

But hold that Primrose was the wisest hack,
 Who flung a Party from his gallèd back,
 That Beach more joy in calm retirement feels
 Than Joseph with a Seddon at his heels.

Bull. You take things calmly, Sir—

Balfour. —nor care to sham,
 Or try to look the busy drudge I am.
 Am I the worse because afar from Thames
 I steal an hour for friends or books or games ?
 Imperial Joseph if he deigned to play
 Might miss a hole, and give the game away,
 For, as in statecraft, oft upon the sward
 A man may hit too quickly and too hard.
 How would John Bull or England like the yoke
 Of strenuous, fussy, advertising folk ?
 My plain old Uncle, scarcely up to date,
 Keep no “front window,” yet preserved the State.

Bull. Your Uncle had my confidence, well earned ;
 If faded grew his coat, 'twas never turned ;
 But look not back ; the quiet years have been,
 The good old servant and the good old Queen,
 Past is their day ; gone easy pride of place,
 And other times demand a smarter pace.
 Wake up, John Bull ! is thundered at my head
Forte by all, *fortissimo* by Stead.
 Lo, foreign rivals draw the tight'ning coil,
 They come, they burrow in my very soil ;
 Their exports mount in bold statistic curves,
 Their swarming bagmen beat my close preserves,
 And where of yore their ships veiled tops to me,
 Their giant hulls race snorting o'er my sea.
 So can you blame me if I look askance
 At philosophick doubt with elegance ?