

was that man. It is probable that Mr. Blake felt his mistake in coquetting with the race antagonism got up, which was the more conspicuous by contrast with the conduct of Mr. Mackenzie and Sir Richard Cartwright; but Mr. Blake's record was quite pure enough to have enabled him to live down a more serious error, and it is to be deplored that the state of his health deprived the party of a leader whose place it seems at present impossible adequately to supply.

In this connection we cannot help thinking that the party would have been best placed under the control of Sir Richard Cartwright. That, however, is a point on which it should be the best judge itself. It seems certain that dignity, moderation, and abstinence from the personal abuse and petty modes of attack of opponents, would have better served both its purposes and its reputation, than their absence, which has been conspicuous. To these errors, to the tendency to a prevailing unpatriotic tone, to the constant reiteration of exaggerated views of the national debt, and the amount of taxation, to continued harping on the "exodus," and the persistent opposition to measures calculated to build us up as a nation, are doubtless to be attributed the decreased strength, and influence on public opinion, with which, as we think, they will come to the ensuing session of parliament.

Neither has the assumption of a higher comparative standard of purity very well stood the test of facts. The party methods in 1873, inclusive of the transaction with the Ontario Bank, did not afford a much more edifying spectacle than the Pacific Scandal, and in the matter of electoral corruption the Liberal party has been very far from vindicating its superiority.

There are not wanting some indications that the party is beginning to doubt the efficacy of an unpatriotic policy, and, if so, its return to more worthy modes of political warfare would be of incalculable advantage to a country which fairly groans under the heavy infliction of a political charlatanism, which disturbs and discourages its legitimate industries, and breeds a spirit of discontent, disunion and despondency in a young, really prosperous and rapidly growing country, which only needs that all should pull together with national pride, and national courage and fortitude.

On the other hand, we see little justification for the wholesale imputations of disloyalty and hypocrisy continually poured out by the Conservative press. We do think the policy of the Liberal party to have been mistaken, unfortunate and, in some cases, factious and insincere; but no party has ever quite succeeded in avoiding the pitfalls opened by the opportunities and accidental circumstances of party strife, and nothing is more natural, however much to be deplored, than the conviction of the political partizan that the entire platform he advocates is the only truth, and that every thing else is false. It is the old joke, "Orthodoxy is my doxy, heterodoxy is everybody else's doxy."

KINGLAKE'S "CRIMEA."

At last—that is to say, a month or two ago—Mr. Kinglake's leisurely, sober, and ponderous, yet most fascinating, history, has come to a close with the death of Lord Raglan, of whom the brilliant author of "Eothen" was a devoted admirer. Many, who may, perhaps, have grown weary of the long intervals which separated each weighty volume from its successor, will probably now be tempted to take up the work again as a whole, with the fair expectation of that thorough enjoyment of a marvellous style, which can never be so completely realized in a piecemeal perusal.

That Mr. Kinglake is a partizan is unquestionable; but there is as little doubt in the mind of the reader who has the faculty of perception of truth, that his partizanship is justified by the character of his hero. As a matter of fact, Lord Raglan's true judgment was literally never at fault. Where he allowed himself to act in opposition to it, his action was at the instance of considerations which he deemed of higher and broader consequence than those involved in his own views. These considerations were, in every case, of importance, such as were inseparable from the almost inevitable evils of a divided command,—evils scarcely ever successfully averted but by such loyalty as that of Eugene to Mariborough; unless, indeed, we except the one or two instances in the annals of early republican Rome, as in the case of the Consul Livius, when his coadjutor Nero joined him at the Metaurus, where they inflicted on Hasdrubal that defeat which was the turning point in the fortunes of Hannibal. It is a strange freak of historical circumstance that the supreme iniquity of the Emperor should have so completely overshadowed the surpassing service to his country accomplished by the brilliant secret march of the Consul, that ninety-nine out of a hundred who have a smattering of the rudiments of history to-day, have no other association with the name of Nero than that implied in the "tremendous language" of Tacitus: "*Virtutem ipsam excindere*,"—the desire "to cut out virtue itself by the roots."

The situation of the allied armies after Inkerman was very critical. The indomitable courage and energy, joined to the extraordinary ability of General Todleben, was as nearly as possible putting the victors in greater jeopardy than the vanquished, and had not that magnificent soldier been lost to the defence by a wound, it is, perhaps, doubtful what the ultimate result of the siege might have been. The great Russian engineer is indeed, after all, the real hero of Mr. Kinglake's volumes, and whether he voluntarily or involuntarily gives him that place of honor, none can say it is beyond his deserts.

None knew that the vacillation of General Canrobert, by which he considerably damaged his strategic reputation, was due to his being continually checked by General Niel, despatched by the Emperor to prepare the stage for a grand flourish when he should arrive in person, to accomplish one of the theatrical *coups* which he seems to have experienced a morbid delight in contemplating. That vacillation, however, was as troublesome to Lord Raglan, and as mischievous to the allied armies, as it was astonishing to Todleben, who knew their advantages better than they did themselves.

But the last act came with the appointment to the French command of the iron Pelissier, who almost contemptuously put aside the Emperor's dramatic plans. He, however, lost his head with violent temper for an unfortunate eight days, and added for a time to the embarrassments which, capped by the sense of his responsibility for the ill-fated attack on the Redan, ultimately wore out the life of a splendid soldier; but one who, perhaps, a little lacked the unflinching sternness of purpose of his great master, the Duke of Wellington; a lack scarcely made up for by perfect tact and imperturbability of temper in dealing with impracticable colleagues.

At the eleventh hour Pelissier changed the preliminaries of his assault on the Malakhoff; and it is unquestionable that Lord Raglan submitted his better judgment to an illogical caprice of his ally. In accepting what was practically an ultimatum, he was influenced by what was, in his opinion, the supreme consideration of maintaining intact his cordial relations with his colleague. "Moreover, had the English been held back when the French were in movement, they would doubtless have been taxed with treachery or cowardice. The question is partly for strategists, partly for casuists. It is certain that, in opposition to his judgment and his conscience, Lord Raglan launched his soldiers on an undertaking that proved to be as desperately hopeless as he believed it to be, and sacrificed many valuable lives to speculative and ulterior considerations." But there must have been soldierly qualities of the highest order in the worn-out general who could still succeed in establishing a more than cordial understanding with the stern Frenchman who had coolly smoked to death several hundred Arabs in a cave in Algeria.

It is thus that the future Duke of Malakhoff is described:—"The short, thick-set, resolute Norman had passed his sixtieth year, but the gray, the fast-whitening hair that capped his powerful head, and marked the inroads of Time, wore an alien look, as though utterly out of true fellowship with the keen, fiery, vehement eyes, with the still dark and heavy moustache, with all the imperious features that glowed, or seemed to be glowing, in the prime or fierce mid-day of life. His mighty bull-neck, strongly built upon broad, massive shoulders, gave promise of hard, bloody fights, gave warning of angry moods and even of furious outbursts."

All this ominous promise was presently fulfilled, not improbably under irrepressible irritation at the meddling of the Emperor; but when the English Marshal lay dead, the iron Frenchman "stood by the bedside for upwards of an hour crying like a child."

DELAGOA BAY.

South Africa has now for some years enjoyed the privilege of being *par excellence* the chosen theatre for the perennial muddling of the British Colonial Office. Very much according to the party exigencies of the moment in Parliament, expeditions have been wrongly undertaken and backed out of at the wrong time; unjust and mischievous wars have been entered upon, and some of those which were just have only ended in disaster and disgrace to the British arms.

We crushed Cetewayo, who might have been made a safe ally, and pursued a policy, consistent only in the most pitiable vacillation, with the uncompromising Boers, whose successes were mainly due to our irresolution, and the appointment of incompetent commanders. The result of our miserable wavering has been to add contempt for British arms to malignant hatred of British rule.

Blunders in diplomacy have, of course, gone hand in hand with those in the field, and both are now beginning to bear fruit in due season.

The finest harbor on the east coast is Delagoa Bay, which belongs to Portugal. The territory was at one time in dispute, but was confirmed to Portugal by the arbitration of Marshal McMahon, when President of France. Portugal is tenacious both of honor and land, but her government is deeply in debt, and a few years ago the Delagoa Bay might have been acquired on easy terms, either by purchase delicately proposed, or in exchange for some other piece of territory. This was, of course, a piece of foresight quite beyond the Colonial Office, or the courage of a Minister to face the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Now, the Transvaal, to which Great Britain has, with an unwise facility, conceded autonomy, has no seacoast, but the shortest line to the sea is straight to Delagoa Bay. The recent gold discoveries threaten the Boers with a loss of preponderance in population, owing to the influx of British miners, and their hatred of the English suggests to them to solicit a German protectorate. Germany is pushing her trade in those regions by every means possible to her, and might be by no means inclined to turn a deaf ear to the appeal of the Boers. If he consented, the complications and the damage to English commerce which would ensue need no explanation. Meanwhile, a railway is actually in course of construction across the Portuguese territory, and the Transvaal Boers propose to build a line in their own country to join it. Fortunately, the Delagoa Bay line is at present in American hands, which is at all events better than being in those of Germany, and it is said that it is not even yet too late to secure a cession of the territory from Portugal, though the Portuguese government is now quite alive to its enhanced value, and the purchase would no doubt cost ten times as much as it might have been obtained for a few years ago.

Many officers, both naval and military, of large South African knowledge and experience, as well as Mr. Rider Haggard, have written on the subject with great energy, to the English press. We trust it may not be once again "too late," for the success of the combination would probably mean the extinction of British power and influence in South Africa.

We can only trust that the British government may be sufficiently roused by the appeals made to it to throw off for once its proverbial *via inertia*, and take energetic measures in time. It may be a rather forlorn hope, but we are reluctant to altogether abandon it.