feelings still existed, and Mr. O'Shanassy directed the servant behind his chair to request that Mr. Haines would do him the favour to take wine with him. The Irish servant, who was quite agog with the good news that was current, saluted Mr. Haines, and murmured in a voice that was not inaudible, "The Chief Secretary requests you will take wine with him, sir." A general burst of laughter followed this maladroit stroke.

CHAPTER IV

IN OFFICE

Why I became a Minister—Remonstrance of the goldfield members against some of the Ministers—Conspiracy among the civil servants—The “No Popery” rumours—Debate, and fall of the Ministry—Letter from Edward Butler—The second Haines Government and their policy—Representation of minorities—Fall of the Government—Second O'Shanassy Government—Principles of Responsible Government insisted on—Letter from the Chief Secretary, New South Wales—New Reform Bill amended and read unanimously a third time in the Assembly—The measure rejected in the Upper House—Letter from Mr. Bright on the independence of colonies—Mr. Disraeli on the same subject—Industrial projects—Letter from W. K. Sullivan—The New South Wales elections—Dalley and Deniehy—Henry Parkes invited to settle in Victoria—Letters from John Dillon, Edward Whitty, Cashel Hoey, Chief Justice Stawell, Archbishop MacHale, and T. B. MacManus—Lord Palmerston and Mr. O'K— —Edward Whitty's arrival in Australia—Letter from B. C. Aspinall—Death of Whitty—The Land Convention and Land League—Cabinet quarrel on the Governor's speech—My serious illness—Departmental reforms—Resigned office—Misrepresentations, letter to the **Argus**—Generous conduct of the electors at Villiers and Heytesbury—Letter to Mr. O'Hagan—Debate on my resignation in the new Parliament—Mr. Nicholson authorised to form an Administration offers me a place in it, which I do not accept.

THE inducements to accept office in the new Government were strong, even imperative. I belonged to a group of friends who were disparaged because they did not succeed in Ireland. I was eager to show that we were not unfit to bear the burthen of a State. Here was a country freer than anything but separation would have made Ireland. The Imperial Government could not appoint or dismiss a clerk, nor apply a shilling of the public revenue to any purpose until it was voted by the local Parliament. In such an Australia I might aim to show what could be accomplished in such an Ireland.

Before a brief honeymoon of office was over we had to encounter some of its troubles and disasters. During the adjournment, and while the new

Ministers were at their elections, a skilful and vigorous effort was made to reconcile the Ministers who had gone out and the men who had voted against them, but had refused to join O'Shanassy. Among our supporters there was natural dissatisfaction, for several who thought themselves entitled to office had been overlooked.

Dr. Owens wrote me on behalf of the goldfield members, whom he considered himself entitled to represent, "that they were altogether opposed to the bigotry with which the Government had been assailed, but that they could not take cordially to Ministers like Foster, so justly detested by the miners for his past policy;¹ Greaves so constitutionally unreliable, and Horne so insignificant. The first popular Ministry ought to consist of widely different elements." Some of the younger men came to me to say that they were not surprised O'Shanassy went off with the old colonists, but how I came to estimate so ill the respective value of men was a perplexity to them. One of the ablest of these men, a journalist, was willing and anxious to accept a place in the Cabinet—without a portfolio or department—as a recognition of his political status, and I strongly urged on my new colleagues to gratify him. But what was sometimes called the "old foggy" element in the Government was dead against him, and his admission would have led to two retirements. Two retirements from the first Government would have been fatal, and I had no choice but to acquiesce.

Suspicion is a sentiment never long absent in democratic communities. Washington was suspected of desiring to turn the Republic he had founded into a Monarchy; Hamilton was suspected of conspiring to ape in the new country the imperialism of Chatham. One of the handiest weapons to employ against the new Administration was that I was an Irish rebel, hostile to all peaceful government, and that I was such a bitter Papist that I would never be content till the Pope was proclaimed sovereign of the Australias. The new Chief Secretary had appointed Captain Standish, a gentleman whom I had never seen and probably never heard of before, to be Chief Commissioner of Police, and it was alleged in a Sandhurst newspaper that he was my nephew. Johnny Fawkner, who was called the father of the colony, because he had arrived in the second boatful of immigrants from Van Dieman's Land and outlived his compeers, exhorted his Austral Felicians to rise up against this danger. Whatever he found attributed to John Mitchel in British journals he transferred to my account; and a letter which Mr. Archer, an English gentleman, wrote to Frederick Lucas, having got published in the **Tablet** after Lucas's death, was republished in Melbourne, with exuberant commentaries. Mr. Archer assured Mr. Lucas that the Bishop of Melbourne heard a rumour that he was coming to Australia, and was persuaded it was the work of Providence to send him

there. Mr. Fawkner assumed as a fact admitting of no dispute that when Mr. Lucas died I was put in his place, overlooking the fact that the date of Mr. Archer's letter showed that it was only despatched from Melbourne about the time when I was arriving in Australian waters. I did not condescend to make any answer to these amenities, and many ignorant persons accepted them as gospel. Several of the other Ministers were fiercely bombarded on different grounds, and the majority of the Colonists certainly arrived at the conclusion that they would not do.¹

Our troubles were complicated by discovering that the permanent officials knew so little of the ethics of Responsible Government that they had formed a secret committee to aid the re-election of their late masters. One of the conspirators betrayed the remainder, and when the correspondence was carried to the Government I found that the chief officer of my department, who appeared the most zealous and deferential of officials, was an active member of the cabal. I sent for him and told him I had been pleased with him, and was unwilling that any ill should come to him through me, but his duty was to be absolutely faithful and obedient to his superiors, and that if he did not separate himself altogether from these illegitimate proceedings he would certainly be dismissed. The Government might be defeated when Parliament met, but that would not save him; some of us would infallibly soon return to office, and still hold him responsible. He expressed profound regret, and as he came several times under my authority in later Administrations I am confident he meddled no more in illegitimate politics.

When the elections were over the Attorney-General and the Commissioner of Customs were found to have lost their seats, and the former assured me that the story was industriously promulgated in his district that, though he professed to be an orthodox Protestant, he was, in fact, a Papist and Jesuit in disguise. I consoled him with the reflection that Edmund Burke had been assailed with the same inventions. The anti-Irish sentiment was not new. Before I arrived in the colony, or sailed for it, the **Argus** complained of the number of Irishmen in office, though they were all good Protestants, and some of them had been baptized in the Boyne water.¹ When Parliament met a vote of No-Confidence was immediately carried against the O'Shanassy Government. They defended their position with great vigour and considerable success, but the end was predetermined, and they promptly retired. I spare the reader any synopsis of this debate, but Edward Butler sent me enthusiastic and no doubt extravagant applause of one of the speeches:—

“I read your speech three times over with unabated delight and enthusiasm. Most assuredly nothing like it has ever been heard in an

assembly in this part of the globe. It is as a keen blade flashing and cutting amongst the rude clubs of savages. Yet I expected something like it, for I knew of old that you never were so vigorous as when personally assailed. That speech, I think will bear you interest in the vindication of both character and intellect.”

This ignominious defeat of the first popular Administration was pronounced by enthusiastic Conservatives to be not only a decisive victory for Conservative opinions, but a fatal, if not a final, overthrow of the Progressive Party. But the interregnum was brief. After a single session, protracted to over nine months, the reformers returned to office, and under some form, sometimes as a naked democracy, sometimes in coalition with men of more sober views, they have exercised power from that period to the present.

The history of the interregnum may be briefly told. The new Government consisted of Mr. Haines and a couple of his original colleagues and three or four men who had been leaders among the Opposition before which Mr. Haines had fallen. They were greatly strengthened by the adhesion of Mr. Michie as Attorney-General; a debater so skilful and accomplished that I constantly compared him in my mind to Mr. Disraeli, with whom, under favourable conditions, he could have maintained a not unequal fight.

It was certain in a Democratic community like Victoria that Democratic changes would be effected, and this Conservative Government determined to concede the measures which were inevitable, confident that they could regulate them more considerately than their probable successors. But this is always a dangerous experiment. If the people have not confidence in the intentions by which the promoters of a reform are moved, it is necessary to make larger concessions than would content them from the natural spokesmen of their opinions. The programme of the Government was to postpone all serious questions, such as that of the Public Lands and Civil Service, till the Legislative Assembly was brought into closer harmony with public opinion, and with that view they proposed to extend the franchise, to increase the number of members, to reduce the duration of Parliament from five to three years, and to secure its independence by prohibiting any salaried officer from sitting in either House. The Opposition assailed this programme as stinted and meagre. I, on the contrary, admitted that if the measures proposed were discreet and liberal they would prove adequate and satisfactory; but I warned the Government that while the Land Bill was postponed they must forbid a system which had hitherto prevailed of selling the territory in principalities to squatters. The proposed extension of the franchise, it was insisted, did not go far enough, and it retained unjustifiable privileges in the interests of the

wealthy. The merchants and lawyers, for example, who resided in the suburbs would have votes where they resided, and would have other votes in Melbourne from their warehouses or chambers. The Opposition insisted on the arrangement which in these times is called "one man one vote," but it is a fact of curious significance that though the proposal was renewed on every suitable occasion during the forty years which have followed, it has not yet become law in that democratic colony. The measure had another provision to which some of the supporters of the Government and several of the Opposition took exception; it recognised the right of minorities to be represented, and proposed to provide for it by three-cornered constituencies, or by constituencies with five representatives, of whom an elector could only vote for three. I recognised this as a just proposal, and separated from the bulk of the Opposition by giving it my cordial support. Mr. O'Shanassy took the same course, and the supporters of the Government who had been murmuring their apprehensions now burst out with the objection that the proposed arrangement would doubtless give an undue advantage to Catholics. In the existing Chamber Catholics were entitled by population to seventeen members, and they had only seven, the utmost the proposed change could give them was some approximation to the number they were entitled to, but, to bigots, that seemed an alarming calamity. The desire that Parliament shall be the exponent of the whole people, not merely of a majority, is true Democracy. But Democracy commonly abandons that position and allies itself with the selfish interests of a single class. Mr. Haines, who was not at all a bigot, but a High Churchman, who probably thought a Puritan more objectionable than a Papist, was alarmed at the clamour, and proposed a new and, as he affirmed, less dangerous manner of applying the system, the cumulative method by which an elector could distribute his votes either on the whole number of members the constituency elected, or on one or more at his discretion. But the Minister who hesitates makes as fatal a mistake as the woman or the fortress who parleys. There were speedily three sections opposed to the Government measure. The squatters, who believed that the extension of the franchise would ruin their interests, and that the minority clauses would not compensate them for this danger; a section who thought that the minority principle was too complicated to be understood by the people; and Puritans, who seemed to believe that it was wicked to give the Catholics the full representation to which they were entitled. The schedule by which it was proposed to apply the principle was defeated by a considerable majority on the motion of Captain Clarke, who had been a member of the first Haines Government. In the Victorian Legislature, whatever party was in office, power has been promptly resigned when any

incident demands it, and Mr. Haines a second time set the example of this practice by sending in his resignation. His party were deeply discontented, some of them greatly exasperated, by this unexpected stroke, which would inevitably throw power into the hands of the Democratic Opposition.¹ It was certain Mr. O'Shanassy would be head of the Government, but who were to be his colleagues in his second experiment was a subject of universal interest.

The men selected had capacity and experience, but the popular element was as wanting as in the first. I occupied the office of President of the Board of Land and Works, and as there were four departments united in it, Railways, Roads and Bridges, Public Works, and Water Supply, it was determined to ask from Parliament power to appoint a vice-president to share the inordinate labours, and I resolved, when the necessary Bill became law, to offer the office to Mr. Brooke, one of the ablest of the Democratic Party. But this was not enough, and Mr. O'Shanassy largely lost the support of the democracy.

The Governor desired to swear in to the Executive Council all the members of the new Administration. I pointed out that the English practice was when a man was sworn in to the Privy Council that he retained the office for life unless he was removed for some misconduct. The Governor was of opinion that it would be more convenient that when Ministers retired from office they should retire from the Executive Council also. Some of my colleagues thought the question of no importance, but I was of a different opinion. I asked the Governor if he had sworn in Mr. Haines when he returned to office a second time. He said he had not. I rejoined that he had adopted the proper practice on that occasion, and that I respectfully declined to be sworn into the Executive Council, being already a member of that body. The subject was dropped and never revived. I consulted the Prime Minister of New South Wales and was rejoiced to find that he agreed with me on the question.

“C. S. OFFICE.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I was glad to have a line from you. The very course you recommend to be taken regarding the Executive Council was that suggested by me in reference to the late Ministers.

“When Sir William Denison sent for me, the only point upon which I had any difficulty was this—and he at once told me that though he had no power to dismiss from the Executive Council, he would only summon the members of my Cabinet. This is, of course, virtually adopting the principle of a Privy Council. The matter has been referred to the Secretary of State—in the meantime, the late Ministry retain their offices and their titles, but to the deliberations of the present Ministry they are not invited. I could not

have gone on upon any other principle. I am as you may imagine fully occupied—the city has re-elected me in a most gratifying manner, and my friend and treasurer also.

“Murray and Martin will also be returned unopposed, and though the Paramatta aristocracy are very fierce and threaten me with a tremendous opposition when the Assembly meet I am not *alarmed*. I have stood fire before to-day, and I know I have many friends as well as opponents in the Assembly.

“We have just completed a despatch for the Secretary of State upon this very matter, in reference to his instructions generally and recommending most important alterations in them. I will show him your note.—Believe me yours faithfully,

“CHARLES COWPER.”

On another point we had a more serious difference with the Governor. The Opposition Press affirmed that we were making improper magistrates: the statement was quite unfounded, but at the next meeting of the Executive Council the Governor informed us that before issuing commissions to any new magistrates he felt it his duty to take the opinion of the Chief Justice on the men proposed. This was not Responsible Government, and my colleagues authorised me to draw up a minute on their behalf to the Governor on the subject, which I did, and we heard no more of the matter.

The first task the Government undertook was to carry to a successful issue the question of electoral reform, which had failed in the hands of their predecessors. Two Bills were introduced, one extending the number of members to ninety, and framing electorates as far as it was practicable to contain four thousand electors each. The increase of the population, and the difficulty of furnishing sufficient members for select committees justified this change. The measure appeared to give general satisfaction, and after undergoing the most careful scrutiny and some modifications in committee, had its third reading passed unanimously. The other was a Bill regulating elections. It had been found necessary to make the representation of minorities an open question in the Cabinet. The Bill did not provide for it, but it was arranged that an independent member should move the necessary clauses, and the members of the Government who approved of the principle were at liberty to support it with all their strength. When the Reform Bill, as the first measure was called, went to the Upper House it was encountered with a decided resistance. Some declared that ninety members selected on the basis of population alone would destroy the squatters, and endanger many serious interests; others foresaw in this proposal the first plunge into the muddy waters of

American democracy, and Mr. Fellows, who had transferred himself to the Upper House, insisted that the measure should be postponed till an Elections Regulations Bill providing for the representation of minorities had been passed.

I shall not embarrass this narrative with names unless when they are names of cardinal significance. It is enough to say that the man of greatest wealth in the House (who was Commissioner of Customs in the new Government) warned them that rejecting this Bill was not the way to protect property, but the way to inflame public opinion against it and to lead to an immediate dissolution of Parliament to be followed in all probability by a more democratic assembly. But remonstrance was in vain: the measure was rejected by a narrow majority; the Government withdrew the second Bill and prepared for a general election. Before the Session terminated the Chief Secretary announced that a new Session would speedily open, when the Reform Bill would be again sent to the Council to enable them to consider more deliberately whether they would reject a measure dealing exclusively with reform in the Legislative Assembly, and which had been unanimously adopted by that body. If it did, it might be necessary to consider serious changes in the constitution.

The Session closes with a respectable imitation of a White-bait Dinner, except indeed that the Australian Ministers, instead of enjoying the good things in secret, invite their Parliamentary supporters in the Lower House to share these festivities, which are commonly as joyous and exuberant as a schoolboy holiday festival.

When the recess arrived I found a huge accumulation of correspondence and agenda which occupied my leisure as long as I had any, and overflowed into the succeeding Session. The character of the writers make some of the letters of permanent importance.

In the middle of this century English opinion got entangled in the strange fallacy that the colonies were a burthen to the empire. The British troops were in the end withdrawn in succession from Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, where the British flag was left flying without a single soldier to protect it. A little later Lord Granville refused an offer of the Government of Victoria to raise, clothe, feed, and pay a regiment, which should receive its officers and instructions from the Horse Guards, on the sole condition that it should not be withdrawn in the time of war from the province which had created it.

Mr. Bright was so vehemently anti-colonial that he thought himself justified in mooting to a Minister of the Crown in Australia the proposal to prepare for separation. Here is his letter to me.

After speaking of his health and pursuits, and of the American war, and

the Trent incident in the tone usual to him he concluded:—

“The prospect of War has often made me think of your distant colonies. You have trade with America, and you have valuable cargoes in the sea between your continent and this island. Privateers would shut up your commerce, and you would be subjected to grievous evils arising from a war in which you had no interest, and about which you were not consulted.

“I do not know how long the tie between England and the Colonies would stand the strain of a war with the United States, but if I were a Colonist I should be tempted to ask myself, how much I gained from a nominal connection with the Government of the English oligarchy to compensate me for the calamities brought upon me by the war into which they were recklessly plunging me. A fair inquiry of this nature might create a further secession, and one more reasonable than that which now astonishes the world. They who wish this empire to continue united should value peace.

“The Anti-reformers here abuse your representative system—everything is evil that is not restrictive and monopolist in politics—but I hope you are going on well, and that you have no reason to regret that you left our House of Commons. With many thanks for your kind letter.—I am very truly yours,

“JOHN BRIGHT.”

It was widely believed in Australia, and it has sometimes been insisted on in England, that the anti-Colonial sentiment was a craze of the Liberals. But unhappily it was a craze from which neither party escaped. In the “Life of Lord Malmesbury” a letter of Mr. Disraeli is published which exhibits that statesman under an awful fit of the disease:—

“The Fisheries affair is a bad business. Pakington's circular is not written with a thorough knowledge of the circumstances. He is out of his depth—more than three marine miles from shore. These wretched colonies will all be independent too in a few years, and are a millstone round our necks.”

I did not sympathise with Mr. Bright's policy. Cutting off the colonies to lighten the progress of the empire seemed to me like cutting off the wings of a bird to disembarass its flight. George III. shook off the millstone of the North American colonies with a result we are all familiar with, and if Mr. Disraeli or Mr. Bright had given effect to his conviction he would have done a work as disastrous.

William K. Sullivan was at this time one of the most original and laborious chemists in Europe, and he was moreover an accomplished man of letters. He wrote to me proposing to come to the new colony and devote himself to the organisation of science and the development of new industries. He held at the time, under Sir Robert Kane, the first

appointment in the Museum of Irish Industry, and he was afterwards promoted by the Imperial Government to be President of the Queen's College in Cork. The same spirit that stimulated Berkeley to seek a career in India, and Arnold to meditate one in Ireland, moved the generous soul and eager spirit of Sullivan. He wrote to me frankly of his wishes:—

“Now that you are in power I think you could do many things which would benefit the colony in an educational point of view, and let me candidly add I would be very glad to assist you. My proposal is this—Establish a Chair of Chemistry in the University of Melbourne, and establish in connection with it a technological collection or museum—in which would be brought together specimens of all the raw materials, mineral, vegetable, and animal, produced in the colony. Specimens illustrative of the processes and products of those branches of manufacture which have been introduced into the colony or which might be introduced with advantage—models of machinery, especially of mills, mining machines and tools. In connection with this department you might have an office for the registration of patents; and a short report might be annually published informing the public of the discovery of any new resources in the colony, the locality of each kind of mineral raw material, the patents registered, and an epitome of the chief European discoveries bearing upon colonial industries.

“I believe I could do all this better than any one else you could get, inasmuch as I have devoted more time to such matters—indeed it is I made the chief part of the recent collections for the Scotch Museum at Edinburgh, and it is the system of labelling and description carried out by me at this museum which is now being adopted in all the other technological museums. Further, if you could allocate a certain sum, say £3,000 or £4,000, I could take out a collection of models of mining machinery, windmills, flour mills, machinery for the preparation of fibres, &c., together with specimens illustrative of the processes of manufacture such as does not exist in any museum here after an expenditure of twice or thrice that sum.

“You can scarcely believe the simple questions that are sometimes demanded by persons in Melbourne, and upon the most commonplace branches of manufacture, such as soap, leather, &c. I have received at least twenty such. Now, there ought to be the means of having such questions answered on the spot—nay, more, such knowledge ought to be forced upon every one whom it concerns.

“It is not classics or paleontology (and no one has a higher appreciation of such subjects than myself) that will increase the material prosperity of an infant colony—you must have the foundations and the skeleton of the

building before you can ornament it.”

This was a bold and practical scheme, and if Huxley, whose gifts were not rarer than Sullivan's, had made the same proposal, he would have been received in Victoria with enthusiasm, and to me the coming of Sullivan would have been a happy stroke of fortune for the new community; but after consultation with some of my colleagues I found the generous offer could not be accepted because Sullivan was a Catholic, and his appointment would have been the subject of endless misrepresentation.

In New South Wales a general election had brought into Parliament some young men of my own race, in whose career I had large hopes. The most conspicuous of them were W. B. Dalley and Daniel Deniehy. Dalley was a politician and a man of society, and Deniehy, though by profession an attorney, was a recluse and an accomplished man of letters. He was ill and absent during my visit to Sydney, but I had read some of his speeches and essays with much sympathy. I take an extract from his acknowledgment of my congratulations to indicate the sort of Irish-Australians I aimed to confederate in the new country in pious memory of the old one.

“Perhaps you will pardon my delay in answering your kind letter of congratulations when I assure you that the sovereign circumstance of pride and pleasure connecting itself with my return to the local Parliament is the receipt of that letter, the generous and graceful things it contained for a man so young and so obscure as myself, from one I have long learnt to love and honour more than any words at my command can express. But I have also to excuse my delay in acknowledging a letter, which, I trust, my children will yet show (when you and I are ‘quiet in our graves’ as what one of the greatest and truest men Ireland has had in these latter days was pleased to say to their father when putting his foot on the threshold of public life)—because of a species of nervous illness which has haunted me for the last three weeks, making me dread the very sight of pen, ink, and paper, and throwing even my business communications with home into disorder.

“I think the cardinal service—the permanent, the historical and statesmanlike benefit you can render Australia will be the federation of the provinces. Social as well as political reasons call for this urgently; and I know no one as fitted as yourself to execute this great work. How can I express to you with what pleasure, what readiness, what a sense of performance of the highest duty, I shall co-operate—humbly and within my own little sphere?

“I know not if I ought to congratulate you on your accession to ministerial honour and responsibilities. I should have liked to see you some years longer independent in the House, a learner and observer among men

and facts purely Australian, and then Premier of Victoria. Would to God, my dear Mr. Duffy, we had you here! I think the man who undertakes to tell the world the story of your life will overlook one of your highest services to your country if he omits to tell how, by ineffably fine sympathies and continuous guiding and teaching for holy ends, you moulded into noble and vigorous forms the intellect and spirit of the young men of Ireland. I have been told by the few who really knew anything of you while you sojourned in Sydney—that you looked largely to the young native men of Australia to shape wisely and beneficially their country's destinies, even at this almost rudimentary stage of our national existence. O, dearest Mr. Duffy, the service you rendered young Irishmen is what you also, and you alone, could afford my countrymen here. In Victoria, I believe, you have as yet no native youth—and one great element of beneficence is removed from your pathway there. May we not hope sometime—ere long I hope—to have you in Sydney with us? Taking up politics as a solemn duty under the circumstances of oligarchic obstruction peculiar to this older province of Australia, but with tastes and feelings gravitating towards literature and art rather than politics—small politics too, with the coarse squabbles and the vile and vermicular intrigues perpetually dribbling through them—how I should be heartened and directed—how perpetually should I be refreshed with thoughts of the great coming benefits for the suffering section of humanity yet to fly hither—if I had Mr. Duffy as my leader!”

Henry Parkes, with whom local politics had not gone satisfactorily, informed me that he was about to retire from Parliament, and probably from New South Wales. I was eager to serve a man whom I greatly esteemed, and willing to fortify the popular party in Melbourne by so effective a recruit. My colleagues were willing also, and I made him an offer, which afforded him an immediate opening into public life in Victoria. It is disastrous to such arrangements to have them prematurely disclosed, and I was much chagrined at reading in the Sydney papers paragraphs announcing what had been done. I promptly made inquiries, which elicited the following reply from Parkes:—

“I have no doubt the blame—whatever it may be—of their publication rests with myself. Your letter advising me to settle in Melbourne, and tendering your aid in my difficulties, was among the first substantial offers of friendship I received. That circumstance, added to the value I set on your friendship for its own sake, induced me, perhaps indiscreetly, to show the letter to several of my friends. You will readily conceive how some of the gentlemen may have concluded that in my circumstances the offer would be accepted, and accordingly set it down as a settled thing.

“I am anxious to know Melbourne with my own eyes and ears—to see one of your principal and oldest goldfields, or rather the social result as developed on the spot—to acquaint myself somewhat with the state of colonisation in your interior; to learn something from the private conversation of your public men, especially with reference to the Australian future. If in following out these objects I can combine with them a run through Tasmania, I shall, of course, gain an additional pleasure.”

A note from John Dillon described the condition of public affairs in Ireland, in which he said he had to endure in silence wrongs and sufferings which he could do nothing to redress. He added:—

“In the midst of this hopeless gloom the news of your success comes to your old friends like a ray of light. When our enemies attribute our failures (individual and collective) to our want of capacity and energy we have but one answer, and it is a conclusive one. We point to men of Irish birth or blood who are prosperous and distinguished everywhere but at home. We claim as ours the first soldier of France, the first soldier and statesman in Spain, the Commander-in-Chief of the American Army (the son of an Irish physician), and we owe it to you that we are able to add that the genius of our people is asserting itself in the distant Continent of Australia. For this reason (if our old friendship did not supply a sufficient motive) I would watch your career with keen and anxious interest.”

Edward Whitty reported from London with manly frankness his failures and his successes:—

“My political novel was rejected by every publisher in London—too political and too strong. Smith and Elder said: ‘Write a regular novel and we’ll give you money for it’. I did, in about six weeks, and it will be advertised next week. It is plucky and melodramatic, and will be a hit, they say. I hope so.”

The second novel was “The Friends of Bohemia,” which became a favourite with some of his most noted contemporaries, though the public have never understood it.

About this time Cashel Hoey wrote:—

“18, DENBIGH STREET, PIMLICO,

“*May 17, 1858.*

“Your last two letters have filled my heart and filmed my eyes. God bless you, and be with you always. Though touching thirty, I would give a year of my life to see you again, and I begin to believe that it is not quite so improbable as I have always supposed since we parted. But first let me congratulate you on your return to office. I cannot describe to you the thrill of delight with which I read the telegrams of the **Times** in a little village inn in Hampshire last Sunday week, and among all your old friends here—

especially Brady, Swift, French, Father Doherty, Maguire, MacMahon—any good news about you is always heard like a piece of personal good luck, and your impressions are just as fresh as if you only left yesterday.

“Dizzy is in sovereign luck, you see. He looks as strong and as inscrutable as a sphinx. On the eve of the Tenant Right debate I wrote him a long private letter, urging him to have an Irish policy. I told him I had been your lieutenant, and that when you were going you had given me great hopes that whenever he returned to office certain questions in which we were interested would be sure to receive a straightforward and statesmanlike consideration. I advised him—I. To bring up the Maynooth grant at once, as they were talking of doing. II. To give the Catholic University a charter, as they did to the Canadian one. III. To deal with these Belfast riots with extra vigour. IV. To keep a sharp eye on the Irish legal patronage, and not allow the Orange lot there to outrage public opinion in any indecent way. V. To ask Napier to push his Land Bills, and promise to introduce them next session. I told him that his Foreign and Indian policy commanded the respect of the Catholics, and that if he dealt in any reasonable way with certain questions as above in which he would not violate any party consistency, he could strengthen his arm greatly in Ireland. I showed him then that Ireland was really the only field open for large electoral operation.”

A little later Hoey wrote to me of some significant facts in Irish politics:—

“BOULOGNE-SUR-MER, *July 15, 1858.*

“I know what delight it will give you to hear that Disraeli has not forgotten his promise to you, and is really bent on legislation in the right direction for Ireland. I have written to him twice just what I thought you would say if you were here. He has not answered my letters directly—that I did hardly expect—but he has acted upon them, and in such a way as to leave no doubt on my mind of why he has done so. D. sent for the Irish members, and had the interview with them, about which you will see a debate reported—and in the course of it alluded to a certain confidential communication which he had received. Mark Whiteside's speech. The present Government know no distinctions of politics or creeds in Ireland—would, in fact, give office to Young Irelanders—inquire into no gentleman's antecedents—and Dizzy's declaration that their policy towards Ireland is to be ‘just, generous, and conciliatory’. He has since privately intimated, in answer to a query of Monsell's on behalf of the Bishops, his intention of giving the Catholic University a charter, and both Lord Derby and he have announced that they will introduce a Landlord and Tenant Bill next session. Of course it will be Napier's. I send you letter I. I will send

you II. and III. shortly. I honestly believe—though it may never be known to the world—that this good is due to his memory of your conversation with him, and to my application of existing circumstances in that direction. I wish you would write to him, and add your weight to the influences now working upon his mind; and if you have any Imperial business of a bold, liberal, statesmanlike character such as the Union of the Colonies, in which the Home Government has an issue, now is your time to push it. All these fellows are working like men of genius and ambition—for the future. I never saw such a victory of brains, pluck, and experience as theirs has been. When they came in they could not rely on one-third of the House—now it is child's play to them to beat Palmerston to rags night after night.”

We were planting new towns, and I determined to name some of them after men who had served the country, and I began with an old antagonist become Chief Justice, and Stawell is now a thriving and prosperous township. I communicated my project to Sir William, and asked him to name the streets in the settlement called after him. This was his reply:—

“MELBOURNE, *May* 26, 1858.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I most cordially approve of your intention—carried out, it will produce, in my opinion, more beneficial results than may at first sight appear probable.

“With reference to the streets I have felt some difficulty in giving only to them the names of men who have done much for the country, whilst the town is called after myself.

“I trust that in avoiding this difficulty you will not deem me to have exceeded your permission if I propose to mark the streets with names of branches of my own family.

“Pray accept my best thanks for your courtesy and consideration, and believe me, yours faithfully,

“WILLIAM F. STAWELL.”

The Archbishop of Tuam acknowledged some slight service I had been able to perform at his request:—

“TUAM, *February* 12, 1859.

“MY DEAR SIR,—It is high time to acknowledge your very kind letter, for which, and the manifestation of that kindness practically, I feel greatly obliged. It is fortunate that those of our countrymen who never would put themselves under obligations to a home government of whatever political complexion for any favour, which is but too openly bought by the sacrifices that are required in return, may look with hope and confidence to that distant and more favoured land where office enlarges the opportunity of developing the policy which led to its attainment. We have not been unwatchful of the fluctuations of parties in your vast continent, and, as far

as we can judge them, there promises to be a large preponderance in favour of that policy which has for its aim the welfare of the people. For such an encouraging prospect the country is mainly indebted to you and Mr. O'Shanassy. It shows what a few earnest men can achieve, and if but the title of our Catholics in Ireland of station were to be equally zealous and strenuous in their exertions, those severe grievances which you felt so keenly and exposed so eloquently when in Ireland would not have remained to this day in all their destructive vitality. Accept once more my best thanks regarding Mr. Burke, and believe me, my dear sir, with sincere respect, your very faithful,

“* JOHN MACHALE.”

My old friend, T. B. MacManus, who was then engaged in commercial pursuits in San Francisco, and had become an American citizen, was seized with the desire of testing the rights of his new nationality against the authority of Sir William Denison, by whom he and his comrades had been so scurvily treated, but I did not think that this was the way to plant our race securely in Australia, and I discouraged the adventure.

“SAN FRANCISCO, *September 12, 1857.*

“MY DEAR DUFFY,—I want you to forward me files of some papers foreshadowing your policy.

“I need not tell you with what interest I look on O'Shanassy's and your movements in regard to the future of the Australian federation. I often wish to be among you, and the d—I sometimes puts it in my head to take a dash down at all risks. How would it be if an Irish rebel (now an American citizen), with his full papers, chanced in the pursuit of business to visit her Britannic Majesty's possessions in Australia? Of course as an Irish rebel Sir William Denison would consign him to the chain gang and the ‘Cascades,’ but then as a citizen Uncle Sam would be compelled to demand his release. This is a question that your old friend could realise, and perhaps make practical some of our *day dreams* on the banks of the old Blackwater thirty years ago.

“I am now in this State over six years, and it is no egotism on my part to say that I have the universal goodwill of every class in it, from the Governor to the miners. I am in as good and vigorous health as you ever saw me. Should you ever meet with one James Aikenhead, of Launceston, V. D. L., cherish him. He comes up more to my idea of a sincere, true, and able man than any I have met in my career. Had I time I would write more particularly and more fully. You must take this as a rambling letter written on board of ship; but I am, you will be glad to learn, in as much pristine vigour (if not more so) than you ever knew me, and ready and willing for the old cause.—I am, dear Duffy, as I have been, ever

most faithfully yours,

“T. B. MACMANUS.”

The applications for appointments were very numerous, scarcely a ship came into Port Phillip Harbour that did not bring me letters of introduction from political associates in Ireland, or personal associates in the House of Commons. This was to be expected, but it seemed to me unreasonable that men like Mr. Whiteside and Mr. Monsell who when in office had large patronage, and when not in office large influence, should send their protégés to Australia. With one case I was utterly disgusted.

A scandal about old Palmerston had been recently glanced at in the Society papers which somebody sent me from London. A National schoolmaster named O’K——, who considered himself ill-used, sent his wife to the octogenarian to represent his wrongs. Cupid had grown old, but even in his ashes lived his wonted fires. A scandal ensued. The O’K—— were Irish Catholics, and great pains were taken, and most unsuitable instruments employed to avert exposure by the interposition doubtless of some of the official Whig *Cawtholics*. Mr. O’K—— was despatched to Australia with letters of introduction to me, which in an ordinary case would have been very effective. He was about five-and-thirty, shrewd-looking and rather gentlemanly for a country schoolmaster. “You are the plaintiff,” I said, “in the recent case arising out of the Palmerston scandal?” “Yes,” he said. “Tell me the facts of the case.” “It is a very long story,” he replied. “No matter, I have leisure just now.” “I would rather not go into the case; I have no objection to state that I was induced to withdraw the prosecution on an understanding that my children would be provided for, our passage to Australia paid, and £100 given me in hand.” “Well,” I said, “one of two things: you have made a charge against a public man which has broken down, or you have taken a money compensation for abandoning the defence of your wife’s honour and your own. In either case I decline to become responsible for you in any manner.” Mr. O’K—— departed, and I do not know what became of him.

A painful letter from Edward Whitty announced that I might expect his immediate arrival in Melbourne.

“Jan. 11, '59.

“Since I wrote to you I have lost my wife and twins and a baby—all under very terrible circumstances. My own health greatly broken with mental misery, and to-day a consultation of doctors decides that it would be death to me to go back to pen-work in London—consumptive symptoms showing themselves—and what they advise is a voyage. Accordingly (as my two remaining children are safe in my sister’s care) I think I shall be off to see you by next ship. Even if I were well, I crave the great change. You

seem to be strong out there. I trust you are as happy as ambitious men can be. I wish I were there fighting for you in my own way.”

When I announced the news to Aspinall he bethought himself immediately how he could best welcome and aid our friend, but he could not altogether refrain from the irony and burlesque which he loved so well.

“I was glad to see your handwriting to-day, glad also to see the news it conveyed. It was like meeting two old friends together.

“I have already sent to Higinbotham (**Argus**) and will see Franklyn (**Herald**). No stone shall be unturned, or should be, I ought to say; for I have no doubt the papers will compete for him, not he seek employment from them.

“The only question is which of us is to be his host in the first instance, and Mrs. Aspinall and I are clean against you on that point. His poor wife was at our marriage. We spent our honeymoon with them—we have a right to him. Besides which, if he comes to you he will be branded by his rivals as a Duffyite. Now, thanks to my insignificance, he cannot be called an Aspinallite. So, from my place he starts with no stigma upon him beyond being an Irishman—which we may hush up. But I must call and see you to settle this point.”

But Whitty was already in the grasp of death. He contributed for two or three weeks to the leading journals, but his health totally failed, and he retired to country quarters, where he died in the house of his kinswoman, Mrs. Whyte, wife of the head-master in the training school of Melbourne. His friends asked me to take charge of the correspondence which was still arriving from Europe, and it furnished a painful revelation of the tragedy of Bohemian life. He lies buried in the Kew cemetery, Victoria, where Barry Sullivan claimed the right of erecting a monument at his sole cost.

Wilson Gray came to consult me on what ought to be done to control the dominant squatters. I reminded him of what we had done in Ireland on behalf of the tenantry with such effect, holding a conference or convention representing the country effectually. He consulted his friends, and after correspondence with notable men throughout the country, a convention on the land question was held in Melbourne. Invitations were sent to the goldfields, to those who had taken part in democratic meetings in recent times, and to the local secretaries of the Duffy Qualification Fund. An assembly of well-informed men, most of them young and vigorous, was got together. They deliberated for several days and adopted a series of principles chiefly under the influence of Wilson Gray, some of which were extreme and impracticable, but which greatly increased the public knowledge and interest in the land question. Before they separated they

desired to thank the land reformers in the Government and Parliament for their help and sympathy, and I advised my colleagues and supporters that we should invite them to meet us in a committee-room of the House. This was done, to the consternation of many timid persons, and I told the deputation that as a General Election must follow the Reform Bill, the best way they could promote their opinions was by getting some of themselves elected to Parliament. This sentiment was sharply censured, but after a time nearly a moiety of the delegates became members of the Legislative Assembly. After the convention they established a Land League, which thereafter took an active part in public affairs. I was in general sympathy with it, and helped it occasionally with a little money.

In the Government I gradually found my opinions were not in a majority, and that there was apparently a jealousy of the individual position I occupied in public life, as a man of a certain experience and knowledge. We were tending the infancy of a State which in time would become immense in its power and resources, and I was constantly, perhaps sensitively, anxious to base it on the experiences of the mother country. Some of my colleagues had been municipal councillors, and scarcely realised the difference of the new position they occupied from the old. An incident which seemed trifling at the moment, but involved serious and permanent consequences occurred. The Indian Mutiny and the frightful stories of massacre which accompanied the first reports, raised a keen feeling of sympathy in the colony. The Legislature voted £25,000 for the relief of the injured and distressed, and the Corporation of Melbourne sent an address of sympathy to the committee managing a fund for the same purpose in London. The committee transmitted their thanks to the Mayor of Melbourne, uniting in a strange salmagundi with him and his colleagues, the Government of the country, as persons to whom the public gratitude was due. The Mayor brought the document to the Chief Secretary, and Mr. O'Shanassy, who was unfamiliar with official practice or etiquette, promised to return thanks for both. When the Governor's speech for the closing of Parliament was being drafted, Mr. O'Shanassy proposed to introduce a paragraph thanking the committee on behalf of the Government of Victoria and the Corporation of Melbourne. I pointed out what a grotesque position the Government would occupy if the administration of the colony was bracketed with a Corporation of no capacity or importance. All our colleagues took part in the controversy, and the feeling was decidedly against the proposal. Mr. O'Shanassy, who considered himself committed to it, at length fiercely broke in with the statement that if the paragraph were not retained in the speech he would not remain in the Government. I replied that this was a summons to abject submission, and

that I answered it by stating that if the paragraph were retained in the speech I would not remain. After a moment's pause I said, "As you are the head of the Government, it is my duty to give way, and I verbally offer my resignation, and I will retire and put it into writing. I immediately did so, and returned to my department to remove my private papers. In half an hour I was followed by Mr. Chapman, the Attorney-General, who came to express the unanimous wish of the Cabinet that I should return; they had induced Mr. O'Shanassy to withdraw the paragraph, and no more would be heard of it. Under these circumstances I returned, but the incident caused a silent alienation never altogether abated.

When my election was over and the business of the administration began, I was attacked with a fit of dysentery, which brought me to the very edge of the grave, and of which I find the following notice in my diary:—

"I have certainly endured all the pains of death in my last illness, having been left to die, and having expected and desired death. All things became indifferent to me, but the desire to make amends for any wrongs I had done. I have realised and perfectly remember the condition of lunacy, for the real and the imaginary had a place side by side in my memory, and I could not separate them. The plot of the last novel I had read mixed with the experience of my life inextricably; the events of the one holding their place as distinctly as the other. Night after night I had the sensation that an avalanche of ice fell into my abdomen, and the killing cold thrilled me to the marrow. I realised for the first time with painful surprise and terror that the will was powerless over the muscles, not a limb would move, not a finger at the most intense desire to do so. These were doubtless opium dreams."

The danger was so alarming that the doctors in attendance despaired of my recovery, and my death was actually announced in Parliament. But by the care of my family and friends, I was pulled through the difficulty, and commenced the most serious labour of my life.

There was a large staff of engineers, architects, and surveyors in the department of Land and Works, and I determined to bring appointments and promotions under strict regulation by establishing a competitive system, and the professional officers at the head of each branch were united in a board for this purpose. The State had suffered much loss by the *laches* of contractors who gave bonds for the due performance of their work, not one of which had ever been enforced. It was now required that instead of bonds a proportionate deposit should be made, and that this practice might not preoccupy too large a share of the contractor's capital, the Board were prepared to accept Government debentures bearing interest at 3 per cent. The railways so long projected were now vigorously

commenced; they had been postponed on account of my illness, but contracts were now accepted, and the great work begun. No appointment hereafter would be made by favouritism or solicitation, but given to the man who proved himself best entitled to it. By a curious chance the great permanent offices in my department had become vacant since I had come into office. I had to appoint the Surveyor-General and the Secretary for Public Lands, the Commissioner of Roads and Bridges, and the Secretary of the same department, and it was notorious that I had not bestowed one of those offices for political or private friendship, but upon gentlemen who had no other claim than long service or proved and special fitness in each case. But the most signal reform was letting in the light of day on business hitherto transacted in private. The ministers of the Crown in their departments disposed of as much of the public property in a twelvemonth as Parliament itself, and disposed of it at their entire discretion, sometimes ignorant of the facts, and always ear-wigged by interested persons. In my own case I had to determine the granting or refusal of disputed preemptive rights, the compensation for land required for public purposes, or for injury inflicted on private property; the position of public buildings, the direction of public roads, and the like, all of them of serious practical importance, and I now made the great change of causing all this business to be transacted in a Court of Land and Works open to the public and reported by the press, a reform which has continued in operation for nearly forty years.¹

From the beginning the Government were assailed by persistent abuse of which Mr. Ireland and Dr. Evans were the main objects. It seemed destined to be overthrown, but as a dissolution of Parliament was in the air, it happened, as it commonly does in such circumstances, that no one would take the responsibility of precipitating that event. Among the measures promised the next session, was a Land Bill opening the country to selection, for which it was my duty to be responsible. I had taken up in public and private the ground that the alluvial land possessed by the State must be reserved for the people, agriculture, not pasturage, being the highest purpose to which it could be applied; I was also of opinion that a generous system of deferred payments was a condition without which the mass of the industrious classes could not get on the land. I had reason to fear that these sentiments were not universal among my colleagues, and when we got into recess I was constantly thwarted in the design of carrying my principles into action. I was urged over and over to sell masses of agricultural land which I thought ought to be kept for selectors. At length it was plain that I would not be aided in doing what I had undertaken to do, and I immediately tendered my resignation.

When I left the Government, the controversy which sprang up in the Press was stimulated by communicated paragraphs suggesting that the difference was not a public, but a personal one, and that the Government would probably be strengthened by my resignation, as it would put an end to the no-popery cry which was raised only because there were two Catholics in the Government. As the meeting of Parliament was several months distant, and the General Election would cause the question to be debated on many platforms, I found it necessary to publish a letter on the subject, and I will confine myself now strictly to the explanation I gave when all the parties concerned were alive to contradict me if it were possible.

“It was my intention,” I wrote,¹ “to have preserved the strictest silence on the subject of my retirement from office till the time came for the usual explanation in Parliament, but as each of the morning papers has been furnished with a version of the transaction, identical in spirit, and plainly coming from the same source, and as this version was not true, I was reluctantly compelled to depart so far from my original intention as to briefly contradict it. You stated, on what no doubt seemed to you adequate authority, that the circumstances which led to my resignation were ‘of a personal and not of a political character;’ . . . but the alienation of feeling which led to my resignation was of an origin not personal but purely political.

“When I returned to the department of Land and Works in September last, immediately after my illness, I found the public mind filled with the idea that the Government intended to throw an immense mass of agricultural land into the market at once; and I discovered, with painful surprise, that such was actually the policy of some of my colleagues. I represented to the Cabinet in the strongest manner the objections to this course, and finally I succeeded, by a bare majority, in negating it. This decision and the policy upon which it was founded, which I have since felt bound to systematically carry out, has been a source of constant heart-burning from that time forth. It led, I regret to say, to the loss of a friendship I very much valued—that of Mr. O’Shanassy. . . .

“I trust you are right in concluding that one probable advantage of my retirement will be to abate the iniquitous sectarian warcry, which some persons have endeavoured to raise against the Government. But when you bring this advantage into such sudden contact with the fact of my retirement, you suggest an inevitable suspicion that they may stand towards each other in some occult way in the relation of cause and effect.”

When the period of the General Election approached, I revisited Villiers and Heytesbury. Since my first acquaintance with the constituency, they

had elected me on three occasions without any contest or expense. But it was a subject of curious speculation how the Irish electors would regard my separation from Mr. O'Shanassy. The leading men were farmers and shop-keepers chiefly, with a road engineer or two; intelligent and vigorous, but without much of what is called culture; but I have never in any position of life met men who conducted themselves more thoroughly in the spirit of gentlemen. I was received as usual without any reference to my retirement from office, preparations for a contest were vigorously carried on, and in the end I received the old support, which was the more valuable because it was equally exhibited in every centre of population in the two counties. When the election was over, and I was ready to leave for Melbourne, the leading members of my committee came to me and said, "We are in dismay at your quarrel with Mr. O'Shanassy. To our people in Australia, it will be as fatal as the quarrel of Flood and Grattan in Ireland, and we entreat you not to consider it as final, for your real destiny and duty is to act together." It was a keen satisfaction to me to know I had trusted them as much as they trusted me. After my arrival in Belfast I received a telegram announcing that a meeting had been held at the Chamber of Commerce in Geelong, the Hon. Mr. Strachan in the chair, at which it had been determined to offer me the representation of West Geelong, on behalf of reformers who distrusted the O'Shanassy Government. It was a great compliment, but I replied that I could not desert a constituency which had treated me with such generous fidelity.

I reported my retirement in what, at this distance of time, seems to me a philosophic mood; at any rate it was neither dispirited or despondent:—

"MELBOURNE, *May* 16, 1859.

"MY DEAR O'HAGAN,—Since my recovery from death's door in September last I have been meditating a letter to you. But during the sitting of Parliament the charge of a heavy department, and the late hours in the House, deprived me of all leisure. Now, however, I have abundance, for Parliament is up, and I have resigned my office. I will not trouble you with local politics at the distance of half the world's circumference, but I may predict that some day I will return to office; and meantime the only sacrifice is that of income—I certainly have not lost character or influence.

"I confidently hope to go home for a year in about three years, and then to return and be content with Australia for the remainder of my life. There are half a dozen friends in Ireland I long to see again, but the sky and soil here suit me far better. I grow my own peaches, figs, grapes, and walnuts, in addition to all the home fruits, and have become a great horticulturalist—dividing my time between politics and the pruning knife."

The General Election proved fatal to the Government, several ministers

lost their seats, and their supporters were reduced to a handful. One of the earliest questions to be dealt with when the House assembled was my resignation. I stated the grounds of it, and justified the policy I had pursued. Mr. O'Shanassy in reply made a suggestion which did him fatal injury in many generous minds. He told the story of my proposed resignation at an earlier period on the Governor's speech, and said he had no doubt, from the tone of the Dublin **Nation** on the same events, that what I objected to was not the ridiculous combination of Cabinet and Corporation, but sympathy with the sufferers in India, whose sufferings he had seen minimised if not mocked at in the Dublin **Nation**. I had as little control of the **Nation** as of the **Times**, and this was regarded as a felon stroke by one Catholic against another in a community so ready to believe ill of any of them. The Government was quickly swept away, but before it abandoned the Treasury Benches, Mr. O'Shanassy had to answer the serious charge of having taken possession of, and read, a private telegram addressed to Mr. Henty, a shipowner, who had lost a steamer by what he believed to have been the fault of the Government. Mr. O'Shanassy's defence was that the Attorney-General had advised this course—a circumstance that proved highly prejudicial to both gentlemen. Mr. Nicholson was authorised to form a new Administration, and one of his first steps will illustrate how small an effect Mr. O'Shanassy produced in relation to me. Mr. Nicholson, accompanied by Mr. Wood, his Attorney-General, called on me to invite me to join the new Administration. It was to consist of picked men of the democratic and moderate parties, and its main business was to settle the land question. This was indeed the chief business of Parliament, and the work for which I was most anxious. With Mr. Nicholson and Mr. Wood I was perfectly willing to act—the one was the father of the ballot and the other had already been my colleague in office; but I inquired the names of the gentlemen he proposed to unite in the Administration, and when he specified them I considered it impossible, as indeed it afterwards proved impossible, that they would agree to a satisfactory settlement of the land question. I said if I entered the Government alone, I would find myself in a constant minority, and probably be driven to resign, and I did not want any more resignations; I would be happy to join if Mr. Nicholson enabled me to bring in two members of the Liberal party along with me, and I suggested Mr. Anderson and Mr. Brooke. Mr. Nicholson and Mr. Wood thought this would be impracticable, but promised to consult their colleagues and let me know. Finally they reported that I might bring in one colleague with me, but my experience in the late Government warned me against the consequences, and I declined. I went in to opposition, designing to maintain a friendly

neutrality towards the new Administration as long as their policy justified it.

Mr. Foster, as it appeared later, was the scapegoat of the Governor's policy, which he could not resist successfully in a Crown Colony where a Governor was still supreme.

A note I wrote to the Bishop of Kerry, in reply to his congratulations, was published in Ireland and reprinted in Victoria at this time, from which I may quote a sentence:—"A curious fate and experience mine have been, to be howled at in both ends of the earth, by parties more asunder than the Antipodes, on diametrically opposite grounds of complaint! Yonder for betraying the interests of religion; here for being its slave and missionary. I wonder if I had stopped at the equator, would they have done me the justice in those latitudes of admitting that I belong to neither Antipodes of opinion?"

We have an Irish Colonial Secretary, an Irish Attorney-General, an Irish Solicitor-General, an Irish Surveyor-General, an Irish Chief Commissioner of Police, an Irish President of Road Board, an Irish Commissioner of Water Supply.—**Argus**, March 31, 1855.

The Conservative Party were effectually served by a satirical journal named **Melbourne Punch**. Mr. Melbourne Punch expressed his sentiments on this transaction in an imitation of a popular negro song—

"It's no more the making of the laws,
'Tis lay down the schedule and the clause,
There's no more work for poor old H——
He has given up his party and his cause'.

During my illness it was necessary to appoint a Vice-President of the Board of Land and Works, and when I returned to my office I found to my serious embarrassment Mr. O'Shanassy had bestowed the office not on the gentleman for whom I had intended it, but on another person much less competent.

Letter to the **Argus**, March 16, 1859.
