

# Lord Rosebery and the Liberal League

waiting for you when you selected the lower trail before dusk reached the first inquiry was for the they were told that they

they reasoned. "They two hours ago."

own and the men had not Interest increased to had happened surely, for ripped for a night in the believed to be miners, mountain trail after dark, y had seen nothing of the

med miners was an Am-Helm. He had worked creek and elsewhere, and man, with an evil record y. He was accompanied his party ate supper at on their blankets. In ad breakfast and resumed apparently had little or nced difficulty in paying

reak of dawn fifty men mountain trail for the ay was a glorious one. cloudless, and the warm lighted the path of the m silently up the moun- ds carolled their sweet groves and the graceful nk darted like a ray of branch and with its weird ant to tell the searchers hastily tragedy that had before in the deep re- ail. When half way up arp turn in the trail the place where the under- and there were the

A little further on a was picked up, and next from some garment was of blood. There was where on the trail, on ks of trees. Next there body having been drag- g. Following that sign two dead bodies lying, her, in the underbrush, with wide-staring eyes of fright and horror. One on the body of Lewin been shot through the the murderers. The s were next found. They gold, not a sign of which was discovered where urrently lain in wait for the first volley from

taken to the Forks of quest was held. Several eed over the mountain discovery of the bodies d their packs examined; d of an incriminating n- suspected persons was s known to have already rny. Helm was followed into custody at the in- were anxious to earn a been offered. When his thing was found therein, his courtroom on Bastion dowed one morning when the dock. "He was a scular man of about yes. He had a soft and he had just left a barber's e was quite presentable, were shabby.

he charge Helm denied e spot when the bodies fter the tragedy, but he rder would not his pack gold? What had the ck? Nothing, not even honest man who worked he was now hungry and

he half my time in fig- nant debt, and the other, m to get out of debt, impudent leer.

h the courtroom at the discharged with an ad- ce country at once and rders were not caught, r recovered. There are e believe that Helm was hid- cene, and is there still, rrier of Boone Helm in- dicates that he was e many desperadoes who the Pacific coast. He these chronicles.

London the other day, Lord Rosebery, the president of the Liberal League, addressed a largely attended meeting of the League at the Whitehall Rooms of the Hotel Metropole. He said: "I am very glad to meet you once more, and I shall have to ask you, as I have a considerable amount to go over, to allow me to condense some of my argument which otherwise I should prefer to expand. I confess that at the end of 1905, when the new Government was formed, I had some of the conviction that the League might well and fitly come to an end, having amply achieved its purpose, and this conviction has remained with me up to the present time; but when I communicated it to a gathering of the more active members of the movement, they have come to a directly opposite conclusion. They believe that the vigor of the League, the continuing necessity for its principles being advocated at the present time; they pointed out that from our ranks were still springing up fresh spirits, such as my young friend Mr. Roberts, whose unopposed election at St. Austell was, perhaps, the most gratifying feature of some not very gratifying relations (laughter); and they said truly, 'could we argue against them—that these were anxious times, that these were not such times as when I gave up my arguments to that effect? Well, I did say this—that if the League were to take a new day spring of life to begin, as it were, in the second year of its career, in the second year of its life, new principles—not dropping the old principles—and a new purpose. I have said that we do not propose in any way to drop the old basis of the policy of the League, and I trust you will excuse me if I do not dwell at any length on the principles which have so long admitted and held. I shall not dwell on the historical opposition to an independent Parliament in Dublin.

**Same Imperialism.**

I will, however, say one word as to the same Imperialism, which, perhaps, formed the origin and purpose of our movement. The second reason why Imperialism continues to exist at the present time, I am one of those who are anxious for friendly relations with our one, but which, in the great Powers of Europe. (Hear, hear.) I believe that that should be the principle of the foreign policy of Great Britain, and although I know well the difficulty of carrying that out, I should nevertheless think that was possible to interfere with that fixed purpose of the foreign policy of Great Britain. But that does not do away with the necessity for constant vigilance against the maintenance of a vast superiority at sea (hear, hear), and for constant readiness, commitments on the part of our armaments, because when you allow your armaments to sink below a certain level, you will be liable to periodical and sometimes abrupt and unwelcome attacks from a great nation (cheers), and to the very heart of the Empire. The second reason for maintaining our Imperialism is this—that it is necessary to hold together the Empire, which has protection as its basis (cheers), and which sees in the protection the guarantee of the Empire. I speak with great respect of our self-governing colonies. I do not for a moment criticize their tariffs, which, from their point of view, are no doubt a very great advantage. But I must make this remark—that from the point of view of Empire those tariffs are not an assistance, but an impediment to the union of the Empire. I for one do not allow myself except under the pressure of powerful necessity, to a new and more universal tariff springing from the centre of the Empire itself, which would add that greater element of disunion to the protectionist elements of disunion at which I have already hinted, and which I would have this further grave objection, that it would allow to every nation whose interest now to preserve our free trade Empire in existence—of making it the interest of every nation to destroy and break up that Empire which has been the part of tariff to the rest of the world. (Cheers.) One last word on Imperialism as regards armaments. There are arguments in support of assemblies against the maintenance of armaments—honest movements, sincere movements, disastrous movements. They have as their motto the idea that such a reform would be a thing, and that militarism jars and interferes with social reform. Gentlemen, social reform is a great thing, and our Imperialism mixed up with social reform, because of the long and the Imperial nation worthy of its destinies from every point of view; but social reform is of very little use unless it is based on a firm foundation of no use converting Great Britain into a very Garden of Eden if your fence lets in the wolves that would ravage it. You may have the best vineyard in the world, but as long as it is unprotected it is apt to be very useful to yourselves and to others. (Hear, hear.)

**Free Trade, Protection and Socialism.**

I pass from Imperialism to the cognate subject in our estimation, Free Trade. I have nothing further to say about Free Trade at this juncture. By an enormous majority it was safely established for a long time to come, and is therefore not one of the vital questions of the moment any more than Irish Home Rule, but I say that there are considerations—and I would beg to refer to the fact that these considerations—which might drive us even from free trade. One is the enormous pressure, and possibly the increasing pressure, of direct taxation, which might make the nation seek some relief from an intolerable burden in shifting some of that burden on to another source of supply. A second cause that might occur is this—that in the race for armaments the cost of armaments might become so excessive, the necessity for a vast expenditure might be so sudden, that it might be necessary to forsake for the moment that policy of free trade. I include in these only as possibilities which should be kept in view by our reformers. But, thirdly, there is another consideration, and it is this: that the doctrine of free trade, I think, should never be driven—trust in God we shall never be driven—to the formidable option between protection and

Socialism, and if it came to a choice between Socialism and protection, I think that the choice would be in favour of Socialism. (Cheers.) I will tell you why. Protection is a great evil, and it is a great source of corruption (hear, hear); but Socialism is the end of all things, Empire, religious faith, freedom, property—Socialism is the death-blow to all. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I do not know why you recall to you what a death blow Socialism is to religion, to Empire, to liberty, and to property, that I read with a great surprise the protest on behalf of Socialism signed by 100 members of religion, who seem imperfectly to comprehend the doctrines they have advocated, but I send their honored name to a system which I do not now characterize. Well, now, gentlemen, with regard to that phantom of evil to which I have alluded—perhaps the death-blow to all, I do not believe, because it is a reality—we had some notable elections in 1907. We had the Liberals and the Conservatives fighting at each others throats for their own protection, and we had no Second Chamber, no one banner, "protection and the House of Lords" on the other—close grips with each other, striving to get each other for the hucks, and letting the Socialists slip away from the kernel, which was the seed. I do not know any spectacle which struck me as so ludicrous, and at the same time so instructive, as the Liberal party were fighting for free trade, and the Second Chamber—no Second Chamber just at the moment when a Second Chamber was most necessary (hear, hear). Here we had the Liberal party would become of free trade if Socialism were predominant? Protection would not be merely a national benefactor, but a national necessity. When all the means of production, and manufacture, the land were the property of the State, the State would only be protecting its own without the risks that protection entails in the present state of our community. Therefore the banner of the Liberal party was, I venture to say, an absurdity in that contest. If Socialism were to dominate our community, the Liberal party must be aware that it would inevitably disappear. The advocates of progress would either enter on the path of false ideals or be crushed by the Socialists, or would join the Conservative forces. The Conservative party would probably fare better, because in all communities there is a conservative force, and a conservative force, but a Conservative party be when there was nothing left to conserve?

**"An Effective Second Chamber."**

I have hurried on to the last point on which I wish to lay special stress today, because I am anxious to lay stress upon it as being the last point on which I wish to address you. I have touched—I mean the point of an effective Second Chamber. This is a country in which all the barriers to the progress of the people are being removed, and the people are being educated, and the people are being organized, and the people are being united, and the people are being empowered. You have had the veto of the President—not a form that has fallen into desuetude, but an active and vigorous element in the Constitution. Here we have a veto which is not a veto, but a veto of a hereditary Second Chamber, which it is now sought entirely to abolish. (Hear, hear.) Now I must honestly say that this is a very great mistake. Socialism reared in this community last year and that it is prepared to rear on every occasion again, it does not know what it is doing, and it is not a Government which should be barked at the present time, should have proceeded to attempt to abolish the only barrier, feeble though it be, that stands in the way of the progress of the Government plan, that I myself was prepared to proceed by resolution in the year 1894 and in the year 1895. (Hear, hear.) A great deal has passed since that time. In the first place 12 years have passed, and 13 not uneventful years. In the second place, we discovered by the general election of 1895 that the Liberal party were not intended to proceed by resolution of the House of Lords was right and the House of Commons was wrong in interpreting the wishes of the country. Thirdly, the general election of 1905 showed us in our midst which makes me more than reluctant to remove the last feeble barrier which might interpose between the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and which, if you may hear that there is no chance of this. (Hear, hear, and a voice.) "No chance at all." No chance at all of the Liberal party, and I am in no moment. I will come to it at once. (Laughter.) I think there is a very considerable chance, if you abolish the House of Lords or any Second Chamber whatever, of the will of the House of Commons prevailing in any way when it only represents the hurried verdict of the country. I am afraid that the Liberal party, if they were to say the Socialists are in a minority, they are in a very great minority—I hope they will always remain in a minority, but the lesson of history is that the Liberal party, if they are made, not by a majority, but by a minority—an earnest, violent, if you like, minority, but still a minority. Do you suppose that the Puritans in the great revolution which ended in the overthrow of the Throne and in the life of Charles I. were in a majority of the nation? No historian thinks so. Do you suppose that the revolutionaries who overthrew the Throne and took the life of Louis XVI. were in a majority? No historian thinks so now. The fact is that, in view of the general state of the middle classes all over the world, the Liberal party, if they are to be a determined will and a clear ideal before it, is exceedingly prone to upset the powers of a majority opposed to it.

**The Voice of the Nation.**

Now let me go back to the thread of my own argument, which was interrupted a little by that interruption,

and I will give you a concrete instance. I was told last night by the Lord Chancellor from the woolsack that the votes of the House of Commons were found in the House of Commons. (Hear, hear.) That is a truth which contains a fallacy. Was the voice of the nation found in the House of Commons in the year 1895, when it passed a Bill for Irish Home Rule? Certainly not. The fact is that at a general election, which is very often brought about under a sudden impulse, a sudden enthusiasm, or a sudden repugnance, the voice of the nation is heard in gross but not in detail. It gives a mandate in gross and not in detail, it gives a certain body of men to the Government for the time, or the Government coming in, or the Government having the majority—it gives to them a general authority to act in its name, but it certainly does not imply by that that it is bound to agree during the whole six years of the Parliament with whatever measures, unexpected or other, that may be chosen to bring forward. We had a concrete instance last night that the Scottish Land Bill must be passed because 57 Scottish members supported it. I never questioned the election, the Government coming in, or the Government having the majority—it gives to them a general authority to act in its name, but it certainly does not imply by that that it is bound to agree during the whole six years of the Parliament with whatever measures, unexpected or other, that may be chosen to bring forward. We had a concrete instance last night that the Scottish Land Bill must be passed because 57 Scottish members supported it. I never questioned the election, the Government coming in, or the Government having the majority—it gives to them a general authority to act in its name, but it certainly does not imply by that that it is bound to agree during the whole six years of the Parliament with whatever measures, unexpected or other, that may be chosen to bring forward. 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