

as the Palmerstonians. There was then no Gladstonian party at all. The Peelites were disbanded. Some had fallen back into the Conservative ranks. Some, like Sidney Herbert, who died in 1861, Cardwell, and Gladstone himself, sat in the Cabinet of Lord Palmerston. Others had fallen out of public life altogether. Mr. Gladstone was still to the general public somewhat of an enigma. So lately as May 1858 he had been earnestly entreated both by Lord Derby and by Mr. Disraeli to accept the Board of Control on the resignation of Lord Ellenborough. He had voted for the Conservative Reform Bill of 1859, and against Lord Hartington's motion which turned Lord Derby out. When he accepted office in a Liberal Administration, his Tory constituents at Oxford were so much surprised and annoyed that they did their best to deprive him of his seat, and almost succeeded. The Whigs regarded him as a Tory and a Puseyite. The Tories bore a grudge against him because he had imposed a succession duty on landed estates. The Radicals considered him a lukewarm reformer, and in short hardly any one except his personal friends knew what to make of him. Then came the opportunity, and with it was displayed the full grandeur of the man. The Parliament of 1859 passed no successful or memorable legislation which was not connected with finance. Mr. Gladstone's Budgets were the great events of the Sessions from 1860 to 1865. Almost every year taxes were repealed, expenditure was diminished, revenue was increased. After an obstinate conflict with the House of Lords the paper duty disappeared, and with it the power of the Lords to interfere, except by rejecting a whole Budget, with the taxation of the people. The duties on tea and sugar were so reduced as to bring those commodities within the reach of the working classes. The income-tax fell from ninepence to fourpence. The Commercial Treaty with France preserved the peace of Europe, and by the trade which it created between the two sides of the English Channel more than made up for the losses inflicted upon British commerce by the American War.