

write, that twenty could neither read nor write, and that the remaining eight could only read and write imperfectly, and that this would to a certain extent appear to bear out the impression that crime arose from the want of education. He must, however, express his opinion that mere secular education alone would be of little use in the case of the poor. The education of the people must be given in a sound, moral, and religious education in early life, educating him in after life would not have the beneficial effect that was anticipated. He considered that much good was done by country gentlemen in their station exerting themselves among their poor neighbours in endeavouring to repress those habits of crime and plunder that appeared to be so prevalent of late years. It behooved them to take all the means in their power to repress the causes that had operated upon the lower classes to induce them to resort to these violent and dangerous proceedings; and he feared that, unless some general system of moral improvement was resorted to, the mere giving of education to the lower orders of people would not at all tend to check that increase of crime which had caused so much uneasiness and alarm. His lordship, having alluded to one or two cases in the calendar, then dismissed the grand jury to their duties.

From the *Britannia*.

THE ANATOMY OF PARLIAMENT.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

"Thank God we have a House of Lords!" was the consolatory exclamation of one of the most acute and determined democrats this country has ever produced. "Thank God we have a House of Lords!" Every year's experience serves to show the prophetic foresight which prompted that ejaculation, and to mark still more decidedly the wisdom of that plan of Government which constituted an upper or Senatorial House, as a counterpoise to the democratic tendencies of a popular assembly.

The contrast between the Houses is most strongly marked, so strongly, indeed, as to afford one guarantee for the integrity of the constitution. Each chamber is the representative of a principle; the one of the aristocracy, the other of the democracy; and in all the external symbols of either, the peculiarities attaching to each are preserved. The House of Lords is quiet, elegant, gentlemanly; the House of Commons—noisy, plain and rude. In the one House you see the sedateness and calm which attend undisputed possession; in the other, all the fever, all the strife, all the ignoble earnestness of the endeavour to attain to it. The one holds, the other grasps at. The Lords bring reason and calmness to bear on legislation; the Commons, clamour and passion. Experience and well-regulated patriotism are on the one hand; conceit, wild theory, a passion for change, and a love of display, misnamed public spirit, on the other. Each peer represents personally, and by the order to which he belongs, the best interests of the whole people; each commoner represents only the interests of a section or class, to the exclusion or detriment of all the rest. There are no adventures in the House of Lords; there are many in the House of Commons. The one House is placed far above the necessity for excitement, and the other is in the very atmosphere of the other. The Commons generate the very material of legislation; the Lords refine, purify, fashion, and mould it for use, unless, when deleterious or base, they reject it. All the greater minds of the age ascend to the House of Lords, which therefore comprises the prime wisdom, talent, and experience, to which that age gives birth; the House of Commons is but a stepping-stone, a ladder to be kicked aside by him who has so matured his powers, in the exercises of party and the study of mankind, as to have become fitted for a seat among the master-spirits—he quits the elected to sit among the elect. Among the Commons, the proceedings of the House of Commons, with that different feeling one enters the House of Lords! It is like escaping into a drawing-room from the heat and turmoil and vulgar babble of a debating club. The House itself looks like an enormous saloon, and the carpeted floor, and the rich crimson cloth with which all the seats are covered, add to the impression of courtly ease and splendour which strike the eye on first beholding it.

The *debate* is very imposing; nor is your interest lessened when you come to analyse its component parts. What a crowd of historical and personal recollections rush upon the mind! How many noble reputations, acquired in arms, in jurisprudence, and in the more general exercise of intellect, are there represented! A Marlborough, a Rodney, a Mansfield, a Redesdale, a Portland, a Chatham, are here, not merely in the mouldy records of their triumphs, but in their own flesh and blood. You see before you the living representatives of those master spirits who, whether by their prowess or their wisdom, raised the greatness of England in their own time and have left, as an heritage to their country, the fruits of their fame. Emphatically may it be said of the House of Lords, that it is a "house of lords," in more senses than one, that "they being dead, yet speak." Scarcely have you gratified your eager desire to behold the descendants of the mighty dead, when you feast your intellectual gaze on the not less illustrious living. Not in one, or in two, or in ten visits, can the House of Lords be really understood and enjoyed. You must be a constant attendant, and ponder well and often upon what there occurs, before you become thoroughly imbued with the moral impressiveness which accompanies and exalts the positive intellectual and moral worth of that venerable assembly.

But in the indulgence of these reflections I am somewhat forgetting that, in all probability, the majority of my readers have never been within the walls of the House; and that they would rather have a circumstantial description of what it really is, than be called upon to indulge at second-hand in associations which are after all perhaps somewhat trite. For this purpose then, we will post ourselves in the gallery appropriated to strangers.

At the further end of the House, between the two high glazed doors which form the peers' entrance, is the throne. It is placed upon a raised platform, and rises two or three steps from the floor. All that is not gilded is covered with crimson cloth. Behind the throne, are the Royal initials; but, by a strange negligence, the "W. R." has not yet been replaced by the initials of Queen Victoria. The space in front of the throne, and on the steps, is occasionally occupied by gentlemen who are introduced by the Lord Chancellor's order, and the three or four aristocratic-looking boys who are paying such devout attention to the proceedings are the sons of peers. In the middle of the throne is what is called the woolsack—a large crimson cushion, or bank, like nothing but itself, in the centre of which sits the Lord Chancellor, in all the glories of a silk gown and full judicial wig. A less commodious seat for one who has to be there for many hours, after a fatiguing day in the Chancery Court, cannot well be conceived. Other peers occasionally lounge about the woolsack, though, as there is no back to lean against, one is at a loss to account for their taste. Immediately in front of the woolsack are two other banks of the same kind stretching forward into the House, which are also used as seats or lounging-places. The Princess of the Blood generally occupy them when present in the House. In front of these is the table, at which sit, with their faces to the Chancellor, two or more clerks (barristers) in wigs and gowns; and, occasionally, a Master-in-Chancery or so. The former individuals have to read petitions and other matters to the House, when desired to do so, and are chiefly distinguished by being the most readers in the United Kingdom. In front of the table, between it and what is called the "bar," behind which strangers and members of the other House are admitted, are situated the cross-benches, occupied by the Duke of Richmond and other noble lords—those who have not yet made up their minds, or who have no minds to make up. The great mass of peers are ranged on benches stretching on each side along the sides of the House, from the glass doors before mentioned down to the bar. Of these the Government and their supporters sit on the right of the Chancellor, and the Opposition on the left. As you view them from the strangers' gallery, or stand at the bar, however, these positions, of course, appear reversed—the Opposition being on your right, and Government on your left.

So much for the ground plan; now for the filling up. But before you begin to inquire who the individual peers are, the first impression that strikes you is the gentlemanly aspect of the whole assembly. No buzz, no creaking of boots and scraping of feet, such as you hear in the House of Commons—but all quiet, easy, and well-bred. You instinctively feel that you are in an assembly of gentlemen, and so you see or hear anything to dispel the illusion. The peers are in one peculiar respect distinguished from the Commons: they pay a due attention to dress. There are no dirty, vulgar men in the House of Lords—no men with soiled stockings and disordered shoes. They do not seem to favour the delusion that slovenliness and talent have any necessary relationship.

Now for the peers themselves. Immediately on the right of the Lord Chancellor, and on the extreme left of the House, as viewed from the gallery, is the Bench of Bishops. In the front is a monk, sickly-looking prelate, in a blue-bitting dark wig. He is the Archbishop of Canterbury, against whom not even his enemies have a word to say. He can champion the Church without provoking the ire of his foes. Near him is the least abstracted, but scarcely less respected, Bishop of London. His full, ruddy face offers a fine contrast to the pale visage of the Archbishop. Conspicuous among these divines is the celebrated Bishop of Exeter—

The seats next to the Bench of Bishops, further down the House on the right of the Chancellor, are occupied by Ministers. In the midst of them sits, or rather lolls, the all-potent, because all-impotent, Melbourne. Observe the careless air with which his white hair is tilted off his forehead, and the *dehors* for which his whole bearing expresses. He is turning hastily over the leaves of a Government Bill—it is the first time he has looked at it, though the order of the day for its second reading is now being moved! The tall dandy, with a face like the Saracen's Head in acute grief, is the Marquis of Normandy. An elderly gentleman next him, fresh-coloured, and with a staid, respectable air, is his brother-Marquis of Lansdowne. A very stout, infirm old man, with crutches, a bald head, and bearing in face a marked resemblance to the great Charles James Fox, is his nephew, Lord Holland. He is chiefly remarkable for vociferous cheering at inconvenient times, and for making good speeches greatly to the embarrassment of his colleagues. To the right of the Marquis of Lansdowne you will observe a peer with a peculiarly sheepish expression and enormous white shirt-collar—that is Lord Duncannon. In spite of his very silly appearance, his lordship is one of the few men of business in the Ministry; but the desk, not the House, is his sphere. Immediately adjoining Ministers, on their right, and at the head of a bench that is scarcely separated from theirs, sits Lord Brougham. He displayed his usual sagacity in the choice of that seat. He is as it were among the Ministers, but not of them; yet the neutrality of his position is not so marked as to signify the impossibility of re-union. Behind the noble and learned lord, on the back bench, sits the Earl of Radnor. To his right sits the Marquis of Clanricarde, concerning whom even his friends are expressly silent; near him, also, sits Lord Denham, with that fine severe face of his—the index of so much more than his mind contains.

Let us now turn to the Conservative benches—on the left of the Chancellor. First, in all points of view, let us sit on the Duke of Wellington. He sits at the end of the first bench, in front. His dress is the simplest, consisting of a blue frock coat, and plain white trousers. His attitude is singular. With his arms folded, his head sunk on his breast, his hat slouched over his eyes, and his legs stretched out to the full length, he would appear to be asleep, and regardless of all that is going on. But if you look at his mouth, you will perceive that he is engaged in deep thought, and frequently he rises and proves that he has been so, either by delivering a plain, manly John-bull-like exposition of his views, or by answering in detail the arguments of those who have gone before. Next to the illustrious knight, is his parliamentary squire, Lord Ellenborough—the peer with a full, fresh colour, and curling head of dark hair. One of the most clear-headed and sensible of his party, he has until lately neglected business for pleasure, but he is now an ardent parliamentary pupil of the duke. Immediately to his right is a dark-haired, pale man, dressed in black, and with the air of a very serious clergyman of the Establishment—that is the Earl of Aberdeen, also a strong, clear-headed man. Lower down, an infirm old man, with white hair and supported by crutches, is Lord Wynford; near him is Lord Kenyon, the peer whose cheek is ruddy with health, but whose hair and whiskers are white as snow. Behind the Duke, on the back bench, is the Earl of Wicklow, a stout, ruddy-faced man, with sandy hair. When he does not get into a passion, he is a very sensible man in his party. If ever strong row at the extreme end of the House, farthest from the Lord Chancellor, Lord Lyndhurst has chosen to post himself, for what reason it is difficult to say. Quite out of from the other leaders of his party, it would seem that the inconvenience of the position is his charm. Any other man would feel embarrassed at having to address the House from such a distance; but Lord Lyndhurst's fine, clear, manly, trumpet-like voice, overcomes all obstacles of space, as his self-possession overcomes all those of situation; and he makes himself heard, *aud et fatis* too, in any part of the House.

The strong and characteristic contrast between the House of Commons and the Upper House is marked in the building, its decorations, and the personal appearances of the members, how much the more evident is it in their respective modes of conducting a debate! The reader is aware that scenes of riot and confusion occur at times in the Lower House, in comparison with which the silent councils of the Indian Saganeas are venerable. In the House of Lords no such scenes occur. The only event of the kind that at all approached to them was when the late King came down to open Parliament after the rejection of the Reform Bill. But how different was the display of feeling! If ever strong excitement was pardonable, it was on such an unprecedented occasion. Yet it did not degenerate into riot, as is the case in the House of Commons; and their lordships had scarcely given way to it when it was put to a stop. The fact is, that the tone which pervades the House, and the good breeding of its members, precludes such exhibitions. No man is in that House by accident—all have their credentials, either of birth or of talent. But not in the absence of noise, and the maintenance of order alone, is the superiority of the House of Lords to be ascribed. The tone of the debate is far superior. Almost every man who rises to speak in the House is, or less, a statesman. He feels himself, not the representative of a mere class, the advocate of an isolated few, but one of the guardians of the welfare of the community—a member of the high court of appeal of the nation—the constitutional moderator of the passions and prejudices of the people. The least celebrated peer, therefore, however little he may be versed in the arts of the orator, delivers his sentiments with a dignity, a calmness, and a consciousness of disinterestedness known to the commoner. He has not the fear of a deputation angry Congressmen before his eyes, nor of a dissolution, which exposes him to write a long and tedious oration to the enormous expenses of an election. He can afford, therefore, to throw overboard most of those considerations which practically derogate from the otherwise high trust of a representative of the people. But if these advantages attend the Peer whose only claims are his title and stake in the country, how much the more do they attach to him who has also genius, talent, and a made reputation to bring to bear upon the debate! If ever you hear political truths spoken in Parliament, it is in the House of Lords. Great candidly applied his mind to extricate his country from the political difficulties of the future, or their candid censures of the policies of the past, without fear and without reproach. A Wellington, a Lyndhurst, a Brougham, an Aberdeen, here sow the seeds whence germinate the principles on which national policy is based. 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