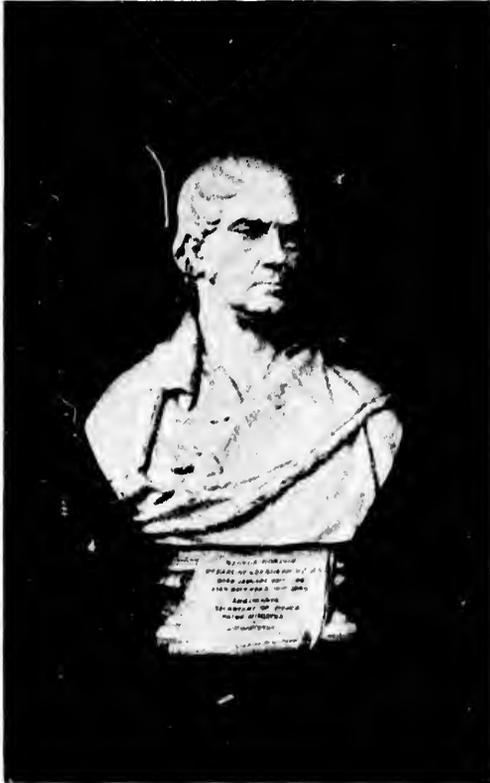


alrons Englishman living in the midst of alarms of war and in the very vortex of the intrigues of half a dozen rival courts without ever betraying the confidence of a friend or sacrificing for a moment the interests of his country. Had he done nothing else Lord Aberdeen would have conferred an inestimable service upon the cause of liberty and national independence by the part which he played in that campaign.

The Gordons have often distinguished themselves in early life. One of the same family fell on the field



GEORGE GORDON, FOURTH EARL OF ABERDEEN.  
Memorial Bust in Westminster Abbey.

of Waterloo a Lieutenant-Colonel and a K. C. B., when he was only 23 years old. Lord Aberdeen had been taught statesmanship as a boy at the table of Pitt and Melville, in whose homes he had spent his youth, and who had besides inherited a great tradition of public service broken only by a single link. He had, moreover, been steadied by the responsibilities of the management of his estate at a time when other young men have barely left the university. This, however, is not the place for telling the story of Lord Aberdeen, the Prime Minister, excepting so far as it bears upon the prospects of Lord Aberdeen, the Governor-General. As Foreign Minister, as Colonial Secretary and as Prime Minister, Lord Aberdeen

had as much opportunity as any living man in shaping the policy of England, both in Colonial affairs and on the continent of Europe. It is interesting to note, in view of the position which his grandson holds to-day, that the most conspicuous feature of his administration of colonial affairs during the short time he was at the Colonial Office was to draw up instructions to Lord Amherst, whom he proposed to send as High Commissioner to Canada with powers not only to investigate but to settle in the most liberal manner the grievances of the colony. Although Lord Aberdeen was a Conservative and Foreign Minister of the Duke of Wellington, he always set his face as a flint against the doctrine favored by Lord Palmerston of interfering in every possible way short of military force in the affairs of other nations. In like manner, although he was a peer and a member of the permanent majority in the House of Lords he opposed without hesitation what he considered the Duke of Wellington's dangerous policy of throwing out the measures of the Reform Administration. Notwithstanding this, the leadership and management of the Conservative party in Scotland was forced upon him by the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, who assured him that he had become "the standard of our colonial policy as you were before of our foreign policy." Despite his preoccupation with foreign affairs, he was statesman enough to see that the destruction of the Scotch Church was inevitable unless action was taken to promptly meet the demands of those who subsequently constituted the Free Church of Scotland. His advice was disregarded until it was too late.

During his second term of office as Foreign Secretary it fell to his lot to arrive at two important decisions of vital importance to the Dominion over which his grandson is now presiding as representative of the Queen. When he entered office the relations with the United States were somewhat dangerously strained owing to frontier difficulties and Canadian troubles. He sent Lord Ashburton to Washington on a special mission to adjust the difficulties between the Empire and the Republic. The frontier line which secured British Columbia for Britain was Lord Aberdeen's handiwork. Lord Aberdeen had proposed in the first case to refer the disputed question to arbitration. But President Polk took a high line on the subject and declared that the rights of the United States to the territory in dispute were so clear and unquestionable that he was determined to take active measures to vindicate American rights. Lord Aberdeen was the last man in the world to deal in bluster, but he was not to be bluffed by the President, and in the House of Lords he stated that Britain also had rights in the disputed territory which were clear and indisputable, and these rights, with the blessing of God and their support, he was fully prepared to maintain. After this preliminary defiance on each side, a compromise was drawn up by Lord Aberdeen, and ultimately approved of by the American Senate. By this means British Columbia was secured to the British Empire. But although Lord Aberdeen was very