



THE "NORTH HEAD" OF PORT JACKSON.

Frowning and bluff thy rugged form appears,
As if in sullen hate and stern defiance—
Majestic o'er th' eternity of water!
King-like upon an adamant throne,
Thou look'st immortally sublime; and seems,
As 'twere, the guardian of the land—repelling
Invincibly the huge convulsive shocks
Of Ocean, who, for some six thousand years
Has striven with his main and mightiest force—
The Tide—(that like another Time still rolls,
And ever rolled, invisibly and changeless—
Commanding all things in his trackless course,
And sweeping all things to a final goal)—
To conquer and subdue thee, but in vain.
Fiend-like around thee, storms and tempests rage
With all their Herculean might effectless,
Save but to add more gloom and terror to
Thy horrid frown, or aggravate thy wildness.
At thy firm feet, as fearful of thy presence,
The elements abruptly cease to strive—
Recolling—howling—charmingly terrific,
Lapse into wild, ineffable confusion!

For ever warring with the stern cold South,
Thy brow's replete with vestiges of trouble—
Accompanied with that dull, cold, changeless air,
And wild, and drear, and melancholy greyness—
Of Time the unmistakable expression,
And Tract of Solitude and Barbarism!
Around thy form a drowsiness appears,
Commingled with a death-like apathy,
Through which thy beauty is but faintly seen,
Like sunlight through a dark foreboding cloud:
As if the bright, terrific glance, that sleeps
Volcanic-like in thy unchanging gaze,
Had not yet flashed through dull Creation's sleep
With fullest sense of thy high dignity
And might—but waited still the will of Time.
Scarce, if at all, frequented by man's touch,
There's something spirit-like around thy brow,
Prohibiting all vile earth-like approach!
In consequence, the mariner, while passing,
Gazes with dread on thy majestic front;
He feels, but scarce conceives, thy magic power.
Alone, silent, and immovably fixed,
Thou seem'st a very monument of age!

Emblem of what Australia is, and shall be,
When Fixed on her imperishable throne—
Th' affections of a great and generous people—
When Time has wreathed his glories on her brow,
And crowned her Monarch of the Great Pacific—
When all shall hail her in her pristine beauty,
The charm and terror of opposing powers—
The arbiter of strife—the rock of hope—
The metaphor of strength and liberty!

A. D. M.

The Age of Pitt and Fox. By the Author of "Ireland and its Rulers." London: 1845.

[FROM THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.]

[Concluded.]

PROCEEDING on these views, one hundred and fifty seats in the House of Commons were abolished. They were all taken from the smaller boroughs. Those which remained were thrown open, if hitherto close, to all householders whose houses, shops, warehouses, or offices were of the value of ten pounds a-year. The qualification for voting in the scot and lot, or potwalloping boroughs, was raised to that sum.

The seats thus obtained were distributed with regard to the altered circumstances of the country. The representation of England was reduced from five hundred and thirteen to five hundred. Eight additional seats were given to Scotland, and five to Ireland, whose representation had been more recently fixed. Upwards of sixty were allotted to the English and Welch counties. Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Sheffield, Halifax, Rochdale, Stoke-upon-Trent, Stroud, the metropolitan districts of the Tower Hamlets, Finsbury, Marylebone, and Lambeth; other populous towns, the seats of manufacture, or the centres of accumulated property, were now, for the first time, admitted into the representation. The opposition made to a reduction in the numbers of the House of Commons in no way affected the extent of disfranchisement, but added to the number of counties and towns which sent members for the first time, or in augmented number.

No one who surveys this scheme impartially, can fail to see, that while a great blow was struck at the old system of close boroughs,—having no character of popular choice in their size or constitution,—the property of the country, considered as a whole, obtained more than an equivalent.

It has been said that the declared intention was to make the Reform Bill a final measure. Such was the repeated avowal of Lord Grey, Lord Althorp, and Lord John Russell; such was the promise, on the faith of which many doubtful or apprehensive persons gave their support to the ministry. Of course, this declaration was to be understood with two conditions. The one, that amendments declared necessary by the abuse of its provisions, or from the increased fitness of a large class of persons, should from time to time be introduced. The other, that the general satisfaction which it was the object of the Bill to procure should follow its adoption. Not of course the satisfaction of the whole community, is here meant, but general acquiescence, and a prevailing indisposition to further change.

It has been already shown, that had the plan been of the moderate or trifling kind which many persons would have preferred, the question would not have been settled, and perpetual agitation must have ensued. The same evil would have been incurred had the plan been more destructive in its disfranchisement, and more democratic in its constructive clauses. The noble and the wealthy classes, rooted in the soil by prescription, and extending their branches widely by the influence of property, would have resented and resisted any scheme by which numbers alone should govern this great Empire. Or, if defeated by the force of popular enthusiasm, they should be

compelled to yield to the storm, they would have taken advantage of a calmer day, and excited the aristocratic powers of combination to overthrow the fragile fabric, and scatter its unsettled foundations.

But when the landed proprietors found, that by registering voters they could make their weight be felt in the new legislature; when the merchants and manufacturers discovered that the new men had their place amongst the highest in the senate—it was seen, that though the rotten planks were removed, and the rudder had been strengthened, the lines of the constitution had not been altered, nor stability sacrificed to buoyancy and speed. The most powerful of the Tory nobles, the most jealous *laudatores temporis acti*, began to survey their new abode; to study its advantages; to accustom themselves to the broad lights and spacious passages of the modern building; and finally, to accommodate themselves to the restored habitation:—it was found that the bees could still make honey, and had even more room in the new Hive than in the old—

Ergo ipsas quamvis angusti terminus ævi
Excipiat (neque enim plus septima ducitur ætas.)
At genus immortale manet, multosque per annos,
Stat fortuna domus, et avi nuncian. ur avorum.

It is obvious, that while the authors of the Reform Act were governed by these considerations, they must have viewed with scorn the imputations so harshly cast upon them, that they sought to secure the permanent predominance of their own party. They must have foreseen, that a plan of representation which gave great power to property, and maintained the landed interest on a high, though somewhat lowered eminence, would give the Tory party, compact and strong as that party was, as good a prospect of governing the country as any other. In fact, the French Revolution had thrown into that party many of the oldest Whig families; and the government of Mr. Pitt had brought to their aid a great portion of the mercantile community. It was impossible, without wrenching power from its natural position, to exclude such a party from the prospect of regaining the government. But as the authors of the Reform Bill never contemplated such a dislocation, so likewise they never sought for, or expected such a result. Their followers might indeed imagine that a party which had become so unpopular by its resistance to reform, would not soon rise again. But the framers of the Reform Bill had calculated on the variations in the popular compass, and were not surprised at the change which occurred.

Lord Grey had promised Retrenchment. We take from a pamphlet, entitled *The Reformed Ministry and the Reformed Parliament*, published in 1833, the following statement:—

One of the earliest acts of Earl Grey's government was to reduce their own salaries, those of all the great officers of state, and others whose salaries exceeded £1000 per annum. In two years, viz. 1831 and 1832, not less than 1265 offices, with salaries amounting to £220,000, were abolished, in the different establishments of the government. In the customs alone 414 offices were reduced, and a saving of £29,000 per annum, effected. In the excise 507 were reduced, and an annual saving of £145,250 effected. Similar reductions were made in the diplomatic and consular departments. At Malta, Gibraltar, Cape of Good Hope, New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, &c., a saving of £134,000, out of a charge of £411,000, will be the consequence of the reductions made. In Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Trinidad, British Guiana, &c., similar reductions have been made.

The total saving in the government established in the colonies will be £224,000, out of a charge of £573,000. The following table shows the reductions:—

| | Emoluments in 1829. | Emoluments in 1833. | Saving. |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Treasury | £20,900 | £14,800 | £6100 |
| Home, Foreign, and Colonial Departments | 52,828 | 36,100 | 16,728 |
| Admiralty | 19,940 | 7500 | 12,440 |
| Army | 17,876 | 8455 | 9421 |
| King's Household, &c. | 11,286 | 2000 | 9286 |
| Customs | 64,520 | 18,400 | 46,120 |
| Excise | 14,300 | 7200 | 7100 |
| Judges and Courts of Law | 52,492 | 38,000 | 14,492 |
| Ireland | 49,903 | 32,989 | 16,914 |
| Colonial Agents, &c. | 5305 | 1300 | 4005 |
| Miscellaneous | 6298 | | 6298 |
| DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR OFFICES. | | | |
| Ambassadors | 55,300 | 45,900 | 9400 |
| Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary | 50,300 | 38,900 | 11,400 |
| Ministers resident abroad | 14,200 | 10,750 | 3450 |
| Secretaries | 15,000 | 11,375 | 3625 |
| Consuls, &c. | 44,450 | 21,800 | 22,650 |
| General Total | £494,898 | £295,469 | £199,429 |

The great reductions in our naval and military force made it possible to diminish the burden of taxation—

When the ministry came into office in 1830, they found the revenue of the country amounting to £50,056,616; of which sum about 35,000,000 was required for the payment of the debt, civil list, and other fixed charges. The estimated excess of income over expenditure was that year £700,000; but, between that period and the present, Lord Althorp has repealed the duty on coals, amounting to £900,000; on candles, to £500,000; on soap to £600,000; on printed cottons, to £550,000; assessed taxes and farming stock, to £440,000; on marine insurances, to £100,000 on slates, tiles, on advertisements; on tax-carts; small receipt stamps; on travellers, clerks, book-keepers, office-men, &c.; making a total of £3,335,000. These taxes were repealed in 1832 and 1833.

The same ministry, in 1834, repealed the house-tax, £1,200,000; the window tax on farm-houses; on husbandry horses, used occasionally for riding or drawing; on shepherd's dogs; on post-horses, used occasionally in husbandry; on starch, £75,000; and on almanacks; making with the house-tax, a total of £1,581,000 repealed in 1834.

In addition, the annual payment of the interest on the West India compensation, viz., £750,000 has been provided for; so that the total reduction in the years 1832, 1833, and 1834, with this payment, amounts to no less than £5,700,000.

Every effort has been made to remove unnecessary and injurious shackles upon trade, either by reducing taxes which pressed on industry, or removing vexatious regulations or exclusive privileges. With this view, the tax upon printed cottons, amounting to £2,000,000 gross, and £600,000 net, was repealed. The cotton-tax, which was substituted for about half this amount in 1831—repealed in 1833. The duties upon upwards of 400 articles used in manufacture, of more or less importance, many of them very

considerable—either materially reduced or altogether repealed; reductions amounting to not less than £400,000. The package and scavage dues, amounting to £16,000 a-year, have been abolished; and the port dues of the city of London reduced to less than one half. The Custom-house laws have been consolidated, and made simple and easy of access.

The discussions regarding Ireland which occurred when the new Parliament met, we reserve for the conclusion of our remarks, one of the first questions to which the Reform ministry turned their attention, was the mode in which slavery in the West Indian colonies should be treated.

There could be no doubt among liberal and enlightened men on the abstract vices of slavery. Whatever may be the evils of despotism in government, they are as a grain of sand compared to the enormous grievance of personal slavery. The spirit of the Christian religion, the laws of humanity, the rules of sound policy, alike forbid that man should be the chattel property of man—his to *force* to labour—his to corrupt—his to torture—his to kill.

Indeed, so repugnant is this institution to human nature, that it requires the most violent means to preserve it. Horses grow fond of their stable, and exult in bearing their master to the chase or the charge; dogs feed from their master's hands, and watch with untiring affection over their masters' lives. But man, turning to him "who made us of such large discourse, looking before and after," cannot easily and willingly lend "such capability and godlike reason" to the uses of bondage. His mind revolts at toil enforced by the whip for the benefit of another; his affections are outraged by the licentious violence which robs him of the bride of his bosom; his spirit looks upward to God, and prays for deliverance from the unholy compact.

It is therefore necessary, in order to maintain slavery, to degrade, as far as possible, human nature to the brute. With this view idleness or disobedience must be followed by instant chastisement; religious or intellectual instruction must be debarred; indulgence must be given in the shape of childish amusement or physical pleasure, without any mixture of sweet companionship or moral elevation.

Such was slavery in the British West Indies during the last century. Such was the system which the government of England, of all parties, encouraged by public opinion, fostered, promoted, and upheld. After the abolition of the slave trade by the Whig ministry of 1806, the philanthropists who had raised their batteries against that iniquitous traffic had employed the same artillery against slavery itself. The government, imbued with the Tory maxim—of leaving ill alone, had seen this movement with displeasure. Their opponents, with the remarkable exception of Mr. Brougham, had not been forward to incur the responsibility of the mighty change contemplated by the society for the abolition of slavery. Still opinion grew more and more resolute against the system. It was thought necessary to do something. The ministry put in force a code of regulations, mitigating in appearance the evil denounced; forbidding the flogging of women, allowing certain markets for the slaves to dispose of their produce; enforcing fixed allowances of food and clothing.

Experience soon showed that these regulations were founded on wrong principles. In fact, the ground between slavery and freedom is a shifting quicksand. In slavery, the human animal has a chance of being as humanely treated as the other cattle on the owner's estate. If he is obedient, docile, industrious, he may thrive, and grow fat as well as the ox and the ass, and every thing that is his. An intelligent, kind-hearted master, an honest and good-tempered overseer, may effect much in the way of mitigation by discretion. But mitigation by law is another thing. The slave learns that his master's master has interfered in his behalf. He inquires from his friends what are the securities he has obtained. He seeks to put in force his new and unaccustomed rights. But the master examines, with no less attention, and with more sagacity, the negro code. He knows that Parliament intended labour to be still compulsory, and he ascertains the means by which it is to be enforced. The negro and the planter, from bondsman and master, become plaintiff and defendant. The negro finds he has many ways of counteracting his master; the master finds he has many more ways of defeating the negro. Complaints multiply; punishments increase in proportion; the amount of work diminishes; the indulgence of the planter is at an end. Inspection, arbitration, courts of justice, only aggravate the discord which prevails; slavery is still the law, and compulsory labour the recognised obligation; the sanctioned mitigations are evaded or despised; the negro people become more and more exasperated, and are viewed with increased suspicion. Toil beyond human endurance, punishments exceeding human justice, are rigorously enforced; population rapidly diminishes, and the planter, turned tyrant, surveys, with dismay, his blood-stained produce and his perishing people.

Thus it happened in Demerara. The whole number of slaves, on estates wholly or partially cultivated in sugar, was, in 1829, 47,456. In three years, to May, 1832, the deaths were 5573; and the total diminution of numbers 2745, or 5½ per cent. On some estates the mortality was larger. The increase of sugar from 1826-9 to 1829-32, was from 662,000 cwt. to 806,000 cwt. In 1829, when the slave population was 61,627, the number of punishments was 17,359; in 1831, the slave population being 98,000, the number of punishments was 21,656.

In Jamaica, where the Orders in Council had not operated, the difference in the increase of sugar, from 1823-6 to 1826-9, was only from 1,354,000 cwt. to 1,389,000 cwt., and the decrease of population was only from 334,000 to 327,000.

Still the change proposed was of an awful nature. Statesmen, entrusted with the destinies of their fellow subjects of all ranks and conditions, could not leap to the dogma of the religious societies, that slavery must be abolished without qualification, and the consequences left to chance. Anarchy, rebellion, and murder, were, in their eyes, evils of no less enormity than slavery itself. A safe way out of the labyrinth might be found; to fire the building for the sake of escape, would be the stratagem of desperate men, but not of a wise government.

Inquiry was the first step that was adopted. Committees of both Houses were appointed, and members of the Cabinet placed upon each. The evidence before these committees was at once appalling and satisfactory. The evils of slavery were fully proved. But it was likewise shown that many of the

blacks had acquired, under benevolent masters, very considerable property; that migratory gangs worked for wages with great benefit to their employers and themselves; that Baptist and other Missionaries had taught the most intelligent among them the privileges of the Christian faith, and the duties of free subjects. In short, it was proved, to the conviction of the Cabinet, that the experiment of emancipation did not involve either political anarchy or social annihilation.

It is not necessary, in this place, to discuss the particular merits of the plan brought forward by the government for the emancipation of the slaves. That plan was afterwards greatly modified. Instead of a loan of Fifteen Millions, to be repaid by the labor of the slaves, the magnificent sum of Twenty Millions was granted by the Commons of England, as their share of the loss to be incurred by emancipation; the period of twelve years was reduced to seven, and the seven were, in fact, no more than five.

Be the merits of the machinery what they may, no one can deny the boldness of conception by which this scheme was marked. No less than Eight Hundred Thousand human beings were, in a few years, to be raised from slavery to freedom; their children were all to be born free; a community of freemen was to be established in all the colonies of the British crown; and the vain boast of the American constitution, that all men are equal, was to become a reality for the subjects of the King of England. The nation, which had incurred eight millions of debt for the sake of maintaining its independence, or its power by war, added twenty millions to that debt for the sake of humanity and conscience, in peace. Pressed by no insurrection, in no penury of resources, in no failure of military force, Great Britain declared herself ready for any sacrifice of wealth, or even any hazard of diminished Empire, in order to abolish all distinction of race or color, and establish for ever the freedom of her negro subjects.

The Tory party looked on, cautiously and coldly, while this measure was making its way through Parliament. Lord Ellenborough denounced its introduction as hazardous and premature; had the West Indian interest thought itself equal to resistance, it was tolerably clear that factious aid would not have been wanting; when that interest accepted the Twenty Millions, the party reluctantly acquiesced in the emancipation of the blacks.

The discussions of this year exhibited in a strong light the debating ability of Lord Stanley. At the commencement of the session, he overpowered the Irish Repealers by his vehement invective; afterwards, he carried on at the same time the Church Temporalities Bill of Ireland, and the Slavery Abolition Bill, with unrivalled clearness of statement, readiness of reply, and facility of managing the details of complicated measures.

In the same year the Bank Charter was renewed. Lord Althorp maintained sound views on the subject of currency, in accordance with those of Mr. Horne, Mr. Huskisson, Lord Grenville, Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Ricardo, and Sir Robert Peel. The details of the measure do not require any notice here.

The renewal of the Charter of the East India Company was the occasion of a greater change. The Commercial character of that Company was extinguished. The trade to China was thrown open. The English merchant was free to carry on his commercial speculations with a nation of three hundred millions. The East India Company remained the Sovereign of India on terms which, after some negotiation, appear to have been considered on both sides equitable and just. Thus, this great change was accomplished among the minor achievements of the government of Lord Grey.

The prominent question for Parliamentary discussion in 1834, was the Bill for the amendment of the Poor Laws.

It is obvious that a poor man, and a pauper, are in different stations of life. A day-laborer may be poor; but so long as he lives on his earnings, he does not differ, in the character of his employment, from the lawyer, the physician, or the tradesman, who receives his yearly income from the proceeds of his industry. The pauper has no such resource. In failure of all means of support, he applies to the community for sustenance—the community thus appealed to gives him work and maintenance if he is able to labor, maintenance alone if he is unable. Such was the principle of the Poor Law of Elizabeth. Founded on wise and benevolent views, it directed that the overseers of parishes should relieve the infirm and the young, who could earn little or nothing for themselves, and should set the able-bodied to work.

In an evil hour, this law was perverted to far different purposes. It was meant for the pauper—it was applied to the laborer. When, during the war, food became dear, it occurred to some volunteer legislators, that if, instead of raising wages, the laborers received support for their families from the poor rates, the purpose of enabling the laboring classes to live, would be attained at the smallest cost to the owners and occupiers of land. This plan received the approbation of Mr. Pitt; and every obstacle which the law interposed to prevent the substitution of rates for wages was thrown down, to favor the progress of the scheme. The act of George the First, enabling the parishes to restrict relief of the able-bodied to the workhouse, was repealed. Magistrates laid down rules for the distribution of the public funds, and published tables for the guidance of overseers, founded on the numbers of a laborer's family, and the price of the peck of flour.

By this system, society was placed in the greatest peril. According to the natural distribution of wages and labor, a young man earning the value of his work, is obliged to calculate, before he marries, whether those earnings will enable him to support a wife, and bring up a family of children, until those children are able to earn their own subsistence. This forethought marks him for a reasonable being, and keeps up in the community of laborers to which he belongs, that power of commanding adequate food, house-room, and raiment, which constitutes comfort in his own vast and important class. But when his wages are measured by the lowest amount of money on which he can live, and the provision for a married couple is made by the parish, all motive for provident forethought is taken away, and the temptation to early marriage, strong enough in itself, has no counterbalancing fear. Want cannot afflict the favorite of the law; no starving children will reproach him with exposing them to hunger and nakedness. The state offers a premium to all who marry. Thus, to quote a trite instance—two laborers were thrashing together in a barn, their day's work was the same, the value of their

labor to their employer exactly the same; yet, one received only eight shillings for a week's work, the other received fifteen. The reason was, that one was single, the other married.

It is obvious that such a system must produce more laborers than could find profitable employment. This was in fact the case. Forty or fifty laborers were to be found in a parish, whom no employer wished to hire:—who lowered the general value of labor, the only commodity the poor man has to sell, and by absorbing a large sum in poor-rates, diminished the whole fund applicable to the commodity which the employer wishes to buy.

Such was the general and indirect evil. The collateral consequences were not less mischievous. The idle father of a large family, paid by the head for the number of his children, divided the painful toil of the industrious peasant, who, with a less family, received four shillings a week less than his dissolute, lazy neighbour. The employer, breaking off the old endearing connexion between the farmer and his men servants, turned off his laborers in hard weather, to live upon parish allowance. Gangs of men, young and old, under a timid overseer, neglected the parish road they were put to mend, and, combining together in crowds, planned a scheme of poaching and drinking for the night. Theft and house-breaking succeeded to idleness and poaching; the law lost all authority, and if any active landowner, clergyman, or farmer, attempted to check this career, a benevolent magistrate was to be found at no great distance, who had no scruple in taxing his neighbours, to gain among the lazy and profligate the title of the poor man's friend.

Such was the evil with which the ministry of Lord Grey had to deal. Mr. Canning and Sir Robert Peel had declined or evaded that which was at once the most difficult of invidious tasks, and the most imperative of patriotic duties. The evil had gathered strength by neglect; the riots of 1830 were but a slight symptom of the disorders which must overtake the country if that duty was much longer neglected.

The first step in this, as in other instances, was to inquire—the Bishops of London and Chester, Mr. Sturges Bourne, Mr. Senior, and other gentlemen, were established Commissioners of inquiry, in order to ascertain the chief defects in the administration of the poor-law, and the mode of amending them. The Poor-Law Amendment Bill was framed on their Report. The management of relief was confided to district boards, instead of parochial vestries; the principle of local representation was maintained, but some additional influence was given to the owners of land; the law of George the First, enabling the guardians to give relief in the workhouse, was restored; a central board of commissioners, appointed by the government, was entrusted with the power of framing general rules, and of watching over the local administration, without any authority to order relief in individual cases.

The first operation of this law was salutary. Farmers expended large additional sums in wages. The rates for the relief of the poor were reduced by the sum of two millions sterling; but it is probable that a larger sum than two millions was added to the expenditure for wages. Healthy, industrious labor for wages, took the place of idle, loitering, nominal work, paid by the parish officers under the name of relief.

The greatest question which lay before the Parliament and the people of Great Britain, after the passing of the Reform Bill, still remains to be considered. Ireland had been from the period of the union a source of dispute and of weakness; a theme for eloquence in parliament, a theatre of bloodshed in her valleys; a name of terror to fanatical Protestants; a reality of suffering to the peasant Catholics; a great Church Establishment for a fifth or a tenth of her people; large landed proprietors totally unacquainted with the condition of their tenants; laws for punishing the people, enacted by party violence, and administered by party indolence; famine, discontent, insecurity, deeds of atrocity, wrongs unredressed, justice distrusted, the demagogue powerful with the millions, the government relying on the bayonet—such were some of the features of Ireland from 1801 to 1829.

Let us shortly notice the history of the Roman Catholic Emancipation, in order to understand the Irish difficulty with which Lord Grey had to deal. That measure had been proposed to George the Third by Mr. Pitt, when in office, and abandoned by him as soon as he had retired from power. It was proposed by Mr. Fox in 1805; by Mr. Grattan in subsequent years; by Mr. Plunkett, by Sir Francis Burdett, and partially by Mr. Canning. For about fifteen years it was an open question in the Cabinet. Mr. Secretary Canning supported, Mr. Secretary Peel opposed, the Roman Catholic claims.

After Mr. Canning's death the same division existed in the cabinet. Distracted councils made a distracted country. At length Mr. O'Connell procured himself to be elected member for the county of Clare—assailed the English government and parliament in the most inflammatory language; and by means of a well-organized association brought Ireland to the verge of civil war. Then the Tory ministry relented. That which had been refused to petitions and supplications; to offers of a vote on the appointment of their Bishops: to the arguments of Mr. Fox, the inspiration of Grattan, the eloquence of Plunkett;—that which twenty-three years of rational discussion, and the authority of the greatest of English statesmen had not obtained, was yielded to the array of embattled multitudes, and the threats of impending rebellion. Catholic Emancipation was granted; but the same want of foresight which had marked the resistance, accompanied the concession. The Roman Catholic Relief Act itself was the trophy and the triumph of popular agitation. Other questions were left unsettled; the Protestant Church was left to support itself by tithe and church cess levied upon the Roman Catholic majority. Nothing—for next to nothing—was done for Education; Roman Catholics obtained no practical boon, either in offices, diminution of burthens, or social improvement. It was as if a farmer in America had cleared his land of the trees which shut out the sun and air, but had omitted to plough or to sow, and had looked for a harvest of plenty from the spontaneous bounty of heaven. The case was even worse than this. Popular agitation; monster meetings; violent speeches, had brought about a concession of legal equality. Why not try the same means to procure a redress of remaining grievances?

This obvious corollary followed the government proposition.

The Irish were too quick in intellect, and too much elated by success, not to try the experiment of further menace. The collection of tithe was a tempting topic for an orator, a sore grievance for the people. The ragged peasant forced to pay his penny to a church, which in his eyes was heretical and reprobate, was easily moved to oppose the exaction. Passive resistance was the signal. The conflict which had been carried on for equal rights had raged in public meetings, in assemblies of men convened for the purpose of denouncing an unjust law, and petitioning for redress. The tithe agitation raged in every farm and upon every field, in the depth of the valley, upon the top of the mountain. Whenever the tithe collector appeared, accompanied perhaps by a brigade of constables, perhaps by a troop of horse, the cattle were driven away; the peasantry were summoned by signal from hill to hill; loud executions followed the ministers of the law, and bloodshed was often the result. A miserable peasantry, thus excited in their homes, and instigated by their leaders, could not restrain their passions within the channel which had been marked out for their resistance. Fearful assaults, atrocious murders, deadly conflicts, spread over the southern counties; the government was powerless for repression; and the agitators themselves in vain denounced the transition from sedition to bloodshed. Still the crime increased, and deeds of the most horrible atrocity were accompanied by a savage spirit of insult to the victims.

The government of Ireland under Lord Anglesea, had been to the end of the year 1832, employed chiefly in two great measures. One of these was the Irish Reform Bill, by which the close boroughs of Ireland were opened; the right of election was extended from the sovereign and twelve, a common number even in the larger towns, to all householders of ten pounds a-year, and an additional member was given to four of the great towns.

The other important measure adopted by the Irish government was the scheme for National Education. The Board composed of Protestants and Catholics, nearly as it now exists, was established. Under their auspices a system of instruction was adopted, of which the Roman Catholic children could partake, without offence to their parents or their priests. Against this scheme was directed the cry of Bible mutilation. The Bishops in the House of Lords denounced it. But the foundation was laid for the mixed education of the people of Ireland, and the moral improvement of the rising generation.

Still, however useful these measures might be for the future, the Ministry which had carried the Reform Act found the tithe war making fearful progress, and the great problem of the government of Ireland still unsolved.

Whatever might be the measures best adapted for the permanent happiness of Ireland, it was necessary to encounter the pressing and predominant evil. Life was insecure. No enjoyment of political rights, no encouragement to peaceful industry, no removal of glaring inequalities, could succeed, while the subject could not feel secure in his field, on the road, in his bed. Lord Anglesea had conceived the largest schemes for the arrangement of the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches, without injury to any living individual. He had drawn an outline of measures for the future improvement of the country. But he saw that it was necessary to put down the spirit of general sedition and local outrage. He did not hesitate, therefore, to recommend what was afterwards called the Coercion Act.

The effect of this law was immediate. The murderers and "prædial agitators" were intimidated. Life and property were again restored to their ordinary security. It became possible to sow the seeds of improvement; for the soil which was lately covered by the waters of strife, was made fit for its reception.

A plan was devised for removing some of the more glaring deformities of the Irish Church. Church cess was altogether abolished. Ten Bishoprics were suppressed, the incomes of the clergy were subjected to a graduated income tax. This plan received the unanimous support of the Cabinet, and was carried in both Houses of Parliament.

Still, the Church Establishment of Ireland remained the Church of one-eighth of her people. The religious instructions of the majority were left dependent on voluntary contribution. If Church Establishments were a good, why leave the priests of the great majority dependent on the charity of their flocks? If Church Establishments were an evil, why leave so gross an instance of pay without congregations as the Protestant Church? The opinions of some members of the Cabinet were known to be in favor of a reduction of the Establishment. Lord Wellesley, who had succeeded Lord Anglesea as lord-lieutenant, had advised, in January, 1834, the issuing of a Commission to ascertain the respective numbers of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics. Mr. Ward had given notice of a motion for a day in May, respecting the Irish Church. But it now became obvious that Lord Stanley, Lord Ripon, the Duke of Richmond, and Sir James Graham, would admit of no further measures respecting the ecclesiastical establishments in Ireland. Lord Stanley, Sir James Graham, and Lord Ripon tendered their resignations. They were accepted by Lord Grey. The Duke of Richmond, who had been absent in Paris, followed the example of Lord Stanley.

The Commission advised by Lord Wellesley was now issued; and it was hoped that the administration of Lord Grey might have the glory of settling the long vexed question of Ireland. But it was not to be so. Lord Grey wished to renew the Coercion Bill for a year longer; Lord Althorp, refusing to concur, tendered his resignation. Lord Grey sent his own with that of Lord Althorp to Windsor.

Let us now consider, in as far as a short experience will allow us, the effect of the measures of which we have traced the outline.

The great measure of Parliamentary Reform has now been in operation for about thirteen years. The Tory predictions of destruction to the Monarchy and ruin to the Church have been signally falsified. The institutions of the country have been more secure; the consent of the people to the acts of their representatives has been more readily ascertained; the power of great men to send their nominees to Parliament has been, to say the least, greatly curtailed. The representatives of the seats of our Manufactures, have brought to the discussions of the House of Commons much practical knowledge, and much enlightened argument. The House of Commons