Various

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WOMEN AND LITERATURE IN FRANCE

From a sprightly letter from Paris to the *Cologne Gazette*, we translate for *The International* the following account of the position of women in the French Republic, together with the accompanying gossip concerning sundry ladies whose names have long been quite prominently before the public:

"It is curious that the idea of the emancipation of women should have originated in France, for there is no country in Europe where the sex have so little reason to complain of their position as in this, especially at Paris. Leaving out of view a certain paragraph of the *Code Civile*—and that is nothing but a sentence in a law-book—and looking closely into the features of women's life, we see that they are not only queens who reign, but also ministers who govern.

"In France women are engaged in a large proportion of civil employments, and may without hesitation devote themselves to art and science. It is indeed astonishing to behold the interest with which the beautiful sex here enter upon all branches of art and knowledge.

"The ateliers of the painters number quite as many female as male students, and there are apparently more women than men who copy the pictures in the Louvre. Nothing is more pleasing than to see these gentle creatures, with their easels, sitting before a colossal Rubens or a Madonna of Raphael. No difficulty alarms them, and prudery is not allowed to give a voice in their choice of subjects.

"I have never yet attended a lecture, by either of the professors here, but I have found some seats occupied by ladies. Even the lectures of Michel Chevalier and Blanqui do not keep back the eagerness of the charming Parisians in pursuit of science. That Michelet and Edgar Quinet have numerous female disciples is accordingly not difficult to believe.

"Go to a public session of the Academy, and you find the '*cercle*' filled almost exclusively by ladies, and these laurel-crowned heads have the delight of seeing their immortal works applauded by the clapping of tenderest hands. In truth, the French savan is uncommonly clear in the most abstract things; but it would be an interesting question, whether the necessity of being not alone easily intelligible but agreeable to the capacity of comprehension possessed by the unschooled mind of woman, has not largely contributed to the facility and charm which is peculiar to French scientific literature. Read for example the discourse on Cabanis, pronounced by Mignet at the last session. It would be impossible to write more charmingly, more elegantly, more attractively, even upon a subject within the range of the fine arts. The works, and especially the historical works, of the French, are universally diffused. Popular histories, so-called editions for the people, are here entirely unknown; everything that is published is in a popular edition, and if as great and various care were taken for the education of the people as in Germany, France would in this respect be the first country in the world.

"With the increasing influence of monarchical ideas in certain circles, the women seem to be returning to the traditions of monarchy, and are throwing themselves into the business of making memoirs. Hardly have George Sand's Confessions been announced, and already new enterprises in the same line are set on foot. The European dancer, who is perhaps more famous for making others dance to her music, and who has enjoyed a monopoly of cultivated scandal, Lola Montes, also intends to publish her memoirs. They will of course contain an interesting fragment of German federal

politics, and form a contribution to German revolutionary literature. Lola herself is still too beautiful to devote her own time to the writing. Accordingly, she has resorted to the pen of M. Balzac. If Madame Balzac has nothing to say against the necessary intimacy with the dangerous Spanish or Irish or whatever woman—for Lola Montes is a second Homer—the reading world may anticipate an interesting, chapter of life. No writer is better fitted for such a work than so profound a man of the world, and so keen a painter of character, as Balzac.

"The well-known actress, Mlle. Georges, who was in her prime during the most remarkable epoch of the century, and was in relations with the most prominent persons of the Empire, is also preparing a narrative of her richly varied experiences. Perhaps these attractive examples may induce Madame Girardin also to bestow her memoirs upon us, and so the process can be repeated infinitely."

Authors and Books

Parke Godwin has just given to the public, through Mr. Putnam, a new edition of the translation made by himself and some literary friends, of Goethe's "Autobiography, or Truth and Poetry from My Life." In his new preface Mr. Godwin exposes one of the most scandalous pieces of literary imposition that we have ever read of. This translation, with a few verbal alterations which mar its beauty and lessen its fidelity, has been reprinted in "Bohn's Standard Library," in London, as an original English version, in the making of which "the American was of *occasional use*," &c. Mr. Godwin is one of our best German scholars, and his discourse last winter on the character and genius of Goethe, illustrated his thorough appreciation of the Shakspeare of the Continent, and that affectionate sympathy which is so necessary to the task of turning an author from one language into another. There are very few books in modern literature more attractive or more instructive to educated men than this Autobiography of Goethe, for which we are indebted to him.

John Randolph is the best subject for a biography, that our political experience has yet furnished. Who that remembers the long and slender man of iron, with his scarcely human scorn of nearly all things beyond his "old Dominion," and his withering wit, never restrained by any pity, and his passion for destroying all fabrics of policy or reputation of which he was not himself the architect, but will read with anticipations of keen interest the announcement of a life of the eccentric yet great Virginian! Such a work, by the Hon. Hugh A. Garland, is in the press of the Appletons. We know little of Mr. Garland's capacities in this way, but if his book prove not the most attractive in the historical literature of the year, the fault will not be in its subject.

The Scottish Booksellers have instituted a society for professional objects under the title of the "Edinburgh Booksellers' Union." In addition to business purposes, they propose to collect and preserve books and pamphlets written by or relating to booksellers, printers, engravers, or members of collateral professions,—rare editions of other works—and generally articles connected with parties belonging to the above professions, whether literary, professional, or personal.

D'Israeli abandons himself now-a-days entirely to politics. "The forehead high, and gleaming eye, and lip awry, of Benjamin D'Israeli," sung once by *Fraser* are no longer seen before the title-pages of "Wondrous Tales," but only before the Speaker. It is much referred to, that in the recent parliamentary commemoration of Sir Robert Peel, the Hebrew commoner kept silence; his long war of bitter sarcasm and reproach on the defunct statesman was too freshly remembered. Peel rarely exerted himself to more advantage than in his replies, to D'Israeli, all noticeable for subdued disdain, conscious patriotism, and argumentative completeness. For injustice experienced through life, the meritorious dead are in a measure revenged by the feelings of their accusers or detractors, when the latter retain the sensibility which the grave usually excites, and especially amid such a chorus of applause from all parties, and a whole people, as we have now in England for Sir Robert Peel—the only man in the Empire, except Wellington, who had a strictly personal authority.

Dr. Dickson, recently of the Medical Department of the New York University, and whose ill-health induced the resignation of the chair he held there, has returned to Charleston, and we observe that his professional and other friends in that city greeted him with a public dinner, on the 9th ult. Dr. Dickson we believe is one of the most classically elegant writers upon medical science in the United States. He ranks with Chapman and Oliver Wendell Holmes in the grace of his periods as well as in the thoroughness of his learning and the exactness and acuteness of his logic. Like Holmes, too, he is a poet, and, generally, a very accomplished *litterateur*. We regret the loss that New York sustains in his removal, but congratulate Charleston upon the recovery of one of the best known and most loved attractions of her society.

Mr. John R. Bartlett's boundary commission will soon be upon the field of its activity. We were pleased to see that Mr. Davis, of Massachusetts, a few days ago presented in the Senate petitions from

Edward Everett, Jared Sparks, and others, and from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, at Boston, to the effect that it would be of great public utility to attach to the boundary commission to run the line between the United States and Mexico, a small corps of persons well qualified to make researches in the various departments of science.

William C. Richards, the very clever and accomplished editor of the *Southern Literary Gazette* was the author of "Two Country Sonnets," contributed to a recent number of *The International*, which we inadvertently credited to his brother, T. Addison Richards the well-known and much esteemed landscape painter.

MAJOR POUSSIN, so well-known for his long residence in this country as an officer of engineers, and, more recently, as Minister of the French republic,—which, intelligent men have no need to be assured, he represented with uniform wisdom and manliness,—is now engaged at Paris upon a new edition of his important book, *The Power and Prospects of the United States*. We perceive that he has lately published in the Republican journal *Le Credit*, a translation of the American instructions to Mr. Mann, respecting Hungary. In his preface to this document, Major Poussin pays the warmest compliments to the feelings, measures and policy of our administration, with which he contrasts, at the same time, those of the French Government. He hopes a great deal for the Democratic cause in Europe from the *moral influences* of the United States.

DR. JOHN W. FRANCIS, one of the most excellent men, as well as one of the best physicians of New York, has received from Trinity College, Hartford, the degree of Doctor of Laws. We praise the authorities of Trinity for this judicious bestowal of its honors. Francis's career of professional usefulness and variously successful intellectual activity, are deserving such academical recognition. His genial love of learning, large intelligence, ready appreciation of individual merit, and that genuine love of country which has led him to the carefullest and most comprehensive study of our general and particular annals, and to the frequentest displays of the sources of its enduring grandeur, constitute in him a character eminently entitled to our affectionate admiration.

THE POEMS OF GRAY, in an edition of singular typographical and pictorial beauty, are to be issued as one of the autumn gift-books by Henry C. Baird, of Philadelphia. They are to be edited by the tasteful and judicious critic, Professor Henry Reed, of the University of Pennsylvania, to whom we were indebted for the best edition of Wordsworth that appeared during the life of that poet. We have looked over Professor Reed's life of Gray, and have seen proofs of the admirable engravings with which the work will be embellished. It will be dedicated to our American Moxon, JAMES T. FIELDS, as a souvenir. we presume, of a visit to the grave of the bard, which the two young booksellers made together during a recent tour in Europe. Mr. Baird and Mr. Fields are of the small company of publishers, who, if it please them, can write their own books. They have both given pleasant evidence of abilities in this way.

BURNS.—It appears from the Scotch papers that the house in Burns-street, Dumfries, in which the bard of "Tam o'Shanter" and his wife "bonnie Jean," lived and died, is about to come into the market by way of public auction.

"EUROPE, PAST AND PRESENT:" A comprehensive manual of European Geography and History, derived from official and authentic sources, and comprising not only an accurate geographical and statistical description, but also a faithful and interesting history of all European States; to which is appended a copious and carefully arranged index, by Francis H. Ungewitter, LL.D., —is a volume of some six hundred pages, just published by Mr. Putnam. It has been prepared with much well-directed labor, and will be found a valuable and comprehensive manual of reference upon all questions relating to the history, geographical position, and general statistics of the several States of Europe.

M. LIBRI, of whose conviction at Paris (*par contumace*, that is, in default of appearance), of stealing books from public libraries, we have given some account in *The International*, is warmly and it appears to us successfully defended in the Athenæum, in which it is alleged that there was not

a particle of legal evidence against him. M. Libri is, and was at the time of the appearance of the accusation against him, a political exile in England.

MAJOR RAWLINSON, F.R.S., has published a "Commentary on the Cuneiform Inscriptions of Babylon and Assyria," including readings of the inscriptions on the Nimroud Obelisk, discovered by Mr. Layard, and a brief notice of the ancient kings of Nineveh and Babylon. It was read before the Royal Asiatic Society.

REV. DR. WISEMAN, author of the admirable work on the Connection between Science and Religion, is to proceed to Rome toward the close of the present month to receive the hat of a cardinal. It is many years since any English Roman Catholic, resident in England, attained this honor.

THE OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY has published several interesting volumes, of which the most important are those of Judge Burnett. An address, by William D. Gallagher, its President, on the History and Resources of the West and Northwest, has just been issued: and it has nearly ready for publication a volume of Mr. Hildreth.

THE IMPERIAL LIBRARY AT VIENNA has been enriched by a very old Greek manuscript on the Advent of Christ, composed by a bishop of the second century, named Clement. This manuscript was discovered a short time since by M. Waldeck, the philologist, at Constantinople.

MR. KEIGHTLEY's "History of Greece" has been translated into modern Greek and published at Athens.

GUIZOT's book on Democracy, has been prohibited in Austria, through General Haynau's influence.

WORDSWORTH'S POSTHUMOUS POEM, "The Prelude," is in the press of the Appletons, by whose courtesy we are enabled to present the readers of *The International* with the fourth canto of it, before its publication in England. The poem is a sort of autobiography in blank verse, marked by all the characteristics of the poet—his original vein of thought; his majestic, but sometimes diffuse, style of speculation; his large sympathies with humanity, from its proudest to its humblest forms. It will be read with great avidity by his admirers—and there are few at this day who do not belong to that class—as affording them a deeper insight into the mind of Wordsworth than any of his other works. It is divided into several books, named from the different situations or stages of the author's life, or the subjects which at any period particularly engaged his attention. We believe it will be more generally read than any poem of equal length that has issued from the press in this age.

Miss COOPER's "RURAL HOURS"[1] is everywhere commended as one of the most charming pictures that have ever appeared of country life. The books of the Howitts, delineating the same class of subjects in England and Germany, are not to be compared to Miss Cooper's for delicate painting or grace and correctness of diction. The Evening Post observes:

> "This is one of the most delightful books we have lately taken up. It is a journal of daily observations made by an intelligent and highly educated lady, residing in a most beautiful part of the country, commencing with the spring of 1848, and closing with the end of the winter of 1849. They almost wholly concern the occupations and objects of country life, and it is almost enough to make one in love with such a life to read its history so charmingly narrated. Every day has its little record in this volume,—the record of some rural employment, some note on the climate, some observation in natural history, or occasionally some trait of rural manners. The arrival and departure of the birds of passage is chronicled, the different stages of vegetation are noted, atmospheric changes and phenomena are described, and the various living inhabitants of the field and forest are made to furnish matter of entertainment for the reader. All this is done with great variety and exactness of knowledge, and without any parade of science. Descriptions of rural holidays and

[1] RURAL HOURS: by a Lady, George P. Putnam, 155 Broadway. 1850.

> rural amusements are thrown in occasionally, to give a living interest to a picture which would otherwise become monotonous from its uniform quiet. The work is written in easy and flexible English, with occasional felicities of expression. It is ascribed, as we believe we have informed our readers, to a daughter of J. Fenimore Cooper. Our country is full of most interesting materials for a work of this sort; but we confess we hardly expected, at the present time, to see them collected and arranged by so skillful a hand."

THE REV. SYDNEY SMITH's "Sketches of Modern Philosophy," remarks the Tribune, "consist of a course of popular lectures on the subject, delivered in the Royal Institution of London in the years 1804-5-6. As a contribution to the science of which they profess to treat, their claims to respect are very moderate. Indeed, no one would ridicule any pretensions of that kind with more zeal than the author himself. The manuscripts were left in an imperfect state, Sydney Smith probably supposing that no call would ever be made for their publication. They were written merely for popular effect, to be spoken before a miscellaneous audience, in which any abstract topics of moral philosophy would be the last to awaken an interest. The title of the book is accordingly a misnomer. It would lead no one to suspect the rich and diversified character of its contents. They present no ambitious attempts at metaphysical disquisition. They are free from dry technicalities of ethical speculation. They have no specimens of logical hair-splitting, no pedantic array of barren definitions, no subtle distinctions proceeding from an ingenious fancy, and without any foundation in nature. On the contrary, we find in this volume a series of lively, off-hand, dashing comments on men and manners, often running into broad humor, and always marked with the pungent common sense that never forsook the facetious divine. His remarks on the conduct of the understanding, on literary habits, on the use and value of books, and other themes of a similar character, are for the most part instructive and practical as well as piquant, and on the whole, the admirers of Sydney Smith will have no reason to regret the publication of the volume."

[From the London Times.]

BIOGRAPHY OF SIR ROBERT PEEL

In the following brief narrative of the principal facts in the life of the great statesman who has just been snatched from among us, we must disclaim all intention of dealing with his biography in any searching or ambitious spirit. The national loss is so great, the bereavement is so sudden, that we cannot sit down calmly either to eulogize or arraign the memory of the deceased. We cannot forget that it was not a week ago we were occupied in recording and commenting upon his last eloquent address to that assembly which had so often listened with breathless attention to his statesmanlike expositions of policy. We could do little else when the mournful intelligence reached us that Sir Robert Peel was no more, than pen a few expressions of sorrow and respect. Even now the following imperfect record of facts must be accepted as a poor substitute for the biography of that great Englishman whose loss will be felt almost as a private bereavement by every family throughout the British Empire:—

Sir Robert Peel was in the 63d year of his age, having been born near Bury, in Lancashire, on the 5th of February, 1788. His father was a manufacturer on a grand scale, and a man of much natural ability, and of almost unequaled opulence. Full of a desire to render his son and probable successor worthy of the influence and the vast wealth which he had to bestow, the first Sir Robert Peel took the utmost pains personally with the early training of the future prime minister. He retained his son under his own immediate superintendence until he arrived at a sufficient age to be sent to Harrow. Lord Byron, his contemporary at Harrow, was a better declaimer and a more amusing actor, but in sound learning and laborious application to school duties young Peel had no equal. He had scarcely completed his 16th year when he left Harrow and became a gentleman commoner of Christ Church, Oxford, where he took the degree of A.B., in 1808, with unprecedented distinction.

The year 1809 saw him attain his majority, and take his seat in the House of Commons as a member for Cashel, in Tipperary.

The first Sir Robert Peel had long been a member of the House of Commons, and the early efforts of his son in that assembly were regarded with considerable interest, not only on account of his University reputation, but also because he was the son of such a father. He did not, however, begin public life by staking his fame on the results of one elaborate oration; on the contrary, he rose now and then on comparatively unimportant occasions; made a few brief modest remarks, stated a fact or two, explained a difficulty when he happened to understand the matter in hand better than others, and then sat down without taxing too severely the patience or good nature of an auditory accustomed to great performances. Still in the second year of his parliamentary course he ventured to make a set speech, when, at the commencement of the session of 1810, he seconded the address in reply to the King's speech. Thenceforward for nineteen years a more highflying Tory than Mr. Peel was not to be found within the walls of parliament. Lord Eldon applauded him as a young and valiant champion of those abuses in the state which were then fondly called "the institutions of the country." Lord Sidmouth regarded him as the rightful political heir, and even the Duke of Cumberland patronized Mr. Peel. He further became the favorite *eleve* of Mr. Perceval, the first lord of the treasury, and entered office as under-secretary for the home department. He continued in the home department for two years, not often speaking in parliament, but rather qualifying himself for those prodigious labors in debate, in council, and in office, which it has since been his lot to encounter and perform.

In May, 1812, Mr. Perceval fell by the hand of an assassin, and the composition of the ministry necessarily underwent a great change. The result, so far as Mr. Peel was concerned, was, that he was appointed Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Mr. Peel had only reached his 26th year when, in the month of September, 1812, the duties of that anxious and laborious position were entrusted to his hands. The legislative union was then but lately consummated, and the demand for Catholic emancipation had given rise to an agitation of only very recent date. But, in proportion to its novelty, so was its vigor. Mr. Peel was, therefore, as the representative of the old tory Protestant

school, called upon to encounter a storm of unpopularity, such as not even an Irish secretary has ever been exposed to. The late Mr. O'Connell in various forms poured upon Mr. Peel a torrent of invective which went beyond even his extraordinary performances in the science of scolding. At length he received from Mr. Peel a hostile message. Negotiations went on for three or four days, when Mr. O'Connell was taken into custody and bound over to keep the peace toward all his fellow-subjects in Ireland. Mr. Peel and his friend immediately went to England, and subsequently proceeded to the continent. Mr. O'Connell followed them to London, but the police were active enough to bring him before the chief justice, when he entered into recognizances to keep the peace toward all his majesty's subjects; and so ended one of the few personal squabbles in which Mr. Peel had ever been engaged. For six years he held the office of chief secretary to the lord-lieutenant, at a time when the government was conducted upon what might be called "anti-conciliation principles." The opposite course was commenced by Mr. Peel's immediate successor, Mr. Charles Grant, now Lord Glenelg.

That a chief secretary so circumstanced, struggling to sustain extreme Orangeism in its dying agonies, should have been called upon to encounter great toil and anxiety is a truth too obvious to need illustration. That in these straits Mr. Peel acquitted himself with infinite address was as readily acknowledged at that time as it has ever been even in the zenith of his fame. He held office in that country under three successive viceroys, the Duke of Richmond, Earl Whitworth, and Earl Talbot, all of whom have long since passed away from this life, their names and their deeds long forgotten. But the history of their chief secretary happens not to have been composed of such perishable materials, and we now approach one of the most memorable passages of his eventful career. He was chairman of the great bullion committee; but before he engaged in that stupendous task he had resigned the chief secretaryship of Ireland. As a consequence of the report of that committee, he took charge of and introduced the bill for authorizing a return to cash payments which bears his name, and which measure received the sanction of parliament in the year 1819. That measure brought upon Mr. Peel no slight or temporary odium. The first Sir Robert Peel was then alive, and altogether differed from his son as to the tendency of his measure. It was roundly asserted at the time, and very faintly denied, that it rendered that gentleman a more wealthy man, by something like half a million sterling, than he had previously been. The deceased statesman, however, must, in common justice, be acquitted of any sinister purpose.

This narrative now reaches the year 1820, when we have to relate the only domestic event in the history of Sir Robert Peel which requires notice. On the 8th of June, being then in the 33d year of his age, he married Julia, daughter of General Sir John Floyd, who had then attained the age of 25.

Two years afterward there was a lull in public affairs, which gave somewhat the appearance of tranquillity. Lord Sidmouth was growing old, he thought that his system was successful, and that at length he might find repose. He considered it then consistent with his public duty to consign to younger and stronger hands the seals of the home department. He accepted a seat in the cabinet without office, and continued to give his support to Lord Liverpool, his ancient political chief. In permitting his mantle to fall upon Mr. Peel, he thought he was assisting to invest with authority one whose views and policy were as narrow as his own, and whose practise in carrying them out would be not less rigid and uncompromising. But, like many others, he lived long enough to be grievously disappointed by the subsequent career of him whom the liberal party have since called "the great minister of progress," and whom their opponents have not scrupled to designate by appellations not to be repeated in these hours of sorrow and bereavement. On the 17th of January, 1822, Mr. Peel was installed at the head of the home department, where he remained undisturbed till the political demise of Lord Liverpool in the spring of 1827. The most distinguished man that has filled the chair of the House of Commons in the present century was Charles Abbott, afterward Lord Colchester. In the summer of 1817 he had completed sixteen years of hard service in that eminent office, and he had represented the University for eleven years. His valuable labors having been rewarded with a pension and a peerage, he took his seat, full of years and honors, among the hereditary legislators of the land, and left a vacancy

in the representation of his *alma mater*, which Mr. Peel above all living men was deemed the most fitting person to occupy. At that time he was an intense tory—or as the Irish called him, an Orange Protestant of the deepest dye—one prepared to make any sacrifice for the maintenance of church and state as established by the revolution of 1688. Who, therefore, so fit as he to represent the loyalty, learning, and orthodoxy of Oxford? To have done so had been the object of Mr. Canning's young ambition: but in 1817 he could not be so ungrateful to Liverpool as to reject its representation even for the early object of his parliamentary affections. Mr. Peel, therefore, was returned without opposition, for that constituency which many consider the most important in the land—with which he remained on the best possible terms for twelve years. The question of the repeal of the penal laws affecting the Roman Catholics, which severed so many political connections, was, however, destined to separate Mr. Peel from Oxford. In 1828 rumors of the coming change were rife, and many expedients were devised to extract his opinions on the Catholic question. But with the reserve which ever marked his character, left all curiosity at fault. At last, the necessities of the government rendered further concealment impossible, and out came the truth that he was no longer an Orangeman. The ardent friends who had frequently supported his Oxford elections, and the hot partisans who shouted "Peel and Protestantism," at the Brunswick Clubs, reviled him for his defection in no measured terms. On the 4th of February, 1829, he addressed a letter to the vice-chancellor of Oxford, stating, in many well-turned phrases, that the Catholic question must forthwith be adjusted, under advice in which he concurred; and that, therefore, he considered himself bound to resign that trust which the University had during so many years confided to his hands. His resignation was accepted; but as the avowed purpose of that important step was to give his constituents an opportunity of pronouncing an opinion upon a change of policy, he merely accepted the Chiltern Hundreds with the intention of immediately becoming a candidate for that seat in parliament which he had just vacated. At this election Mr. Peel was opposed by Sir Robert Inglis, who was elected by 755 to 609. Mr. Peel was, therefore, obliged to cast himself on the favor of Sir Manasseh Lopez, who returned him for Westbury, in Wiltshire, which constituency he continued to represent two years, until at the general election in 1830 he was chosen for Tamworth, in the representation for which he continued for twenty years.

The main features of his official life still remain to be noticed. With the exception of Lord Palmerston, no statesman of modern times has spent so many years in the civil service of the crown. If no account be taken of the short time he was engaged upon the bullion committee in effecting the change in the currency, and in opposing for a few months the ministries of Mr. Canning and Lord Goderich, it may be stated that from 1810 to 1830 he formed part of the government, and presided over it as a first minister in 1834-5, as well as from 1841 to 1846 inclusive. During the time that he held the office of home secretary under Lord Liverpool he effected many important changes in the administration of domestic affairs, and many legislative improvements of a practical and comprehensive character. But his fame as member of parliament was principally sustained at this period of his life by the extensive and admirable alterations which he effected in the criminal law. Romilly and Mackintosh had preceded him in the great work of reforming and humanizing the code of England. For his hand, however, was reserved the introduction of ameliorations which they had long toiled and struggled for in vain. The ministry through whose influence he was enabled to carry these reforms lost its chief in Lord Liverpool during the early part of the year 1827. When Mr. Canning undertook to form a government, Mr. Peel, the late Lord Eldon, the Duke of Wellington, and other eminent tories of that day, threw up office, and are said to have persecuted Mr. Canning with a degree of rancor far outstripping the legitimate bounds of political hostility. Lord George Bentinck said "they hounded to the death my illustrious relative"; and the ardor of his subsequent opposition to Sir Robert Peel evidently derived its intensity from a long cherished sense of the injuries supposed to have been inflicted upon Mr. Canning. It is the opinion of men not ill informed respecting the sentiments of Canning, that he considered Peel as his true political successor—as a statesman competent to the task of working out that large and liberal policy which he fondly hoped the tories

might, however tardily, be induced to sanction. At all events, he is believed not to have entertained toward Mr. Peel any personal hostility, and to have stated during his short-lived tenure of office that that gentleman was the only member of his party who had not treated him with ingratitude and unkindness.

In January, 1828, the Wellington ministry took office and held it till November, 1830. Mr. Peel's reputation suffered during this period very rude shocks. He gave up, as already stated, his anti-Catholic principles, lost the force of twenty years' consistency, and under unheard-of disadvantages introduced the very measure he had spent so many years in opposing. The debates on Catholic emancipation, which preceded the great reform question, constitute a period in his life, which, twenty years ago, every one would have considered its chief and prominent feature. There can be no doubt that the course he then adopted demanded greater moral courage than at any previous period of his life he had been called upon to exercise. He believed himself incontestibly in the right; he believed, with the Duke of Wellington, that the danger of civil war was imminent, and that such an event was immeasurably a greater evil than surrendering the constitution of 1688. But he was called upon to snap asunder a parliamentary connection of twelve years with a great university, in which the most interesting period of his youth had been passed; to encounter the reproaches of adherents whom he had often led in well-fought contests against the advocates of what was termed "civil and religious liberty;" to tell the world that the character of public men for consistency, however precious, is not to be directly opposed to the common weal; and to communicate to many the novel as well as unpalatable truth that what they deemed "principle" must give way to what he called "expediency."

When he ceased to be a minister of the crown, that general movement throughout Europe which succeeded the deposition of the elder branch of the Bourbons rendered parliamentary reform as unavoidable as two years previously Catholic emancipation had been. He opposed this change, no doubt with increased knowledge and matured talents, but with impaired influence and few parliamentary followers. The history of the reform debates will show that Sir Robert Peel made many admirable speeches, which served to raise his reputation, but never for a moment turned the tide of fortune against his adversaries, and in the first session of the first reformed parliament he found himself at the head of a party that in numbers little exceeded one hundred. As soon as it was practicable he rallied his broken forces; either he or some of his political friends gave them the name of "Conservatives," and it required but a short interval of reflection and observation to prove to his sagacious intellect that the period of reaction was at hand. Every engine of party organization was put into vigorous activity, and before the summer of 1834 reached its close he was at the head of a compact, powerful, and well-disciplined opposition. Such a high impression of their vigor and efficiency had King William IV received, that when, in November, Lord Althorp became a peer, and the whigs therefore lost their leader to the House of Commons, his Majesty sent in Italy to summon Sir Robert Peel to his councils, with a view to the immediate formation of a conservative ministry. He accepted this responsibility, though he thought the King had mistaken the condition of the country and the chances of success which had awaited his political friends. A new House of Commons was instantly called, and for nearly three months Sir Robert Peel maintained a struggle against the most formidable opposition that for nearly a century any minister had been called to encounter. At no time did his command of temper, his almost exhaustless resources of information, his vigorous and comprehensive intellect appear to create such astonishment or draw forth such unbounded admiration as in the early part of 1835. But, after a well-fought contest he retired once more into the opposition till the close of the second Melbourne Administration in 1841. It was in April, 1835, that Lord Melbourne was restored to power, but the continued enjoyment of office did not much promote the political interests of his party, and from various causes the power of the whigs began to decline. The commencement of a new reign gave them some popularity, but in the new House of Commons, elected in consequence of that event, the conservative party were evidently gaining strength; still, after the failure of 1834-5, it was no easy task to dislodge an existing ministry,

and at the same time to be prepared with a cabinet and a party competent to succeed them. Sir Robert Peel, therefore, with characteristic caution, "bided his time", conducting the business of opposition throughout the whole of this period with an ability and success of which history affords few examples. He had accepted the Reform Bill as the established law of England, and as the system upon which the country was thenceforward to be governed. He was willing to carry it out in its true spirit, but he would proceed no further. He marshaled his opposition upon the principle of resistance to any further organic changes, and he enlisted the majority of the peers and nearly the whole of the country gentlemen of England in support of the great principle of protection to British industry. The little maneuvres and small political intrigues of the period are almost forgotten, and the remembrance of them is scarcely worthy of revival. It may, however, be mentioned, that in 1839 ministers, being left in a minority, resigned, and Sir Robert Peel, when sent for by the Queen, demanded that certain ladies in the household of her majesty,—the near relatives of eminent whig politicians,—should be removed from the personal service of the sovereign. As this was refused, he abandoned for the time any attempt to form a government, and his opponents remained in office till September, 1841. It was then Sir Robert Peel became the first lord of the treasury, and the Duke of Wellington, without office, accepted a seat in the cabinet, taking the management of the House of Lords. His ministry was formed on protectionist principles, but the close of its career was marked by the adoption of free trade doctrines differing in the widest and most liberal sense. Sir Robert Peel's sense of public duty impelled him once more to incur the odium and obliquy which attended a fundamental change of policy, and a repudiation of the political partizans by whose ardent support a minister may have attained office and authority. It was his fate to encounter more than any man ever did, that hostility which such conduct, however necessary, never fails to produce. This great change in our commercial policy, however unavoidable, must be regarded as the proximate cause of his final expulsion from office in July, 1846. His administration, however, had been signalized by several measures of great political importance. Among the earliest and most prominent of these were his financial plans, the striking feature of which was an income-tax; greatly extolled for the exemption it afforded from other burdens pressing more severely on industry, but loudly condemned for its irregular and unequal operation, a vice which has since rendered its contemplated increase impossible.

Of the ministerial life of Sir Robert Peel little more remains to be related except that which properly belongs rather to the history of the country than to his individual biography. But it would be unjust to the memory of one of the most sagacious statesman that England ever produced to deny that his latest renunciation of political principles required but two short years to attest the vital necessity of that unqualified surrender. If the corn laws had been in existence at the period when the political system of the continent was shaken to its centre and dynasties crumbled into dust, a question would have been left in the hands of the democratic party of England, the force of which neither skill nor influence could then have evaded. Instead of broken friendships, shattered reputations for consistency, or diminished rents, the whole realm of England might have borne a fearful share in that storm of wreck and revolution which had its crisis in the 10th of April, 1848.

In the course of his long and eventful life many honors were conferred upon Sir Robert Peel. Wherever he went, and almost at all times, he attracted universal attention, and was always received with the highest consideration. At the close of 1836 the University of Glasgow elected him Lord Rector, and the conservatives of that city, in January, 1837, invited him to a banquet at which three thousand gentlemen assembled to do honor to their great political chief. But this was only one among many occasions on which he was "the great guest." Perhaps the most remarkable of these banquets was that given to him in 1835 at Merchant Tailors' Hall by three hundred members of the House of Commons. Many other circumstances might be related to illustrate the high position which Sir Robert Peel occupied. Anecdotes innumerable might be recorded to show the extraordinary influence in Parliament which made him "the great commoner" of the age; for Sir Robert Peel was not only a skillful and adroit debater, but by many degrees the most able and one of the most eloquent men

in either house of parliament. Nothing could be more stately or imposing than the long array of sounding periods in which he expounded his doctrines, assailed his political adversaries, or vindicated his own policy. But when the whole land laments his loss, when England mourns the untimely fate of one of her noblest sons, the task of critical disquisition upon literary attainments or public oratory possesses little attraction. It may be left for calmer moments, and a more distant time, to investigate with unforgiving justice the sources of his errors, or to estimate the precise value of services which the public is now disposed to regard with no other feelings than those of unmingled gratitude.

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