

to Franklin. This remarkable man was then in his 75th year. He had complete knowledge of his subject, and to unrivalled powers of dissimulation added resolute courage and vigour of mind. Surveying the whole field of the revolutionary war and the treaty which concluded it, the services of Franklin were of great value to his country. The criticisms that have been levelled at some of the proceedings of the Commissioners do not challenge their zeal and ability. One complaint is that they broke faith with Congress and framed a treaty without consulting France. Technically they were in the wrong, but as they knew that France and Spain were hostile to their demand for the Western territories and that France had sent a confidential agent to London to warn the British Government against making too generous concessions to the Americans, they kept the negotiations secret, and the result justified their precautions. They held out, unwisely as time has shown, against protection and fair terms for the Loyalists, but they could point to the excited state of feeling at home which, in their belief, would not permit any real concession. The article in the treaty on this point turned out to be quite illusory, as they must have known it would. American historians censure the treatment of the Loyalists as an error in national policy, but the Commissioners, as the leaders in a successful revolution, could not be expected to keep their heads on every point. In the exultant enthusiasm of victory

the present was bound to outweigh the future. It was far otherwise with Shelburne, who earned neither the applause of his own generation nor the approval of posterity. He had not even made the best of a bad bargain. The treaty of peace, hastily made and bungled in the making, proved unsatisfactory to both countries. The acknowledgment of the independence of the United States took place before it was signed, and was not therefore dependent upon it. Peace was not ensured, and war broke out again within thirty years. The fisheries settlement proved a bone of contention for more than a century and nearly provoked a third war. The much-vaunted water boundary between Canada and the Republic was the scene of British defeats in the war of 1812. The betrayal of the Loyalists injured the honour of England and made partial reparation a costly business. Worse than all, the treaty complicated the relations and estranged the feelings of the two branches of the English race. The Americans naturally felt no gratitude, and the English suffered from a humiliation which long kept them aloof. The career of Shelburne has been presented dispassionately and adroitly by his kinsman and biographer, Lord Fitzmaurice, and the Whig historians, more intent on the justification of theories than on facts, have dealt kindly with his failures.

But the chief legacy of the first Lord Lansdowne to his countrymen is a solemn warning against a premature and disastrous peace.

