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THE "NEW" LLOYD GEORGE.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

"CONFESSIONS OF A BOOK-LOVER."

The Bookman says :—As a book-lover he is the *genuine* thing. He is delightfully enthusiastic, and his enthusiasm is contagious.

"THE ENERGY OF LOVE."

A MEMOIR.

The British Weekly says :—A book of *standard* merit, written with perfect taste and true literary skill.

"THE SOULS OF THE BRAVE."

The Christian Advocate says :—Much has been written about the law of sacrifice in connection with the war, but, we think, nothing so imaginative, yet so spiritual and Scriptural as this.

The Rt. Hon. DAVID LLOYD GEORGE, P.C., D.C.L.,

THE 'NEW' LLOYD GEORGE

AND THE OLD

BY

E. W. WALTERS

AUTHOR "THE SOULS OF THE BRAVE," "THE ENERGY OF LOVE," "CONFESSIONS OF A BOOK-LOVER, ETC.

Many persons hold that the so-called "new" Lloyd George is simply the old Lloyd George in a war cloak.—DAILY PRESS.

True patriotism is of no party.—SMOLLETT.

LONDON:
JOSEPH JOHNSON,
HOLBORN HALL,
E.C.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

I AM indebted in many directions. To the Authors of books, articles, etc., touching the life and personality of the Subject of this little volume I should like to convey special thanks, and would mention in particular Mr. Herbert Du Parcq, Mr. Beriah Evans, Dr. Charles Sarolea, Mr. A. G. Gardiner, Mr. J. F. Marcossan, Mr. Lewis R. Freeman, and Mr. Frank Dilnot.

I am also indebted to various kind friends, who, by the spoken word and other means, have helped in the writing of these pages.

As regards the title, *The 'New' Lloyd George*, it is interesting to recall Robert Louis Stevenson's playful remark: "Man is a creature who lives not upon bread alone, but principally by catch-words." In certain quarters much has been heard of the 'New' Lloyd George. To what extent the title is justified, as applied in a critical sense, rests with the judgment of the reader.

It should be added that pen was first put to these pages early in October, 1915. Since then many fresh fears and suspicions have arisen. The reader who would be just in his judgment should read to the last page, and *beyond*.

E. W. W.

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INTRODUCTORY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

You would play upon me: you would seem to know my stops: you would pluck out the heart of my mystery: you would sound me from the lowest note to the top of my compass.

SHAKESPEARE. *Hamlet,* Act III., 2.

FORCIBLE, lively, realistic, *vivid,*—that was our first impression of David Lloyd George. The impression was made some years before he became world-famous. He was showing two friends over the House at the time, and impressed all who witnessed the scene with his remarkable enthusiasm. It seemed, indeed, as though to him at the moment the House of Commons was the whole world and the two friends the only inhabitants, so thoroughly did he enter into his task. A thorough man! And to thoroughness must be added unusual gifts of courage and tenacity. On his first entry into Parliament it was clear to men of discernment that a great future awaited him.

"Yes, here," Mr. A. G. Gardiner wrote some years back in the *Daily News*—"here was the potentiality of politics, and here, too, its romance. . . . My mind turned to that little village between the mountains and the sea. I saw the kindly old uncle, boot-maker and local

preacher, worrying out the declensions and the irregular verbs of a strange tongue in order to pave the path of the boy to the law. I saw the boy of twenty-one a qualified Solicitor, with his foot on the ladder, fighting the battle of the village folk against the tyranny of the parson, who refused the dying wish of a Dissenter to be buried in his child's grave. 'Bury him where he wished to be,' said young Lloyd George, strong in the law, 'but if the gate is locked, break down the gate.' And the old man was buried in his child's grave, and solemn Judges in London pronounced a solemn verdict in support of the young Hampden. I saw him, still little more than a lad, leaping into the ring and challenging the squire of the village for the possession of the Carnarvon Boroughs—challenging him and beating him. I saw him, with nothing but his native wit and his high soaring courage to help him, flashing into the great world of politics, risking his fortune and even his life in support of an unpopular cause, escaping from Birmingham Town Hall in the clothes of a policeman, his name the symbol of fierce enthusiasms and fierce hates. And then I saw him, transformed from the brilliant free-lance into the serious statesman, the head of a great department, handling large problems of government with easy mastery, moving great merchant princes like pawns on a chess-board, winning golden opinions from all sides, his name always on the lips of the world, but no longer in hate—but rather with wonder and admiration."

The secret of his power is obvious to all.

Indeed, it is said that he wears his heart upon his sleeve. Above all, is he hopeful and courageous. "The bigger the task, the better he likes it; the higher the stakes, the more heroic his play. He never fears to put his fate to the touch, and will cheerfully risk his all on a throw. He has not only the eye for the big occasion and the courage that rises to it: he has the instinct for the big foe." But, there is surely, a rich store of discretion at the back of his valour. Were it otherwise he would have failed many times, and failed deplorably. *Has he failed?* Rather has he the valour that springs from sound judgment and a sure consciousness of the power to carry every task he undertakes to a successful end.

He is at the bottom, as Mr. Gardiner writes, "the most subtle, the most resolute, and the most wilful force in politics. He has passion, but it is controlled. It does not burn with the deep spiritual fire of Gladstone. It flashes and sparkles. It is an instrument that is used, not an obsession of the soul. You feel that it can be put aside as adroitly as it is taken up."

That he is a steadfast man goes without saying. Having once put his hand to the plough, he does not look back. Knowing his ability to cut a straight furrow, he goes straight ahead, sure of eye and hand. And the fire within him, whether or no it be of the nature that burnt in the great soul of Gladstone, is certainly an undying fire. Sparks may shoot forth, flames may leap up—the heat and force may lead some men to imagine that the fire

must burn to ashes, but the warmth and the glow remain.

Again, it has been said that " he has the swiftest mind in politics It is a mind that carries no impedimenta. Hazlitt once wrote an essay on *The Ignorance of the Learned*, and declared that anyone who has passed through the regular gradation of a classical education and is not made a fool by it, may consider himself as having had a very narrow escape. Certainly the man of learning, unless he wears it lightly, as Macaulay said of Milton, and has assimilated it easily, starts with a heavy handicap when he comes down into the realm of affairs. He is under the dominion of authority and the awe of the past. Mr. Lloyd George has no such restraints. He is like a runner ever stripped for the race. The pistol may go off when it likes. He is always away from the mark like an arrow."

How many figures of speech spring to the mind when thinking of such a man—the swift and sure runner—the man in whose soul burns an undying fire—the sure and steady ploughman—the agile debator and nimble wit. Again, some have called him the showman; whilst others have compared him to a spider, spinning his web as he goes along. And one of unusually keen insight has likened him to a child, looking at life with frank self-assertion, " free from the formulas and prescriptions, seeing the thing, as it were, in a flash of truth, facing it without reverence because it is old, and without fear because it is vast."

Is this, after all, the main secret of his power—

this wonderful receptivity, this unclouded faith, this capacity for bringing a fresh untrammelled mind to the contemplation of every problem? *He looks at life with the eyes of a child.* If this be true, it is easy enough to say why men turn toward him. Such a nature is irresistible: it draws one even against one's will. And taking into account the characteristics named—his courage, his vigour, his tenacity—how easy it is to see why in time of great stress and sorrow men turn toward this man as toward a tower of strength. At the time of writing (October, 1915), he is praised on all sides. But time, we know, must surely bring *many* changes. *Not for long can a politician remain in favour with all parties.*

BETWEEN THE MOUNTAINS AND THE SEA.

CHAPTER II.

BETWEEN THE MOUNTAINS AND THE SEA.

Then said Great-Heart to Mr. Valiant-for-Truth, "Thou hast worthily behaved thyself. Let me see thy sword." So he showed it him. When he had taken it in his hand, and looked thereon awhile, he said, "Ha! it is a right Jerusalem blade."

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

THERE is, as we have seen, the "actuality of romance" in the life story of David Lloyd George. In Llanystumdwy, the little Welsh village between the mountains and the sea, scenes were enacted which clearly foretold the future of the young man who went forth armed, as Great-Heart said of Valiant-for-Truth, with a "right Jerusalem blade."

Manchester claims the honour of being his birthplace, and upon the house in which his parents lived a plate will, no doubt, be fixed, recording that the Right Hon. David Lloyd George was born there on January 17th, 1863. His parents, however, moved to Wales before he was a year old.

Pembrokeshire was their native county, and to Pembrokeshire they returned, and there took a farm known as Bulford, a few miles from Haverfordwest. This farm was the scene of many trials and difficulties. After little more

than a year of effort Mr. Lloyd George's father died suddenly of pneumonia.

The widow was left with three little children, unprovided for and with no apparent means of support—left to the mercies of the world. But the world held for them a noble friend. In Llanystumdwy lived Richard Lloyd, the widow's brother, a man in a humble position, but with a heart of gold. He hastened to the help of the bereaved family, and brought the mother and the three children to the little cottage in which he followed his calling as a shoe-maker.

Great claims are made (and justly) for Richard Lloyd. It may, indeed, be said that to him we are indebted in a very large measure for the great achievements of his famous nephew. This noble old man still lives, and will surely live in blessed memory.

A distinctly religious man, he belongs to the religious body known as the *Disciples of Christ.* This sect, true to its principles, has no paid ministry. Their hope and their ideal is to return, so far as possible, to the practices and mode of worship of the early Christian Church. In Llanystumdwy their minister for many years was Richard Lloyd. For over fifty years he preached in the little chapel, and he still retains, it is said, a good share of the freshness of his early ministry.

During the boyhood of his famous nephew, Richard Lloyd worked on week-days in the little shoe-making shop which became known as the *Parliament House.* Here rustic politicians and others congregated to discuss local and

national questions. Here the boy David had his mind awakened to problems which concern the people, and to those minor questions (though of vast importance, no doubt, in Llanystumdwy) which affect small estates and communities. Here the young David put the first edge to the sword which was to be used with such effect in after years.

Want and privation has been the stone upon which many famous reformers have sharpened their weapons. But, happily, Mr. Lloyd George never knew actual want. He came, however, near enough to the poverty line to understand the feelings of those on the other side. "My mother," he has said, "had to make a hard struggle to bring up her children. But she never complained and never spoke of her troubles. It was not until long after that we were able to appreciate how fine had been her spirit in the hard task of bringing up her fatherless children. Our bread was home-made. We hardly ever ate fresh meat, and I remember that our greatest luxury was half an egg for each child on Sunday morning."

The National School of Llanystumdwy enjoys the honour of having taught Mr. Lloyd George the three important "R's." It is a small and humble school, but was blessed in the days now in mind with a headmaster of unusual parts. David Lloyd George proved a ready pupil, though he was not a particularly studious boy. Then, as now, his chief gifts were quickness of perception and a ready grasp of essentials—quick to learn, in earnest in all matters of account,

blessed with a retentive mind, and withal a *boyish* boy.

Adventures in the countryside did not always turn to his advantage. Indeed, a farmer in the locality, on finding a damaged hedge or fence, would almost invariably exclaim, "It is that young David Lloyd has done this!" Reminders of those adventurous days are to be found in the initials the boy carved on the old bridge over the river Dwyfawr, and on a tree not far distant may be seen to this day the following letters and date carved by the boy's own hand—D. Ll. G., January 16th, 1871.

He was a great weaver of stories, chiefly from his own imagination—stories of mighty enterprise, such as fire the youthful mind. But through all he was blessed with the guidance of an uncle who could tell of life out of mature experience and sober judgment. A great influence in his upbringing was, of course, the little Chapel at which his uncle preached. The boy walked the two miles to the Chapel thrice every Sunday and also on Wednesdays for week-night services. After the services, when on his way homeward at his uncle's side, the young David would discuss eagerly various points in the discourse, such discussions being warmly encouraged by his uncle.

He was baptized by his uncle in the Bapistry placed in the brook which flows in front of the little Chapel. This is a scene worthy of contemplation—the saintly uncle, the flowing brook, the little Chapel—the child born in humble circumstances, yet blessed with remarkable

gifts. Of all scenes in which the child played a part, not one gives a better impression of his upbringing. He had a great love for music—a true Welshman. And he knew the Hymn Book of his upbringing so well, that he was able to supply on demand the correct numbers of most of the Hymns.

He was, however, fond, as we have seen, of youthful adventures and daring enterprises. Till this day he bears evidence of the fact in the form of marks upon his head, caused by a young friend giving a sudden turn to a winch with which he and his companion were making risky experiments.

Bandy was his favourite game in the winter months, and he enjoyed, we gather, a reputation for much skill on the ice. In summer there was the usual round of out-door games, and the boys of the village would frequently wander afield in search of hares and rabbits, to the annoyance, no doubt, of landowners and farmers. The young David was, in fact, a keen sportsman in his youthful way. He gained a great reputation as a climber of trees. It is claimed, however, that he was "most punctilious in observing that he must not rob birds' nests, unless, perchance, they were crows' nests."

He was ever the champion of the weaker vessel. Old schoolfellows relate how the lads of Llanystumdwy were eager with excitement at the prospect of a fight, in which young Lloyd George was to be the champion of a weaker schoolfellow, who had been bullied by older boys. The young David was determined to put a stop

to the bullying. He challenged the bullies, declaring his readiness to fight them in succession. Place and time were appointed, and a boy, who had left the school, was invited to act as umpire. But news of the coming contest leaked out, and came to the schoolmaster's ears. Consequently, there was no fight on the lines arranged. But the moral of the story holds good. From his earliest days David Lloyd George has been on the side of the oppressed, and ready to fight their cause against any odds. Of wars of a more serious nature we shall learn later. Here we need only recall an incident relating to old-time battles.

When, in 1909, Mr. Lloyd George visited his old school, to receive from some of his old schoolfellows an address of congratulation, he recalled the Franco-German war of 1870, and how the war was carried on by the boys of Llanystumdwy school. "The boys," he said, "divided themselves into two parties—French and Prussians. The French entrenched themselves in the porch of the school, and," Mr. Lloyd George continued with a smile, as he indicated an old schoolfellow, "*there is Napoleon!*"

There can be no doubt that the Napoleon of Llanystumdwy school was defeated. Then, as now, the cry from David Lloyd George would have been, "No quarter! The tyrant must be crushed." Even at this early date we see the champion of freedom drawing his sword.

APPROACHING MANHOOD.

CHAPTER III.

APPROACHING MANHOOD.

I do not value chiefly a man's uprightness and benevolence which are, as it were, his stem and leaves. I want the flower and fruit of a man, that some fragrance be wafted over from him to me and some ripeness flavour our intercourse.

THOREAU.

THERE can be no doubt that Mr. Lloyd George was influenced in his choice of a career by Thomas Goffey, a solicitor of Liverpool. During the anxious days after William George's death, Mr. Goffey showed much kindness to Mr. Lloyd George's mother, and became a hero in the boy's eyes. He saw in the solicitor "a figure worthy of emulation." Few other human beings in the boy's knowledge could make the crooked straight and bring comfort and cheer in like manner. A model man! And if obstacles (and they were many) could be overcome, then he, David Lloyd George, would be a man in the pattern of the able and benevolent Mr. Goffey. He, too, would be a solicitor. And this ambition, thanks to the boy's industry and the self-sacrifice of his uncle, was eventually realized.

"My uncle," Mr. Lloyd George has told us, "never married. He set himself the task of educating the children of his sister as a sacred

and supreme duty. To that duty he gave his time, his energy, and his money."

The first obstacle to be overcome if the boy's desire was to be realised was the Preliminary Law Examination. The boy was then not quite fourteen years of age, and one of the subjects he had to take up for the examination was French, which, unfortunately, was not taught at the school of Llanystumdwy.

This difficulty did not, however, deter the boy. Together with his uncle he studied the language with the help of a grammar and a dictionary. Many an evening did the two spend "plodding along the pathway of knowledge," At last, the youthful scholar was ready to take the examination, and he journeyed with his uncle to Liverpool. One can imagine with what anxiety the household awaited the result. At last it came, and David Lloyd George had scored his first important victory!

The next step was to find a suitable opening in a solicitor's office. Again, the way was made clear. An opening was found in the firm of Messrs. Breese, Jones and Casson, of Portmadoc, a neighbouring town, and in July, 1878, Mr. Lloyd George left Llanystumdwy. Later, he was articled to Mr. Casson, a junior partner in the firm. He won the esteem, however, of all the members of the firm, and of the senior partner, Mr. Breese, in particular. This astute lawyer who was, by the way, Liberal agent for the county of Merioneth and part of Carnarvon, once remarked of the young Lloyd George: "Mark that lad. He will become one of the leading men in

the land some day. He has the quickest and sharpest mind of any man I know."

During this period, Mr. Lloyd George kept in close touch with his home at Llanystumdwy, and now began to take a more active part in the week-night services at the Chapel. At first he read a portion from the Bible. Later, he delivered short addresses on Bible subjects, displaying, we may be sure, gifts of an unusual order. It was not long before other congregations desired to hear the young Welshman. In the early pages of a diary kept by Mr. Lloyd George at the time, is the following entry: "Speaking at Missionary meeting at Festiniog, and delivered my address from the pulpit. Audience listened with marked attention." Later comes this entry: "attended Sunday-School Centenary. Delivered address."

Strange to say, about this time doubts concerning certain religious matters swept like an evil wind over his mind. But these disturbing thoughts were soon expelled by the reading of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus.* He now became a devoted and enthusiastic Sunday-school teacher, and in after years he declared publicly that the best training he ever had was in a Sunday school: "It is what has chiefly enabled me to do my work as President of the Board of Trade."

At this time he was, of course, studying law, but he found time for general reading, and a note book in which he made entries concerning certain books reveals the interesting combination of constitutional history with the plays of Shakespeare. Of novels, Disraeli's *Tancred* is

mentioned, whilst touching political works and pamphlets we find mention of "Five Years of Tory Rule." In, at any rate, the choice of his reading, he had by now entered into man's estate. Certain entries in his note-books at this time are of remarkable interest. For instance, concerning the death of an acquaintance, who lost his life on the playing field, we find this entry: "He might as well have lost his life in the pursuit of some noble object as in the vain pursuit of pleasure."

Later, we find the young Lloyd George sending a contribution to the *North Wales Express*, and expressing in his diary his feelings on his first appearance in print: November 5, 1880. "When I eagerly opened the *North Wales Express* this morning, I found my own contribution on same page as leading article. I had first of all looked up 'Notices to Correspondents,' expecting to find a refusal of my letter, but was disappointed on the right side."

A by-election gave him further opportunity for exercising the powers of his pen, and in an entry from his diary, dated, Nov. 16, 1880, we learn that he wrote under a pseudonym a severe criticism of the views of a certain political opponent. "Am afraid its length and virulence will tend to its exclusion," the entry runs. Then he adds cheerfully, "However, it does not matter much. Pseudonyms do not blush."

Another entry, referring in a humorous vein to affairs political, is dated November 17, 1880, and runs,—"Attended Mr. Rathbone's meeting at Criccieth. Very enthusiastic considering that

it was regarded as the stronghold of Toryism. We had the intelligence of Criccieth to welcome Mr. Rathbone. A good meeting. There was one disturber, but his partisanship was venal. It counted for nothing: and Dr. John Thomas soon settled him by suggesting that he was one of those people attending meetings with more in his belly than in his head! Had a lift on top of Morfa Lodge carriage (Mr. Rathbone inside) to Portmadoc. Meeting at Portmadoc. Rathbone is a very poor orator, but a sensible speaker. Mr. W. S. Caine, M.P., for Scarborough present. He is a very good speaker. My impression is that, so far as speaking is concerned, the Welsh are incomparably superior to the English."

The family had now left Llanystumdwy and settled at Criccieth in a small house beneath the shadow of the old castle, and here it was that the young Lloyd George's interest in politics commenced to play an important part in his life. In 1881 he paid his first visit to London, and duly recorded in his diary his impression of the House of Commons,—"Went to the Houses of Parliament. Grand buildings outside, but inside very crabbed, small and suffocating, especially the House of Commons. I will not say but I eyed the assembly in a spirit similar to that in which William the Conqueror eyed England on his visit to Edward the Confessor, as the region of his future domain. O vanity!"

Further entries in the diary read: "Called at the Law Courts. Q.C.'s are not perfect. Very garrulous, but they have a despicable cant." Then come the brief entries: "At Westminster

Abbey contemplated monuments of departed genius. In the evening went with uncle to Madame Tussaud's."

In spite of his early impression of the House of Commons, his diary shows that his interest in politics was in no wise abated. An entry for March 31st, 1883, speaks of the Marquis of Salisbury's attacks on the Government. "They are," he remarks, "a splendid piece of criticism, fact, manipulation, and distortion." And on April 7th of the same year, we find the future Chancellor making this entry: "(Reading) Carlyle's 'Hero Worship.' Budget. Very clear and satisfactory. A thorough exposure of Conservative (or rather Jingo) finance and a complete vindication of Liberal finance."

Thus wrote the Lloyd George of 1883, certain of his point of view, convinced beyond doubt that right was on his side, "a liberal through and through." It is said that he has widened of recent years, though it is claimed that he is still a Liberal—and through and through. "The *New* Lloyd George," one admirer writes, "is the old Lloyd George. His sword has the same edge and is of the same steel." There are some persons, however, who hold a different view.

ADVOCATE.

CHAPTER IV.

ADVOCATE.

There is surely a piece of divinity in us, something that was before the elements, and owes no homage to the sun.

SIR THOS. BROWNE, *Religio Medici.*

We count him a wise man, that knows the minds and insides of men.

SELDEN, *Table-Talk.*

. . . . .

ON gaining his twenty-first year, Mr. Lloyd George again visited London and sat for his final examination in law. He passed with honours, and in due course was admitted formally to the Roll of Solicitors. "To-day," he wrote home after the ceremony, "I went to Chancery Lane and got admitted in regular humdrum fashion. The ceremony disappointed me. The Master of the Rolls, so far from having anything to do with it, was actually listening to some Q.C. at the time, and some fellow of a clerk swore us to a lawyerly demeanour in our profession at the back of the Court, and off we shambled to the Petty Bag Office to sign the rolls."

He was, however, now a qualified solicitor, and a brass plate was duly fixed to the door of the little house in which he lived, and the back parlour given up to the practice of the law.

Clients came slowly, hesitatingly at first, but the young man's exceptional gifts eventually won a name, and much-needed cash. Soon he had the gratification of recording in his diary some stirring victories. In an entry dated January 30th, 1885, he tells how whilst having dinner he was asked to defend a man for assault. "This was about 12.20," the entry runs. "Saw parties: rushed down to police station by 12.50. Very much tempted at first to decline to go altogether. I felt so timorous. Got fellow off, to his immense satisfaction."

Another victory came on February 24th of the same year. "Won a boating case at Pwllheli after a long and sharp fight," he records. "Have gained in confidence," he remarks later, "and somehow feel I make tolerable advocate." His days now were full to overflowing, and on June 20th we find him recording that he was up at 5.30, breakfasted at 6.20, and posted letters at 6.50. "After waiting twenty minutes for P.O. youngster to get up," the entry continues, "I got letter from Carnarvon, enclosing garnishee order on W.J. Started 7.20 along railway there. He had gone to the village; met him there and served him. Ran back, perspiring to saturation. Caught 8.19 train to Festiniog. Down to Tanybwlch to serve——. Then at Portmadoc. Home 8 train."

On June 23rd he went to Pwllheli County Court. "Brynmor Jones, Judge," he records. "Very shrewd and clear. Knows great deal of Law. Sees point of case. Very courteous to advocates. If he continues like this he is just

the sort of fellow I'd wish. He'll stimulate you carefully to prepare your case, especially as regards legal points. He delights in these. Got my application all right. Home 6 train. Stroll with Williams towards Llanystumdwy. Then engaged with clients until between 10 and 11."

June 24th proved a great *field day*:—"Up between 5 and 6. Portmadoc County Court. Won all my cases," he records. "Pentrefelin trespass case very hard fought. but won on point of law. Also Festiniog pony case. Glad I won this. It will do a world of good to me. Plaintiff had consulted all Festiniog lawyers. I had over thirty cases on my list. Had all the fighting cases except two or three. Home 6.30. To Chapel. After Chapel with W.G. to station for my letterpress."

Later, whilst still engaged with Petty Sessions and County Courts, he had reasons for asserting that Magistrates, particularly landlords, were wanting in judicial fairness. "It seemed to them to be trifling with sound principles to claim a presumption of innocence in favour of a villager accused of poaching." Mr. Lloyd George set himself to change this state of affairs. He was not going to be brow-beaten by the justices of any bench. "It was," he declared, "essential to show that a solicitor could beard the magistrates in their dens without being instantly led off to execution."

The first fight in this direction came in May, 1889, when four quarrymen were charged before the Carnarvon Magistrates with unlawfully fishing with a net in the Nantlle lower lake. Mr.

Lloyd George was retained for their defence, and in the course of the case he boldly contended that the bench had no jurisdiction. Whereupon, the Chairman remarked that the point would have to be proved in a higher Court.

"Yes, sir," Mr. Lloyd George said, "and in a perfectly just and unbiassed Court, too."

"If that remark," said the Chairman, "is meant as a reflection upon any magistrate sitting on this bench, I hope you will name him. A more insulting and ungentlemanly remark to the Bench I never heard during the course of my experience as a magistrate."

From this the scene took on a very stormy aspect, and was recorded as follows in a local newspaper :—

Mr. Lloyd George: "But a more true remark was never made in a Court of Justice."

The Chairman: "Tell me to whom you are referring. I must insist upon your referring to any magistrate or magistrates sitting in this Court.

Mr. Lloyd George: "I refer to you in particular, Sir."

The Chairman (rising) : "Then I retire from the chair. Good-bye, gentlemen. This is the first time I have been insulted in a Court of Justice."

The report goes on to say that the Chairman then left the Court. Whereupon, another magistrate rose and said : "In fairness to the Chairman and other magistrates I must say that Mr. Lloyd George was not justified in making such remarks."

To this protest a third magistrate added: "I decline to proceed with the case until Mr. George apologises."

"I am glad to hear it," Mr. Lloyd George replied. Whereupon a fourth magistrate said that he would not sit any longer to hear the case, until Mr. Lloyd George had withdrawn or apologised.

The bold young Advocate let this remark pass, and the magistrate thereupon vacated his seat.

One of the few remaining magistrates, however, now made great efforts to induce the young Advocate to apologise to the Bench.

But Mr. Lloyd George maintained that at least two of the magistrates were bent upon securing a conviction, whether there was a fair case or no. "I am sorry," he continued, "that the Chairman has left the Court, because I am in a position to prove what I have said. I shall not withdraw anything, because every word I have spoken is true."

This attitude led to the emptying of the Bench. But suddenly there came an anti-climax. Four magistrates came back, and the new Chairman solemnly announced their unanimous opinion that Mr. Lloyd George's remarks were unjustifiable and *should* have been withdrawn, but that, 'under all circumstances,' it was better that the case should proceed.

Thus acted the David Lloyd George of 1889, fighting courageously in the cause he believed to be right. The harder the fight, the brighter and stronger his spirit in the fighting—"a young Advocate who knew no fear." Over his

desk, inscribed and fixed with his own hand, were Abraham Lincoln's famous words :—

There is a vague popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest. Let no young man choosing the law for a calling for a moment yield to the popular belief . . . The lawyer has a supreme opportunity of being a good man.

EARLY BATTLES FOR FREEDOM.

CHAPTER V.

EARLY BATTLES FOR FREEDOM.

"Then the giant came up, and Mr. Great-heart went to meet him: and as he went, he drew his sword."

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

WE have seen how in boyhood Mr. Lloyd George took the side of the weak and boldly challenged the largest and strongest boys in the school at Llanystumdwy, and how later, as a young Advocate, he waged a moral battle against the influential and dignified Magistrates of Carnarvon. His next battle was fought in the village of Llanfrothen—an important and most interesting engagement, of which there have been many accounts. Mr. Herbert Du Parcq states the case thus: "In 1864 the old churchyard of Llanfrothen had been enlarged by the gift to the Rector and parishioners of an adjoining piece of land. The gift had not been by deed, but nobody had any doubt about its validity, and in 1869 a wall was built at the cost of the parishioners, enclosing the new part of the churchyard. There was, in fact, abundant evidence that the ground had become, and been treated as, part of the parish graveyard. The fact would never have been disputed had it not

been for the Morgan Burial Act of 1880. This Act of Parliament permitted Nonconformists, after giving formal notice to the clergyman, to bury their dead in the parish Churchyard with the rites of their own denomination."

"It is a little difficult to comprehend," Mr. Du Parcq remarks, "the type of mind to which such a concession can seem anything more than an act of barest justice. The most extreme opponent of the Nonconformist position could at the very worst, only complain that he was being coerced into exercising Christian charity. But the Rector of Llanfrothen saw in the act, one must suppose, a direct attack upon the sanctity of the Establishment. In 1881, incensed because under the provisions of this hated piece of legislation a Dissenter's body had for the first time been laid to rest with the rites of a dissenting religion in the piece of ground acquired from Mr. and Mrs. Owen, the Rector seems to have hit upon the brilliant contention that, because there had been no conveyance and no consecration of the new ground, Mrs. Owen (who was by this time dead) had never lost her title to it. Mrs. Owen, a faithful daughter of the Church, was readily persuaded to convey the piece of land in solemn form to the Rector, on trust to permit the parishioners of Llanfrothen to be buried there, but upon the condition that their burial should be to the accompaniment of the rites of the Church of England. This seemed to the Rector an ingenious solution of the difficulty."

Subsequent events, however, proved that the

Rector was sorely misguided. In 1888 the question was again raised. In that year an old quarryman, named Robert Roberts, expressed on his deathbed a desire to be buried in the grave where his daughter lay in the parish graveyard. To this desire the Rector at first acceded, and the grave was opened. Later, however, the Rector discovered that the burial service was to be conducted by a Nonconformist Minister, and this, in view of the Burial Act, was held to be illegal. Thinking that justice was on his side, the Rector now claimed the right to select the spot where the deceased should be buried. The grave of the quarryman's daughter was closed, and another spot selected in a desolate, forbidding part of the churchyard. "A spot bleak and sinister," Mr. Lloyd George has said, "in which were buried the bodies of the unknown drowned that were washed up from the sea in this region of shipwrecks."

At the earnest request of the injured persons, Mr. Lloyd George took up the case. After a night spent in examining the parish records, he came to the conclusion that the Rector's action was illegal. Bold and courageous measures followed. The young Advocate advised the friends of the dead quarryman to enter the churchyard and reopen the first grave. This advice was followed. But on the day of the funeral the mourners found the gates of the churchyard locked. They were not, however, to be denied. The gates were forced open and the old quarryman was buried according to the wishes expressed by him on his deathbed.

The Rector, finding himself defied, appealed to the law, and a claim was duly filed in the Portmadoc County Court. The outcome was that, "one Morris Roberts and seven other defendants were sued for damages for wrongfully entering the plaintiff's land, and digging a grave therein, burying a corpse and conducting a funeral service contrary to the provisions of the trust deed."

Mr. Lloyd George defended, and the jury to whom the case was submitted returned a verdict in favour of the defendants. The Judge, however, disagreed with the finding on a point of law, and damages were awarded to the Rector. But the young Advocate was not to be outdone. The case was taken to the High Court, where the former judgment was quashed.

Concerning this victory, Mr. Lloyd George wrote at the time: "Coleridge (Lord Chief Justice Coleridge) read out slowly, with emphasis, the whole squabble . . . The Court laughed at my retorts upon His Honour and His Honour's futile answers. Suddenly someone clapped my back and said, 'Well done, Machgen!' It was E. F. Griffith. . . . So far as the County Court judge is concerned, I have triumphed."

Further battles in which Mr. Lloyd George played an important part were the outcome of the Anti-Tithe League formed by Thomas Gee and John Parry, of Llanarmon. The war began in Flintshire, and by 1888 had spread through Merionethshire to Carnarvonshire. In South Carnarvonshire it fell to Mr. Lloyd George to act as Secretary to the League. He had pre-

viously organized a local Farmers' Union, and now threw himself into the fight with renewed energy. "With him office has never been a sinecure." Meetings were organized throughout the district, and were frequently held in the neighbourhood of the stronghold of the Established Church. Little wonder, if the proceedings were sometimes turbulent! Indeed, at a meeting held at Nevin Mr. Lloyd George's companion speaker was compelled to run for his life through the back of the building! Another stormy encounter was witnessed at Sarn Mallteyrn. Here, however, Mr. Lloyd George "riddled the argument of his opponent," and utterly defeated him, to the delight of the crowd. Indeed, so popular did the hero of these encounters become that when the famous founders of the League visited Pwllheli to speak against the Tithe and in support of Disestablishment, the audience, not content with hearing the "great guns" of the evening, refused to leave the hall without a speech from Mr. Lloyd George.

Clearly, the young Advocate had now won a name as a public speaker. Meanwhile, his interest in politics had grown year by year. On February 12th, 1886, he heard Michael Davitt speak on Home Rule for Ireland, and his mind was now turned seriously toward a Parliamentary career. He proposed, in brilliant fashion, a vote of thanks to Mr. Davitt, who afterwards advised him to take to politics in earnest, and to turn his face toward no less a quarter than the great House of Commons!

"Mr. Michael Davitt was a man," said the

young speaker, "who had not only done much for humanity, but had also suffered much for humanity, and, therefore, they all honoured him. To oppose a man because he did not belong to their nation was most narrow-minded, and contrary to the principles of their religion. They remembered the parable of the man who fell among thieves. His neighbour was not the man who belonged to his own nation, but a stranger from Samaria—not the priest and the Levite. . . . Mr. Michael Davitt was the stranger from Samaria—an Irishman—who had come there to bind up their wounds. Let them respect him on that account. The people who spoke against bringing Michael Davitt into Wales were those who on bended knees begged princes who were no better than German half-breeds to come into Wales to preside over our Eistoddfodau. Why, then object to the introduction of a true philanthropist, a man who had done much for his fellow men?"

MATTERS POLITICAL

CHAPTER VI.

MATTERS POLITICAL.

"*It is as hard and severe a thing to be a true politician as to be truly moral.*"

BACON. *Advancement of Learning.*

How Mr. Lloyd George learnt in his uncle's shoemaking shop in Llanystumdwy to discuss matters of public interest; how politics were deemed a very serious matter and discused with weight and circumstance; how the boy came to talk as a grown man, and to embrace in his outlook, not only matters of concern to the immediate neighbourhood, but also of the great world, has already been recorded.

Of no less importance in developing the boy's outlook, was the smithy situated at the lower end of Llanystumdwy. Here, however, the talk was chiefly of theological matters.

Hugh Jones, the smith—an elderly man, white-haired, handsome, with a massive head—seldom condescended to speak of such "inferior stuff" as politics. But many ardent local politicians met beneath the smithy's roof. Indeed, Mr. Lloyd George, when addressing his old school-fellows in 1909 said, "Yonder smithy was my first parliament, where night after night,

we discussed and decided all the abstruse questions relating to this world and the next, in politics, in theology, in philosophy, in science. There was nothing too wide and comprehensive for us to discuss, and we settled all the problems among ourselves without the slightest misgiving."

"A Welshman takes to politics as a duck takes to water," as Mr. Lloyd George has remarked. One of his earliest political memories is of the year which "marked an epoch in the history of Welsh Liberalism." "I was a boy at school then," he said in a speech delivered in 1910, "and I was in the blackest Tory Parish in the land. I believe my old uncle, who brought me up, was the only Liberal in the Parish, so you may guess the sort of time I had. Let me tell you what happened. He was *not* the only Liberal in the Parish. There were three or four others, and I will tell you what happened to them at the election. One or two of them refused to work for the Tory candidate, and two or three actually went further, and dared to record their votes for the Liberal. All of them received notice to quit. I remember some lads who were at school with me in the same class in a year or two had to leave the neighbourhood. I was very young, but young lads do not forget things of that sort. I knew the reason why they left. It was because the great Squire of the Parish had turned their father out of the house, purely because he dared to vote for the Liberal Candidate. After the Election, notices to quit were showered upon the tenants.

What happened? They were turned out by the score on to the roadside because they dared to vote according to their consciences. But they woke the spirit of the mountains, the genius of freedom that fought the might of the Norman for two centuries. There was such a feeling aroused among the people that, ere it was done, the political power of landlordism in Wales was shattered as effectually as the power of the Druids."

This was the fire that burnt so fiercely in coming years. Of that fire more later. Now we are concerned with the Welsh lad who took to politics as a duck takes to water. Whilst still little more than a boy he became a member of the Portmadoc Debating Society, and on November 28th, 1881, he blossomed forth in grand style in a debate on the motion, "That Irish landlords should not be compensated in respect of any reductions of rent consequent on the Irish Land Act." A bold motion, but not too bold for young Mr. Lloyd George, "No question awed him, no problem was too large."

We next find him opening on the affirmative side the question, "Should the County Franchise be assimilated to the Borough Franchise?"

But this last was a small matter compared to the part taken by the young debater on the Egyptian War. Touching this large question, we have it on the authority of a local paper that he delivered a "most eloquent harangue, full of clinching arguments."

He found the debates of the Society of consuming interest, and revelled in the opportunity

for discussing great and sweeping questions. Indeed, the subjects were as wide as they were bold. "Fair Trade versus Free Trade," was among the selection. From this came a jump to "Mr. Bradlaugh and the Channel Tunnel." Then came a heated debate on Trade Unionism, followed by a discussion on the vexed question of Phonetic Spelling.

As a whole the subjects cannot, of course, be termed political; but they undoubtedly lead up to the intensely interesting entries made later by the young debater in his diary. Indeed, in the diary we have a clear view of a great politician in the bud. An entry made on November the 18th, 1885, reads: "Reply to the attack on Chamberlain." (Joseph Chamberlain was at this time, of course, a Liberal). "Pointing out that every Tory mushroom thought he ought to attack Chamberlain. I then quoted Burns on the attack on Gavan Hamilton. I attacked cynyffynwyr (sycophants) and appealed to people to vote with judgment and confidence. All this latter part from Chamberlain down was delivered in a very impassioned manner, and I was tremendously cheered on sitting down. I felt I had made another stroke at Criccieth."

On the next day Mr. Lloyd George addressed a meeting at Talysarn, but records that it was not very enthusiastic. The people, however, listened attentively and gave some appreciative applause. "I took twenty-five to thirty minutes," he says in his diary. "Not much fire in me. Took Leasehold and Fair Trade. Was asked at the end to explain the ballot-papers.

Did so in short speech : all extempore : but had some *hwyl* with it."

On November 24th, 1885, he attended a Tory meeting, and found that it was nothing but a prolonged attack upon himself, comparing him to a mosquito ! He records, however, that he did not feel much annoyed. "Never felt less," the entry continues. "In fact, felt somewhat gratified that I should be made the chief butt of attack at every Tory meeting we have had since I began speaking—as witness the Disestablishment meetings."

Later he is called upon to record in his diary news of Tory victories in the Boroughs. "W—," one entry reads, "screamed his elation at the station. . . . He did it to annoy me, I have no doubt. I believe he dreads our retort, for he told me they were going to hold a counter meeting on Monday, if we had one on Saturday ; but I outwitted him by securing the hall for Monday."

On November 26th, 1885, came further Tory victories. "This is rather disheartening," he comments, "It must be these Parnellites ; besides, there is no cry for the towns. Humdrum Liberalism won't win elections."

On November 28th of the same year he rose at 6 o'clock and had the joy of hearing of Gladstone's overwhelming majority. "Waiting for results," he writes, "In the meantime crowd kept in humour (and so was I) by singing, calling for and giving cheers and groans for prominent politicians. Immediately after result I made rush for Post Office to telegraph to Uncle.

Splendid majority. Scarcely anticipated it after all the prognostications of evil. Felt elated. Home 6 train. To our meeting at Town Hall. Rather late when I got there. Very much cheered on mounting platform. J. T. J. allowed to speak, but all next speakers howled down. . . . Never saw such confusion. Rather enjoyed it. I had no speech ready myself . . . E. J. was utterly unable to speak and the meeting broke up."

A few days later he records that he is weary, sleepy, and utterly done up. He rose, however, at 6.30, and was cheered by news of great Liberal victories in the counties. "Am convinced," he wrote in his diary, "that this is all due to Chamberlain's speeches." Indeed, his admiration at this time for Joseph Chamberlain was of the nature of hero worship.

"Mr. Chamberlain," he wrote in the *North Wales Observer* in 1884, "is unquestionably the future leader of the people. Anyone who reads his speeches will know the reason why. He does not argue closely like Sir Charles Dilke, nor does he discourse with the polished elegance of Mr. Trevelyan ; and yet his speeches have far greater effect upon public opinion than those of either of the two. He understands the sympathies of his countrymen. It is therefore that he speaks intelligently and straight-forwardly, like a man who is proud of the opinions which he holds. He has no dread of Tory misconstruction. He does not hedge round his sentences lest the viper sting them. He is a Radical, and doesn't care who knows it, so long as the people do. He is

convinced that the aristocracy stand in the way of the development of the rights of man, and he says so unflinchingly, though he be howled at as an ill-mannered demagogue by the whole Kennelry of gorged aristocracy, and of their fawning millions."

Strong words, foreshadowing, it may be thought battles still to come. Here, however, the main point of interest rests in the fact that the Joseph Chamberlain of 1884 very largely influenced Mr. Lloyd George in forming views concerning which so much adverse criticism was heard later. Change follows change. Just now political parties are at peace. We who live in the "dark yet enlightened year," 1916, see the Aristocracy and the Democracy fighting shoulder to shoulder, with common sympathies and one all-important aim. Mr. Lloyd George's two sons take common measure with the officers of His Majesty's forces, and are one with the Duke and Belted Earl. There is no talk now of the "gorged aristocracy." To-day, all good and valiant citizens are of one blood, and no man can fling a stone. Some men say that herein rests the reason why it is said that a "new" Lloyd George has arisen. We shall see.

THE ORATOR.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ORATOR.

It is poor eloquence which only shows that the orator can talk. Words should be employed as the means, not as the end; language is the instrument, conviction is the work.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. *Discourses on Art.*

"I feel," said Mr. Toots, in an impassioned tone, "as if I could express my feelings, at the present moment, in a most remarkable manner, if—if—I could only get a start."

DICKENS. *Dombey and Son.*

"THE gift of Tongues," it is said, "is half the battle to a politician," and Mr. Lloyd George has enjoyed from very early in his life the gift of clear, forceful and eloquent speech. Unlike Mr. Toots, he got a good start. We have from an authoritative source a picture of him as a child of two standing upon a flight of stairs, addressing an audience composed of the other children of the family. "While he spoke he thumped on the stairs with a stick, to make sure of the attention of his hearers and to drive home his points." Later, we hear of the little David displaying his powers at an Eisteddfod held at Llanystumdwy. Here he delivered a moral hymn, "Remember, child, to speak the truth"—*Cofia, blentyn, ddwedy, y gwir.*

Further public appearances—the addresses delivered at various chapels, and the speeches made in the Debating Society at Portmadoc, followed as a natural course. Indeed, there is ample evidence of his seeking to develop day by day and in every way possible his gifts of public utterance, both as regards matter and style, particularly it may be said as regards style. In his diary he comments, as we have seen, upon the style of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. "It is," he notes, "clear, intelligent and straightforward, like the man who is proud of the opinions which he holds. . . . *He does not hedge round his sentences.*"

At all times the young orator was on the look out for fresh methods of giving point and effect to his speeches. It is recorded that during his younger days, he would walk through the country lanes rehearsing his speeches aloud. In his search for good public speakers—particularly speakers with a clear and definite message—he listened critically to orators of both sexes; and he gives in his diary, under the date, August 1st, 1879, not only candid judgment with regard to the oratorical powers of a certain lady, but also most interesting views concerning "Women's Rights." "Miss Becker," the entry runs, "spoke at the Town Hall, Portmadoc, on Woman's Rights. Very few real arguments. She proved too much, which proves nothing. The earth would be a paradise were women to have their suffrage. She was rather sarcastic. Mr. Breese rose to oppose her, and made a half-hour speech. Very good! Spoke in rather low

tone, and so did not understand half his speech. Miss Becker answered him, but did not touch on some of the arguments. As for myself, I do not see why single women and widows managing property should not have a voice in the adjustment, etc., of taxes."

Further interesting entries were made by Mr. Lloyd George in his diary concerning speakers and speeches. The most interesting are those which deal with Mr. Chamberlain. "The famous statesman," he remarks again in one entry, "understands the sympathies of the people." This has of course always been Mr. Lloyd George's own aim and desire. Indeed, from his intense sympathy with the people has sprung his finest oratorical efforts—his inspiring calls to the masses to bestir themselves, his fiery words of condemnation, and, too, his glowing words of approval.

So completely did he master early in his life the art of public speaking, that at the present day he finds it possible to deliver a speech with the aid only of a few hurried phrases on a slip of paper. "He is in this respect," says the Editor of the *Daily News*, "the antithesis of Mr. Churchill, though Mr. Churchill is like him in daring. . . . I once had a pleasant after-dinner talk with them on the subject of their oratorical methods. 'I do not trust myself to the moment on a big occasion,' said Mr. Churchill, 'I don't mind it in debate or in an ordinary platform speech; but a set speech I learn to the letter. Mark Twain said to me, *You ought to know a speech as you know your*

prayers, and that's how I know mine. I've written a speech out six times with my own hand.' 'I couldn't do that,' said Mr. Lloyd George, 'I must wait for the crisis. Here are my notes for the Queen's Hall speech.' And he took out of his pocket a slip of paper with half-a-dozen phrases scrawled in his curiously slanting hand. The result is a certain thinness which contrasts with the breadth and literary form of Mr. Churchill's handling of a subject, or with the massive march of Mr. Asquith's utterance. But it has qualities of sudden eloquence, imaginative flight and quick wit that make it unique in the records of political oratory. Above all, it has a quite unexampled air of intimacy. His swiftly responsive nature brings him into extraordinary close relations with his audience, so that he almost leaves the impression of a brilliant conversation in which all have been engaged. This responsiveness, while it gives to his speech its rare quality of freshness and exhilaration, is the source of his occasional indiscretions. Lord Salisbury's 'blazing indiscretions' were due to his detachment from men and his remoteness from the audience. They were the indiscretions of an Olympian. The indiscretions of Mr. Lloyd George come from his nearness to his hearers. He cannot resist the stimulus of the occasion. It works in him like wine. It floods him with riot of high spirits and swift fancy, until he seems to be almost the voice of the collective emotion. . . .

"The soil of his mind is astonishingly fertile but light. He is always improvising. You feel

that the theme is of secondary importance to the treatment. . . . No anchor of theory holds him, and he approaches life as if it were a new problem. It is a virgin country for him to fashion and to shape."

Thus it comes about that we get a bright, fresh note in all his doings, whether in childhood, early boyhood, youth or young manhood, or in that happy period with which we are about to deal.

MARRIAGE AND FIRST ELECTION.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARRIAGE AND FIRST ELECTION.

Marriage—when it is marriage at all—is only the temporary seal which marks the vowed transit of temporary into untiring service, and of fitful into eternal love.

RUSKIN. *Sesame and Lilies.*

It requires the pen of an Allen Raine to tell the love story of David Lloyd George. We want the atmosphere, the local colour, the true Welsh setting to appreciate to the full the few facts known. We require pictures of Mynydd Ednyfed Fawn, and Pencaenwydd, and various other places. Above all, we want a clear, vivid impression of the persons concerned. But we must be content with knowing through the imagination, if through no other source, that in the love affair of Mr. Lloyd George and Miss Maggie Owen there was the charm of true romance. A friend comes near to the desired mark when he writes of the glories of the "Land of My Fathers," of the winding lanes and wide roads leading to great centres of activity—from quietude amidst open nature to stone forests of houses and crowded streets, and reminds us that in the lives of David Lloyd George and Maggie Owen there was a happy blending of both town and country—sufficient of the company of Mother Nature to teach them the great lessons of the Universe,

and sufficient of the town to show them the great need of putting the lessons learnt into practice.

Touching certain days previous to Mr. Lloyd George's marriage there are in his diary two entries of unusual interest. The first falls under the date November 28th, 1885, and reads:—"Took M. O. and her cousin home. (M. O. was the future Mrs. Lloyd George). The second entry, made after a debating Society soiree, reads:—"Took Maggie Owen home."

The Miss Maggie Owen referred to is the only daughter of Mr. Richard Owen of Mynydd Ednyfed Fawn, Criccieth. Her marriage with Mr. Lloyd George was celebrated at the little chapel at Pencaenwydd on January 24th, 1888. The ceremony, which was of a simple nature, was performed in part by the saintly uncle to whom Mr. Lloyd George is so deeply indebted. But though simple, it was a stirring occasion for Pencaenwydd. A local paper tells how early in the day flags were to be seen in all directions, together with a considerable display of bunting. "After luncheon," the report continues, "the newly-wedded couple left by midday train for London on their honeymoon. The town was illuminated at night and fireworks were let off."

It was further written at the time that Mr. Lloyd George had made a pre-eminently wise choice. Time has fully justified the words; and if usefulness in the lives of married people may be accounted a sign of happiness then Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd George may indeed be considered fortunate. Shortly after the marriage Mr. Lloyd George's name was put forward as that of a

possible candidate for the Carnarvon Boroughs, and in the summer of 1888 he was adopted definitely as candidate by the Liberal Associations of Nevin, Pwllheli, and Criccieth. Other candidates, it is said, had but a small chance against the local hero. His march was triumphant! In August he was splendidly received at Bangor, where he spoke in Welsh, raising the audience to a high pitch of enthusiasm.

On August 24th Mr. Lloyd George wrote to Criccieth:—"Received a telegram from Morgan Richards this morning that I had been unanimously selected at Bangor last night. He also wrote me that my speech had made a very favourable impression. I could quite see for myself at the Monday evening meeting that I was the popular candidate. Despite all the machinations of my enemies I will succeed. I am now sailing before the wind, and they against it."

Yes! He was now "sailing before the wind." On December 20th, 1888, he was chosen as Gladstonian candidate for Carnarvon Boroughs. The County Councils (following on the passing of the Local Government Act) were now in existence, and Mr. Lloyd George was immediately offered no less than four seats in the Council. He refused them, however, so that he might be free to fight for others—an act of self-sacrifice which found early reward. When the elections were over, he was selected as one of the Aldermen of the Carnarvon County Council.

His main interest, however, at this time was the Parliamentary candidature. At the previous

election (1886) the Carnarvon Boroughs had returned Mr. Swetenham, Q.C., a Conservative. Early in 1890 that gentleman died suddenly, and now came the opportunity to win back the constituency to its old beliefs. On March 24th, Mr. Lloyd George issued his election address. In this he referred to Mr. Balfour's *baton-and-bayonet* rule in Ireland, and made it clear that he was a firm believer in Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Policy. He stood, moreover, for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the English Church in Wales, for the taxation of ground rents, and the enfranchisement of leaseholds, and a liberal extension of the principles of decentralisation.

It is interesting to recall passages from speeches made by Mr. Lloyd George at this time. "The Tories forget," he said, "that they are living in an enlightened century. I once heard a man declaiming wildly against Mr. Tom Ellis as a Parliamentary representative. According to that man, Mr. Ellis's disqualification consists mainly in the fact that he has been brought up in a cottage. The Tories do not yet realise that the day of the cottage-bred man has at last dawned."

On another occasion, speaking in his best style, his voice tuned in perfect accord with his inspiring words, he said, "A holy war has been proclaimed against man's inhumanity to man, and the people of Europe are thronging to the crusade. The great question for us to determine is this: Whether in this mighty Armageddon Wales shall simply be the standard bearer of another nation, or shall the Red Dragon of

Wales once more lead forth a nation to do battle for right ?"

In the same speech he said, "You have pledged yourselves to a great programme—Disestablishment, Land Reform, Local Option and other great reforms. But however drastic and broad they may appear to be, they, after all, simply touch the fringe of the vast social questions which must be dealt with in the near future. There is a momentous time coming. The dark continent of wrong is being explored, and there is a missionary spirit abroad for the reclamation to the realm of right."

Much adverse criticism and not a little sarcasm was levelled at the fiery young candidate. "The intelligence, the magnificent intellect of Mr. George," said Sir John Puleston, member for Devonport, "did not confine him within the narrow limits of the small Principality of which they were so proud ; his ideas were as boundless as Europe itself." It is instructive, after the march of years, to see Sir John Puleston impaled, so to speak, upon the point of his own sarcasm. From another quarter complaints were made to Mr. Gladstone against certain views of the self-opinionated young Celt. The "Grand Old Man" replied in full, well-rounded manner : "If a Welsh constituency were to return a gentleman who, whether Tory or Dissentient, would vote against the claims which Wales is now justly making, that her interests and feelings should at length be recognized in concerns properly her own. Even if he reserved or promised you his individual vote, by supporting

the Party opposed to you and keeping it in power, he would make that vote perfectly nugatory. . . ."

Mr. Acland, M.P., and Mr. Ellis Griffith threw in their weight on the side of Mr. Lloyd George, and Sir Wilfrid Lawson, glad to support one who stood for the principles of temperance, appeared on various platforms in the young candidate's favour. Moreover, Irish Nationalists joined in the fight, journeying from Ireland to North Wales to answer their countrymen from Ulster. It was seen that there was to be a warm contest, with a close finish. *The Times* newspaper, commenting in weighty fashion upon the fight, foreshadowed the defeat of Mr. Lloyd George. The Hon. Frederick Wynn, it pointed out, had thrown his weight into the fight, and the Hon. Frederick Wynn was the Squire of Glynllifon.

On April 2nd the candidates were nominated, and on April 10th came the elections amidst intense excitement and the occasional street singing, said a local newspaper, of Lloyd George's famous battle song :—

> "Hurrah! Hurrah! We're ready for the fray!
> Hurrah! Hurrah! We'll drive Sir John away!
> The Grand Young Man will triumph,
> Lloyd George will win the day—
> Fight for the Freedom of Cambria!"

The result was declared on the following day: Lloyd George 1,963; Ellis Nanney 1,945. A small majority, but *victory!* And so, shortly after his marriage, David Lloyd George realised his great ambition. He was now, or would be very soon, a Member of Parliament.

WESTMINSTER.

CHAPTER IX.

WESTMINSTER.

> *"What do you think of my entering the House of Commons?"*
> *"I think," rejoins Twemlow, feelingly, "that it is the best club in London."*
>
> DICKENS. *Our Mutual Friend.*

THE new Member, after being introduced by the future Lord Rendel and Mr. Acland, took the oath and his seat in the *House*. This was on April 17th, 1890. His reception was particularly cordial. In the evening he wrote in high spirits: "After a very enthusiastic reception by the Liberal Members of the House, I am off to dine with my friend Sir John Puleston."

The "cottage lad" of a few years back now moved in the high political circles. It is worthy of note that Sir John Puleston had been one of the speakers on the Conservative side in the Carnarvon Election, and had given extremely hard blows. An interesting side light this on the Party System! Another interesting glimpse of the "life political" is found in a letter written by Mr. Lloyd George after his first division: "My first divisions last night. I voted against Bi-metallism, but I could not tell you why."

Not more than a week had elapsed when the young Member interrogated the Leader of the

House with regard to the Town Holding Committee. The privilege of actually addressing the House was carefully reserved. He was too wise to risk early failure. "I shall not speak in the House this side of the Whitsuntide holidays," he wrote to his uncle in a letter touching the Temperance question. "Better not appear too eager. Get a good opportunity and make the best of it—that's the point. Let the cry against compensation increase in force and intensity. Then is the time to speak. I can do better myself then. The steam is hardly up yet. That was evident in the debate, which was rather an unreal one, no fervour or earnestness characterising it. The House does not seem at all to realise or to be impressed with the gigantic evils of drunkenness. Later on, there will be more of that spirit as the country gets roused."

Later, we find Mr. Lloyd George sending notes of a speech to Criccieth, so that his brother William and his uncle (known affectionately as "the Bishop") might pass judgment upon it. "I enclose the notes of the speech I intend delivering on the Welsh Church at the Tabernacle. Read it and send me your candid opinion as to its merits and demerits. It is simply a rough outline, mind you. Will it do if duly elaborated ? Let me have your opinion by return. Show it to the 'Esgob' (Bishop). He can send it on to me on Friday. If you or he have any good joke in support, send it on."

The speech was a great success. It is, indeed, abundantly clear that so far as the public plat-

form was concerned, the eloquent young Welshman still marched from victory to victory. He found, however, in his early parliamentary days that the House of Commons was a most difficult place to speak in—a common experience with eloquent young members. "These M.P.'s," he wrote, "are so frightfully decorous and respectable." *His* sphere was the public platform. At Manchester, which he visited at this time, he was received with the utmost enthusiasm.

During the first session in Parliament he sat on a Committee to judge a Scotch Water Bill—*a tedious task.* "I am sitting," he wrote, "on a Committee judging some Scotch Water Bill." "This Scotch Bill," he wrote later, "takes up all my time, and I fear health now I am confined to a crowded room without moving for five hours. No more Committees for me." Later, on June 26th, he wrote, "Goodness knows that ten hours in an office would be preferable to the five I spend over this dry Scotch Bill. I am writing this instead of listening to the evidence of the antagonists to the Bill. I had made up my mind on the evidence of the promoters themselves against the Bill, so I don't think it necessary to listen to any more arguments or evidence against it."

At this period we find the young Member dining with Samuel Smith, and remarking afterwards that his host observed that the greatest mistake a man can make is to speak too frequently in Parliament. "The House," Samuel Smith maintained, "instinctively dislikes

a man who speaks too frequently." This evidently touched Mr. Lloyd George's ready sense of humour. Later he wrote: "Poor old Sam! His great failing is that he never acts upon his precept. He is always talking upon all sorts of topics at all sorts of times."

We also have a record of Mr. Lloyd George being present at this time at a garden party at Mr. Gladstone's residence, Dollis Hill. Here he met numerous "big guns," but was far from awed or dismayed. He moved with ease and composure from cottage to palace, and mixed with "all sorts and conditions of men."

He still observed strictly the Day of Rest, and touching a certain Sunday morning we find him recording that he heard Dr. Clifford preach, and found the sermon capital from an intellectual standpoint. The point that chiefly impressed him was that, although brain, disposition, bias, are hereditary, *a man must build up his character.*

Having now gained acquaintance with the ways and methods of the House, Mr. Lloyd George made a display as a debater, particularly against his long lost hero and leader, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. The opportunity came, and was eagerly seized upon, on June 13th, 1890, in a debate relating to the Local Taxation Bill and its compensation. "Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Randolph Churchill," he declared, "are political contortionists who can perform the great trick of planting their feet in one direction and setting their faces in another." This was the first of many strong, not to say bitter attacks, and it had the remarkable effect of inducing the House

to listen to a young and comparatively unknown Member. "There was," Mr. Lloyd George wrote home later, "a very good audience, and although at first they appeared to be indifferent, as they generally are when insignificant Members speak, they soon—both sides—listened attentively." Mr. Gladstone, it transpired, was *much* gratified.

On August the 13th in the same year, Mr. Lloyd George delivered his second important speech in the House. This took the form of strong criticism on some items of expenditure, which included a sum paid for the installation of Prince Henry of Prussia as a Knight of the Garter. "What service," Mr. Lloyd George asked, "has Prince Henry of Prussia ever rendered to this country?" The question is of peculiar interest in view of recent events affording (it may be thought) another early glimpse of the so-called 'new' Lloyd George.

STORMY SESSIONS.

CHAPTER X.

STORMY SESSIONS.

Beautiful talk is by no means the most pressing want in Parliament.

CARLYLE. *Latter-Day Pamphlets.*

The English fancy they are free. It is only during the elections of Members of Parliament that they are so.

ROUSSEAU.

STORMY sessions followed. In 1892 came a General Election, which saw the return of the Liberals with a majority of forty only. The Welsh Gladstonians now numbered thirty-one, and were sufficiently numerous to dictate to the Administration. Mr. Gladstone saw the danger and took measures to avoid it. But after the retirement of the *Grand Old Man* in March, 1894, Mr. Lloyd George, together with three of his colleagues, broke into open revolt.

Writing to a correspondent in defence of his course of action, Mr. Lloyd George pointed out that the Government had refused to give any specific pledge to pass the Welsh Bill that Session, or even to give it precedence over other Bills. "If the Government," he said, "persists in its policy of putting other measures before Disestablishment its blood be on its own head."

Lord Rosebery was now Premier, and Mr.

Lloyd George, it is said, resented His Lordship's whole attitude toward Wales. Indeed, he complained that Lord Rosebery had referred to Welsh members as "the natives of a principality, as though they were the Wallabees of Central Africa. Stanley," he pointed out, "had cheated the native tribes with empty jampots, and that was the policy of the Liberal Government toward Wales. Empty jampots were offered! To such treatment Wales would not submit. If the jampots were not filled the Liberal Government must face the hostility of the Welsh Members."

"Our aspiration," Mr. Lloyd George pointed out, on another occasion, "is a Young Welsh Party with National motives. You will find it," he continued, "an accomplished fact after the next General Election. The idea of Nationality is a vigorous and growing one, and as a compact band we shall get our wants promptly attended to by the Liberal Party in addition to being able to squeeze the Tories when in Office."

But the "Prodigals," as Lord Rosebery called them, fell later upon disheartening days, and for reasons—the best of reasons—returned to the Liberal fold. The Government, nevertheless, was short-lived, chiefly owing to the fact that the *Prodigals* were not so repentant as was at first supposed. Indeed, it was whilst a number of them were at Llandrindod, arranging further action, that a snatch division in the *House* placed the Government in a minority of seven. Whereupon, Lord Rosebery, weary of fighting under such conditions, resigned.

In an interview published in the *Westminster*

Gazette at the time, Mr. Lloyd George was reported as saying that the aspiration of himself and his friends was to form a Welsh National Party, with Disestablishment, Land Reform, Local Veto and Home Rule for Wales as its platform. Further, he complained that Lord Rosebery's attitude was that he evidently did not believe in Disestablishment as a principle.

Much has been written concerning the matter, and much will, no doubt, be written in time to come. An exciting period, "offering," says one writer, "excellent entertainment."

Letters contributed by Mr. Lloyd George to a Welsh newspaper throw valuable light upon famous statesmen at the time now in mind. Concerning Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George wrote: "He is a short, thick-set man, rather round shouldered, with a face as clean shaven as that of the most advanced curate, keen eyes and a broad intellectual forehead. He is the hope of the rising generation of Radicals. He is only a few years over forty, and has won a prominent position in the world of politics. He is, or at any rate was, a Nonconformist, being descended from a family of Yorkshire Independents. There is only one man in the House who is more effective as a Parliamentary debator. He speaks clearly and emphatically and sets out his arguments with great brilliancy and force. It is considered that upon the whole he fills the same position in the Parliament of 1892 as did Mr. Chamberlain in that of 1880-1885. On him are fixed the hopes of the Radicals."

Comparisons were made by Mr. Lloyd George

in the same series between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Balfour. "Mr. Chamberlain," he wrote, "is by nature much more aggressive and stubborn than Mr. Balfour. The Tory leader lacks energy and application. Those who know him best think him rather indolent. He was never a hard worker. When he was Irish Secretary he worked harder than he ever has before or since, but even then he accepted without hesitation any explanation which was offered him by the Irish Constabulary in reply to complaints of injustice. It is much less troublesome to do that than to make a personal investigation into the matter. That is not Mr. Chamberlain's way. He is mercurial, always on the move, and full of life and vigour."

There were other articles in the series but we need only give a brief comparison between Michael Davitt and Mr. Chamberlain. "The first," Mr. Lloyd George wrote, "is magnificently large minded in speech, whilst the latter is given to spiteful innuendoes." Writing further of Mr. Asquith the conviction was expressed that it became more apparent day by day that he would occupy, with more dignity and usefulness, the position which Mr. Chamberlain held in the Liberal Party prior to 1885.

The next session (1897) was also marked by stormy scenes. Old tactics were revived : "Mr. Lloyd George and his confederates flooded the order-paper from day to day." Later the "rebel leader" found himself in collision with the Irish Members.

"Why," he asked a certain group, "do you support the Tories, your enemies, in imposing fetters upon us in Wales who have been your friends?"

"Oh!" an Irishman replied thoughtlessly, "we in Ireland take care of ourselves."

"Ah!" said Lloyd George, "that is your game is it? Well, *two* can play at it. We shall see what you say when British Members unite to talk of their own interests."

Later, when Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman succeeded Sir William Harcourt as leader of the opposition, there were further scenes of an exciting nature. Contrary to the desire of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Lloyd George insisted upon dividing the House against the Government on a question concerning the privileges of the House. And to the great discomfiture of Sir Henry, Mr. Lloyd George carried with him into the division lobby the bulk of the Liberal Members.

In 1904, whilst the House was in Committee and the "Irish Coercion Bill" was under discussion, Mr. Lloyd George again asserted himself, this time in connection with a question touching the health of school-children. The Chairman having accepted the motion of the closure, Mr. Lloyd George flatly refused to leave his seat for the division. Forthwith an appeal was made from the Chair, to which Mr. Lloyd George replied: "I see no object in taking part in a farce of this kind to suit the exigencies of the Cecil family. It is a perfect farce that we should not be allowed to discuss questions

affecting the health of the children in the schools. *It is monstrous!*"

Mr. Lowther, who was acting at the time as Deputy Speaker, was called upon to pronounce sentence upon the unruly Member. This was done with due solemnity. But Mr. Lloyd George was not to be moved. "We must make a most emphatic protest," he said, "against the action which the Chairman has taken at the instigation of the Prime Minister. We consider the Chairman ruled out questions of vital importance to our constituents and we cannot, consistently with our sense of duty, take any further part in this Parliamentary Session."

Then followed a remarkable scene. Mr. Asquith, who was leading the opposition, sided with the rebellious Welshman, and the upshot was that Mr. Asquith linked his strong arm with the arm of Mr. Lloyd George, and led the whole party of Liberals out of the House!

A FREE CHURCH FOR A FREE PEOPLE.

CHAPTER XI.

"A FREE CHURCH FOR A FREE PEOPLE."

Unfortunately, few people who feel a passion think of learning anything from it.

M. ARNOLD.

Enthusiasm is the genius of sincerity, and truth accomplishes no victories without it.

LORD LYTTON.

THE storms were followed by a spell of fine weather. To the joy of the Welsh Party the Welsh Disestablishment Bill now occupied a place upon the order paper immediately after the Budget, and in April, 1895, the Bill passed its second reading with a majority of 44. But Wales was doomed to disappointment. While the Bill was in Committee the Government fell, and the Bill was buried. "But buried," Mr. Lloyd George declared, "in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection."

The aims of the Bill possessed his soul. "To free his co-religionists from bondage to a Church Hierarchy foreign in its inception, his co-peasants from the oppression of a Landed Squirearchy foreign in its conception, and his compatriots from the bonds of a Political Party to him foreign in its ideals and sympathies;—these," writes Mr. Berial Evans, "were the objects he set himself out to attain. . . . All his

associations, and consequently all his sympathies, were with those whom he had ever been taught to believe were the oppressed, and these oppressed were his compatriots and co-religionists. From earliest childhood he had been obsessed by the sense of danger to public liberties he believed to be involved in the immoral union of Church and State. In his own little world he had seen how the alliance between Parson and Squire ever told to the detriment of things and of persons dear and sacred to him."

Out of Mr. Evans' close acquaintance with Mr Lloyd George and the Welsh Nationalists we have many interesting observations. "It is difficult," he writes, "for those not born of them, or who have not lived with them and been accorded free entry into the sanctuary of their inmost thoughts, to appreciate what Disestablishment means to Welsh Nationalists. To the Episcopalian Nationalist—and there is a strong body of them in public, and many more in private—Disestablishment implies enabling the Church he loves with a devotion which can scarcely be measured by ordinary human standards, to develop on National lines, freed from the restricting trammels of an alien, anti-national authority, it would appeal as it has done for long centuries, to the still fervent patriotism of this people, and enjoy at least the opportunity of becoming again what it once was—the real National Church of Wales, instead of being the nominal National Church in Wales, and thus render possible the realisation of the fondest dream of every true Churchman, to see the day

dawn when there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."

The battle for this ideal was fought by Mr. Lloyd George in his accustomed manner. There was no mincing of words, no 'fining down' of methods. His tongue was still a two-edged sword. It may be thought, and not altogether without reason, that his words were at times needlessly strong. But David Lloyd George has ever brought the strongest possible forces to bear upon his opponents. And here was a cause, an aim, an *ideal* upon which he set his heart very early in life. Indeed, there is a sense—a very real sense—in which it was for many years his greatest and highest aim—"a sacred trust."

At a National Convention held at Cardiff on October 6th, 1904, he said: "We are fighting for religious equality. The people of Wales have undertaken this great enterprise not as individuals, not as members of a party, not even as members of a Church, but as a Nation. Wales has entered the lists to champion the most sacred cause that was ever entrusted to the charge of a people—the great cause of Freedom of Conscience."

He held that "the fight for the schools was identical in purpose with the fight for Disestablishment." "All that is good in the Act," he said when speaking at Cardiff, "we will administer rigidly, ruthlessly. We can so administer the Act as to exercise fairly clear control over the schools, whilst at the same time withholding rate aid. We recommend that policy

to the Councils—to administer the law and keep within the letter of the law without levying a rate for sectarian institutions that refused popular control, and imposed offensive tests on teachers. . . . We have staked our reputation upon the result. By our demeanour in the contest shall we be judged for all ages. . . . And when the contest is over, Wales will have the proud satisfaction of knowing that she has been in the forefront of the battle that has established for ever in the British constitution the principle that no man on British soil shall suffer any proscription at the hands of the State for any belief he honestly holds as to matters that pertain to his own soul."

There are many passages in his speeches breathing the same air. "We draw the sword," he cried, "for religious liberty. That inflames our enthusiasm!" In this spirit we find him declaring that the "Squire and the Parson have broken into the poor box and divided its contents between them." On another occasion he reminded the House of the "great Anglican pillage" at the time of the reformation of the English Church. "Now they come here," he continued, "when we are trying to recover some part of this pillaged property for the poor, for whom it was originally given, and accuse us of robbing God."

Strong words, and there were many words considerably stronger. "The fight was to the death." There was little or *no* thought of minor personal injuries. Yet at the back of the fray there were better relations than might be

supposed. Many a Parliamentarian, as we know, has abused a political opponent in the strongest possible terms and dines with him in seeming good fellowship on the very same evening. And indeed, in this contest, seemingly so fierce and bitter, there were many humorous touches. To give one instance, at one of Mr. Lloyd George's "reply meetings" in Flintshire, the Chairman, a Welsh Deacon with extremely strong convictions, introduced Mr. Lloyd George in the following manner: "Gentlemen,—I haff to introduce to you to-night the Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs. He has come to reply to what the Bishop of St. Asaph said the other night about Welsh Disestablishment. . . . In my opinion, gentlemen, the Bishop of St. Asaph is one of the biggest liars in creashon; but thank God we haff in Mr. Lloyd George a match for him to-night."

As for Mr. Lloyd George's own opinion of the Bishop, he described him in an interview as a foeman in every way worthy of their steel—"the most doughty champion the Church in Wales possesses."

Speaking further in support of the principles of Disestablishment, Mr. Lloyd George maintained that the nation will never lose its religion so long as it maintains its reverence for things spiritual. "If a nation ceases to take an interest in religion, the maintenance by law of an official connection with religion in the form of an established Church is a piece of hypocrisy." This view, though firmly and clearly expressed, is in softer tone than many earlier utterances. With

the drawing nigh of victory, the sword—though still quick and sharp—lost some of its first deadliness. To the end, however, the battle was hot and strong. The old wounds, so sore and angry, are not yet entirely healed. It is well that we should now forget old feuds. It is, surely, sufficient to know that the Disestablishment Act has been placed on the Statute Book.

THE COLD SHADES OF OPPOSITION.

CHAPTER XII.

THE COLD SHADES OF OPPOSITION.

This party of two reminds me of the Scotch Terrier, which was so covered with hair that you could not tell which was the head and which was the tail of it.

JOHN BRIGHT. (*Speech* 1886).

This is not the cause of faction, or of party, or of any individual, but the common interest of every man in Britain.

" JUNIUS." (*Letters*).

A born fighter, fierce in attack, stubborn and exceedingly troublesome to his enemies when acting on the defensive, at all times courageous—thus ran at the time now in mind the common estimate of David Lloyd George. The cold shades of opposition had upon him an enlivening effect. He delighted in harassing the enemy, and, when opportunity arose, of making surprise attacks—a master of trench warfare.

" The Wave of Toryism," he said to his constituents, " has dashed itself in vain against the rocks of Eryri." He was very far from downhearted. The fight at the election of 1895 may have gone against his party, but that, far from being a cause for despair, called for a stout and cheerful heart. Never was he in better fighting form. When the Agricultural Land Rating Bill was under discussion a writer in the *Western Mail* asked in imitation of various

friends :—"Has Lloyd George been speaking all the morning? Lloyd George speaking? Lloyd George *still* speaking? Has anyone else but Lloyd George spoken?"

He gloried in the fight, and judging by his correspondence at this time his life was thoroughly enjoyable. He wrote that Herbert Lewis and himself had a great time whilst speaking on questions concerning the naval dockyard at Pembroke: "I am told on all hands that I never spoke better in my life. . . . The Liberals cheered frantically. For a short time there was great excitement. After that I kept the thing going, and whereas they expected to get their Naval Works Bill before dinner they didn't get it till nearly midnight. Lowther, the Chairman of Committee, said he would not go to dinner without first getting through with it, even if he had to sit in the chair until the dawn. . . Very well, he was jolly glad to adjourn at a quarter to nine without making much progress. They thought they might get a Bill called the Military Manœuvres Bill through before midnight, but I soon developed a keen interest in soldiering. I moved an amendment on the spur of the moment. Lowther would not allow it, because it was not strictly in order. Very well. I altered it at once. He had then to take it. I divided, and their Bill was talked out. . . . That is the way to play the game. My blood is now up. I hadn't warmed to it before."

It is abundantly clear that he revelled in political warfare, and was amazingly successful. "His rising in the House," says Mr. Beriah

Evans, "was more dreaded by the occupants of the Treasury Bench than was the Leader of the Opposition. Indeed, he was *de facto* the Leader of such Opposition as there was in the House of Commons in those dead days of suppressed Liberalism." Clearly, he put the fear of his keen judgment and ready wit into the hearts of the leading Tories, and thus became the "life of the House and the dread of the Government." He had not the least doubt of his right to employ stringent measures. His business was to harass the Government—if not on a large scale, then on a small scale. In any circumstances, the Government must be made to feel the power of the Opposition.

"You must make the Government feel a certain amount of inconvenience if you mean to get anything out of them," he wrote at this time, and then went on to remark that he must make the Government sit up a couple of hours after midnight.—"That is our only chance."

The fight was, of course, waged under most difficult conditions. A writer in the *Westminster Gazette* declared at the time that the House was the child of national exhaustion, of self-protective cynicism and of class interests. . . . "An appeal to a generous sentiment falls dead. A cynical appeal to practical selfishness is more acceptable, a ribald joke evokes a ready laugh. . . . It has been a difficult year for any orator to make his mark."

Yet Mr. Lloyd George did make his mark; not, however, so much on account of his oratory as in virtue of his gifts as a keen and wily fighter.

Difficulties with regard to leadership found him wonderfully hopeful and buoyant. "Why should Liberals," he asked, "be depressed because of difficulties about leadership?" "Conservatives," he pursued, "have been no more fortunate in the past. Upon the death of Lord Beaconsfield the Tory Party first of all selected Sir Stafford Northcote. He did not satisfy them so they appointed Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. They got rid of him in six months, and then Lord Randolph Churchill was made leader. He got sick of them in sick months, and then came Mr. Balfour. Five Tory leaders in five years. The Tories ought not to taunt us with the fact that we have lost two leaders."

"We will follow any man," he said later, "who can bring us specimens of the grapes of Ascalon, and we don't care what his name is—Joshua, if Moses goes, and if Joshua goes, anybody else who can lead us into the promised land."

One is almost led to wonder why, even at this early date, Mr. Lloyd George was not chosen as leader. Clearly, he had his hand upon the sword, and he knew well its nature and the keenness of its edge. How bravely he would have used it! But he had still to prove the solid worth which rested behind the fiery manner and alert tongue.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

Freedom of thought means division of opinion. A Party which is not divided in Opposition will seldom have ideas on which it is worth while to unite when in power.

J. A. SPENDER. *The Comments of Bagshot.*

IT is instructive at this point to recall Mr. Lloyd George as a child in the little Chapel in Llanystumdwy, singing the familiar words, "Dare to be a Daniel." In his earliest years he was taught to stand firmly by the truth. This was, indeed, one of the main lessons of his upbringing: he must "Dare to have a purpose firm and dare to make it known." As for the result, all the world knows that few men have been more valiant for the truth than David Lloyd George. When the South African War broke out, and he felt that it reflected discredit upon his country, he expressed his feelings in the clearest possible terms. There was no mincing of words. He attacked the men whom he deemed responsible in a manner that brought down upon his head a storm of hatred and abuse compared to which the adverse criticisms of other days were as showerdrops on a sunny day. But he was not to be turned from his purpose.

Speaking at Carmarthen he said, "If I do not take the first and every opportunity to protest

against what I consider to be an infamy I shall deem myself a recreant before God and man."

He made no effort to veil the fact that to his mind Mr. Chamberlain was largely responsible. "One of Mr. Chamberlain's speeches," he declared, "does more to jeopardize the Empire than a score of Nicholson's Neks." On another occasion he said, "This war has been forced upon us by a Government which has divided three millions of money amongst its own supporters, by a measure carried by a Chamber composed of landlords who benefited to the tune of hundreds of thousands of pounds—a Chamber for which no native-born British subject has the right to vote."

When called a "Pro-Boer," he reminded his opponents of the folly of the pot calling the kettle black. Mr. Chamberlain, he pointed out, had opposed the Zulu War. Was Mr. Chamberlain a nigger because he did so? Far from being a Pro-Boer he and his few supporters were, he claimed, the only true Britons.

"The real test of Liberalism," he said, "is not in its readiness to fight, but the object for which it fights. . . . If it is simply a question," he pursued, "of defending such possessions as we have already got, and which, I believe, we administer well, or some great question of principle, some question of the protection of the weak and oppressed, then we should all unite in regard to it. In the days of Elizabeth the Puritans were the best fighters, but they fought for a noble and just cause—the cause of religious and civil freedom, whether in England or abroad.

And as long as there is some great cause of that kind to fight for, we ought to be as ready to fight for it now as we were three hundred years ago."

Recent events have brought an echo of his words. Now we acclaim his sentiments. "With years have come counsels more profound," and few men stand higher in the estimate of their fellow countrymen than David Lloyd George. But at this point we are concerned with the Lloyd George of other days—with the man who faced for convictions now acclaimed the jibes and missiles of infuriated mobs.

One of the first public outbreaks was at Glasgow, where a meeting had been arranged to take place in the City Hall. Students marched in large numbers to the Hall, but found to their extreme annoyance that it was already full. Not to be outdone, they joined forces with other rebellious characters who were rioting on the stairway. A great crowd had by now gathered in the street below. Indeed, the whole locality was in an uproar. But inside the Hall, firmly placed in their seats, were round numbers of faithful followers of the principal speaker. There were further fierce efforts to break up the meeting, but the police were now in strong force, and aided by a body of stewards they repulsed the rioters and cleared the staircase.

This skirmish, far from disheartening Mr. Lloyd George, deepened his determination to exercise the rights of free speech. He set his mind on going to Bangor, in spite of strong and influential opposition. "I *am* going to Bangor," he declared defiantly. "I mean to insist upon

it. I hear the bulk of leading Liberals are strongly opposed to a meeting at this juncture, and they entreat me not to go. I will not listen." And to Bangor he went, but at the cost of bodily harm. Whilst leaving the meeting he was struck a heavy blow with a bludgeon.

Later, at Birmingham, he narrowly escaped death. A meeting was arranged to take place in the Town Hall—"right in the camp of the enemy." Threats and warnings arose, but again Mr. Lloyd George was not to be moved from his purpose. On the day fixed for the meeting sandwichmen paraded the main streets of Birmingham calling upon loyal citizens to "DEFEND THE KING, THE GOVERNMENT AND MR. CHAMBERLAIN." The first attack was made upon the train which was expected to carry Mr. Lloyd George into the Town. But that particular train—for very good reasons—did not carry Mr. Lloyd George. He had already arrived.

The scene which followed is still fresh in the memory. Many can recall the mob, composed of "all sorts and conditions of men"—from the highly respected citizen to the paid rowdy. Indeed, it is said that in all no less than 30,000 people must have collected around the Hall! But again Mr. Lloyd George was quicker than his enemies. He reached the Hall shortly after six, some while before the crowd had taken on a dangerous character.

The opening of the ordinary doors of the Hall brought about the first bursting of the storm. The entrances were rushed, and in the meantime

a body of rebellious students caused violent disorder within the building. The situation clearly foretold serious trouble. But the organisers of the meeting, not to be outdone, made courageous efforts to gain a hearing. Mr. Lloyd George rose, but only to be received by a deafening uproar. Each moment it became clearer that ordered speech was out of the question. The din rose higher, and the temper of the rebels passed beyond control. Suddenly there was a forward rush against the police who guarded the platform. Sticks were used, and in some cases hammers and even knives. Worse still, certain persons of criminal disposition hurled bricks bound with barbed wire through the windows of the building.

Many persons were seriously injured, and, indeed, for a while there appeared to be no prospect of Mr. Lloyd George and his supporters leaving the Hall alive. But, happily, again they were able to prove the superiority of their wits and resources. Mr. Lloyd George got back safely to his host's house in Hagley Road and remained there in safety till he left on the following morning.

It is significant that in spite of all this violence, Mr. Lloyd George still had a good word to say for the democracy. "I have never thought," he said later, "that Birmingham was permanently lost to democracy. As a matter of fact, the very quality which has in my judgment led Birmingham astray, is a democratic quality—its devotion to its chief; not the sycophancy and snobbery which surrounds some who gain

position and power without merit, but loyalty, the loyalty of the people to the man whom they have chosen from among themselves to lead them."

Little wonder if many persons still hold that Mr. Lloyd George at this time was deplorably misunderstood. How refreshing it is to recall the loyalty of the majority of his constituents! Through the whole trouble—the "campaign of hate," some have termed it—he retained his seat in the House of Commons. In fact, at the *Khaki Election* he was returned by the largest majority recorded thus far in his favour. Happily, at no time did he entirely lack friends.

The feeling against him, however, was so strong, and came from so many quarters that "the man in the street" came to think of him as "the outcast enemy of England." How different now! Little wonder if men deem it necessary to speak of a *new* Lloyd George!

LITTLE BROTHER OF THE POOR.

CHAPTER XIV.

LITTLE BROTHER OF THE POOR.

Here is a short piece of precious word-revelation, for instance, "God is Love." Love! Yes. But what is that? The revelation does not tell you that I think. Look into the mirror, and you will see. Out of your own heart you may know what love is.

RUSKIN.

To make some nook of creation a little fruitfuller, better, to make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuller, happier, more blessed, less accursed! It is the work for a God.

CARLYLE.

HERE we touch upon one of the main sources of Mr. Lloyd George's power—his sympathy with the poor, his burning desire to alleviate the lot of persons struggling against adverse conditions, his determination, in brief, to bring about better social conditions. This aim has coloured the whole of his life. "Little brother of the poor," Mr. Bonar Law has called him. And no greater compliment has been paid him by either friend or opponent.

At an early stage in his political career he sought to bring about the "emancipation of the Welsh peasant, the Welsh labourer, and the Welsh miner from oppression of the antiquated and sterilising and humiliating system of land tenure." The words are his own. "The Land Question," he declared, "is at the root of the social evil. Industries have been stifled and

starved by unreasonable demands with regard to the land. Agriculture is depressed owing to the land conditions. The land of this country was not created and given as an endowment to maintain the dignity and delights of a small class. It was given for the benefit of the children of the soil. There are abundant resources in this country to feed, clothe, and shelter our impoverished millions—yea, and if properly husbanded and managed, to do the same for millions more."

As for the leasehold system, he declared that it was nothing short of vicious. "Now what happens," he asked, "when a man takes a piece of land to build upon? It may be land at the time for which the owner may be only getting a few shillings. A man builds upon it, and rent immediately goes up by leaps and bounds to as much as four, five, ten, and fifty times, and sometimes—I can give you cases—a hundred times the previous value of the land—purely because he has built a home for himself upon it. What better purpose can you put land to than that? He gets a lease for sixty, seventy, or eighty years. Year by year the value of that land passes out of the hands of the man who built on it, who sweated for it, who raised money for it, into the hands of the man who never spent a penny in erecting that house."

"The greatest asset of a country," Mr. Lloyd George said later, "is a virile and contented population. This you will never get until the land in the neighbourhood of our great towns is measured out on a more generous scale for

the homes of our people. They want, as a necessity of life, plenty of light, plenty of air, plenty of garden space, which provides the healthiest and most productive form of recreation which any man can enjoy. I am not against sport; I only want to extend the area of its enjoyment. A small number of people like to take their sport in the form of destroying something; the vast majority prefer cultivation to destruction. Some like blood; others prefer bloom. The former is considered a more high-class taste; but so few of us can afford to belong to that exalted order—they must be content with such humble pleasures as flower-gardens and vegetable-patches and fruit-bushes can afford them. In the old days there might have been some excuse for this congestion of housing space—the means of locomotion were so inadequate that men had to crowd together within the smallest compass; and now, with electric trams and a general development of our transport system, there is no excuse for it. A pernicious system which had its excuse in the exigencies of industrial life, is now perpetuated through pure greed. The people of this country ought not to allow avarice and selfish niggardliness any longer to stand between them and their highest interests."

The tendency to quote from and dwell upon Mr. Lloyd George's speeches is irresistible. No words can describe so forcibly our old social diseases and the cure as the words which have sprung at white heat from his heart and brain. Even in cold print, the man—" the agitator "—

is present, throbbing with life and sympathy. The lack of finish in his utterances, his absolutely natural manner, add to the illusion. He stands before us in flesh and blood, a man like unto those with whom and for whom he pleads. His sincerity cannot be questioned.

"What is poverty" he asks. "Have you ever felt it yourselves? If not, you ought to thank God for having been spared from its sufferings and its temptations. Have you ever seen others enduring it? Then pray God to forgive you if you have not done your best to alleviate it! By poverty I mean real poverty; not the cutting down of your establishments not the limitation of your luxuries. I mean the poverty of the man who does not know how long he can keep a roof over his head, and where he will turn to find a meal for the pinched and hungry little children who look to him for sustenance and protection. That is what poverty means. The day will come, and that day is not far distant, when this country will shudder at its toleration of that state of things when it was rolling in wealth. I say again that, apart from its inhumanity and essential injustice, it is robbery; it is confiscation of what is the workman's share of the riches of the land."

His predominant desire, as we have seen, has been to better the conditions of life for the poor. Old Age Pensions, The Health and Unemployment Act, Development Grants, Labour Exchanges—the aim in each case is the same. Speaking in support of Old Age Pensions, he said, "We want to drive hunger from the

hearths. We want to banish the workhouse from the horizon of every workman in the land."

The Development Grant encouraged schemes for developing the resources of the country, namely, the institution of Schools of Forestry, the setting up of experimental farms, the improvement of farm stock, the disseminating of agricultural instruction and the like. As for Labour Exchanges, they, of course, formed part of a great national scheme for making provision against unemployment.

"These ideas," writes Mr. Beriah Evans, "obsessed him at the very commencement of his career. Twenty-two years ago in the solitude of the great rocks jutting out into the sea not far from his home at Bryn Awelon, Criccieth, in company with his life-long friend, Mr. Herbert Lewis, M.P., and myself he was wont to discuss them—our discussions there were in no danger of casual interruption, and the sound of the waves breaking on the rocks around us booming the applause which the multitude was later to give him."

From the Land Question sprang his most sweeping reforms. "Feudalism," he declared, "is the enemy." And as such he attacked it. "I went down a coal mine the other day," he said in one of his speeches, "and they pointed out to me many collieries there. They said: 'You see that colliery there? The first man who went there spent a quarter of a million in sinking the shafts and driving the levels. He never got to the coal. He lost his quarter of a million. A second man came along, spent a

hundred thousand pounds—he failed. A third man came along; he got the coal.' What was the landlord doing in the meantime? The first man failed, but the landlord got his royalties. And I said, 'When the cash failed what did the landlord put in'? He simply put in the bailiffs! The capitalist risks, at any rate, the whole of his money, the engineer puts in his brains, the miner risks his life. And yet, when the Prime Minister and I knock at the doors of these great landlords and say to them, 'Here, do you know those poor fellows who have been digging up royalties at the risk of their lives—some of them are old—they have survived the peril of their trade, but they are broken, they can earn no more. Won't you give them something towards keeping them out of the workhouse?' They scowl at us. We say 'Only a halfpenny, just a copper?' And they say, 'You thieves!' And they turn their dogs on to us, and you can hear their bark every morning. If this is an indication of the view taken by these great landlords of their responsibility to the people, who, at the risk of their lives, create the wealth, then I say their day of reckoning is at hand."

"Who ordained," he asked on another occasion, "that a few should have the land of Britain as a perquisite? Who made ten thousand people owners of the soil, and the rest trespassers in the land of our birth? Who is it who is responsible for the scheme of things whereby one man is engaged through life in grinding labour to win a bare and precarious

existence for himself, and when at the end of his days he claims at the hands of the community he served, a poor pension of eightpence a day, he can only get it through a revolution, and another man who does not toil receives every hour of the day, every hour of the night, more than his poor neighbour receives in a whole year of toil? Where did the table of that law come from? Whose fingers inscribed it? The answers are charged with peril for the order of things the Peers represent; but they are fraught with rare and refreshing fruit for the parched lips of the multitude who have been treading the dusty roads along which the people have marched through the dark ages which are now merging into light."

Turning to the Churches, he declared that upon them rested a very large measure of responsibility: "I say to the Churches of the land that unless they can prove that they have spared no sacrifice, no effort, then the responsibility must be on the altars of their faith, and upon the bared heads of those who bow before them."

Thus spoke the "little brother of the poor" —the man whose ideals have been scoffed at, and dubbed the impossible dreams of a Utopian. Are they impossible? "Nay, in some far-away and distant hour," says the Author of "*Unto this Last*," "I can imagine that England will cast all thoughts of possessive wealth back to the barbaric nations among whom they first arose; and that while the sands of the Indus and adamant Golconda may yet

stiffen the housings of the charger, and flash from the turban of the slave, she, as a Christian mother, may at last attain to the virtues and the treasures of a Heathen one, and be able to lead forth her sons saying — '*These are my Jewels.*' . . .

"Luxury is indeed possible in the future—innocent and exquisite; luxury for all, and by the help of all. . . . Raise the veil boldly; face the light; and if yet the light of the eye can only be through tears, and the light of the body through sackcloth, go thou forth weeping, bearing precious seed until the time come, and the Kingdom, when Christ's gift of bread and bequest of peace shall be unto this last as unto thee."

HOME LIFE.

CHAPTER XV.

HOME LIFE.

The world had a million roosts, but only one nest.
O. W. HOLMES. *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.*

The house of everyone is to him as his castle and fortress, as well for his defence against injury and violence, as for his repose.
COKE. *Semayne's Case.*

WE have been reminded recently that political marriages are usually happy. "Take the great Prime Ministers of the past hundred and fifty years: Chatham, the younger Pitt, Peel, Palmerston, Gladstone, Disraeli, Lord Salisbury. All, with one exception, made marriages which were something more than happy—which approached the ideal of marriage—and of each one it can be said that without his wife it is doubtful whether he would have been the man he was. Who knows all that Peel and Palmerston owed to their wives? And there are two great political love-stories—those of Gladstone and Disraeli—not the less remarkable because they were poles asunder. It is impossible to read unmoved the story of Gladstone and his wife, summed up so pathetically by Mrs. Gladstone after his death. 'I never thought him old, he never thought me old.' Stories of Mrs. Gladstone's devotion to her husband are proverbial, but beside any of them can be put one of Lady Beaconsfield. One day when she was

driving her husband down to the House her hand was crushed in the door of the carriage just as they were starting. She was in intense agony, but she never gave a sign of it until she had parted from her '*Dizzy*' for fear of distracting his mind from the speech he was going to make. And those two great political marriages were not exceptions. Glance back at recent political history, and one after another will occur instances of husbands and wives remarkably happy." Take the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd George. Again, history has repeated itself. They also have had adventures which have drawn them closer together. At the time of the Election of 1892, whilst driving together through the streets of Bangor, a blazing fire ball of tow, dipped in paraffin, was thrown at them. The blazing ball fell on Mr. Lloyd George's head, knocking off his hat, then fell on to Mrs. Lloyd George. Only Mr. Lloyd George's quick action in seizing the ball and throwing it out of the carriage saved her. Again, at the election of 1895, Mrs. Lloyd George was only saved from injury by a prompt course of action. After the declaration of the poll, she accompanied her husband to the station, to see him off to Flint Boroughs. After he had departed, the Conservative candidate, on his way to Criccieth, arrived by a down train. Mrs Lloyd George and a number of friends were standing in the station when he arrived, accompanied by a crowd of disappointed supporters, who rushed angrily at Mrs. Lloyd George. Fortunately, however, the danger was realised.

Her friends hurried her into the parcel office, and a strong bodyguard was formed in front of the door. Mrs. Lloyd George bore the ordeal in a cheerful and courageous manner. Her good qualities are widely recognised. Mr. Du Parcq writes: "It is a tribute to her influence upon her husband's life that his career, far from suffering any check from fresh responsibilities he undertook, grew and developed with his marriage. This was no coincidence. A woman of smaller ideals might easily, and with the best intentions, have set a limit to the great ambitions which would have seemed to some vain and almost reckless. The wife he had won took her place at her husband's side with a strong determination to spur those ambitions by her encouragement, and to aid their fulfilment by her self-sacrifice."

Here we may recall the names and dates of the birth of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd George's children: Richard, born Feb. 15th, 1889; Mair Eiluned, born Aug. 2nd, 1890; Olwen Elizabeth, born April 3rd, 1892; Gwilyrn, born Dec. 4th, 1894. No words from the pen of Mr. Lloyd George throw a brighter or more pleasing light upon his nature than the letters written by him in relation to his children. On June 16th, 1891, we find him writing: "Before coming on here (House of Commons) I took the little chickens with Maggie and Kate, to St. James' Park and left them there. Dick delighted beyond measure looking at the boat and *wag-wags.* "Look, look, Daddy; a ship on the sea!'" Another letter, dated June 10th, 1891, reads: "I've

secured in the Members' ballot a couple of of tickets for the great review to-morrow at Wimbledon, and Maggie and I will take Dick there to see the bands and red-coats and *gee-wups*. He talks excitedly about it even now. We took him to see the procession to-day. He was very pleased with the soldiers, especially the cavalry, but he saw nothing for special admiration in the Emperor. He took a much greater fancy to the horses. . . ." It is interesting to note that the Emperor referred to in the letter is the present Emperor of Germany. "Dick" saw nothing special to admire in him. He took a much greater fancy to the "horses." The far-seeing son of a far-seeing parent!

The letters show that Mr. Lloyd George has in his nature the best characteristics of the home-loving man! In the midst of a multiplicity of public duties he retains a simple and loving heart. Letters written by him at the time of his Mother's death are of a particularly touching nature. The loss came in the midst of a busy Session, and he tells of the sympathy of various Members, mentioning in particular Sir William Harcourt, and Mr. John Burns. We would pass in silent sympathy the bereavement, still painfully fresh in the memory, which came on November 30th, 1907.

It need scarcely be said that Mr. Lloyd George has continued to correspond with Mr. Richard Lloyd. On June 8th, 1896, we find him writing to thank his uncle for being so good as to send each morning a budget of Criccieth news: "If

you saw the eagerness with which it is read you would be amply repaid for your trouble." He writes. In other letters to his uncle he tells of "matters Parliamentary." For instance, "I have been at it once or twice to-day—in fact, spoke repeatedly." Later he writes, "We hope to keep the Finance Bill over until to-morrow. There will be nothing much after this, and I am glad of it. . . ."

Now, what of Mr. Lloyd George's home life? Few politicians have been subjected to stronger rays of searchlight than he. None have withstood the ordeal better. Journalists, with quick eyes for copy, have besieged every phase of his life, both public and private, and not a few, enjoying privileges of friendship, have penetrated the sacred precincts of his hearth and home. We have had pictures of Mr. Lloyd George at breakfast, and have been told that he is one of the few men who are cheerful and talkative first thing in the morning. He arrives at the breakfast table with a merry twinkle in his eyes, and has a happy word for everybody. A politician carrying a heavy load of care, he shows (though it may seem incredible) the buoyancy of a schoolboy. Before him stands a pile of letters, some of the nature that has been all too common—letters of abuse. Opening the envelopes, he finds himself accused of the darkest deeds, but far from being moved to wrath or indignation, he tosses the letters across the table for his guest to see. "Are they not amusing?" he enquires.

The happy truth is, it is worse than futile to

storm with mud the citadel of a man of the stamp of David Lloyd George. Whether in the privacy of his home or in public, he is proof against all such attacks. He stands before the people with a heart bare, yet escapes uninjured. Pictures of his home life do not, in fact, throw any special light upon his personality. He is always at home. There never was a more natural public man. His speeches are a model of outspokenness and have, indeed, led men to write of him as "thinking aloud" on the public platform.

Let that suffice. There is a better part than peeping and prying. We would be content with the simple fact that the man of whom we think has the golden heart of a good father and a good husband. The passing years with their innumerable calls upon his time and strength have not robbed him of his best gifts. In many respects the present year is the same as the year in which were written the letters from which we have quoted. His sons have now grown to manhood, but there is the same tender concern for their happiness and well-being. A worthy father of worthy sons. Richard Lloyd George (now Captain) and Gwilym Lloyd George (now Lieutenant) were amongst the first to come forward when a call was made for men to fight in the cause of Justice and Liberty. *The true blood is in their veins.*

WIDE AUTHORITY.

CHAPTER XVI.

WIDE AUTHORITY.

Those who would treat politics and morality apart will never understand the one, or the other.

JOHN MORLEY. *Rousseau.*

A man full of energy, inspired by the fervid genius of the Celt, whom gallant little Wales has sent to an office of wide authority.

THE PUBLIC ORATOR, *Oxford,* when Mr. Lloyd George was made an honorary D.C.L.

When in 1905 came the fall of the Conservative Government, Mr. Lloyd George had become so valuable a member of the Opposition that his inclusion in the new Ministry was taken for granted. Few anticipated, however, that he would be selected for the Board of Trade. Indeed, the appointment came as a general surprise. But it was soon realised that he was fitted in a marked degree for the post. In due course, he brought about greater legislative and administrative changes than can be placed to the credit of any previous President of the Board of Trade. It was thought in many quarters that the Board of Trade was a sort of "cut and dried" Department, affording little scope for the exercise of new ideas. Lloyd George dispelled the popular notion. He not only removed obstructions to the commercial welfare of the country, but was instrumental in placing on the Statute Book three highly

important measures, namely, the Merchant Shipping Act, the Port of London Act, and the Patents Act.

Even his opponents began to recognise openly his sterling qualities. In one Conservative newspaper we find him referred to at this time as the *Mascot of the Government.* Clearly, *high office* was in store for him. The expected honour was not long in coming. When Mr. Asquith became Prime Minister in 1908, he was appointed with the general approval of the Nation to the responsible office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it is noteworthy that *The Times* newspaper remarked at the time that "no better man could have been chosen for the post." True, *The Times* changed its tune later, but the compliment had been set down: "No better man could have been chosen for the post." Concerning the Budget of 1910 and the Insurance Act of 1912 *The Times* had much to say. Still fresh in the mind are the efforts made to destroy the Insurance Bill. A revolution was threatened. But Mr. Lloyd George boldly faced his opponents, and finally defeated their opposition. The Act was passed, and "stands," say those who favour the measure, "as a beneficent factor in our daily life."

Of other measures of social reform—Old Age Pensions and the Land Question — mention has been made elsewhere in these pages. Here we may allow ourselves the privilege of dwelling again briefly upon the manner and style of the man who "caused the breath of the Welsh mountains to blow over the musty

officialism of Westminster." That he came into power with strong views with regard to permanent officials is well known. He saw the long-standing evils and came fully prepared to sweep them away. His predecessors had been content with a smattering of knowledge. He made himself master of every detail. He was determined that there should be no more dictating on the part of officials. The old order had stood long enough. It was high time that it gave way to a state in keeping with the onward march of progress.

As regards the Bills passed during Mr. Lloyd George's tenure of office as President of the Board of Trade, the Merchant Shipping Act is considered the most important. In this, as in other Acts, Mr. Lloyd George went in quest of knowledge to the highest authorities. Before the Act was framed, the leading ship owners and seamen were consulted, and the result was that an Act was introduced that vastly improved the standing of both masters and men, and was, indeed, spoken of by Mr. Bonar Law as "a protection against unfair foreign competition." As for the Port of London Bill, that, it is claimed, went far to solve the problem which had baffled many of Mr. Lloyd George's predecessors. Here again, Tory opinion favoured the measure. "It was," said Lord Milner, "the best way out of a very difficult and complicated position."

No less important in its aims was the Patents Bill. This Bill sought to "assist British commerce and encourage the establishment and extension of British industrial enterprise."

Concerning this measure also, leading Conservatives spoke favourably, but now with a second motive. They thought they saw in the Bill steps favourable to the principles of Protection. But they were soon disillusioned. Mr. Lloyd George protested that the Bill, far from being of a protectionist nature, was distinctly and essentially a measure favouring Free Trade.

Later on came the fight between the Lords and the people. Thus far there had been some progress, but vested interests were now threatened, and the House of Lords rose up in arms. Mr. Lloyd George's scathing remarks when the Government Education Bill was thrown out by the Lords are still fresh in the memory. The aim of the Bill was to settle by "mutual consent" the aspirations of both the Established and the Free Churches. Lord Lansdowne called a confidential meeting of the Unionist Peers, with the result that the Bill was killed before it came before the Upper House. "Lord Lansdowne," Mr. Lloyd George said, "arrogated to himself a position which no King claimed since the ominous days of Charles I. . . . Decrees are issued from Lansdowne House that Buckingham Palace would not dream of sending forth."

Matters went from bad to worse, when, in 1909, the "People's Budget" was thrown out by the Lords. To interfere in matters of Finance was a fresh piece of daring. A storm immediately arose. The Lords had gone too far! "I have them now!" Mr. Lloyd George cried triumphantly. "Their greed has overborne their craft." It remained, however, with

Mr. Asquith to open a definite campaign. Speaking at the Albert Hall, Mr. Asquith said: "Neither I nor any other Liberal Minister, supported by a majority of the House of Commons, is going to submit again to the rebuffs and humiliations of the past four years. We shall not resume office unless we can secure the safeguards which experience shows us to be necessary for the legislative utility and honour of the party of progress."

As for Mr. Lloyd George, the ground suited admirably his spirit and manner of fighting. It was futile for men high up the social ladder to throw missiles upon his head. He threw back with such force that his opponents were almost invariably brought to earth. The Duke of Beaufort, addressing a meeting of his tenantry, said he would "like to see Lloyd George in the middle of twenty couple of hounds." "Robber," others called the Chancellor. And not a few dubbed him a "thief." Replies made by the "thief" were distinctly disconcerting. Lord Milner advised the Lords (in language only too familiar) to throw out the Bill. Fatal advice! Indeed, it was not long before the Lords dug a hole for the burying of their own power!

Later, as the result of an appeal to the country, the Liberals were returned to power with a majority of 125, and the suspended Budget was duly passed. The Lords were defeated. At the instance of the Cabinet the House of Commons now passed a series of resolutions:—"That the House of Lords be absolutely ex-

cluded from the domain of Finance; that its power of veto over measures passed by the Commons should be restricted; that the constitution of the House of Lords should be modified as to make it an elective instead of an hereditary chamber."

In due course the resolutions were embodied in the "Parliament Bill," and after the appeal to the country in December, 1910, the Lords were "compelled to sign their own death warrant." The Bill passed in August, 1911, and the placing upon the Statute Book of the Irish Home Rule Bill, and the Welsh Disestablishment Bill followed as a natural course.

With the exception of the bitter enmity which arose out of Mr. Lloyd George's attitude at the time of the South African War, never was feeling so strong against him. The Conservative papers rained abuse upon him in a manner that might well have damped the ardour of a weaker man. But Mr. Lloyd George thrived on the treatment. Receiving the shower in the proverbial manner of the duck, he proceeded to counter attack in full and steady manner. He seemed to revel in the storms. The Democracy favoured his measures. He neither asked nor desired more. As for his opponents' attitude toward the "People's Budget," how natural they should resent having their pockets touched! Conservative papers, famous for their readiness to protect vested interests, declared in wordy "leaders" that the country was on the verge of ruin.

How different in the present dark year of real

and serious trial ! Now we hear of a *New* Lloyd George, and one of the very papers to which we have referred declares that, 'Mr. Lloyd George is the only Minister in the Cabinet who understands his business, and can be relied upon in the day of Britain's peril.'

THE GREAT EUROPEAN WAR.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GREAT EUROPEAN WAR.

A Nation with whom sentiment is nothing is on the way to cease to be a nation at all.

J. A. FROUDE.

He threatens the innocent who protects the guilty. COKE.

The love of liberty is the love of others; the love of power is the love of ourselves. HAZLITT.

IT has been said that "if to hate war, to strive earnestly for peace, to seek friendship of foreign nations, are the marks of a pacifist, then throughout his career Lloyd George has been a pacifist." He has desired most earnestly to establish peace with all nations, but not peace at any price.

Elsewhere we have recalled a speech made in 1899. "The real test of liberalism," he then said, "is not its readiness to fight, but the object for which it fights. If it is desired that this country should enter on a course of militarism and of fighting our neighbours for our own aggrandisment and for theft and plunder, that is a course of action which the Liberal party at all costs should oppose, either in or out of its ranks. If, on the other hand, it is simply a question of defending such possessions as we have already got, and which I believe we administer well, or if it is some great question of principle,

some question of the protection of the weak and oppressed, then we should all unite in regard to it. In the days of Elizabeth the Puritans were the best fighters, but they fought for a noble and just cause—the cause of religious and civil freedom, whether in England or abroad. And as long as there is some great cause of that kind to fight for, we ought to be ready to fight for it now as we were three hundred years ago."

It is well that we should keep the words in mind, for they show, as nothing else could, that the sword wielded by Mr. Lloyd George early in life is the sword he wields still—*the Sword of Freedom and Justice.* By training and *conviction* he is a pacifist. There is, however, a sense in which he is militant, and we have seen that few men can wage war with a stronger hand.

He has ever been the champion of small nations. The violation of the neutrality of Belgium moved the deepest roots of his being. "There is no man," he said at the Queen's Hall on September 19th, 1914, "who has always regarded the prospect of engaging in a great war with a greater reluctance and repugnance than I have done throughout the whole of my political life. There is no man more convinced that we could not have avoided war with Germany without national dishonour. I am fully alive to the fact that every nation who has ever engaged in any war has always invoked the sacred name of honour. Many a crime has been committed in its name; there are some being

committed now. All the same, national honour is a reality, and any nation that disregards it is doomed. Why is our honour as a country involved in this War? Because in the first instance we are bound by honourable obligations to defend the independence, the liberty, the integrity of a small neighbour who has always lived peaceably. She could not have compelled us; she was weak; but the man who declines to discharge his duty because his creditor is too poor to enforce it is a blackguard. We entered into a treaty—a solemn treaty—to defend Belgium and her integrity. Our signatures are attached to the documents. Our signatures do not stand there alone; this country was not the only country who undertook to defend the integrity of Belgium. Russia, France, Austria, Prussia—they are all there. Why are Austria and Prussia not performing the obligations of their bond? It is suggested that when we quote this treaty it is purely an excuse on our part—it is our low craft and cunning to cloak our jealousy of a superior civilisation that we are attempting to destroy. Our answer is the action we took in 1870. What was that? Mr. Gladstone was then Prime Minister. Lord Granville, I think, was then Foreign Secretary. I have never heard it laid to their charge that they were ever jingoes. That treaty bound us then. We called upon the belligerent powers to respect it. We called upon France and we called upon Germany. At that time, bear in mind, the greatest danger to Belgium came from France and not from Germany. We intervened

to protect Belgium against France, exactly as we are now doing to protect her against Germany. We proceeded in exactly the same way. We invited both the belligerent Powers to state that they had no intention of violating Belgian territory. What was the answer given by Bismarck? He said it was superfluous to ask Prussia such a question in view of the treaties in force. France gave a similar answer. We received at that time the thanks of the Belgian people for our intervention in a very remarkable document. It is a document addressed by the municipality of Brussels to Queen Victoria after that intervention, and it reads—

The great and noble people over whose destinies you preside has just given a further proof of its benevolent sentiments towards our country. . . . The voice of the English nation has been heard above the din of arms, and it has asserted the principles of justice and right. Next to the unalterable attachment of the Belgian people to their independence, the strongest sentiment which fills their hearts is that of an imperishable gratitude.

"That was in 1870. Mark what followed. Three or four days after that document of thanks, a French army was wedged up against the Belgian frontier, every means of escape shut out by a ring of flame from Prussian cannon. There was one way of escape. What was that? Violating the neutrality of Belgium. What did they do? The French on that occasion preferred ruin and humiliation to the breaking of their bond. The French Emperor, The French Marshals, a hundred thousand gallant Frenchmen in arms, preferred to be carried captive

to the strange land of their enemies, rather than dishonour the name of their country. It was the last French army in the field. Had they violated Belgian neutrality, the whole history of that war would have been changed, and yet, when it was the interest of France to break the treaty then, she did not do it.

"It is the interest of Prussia to-day to break the treaty, and she has done it. She avows it with cynical contempt for every principle of justice.

"What is their defence? Consider the interview which took place between our Ambassador and the great German officials. When their attention was called to this treaty to which they were parties, they said: 'We cannot help that. Rapidity of action is the great German asset.' There is a greater asset for a nation than rapidity of action, and that is honest dealing. What are Germany's excuses? She says Belgium was plotting against her; Belgium was engaged in a great conspiracy with Britain and with France to attack her. Not merely is it not true, but Germany knows it is not true. What is her other excuse? That France meant to invade Germany through Belgium. That is absolutely untrue. France offered Belgium five army corps to defend her if she were attacked. Belgium said: "I do not require them; I have the word of the Kaiser. Shall Cæsar send a lie?" All these tales about conspiracy have been vamped up since. A great nation ought to be ashamed to behave like a fraudulent bankrupt, perjuring its way through its obligations. What she says

is not true. She has deliberately broken this treaty, and we were in honour bound to stand by it.

"Belgium has been treated brutally. How brutally we shall not yet know. We already know too much. But what had she done? Had she sent an ultimatum to Germany? Had she challenged Germany? Was she preparing to make war on Germany? Had she inflicted any wrong upon Germany which the Kaiser was bound to redress? She was one of the most unoffending little countries in Europe. There she was—peaceable, industrious, thrifty, hard-working, giving offence to no one. And her cornfields have been trampled, her villages have been burnt, her art treasures have been destroyed, her men have been slaughtered—yea, and her women and children too. Hundreds and thousands of her people, their neat, comfortable little homes burnt to the dust, are wandering homeless in their own land. What was their worst crime? Their crime was that they trusted to the word of a Prussian King. I do not know what the Kaiser hopes to achieve by this war. I have a shrewd idea of what he will get; but one thing he has made certain, and that is that no nation will ever commit that crime again."

As regards the three years preceding the War, it will be remembered that in July, 1911, the coast of Morocco became a sore point in international affairs. On the first day of July, 1911, the German Ambassador in London informed Sir Edward Grey that the Imperial Government had decided that to support German interests

it was necessary to send a cruiser to the Port of Agadir. It is said that 'the announcement implied that Germany, who, in the Emperor's words, *would not be denied her place in the sun*, had determined that she must be consulted in regard to the situation which had arisen from the French expedition to Fez and the Spanish occupation of Ports in the interior.'

At the same time, Sir Edward Grey was advised 'that the Imperial Government regarded a return to the *status quo* in Morocco as doubtful, if not impossible, and that what they contemplated was a definite solution of the Moroccan question between Germany, France and Spain.' There was, it seems, the feeling that there was no disposition on the part of Germany to consult Great Britain. It was claimed at the time that Great Britain had no desire to acquire territory in Morocco, but the fact remained that she was bound by treaty obligations to France.

Now as regards the part played by Mr. Lloyd George: on the day of a highly important interview between the English Foreign Secretary and the German Ambassador, Mr. Lloyd George was announced to speak at the Mansion House. After consultation with Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith it was decided that he should speak of foreign affairs, but within certain limits. Sir Edward Grey said later, "We were anxious as to the way in which things were developing, and we all then felt that for a Cabinet Minister of first-rate importance to make a speech on a formal occasion, and to say no word about

foreign affairs would be misleading to public opinion here and everywhere."

'It is essential,' Mr. Lloyd George said in his speech, 'to the highest interest not merely of this country, but of the world, that Britain should at all hazards maintain her place and prestige amongst the Great Powers. Her potent influence has many a time in the past, and may yet in the future, be valuable in the cause of human liberty. It has more than once in the past redeemed Continental nations—who are sometimes too apt to forget that service—from overwhelming disaster and national extinction. I would make great sacrifices to preserve peace. I can conceive of nothing that could justify disturbance of international goodwill, except questions of the greatest national moment, but if a situation were forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position which Britain has won by centuries of heroism and achievement, by allowing Britain to be treated, where her interests are vitally affected, as if she were of no account in a Cabinet of nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure.'

'The speech,' Sir Edward Grey said later, 'claimed no pre-eminence, no predominance for us in international affairs. It contained no menace. It did not say that there was any particular demand or claim on the part of Germany that was inconsistent with British interests. Its purpose and its point was that

where British interests are affected we must not be treated as if we were of no account. . . . If the time ever comes when this cannot be said by a Minister in the position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer we shall have ceased to exist as a great nation.'

This was in answer to criticism levelled against Mr. Lloyd George's speech. It was said in certain quarters that the 'Apostle of Peace' of 1899 had developed a war-like spirit. But it was soon seen beyond all doubt where the warlike spirit lay, though it is not easy to say precisely when the change in Germany's policy began. It is, however, quite clear that 'the determination in Germany to expand by seizing other nations' possessions gradually developed into a settled policy, under the plea of necessity.'

"Germany," writes Sir Andrew Wingate, "continued to increase her fleet, with the knowledge that she was preparing to challenge England to a contest for the supremacy of the seas. Prince Bulow was convinced that a conflict with England would never come to pass if Germany did not indulge in undue and unlimited shipbuilding and armaments. Count Reventlow, writing on recent German foreign policy, admits that this caution ceased to guide the naval programme. Had the '*Dreadnought* movement in Great Britain,' he declares, 'either not been imitated in Germany, or not at once, or had Germany, in view of the higher cost per ship, restricted the number to be laid down, it is possible that English policy towards Germany

would have undergone another transformation. . . . . The anxiety about the German fleet would have been removed.' . . .

"As a matter of fact, there was strong public opinion in this country as to exactly how the British fleet was to be used. The German Government was aware of this. Nevertheless, it decided to have a fleet so powerful in gun and swift in speed that England would find it difficult to keep pace with it."

In this connection it is interesting to recall the fact that Mr. Lloyd George, who in time past has been accused of being a "Little Navyite," said in his Budget speech in April, 1909, that "we all value too highly the immunity which this country has long enjoyed from the horrors of an invaded land to endanger it for lack of timely provision. That immunity is a great national asset. It is an essential part of that great national wealth which security has enabled us to build up. It means an inviolable guarantee for our national freedom and independence. Many a time it has been a citadel and sole guarantee which has saved the menaced liberties of Europe from an impending doom. We do not intend to put in jeopardy the Naval supremacy which is not only essential to our national existence, but to the vital interests of Western civilization."

It is true that against this must be placed various public utterances by Mr. Lloyd George which took the form of a protest against increased naval expenditure. For example—: "Rich nation as we are, we cannot afford to

build navies against nightmares. It is much too expensive an operation." In this attitude he was not without supporters. Indeed, it is said that both parties in the House were blind to the actual trend of affairs. Out of the breadth of his sympathies Mr. Lloyd George believed, and still believes, in the great masses of the German people. "I will not say a single word in disparagement of them," he said in the famous speech delivered at the Queen's Hall. "They are a great people, and have great qualities of head and hand and heart. I believe, in spite of recent events, that there is as great a store of kindliness in the German peasant as in any peasant in the world; but he has been drilled into a false idea of civilisation. It is efficient, it is capable; but it is a hard civilisation; it is a selfish civilisation; it is a material civilisation. They cannot comprehend the action of Britain at the present moment. They say, France we can understand; she is out for vengeance; she is out for territory—Alsace and Lorraine. They say they can understand Russia; she is fighting for mastery—she wants Galicia. They can understand you fighting for vengeance—they can understand you fighting for mastery—they can understand you fighting for greed of territory; but they cannot understand a great Empire pledging its resources, pledging its might, pledging the lives of its children, pledging its very existence, to protect a little nation that seeks to defend herself."

Now as regards the part played by "The Land of My Fathers." Mr. Lloyd George saw Lord

Kitchener and urged the raising of a Welsh Army with Welsh speaking officers. Indeed, Colonel Owen Thomas left the War Office that same day as the "first Brigadier-General of the first Welsh Army the world has seen since Sir Rhys ap Thomas led the men of Carmarthenshire, Breconshire, and Cardiganshire to Bosworth Field, and with his own hands placed the crown of England on the Welsh prince, Henry Tudor. Mr. Lloyd George's appeal to his fellow-countrymen was as readily responded to as had been the war-torch which Owen Glyndwr sent flaming through the length and breadth of the Principality. Lord Kitchener now has at his command a larger Welsh Army than Wellington had of combined British forces in the battle of Waterloo, exactly a hundred years ago. And the record of the Welsh Fusiliers and the South Wales Borderers in this War, up to the time of writing, will compare with the proudest and most daring feats of arms by any nation in this or any previous campaign."

These are the just claims of a Welshman (Mr. Beriah Evans) who continues : "It must be to the credit of Mr. Lloyd George, too, that His Majesty King George V. created a body of Welsh Guards—that envied aristocracy of the British Army—His Majesty himself becoming its Colonel-in-Chief. and thus placing the Principality in a military sense on a footing of equality with the three sister nations in the United Kingdom. Lord Kitchener placed the finishing touch upon the recognition of that separate Welsh nationality for which Mr. Lloyd

George has ever stood, by issuing an army order authorizing the use of the Welsh language at all times in the Welsh Army."

Little wonder if Mr. Lloyd George is proud of the Principality! To speak to him of Wales is to learn that his heart still dwells in a certain valley between the mountains and the sea. A man of innumerable activities, he still rests at times in tender thought amid old familiar scenes. His love for the Principality still inspires his finest utterances, and there is no situation to which, out of his love for Wales, he cannot apply an apt illustration. "I know a valley in North Wales between the mountains and the sea," he said in his famous speech at the Queen's Hall. "It is a beautiful valley, snug, comfortable, sheltered by the mountains from all the bitter blasts. But it is very enervating, and I remember how the boys were in the habit of climbing the hill above the village to have a glimpse of the great mountains in the distance, and to be stimulated and freshened by the breezes which came from the hilltops, and by the spectacle of their grandeur. We have been living in a sheltered valley for generations. We have been too comfortable and too indulgent, many, perhaps, too selfish, and the stern hand of fate has scourged us to an elevation where we can see the everlasting things that matter for a nation—the great peaks we had forgotten, of Honour, Duty, Patriotism, and, clad in glittering white, the towering pinnacle of sacrifice pointing like a rugged finger to Heaven. We shall descend into the valleys

again; but as long as the men and women of this generation last, they will carry in their hearts the image of those mighty peaks whose foundations are not shaken, though Europe rock and sway in the convulsions of a great war."

MINISTER OF MUNITIONS.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MINISTER OF MUNITIONS.

Thou, O God, selleth all things at the price of labour.
LEONARDO.

THE Liberal Government held good for a while after the declaration of war, but behind the scenes, and indeed, clear to public gaze, there were difficulties which threatened to develop into serious obstacles. The outcome was, the Premier and his followers were called upon to sacrifice their immediate personal interests to the common good. This they did with a loyalty and disinterestedness that called forth commendation from all parties. A Coalition Government was formed: Liberal, Conservative and Labour Members came shoulder to shoulder.

There were still, however, many grave difficulties to be overcome. Disquieting news came of the deficiency of shells. Shrapnel our army had in plenty, but shrapnel had been found of little or no use in modern conditions of warfare. It was necessary to destroy the enemies' positions, and open the way to infantry attacks. High explosive shells were the urgent need—a large and constant supply. Moreover, heavy guns were in demand. Official calculations had failed. Worse still, the wrong kind of munitions were still being manu-

factured and sent to the front. "The calculations," wrote the late Editor of the *Daily Citizen* "were hopelessly wrong, and deliveries were not made to anything like the degree required. In view of all that came after, it is important to emphasise the fact that the Committee had no power. It is pretty certain that Mr. Lloyd George fought strongly for drastic improvements and extensions, but neither he nor any other member of the committees was in a position to do anything. The executive power was only created at a later date, when the Ministry of Munitions came into existence. Well-meaning officialdom enveloped him on all sides. It will be on record in the future that his vision pierced a good deal of muddle-headedness and that he went on strenuously making arrangements for a new state of things." The result was the creation of a new post, with Mr. Lloyd George at the head. He now became Minister of Munitions.

Previous to accepting the post, Mr. Lloyd George in his wisdom had obtained from the House of Commons power for the Government to take over any works suitable for the making of munitions. All were alive now to the urgent needs of our armies in the field, and it was felt that a direct appeal to manufacturers and workmen would be sufficient to bring about the desired results. To this appeal there was in many quarters a ready response. It was, however, soon realised that the actual and most urgent need was a complete reorganisation of the country's resources. The fact, once grasped,

was immediately acted upon. Mr. Lloyd George introduced a plan to mobilise the engineering resources of the country. Counties were mapped out and every available factory and workshop brought into 'a co-ordinated scheme for the production of munitions of war.'

It is good to record that the new minister was not wanting in loyal and willing support. Influential men flocked in increasing numbers to his help—" great engineers, famous managers, men who had made fortunes by their ingenuity and power of organisation. They were prepared to work for nothing in the emergency of the nation, and they placed themselves unreservedly at Mr. Lloyd George's disposal. With their aid and that of the local committees who had enthusiastically devoted themselves to the work, the big munition scheme grew swiftly. A thousand difficulties had to be encountered on the way. Labour was suspicious of the profits made by the manufacturers; manufacturers condemned the restrictions of the Trade Unions."

The Minister of Munitions lost no time in bringing his peculiar gifts to play upon the situation. Again, his knowledge of men and powers of persuasion came to the fore. But now to persuasiveness he added strong words. So strong, indeed, were some of his observations touching certain sections of labour that not a few people declared that Lloyd George had at last " found out " the working man!

But the truth is, the whole system of the production of munitions was at fault. A fresh and still more vigorous awakening was now the

crying need, and again without hesitation Mr. Lloyd George applied the necessary measures. Speaking at Manchester on June 3rd, 1915, he said: "It depends more upon the masters and men who are occupied in running the workshops of the country, than upon almost any section of the community, whether Britain will emerge from this colossal struggle beaten, humiliated, stripped of power and honour and influence, the mere bond slave of a cruel military tyranny, or whether she will come out triumphant, free, more powerful for good than ever in the affairs of men. You have read—and so have I—appeals from the front to the workshop. I would almost say that at the present moment everything depends on the workshops of Britain. Have you read that anxious tale of the struggle which is going on now in Galicia? Read it, read it well, read it intelligently, and you will find how much the workshops count in this war."

The need was most *urgent*, and Mr. Lloyd George set out the case in the plainest possible language: "When the house is on fire," he said later, "questions of procedure, of precedence, of etiquette, of time, and division of labour disappear. You cannot say that you are not liable to service at three o'clock in the morning, if the fire is proceeding. You don't choose the hour; you cannot argue as to whose duty it is to carry the water bucket and whose duty it is to tip it into the crackling furnace. You must put the fire out. There is only one way to do that. That is, everything must give way to

duty, good-fellowship, comradeship, and determination; you must put the whole of your strength into obtaining victory for your native land and for the liberties of the world.

"We have been endeavouring to conduct a war against the most formidable antagonist that ever attacked human liberties, with the ordinary, clumsy, unhandy weapons of peace. You may as well send our men to face shrapnel and howitzers armed with picks and shovels as to go through the war with your industrial army organised, equipped and armed with the weapons of peace. They are not applicable. The ordinary methods of controversy are inapplicable. Party politics are gradually vanishing. We hear occasionally a lingering growl, and we are all looking forward to the days when we will hear the roar of the party politician again. It will be a proof that peace has returned. I am not sure that the same men will quarrel with the same men; in fact, I am fairly certain that they will not; but I hope it may be that when the hour for reconstruction comes, all will be for the State, all will be for the nation."

This ideal of hard work and self-sacrifice was proclaimed and "pressed home" in all industrial quarters. Speaking later at Cardiff (June 11th, 1915) Mr. Lloyd George said: "The appeal which has been made to the manhood of this country is not an appeal for recruits. It is an appeal for work, it is an appeal for skill, it is an appeal for every resource which you can command; and I ask you, employers and workmen—yes, all classes—to so respond to the earnest

appeal that we make, that you will be able in the years to come to hear this war discussed on your hearthstones without colouring or cowering with shame for any deed that you have perpetrated. That is my appeal. I ask you to help us. You can do it. You can help this country to win the greatest triumph in its history. It is not a triumph for this country merely. Britain has simply gone in to uphold the standard of right, justice, and fair dealing among nations as well as among men—she has gone in for liberty in Europe. That is the battle cry. I am here to ask you to plant the flag on your workshops. Every lathe you possess, recruit it, enlist it. Convert your lathes and your machinery into battalions which will drive the foe from the land which he has tortured and devastated and trampled upon and disgraced, and liberty will be once more enthroned. It is a great war, it is a terrible war, but believe me that Britain, having entered upon it, cannot go back without wiping her name from the map of the world as a great power. There was a famous historic personage who once turned back and was converted into a pillar of salt, and tradition in the district says that that fact is responsible for the Dead Sea. Whether that is true or not, believe me, if Britain turns back on this journey and on this task she will become nothing but a 'dead sea' among nations. I therefore ask every man in this room and every man outside the room, who has the power and resource, to place both at the disposal of the State in this great hour of peril . . .

"We ought to have no party barriers at the present time. This is not the time to talk of convictions which divide us. We have one conviction in common—our country is right, and our country, being right, ought to win, and we will do our best to secure the victory. Conservatives, Unionists, Liberals, Socialists, Syndicalists—we are one people so long as this war lasts. And I appeal to the labour leaders of this district to do their best. It depends more upon them, I am told, in this district, than in any other district, because the word rests with organised labour here whether you are going to turn out double the supply of shells or simply to halve your possibilities. I think I am entitled, speaking not merely on behalf of the Ministry, but on behalf of a united nation, to appeal to everybody to relax every rule and regulation in order to make it possible for us to win a victory for justice and for right. A great Army has been organised, millions have placed themselves freely under a rigid and stern military discipline, and the achievement of Lord Kitchener in that respect is one of the most brilliant in military organisation. Where there are millions of men who have readily of their own accord, without compulsion, merely by an appeal to their instinct of patriotism, placed their lives at the disposal of their country, I think we who are at home, who are facing no dangers, who are not going to confront the horrors of the battlefield, the least we can do is with all our strength, all our skill, all our reserve, to help these brave lads to win."

The appeal made by Mr. Lloyd George was, as we have seen, to love of Country, to the sense of duty, and, in particular, to loyalty and fairness to the men who were facing the perils and bearing the hardships of the fight. Only by hard self-sacrificing labour could the working man win for himself the honour and glory of the heroic soldier. Every pit was a trench in the war, a labyrinth of trenches, every workshop was a rampart, every yard which could turn out munitions of war was a fortress; picks, shovels, lathes, hammers — they were as much the weapons of the great war of European liberty as the bayonet, the rifle, and the machine-gun. The man who did not handle them with all his strength was failing as much in his duty as the soldier who ran away from the battle at the front.

In a sentence, the ideal was, *Every Man a Fighter in the Cause of Freedom and Justice.* An American journalist, who sought an interview with Mr. Lloyd George at this time, writes: "I secured a fund of data in the Ministry of Munitions, which—if the pursuit had not been given up in despair in the meantime—would have consumed anywhere from two days to two weeks of waiting and wandering in the gloomy precincts of the other Ministries of Whitehall. The filling out of a simple blank form took me direct to a clear-eyed, clear-thinking young secretary, who promptly told me all he knew himself of what I was after, and who, the while he talked, made appointments over the 'phone at his elbow with the several

other secretaries who were able to furnish the remainder of the information desired. The Ministry of Munitions is the only place in England where I have seen the telephone brought to anything approaching the same usefulness as in the average American business concern."

"If he is in, and not in conference, Lloyd George may usually be seen—often on a few moments' notice—by anyone whom his secretary deems warranted in requesting the privilege. But he will not, in the present stress, be interviewed for publication; nor will he send a "message to the public," or undertake to answer any written questions submitted, the preferred method of the British Cabinet Ministers. I may, however, set down a little incident which occurred outside of 6, Whitehall Gardens, to show the marvellous touch in which the Minister of Munitions keeps with the endlessly ramified departments under his control. The day after the now famous Bristol speech I chanced to be lunching at the St. S.———, a well-known political club near the Houses of Parliament, with a technical expert of the Munitions Department. Lloyd George, another Cabinet Minister, and a couple of M.P.'s were at a near-by table.

"'Lloyd George doesn't know me from Adam,' said my friend, 'but I cannot miss the chance to congratulate him on his great speech. It's going to mean smoother going for us in all departments.'

"Stepping across to the Minister of Munitions' table, he extended his hand, with a word of explanation as to who he was. Lloyd George,

who had been accepting a running fire of felicitations without rising, was on his feet in an instant. 'You're C——— of the B—— E—— Company. I know. You came from South Africa at your own expense and have been working in the Munitions Department at a fraction of your regular salary. You have been in the hospital for a month with chronic dysentry, and have only been back at your desk for a week. It's a shame I haven't sent word to tell you, and the other chaps with you that have come from the ends of the earth to help us, how deeply we appreciate your sacrifices and services. I don't know what we should have done without you all. By the way, isn't there a young American explosive expert from Johannesburg working with you—a chemical engineer named Q———, I think it is? Please tell him how especially fine I think it is that he should have joined us to do his bit. I'm going to get round to see you all before long.'"

There was, of course, still much smoothing to be done, much grit to be removed. But already great progress had been made. Woman labour was now being employed, and unskilled labour was being used as it was never used before. Trade Union rights had been partly given up, and many sections were lending willing hands. Indeed, seldom, if ever, has England been the scene of such a transformation in labour as the munitions work caused. "Cotton factories, carpet factories, motor-car workshops, tramcar depots, bicycle shops, technical schools and innumerable workshops of the kind were drawn

into the ring of activity." All this was in addition to the establishment of large Government factories to turn out nothing but war material, directly organised from the Ministry of Munitions.

Capitalists, hesitating in the first instance, now heartily embraced the new Minister. Labour, fearing at one time injury to their rights, took on a more friendly attitude. Indeed, Labour was said at this time to have taken to itself a new dignity. Praising his helpers in the House of Commons on July 28th, 1915, Mr. Lloyd George said: "All the men who are engaged in this task are now working hard. They are working very hard, and I can assure all those whom it may concern that they have neither the time nor the inclination to engage in the sorry and squalid intrigues which seem to fill the minds of evil-disposed persons. They are engaged upon their wok, and all we ask is that both plotters and plot-mongers—I am not sure which is the more mischievous in a time of emergency—shall just keep their hands and their tongues off the Ministry of Munitions."

The warning was scarcely needed. Other departments were subjected to adverse criticism, but Mr. Lloyd George's department was widely acclaimed. *A signal of victory in a dark hour.*

"There are some people," he said at the London Opera House, June 29th, 1915, "who can see nothing but the black menace in the sky, and they imagine it shows a lack of foresight to look at the wide stretches of blue still smiling in the heavens. There are some, on the other hand, who fix their gaze rigidly on the clear

azure above the seas. They deem it disloyal to take any note of the dark thunder-clouds that are rolling up in the East and the grey sky which is hanging so heavily over the plains of Flanders and of France. The new parties are the Blue Sky school and the Grey Sky school. Let me tell you what I think about the sky. The sky is mottled. Let us look boldly at the firmament, ignoring nothing, being partisans of no fact, taking them all in, preparing for the worst and rejoicing in the best, being ready for the thunder-showers when they come, but in the full knowledge that the sun is shining behind the darkest storm-clouds and in the full faith that its illuminating rays will soon break through and scatter the gloom which hangs on the horizon of European democracy."

THE HIGHEST INTERESTS OF LABOUR.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HIGHEST INTERESTS OF LABOUR.

A faithful friend is the medicine of life.
ECCLESIASTICUS VI., 16.

"OUR chief want in life," says Emerson, "is somebody who shall make us do what we can. That is the service of a friend." And that is the service the Minister of Munitions has sought to render to Labour. "War," he has said, "creates a new outlook, demands a fresh order; you cannot haggle with an earthquake. . . All this chaffering about relaxing a rule here and suspending a custom there is out of place. I beg the skilled workmen of this country in whose keeping are the destinies of labour, to lift up their eyes above the mists of distrust and suspicion, and ascend to the heights of the greatest opportunity that ever opened before their class."

He was impatient with the labour leaders who expected the privileges of peace in time of war. 'I tell you quite frankly,' he said at Manchester, 'it may be dangerous to depend upon the continuation of our present conditions. You must remember this. The voluntary army you have at the front consists of men who have placed their movements under the complete direction of those who represent the State. Their time, their movements, their direction, the very

locality they are in, are chosen by the officers of the State; their very lives are at the disposal of the State. That enables those who represent the State to concentrate them, to order them to a position where they can render the greatest service to the State. That is what a Voluntary army in a military sense means. I am sorry to say it does not mean that industrially. The regulations, the customs and practices which may be of great service in times of peace, are utterly inapplicable and out of place in the terrible urgency of war.'

Greatly daring, he hinted, nay, more than hinted at compulsion. "Some people," he said at Manchester, 'don't like the idea of compulsion. Compulsion is not meant for the majority of people. Your experience and mine must be that most people never come up against compulsion at all, because they not merely do as a matter of course what the law asks them; they do a great deal more without the law ever coming near them and asking them to do it. But there are a few who just lag behind, and it is very useful to have something that will jog them along. It is the elementary duty of every citizen to place the whole of his strength and resources at the disposal of his native land in its hour of need. No State can exist except on the basis of a full recognition of that duty on the part of every man and every woman in the land. To what extent and in what direction the moral duty of each citizen to give his best to the State should be converted into a legal duty, a question not of principle but of necessity, is to be decided

from time to time as the emergency arises during a period of war."

He protested strongly against the fear that rights and privileges sacrificed in time of war would be lost to the worker on the restoration of peace. Solemn pledges, he pointed out, had been given. Those pledges would certainly be kept. The old order would certainly reign again at the termination of the war. "I should like," he said in the House of Commons on July 28th, 1915, "to appeal to the trade union leaders to bring such pressure as they legitimately can to bear upon the men in their societies to work the arrangement made with the Government in a more liberal and in a more favourable and satisfactory sense. I am told—and I can only take this upon the reports that have come to me—that the men could easily turn out twenty-five per cent. at least more shot and shell and guns and materials of war if they could shake themselves during the war from the domination of practices which have controlled their actions in peace times. This is really a very serious matter. It is equivalent to adding not merely scores of thousands, but very nearly hundreds of thousands of men to these yards to get the men to suspend these practices. That is all we ask. I would like to tell my hon. friends associated with them that they would be rendering a very great service to the State if they were able to persuade the men to suspend these rules and practices during the period of the war, because nothing that can be done by the Government in the way of organising fresh supplies can

make any impression for some time. What can make an immediate impression is that the men should fling the whole of their strength and energy, without any regard to these practices, into turning out munitions of war. I cannot, without giving figures, which I ought not to give, make my hon. friends realise how vitally important it is to the interests of the country and to the protection of the men in the trenches —the comrades of the workers—their sons, their relatives, that they should, during the next few months, at any rate, do their very best and give all that is in them to increase the output in these yards.

"The trade union representatives know perfectly well to what I am referring. It is a sort of unwritten rule, a practice whereby production is limited almost by the amount which an average man could produce. No man is to go beyond a certain limit of output, in fact, it is regarded as an act of disloyalty by his comrades to do so. That is a very well-known fact, and no unionist denies it. During a period of peace there are reasons for it as well as against it. It is done to conserve the energies of the men, and undoubtedly the employers have been responsible, because in the past the moment men began to put forth the whole of their strength the employers mmediately reduced the piece rates. It takes a long time to get an experience of that kind out of the minds of the men. The fact of their abandoning these practices now will not prevent them from restoring them at the end of the war, but it is vital

that they should be abandoned during the war."

Again and yet again, Mr. Lloyd George insisted upon the vital necessity of abandoning during the period of the war the customs and practices of peace. "War," he said, once more "is like fever, a deadly fever. The rules which are applicable in health are utterly unsuited to a fever. Restraints which would be irksome, stupid and unnecessary when a man is healthy are essential to save his life in a fever. What is the use of the patient saying :—'I must have meat as usual, drink as usual, in fact more than usual, because I am thirstier than usual. I have a high temperature, so I am more parched than usual; there is a greater strain on my strength, so I really ought to have more than usual. If I want to go out, why should I be confined to that bed? Freedom above all! 'But you will die!' 'Ah,' he says, 'it is more glorious to die a free man than to live in bondage.' Let Britain be beaten and discredited and dishonoured, but let no man say that any Briton during the war was ever forced to do anything for his country except that which was pleasing in his own sight. . . . Ah! victory is *not* on that road."

He insisted upon strict living and self-sacrifice in all quarters. During the debate on the Budget proposals, May 12th, 1915, he said: "One thing is perfectly clear. The standard of living in this country for all classes will perforce be reduced in one way or another. Anyone who has studied the standard of living

during the last thirty or forty years must see how it has been rushing up at a prodigious rate. With the increasing wealth and prosperity of the country year by year, up has gone the standard of living. We shall find that the community will have to return to its old and simpler level of expenditure. It will be a good thing in itself. Had we better not face it at once? Men can make sacrifices of luxuries and comforts in a great war when they make sacrifice of life, so that this is the time when people will be prepared to bring themselves down to that level. There is the heat and there is the passion that will enable you to mould and remould a country and a society to some better form and fashion. You can do it in a great war, and this is the time for us to do it." He held that a war such as Great Britain was waging—a war in a righteous cause—called for reformation of character. Far from affording an excuse for any form of indulgence, the War demanded restraints hitherto unknown to the masses of the people. He hammered at this point, as the blacksmith hammers the red-hot iron. "There is," he said, "too much disposition to cling to the amenities of peace. Business as usual, enjoyment as usual, fashions, lock-outs, strikes, sprees—all as usual. Wages must go up, profits must also improve; but prices must at all costs be kept down. No man must be called upon to serve the State unless he wants to; even then he has only to be called upon to do exactly what he would like to do—not what he is fit for, not what

he is chosen for, but what he himself would like to do."

Later he said bitterly, "I am sick at heart at having constantly to call attention to the gravity of the position. I have done it for months, and even my friends get angry. I am sorry. I have done what I conceive to be my duty, and it would be a poor reward for me to say, 'Well, I told you so months ago.'"

Constantly crying "Wolf!" was to him a sorry task, but he felt compelled to repeat the cry. Speaking at the Conference of Representatives of the Miners of Great Britain, he said gravely: "The peril is a great one, the peril is an immediate one, but if the democracy of Britain rises to the occasion they will once more triumph over all the forces of despotism in Europe. Nothing I can possibly say will do more to convince the people of this country of the danger than the facts that appear from day to day in the papers—not the headlines; please pass those over. *Read the news.* The men who after doing that do not understand the peril of their country, would not believe it though one rose from the dead to tell them. And there are hundreds and thousands of them lying in the East and West who could tell the peril if they could speak. The time has come for every man, yes, and every woman who can, to help their country. There are scores of thousands of brave men, 250,000 miners among them, in the trenches, facing the death fury at this hour, waiting anxiously to hear the rattle of the loaded caissons coming from England to

aid them. The wagons are waiting outside the yard gates to be filled. Let us fill them; let us send them along. Then, when that is done, there will be written in letters of flame the greatest chapter in the history of these islands, in which it will be told how when the flag of freedom drooped for a moment under the onslaughts of a ruthless foe, the men and the women of Britain came to the rescue and planted it firmly on high whence no tyranny can pluck it down."

His sorrow and anxiety at the time of the coal strike affected him like a fever. "Coal," he declared, "is everything for us, and we want more of it to win victory. Coal is the most terrible of enemies, and it is the most potent of friends. Read that terrible casualty list given out by the Prime Minister the other day. Three hundred and fifty thousand British soldiers! They were casualties inflicted by German coal, by the Westphalian miner, working in co-operation with the Prussian engineer—without stint, without reserve, without regulation, putting their strength at the disposal of their Fatherland. . . ." In poignant terms he appealed to the miners to rise above their own petty interests. "Coal," he said, "is our international coinage. We buy goods abroad, food and raw material. We pay, not in gold, but in coal. In war it is life for us and death for our foes. It not merely fetches and carries for us; it makes the material and the machinery which it transports. It bends, it moulds, it fills the weapons of war. Steam means coal.

Rifles mean coal. Machine-guns mean coal. Cannons mean coal. Shells are made with coal. Shells are filled with coal. The very explosives inside them are coal, and then coal carries them on right into the battlefield to help our men."

At the conclusion of the South Wales coal strike his heart warmed towards the miner like the heart of a kindly and indulgent parent. "I congratulate all those who are interested in the coalfield," he said, "I congratulate the community, and I congratulate the Empire upon the fact that we have arrived at a satisfactory settlement of this terrible dispute. Personally I hate a quarrel—at least I can say I enter into quarrels very reluctantly, although you appear hardly to believe it. But at any rate, of this I am certain—that of all quarrels that would be distasteful would be a quarrel with my own flesh and blood, because I have so many friends in the minefield of South Wales, and throughout what is a fairly long political career I never had better, sturdier, or more reliable friends than those who live and labour in these valleys of South Wales. To me it was a grief—I can say more to you; to me the mere thought was a horror—that I should have to take part in a struggle with my best friends and with men who have the same blood coursing through their hearts as I have. It is a source of joy to me, a joy beyond all words which I can give you, that I am going back having shaken hands with my fellow-workmen in the South Wales minefield."

Having forgiven and embraced the wayward

miners, he went on, father-like, to plead with them to follow a nobler course of conduct in the future: "Do your best, as much as is in you, to make up for lost time, and show the democracy of France at any rate, that you are prepared to assist them in the common struggle for the freedom of the world. I want you to do this, too, for the sake of the British Navy which defends our shores—the Navy that makes it impossible for the ruthless German to trample our coalfields and cornfields as they are trampling those in France. Fill the bunkers. It means defence; it means protection; it means an inviolable Britain, it means that Britain, through your help, can still defy the most potent enemy in the world. And it depends upon you to help the British Navy to defend our shores. Upon the coal you turn out depends the steel, the explosive, the material that helps our men to meet the enemy on fairly equal terms. You need no certificate of patriotism in the Welsh Valleys. Major Lucas told me this morning that 56,000 men had already been enrolled in Glamorganshire. And how well they have fought! Did you read in yesterday's paper that tale of doughty deeds by the Welsh Fusiliers whose motto, "Gwell angau na chwilydd" (Better death than dishonour) has been written in blood on the battlefields of France? I envy the nerve, but not the heart, of the man who can read that story without a sob of pride. It is a great story, but do not forget they are asking you and me and everybody at home to help them to fight with a fair chance. That

depends upon us. Shell, shot, cannon, machine-guns, rifles—the enemy has them. Give these gallant comrades of ours a chance to face them with equal equipment! Peace at home is essential to victory abroad."

Such passages are nigh to tears. His heart, as we have seen, warmed towards the Welsh miners with the love of a father. Gallant little Wales held the greatest of mottoes—*Gwell angau na chwilydd.* Wales must live up to her high ideal: "Better death than dishonour." Later he said with pride: "Welsh courage has manifested itself in this war as never before in the history of Wales. When Magna Charta was wrested from a tyrannical king, there was a Welsh contingent among the forces that achieved that victory for English freedom, and there are Welsh names among the signatures of the potent document. When the charter of European liberty is drawn up after this war—the charter that will settle the fate of mankind on many continents for ages to come—it will be a source of pride to us that our little country contributed such a large and efficient contingent to the Army hat established a new charter for human liberty. . . . Our Welsh martial spirit was not dead—it was not even slumbering—it was simply hiding in its caves among the hills until he call came from above. War after war swept past it without rousing its old energies. At last it has come forth armed for battle and mightier than ever."

From his earliest days Mr. Lloyd George has loved to think of the *Land of My Fathers* as

blessed with the noblest ideals. This attitude springs from the deepest roots of his being, and is devoid of vainglory. His beloved Principality may be lacking in many things, but *not* in valour and self-sacrifice.

Speaking at Bangor (Feb. 28th, 1915) he recalled the legend of the Welshman who was given a series of what appeared to be impossible tasks to perform ere he could reach the desires of his heart. "Amongst other things he had to do was to recover every grain of seed that had been sown in a large field and bring it all in without one missing by sunset. He came to an anthill and won all the hearts and enlisted the sympathies of the industrious little people. They spread over the field and before sundown the seed was all in except one grain, and as the sun was setting over the western skies a lame ant hobbled along with that grain also."

"Some of us have youth and vigour and suppleness of limb," he continued, "some of us are crippled with years or with infirmities, and we are at best but lame ants. But we can all limp along with some share of our country's burden, and thus help her in this terrible hour to win the desire of her heart."

THROUGH TERROR TO TRIUMPH.

CHAPTER XX.

THROUGH TERROR TO TRIUMPH.

"He that knows that power is inborn, and, so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, works miracles."

EMERSON.

"Let your 'yes' be a strong 'yes,' and your 'no' be a brave 'no.' Don't shilly-shally, don't halt between two opinions; make one of them your own and abide by it. Waterloo had been lost unless Wellington had made up his mind, And to each of us comes his Waterloo, to be lost or won."

HAWEIS.

HERE we come still closer to the aims and aspirations of the Minister of Munitions. "We are only occupied on one task," he urged again in the House of Commons, July 28th, 1915, "We have concentrated upon it the whole of our mind and the whole of our strength—yes, and many of us up to the point of breaking down under the strain. I have had to warn several of the staff off the premises because I could see the strain in their faces, and I was convinced, unless I did so, those men would be incapable of returning for weeks and months. I do beg and appeal that we shall be allowed to go on with our work without interference." He realised that the utmost efforts were being made in many quarters. Masters and workmen alike were in very many cases doing their utmost to bring victory to our arms, and he did not hesi-

tate to praise where praise was due. Even for the erring miner he had further gentle and flattering words. "The Government," he said at the London Opera House, July 29th, 1915, "appeal to the miner to-day as a friend, as their friend, as the country's friend, as the friends of liberty in all lands and in every clime." And was not the liberty of the world threatened? "The privileges of peace," he again insisted, "must be sacrificed temporarily, to the universal good."

In an introduction to the volume published under the title given at the head of this chapter, he says, "The untoward incidents of the war have not weakened my faith in ultimate victory—always provided that the allied nations put forth the whole of their strength ere it is too late. Anything less must lead to defeat. The allied countries have an overwhelming preponderance in the raw material that goes to the making and equipment of armies, whether in men, money, or accessible metals and machinery. But this material has to be mobilised and utilised. It would be idle to pretend that the first twelve months of the war has seen this task accomplished satisfactorily. Had the Allies realised in time the full strength of their redoubtable and resourceful foes—nay, what is more, had they realised their own strength and resources, and taken prompt action to organise them, to-day we should have witnessed the triumphant spectacle of their guns pouring out a stream of shot and shell which would have deluged the German trenches with fire, and

scorched the German legions back across their own frontiers.

"What," he asks, "is the actual position? It is thoroughly well known to the Germans, and anyone in any land, belligerent or neutral, who reads intelligently the military news, must by now have a comprehension of it. With the resources of Great Britain, France, Russia—yea, of the whole industrial world—at the disposal of the Allies, it is obvious that the Central Powers have still an overwhelming superiority in all the material and equipment of war. The result of this deplorable fact is exactly what might have been foreseen. The iron heel of Germany has sunk deeper than ever into French and Belgian soil. Poland is entirely German, Lithuania is rapidly following. Russian fortresses, deemed impregnable, are falling like sand castles before the resistless tide of Teutonic invasion. When will that tide recede? When will it be stemmed? As soon as the Allies are supplied with abundance of war material.

"That is why I am recalling these unpleasant facts, because I wish to stir my countrymen to put forth their strength to amend the situation. To dwell on such events is the most disagreeable task that can fall to the lot of a public man. For all that, the public man who either shirks these facts himself, or does not do his best to force others to face them until they are redressed, is guilty of high treason to the State which he has sworn to serve."

The seriousness of the position cut like a knife

into his soul. He did not doubt that ultimate victory rested with the Allies, given certain conditions. But he was haunted by the fear that those all-important conditions might not be realised. "If we are not allowed," he said, "to equip our factories and workshops with adequate labour to supply our armies, because we must not transgress regulations applicable to normal conditions, if practices are maintained which restrict the output of essential war material; if the nation hesitates, when the need is clear, to take the necessary steps to call forth its manhood and defend honour and existence; if vital decisions are postponed until too late; if we neglect to make ready for all probable eventualities; if, in fact, we give ground for the accusation that we are slouching into disaster as if we were walking along the ordinary paths of peace without an enemy in sight; then I can see no hope; but if we sacrifice all we own for our native land; if our preparations are characterised by grip, resolution, and a prompt readiness in every sphere; then victory is assured."

The Munitions Bill was the natural outcome of the grave position. When introducing the Bill in the House of Commons on June 23rd, 1915, Mr. Lloyd George pointed out that the first step to increase the output, before sources of supply could be expanded, was to secure the necessary skilled labour to fill up the workshops which had plenty of machinery. "The next step," he continued, "is that such skilled labour as we have—it is quite inadequate in numbers—

should be eked out as much as possible by unskilled labour. There is a good deal of work which can be done by unskilled labour if you have skilled men looking after it. I was told by a firm at Bristol, which was undertaking to turn out shells, that if they were allowed to use unskilled labour, they could double their output, because they could then have a night shift, and could use exactly the same machinery. It happens very often that there is not enough skilled labour to utilise the machinery except during the day.

"The third problem is that the labour in the yards should put forward its best. Sometimes we do not get the best in the yards through regulations, useful and perhaps essential in times of peace for the protection of men against undue pressure and undue strain, but which in time of war have the effect of restricting the output. . . . I have a good deal of evidence of that. I have the evidence of a very reliable witness, who assures me from his experience that in some workshops the output could be doubled if these restrictions were withdrawn. Some of them are written, but the most difficult to deal with are unwritten. The written ones are regulations in regard to not allowing unskilled men to work by the side of skilled men, not allowing unskilled labour to take work which up to the present has been occupying skilled labour, and not allowing one man to attend to more than one machine. These are the written regulations, and I have no doubt that each and all of them have a foundation

on some sort of necessity for the protection of labour against undue claims upon its strength in normal cases.

"But the most devastating regulations are those which are not written, those which limit the output by making it impossible for a man to put forth the whole of his strength without bringing upon himself the displeasure of his fellows. It is very difficult to talk about such cases. If you are asked to put forward the cases, the men who supplied that information do not care to make themselves unpopular. But I have a letter, a very able letter, from an unskilled but educated man, who felt that it was his duty to do something for the State in this great crisis, and who applied for a job in a workshop where shells are turned out. The letter he writes me is rather a distressing one. He tells me that there is nothing in shell making that a fairly intelligent man cannot learn in a very short time. It is not highly skilled work. He applied himself to learning some particular branch of the work, and he asked one of the workmen to teach him. The workman very readily placed his services at his disposal, but was instantly ordered off. He was not allowed to learn that trade, and at last he took some sort of employment in the works where he did not come into contravention with the regulations.

"The worst thing of all, he tells me, is that there is undoubtedly amongst a section of the men in a piecework establishment a deliberate discouragement of what they regard as turning out too

much work, which might have the effect of calling for a revision of prices. There is no doubt at all as to the meaning of it. The meaning of it is this—and employers are, I think, very largely to blame for it—that if a man works his utmost in turning out this work, then the employer says, 'You earn £10 a week, that is monstrous.' If all the men did the same, they would revise the scale of wages, and cut down piece-work; so the men, for their own protection, say, 'We cannot do that, because the more we work the less our wages are.' There are two sides to this question. We have a guarantee from the employers that no advantage will be taken of any relaxation of trade union practice in this respect, and that if the men, by putting the whole of their strength into their work, earn large wages there shall be no revision of the rate of piece-work. On the other hand we must appeal to the men, for the sake of their country in a time of dire necessity, dire peril, to put the whole of their strength into their work to help their fellows in the field and to give them a good chance. We ask them to put forth the whole of their strength without any regard to the practices of the past, relying upon the honour of a great nation that it will see fair play for them at the end of the war."

In the same speech he drew the reins still tighter, and, it is said, applied the whip. "The next step," he said, "is one in which trade unions are concerned. We had a very frank discussion between the leaders of the trade unions and myself, and I was bound to point

out that if there was an inadequate supply of labour for the purpose of turning out the munitions of war which are necessary for the safety of the country, compulsion would be inevitable."

"If there are honourable friends of mine," he said later, "who are opposed to compulsion, the most effective service they can render to voluntaryism is to make this army a success. If we succeed by these means, if within seven days we secure the labour, then the need for industrial compulsion will to that extent have been taken away. I sincerely hope we shall succeed. If you have a voluntary army there must be a means of enforcing contracts. It is of no use having 20,000 or 30,000 men who say, 'We will go anywhere we are told,' if, when the time comes, they refuse and you cannot compel them. They volunteer to enter into this contract, but once they enter into it, it is a contract and it must be enforceable, and we take power in the Bill to enforce the contract."

So far as Mr. Lloyd George was concerned the case was perfectly clear. Men must work to their uttermost of their own freewill, or submit to other measures. Few, however, could believe that the acknowledged champion of Freedom and friend of the Democracy would ever sacrifice the principles for which he had fought since early boyhood. But this, it should be remembered, was "a time of terror."

A STORY OF PROGRESS.

CHAPTER XXI.

A STORY OF PROGRESS.

As soon as we have seen our plain duty in each thing that presents itself, let us confine ourselves to that, and withdraw ourselves from everything else.

FENELON.

EXPECTANTLY, anxiously, the Nation awaited an account of the work accomplished. What had the Minister of Munitions actually achieved? What was the state and scope of his Department at the time? What did the future hold? Commenting on the memorable speech made in the House of Commons on December 20th, 1915, *The Times* said that "Mr. Lloyd George's long-promised statement on the work of his Department would be unpleasant reading for certain people at home. It set out the truth about our shortcomings in supplying the Army with the indispensable means for doing work it was sent to do, and unfolded the great scheme inaugurated last May for making good the defects. The first part was a story of discreditable, but characteristic failure to recognise the need; the second a record of the equally characteristic effort made to meet it when once it was recognised."

In keeping with its attitude throughout the war, the *Times* rendered carefully and at their full depth the shadows in the picture, but allowed hopeful rays of lights. Other newspapers saw in the speech a picture rich in high-lights. All,

however, were mindful of the shadows. Mr. Lloyd George, it was pointed out, had taken over a task of inestimable difficulty. "The long and vivid account of work of the Ministry of Munitions," said the *Daily Chronicle*, "must impress everybody with the enormous scale and complexity of the work." The task, in a sentence, was recognised as calling for gifts of an order almost superhuman. *Too late!* had repeatedly dogged the steps of the Allies. The work of the Minister of Munitions was to overcome a heavy handicap, and race godlike, to the fore.

Mr. Lloyd George's account of the progress made was of a hopeful character. The racer, whilst mindful of his handicap, did not doubt his ability, with the aid of labour, to press well to the fore in the last lap. The main point of his speech was that the Central Powers' superiority in mechanical resources *must* be brought to an end. "What we stint in material," he said, "we squander in life. . . . Machinery saves lives. In May, when the enemy was turning out 250,000 shells a day, we were turning out only 15,000. . . . "The footsteps of the Allies have been dogged with the mocking spectre of '*Too late*.' . . . I beg employers and workmen not to let 'Too late' be inscribed on the portals of their workshops."

He dealt extensively with facts and figures. This, indeed, was what the people looked for—solid facts, indisputable figures. A speech, however, without glow and warmth would not be a speech by David Lloyd George as we know

him. Against the dull places stood out bright, luminous high lights.

"It is," he said on rising in the House, "now a little over six months since the Prime Minister invited me to take charge of the provision of munitions to the British Army in this war. Although the work is by no means complete, and some of the most important parts of it are still in course of development, I think the time has come to report progress to the House. Perhaps I had better preface my statements by a short survey of the relation of munitions to the problem of the war, so that the House should understand clearly why we have undertaken action in order to increase the supply. There has never been a war in which machinery played anything like the part which it is playing in this war. The place acquired by machinery in the arts of peace in the 19th century has been won by machinery in the grim art of war in the 20th century. In no war ever fought in this world has the preponderance of machinery been so completely established. The German successes, such as they are, are entirely, or almost entirely, due to the mechanical preponderance which they achieved at the beginning of the war. Their advances in the East and West and South are due to this mechanical superiority; and our failure to drive them back in the West and to check their advance in the East is also attributable to the tardiness with which the Allies developed their mechanical resources. The problem of victory is one of seeing that this superiority of the Central Powers shall be

temporary and shall be brought to an end at the earliest possible moment."

He then went on to describe in detail how the Ministry of Munitions was staffed and organised and how it set to work to make good the lack of shells. "In May," he said, "before the Department was created, the deliveries of high explosive shells were only 16 per cent. of the promises. The first duty of the Department was to see that contracts already entered into were executed, and the second was to seek fresh sources of supply by utilising the untapped engineering reserves of the country. The trouble, they found, arose from lack of machinery, of labour, of the steady supply of material, and sometimes from transport difficulties. A census was made of all the machinery in the country, the whole of the machine-tool trade was placed under Government control, and measures were taken (including the purchase of machinery in America) to provide adequate plant properly distributed to secure an increased output.

"The next step we took," he continued, "was in regard to raw material—metal. At the time of the formation of the Ministry one of the chief difficulties was the lack of a regular and sufficient supply of the necessary raw material. Under the system of competition in the open market the prices of material were rising to an extent wholly unwarranted by the situation. So we formed a separate metal department to deal with that situation, and steps were immediately taken to place the Ministry in control of the supply of materials of all classes and arrange-

ments were made for providing the contractors with all the raw materials they required, and for making good any shortages by tapping fresh sources. The result of these efforts has been to effect a considerable reduction in the prices of raw materials. There has been a saving in the aggregate of something like 15 or 20 millions on the orders, due entirely to the action taken by the metal department in securing control of the whole metal market of this country. It enabled us to secure a supply adequate not only for the immediate future, but for many months to come, and to meet all the demands of the various contractors, and also to provide large supplies for our Allies. Indeed, it was only by these efforts that a crisis in the market was prevented and that manufacturers have been able to effect the substantial increase in the output that has actually taken place."

Describing the next step, he pointed out that measures were taken to increase the number of skilled workmen in the various trades. "We also supplied," he continued, "technical advice by experts to help manufacturers to get over their difficulties. That was a very useful step, especially in the case of firms that had not been in the habit of turning out this class of work. We appointed a number of hustlers to visit the works and find out what was wrong, and to press contracts forward. The effect in itself of calling upon the industries to supply weekly reports was to improve the output. Contractors often were not aware of their own difficulties, until they were forced to face them

and give an account of them. The net result has been to increase the deliveries on old orders from 16 per cent. on the promises as they were then to over 80 per cent., a very considerable increase on the promises as they are now."

Dealing with the manufacture of the component part of shells Mr. Lloyd George said: "This is the most troublesome part of our work, because you are always finding that some component or other is falling short. There was too much reliance placed on Woolwich and too little on seeking fresh sources of supply. We approached this problem in the same way as I have sketched out in regard to shell bodies. We sought out fresh firms with the faculty to undertake the manufacture of the various components, and the next step was to erect new buildings for the purpose of supplementing private firms, and to hurry up the erection of buildings in course of construction. Our census of machinery enabled us to discover rapidly and without loss of time the new sources of supply, and the local boards of management assisted very considerably. Sometimes we have had to adapt components to the kind of machinery that was available in order to increase the supply. There were two emergency factories erected for filling purposes and completed in six weeks. I think that was a very fine piece of hustling. The large filling factories have been put up in various parts of the country in order to cope with the rapidly increasing demand owing to the rapidly increased delivery of shells.

"Talking of the component part of shells," he continued, "brings me to Woolwich, because Woolwich was primarily responsible for filling and assembling. The various shell bodies and components from different parts of the country were sent to Woolwich to be assembled and filled. That dual responsibility undoubtedly hindered and delayed this portion of our work. Without blaming anybody, I may say that the mere fact of having dual responsibility in itself creates delay, and the War Office came to the conclusion at the end of August that it would be better to hand over that part of Woolwich to the Ministry of Munitions. I think I can give very striking figures of the effect which this had on the solution of some of our difficulties. Sir Frederick Donaldson, the distinguished engineer who is at the head of Woolwich, has gone to America and Canada and helped us to organise new sources of supply there, and has rendered very great service. The engineer of the North-Eastern Railway Company was placed at our disposal, and he is in temporary control, and the services which he has rendered there have been conspicuous. I will give one illustration. The manufacture and filling output of various articles has increased since he took it in hand, in some cases by 60 per cent., in others by as much as 80 per cent., whereas the staff has only increased 23 per cent. One of the things he initiated was a statistical record of the output. These records were not compiled prior to his assumption of control. Now they are having, and will continue to have, a potent effect not only upon

the output but upon the cost of the output."

In dealing later with the question of new sources of supply, Mr. Lloyd George reminded the House that soon after he was appointed Minister of Munitions he made an appeal to private firms not engaged hitherto in the manufacture of munitions to place their works at the disposal of the Government. There was a ready response. The country was divided into twelve areas, and forty local Munition Committees were set up in the most important engineering centres.

In dealing further with the increase in the shell supply, and referring again in particular to the output at Woolwich, Mr. Lloyd George made a point of great interest: "The problem of relieving congestion at Woolwich," he said, "has been dealt with by an elaborate system of well-distributed storage and the railway congestion there has been decreased. What is the net result of the steps we have taken to increase the output and delivery of gun ammunition? I have given the figures for May. I cannot give the figures for November as yet. The House will be entitled later on to get them. All I can say is that the quantity of shells fired in the recent operations in September was enormous. The battle lasted for days and almost ran into weeks, but there was no shortage. On the contrary, the Chief of the Staff assured me that they were perfectly satisfied with the quantity of shells. This was the result of four months' careful husbanding, but it will be reassuring for the House to know that the whole

of it was replaced in a month, and we shall soon be in a position to replace it in a single week."

Referring later in his speech to the urgent call for big guns, Mr. Lloyd George said that up to the Midsummer, 1915, big guns on a large scale had *not* been ordered. "We came," he confessed, "rather late to the conclusion that big guns were essential to the successful prosecution of the war. The kind of gun that was regarded as a prodigy in the Boer War was just a poor miserable medium gun. Now the soldiers are doubtful whether it counts in the least in trench warfare. The heavy siege gun which we had at the beginning of the war is now the lightest. Facts have forced the conclusion on us that is it only the very heaviest guns that will enable us to demolish trenches, which are getting deeper and deeper, with trench behind trench—trenches of every conceivable angle. There are labyrinths of trenches with concrete casemates, and nothing but the most powerful and shattering artillery will enable our men to advance against them, except along a road which is a road to certain death. Therefore the War Office came to the conclusion that it was essential to success and victory, and to the protection of the lives of our soldiers, that we should have an adequate equipment of the heaviest artillery.

"We are erecting great works in this country which are mostly associated with the programme for the production of those guns and the supply of adequate projectiles. We are making rapid progress with these structures. We have placed at our disposal the services of one of the ablest

contractors in this country—the manager to Sir William Arrol's firm—and the help which he has given us is one of very conspicuous character."

Later, the Minister of Munitions told how the Prime Minister, after his visit to the front, impressed upon him, in grave language, the importance of supplying machine guns on a large scale, and how steps were taken for multiplying manifold and as quickly as possible the output of the guns required. "We immediately placed," he explained, "large orders at home and abroad. We assisted firms with machinery, labour, and material, and completely equipped a new large factory for the manufacture of the Vickers gun. All the machine tools and equipment have been delivered, but production is delayed for want of skilled labour. In another part of the country an existing machine-gun factory has been extended in order to increase the output of machine-guns. Two new factories have been erected elsewhere to turn out other types of machinery. At two other works extension of plant has been made for the production of machine-gun plants which are to increase the machine-gun production. The net result since we began these operations has been to increase the production five-fold; we turn out five times the number we were turning out at that date. In the New Year there will be a production greater still, and, in short, our requirements are well in sight of being fulfilled . . ."

The production of small arms, certain designs and methods of manufacture, and various steps

taken to economise next came under review. Details were given in every case. Indeed, the speech, together with comments and notes thereon, might be made the substance of a volume of some weight and very considerable importance. Here our simple aim is to keep our attention fixed upon the characteristic methods of the Minister of Munitions. In no part of his speech was his nature revealed in clearer light than in his renewed appeal to the patriotism of labour.

"The right part of economy," he said, "is not to reduce the output, but to reduce the cost, and labour alone can help us here. There are only eight per cent of the machines for turning out lathes in this country working on night shifts. We have appealed to the employers. They say, "We have not got the labour," and it is true. They have not got skilled labour. But there are many of these operations which could be discharged effectively enough by unskilled men and by women. We have done everything to supply unskilled labour. We have done our best to increase the efficiency of labour. Questions of Sunday labour and fatigue and questions of canteens have been gone into. We have done our best by the system of munition volunteers to fill up gaps. We have tried to get men from the Colours—and it was a great rearguard action. Every corporal fought against parting with good intelligent skilled men, and the men themselves did not like it. But at last we are beginning to get over this difficulty, and we have got a very considerable number of men back. But we have

got nothing like what we want. It all depends upon organised labour. Unless they allow us to place unskilled men and women at work which hitherto perhaps has been the monopoly of skilled men in order that we may take the highly skilled men away and put them into other work, we cannot do what we want. You may ask why it has not been done, and I will tell the House why, frankly. We found exactly the same difficulties as we found in the release of men from the colours. There is an action to be fought in every area, every workshop, every lodge.

"There is only one appeal," he continued. "It is the appeal to patriotism. The employer must take steps, though he is loth to do it. They must really face the local trade unions, and put forward the demand, because until they do so the State cannot come in. We have had an Act of Parliament, but the law must be put into operation by somebody, and unless the employer begins by putting on unskilled men and women to the lathes we cannot enforce that Act of Parliament. The first step, therefore, is that the employer must challenge a decision upon the matter, and he is not doing so because of the trouble which a few other firms have had. But let us do it. Victory depends upon it. Hundreds of thousands of precious lives depend upon it. It is a question of whether you are going to bring this war to an end in a year victoriously or whether it is going to linger on in bloodstained paths for years. Labour has got the answer. The con-

flict was entered into with labour; we are carrying it out. It can be done.

"This," he concluded, "is a moment of intense preparation. It is the moment for putting the whole of our energies at home into preparing for the blow to be struck abroad. Our Fleet and the gallantry of the troops of the Allies have given us time to muster our reserves. Let us utilize that time without the loss of a moment. Let us cast aside the fond illusion that you can win victory by an elaborate pretence that you are doing so. Let us fling to one side rivalries, professional, political, everything. Let us be one people. One in aim, one in action, one in resolution, so to win the most sacred cause ever entrusted to a great nation."

ADVERSE CRITICISM.

CHAPTER XXII.

ADVERSE CRITICISM.

I said, the Great Man was always lightning out of Heaven; the rest of men waited for him like fuel, and they too would flame.

CARLYLE on *Heroes and Hero Worship.*

"LET us fling to one side rivalries, trade jealousies, professional, political, everything. Let us be one people." The Minister of Munitions could not have given better advice. But there were certain quarters in which his ardour was resented. Labour was suspicious. Had not Lloyd George hinted, nay, *more* than hinted at industrial compulsion. He was treading, it was declared, upon extremely dangerous ground, and as though to prove their words, certain rebellious spirits proceeded to set mines. Meanwhile, periodicals devoted to the interests of Labour made repeated frontal attacks. Mr. Lloyd George's name was coupled with Lord Northcliffe's, and it was declared that they sought "to force the iron shackles of Prussianism on the necks of the workers." Even newspapers of a temperate Liberal order showed signs of distrust. What was Mr. Lloyd George's attitude? In what direction was he tending? Had he really any intention of lending his great influence to any measure which had as its immediate or ultimate aim compulsion for the

working man? *Compulsion* was an ugly word!

One might have supposed that the Minister of Munitions had not made his purpose clear. Yet time after time, he insisted upon sacrifices being made on *all* sides. Indeed, so far as the people was concerned, that was his chief message. "The customs and practices which are applicable in times of peace," he said, "are utterly inapplicable in the terrible urgency of war." Every man in the nation must do his *utmost.* That was the ideal—*the utmost for the Highest.*

Certainly Mr. Lloyd George saw at one time the remote possiblity of *some* form of industrial compulsion, just as he saw the remote possibility of the German hordes overrunning our fair country. But at no time did he speak of compulsion as a thing to be desired for its own sake. On the contrary, it was held up as a state of affairs to be avoided at all costs. He simply urged Labour to realise its great responsibility.

There were, however, many rumours to the effect that the Minister of Munitions was an ardent advocate of compulsion. The chief and most pernicious of these rumours was exposed by the Prime Minister during the second reading of the Military Service Bill. The Prime Minister stated definitely that Mr. Lloyd George had *not* threatened resignation in the event of any failure to keep the much discussed pledge as regards compulsory military service for young unmarried men. Moreover, Mr. Asquith upset the chief part of the case made by Labour against the Minister of Munitions by making a

definite statement to the effect that the Government had *no* intention of introducing industrial compulsion.

Previous to this the critics had been extremely busy, particularly in quarters where in time past Mr. Lloyd George had been hailed as a valiant champion and staunch friend. Indeed, some critics declared that Mr. Lloyd George was following the example of Mr. Chamberlain. He too, they declared, was bent upon betraying the Democracy and going over to the enemy. It was significant, they said, that Mr. Chamberlain had been Mr. Lloyd George's ideal and model in early life. Did he purpose following the model to the bitter end ?

Criticism equally strong, came from the opposite camp. Staid Tory papers—although in most cases loud in their praises of Mr. Lloyd George's business capacities—made it clear that they still distrusted him as a politician. When in the heat of the discussion regarding compulsory military service it was suggested that a general election might be brought about and a new Cabinet formed, with Mr. Lloyd George as Premier, the *Saturday Review* asked :—" Are not those Conservatives who have been talking of Mr. Lloyd George as the right man for Prime Minister to-day making a profound mistake ? This talk has been so frequent since he became Minister of Munitions last May that it is time to deal with it quite frankly in print. Mr. Lloyd George, of leading men in the Cabinet and the Government at large, is about the last man whom the country could wisely choose

either as Dictator or as Prime Minister. The choice, would be in our view, a crazy one. A very little thought will serve to show that the idea of Mr. Lloyd George as Dictator is singularly absurd."

The writer in the *Saturday Review* went on to say that "Mr. Lloyd George is, when critically examined, found to be quite wanting in the *hard* quality of Chamberlain. Chamberlain, though he had large emotions and aroused them in others, was never luscious; he never, we think, approached clamour. . . . To make Mr. Lloyd George Prime Minister would, we are absolutely certain, be a most disastrous adventure. We hope Conservatives at any rate, and people detached from party will not do more than play with the thought, and the less they play with it the better. It would not be so disastrous to Conservatism; that is *not* what we are thinking of at all; for we grant that Mr. Lloyd George is not out for party gain to-day. It would be disastrous to the nation generally. The country wants a far steadier and more steadying man than Mr. Lloyd George has ever shown himself. He is quicksilver; it wants at this grave time a very different metal from that. The Conservatives must not, cannot, and will not have Mr. Lloyd George as leader."

The Spectator, touching the same theme, allowed that Mr. Lloyd George "envisages a problem of enormous size and complexity at one sweep; he can describe its magnitude and significance in glowing words, which make men's hearts beat faster and their resolution harden

to accomplish things which once seemed impossible. Mr. Lloyd George is, in fine, the best speeder-up in the country. It is only to be expected that the qualities of a speeder-up should exist to the exclusion of some other qualities which require a quieter habit of mind, more precision, and perhaps closer and narrower views. Mr. Lloyd George is, in fact, the prophet, in the old Hebraic sense, rather than the administrator."

In contradiction to the foregoing, the *Observer* said that "everyone who has really studied Mr. Lloyd George knows that with all his fighting power the conciliatory instinct is strong in him. That, it has been said, is his only danger. If he has sufficient reason to think that 'too late' may be our curse in 1916, as it has been our bane in 1915, he has only got to take his courage in both hands. He will win, and clean out. . . . Mr. Lloyd George is for grappling more vigorously with the war, for the speediest and fullest support of our men at the front. We can only urge him to put his faith in the country itself, to seek his chief support, if necessary, where Chatham found it, in that which is greater even than Parliament, the Nation. In the last seven months he has inspired a prodigious and saving work."

The *Saturday Review* may claim to have stated its point of view in particularly strong terms. In the article from which we have quoted it was also said: "Had the Dartmoor Shepherd himself been appointed Munitioner-in-Chief we should have had millions of fresh shells. Set

Lord Derby's feat by the side of Mr. Lloyd George's, and consider them both coolly. Decidedly one prefers Lord Derby as a business man to Mr. Lloyd George in that capacity."

Of such criticism, touching Mr. Lloyd George's various deeds and misdeeds very many volumes might be filled. The point of interest, so far as these pages are concerned, rests in the fact that the Minister of Munitions was now confronted by an entirely fresh experience. Certain Liberal newspapers, fearing that he favoured compulsion, wrote in amazingly strong terms. At the time of the debate in the House of Commons on the Military Service Bill, the *Star* demanded to know why the Government, despite their pledges, were trying to get a verdict before they produced their evidence. "The conscriptionists," led by Mr. Lloyd George," the *Star* leader continued, "cannot afford to wait. The campaign is a purely political campaign. It is not based upon military necessity. Mr. Asquith admitted that 'no case had been made out for general compulsion.' But the Conscriptionists by this Bill are driving in the thin end of the wedge, and the sledgehammer they are using is the power of the House of Lords to force a General Election. The crucial date is January 30th. If the Lords refuse to pass the Parliament Act Amending Bill, which prolongs the life of the present Parliament by eight months beyond that date, an immediate General Election will be compulsory. This Bill is the price which the House of Commons is asked to pay the House of Lords for leave to exist. Not for

the first time, the Lords are being used by reactionary politicians to coerce the Commons. The peril with which the nation is menaced cannot be exaggerated. It is the greatest peril in our history. We are fighting the most powerful military machine that has ever been fashioned, and in the crisis of our fate politicians, actuated by political and personal motives, are smashing our national unity. For ourselves, we care only for victory, and we are ready to sacrifice anything in order to secure it. But we see no short cut to victory in national discord. To us parties are nothing, prejudices are nothing, names are nothing. We put our country first and foremost. We will support any man who will preserve the sacred unity of the nation. But there are forces which aim at dividing the nation in order to achieve their own ends, which in plain English, are (1) military conscription, and (2) industrial conscription. Conscription for the purpose of beating the Germans most men would swallow, but Conscription for the purpose of establishing Mr. Lloyd George and a junta of reactionary dictators, led by Lord Milner, Lord Curzon, and Lord Northcliffe, means disaster and not triumph. . . ."

The Star soon changed its light. Indeed, the "leader" in point was but a meteoric flash against a dark sky. Happily, the sky, as we have seen, grew brighter. With Mr. Asquith's definite statement in regard to industrial conscription the clouds rolled by, and the *Star* returned to its old political faith.

The relationship, so friendly in the past, between Mr. Lloyd George and Labour, was, however, still strained, although the air was distinctly clearer than at the time of Mr. Lloyd George's visit to the Clyde workers, and the suppression of the Scottish Labour paper, *Forward*. Following the suppression of this paper, there was a lively scene in the House. Mr. Hogge asked the Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions whether he could state the results of the recent conferences at Glasgow and Newcastle of the Minister of Munitions, and what further alterations he suggested in the amending Bill to the Munitions Act as a result.

Dr. Addison replied : "The visits of the Minister of Munitions to Glasgow and Newcastle were undertaken with a view to explaining the necessity of the scheme for the dilution of skilled and unskilled labour promulgated by the Ministry of Munitions on the advice of the Central Munitions Labour Supply Committee It is too soon to say what practical result has been achieved. The visits had no direct connection with the Bill for amending the Munitions of War Act."

Mr. J. H. Thomas then asked : "Can the right hon. gentleman explain why it is necessary to suppress the reports of the meeting ?"

Dr. Addison : "I think there is another question on the Order Paper on that point."

Mr. Outhwaite : "Is it too soon to say that the Minister of Munitions had a hostile reception at Glasgow ?"

Dr. Addison : "The reason why my right hon. friend went was that there was considerable

misconception in the area and hostility arising out of it. He went to try to meet it."

Mr. Snowden: "Has he succeeded in removing those misconceptions?"

Dr. Addison: "I hope so."

Mr. Anderson subsequently asked the Lord Advocate upon whose authority and by whose orders the Scottish Labour paper *Forward* had been seized, and what was the ground for such action.

Mr. Outhwaite also asked if the *Forward* newspaper had been seized by the police, and if so could he state if this had been done because the paper had published a report of the recent meeting of the Minister of Munitions, showing that he had received a hostile reception from organised labour on the Clyde?

Mr. Tennant replied: "My right hon. friend, the Lord Advocate, has asked me to reply. I have not yet received the official report in detail of the action taken against the newspaper *Forward*, but I understand that the action was taken by the competent military authority in Scotland under Regulation 51 of the Defence of the Realm Regulations at the instance of the Minister of Munitions."

Mr. Pringle: "What about free speech?"

Mr. Tennant: "The ground for the action taken was an offence under Regulation 27. It does not necessarily follow that there will be any trial."

Mr. Anderson: "May I ask whether it has become an offence and a crime in this country to give a truthful account of the reception

accorded by organised labour in Glasgow to the Minister of Munitions, and whether we are to look upon this as the first fruits of Conscription ? "

Mr. Tennant : "No, sir. I trust my hon. friend will draw no such conclusion. The order under which this newspaper was proceeded against was submitted to the legal authorities in Scotland, and I have their assurance that they were perfectly legal and in order."

Mr. Pringle : "Is my right hon. friend aware that the Minister of Munitions went to Scotland as the champion of free speech and appealed to the working men there on that ground to hear him, and used the name of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald for that purpose ? Does he think it is in accordance with the profession with which he went there that this should be the first action after his visit ? "

Later, Mr. Percy Alden said : "May I ask the Minister of Munitions whether as a sensible man he will not see that this whole business is stopped, if he wants to stop the dissensions and discontent that are going on in labour circles ? "

Mr. Lloyd George replied : "My hon. friends did not give me any notice of this question being raised. If they had, I should have supplied myself with a copy of the paper, and could have shown the House that this paper had been deliberately inciting the workers there not to carry out an Act of Parliament, which had been passed in this House in order to promote the output of munitions."

THE UNSEEN FUTURE.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE UNSEEN FUTURE.

Bear also in mind that the bee while making honey lives upon a bitter food.

FRANCIS DE SALES.

Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

PROVERBS XXVIII., I.

BOLD is the man who ventures to predict the future of any politician. It is, however, interesting and may possibly be instructive to speculate as to how time will deal with certain men, and how they, by their conduct, will deal with time. In the past it has been claimed in many quarters that Mr. Lloyd George must ever remain the sure friend and supporter of the Democracy. Indeed, this has been the cause of many bitter quarrels with him: he has sought to better the conditions of the masses at the expense of the "superior" classes. He supported Old Age Pensions; he favoured Land Grants; he introduced and carried through National Insurance. For the time being, however, the tongue of Lloyd George, the party politician, is stilled. We see only a man prompted by one all-important motive—victory for the cause of Freedom and Justice. Smaller interests have passed, to return, no doubt, but lost for the present in the great issue at stake.

Yet it is claimed in many quarters that in Mr. Lloyd George the Democracy still have a sure and strong friend. Indeed, it is asked, "Is not his love for nations and men of *small* possessions the cause of his whole-hearted desire to bring victory to the Allies?" His outstanding motive has ever been to defend small nations and the weak and poorly-favoured.

It is said, however, that there are in Mr. Lloyd George's nature and conduct many seeming contradictions. Dr. Charles Sarolea in his introduction to Mr. Beriah Evans' admirable volume says that both Mr. Lloyd George's character and life story are made up of bewildering contrasts and contradictions. "A man of the people, and a democrat to the core, he has the autocratic instinct of the born leader of men. The spokesman of the oppressed nationality, he has yet become one of the rulers of the very race which for centuries suppressed the aspirations of his native country. Brought up in the narrow dogma of a sect, his creed has expanded into the comprehensive faith of a citizen of the world. Whilst his affections are centred in the Welsh mountains, his heart is throbbing with the passion of universal humanity. A champion of peace, and for the sake of peace risking his political existence, he finds himself to-day directing the fortunes of the most gigantic war of all times. Once the most hated politician in the United Kingdom, he has lived to become the most popular statesman of Europe. The humble solicitor who started his career in a little Welsh town may be before many months are

over the plenipotentiary of the British Empire in the World Congress which will decide the destinies of nations for generations to come."

Pursuing this last theme, Dr. Sarolea goes on to observe that "it is of singularly good omen that the most popular statesman of the British Empire should be the one British statesman who commands the complete confidence of France, Russia, and Italy. To-day, so far as Europe is concerned, it is not Mr. Asquith or Sir Edward Grey or Mr. Balfour, it is Mr. Lloyd George who is the representative statesman of the British people. Three years ago, at the outbreak of the Agadir crisis, Mr. Lloyd George's Mansion House speech was the trumpet call which both aroused and reassured French opinion. To-day every word of the Minister of Munitions calls forth an immediate and sympathetic response on the other side of the Channel.

"The future peace of Europe," Dr. Sarolea concludes, "can only be lasting if it is established on the firm foundation of the principle of nationalities in foreign policy, and of self-government in domestic policy; if in every case and against every temptation it protects the rights of the small and the weak against the ambitions and encroachments of the strong."

This is still held to be the aim of David Lloyd George: *To protect the rights of the small and the weak against the ambitions and encroachments of the strong.* With this aim in view he maintains, as we have seen, that the privileges of peace must be sacrificed for a while to the Universal good. From this attitude, held so firmly,

declared so strongly, all recent criticism has sprung. Labour, as we have said, has come to look with suspicion upon the old-time champion. But happily amongst the leaders of labour are men of keen judgment. Mr. Frank Dilnot, formerly Editor of the *Daily Citizen*, writing in the *Daily Chronicle*, says, that although an ardent pacifist in peace time, Mr. Lloyd George has shown increasingly that he is by nature a man of war. "He is swift-minded, intuitive, and quite ruthless when his mind is set on a certain course of action. He has a genius for improvising, and improvisation is part of the essence of war. Possessing gifts of imagination which show him with unusual clearness the tragic immensity of the issues, he has also the desperate ardour which counts all things well lost if we can but win the war and win it quickly. Conventions that stand in the way he leaps at like a tiger. An exaltation of purpose surrounds him. That is why I say he is essentially a man of war. Such a personality will often make big mistakes, but will also be responsible for very big achievements. The future of Mr. Lloyd George is an enigma to his friends and to his enemies; it is possibly an enigma to himself. For the moment nothing matters to him but the winning of the war."

Let it be acknowledged, then, that Mr. Lloyd George is a man of war. Let it be allowed that an exaltation of purpose surrounds him. Let it be said that he has the desperate ardour that counts all things well lost if we can but win the war and win it quickly. Still it may be claimed

that he is prompted by a righteous motive. Still it may be said of him, as in his early days, that he wields a "right Jerusalem blade." We all acknowledge and declare sacredly the righteousness of the cause in which the Allies strive. Let credit, then, be given to the man who fights for the great cause with his whole soul and mind. In the veins of David Lloyd George flows the blood of the soldier who with a will lays down his life for the just cause of his country. Condemnation cannot be laid upon the spirit of the man who cries, "All our rights and all our liberties have been won by men who counted their lives as nothing so long as their country and their faith were free. In the days when we were winning the battles of religious freedom in this country, there were shirkers, but their cowardice did not save them from the tomb. It is appointed that men should die once, and after that the judgment. Brave men die, but they need not fear the judgment. I think we are too ready to scoff at creeds which promise the glories of their paradise to those who die for the cause or for the country they are devoted to. It is but a crude expression of a truth which is the foundation of every great faith, that sacrifice is ever the surest road to redemption."

It is fitting that Mr. Lloyd George should speak for himself. Where could be found a surer, clearer statement of his position and frame of mind, than in the simple words: "*War is a time of sacrifice and service. . . .*" "If Germany wins," he has warned us, "we shall be

vassals, not to the best Germany, not to the Germany of sweet songs and inspiring noble thought—not to the Germany of science consecrated to the service of man, not to the Germany of a virile philosophy that helped to break the shackles of superstition in Europe—not to that Germany, but to a Germany that talked through the raucous voice of Krupp's artillery, a Germany that has harnessed science to the chariot of destruction and of death, the Germany of a philosophy of force, violence, and brutality, a Germany that would quench every spark of freedom either in its own land or any other in rivers of blood. I make no apology on a day consecrated to the greatest sacrifice for coming here to preach a holy war against that."

He preached a Holy War, and on the day of the Greatest Sacrifice called for the self-sacrifice of his fellow-men. Little wonder if certain men, who in time of war demand the privileges of peace, find him wanting in sympathy!

There is, however, another side: freedom—particularly freedom from military domination—is dearer to the heart of the average Britisher than words can possibly tell. Because of their love for freedom and hatred for military oppression, *free* men have arisen in their millions, bravely, most willingly, to defeat the cruel aims of Prussian Militarism. To such men and very many of their kind militarism is abhorrent. May it not, therefore, be claimed that to men who oppose *all* forms of military *compulsion* a good word is due? Indeed, it is said, that they

are prompted in their own way with the spirit of the very men who have arisen, as *free* men, to rid Europe of the mailed fist. Yet the cry comes back, "Ah! yes! But to do that men must sacrifice temporarily the privileges they hold so dear."

There is but one course in the matter: all men must be judged according to their light. The motive of David Lloyd George shines clear and bright. He preaches a Holy War, and counts all things well lost if we can but bring early victory to the cause of Justice and Freedom. The future of such a man should be sure. Yet there are fears and misgivings, and men cry: "*Whence—Whither?*" *

*In bringing these pages to a close (Feb., 1916) it is realised that there must be many fresh developments, and possibly great revelations. "The months teach much which the days never know."

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