

to My Country and for
the benefit of Europe
in general a great and
glorious Victory, and may
no misconduct in any
one tarnish it and
may humanity after
Victory be the predomi-
nant feature in the
British fleet, nor
myself individually
I commit my life
to Him who made

PART OF LETTER WRITTEN BY NELSON JUST BEFORE THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.
Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

Napoleon's disposal, and in 1805 he planned its union with that of France, the crushing of the squadron which blocked the ports of the Channel before the English ships which were watching the Spanish armament could come to its support, and a crossing of the vast armament thus protected to the English shore. The three hundred thousand volunteers mustered in England to meet the coming attack would have offered small hindrance to the veterans of the Grand Army, had they once crossed the Channel. But Pitt had already found work for France elsewhere. The alarm of the Continental Powers had been brought to a head by Napoleon's annexation of Genoa; Pitt's subsidies had removed the last obstacle in the way of a league; and Russia, Austria, and Sweden joined in an alliance to wrest Italy and the Low Countries from the grasp of the French Emperor. Napoleon meanwhile swept the sea in vain for a glimpse of the great armament whose assembly in the Channel he had so skilfully planned. Admiral Villeneuve, uniting the Spanish ships with his own squadron from Toulon, drew Nelson in pursuit to the West Indies, and then, suddenly returning to Cadiz, hastened to form a junction with the French squadron at Brest and crush the English fleet in the Channel. But a headlong pursuit brought Nelson up with him ere the manœuvre was complete, and the two fleets met on the 21st of October, 1805, off Cape Trafalgar. "England," ran Nelson's famous signal, "expects every man to do his duty;" and though he fell himself in the hour of victory, twenty French sail had struck their flag ere the day was done. "England has saved herself by her courage," Pitt said in what were destined to be his last public words: "she will save Europe by her example!" But even before the victory of Trafalgar Napoleon had abandoned the dream of invading England to meet the coalition in his rear; and swinging round his forces on the Danube he forced an Austrian army to capitulation in Ulm three days before his naval defeat. From Ulm he marched on Vienna, and crushed the combined armies of Austria and Russia in the battle of Austerlitz. "Austerlitz," Wilberforce

SEC. IV
—
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
—

*League
against
France*

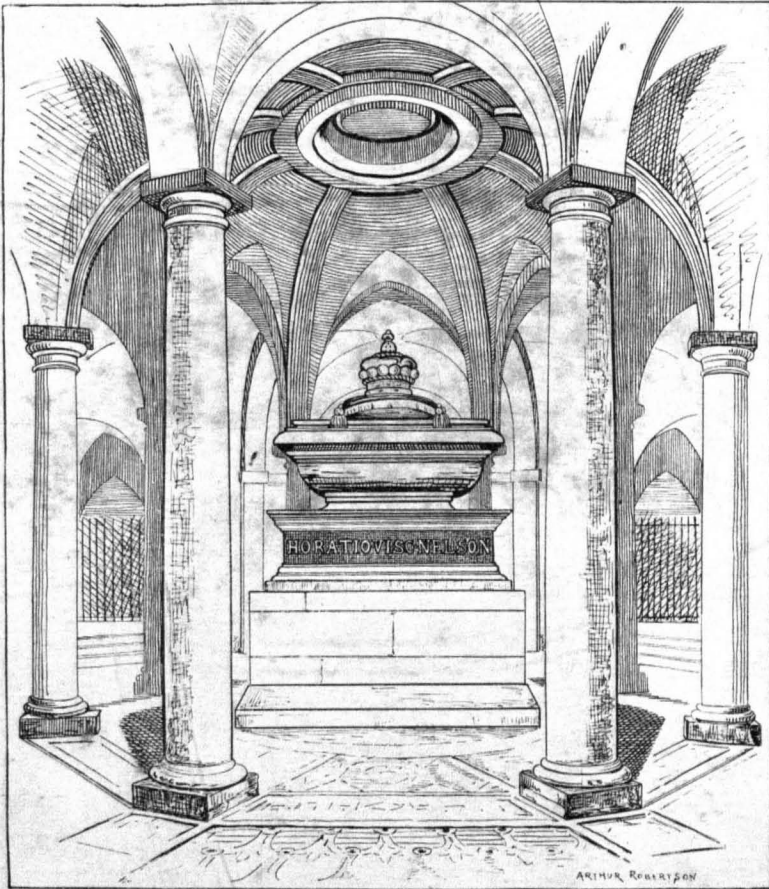


OLD BRISTOL
VOLUNTEER.
*Nicholls and Taylor,
"Bristol Past and
Present."*

Nov. 1805

SEC. IV
 THE
 WAR WITH
 FRANCE
 1793
 TO
 1815

wrote in his diary, "killed Pitt." Though he was still but forty-seven, the hollow voice and wasted frame of the great Minister had long told that death was near; and the blow to his hopes proved fatal. "Roll up that map," he said, pointing to a map of Europe which hung upon the wall: "it will not be wanted these ten



NELSON'S MONUMENT, IN CRYPT OF S. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

Death of Pitt years!" Once only he rallied from stupor; and those who bent over him caught a faint murmur of "My country! How I leave my country!" On the 23rd of January, 1806, he breathed his last; and was laid in Westminster Abbey in the grave of Chatham. "What grave," exclaimed Lord Wellesley, "contains such a father

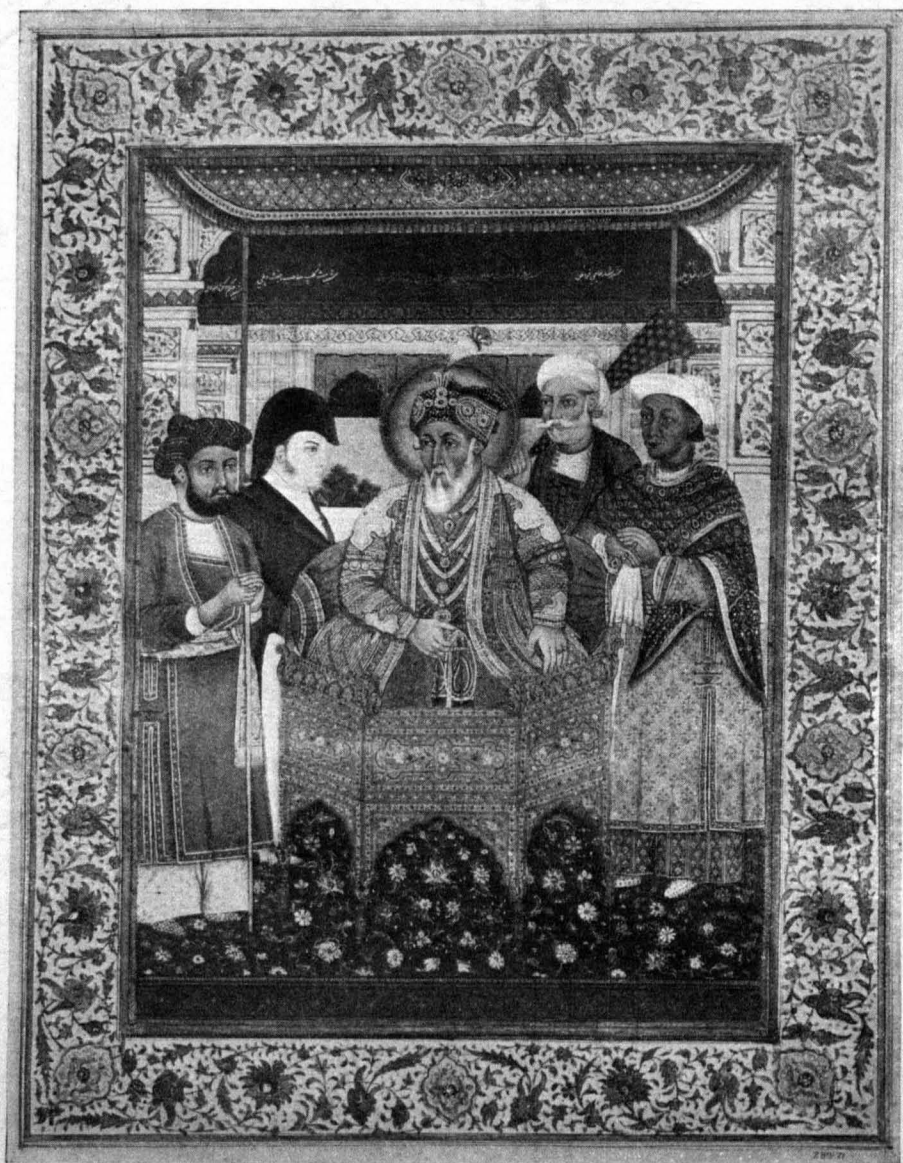
and such a son! What sepulchre embosoms the remains of so much human excellence and glory!"

So great was felt to be the loss that nothing but the union of parties, which Pitt had in vain desired during his lifetime, could fill up the gap left by his death. In the new Ministry Fox, with the small body of popular Whigs who were bent on peace and internal reform, united with the aristocratic Whigs under Lord Grenville and with the Tories under Lord Sidmouth. All home questions in fact were subordinated to the need of saving Europe from the ambition of France, and in the resolve to save Europe Fox was as resolute as Pitt himself. His hopes of peace, indeed, were stronger; but they were foiled by the evasive answer which Napoleon gave to his overtures, and by a new war which he undertook against Prussia, the one power which seemed able to resist his arms. On the 14th of October, 1806, a decisive victory at Jena laid North Germany at Napoleon's feet. Death only a month before saved Fox from witnessing the overthrow of his hopes; and his loss weakened the Grenville Cabinet at the opening of a new and more desperate struggle with France. Napoleon's earlier attempt at the enforcement of a Continental System had broken down with the failure of the Northern League; but in his mastery of Europe he now saw a more effective means of realizing his dream; and he was able to find a pretext for his new attack in England's own action. By a violent stretch of her rights as a combatant she had declared the whole coast occupied by France and its allies, from Dantzic to Trieste, to be in a state of blockade. It was impossible to enforce such a "paper blockade," even with the immense force at her disposal; and Napoleon seized on the opportunity to retaliate by the entire exclusion of British commerce from the Continent, an exclusion which he trusted would end the war by the ruin it would bring on the English manufacturers. A decree was issued from Berlin which—without a single ship to carry it out—placed the British Islands in a state of blockade. All commerce or communication with them was prohibited; all English goods or manufactures found in the territory of France or its allies were declared liable to confiscation; and their harbours were closed, not only against vessels coming from Britain but against all who had touched at her ports. The

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
The
Grenville
Ministry

Jena

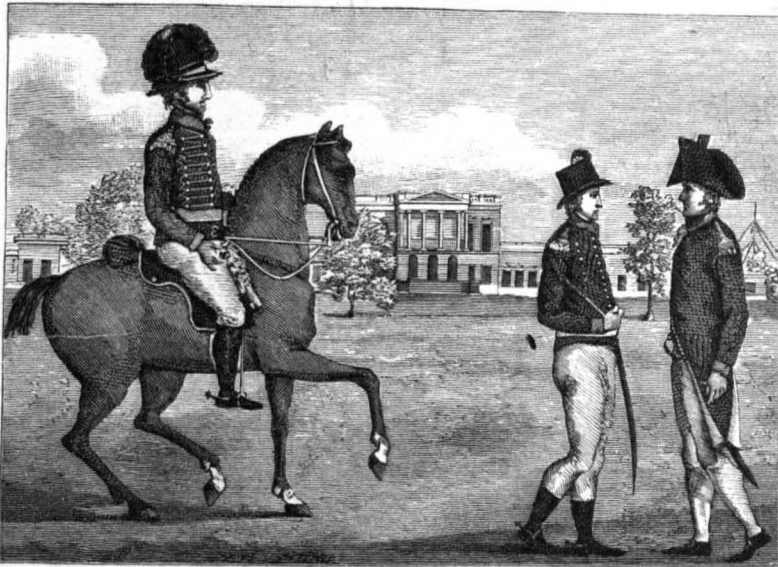
*The
Berlin
Decree
Nov. 1806*



AKBER, KING OF DELHI, AND SIR THOMAS METCALFE.
Illumination, c. 1830, in India Museum.

attempt to enforce such a system was foiled indeed by the rise of a widespread contraband trade, by the reluctance of Holland to aid in its own ruin, by the connivance of officials along the Prussian and Russian shores, and by the pressure of facts. It was impossible even for Napoleon himself to do without the goods he pretended to exclude ; an immense system of licences soon neutralized his decree ; and the French army which marched to Eylau was clad in great-coats made at Leeds, and shod with shoes made at Northampton. But if it failed to destroy British industry, it told

SEC. IV
—
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
—



CALCUTTA MILITIA, 1802.
Gentleman's Magazine.

far more fatally on British commerce. Trade began to move from English vessels, which were subject to instant confiscation, and to pass into the hands of neutrals, and especially of the Americans. The merchant class called on the Government to protect it, and it was to this appeal that the Grenville Ministry replied in January, 1807, by an Order in Council which declared all the ports of the coast of France and her allies under blockade, and any neutral vessels trading between them to be good prize. Such a step was far from satisfying the British merchants. But their appeal was no longer to Lord Grenville. The forces of

*Orders in
Council*

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815

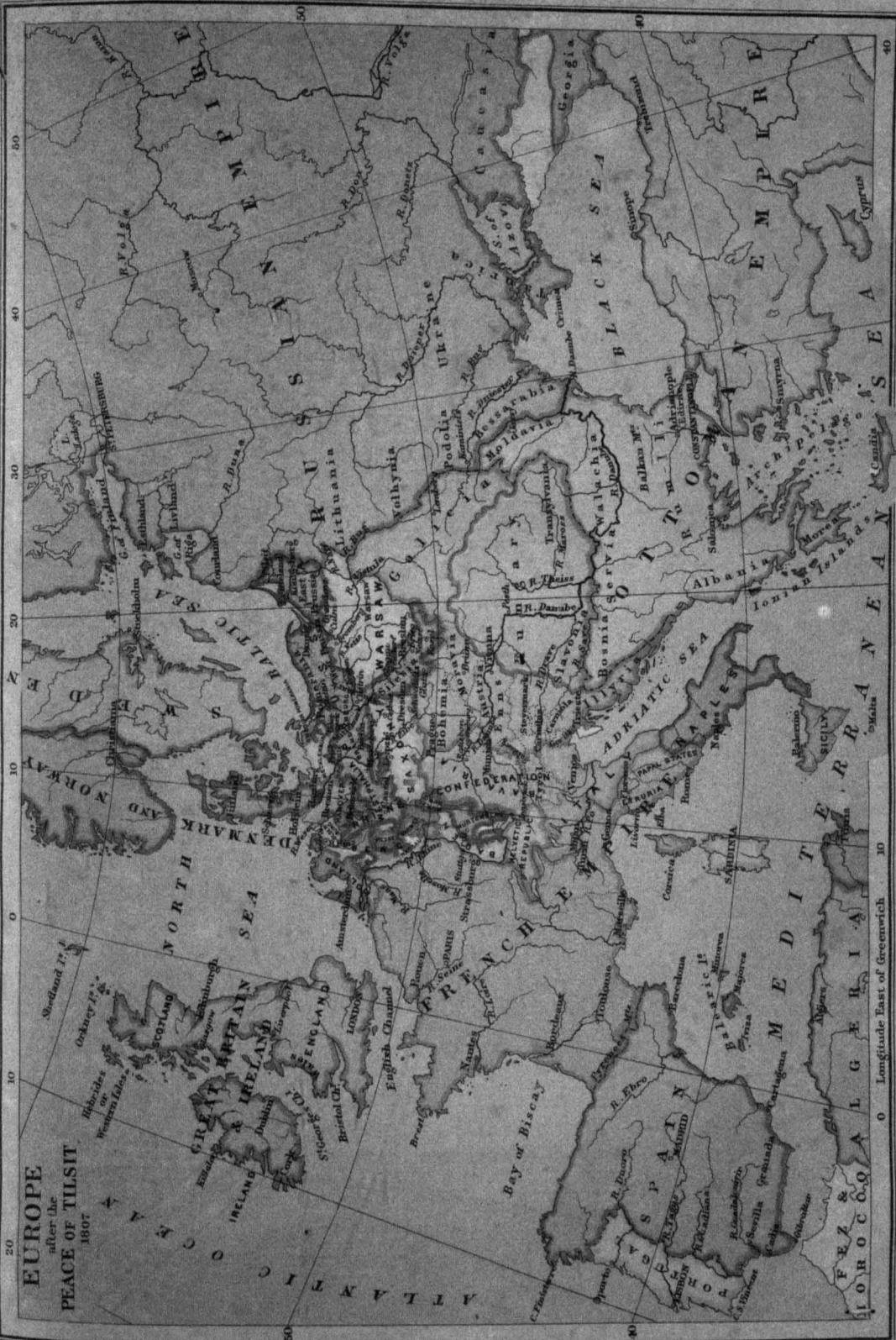
ignorance and bigotry which had been too strong for Pitt were too strong for the Grenville Ministry. Its greatest work, the abolition of the slave trade, in February, was done in the teeth of a vigorous opposition from the Tories and the merchants of Liverpool; and in March the first indication of its desire to open the question of religious equality by allowing Catholic officers to serve in the army was met on the part of the King by the demand of a pledge not to meddle with the question. On the refusal of this pledge the Ministry was dismissed.

Canning Its fall was the final close of the union of parties brought about by the peril of French invasion; and from this time to the end of the war England was wholly governed by the Tories. The nominal head of the Ministry which succeeded that of Lord Grenville was the Duke of Portland; its guiding spirit was the Foreign Secretary, George Canning, a young and devoted adherent of Pitt, whose brilliant rhetoric gave him power over the House of Commons, while the vigour and breadth of his mind gave a new energy and colour to the war. At no time had opposition to Napoleon seemed so hopeless. From Berlin the Emperor marched into the heart of Poland, and though checked in the winter by the Russian forces in the hard-fought battle of Eylau, his victory of Friedland brought the Czar Alexander in the summer of 1807 to consent to the Peace of Tilsit. From foes the two Emperors of Western and Eastern Europe became friends, and the hope of French aid in the conquest of Turkey drew Alexander to a close alliance with Napoleon. Russia not only enforced the Berlin decrees against British commerce, but forced Sweden, the one ally that England still retained on the Continent, to renounce her alliance. The Russian and Swedish fleets were thus placed at the service of France; and the two Emperors counted on securing the fleet of Denmark, and again threatening by this union the maritime supremacy which formed England's real defence. The hope was foiled by the appearance off Elsinore in July 1807 of an expedition, promptly and secretly equipped by Canning, with a demand for the surrender of the Danish fleet into the hands of England, on pledge of its return at the close of the war. On the refusal of the Danes the demand was enforced by a bombardment of Copenhagen; and the whole Danish fleet, with a vast mass of naval stores, was

*Peace of
Tilsit*

EUROPE

after the
PEACE OF TILSIT
1807



0 Longitude East of Greenwich

10

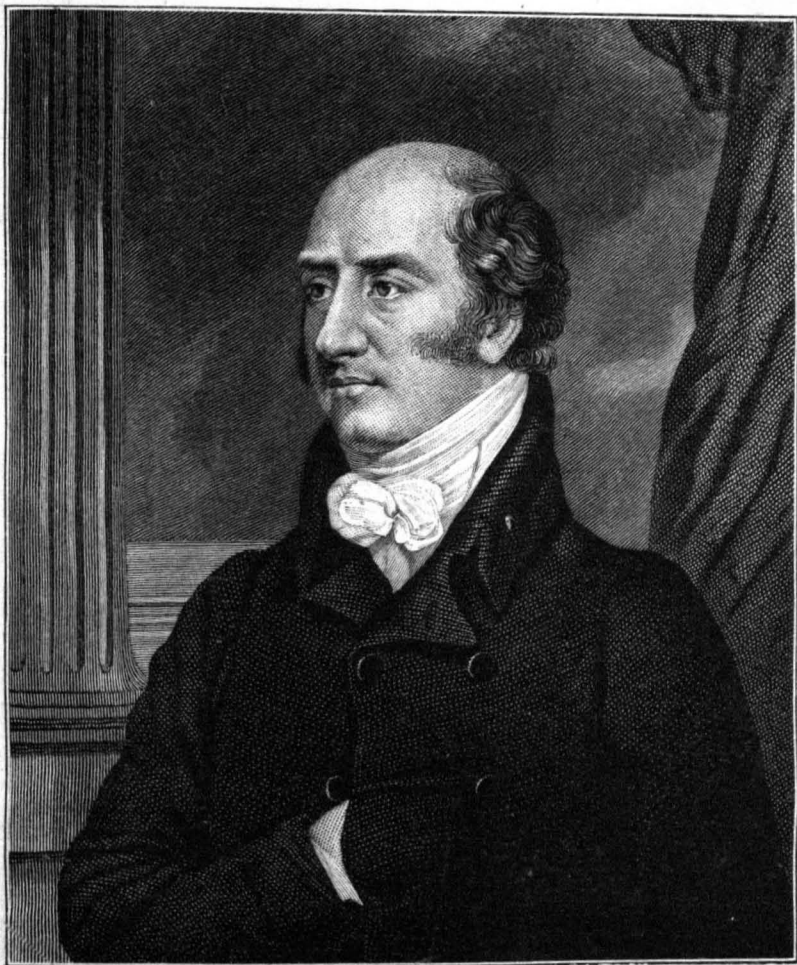
London Macmillan & Co. Ltd

40

Northward map scale

carried into British ports. It was in the same spirit of almost reckless decision that Canning turned to meet Napoleon's Continental System. In November he issued fresh Orders in Council. By these France, and every Continental state from

SEC IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815



GEORGE CANNING.

From the engraving by William Holl from the painting by T. Stewardson.

which the British flag was excluded, was put in a state of blockade, and all vessels bound for their harbours were held subject to seizure unless they had touched at a British port. The orders were at once met by another decree of Napoleon issued at

*The
Milan
Decree*

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
—

The Pen-
insular
War

Milan in December, which declared every vessel, of whatever nation, coming from or bound to Britain or any British colony, to have forfeited its character as a neutral, and to be liable to seizure.

Meanwhile the effect of the Continental System upon Napoleon was to drive him to aggression after aggression in order to maintain the material union of Europe against Britain. He was absolutely master of Western Europe, and its whole face changed as at an enchanter's touch. Prussia was occupied by French troops. Holland was changed into a monarchy by a simple decree of the French Emperor, and its crown bestowed on his brother Louis. Another brother, Jerome, became King of Westphalia, a new realm built up out of the Electorates of Hesse Cassel and Hanover. A third brother, Joseph, was made King of Naples: while the rest of Italy,

and even Rome itself, was annexed to the French Empire. It was the hope of effectually crushing the world-power of Britain which drove him to his worst aggression, the aggression upon Spain. He acted with his usual subtlety. In October 1807 France and Spain agreed to divide Portugal between them; and on the advance of their forces the reigning house of Braganza fled helplessly from Lisbon to a refuge in Brazil. But the seizure of Portugal was only a prelude to the seizure of Spain. Charles the Fourth, whom a riot in his capital drove at this moment to abdication, and his son, Ferdinand the Seventh, were drawn to Bayonne in May 1808, and forced to resign their claims to the Spanish crown; while a French army entered Madrid and proclaimed Joseph Buonaparte



HUSSAR OFFICER.
Print, 1807.



OFFICER, 1792.
"The Fortieth Regiment."

King of Spain. But this high-handed act of aggression was

hardly completed when Spain rose as one man against the stranger ; and desperate as the effort of its people seemed, the news of the rising was welcomed throughout England with a burst of enthusiastic joy. "Hitherto," cried Sheridan, a leader of the



FRENCH EAGLE FROM SPAIN.
United Service Institution.

Whig opposition, "Buonaparte has contended with princes without dignity, numbers without ardour, or peoples without patriotism. He has yet to learn what it is to combat a people who are animated by one spirit against him." Tory and Whig alike held that "never had so happy an opportunity existed in Britain to strike a bold stroke for the rescue of the world ;" and Canning at once resolved to change the system of desultory descents on colonies and

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
*The
rising of
Spain*

sugar islands for a vigorous warfare in the Peninsula. Supplies were sent to the Spanish insurgents with reckless profusion, and two small armies placed under the command of Sir John Moore



SPANISH COCKADE.
United Service Institution.

and Sir Arthur Wellesley for service in the Peninsula. In July 1808 the surrender at Baylen of a French force which had invaded Andalusia gave the first shock to the power of Napoleon, and the blow was followed by one almost as severe. Landing at the Mondego with fifteen thousand men, Sir Arthur Wellesley drove the French army of Portugal from the field of Vimiera, and forced it to surrender in the Convention of Cintra on the 30th of August. But the tide of success was soon roughly turned. Napoleon appeared in Spain with an army of two hundred thousand men ; and Moore, who had advanced from Lisbon to Salamanca to support the Spanish armies, found them crushed on the Ebro, and was driven to fall hastily back on the coast. His force saved its honour in a battle before Corunna,

SEC. IV
 THE
 WAR WITH
 FRANCE
 1793
 TO
 1815
 Jan. 16,
 1809

which enabled it to embark in safety ; but elsewhere all seemed lost. The whole of northern and central Spain was held by the French armies ; and even Zaragoza, which had once



MAJOR-GENERAL WELLESLEY, AFTERWARDS DUKE OF WELLINGTON.
 Engraved by O. Lacour from a painting by Robert Home, 1806.

heroically repulsed them, submitted after a second equally desperate resistance.

Wellesley The landing of the wreck of Moore's army and the news of the Spanish defeats turned the temper of England from the wildest hope to the deepest despair ; but Canning remained unmoved. On

the day of the evacuation of Corunna he signed a treaty of alliance with the Spanish Junta at Cadiz ; and the English force at Lisbon, which had already prepared to leave Portugal, was reinforced with thirteen thousand fresh troops, and placed under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley. "Portugal," Wellesley wrote coolly, "may be defended against any force which the French can bring against it." At this critical moment the best of the French troops with the Emperor himself were drawn from the Peninsula to the Danube ; for the Spanish rising had roused Austria as well as England to a renewal of the struggle. When Marshal Soult therefore threatened Lisbon from the north, Wellesley marched boldly against him, drove him from Oporto in a disastrous retreat, and, suddenly changing his line of operations, pushed with twenty thousand men by Abrantes on Madrid. He was joined on the march by a Spanish force of thirty thousand men ; and a bloody action with a French army of equal force at Talavera, in July 1809, restored the renown of English arms. The losses on both sides were enormous, and the French fell back at the close of the struggle ; but the fruits of the victory were lost by a sudden appearance of Soult on the English line of advance, and Wellesley was forced to retreat hastily on Badajoz. His failure was embittered by heavier disasters elsewhere. Austria was driven to sue for peace by Napoleon's victory at Wagram ; and a force of forty thousand English soldiers which had been despatched against Antwerp returned home baffled after losing half its numbers in the marshes of Walcheren.

The failure at Walcheren brought about the fall of the Portland Ministry. Canning attributed the disaster to the incompetence of Lord Castlereagh, an Irish peer who, after taking the chief part in bringing about the union between England and Ireland, had been raised by the Duke of Portland to the post of Secretary at War ; and the quarrel between the two Ministers ended in a duel, and in their resignation of their offices. The Duke of Portland retired with Canning ; and a new ministry was formed out of the more Tory members of the late administration under the guidance of Spencer Perceval, an industrious mediocrity of the narrowest type ; the Marquis of Wellesley, a brother of the English general in Spain, becoming Foreign Secretary. But if Perceval and his colleagues

SEC. IV

THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE

1793

TO

1815

Torres
Vedras*The
Perceval
Ministry*

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815

possessed few of the higher qualities of statesmanship, they had one characteristic which in the actual position of English affairs was beyond all price. They were resolute to continue the war. In the nation at large the fit of enthusiasm had been followed by a fit of despair ; and the City of London even petitioned for a withdrawal of the English forces from the Peninsula. Napoleon seemed irresistible, and now that Austria was crushed and England stood alone in opposition to him, the Emperor resolved to put an end to the strife by a vigorous prosecution of the war in Spain. Andalusia, the one province which remained independent, was invaded in the opening of 1810, and with the exception of Cadiz reduced to submission ; while Marshal Massena with a fine army of eighty thousand men marched upon Lisbon. Even Perceval abandoned all hope of preserving a hold on the Peninsula in face of these new efforts, and threw on Wellesley, who had been raised to the peerage as Lord Wellington after Talavera, the responsibility of resolving to remain there. But the cool judgement and firm temper which distinguished Wellington enabled him to face a responsibility from which weaker men would have shrunk. "I conceive," he answered, "that the honour and interest of our country require that we should hold our ground here as long as possible ; and, please God, I will maintain it as long as I can." By the addition of Portuguese troops who had been trained under British officers, his army was now raised to fifty thousand men ; and though his inferiority in force compelled him to look on while Massena reduced the frontier fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, he inflicted on him a heavy check at the heights of Busaco, and finally fell back, in October 1810, on three lines of defence which he had secretly constructed at Torres Vedras, along a chain of mountain heights crowned with redoubts and bristling with cannon. The position was impregnable ; and able and stubborn as Massena was, he found himself forced after a month's fruitless effort to fall back in a masterly retreat ; but so terrible were the privations of the French army in passing again through the wasted country that it was only with forty thousand men that he reached Ciudad Rodrigo, in the spring of 1811. Reinforced by fresh troops, Massena turned fiercely to the relief of Almeida, which Wellington had besieged ; but two days' bloody and obstinate fighting, in May 1811, failed to

drive the English army from its position at Fuentes d'Onore, and the Marshal fell back on Salamanca and relinquished his effort to drive Wellington from Portugal.

Great as was the effect of Torres Vedras in restoring the spirit of the English people and in reviving throughout Europe the hope



SILVER PENNY OF WASHINGTON, 1792.

of resistance to the tyranny of Napoleon, its immediate result was little save the deliverance of Portugal. The French remained masters of all Spain save Cadiz and the eastern provinces, and even the east coast was reduced in 1811 by the vigour of General Suchet. While England thus failed to rescue Spain from the aggression of Napoleon, she was suddenly brought face to face with the result of



LIVERPOOL HALFPENNY, 1793.

her own aggression in America. The Orders in Council with which Canning had attempted to prevent the transfer of the carrying trade from English to neutral ships, by compelling all vessels on their way to ports under blockade to touch at British harbours, had at once created serious embarrassments with America. In the long strife between France and England, America had already borne much from both combatants, but above all from Britain. Not only had the English Government exercised its right of search, but it asserted a right of seizing English seamen found in American vessels; and as there were few means of discriminating between English seamen and American, the sailor of Maine or Massachusetts was often impressed to serve in the British fleet. Galled however as was America by outrages such as these, she was hindered from resenting them by her strong disinclination to war, as well as by the profit which she drew from the maintenance of her neutral position. But the Orders in Council and the Milan decree forced her into action, and she at once answered them by an embargo of trade with Europe. After a year's trial, however, America found it impossible to maintain the embargo; and at the opening of 1809 she exchanged

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
England
and
America

1807

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
1809

the embargo for an Act of Non-Intercourse with France and England alone. But the Act was equally ineffective. The American Government was utterly without means of enforcing it on its land frontier; and it had small means of enforcing it at sea. Vessels sailed daily for British ports; and at last the Non-Intercourse Act was repealed altogether. All that America persisted in maintaining was an offer that if either Power would repeal its edicts it would prohibit American commerce with the other. Napoleon seized on



SAILOR, 1807.
Atkinson, "Costumes of Great Britain."



MIDSHIPMAN, 1799.
After T. W. Rowlandson.

May 1810 this offer, and after promising to revoke his Berlin and Milan Decrees he called on America to redeem her pledge. In February 1811, therefore, the United States announced that all intercourse with Great Britain and her dependencies was at an end. The effect of this step was seen in a reduction of English exports during this year by a third of their whole amount. It was in vain that Britain pleaded that the Emperor's promises remained unfulfilled, and that the enforcement of non-intercourse with England was thus an unjust

act, and an act of hostility. The pressure of the American policy, as well as news of the warlike temper which had at last grown up in the United States, made submission inevitable ; for the industrial state of England was now so critical that to expose it to fresh shocks was to court the very ruin which Napoleon had planned.

SEC. IV
—
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
—

State of
England

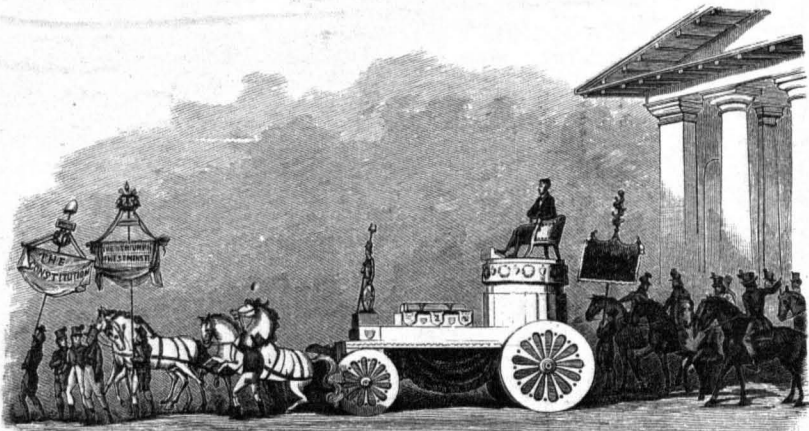
During the earlier years of the war, indeed, the increase of wealth had been enormous. England was sole mistress of the seas. The war gave her possession of the colonies of Spain, of Holland, and of France ; and if her trade was checked for a time by the Berlin Decree, the efforts of Napoleon were soon rendered fruitless by the vast smuggling system which sprang up along the southern coasts and the coast of North Germany. English exports had nearly doubled since the opening of the century. Manufactures profited by the discoveries of Watt and Arkwright ; and the consumption of raw cotton in the mills of Lancashire rose during the same period from fifty to a hundred millions of pounds. The vast accumulation of capital, as well as the vast increase of the population at this time, told upon the land, and forced agriculture into a feverish and unhealthy prosperity. Wheat rose to famine prices, and the value of land rose in proportion with the price of wheat. Inclosures went on with prodigious rapidity ; the income of every landowner was doubled, while the farmers were able to introduce improvements into the processes of agriculture which changed the whole face of the country. But if the increase of wealth was enormous, its distribution was partial. During the fifteen years which preceded Waterloo, the number of the population rose from ten to thirteen millions, and this rapid increase kept down the rate of wages, which would naturally have advanced in a corresponding degree with the increase in the national wealth. Even manufactures, though destined in the long run to benefit the labouring classes, seemed at first rather to depress them ; for one of the earliest results of the introduction of machinery was the ruin of a number of small trades which were carried on at home, and the pauperization of families who relied on them for support. In the winter of 1811 the terrible pressure of this transition from handicraft to machinery was seen in the Luddite, or machine-breaking, riots which broke out over the northern and midland counties, and which were only suppressed by military force. While labour was thus thrown out of its older grooves, and the

SEC. IV
 THE
 WAR WITH
 FRANCE
 1793
 TO
 1815

rate of wages kept down at an artificially low figure by the rapid increase of population, the rise in the price of wheat, which brought wealth to the landowner and the farmer, brought famine and death to the poor, for England was cut off by the war from the vast corn-fields of the Continent or of America, which nowadays redress from their abundance the results of a bad harvest. Scarcity was followed by a terrible pauperization of the labouring classes. The amount of the poor-rate rose fifty per cent. ; and with the increase of poverty followed its inevitable result, the increase of crime.

Revival
 of
 Reform

The natural relation of trade and commerce to the general wealth of the people at large was thus disturbed by the peculiar



PROCESSION AND CHAIRING OF SIR F. BURDETT, JUNE 29, 1807.
Contemporary print in British Museum.

circumstances of the time. The war enriched the landowner, the farmer, the merchant, the manufacturer ; but it impoverished the poor. It is indeed from these fatal years which lie between the Peace of Luneville and Waterloo that we must date that war of classes, that social severance between employers and employed, which still forms the main difficulty of English politics. But it is from these years too that we must date the renewal of that progressive movement in politics which had been suspended since the opening of the war. The publication of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802 by a knot of young lawyers at Edinburgh marked a revival of the policy of constitutional and administrative progress which had been reluctantly abandoned by William Pitt. Jeremy

Bentham gave a new vigour to political speculation by his advocacy of the doctrine of Utility, and his definition of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" as the aim of political action. In 1809 Sir Francis Burdett revived the question of Parliamentary Reform. Only fifteen members supported his motion; and a reference to the House of Commons, in a pamphlet which he subsequently published, as "a part of our fellow-subjects collected together by means which it is not necessary to describe" was met by his committal to the Tower, where he remained till the prorogation of the Parliament. A far greater effect was produced by the perseverance with which Canning pressed year by year the question of Catholic Emancipation. So long as Perceval lived both efforts at Reform were equally vain; but on the accession of Lord Liverpool to power the advancing strength of a more liberal sentiment in the nation was felt by the policy of "moderate concession" which was adopted by the new ministry. Catholic Emancipation became an open question in the Cabinet itself, and was adopted in 1812 by a triumphant majority in the House of Commons, though still rejected by the Lords.

SEC. IV
—
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
—

With social and political troubles thus awaking about them, even Tory statesmen were not willing to face the terrible consequences of a ruin of English industry, such as might follow from the junction of America with Napoleon. They were, in fact, preparing to withdraw the Orders in Council, when their plans were arrested by the dissolution of the Perceval Ministry. Its position had from the first been a weak one. A return of the King's madness had made it necessary in the beginning of 1811 to confer the Regency by Act of Parliament on the Prince of Wales; and the Whig sympathies of the Prince threatened the Perceval Cabinet with dismissal. The insecurity of their position told on the conduct of the war; for the apparent inactivity of Wellington during 1811 was really due to the hesitation and timidity of the ministers at home. In May 1812 the assassination of Perceval by a maniac named Bellingham brought about the fall of his ministry; and fresh efforts were made by the Regent to install the Whigs in office. Mutual distrust, however, foiled his attempts; and the old ministry was restored under the headship of Lord Liverpool, a man of no great abilities, but temperate, well informed, and endowed with a remarkable skill in holding

War with
America

The
Liverpool
Ministry

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815

discordant colleagues together. The most important of these colleagues was Lord Castlereagh, who became Secretary for Foreign Affairs. His first work was to meet the danger in which Canning had involved the country by his Orders in Council. At the opening of 1812 America, in despair of redress, had resolved on war; Congress voted an increase of both army and navy, and laid an embargo on all vessels in American harbours. Actual hostilities might still have been averted by the repeal of the Orders, on which the English Cabinet was resolved, but in the confusion which followed the murder of Perceval the opportunity was lost. On the 23rd of June, only twelve days after the ministry had been formed, the Orders were repealed; but when the news of the repeal reached America, it came six weeks too late. On the 18th of June an Act of Congress had declared America at war with Great Britain.

Sala-
manca
and
Moscow

The moment when America entered into the great struggle was a critical moment in the history of mankind. Six days after President Madison issued his declaration of war, Napoleon crossed the Niemen on his march to Moscow. Successful as his policy had been in stirring up war between England and America, it had been no less successful in breaking the alliance which he had made with the Emperor Alexander at Tilsit and in forcing on a contest with Russia. On the one hand, Napoleon was irritated by the refusal of Russia to enforce strictly the suspension of all trade with England, though such a suspension would have ruined the Russian landowners. On the other, the Czar saw with growing anxiety the advance of the French Empire which sprang from Napoleon's resolve to enforce his system by a seizure of the northern coasts. In 1811 Holland, the Hanseatic towns, part of Westphalia, and the Duchy of Oldenburg were successively annexed, and the Duchy of Mecklenburg threatened with seizure. A peremptory demand on the part of France for the entire cessation of intercourse with England brought the quarrel to a head; and preparations were made on both sides for a gigantic struggle. The best of the French soldiers were drawn from Spain to the frontier of Poland; and Wellington, whose army had been raised to a force of forty thousand Englishmen and twenty thousand Portuguese, profited by the withdrawal to throw off his system of defence and to assume an attitude of attack. Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz

Wellington
in
Spain

were taken by storm during the spring of 1812; and three days before Napoleon crossed the Niemen in his march on Moscow Wellington crossed the Agueda in a march on Salamanca. After a series of masterly movements on both sides, Marmont with the French army of the north attacked the English on the hills in the neighbourhood of that town. While he was marching round the right of the English position, his left wing remained isolated; and with a sudden exclamation of "Marmont is lost!" Wellington flung on it the bulk of his force, crushed it, and drove the whole army from the field. The loss on either side was nearly equal, but failure had demoralized the French army; and its retreat forced Joseph to leave Madrid, and Soult to evacuate Andalusia and to concentrate the southern army on the eastern coast. While

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815

July 22



MEDAL COMMEMORATING WELLINGTON'S ENTRY INTO MADRID.

Napoleon was still pushing slowly over the vast plains of Poland, Wellington made his entry into Madrid in August, and began the siege of Burgos. The town however held out gallantly for a month, till the advance of the two French armies, now concentrated in the north and south of Spain, forced Wellington in October to a hasty retreat on the Portuguese frontier. If he had shaken the rule of the French in Spain in this campaign, his ultimate failure showed how firm a military hold they still possessed there. But the disappointment was forgotten in the news which followed it. At the moment when the English troops fell back from Burgos began the retreat of the Grand Army from Moscow. Victorious in a battle at Borodino, Napoleon had entered the older capital of Russia in triumph, and waited impatiently to receive

*The
Retreat
from
Moscow*

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815

Fall of
Napoleon

June 21,
1813

proposals of peace from the Czar, when a fire kindled by its own inhabitants reduced the city to ashes. The French army was forced to fall back amidst the horrors of a Russian winter. Of the four hundred thousand combatants who formed the Grand Army at its first outset, only a few thousand recrossed the Niemen in December.

In spite of the gigantic efforts which Napoleon made to repair the loss of the Grand Army, the spell which he had cast over Europe was broken by the retreat from Moscow. Prussia rose against him as the Russians crossed the Niemen in the spring of 1813; and the forces which held it were at once thrown back on the Elbe. In this emergency the military genius of the French Emperor rose to its height. With a fresh army of two hundred thousand men whom he had gathered up at Mainz he marched on the allied armies of Russia and Prussia in May, cleared Saxony by a victory over them at Lutzen, and threw them back on the Oder by a fresh victory at Bautzen. Disheartened by defeat, and by the neutral attitude which Austria still preserved, the two powers consented in June to an armistice, and negotiated for peace. But Austria, though unwilling to utterly ruin France to the profit of her great rival in the East, was as resolute as either of the allies to wrest from Napoleon his supremacy over Europe; and at the moment when it became clear that Napoleon was only bent on playing with her proposals, she was stirred to action by news that his army was at last driven from Spain. Wellington had left Portugal in May with an army which had now risen to ninety thousand men; and, overtaking the French forces in retreat at Vitoria, he inflicted on them a defeat which drove them in utter rout across the Pyrenees. Madrid was at once evacuated; and Clauzel fell back from Zaragoza into France. The victory not only freed Spain from its invaders; it restored the spirit of the Allies. The close of the armistice was followed by a union of Austria with the forces of Prussia and the Czar; and in October a final overthrow of Napoleon at Leipzig forced the French army to fall back in rout across the Rhine. The war now hurried to its close. Though held at bay for a while by the sieges of San Sebastian and Pampeluna, as well as by an obstinate defence of the Pyrenees, Wellington succeeded in the very month of the triumph at Leipzig in winning a victory on the Bidassoa, which enabled him to enter

France. He was soon followed by the Allies. On the last day of 1813 their forces crossed the Rhine ; and a third of France passed, without opposition, into their hands. For two months more Napoleon maintained a wonderful struggle with a handful of raw conscripts against their overwhelming numbers ; while in the south, Soult, forced from his entrenched camp near Bayonne and defeated at Orthes, fell back before Wellington on Toulouse. Here their two armies met in April in a stubborn and indecisive engagement. But though neither leader knew it, the war was even then at an end. The struggle of Napoleon himself had ended at the close of March with the surrender of Paris ; and the submission of the capital was at once followed by the abdication of the Emperor and the return of the Bourbons.

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815

England's triumph over its enemy was dashed by the more doubtful fortunes of the struggle across the Atlantic. The declaration of war by America seemed an act of sheer madness ; for its navy consisted of a few frigates and sloops ; its army was a mass of half-drilled and half-armed recruits ; while the States themselves were divided on the question of the war, and Connecticut with Massachusetts refused to send either money or men. Three attempts to penetrate into Canada during the summer and autumn were repulsed with heavy loss. But these failures were more than redeemed by unexpected successes at sea. In two successive engagements between English and American frigates, the former were forced to strike their flag. The effect of these victories was out of all proportion to their real importance ; for they were the first heavy blows which had been dealt at England's supremacy over the seas. In 1813 America followed up its naval triumphs by more vigorous efforts on land. Its forces cleared Lake Ontario, captured Toronto, destroyed the British flotilla on Lake Erie, and made themselves masters of Upper Canada. An attack on Lower Canada, however, was successfully beaten back ; and a fresh advance of the British and Canadian forces in the heart of the winter again recovered the Upper Province. The reverse gave fresh strength to the party in the United States which had throughout been opposed to the war, and whose opposition to it had been embittered by the terrible distress brought about by the blockade and the ruin of American commerce. Cries of secession

The
American
War

SEC. IV
 THE
 WAR WITH
 FRANCE
 1793
 TO
 1815

began to be heard, and Massachusetts took the bold step of appointing delegates to confer with delegates from the other New England States "on the subject of their grievances and common concerns." In 1814, however, the war was renewed with more vigour than ever; and Upper Canada was again invaded. But the American army, after inflicting a severe defeat on the British forces in the battle of Chippewa in July, was itself defeated a few weeks after in an equally stubborn engagement, and, thrown back on its own frontier; while the fall of Napoleon enabled the

English Government to devote its whole strength to the struggle with an enemy which it had ceased to despise. General Ross, with a force of four thousand men, appeared in the Potomac, captured Washington, and before evacuating the city burnt its public buildings to the ground. Few more shameful acts are recorded in our history; and it was the more shameful in that it was done under strict orders from the Government at home. The raid upon Washington, however,



MEDAL GIVEN BY ENGLAND TO INDIAN
 CHIEFS IN THE AMERICAN WAR.
Tancred, "Record of Medals."

was intended simply to strike terror into the American people; and the real stress of the war was thrown on two expeditions whose business was to penetrate into the States from the north and from the south. Both proved utter failures. A force of nine thousand Peninsular veterans which marched in September to the attack of Plattsburg on Lake Champlain was forced to fall back by the defeat of the English flotilla which accompanied it. A second force under General Packenham appeared in December at the mouth of the Mississippi and attacked New Orleans, but was repulsed by General Jackson with the loss of half its numbers. Peace, however, had already been concluded.

The close of the French war, if it left untouched the grounds of the struggle, made the United States sensible of the danger of pushing it further ; Britain herself was anxious for peace ; and the warring claims, both of England and America, were set aside in silence in the treaty of 1814.

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815

The close of the war with America freed England's hands at a moment when the reappearance of Napoleon at Paris called her to a new and final struggle with France. By treaty with the Allied Powers Napoleon had been suffered to retain a fragment of his former empire—the island of Elba off the coast of Tuscany ; and from Elba he had looked on at the quarrels which sprang up between his conquerors as soon as they gathered at Vienna to complete the settlement of Europe. The most formidable of these quarrels arose from the claim of Prussia to annex Saxony, and that of Russia to annex Poland ; but their union for this purpose was met by a counter-league of England and Austria with their old enemy France, whose ambassador, Talleyrand, laboured vigorously to bring the contest to an issue by force of arms. At the moment, however, when a war between the two leagues seemed close at hand, Napoleon quitted Elba, landed on the coast near Cannes, and, followed only by a thousand of his guards, marched over the mountains of Dauphiné upon Grenoble and Lyons. He counted, and counted justly, on the indifference of the country to its new Bourbon rulers, on the longing of the army for a fresh struggle which should restore its glory, and above all on the spell of his name over soldiers whom he had so often led to victory. In twenty days from his landing he reached the Tuileries unopposed, while Lewis the Eighteenth fled helplessly to Ghent. But whatever hopes he had drawn from the divisions of the Allied Powers were at once dispelled by their resolute action on the news of his descent upon France. Their strife was hushed and their old union restored by the consciousness of a common danger. An engagement to supply a million of men for the purposes of the war, and a recall of their armies to the Rhine, answered Napoleon's efforts to open negotiations with the Powers. England furnished subsidies to the amount of eleven millions, and hastened to place an army on the frontier of the Netherlands. The best troops of the force which had been employed in the Peninsula, however,

Return
of
Napoleon

March 1,
1815

SEC. IV
—
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
—

were still across the Atlantic; and of the eighty thousand men who gathered round Wellington only about a half were Englishmen, the rest principally raw levies from Belgium and Hanover. The Duke's plan was to unite with the one hundred and fifty thousand Prussians under Marshal Blucher who were advancing on the Lower Rhine, and to enter France by Mons and Namur, while the forces of Austria and Russia closed in upon Paris by way of Belfort and Elsass.

Waterloo

1815

June 16

But Napoleon had thrown aside all thought of a merely defensive war. By amazing efforts he had raised an army of two hundred and fifty thousand men in the few months since his arrival in Paris; and in the opening of June one hundred and twenty thousand Frenchmen were concentrated on the Sambre at Charleroi, while Wellington's troops still lay in cantonments on the line of the Scheldt from Ath to Nivelles, and Blucher's on that of the Meuse from Nivelles to Liège. Both the allied armies hastened to unite at Quatre Bras; but their junction was already impossible. Blucher with eighty thousand men was himself attacked by Napoleon at Ligny, and after a desperate contest driven back with terrible loss upon Wavre. On the same day Ney with twenty thousand men, and an equal force under D'Erlon in reserve, appeared before Quatre Bras, where as yet only ten thousand English and the same force of Belgian troops had been able to assemble. The Belgians broke before the charges of the French horse; but the dogged resistance of the English infantry gave time for Wellington to bring up corps after corps, till at the close of the day Ney saw himself heavily outnumbered, and withdrew baffled from the field. About five thousand men had fallen on either side in this fierce engagement: but heavy as was Wellington's loss, the firmness of the English army had already done much to foil Napoleon's effort at breaking through the line of the Allies. Blucher's retreat, however, left the English flank uncovered; and on the following day, while the Prussians were falling back on Wavre, Wellington with nearly seventy thousand men—for his army was now well in hand—withdrew in good order upon Waterloo, followed by the mass of the French forces under the Emperor himself. Napoleon had detached Marshal Grouchy with thirty thousand men to hang upon the rear of the beaten

Prussians, while with a force of eighty thousand he resolved to bring Wellington to battle. On the morning of the 18th of June the two armies faced one another on the field of Waterloo, in front of the Forest of Soignies, on the high road to Brussels. Napoleon's one fear had been that of a continued retreat. "I have them!" he cried, as he saw the English line drawn up on a low rise of ground which stretched across the high road from the

SEC. IV
—
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815
—



HOUGOMONT.
After J. M. W. Turner.

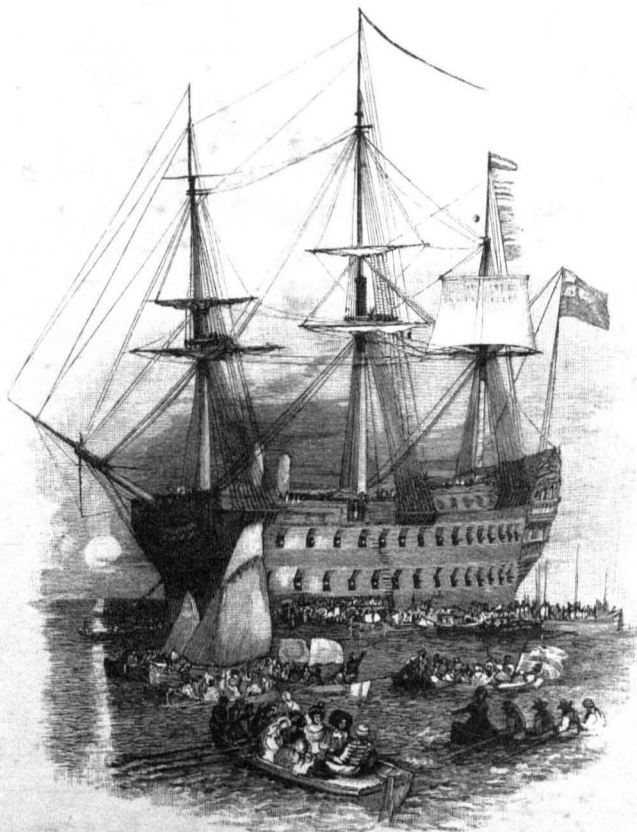
château of Hougomont on its right to the farm and straggling village of La Haye Sainte on its left. He had some grounds for his confidence of success. On either side the forces numbered between seventy and eighty thousand men; but the French were superior in guns and cavalry, and a large part of Wellington's force consisted of Belgian levies, who broke and fled at the outset of the fight. A fierce attack upon Hougomont opened the battle at eleven; but it was not till midday that the corps of D'Erlon

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815

advanced upon the centre near La Haye Sainte, which from that time bore the main brunt of the struggle. Never has greater courage, whether of attack or endurance, been shown on any field than was shown by both combatants at Waterloo. The columns of D'Erlon, repulsed by the English foot, were hurled back in disorder by a charge of the Scots Greys; but the victorious horsemen were crushed in their turn by the French cuirassiers, and the mass of the French cavalry, twelve thousand strong, flung itself in charge after charge on the English front, carrying the English guns and sweeping with desperate bravery round the unbroken squares whose fire thinned their ranks. With almost equal bravery the French columns of the centre again advanced, wrested at last the farm of La Haye Sainte from their opponents, and pushed on vigorously though in vain under Ney against the troops in its rear. But meanwhile every hour was telling against Napoleon. To win the battle he must crush the English army before Blucher joined it; and the English army was still uncrushed. Terrible as was his loss, and many of his regiments were reduced to a mere handful of men, Wellington stubbornly held his ground while the Prussians, advancing from Wavre through deep and miry forest roads, were slowly gathering to his support, disregarding the attack on their rear by which Grouchy strove to hold them back from the field. At half-past four their advanced guard deployed at last from the woods; but the main body was far behind, and Napoleon was still able to hold his ground against them till their increasing masses forced him to stake all on a desperate effort against the English front. The Imperial Guard—his only reserve, and which had as yet taken no part in the battle—was drawn up at seven in two huge columns of attack. The first, with Ney himself at its head, swept all before it as it mounted the rise beside La Haye Sainte, on which the thin English line still held its ground, and all but touched the English front when its mass, torn by the terrible fire of musketry with which it was received, gave way before a charge. The second, three thousand strong, advanced with the same courage over the slope near Hougomont, only to be repulsed and shattered in its turn. At the moment when these masses fell slowly and doggedly back down the fatal rise, the Prussians pushed forward on

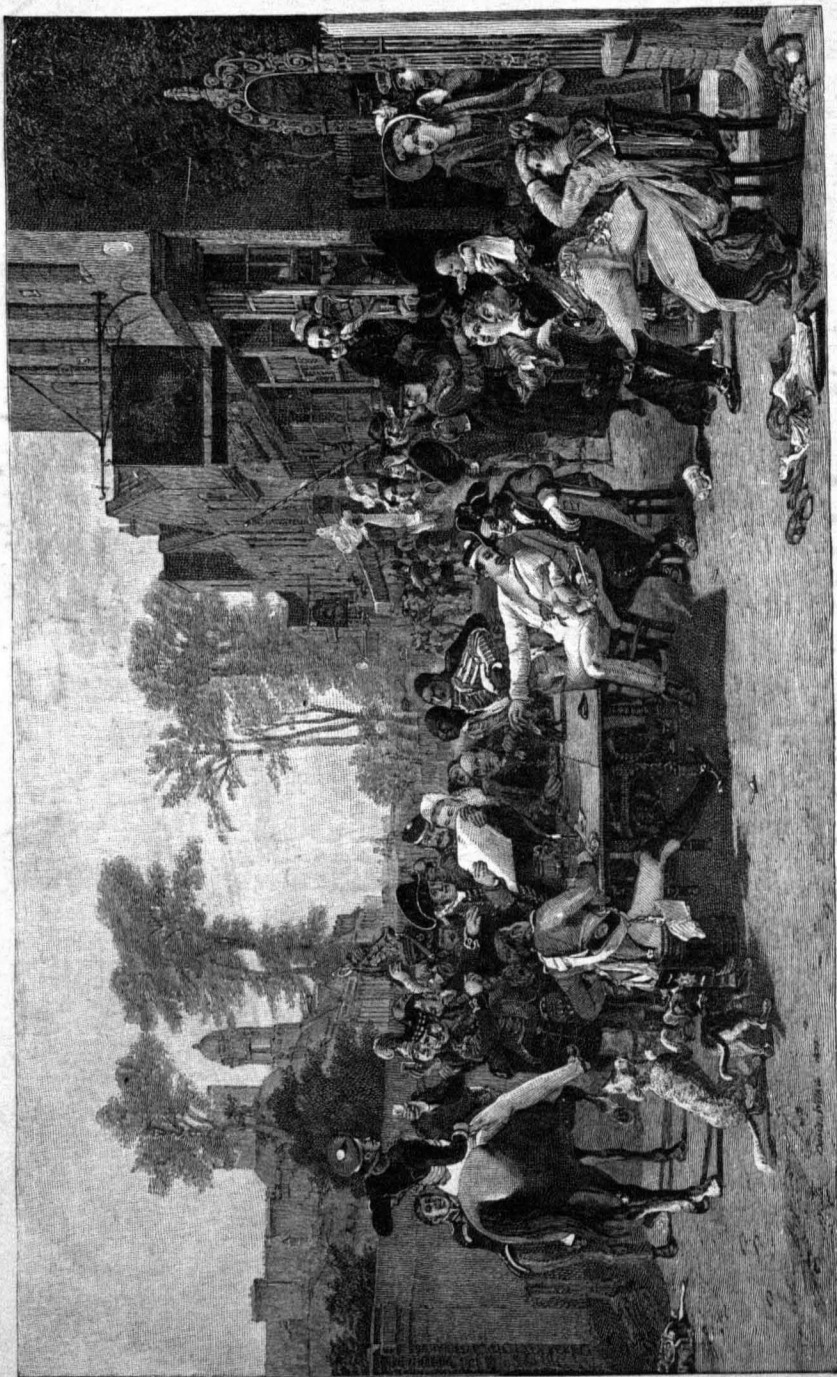
Napoleon's right, their guns swept the road to Charleroi, and Wellington seized the moment for a general advance. From that hour all was lost. Only the Guard stood firm in the wreck of the French army; and though darkness and exhaustion checked the English in their pursuit of the broken troops as they hurried from the field, the Prussian horse continued the chase through the night. Only forty thousand Frenchmen with some thirty guns recrossed the Sambre, while Napoleon himself fled hurriedly to Paris. His second abdication was followed by the triumphant entry of the English and Prussian armies into the French capital; and the long war ended with his exile to St. Helena, and the return of Lewis the Eighteenth to the throne of the Bourbons.

SEC. IV
THE
WAR WITH
FRANCE
1793
TO
1815



THE "BELLEROPHON," THE SHIP WHICH CARRIED NAPOLEON TO ENGLAND.

After J. M. W. Turner.



CHelsea PENSIONERS READING THE GAZETTE OF WATERLOO.
Picture by Wilkie, 1822.



THE HAT-FINISHERS IN COMBINATION, 1820.
Print in Place MSS., British Museum.

EPILOGUE.

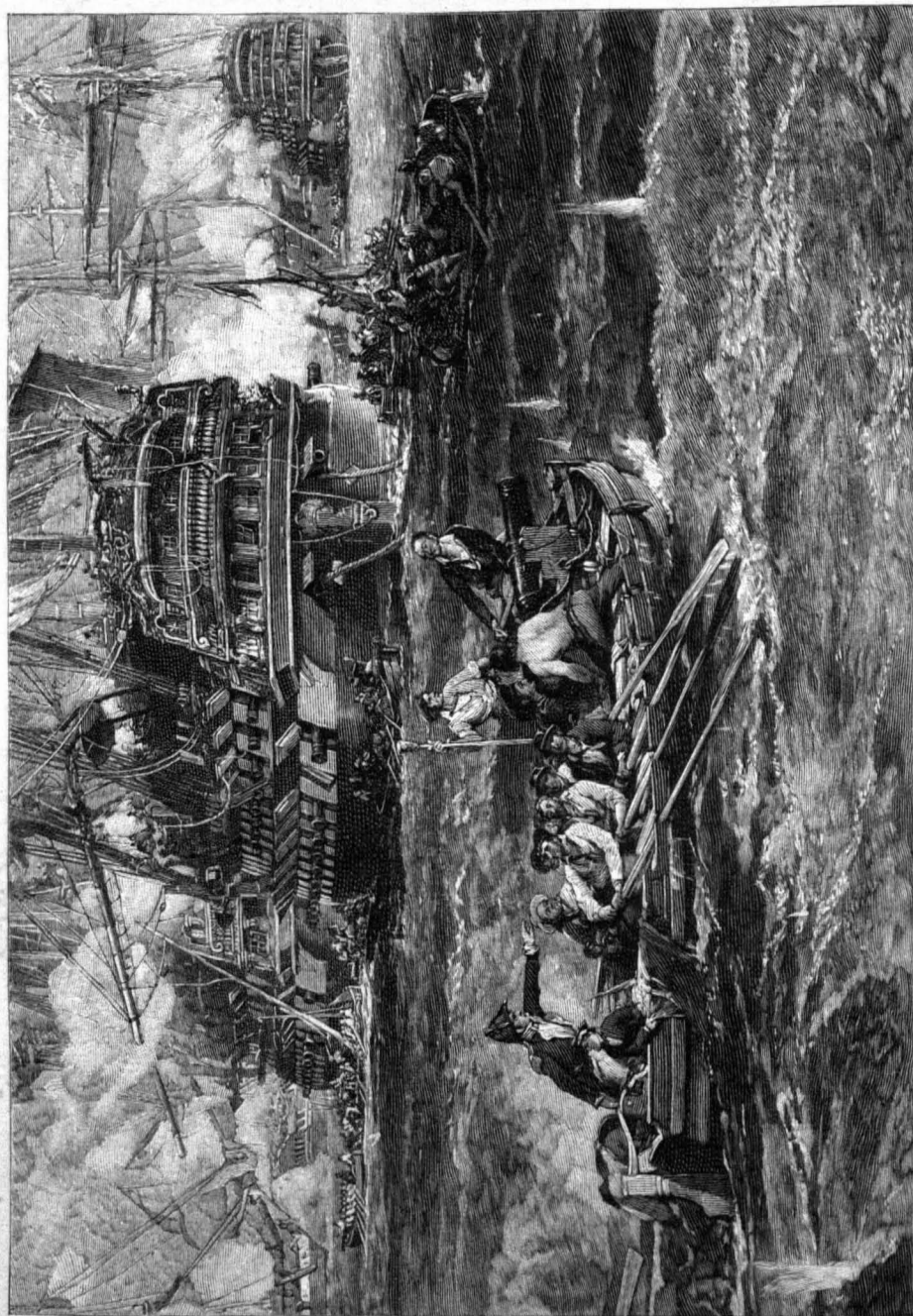
WITH the victory of Waterloo we reach a time within the memory of some now living, and the opening of a period of our history, the greatest indeed of all in real importance and interest, but perhaps too near to us as yet to admit of a cool and purely historical treatment. In a work such as the present at any rate it will be advisable to limit ourselves from this point to a brief summary of the more noteworthy events which have occurred in our political history since 1815.

The peace which closed the great war with Napoleon left Britain feverish and exhausted. Of her conquests at sea she retained only Malta (whose former possessors, the Knights of St. John, had ceased to exist), the Dutch colonies of Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope, the French Colony of Mauritius, and a few West India islands. On the other hand, the pressure of the heavy taxation and of the debt, which now reached eight hundred millions, was embittered by the general distress of the country.

EPILOGUE

1815
 TO
 1873

The
 Peace



THE BOMBARDMENT OF ALGIERS BY VISCOUNT EXMOUTH, 1816.
Picture by George Chambers, in Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

The rapid development of English industry for a time ran ahead of the world's demands; the markets at home and abroad were glutted with unsaleable goods, and mills and manufactories were brought to a standstill. The scarcity caused by a series of bad harvests was intensified by the selfish legislation of the landowners in Parliament. Conscious that the prosperity of English agriculture was merely factitious, and rested on the high price of corn produced by the war, they prohibited by an Act passed in 1815 the introduction of foreign corn till wheat had reached famine prices. Society, too, was disturbed by the great changes of employment consequent on a sudden return to peace after twenty years of war, and by the disbanding of the immense forces employed at sea and on land. The movement against machinery which had been put down in 1812 revived in formidable riots, and the distress of the rural poor brought about a rapid increase of crime. The steady opposition too of the Administration, in which Lord Castlereagh's influence was now supreme, to any project of political progress created a dangerous irritation which brought to the front men whose demand of a "radical reform" in English institutions won them the name of Radicals, and drove more violent agitators into treasonable disaffection and silly plots. In 1819 the breaking up by military force of a meeting at Manchester, assembled for the purpose of advocating a reform in Parliament, increased the unpopularity of the Government; and a plot of some desperate men with Arthur Thistlewood at their head for the assassination of the whole Ministry, which is known as the Cato Street Conspiracy, threw light on the violent temper which was springing up among its more extreme opponents. The death of George the Third in 1820, and the accession of his son the Prince Regent as George the Fourth, only added to the general disturbance of men's minds. The new King had long since forsaken his wife and privately charged her with infidelity; his first act on mounting the throne was to renew his accusations against her, and to lay before Parliament a bill for the dissolution of her marriage with him. The public agitation which followed on this step at last forced the Ministry to abandon the bill, but the shame of the royal family and the unpopularity of the King increased the general discontent of the country.

EPILOGUE

1815
TO
1873

1820

EPILOGUE

1815
TO
1873

Canning

1820

The real danger to public order, however, lay only in the blind opposition to all political change which confused wise and moderate projects of reform with projects of revolution; and in 1822 the suicide of Lord Castlereagh, who had now become Marquis of Londonderry, and to whom this opposition was mainly due, put an end to the policy of mere resistance. Canning became Foreign Secretary in Castlereagh's place, and with Canning returned the earlier and progressive policy of William Pitt. Abroad, his first act was to break with the "Holy Alliance," as it called itself, which the continental courts had formed after the overthrow of Napoleon for the repression of revolutionary or liberal movements in their kingdoms, and whose despotic policy had driven Naples, Spain, and Portugal into revolt. Canning asserted the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of foreign states, a principle he enforced by sending troops in 1826 to defend Portugal from Spanish intervention, while he recognized the revolted colonies of Spain in South America and Mexico as independent states. At home his influence was seen in the new strength gained by the question of Catholic Emancipation, and in the passing of a bill for giving relief to Roman Catholics through the House of Commons in 1825. With the entry of his friend Mr. Huskisson into office in 1823 began a commercial policy which was founded on a conviction of the benefits derived from freedom of trade, and which brought about at a later time the repeal of the Corn Laws. The new drift of public policy produced a division among the Ministers which showed itself openly at Lord Liverpool's death in 1827. Canning became First Lord of the Treasury, but the Duke of Wellington, with the Chancellor, Lord Eldon, and the Home Secretary, Mr. Peel, refused to serve under him; and four months after the formation of Canning's Ministry it was broken up by his death. A temporary Ministry formed under Lord Goderich on Canning's principles was at once weakened by the position of foreign affairs. A revolt of the Greeks against Turkey had now lasted some years, in spite of Canning's efforts to bring about peace, and the despatch of an Egyptian expedition with orders to devastate the Morea and carry off its inhabitants as slaves forced England, France, and Russia to interfere. In 1827 their united fleet under Admiral Codrington attacked and destroyed that of

Egypt in the bay of Navarino ; but the blow at Turkey was disapproved by English opinion, and the Ministry, already wanting in Parliamentary strength, was driven to resign.

EPILOGUE

1815

TO

1873



SIR ROBERT PEELE

Picture by John Linnell, in National Portrait Gallery.

The formation of a purely Tory Ministry by the Duke of Wellington, with Mr. Peel for its principal support in the Commons, was generally looked on as a promise of utter resistance to all further progress. But the state of Ireland, where a "Catholic Reform

EPILOGUE

1815
TO
1873

Association" formed by Daniel O'Connell maintained a growing agitation, had now reached a point when the English Ministry had



REPEAL BUTTON.

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

Picture by Joseph Haverly.



REPEAL BUTTON.

to choose between concessions and civil war. The Duke gave way, and brought in a bill which, like that designed by Pitt, admitted



MANCHESTER OPERATIVE.
Illustrated London News, 1842.

Roman Catholics to Parliament and to all but a few of the highest posts, civil or military, in the service of the Crown. The passing of this bill by the aid of the Whigs threw the Tory party into confusion ; while the cry for Parliamentary Reform was suddenly revived with a strength it had never known before by a Revolution in France, which drove Charles the Tenth from the throne and called his cousin, Louis Philippe, the Duke of Orleans, to reign as a Constitutional King. William the Fourth, who succeeded to the crown on the death of his brother, George the Fourth, at this moment was favourable to the demand of Reform, but Wellington refused all concession. The refusal drove him from office ; and for the first time after twenty years the Whigs saw themselves again in power under the leadership of Earl Grey. A bill for Parliamentary

EPILOGUE

1815

TO

1873

1829

1830

Reform, which took away the right of representation from fifty-six decayed or rotten boroughs, gave the 143 members it gained to counties or large towns which as yet sent no members to Parliament, established a £10 householder qualification



STAFFORDSHIRE COLLIERS.
Penny Magazine, 1836.

EPILOGUE

1815
TO
1873

for voters in boroughs, and extended the county franchise to leaseholders and copyholders, was laid before Parliament in 1831. On its defeat the Ministry appealed to the country. The new House of Commons at once passed the bill, and so terrible was the agitation produced by its rejection by the



VISCOUNT MELBOURNE.

*Picture by Sir T. Lawrence.*June 1,
1832

Lords, that on its subsequent re-introduction the Peers who opposed it withdrew and suffered it to become law. The Reformed Parliament which met in 1833 did much by the violence and inexperience of many of its new members, and especially by the conduct of O'Connell, to produce a feeling

of reaction in the country. On the resignation of Lord Grey in 1834 the Ministry was reconstituted under the leadership of Viscount Melbourne; and though this administration was soon dismissed by the King, whose sympathies had now veered round to the Tories, and succeeded for a short time by a Ministry under Sir Robert Peel, a general election again returned a Whig Parliament, and replaced Lord Melbourne in office. Weakened as it was by the growing change of political feeling throughout the country, no Ministry has ever wrought greater and more beneficial changes than the Whig Ministry under Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne during its ten years of rule. In 1833 the system of slavery which still existed in the British colonies, though the Slave Trade was suppressed, was abolished at a cost of twenty millions; the commercial monopoly of the East India Company was abolished, and the trade to the East thrown open to all merchants. In 1834 the growing evil of pauperism was checked by the enactment of a New Poor Law. In 1835 the Municipal Corporations Act restored to the inhabitants of towns those rights of self-government of which they had been deprived since the fourteenth century. 1836 saw the passing of the General Registration Act, while the constant quarrels over tithe were remedied by the Act for Tithe Commutation, and one of the grievances of Dissenters redressed by a measure which allowed civil marriage. A system of national education, begun in 1834 by a small annual grant towards the erection of schools, was developed in 1839 by the creation of a Committee of the Privy Council for educational purposes and by the steady increase of educational grants.

Great, however, as these measures were, the difficulties of the Whig Ministry grew steadily year by year. Ireland, where O'Connell maintained an incessant agitation for the Repeal of the Union, could only be held down by Coercion Acts. In spite of the impulse given to trade by the system of steam communication which began with the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830, the country still suffered from distress: and the discontent of the poorer classes gave rise in 1839 to riotous demands for "the People's Charter," including universal suffrage, vote by ballot,

EPILOGUE

1815

TO

1873

Nov.,

1834

April,
1835

1831-1841

Peel

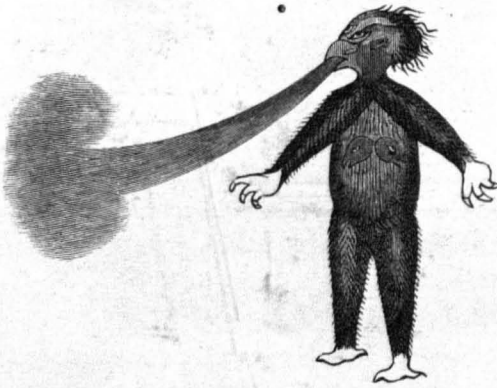
EPILOGUE

1815
TO
1873

annual Parliaments, equal electoral districts, the abolition of all property qualification for members, and payment for their services. In Canada a quarrel between the two districts of Upper and Lower Canada was suffered through mismanagement to grow into a formidable revolt. The vigorous but meddlesome way in which Lord Palmerston, a disciple of Canning, carried out that statesman's foreign policy, supporting Donna Maria as sovereign in Portugal and Isabella as Queen in Spain against claimants of more absolutist tendencies by a Quadruple Alliance with France and the two countries of the Peninsula, and forcing Mehemet Ali, the Pacha of Egypt, to withdraw from an attack on Turkey by the bombardment of Acre in 1840, created general uneasiness; while the public conscience was wounded by a war with China in 1839 on its refusal to allow the smuggling of opium into its dominions.



TURKISH MEDAL FOR BOMBARDMENT OF ACRE, 1840.



CHINESE SKETCH OF ENGLISH SAILOR IN WAR OF 1839.

Illustrated London News, 1857.

A more terrible blow was given to the Ministry by events in India; where the occupation of Cabul in 1839 ended two years later in a general revolt of the Affghans and in the loss of a British army in the Khurd-Cabul Pass. The strength of the Government was restored for a time by the death of William the Fourth in 1837

and the accession of Victoria, the daughter of his brother Edward, Duke of Kent. With the accession of Queen Victoria ended the union of England and Hanover under the same sovereigns, the latter state passing to the next male heir, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland. But the Whig hold on the House of

Commons passed steadily away, and a general election in 1841 gave their opponents, who now took the name of Conservatives, a majority of nearly a hundred members. The general confidence in Sir Robert Peel, who was placed at the head of the Ministry which followed that of Lord Melbourne, enabled him to deal vigorously with two of the difficulties which had most hampered his predecessors. The disorder of the public finances was repaired by the repeal of a host of oppressive and useless duties and by the imposition of an Income Tax. In Ireland O'Connell was charged with sedition and convicted, and though subsequently released from prison on appeal to the House of Lords, his influence received a shock from which it never recovered. Peace was made with China by a treaty which threw open some of its ports to traders of all nations; in India the disaster of Cabul was avenged by an expedition under General Pollock which penetrated victoriously

to the capital of that country in 1842, and the province of Scinde was annexed to the British dominions. The shock, however, to the English power brought about fresh struggles for supremacy with the natives, and especially with the Sikhs, who were crushed for the time in three great battles at Moodkee, Ferozeshah, and Sobraon.

Successful as it proved itself abroad, the Conservative Government encountered unexpected difficulties at home. From the enactment of the Corn Laws in 1815 a dispute had constantly

EPILOGUE

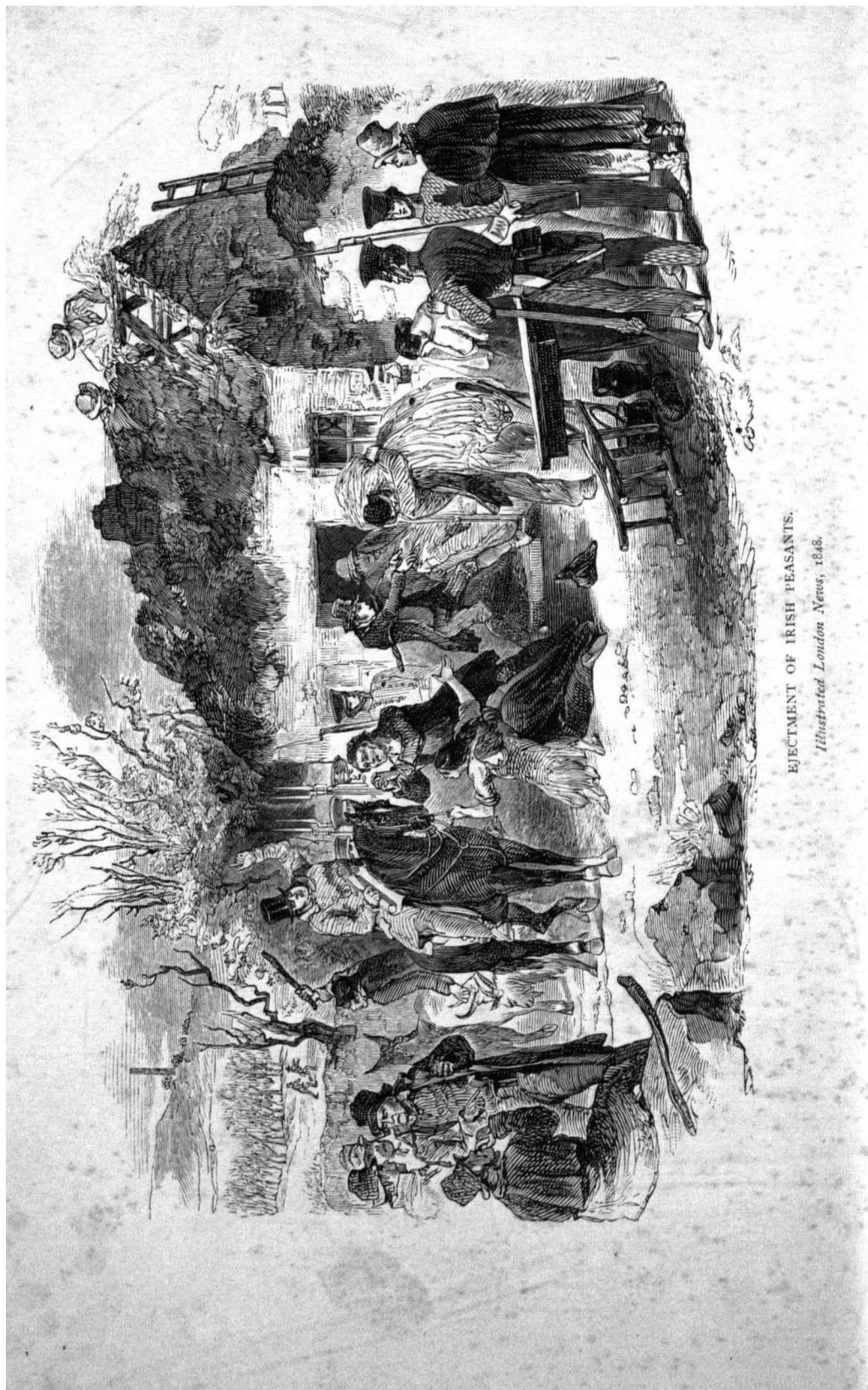
1815
TO
1873



MARTIN, MITCHEL, AND KENYON.
Photograph lent by Mr. Greer, Dalkey.

1845-1846

Free-
Trade



EJECTION OF IRISH PEASANTS.

Illustrated London News, 1848.

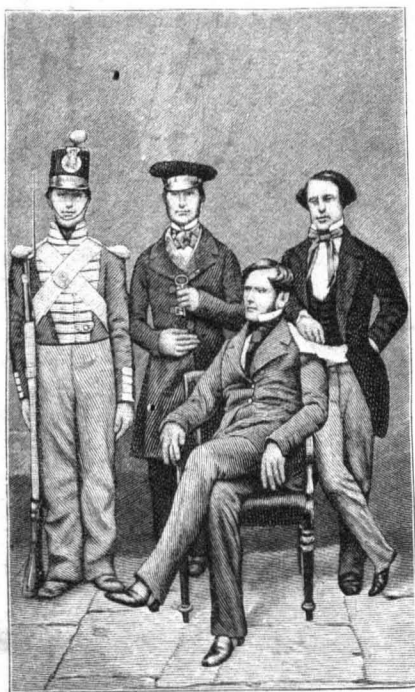
gone on between those who advocated these and similar measures as a protection to native industry and those who, viewing them as simply laying a tax on the consumer for the benefit of the producer, claimed entire freedom of trade with the world. In 1839 an Anti-Corn-Law League had been formed to enforce the views of the advocates of free trade; and it was in great measure the alarm of the farmers and landowners at its action which had induced them

to give so vigorous a support to Sir Robert Peel. But though Peel entered office pledged to protective measures, his own mind was slowly veering round to a conviction of their inexpediency; and in 1846 the failure of the potato crop in Ireland and of the harvest in England forced him to introduce a bill for the repeal of the Corn Laws. The bill passed, but the resentment of his own party soon drove him from office; and he was succeeded by a Whig Ministry under Lord John Russell, which remained in power till 1852. The first work of this Ministry was to carry out the policy of free trade

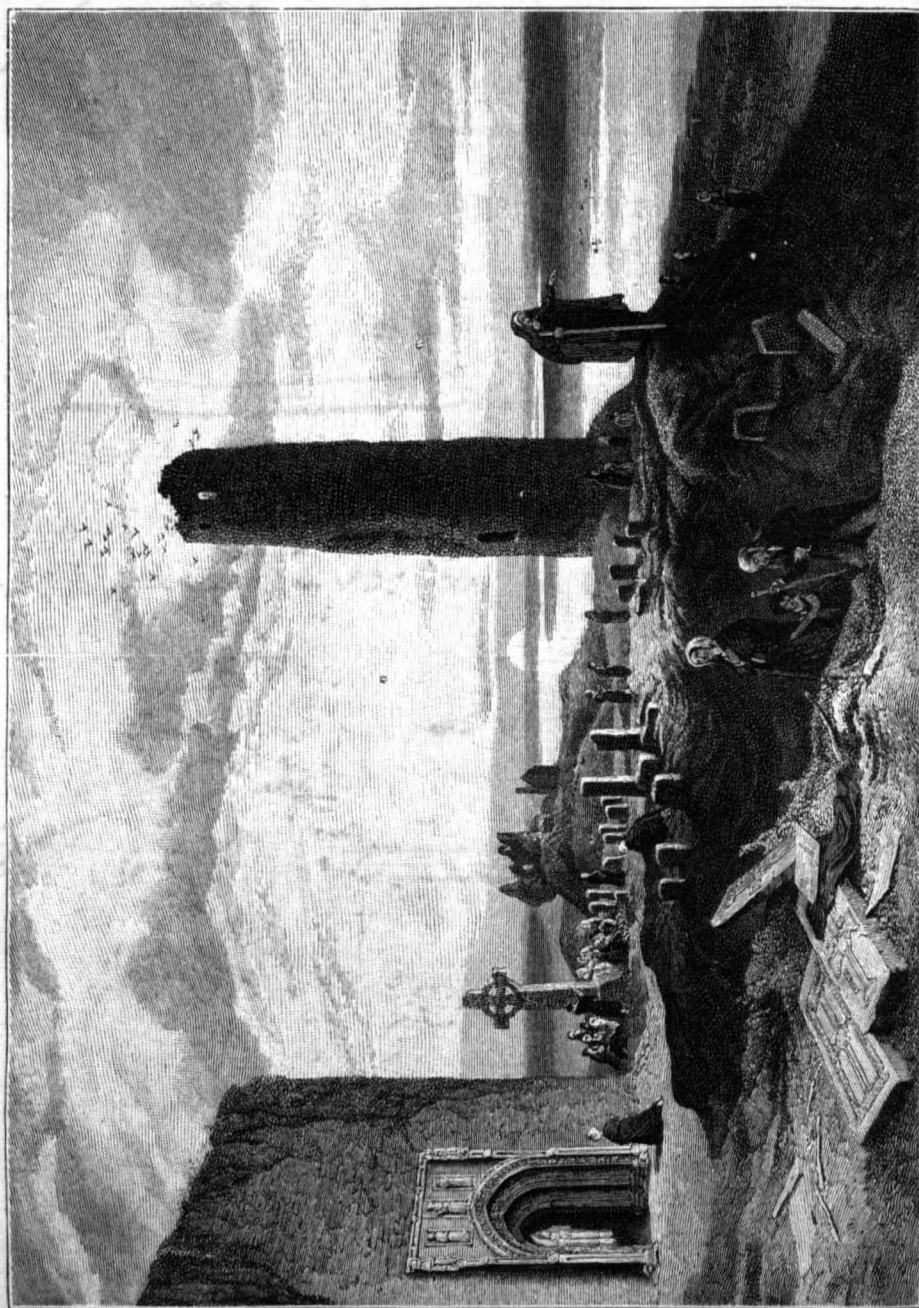
into every department of British commerce; and from that time to this the maxim of the League, to "buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest," has been accepted as the law of our commercial policy. Other events were few. The general overthrow of the continental monarchs in the Revolution of 1848 found faint echoes in a feeble rising in Ireland under Smith O'Brien which was easily suppressed by a few policemen, and in a demonstration of the Chartists in London which passed off without

EPILOGUE

1815
TO
1873



SMITH O'BRIEN AND MEAGHER IN GAOL.
Photograph lent by Mr. Edward French.



CLONMACNOISE.

From a water-colour sketch by Dr. Peck, in the National Gallery of Ireland.

further disturbance. A fresh war with the Sikhs in 1848 was closed by the victory of Goojerat and the annexation of the Punjaub in the following year.

The long peace which had been maintained between the European powers since the treaties of 1815 was now drawing to a close. In 1852 the Ministry of Lord John Russell was displaced by a short return of the Conservatives to power under Lord Derby; but a union of the Whigs with the Free Trade followers of Sir Robert Peel restored them to office at the close of the year. Lord Aberdeen, the head of the new administration, was at once compelled to resist the attempts of Russia to force on Turkey a

EPILOGUE

1815
TO
1873Russian
and
Sepoy
Wars

humiliating treaty; and in 1854 England allied herself with Louis Napoleon, who had declared himself Emperor of the French, to resist the invasion of the Danubian Principalities by a Russian army. The army was withdrawn; but in September the allied force landed on the shores of the Crimea, and after a victory at the river Alma undertook the siege of Sebastopol. The garrison however soon proved as strong as the besiegers, and as fresh Russian forces reached the Crimea the Allies found themselves besieged in their turn. An attack on the English position at Inkerman on November the



TURKISH MEDAL FOR DEFENCE
OF SILISTRIA.

Tancred, "Record of Medals."

5th was repulsed with the aid of a French division; but winter proved more terrible than the Russian sword, and the English force wasted away with cold or disease. The public indignation at its sufferings forced the Aberdeen Ministry from office in the opening of 1855; and Lord Palmerston became Premier with a Ministry which included those members of the last administration who were held to be most in earnest in the prosecution of the war. After a siege of nearly a year the Allies at last became masters of Sebastopol in September, and Russia, spent with the strife, consented in 1856 to the Peace of Paris. The military reputation of England had fallen low during the struggle, and

EPILOGUE

1815

TO

1873

to this cause the mutiny of the native troops in Bengal, which quickly followed in 1857, may partly be attributed. Russian intrigues, Moslem fanaticism, resentment at the annexation of the kingdom of Oudh by Lord Dalhousie, and a fanatical belief on the part of the Hindoos that the English Government had resolved to make them Christians by forcing them to lose their caste, have all been assigned as causes of an outbreak which still remains mysterious. A mutiny at Meerut in May was followed by the seizure of Delhi, where the native king was enthroned as Emperor of Hindostan, by a fresh mutiny and massacre of the Europeans at Cawnpore, by the rising of Oudh and the siege of the Residency



SILVER COIN OF EAST INDIA COMPANY, 1675.



at Lucknow. The number of English troops in India was small, and for the moment all Eastern and Central Hindostan seemed lost; but Madras, Bombay, and the Punjaub remained untouched, and

the English in Bengal and Oudh not only held their ground but marched upon Delhi, and in September took the town by storm.



RUPEE OF BHURTPOR, 1858.

Two months later the arrival of reinforcements under Sir Colin Campbell relieved Lucknow, which had been saved till now by the heroic advance of Sir Henry Havelock with a handful of troops, and cleared Oudh of the mutineers. The suppression of the revolt was followed by a change in the government of India, which was transferred in 1858 from the Company to the Crown; the Queen being

formally proclaimed its sovereign, and the Governor-General becoming her Viceroy.

Lord Palmerston

The credit which Lord Palmerston won during the struggle with Russia and the Sepoys was shaken by his conduct in proposing an alteration in the law respecting conspiracies in 1858, in consequence of an attempt to assassinate Napoleon the Third which was believed to have originated on English ground. The violent language of the French army brought about a movement

for the enlistment of a Volunteer force, which soon reached a hundred and fifty thousand men; and so great was the irritation it caused that the bill, which was thought to have been introduced in deference to the demands of France, was rejected by the House of Commons. Lord Derby again became Prime Minister for a few months: but a fresh election in 1859 brought back Lord Palmerston, whose Ministry lasted till his death in 1865. At home

EPILOGUE

 1815
 TO
 1873



VISCOUNT PALMERSTON.

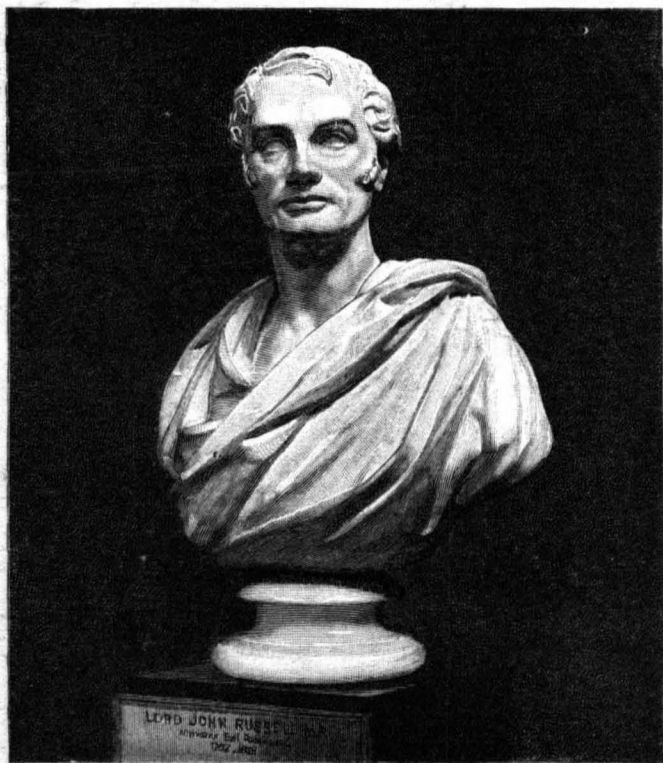
From an engraving by Joseph Brown of a photograph by John Watkins.

his policy was one of pure inaction; and his whole energy was directed to the preservation of English neutrality in five great strifes which distracted not only Europe but the New World—a war between France and Austria in 1859 which ended in the creation of the kingdom of Italy, a civil war in America which began with the secession of the Southern States in 1861 and ended four years later in their subjugation, an insurrection of Poland in

EPILOGUE

1815
TO
1873

1863, an attack of France upon Mexico, and of Austria and Prussia upon Denmark in 1864. The American war, by its interference with the supply of cotton, reduced Lancashire to distress ; while the fitting out of piratical cruisers in English harbours in the name of the Southern Confederation gave America just grounds for an irritation which was only allayed at a far later time. Peace,



LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

Bust by John Francis, in National Portrait Gallery.

however, was successfully preserved ; and the policy of non-intervention was pursued after Lord Palmerston's death by his successor, Lord Russell, who remained neutral during the brief but decisive conflict between Prussia and Austria in 1866 which transferred to the former the headship of Germany.

The
New Re-
formers

With Lord Palmerston, however, passed away the policy of political inaction which distinguished his rule, Lord Russell had

long striven to bring about a further reform of Parliament ; and in 1866 he laid a bill for that purpose before the House of Commons, whose rejection was followed by the resignation of the Ministry. Lord Derby, who again became Prime Minister, with Mr. Disraeli

EPILOGUE

1815

TO

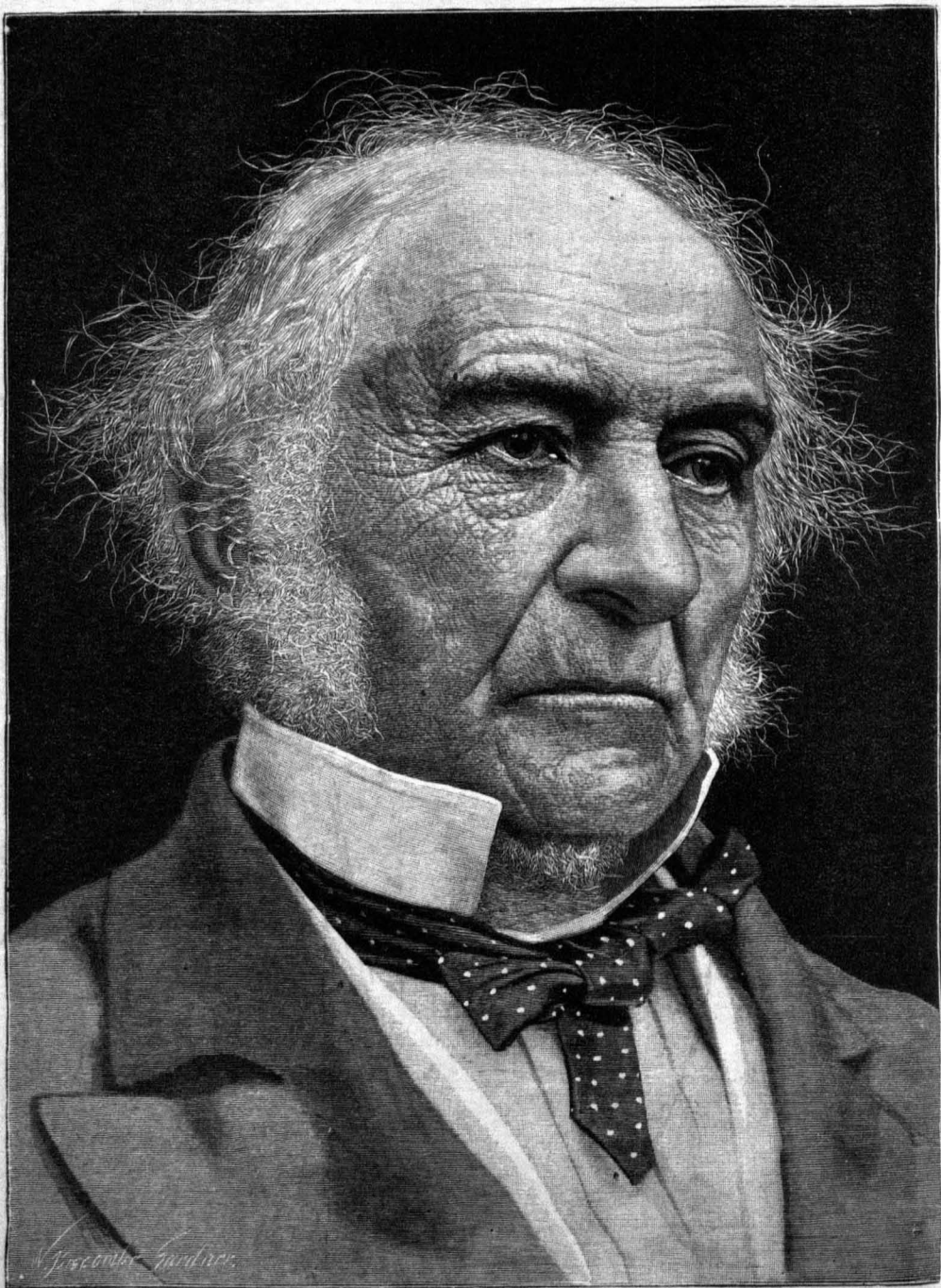
1873



BENJAMIN DISRAELI, EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

Bust by Sir E. J. Boehm.

as leader of the House of Commons, found himself, however, driven to introduce in 1867 a Reform Bill of a far more sweeping character than that which had failed in Lord Russell's hands. By this measure, which passed in August, the borough franchise was extended to all ratepayers, as well as to lodgers occupying rooms of the annual value of £10 ; the county franchise was fixed at £12,



W. L. L. L. L. L.

Engraved by W. Discombe Gardner from a photograph by S. A. Walker.