

while keeping in office. But, *et tu Brute!* In Carnarvon, at least, we had some right to expect that there remained a sympathy with the grand, masterful, and adventurous in the relations of England to the world: a willingness, an eagerness to make strong England play a father's or an elder brother's part in the family of mankind, taking the weak and ignorant by the hand, striking terror into evil doers, giving protection and encouragement to the beginnings of good, causing the wilderness to blossom as the rose, and sending forth the light of religion and civilisation into those dark places of the earth which are still the habitations of cruelty. But the fires of hope were almost extinguished by that speech. The hero seemed to have joined himself to the ignoble chorus of repudiators of rational duty. He seemed, like a famous Laodicean of old, to have "caught the Whigs bathing," and run away with their livery of dishonour. In that garb he seemed to be coming forward as chief priest to sacrifice national honour at the altar of the great god *Laissez-faire*. It was the latest and most alarming symptom of growing virulence in that epidemic of insular churlishness which had during many years been raging amongst English public men. Half of our leading statesmen had already delivered speeches under its debasing influence, and the rest, with the noble exceptions of Earl Grey and Sir Bartle Frere, had shown no signs of healthy resistance to the infection. Public opinion had indeed become grievously emasculated. Everywhere the valetudinarian theory of British policy commanded the assent of safe mediocrities and stolid Philistines. The *Times*, after its kind, dealt out "practical" commonplaces, sicklied over with the colour of the reigning disease. Even the *Standard* seemed inclined to follow the multitude to talk evil. Everybody was informed that he knew "that England had given up business as a conquering and aggressive power. In the whole fourth estate the quasi-Radical *Spectator* had the doubly singular honour of upholding an imperial policy. The creeping palsy of cynical self-abasement had become so powerful that its cant had almost taken the form of established maxims of English public conduct. The dogma of non-interference was constantly alluded to as an incontrovertible first principle. Argument in favour of increas-