

were destined to transform under the title of the Rights of Man." Ever since his visit to America in the days of President Pierce, if not before, Acton had made a special study of the American Constitution in its strength and its weakness, in the amplitude of its safeguards, and in its fatal want of elasticity. A Monarchy cannot be too constitutional. But a too constitutional Republic is a difficult machine to work. England, said a French critic, is a Republic with an hereditary President: the United States are a Monarchy with an elected King.

From this time forward Lord Acton wrote less, and read, if possible, more. Dr. Shaw's careful Bibliography, my obligations to which I have already acknowledged, contains nothing between 1877 and 1885 except a review of Sir Erskine May's *Democracy in Europe* for the *Quarterly* of January 1878. Sir Erskine May, the well known Clerk of the House, was a pleasant and popular writer, who dealt largely in generalisations, and sometimes condescended to platitudes. He was an earnest Liberal, though his office imposed some restraint upon his opinions, and it is creditable to the impartiality of the late Sir William Smith that he should have allowed a Liberal critic to deal with a Liberal author in the traditional organ of Conservatism. He certainly had his reward. For it would be difficult to find in the *Quarterly Review* from the days of Gifford and Southey to our own an article of more fascinating interest and more solid value than this masterly essay, which its author never took the trouble to republish. Notwithstanding Lord Acton's minute and conscientious accuracy in points of detail, he is always best and most characteristic in broad, luminous inferences from large masses of history and long periods of time. He contented himself on this occasion with a few civil remarks about the public servant who made so industrious a use of his leisure, and devoted the rest of his space, which was far too small, to a comparison or contrast of democracy with freedom. He showed that for eleven hundred years, from the first Constantine to the last, the Christian Empire was as