The Statesman Who Fell Sir Charles Dilke's Career

His Brilliant Beginning and the Eclipse From Which He Never Recovered—Personal Traits—As a Public Speaker—Happy in His Two Marriages.

THE obituary notices of Sir Charles Dilke make melancholy reading. They tell the story of a man of high ability and attainments, of a career brilliant from the outset and rapidly approaching the meridian of success, then eclipsed by a cloud which never completely passed away.

It may not be amiss to gather something of the impressions of men who write in today's English newspapers from personal knowledge of the man who had a wider knowledge and a completer grip on the politics of his time than any other English statesman. One finds none of those time-worn anecdotes, none of those little stories of human interest which make interesting reading in the biographies or reminiscences of nearly all prominent men and women. Human interest the story cannot lack, but it is the sustained interest of a tragedy.

According to one who speaks with her personal knowledge Dilke had no sense of humor. For more than half his life it is certain that there was nothing to encourage or develop it.

In 1862, at the age of 26, he took a step, writes one biographer, "which was destined to color his whole life, to give him its brightest though short gleam of perfect sunshine and then to prepare the way for the darkness with which afterward most of it was overspread. It was in that year that he married Katherine Sheil.

She was very beautiful and very attractive and Dilke gave to her—this hard, cold, ambitious, absorbed man—a love that had all the romance and fervor of a great passion.

"In 1871 she bore to him his first and his only child, but in giving birth to this new young life lost her own. Those who knew Dilke intimately at the time spoke almost with a shudder of the tragic and broken grief of the man. There was a curious aggravation of his grief in a circumstance commonplace and frequent enough not even to excite comment in the '70s, still new and strange and enough to excite amazement and horror.

"The first Lady Dilke was one of the pioneers of the movement in favor of cremation as a substitute for burial in the earth; and she left instructions in her will that her body should be so treated after her death. There was no crematory in England at that time, and at great expense and with much trouble the poor lady's wishes were ultimately carried out in so remote a city as Munich. The story got abroad; it was made the suoject of much and adverse comment; it was said to have been even employed as an electioneering weapon against the hapless man whose wounds were opened by coarse and puonic allusions to the manner in which the body that had contained and he loved had been disposed of."

As is well known Dilke in his earlier days developed republican tendencies. It is in reference to this period that the one slight gleam of humor appears in all the memoirs published. And the jest was not Dilke's but the late Queen Victoria's.

Dilke offered unpleasant motions of inquiry into the civil list of the Queen in the House of Commons, and even started a campaign in the country. "Queen Victoria," says the writer, "had not then reached that pinnacle of universal love and respect which she afterward attained, and there was not yet that cheerful acceptance of a court in everlasting mourning and always remote from London's great social happenings. There was up and down the country at that time undoubtedly a certain wave of anti-monarchical feeling. But it needed only the incitement of Dilke's utterances to open that deep fountain of monarchical feeling which is so strong in England; and his speeches created wild scenes of disapproval.

"In the House of Commons one supporter he found was Auberon Herbert, then and ever afterward an eccentric politician preaching a gospel in which he himself was the only believer, and which Dilke rose to propose his motion at Westminster there ensued a scene of tumult of almost unprecedented and unsurpassed violence. In the country the violence was even greater; in one town there was a riot, the hall in which Dilke spoke was stoned, and there was at one time even the risk of the shedding of blood and the loss of life. It was difficult to understand now a nature so self-controlled and so keen of political sense could have been guilty of such an indiscretion. He attempted afterward to explain it away in a story which he called 'The Loll of the Prince Florestan of Mona,' a tale of a too ambitious and too eagerly reforming prince, who learns sense from experience.

"Perhaps the best comment on the whole episode was that of the Queen herself. It has been said that Dilke's father had been on terms of intimacy with the Prince Consort. The Queen recalled that she had stroked Dilke's hair when he was but a child. 'Perhaps,' she said, 'I patted it the wrong way.'"

Every writer in dealing with Dilke's personality remarks on a certain aloofness. He seems to have been a man to whom it was difficult, almost impossible to get very close. There was always an air of something being kept back, even in his most expansive moods. Yet he was always approachable, always ready to give another the benefit of his vast encyclopaedic knowledge.

To newspaper interviewers he was a good subject. One tells how Dilke's first question was always: "Do you want to ask me questions or to let me talk?" If the former were required Dilke would answer the questions rapidly and concisely, shake hands and the interview was over. Those who knew his methods would select the second method. Then Dilke would talk freely and at length, giving all the information that was wanted and much more into the bargain.

"In his public character," says another writer, "Sir Charles Dilke was perhaps lacking in the quality of charm, but he could delight young men in private life with the varied stores of his mind, for he was as learned in life and literature and the arts as in foreign policy and the factory acts and the number of buttons on a German privatist's coat.

"He had a thought for all the little things that go to make up life. A newspaper correspondent once went to interview him at his house up the Thames. At the local station he took a cab, and the cab was kept waiting for two or three hours at the door. Arriving back at the station the visitor asked the fare, but was told in answer the curious fact that Sir Charles Dilke himself paid for every cab that went to and from his house."

Here is another impression of Dilke, when he was at the highest point in his career, when he was regarded by the majority of people as the man who at that moment had the best chance of being the future prime minister of England:

"He had no claim to speak on public platforms with the inspiring enthusiasm of Gladstone, with even the deadly incisiveness of Chamberlain. He had none of the rollicking humor of Harcourt, still less his swashbuckling enjoyment in smiting his political opponents hip and thigh.

"Dry, uninspired, possessed and apparently overwhelmed by his facts, Dilke was never what could be called even a distant approach to an orator. He was not even a good speaker, but he was the beau ideal of what a minister should be when he was dealing with official subjects. And he had the great quality, very dear to the house of Commons in an emetic, of never showing temper or emotion or personal one or dislike.

"He had probably his foes and his disciples, but nobody ever knew them. To him all men seemed, somehow or other, to be instruments in the great scheme of governing best and directing their affairs. If ever the passions of men seemed unknown in a man it was in Dilke. All of which catalogue of qualities seemed to point him out as the final man for taking up the cast and Titanic responsibility of governing the world-wide empire of Britain.

"The more brilliant men around him had all their objects from the purely selfish point of view; not merely Lowe's knowledge, but memory, not temper, but industry, not general alertness, but that tremendous absorption in political life, a quality which tells greatly in politics. For political life is a jealous mistress, and only loves the men who love it alone. And besides, this man, who never had enemies and never favored friends, was just the kind of composing individuality which keeps together a party of elements so discordant as a Liberal party must always be."

In another character sketch we read:

"He was simple in his tastes and careful with money, and the fine inheritance which he received from his father was never curtailed. In addition he got a windfall of some £200,000 from another relative. He owned the Athenaeum, Notes and Queries, and the Gardeners' Chronicle, and they all brought him a good income.

"He was a man who lived a certain extent by rule. Every morning he fenced for some time; he learned to ride latish in life, mainly under the tuition of his second wife, who was a fine horsewoman; he had a cottage at Datchet, in an eyot of the Thames, where he spent most week-ends during the summer and was to be seen constantly there on the water. He went out a good deal to the houses where he was a welcome guest, and in society was lively, talked a great deal and had a loud, frequent, and unmodulated laugh.

"In appearance he looked somehow or other the career he had led. He was of medium height and of fairly strong build. But the complexion was always rather sickly, and in later years became white. His eyes were curiously white in color and were quite unreadable.

He was a man who amid much apparently open talk and frank manners always suggested that he kept something back, that he did not wear his heart upon his sleeve. It was often difficult to elicit from him his real opinions; he had the knack of escaping close scrutiny and entire unveiling of opinion.

"But underneath all this inscrutability there were two things palpable. The first was that no man ever gave to politics a more complete and absolute devotion and the other was that no man had a deeper faith in his own country—in her greatness and in her safety, and that amid all that was uncertain and suggested selfishness and calculating ambition, a sacred, a devoted patriotism shone forth, quiet, and even a little silent, but always there."

When the Crawford divorce suit was pending, Dilke, urged by his friends, notably, it is said, by Joseph Chamberlain, after some days absence from the House of Commons returned one afternoon to his usual place on the front Opposition bench.

"The present writer," says the author of one long memoir, "was one of those in the House when Dilke made this return, and he can never forget how painful a sight it was, and what a revelation of the depth to which a man can be brought from the heights when the wheel of political fortune turns against him.

"Dilke sat in his seat holding up an order paper before his eyes; a deserted, a lonely, a broken man. It is curious how even in a large and crowded body of men misfortune can thus make visibler around him the solitude of desert and of despair.

"Throughout that time there was only one man who stood by Duke publicly in the House of Commons, that was Mr. Chamberlain, who in those dark days made good the eulogy passed upon him once by Mr. (now Lord) Morley of having a genius for friendship."

His second marriage was the one bright spot in the life of Duke after his social and political fall. He had long been an intimate friend of Mark Pattison, the Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, and his wife. Pattison died in 1884, and many of their common friends expected that some day Mrs. Pattison would become Lady Dilke. But no engagement was announced until after the Crawford suit was instituted.

Mrs. Pattison had gone to India in the spring of 1885 to stay with Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, then governor of Madras. While she was there she heard by telegraph of the charges likely to be brought against Sir Charles Dilke and forthwith resolved to show her confidence in him by making a public announcement of their engagement. That confidence was never for a moment shaken.

"The day of our wedding," writes Dilke in his touching memoir of his wife, who died in 1904, "was the only day of her life which she asked those we thought likely to survive her to commemorate when death should come."

She shared all his labors and all his interests, and there never was a more trusting or devoted wife. Their intimate friends declare that never was there a more ideal marriage.

HEARING OF FISH.

The hearing of fishes—so long discussed—seems to have been shown by recent investigations to be a perception of vibrations by the nerves of the skin, no evidence of true hearing having been found. In a pond at the Benedictine cloister of Kremsmunster, the fishes have long come to their meals on the ringing of a hand bell, but Kreidl and Exner, the Austrian Physiologists, have shown that they would come as quickly on seeing the attendant when no noise was made, while they paid no attention to the sound of the bell when no person was in sight.

In other experiments, whistling, the peal of a large bell and various other sounds in air aroused no response from goldfish. Fishes under the stimulation of strychnine, however, were alarmed by violent sounds, like a pistol shot, but fishes lacking the labyrinths of both ears were affected in exactly the same way.

The ears may not be entirely lacking in sensation, though it must be something like the perception by the skin. About eighty species of fishes produce sounds, perhaps to attract the opposite sex, and while these species have not been studied, it is thought that they may hear by vibrations giving a sensation akin to touch, or that possibly the ears in such fishes may have some slight development.

LIBERTY WITHOUT BLOODSHED.

The present Emperor of Japan virtually forced constitutional government upon his people, says Adachi Kinnosuke in an article of the Emperor of Japan. It was original on a monarch's part; absolutely without precedent. Elsewhere, even in the homes of Christian enlightenment, blood has ever been the price that a people paid for their charter of liberty—witness the struggle with King John, the American war of independence, the French revolution. When the Japanese Emperor wished to limit his own absolute powers and give us constitutional liberty, the people did not want it; they did not understand it; they were entirely indifferent about it; they accepted it out of respect to his majesty's wishes. On Feb. 11, 1889, the constitution of the empire was promulgated. It passed into history as the first and the only bloodless Magna Charta known.

CRY OF THE COUNTRYSIDE
SOUTHERN ENGLAND'S DISTRESS

Deficiency of Rural Labor a Problem—No Men Because No Land for Them—A Strike for Fourteen Shillings a Week.

THERE is a serious "Gravamen of Southern England," by Ashton Hilliers, in the January issue of that interesting monthly, the Vineyard.

"The deficiency of rural labor grows more serious each year," he says. "This is a truism which needs insisting upon, lest its significance be overlooked.

"The existing, or rather the remaining, stock of farm hands can cope with the winter work for some few years to come, but only for a few. Our shepherds are mainly elderly; few young men care to face the loneliness of the life and the night-work during lambing. We know farmers who have put down their breeding flocks for this season.

The Fences and the Boys.

"The fences take care of themselves with the help of a hurdle, a stake and faggot and barbed wire. No young men learn the a mirable old methods of cutting and laying. If one wants this, one must don the gloves oneself, or wait the leisure of some gouty greybeard, the last local professor of his art.

"So that with thatching, pondmaking and grubbing, but still, by out of patches, and doing in March what should have been done in November, we rub through the winter. With haysel the annual pinch recommences. The boys who should be leading the horses and raking after the cart are in school, or running errands and sweeping out offices in town.

"The strain is severe enough in good years when the grass stands well against the knives and the corn yields itself harmonicly to the self-binder, but when the crops are lodged laid and twisted twenty ways, bound into mats by poth-weeds and thistles, the machine cannot cope with the tangle, need the crooked stick and hagbishood, to save the stuff, and where are the men?

Where Are the Men?

"They are gone. A stroll through the village shows few beardless slow, round-shouldered elderly men, old men past work, deformed and decrepit men. In a full fellow is seen, he turns up in regular employment on the roads, a smart little chap will be in the hostler's stables or driving the mail cart, but the laborers, the men who used to be here, and who ought to be here now, from one cause and another are no longer here. The young men have gone and the lads are going.

"The exodus of laborers is a matter of numbers and of obvious physical loss. The country laborer is a man without question the ideal source of weight and robustness. Transplanted to Canada he proved to be the best pioneer settler we had, and he followed in droves and formed the bulk of the recruits for the Canadian militia. Moreover, he is the prolific source of numbers in the rural population. The laborer's family is the healthiest and most vigorous in the country. The laborer's family is very little good in a village, either he leaves about the little towns or comes home again.

The Skilled Laborer Disappearing.

"Yes, a good, all-round laborer is a skilled man, and when he is gone we shall all recognize the fact. The surprising thing is that we do recognize it in an absurd, topsy-turvy sort of way, crying, 'Oh, yes, Hodge is just the man for South Africa,' or New Zealand, or whatever the place may be. What seems more to the point is that he is just the man for England.

"This steady depletion has gone on for more than a generation. Some districts in Berkshire, for instance, are almost bled white. If foxes had failed, if the pheasant had migrated en masse, what a pother had been raised! As it is only the men, the very pith and marrow of rural England, who have gone, our country magnates and tenant farmers grumble and look on helplessly, being for the most part, if the truth may be told, rather dull people, suspicious of the ideas of others, deficient in ideas of their own.

Some Vital Points.

"Would you discuss the question with them, they will one and all admit its gravity, but are hopeless of a remedy, holding it a matter of wages. Can't afford to pay more, pay too much already for what the present set of hellers do, these being, in their masters' opinion, the laziest lot they ever set eyes upon; slow, avaricious, unpleasant, and if you say a word to 'im off they goes!'

"This will never do. No remedy lies this way.

"The fact is that, from the squire downward, the theory of getting a living from the land is summed up in the word 'bargain' and the laborer at the bottom of the ladder periodically feels the incidence of pressure from above. There is no security for him. 'What!' says the landlord, 'doesn't he get a cottage for one-and-six the week, which cost me two hundred and fifty to build? What!' says his tenant, 'and I give him an allotment! Ain't I placed up a lot of my best land for his potatoes, rent free? Yes, but there is nothing in the tenure of either cottage or allotment that is calculated to hold the man and his family upon the land, or to develop his interest in it.

"It is hopeless to appeal to the landowners to give the laborers a tenure independent of the caprice of the tenant farmer. Summary eviction, or eviction at short notice, is too tremendous a penalty for a sharp retort, or a lapse from sobriety, or mere incompatibility. To learn with, it is intolerable and is full enough. In the great days of English rural life, under the manorial system, such a penalty was unthought of.

"What is needed is a cottage tenure that will give the laborer who has to live with his master breathing down his neck, and to the laborer's wife who has to return to should he touch his, a home where he can be free from the fear and worry of being told master have forever not.

A Lesson From the Dane.

"Let me refer you to one, for the experience of France and Belgium rather small holdings are the rule, and so that bugs of tenure alone are sufficient to stop the rural exodus. The example of Denmark cannot be too carefully considered. With peasants banks, peasants' high schools, free rural lectures, winter popular amusements and concerts, and offices for affording cheap legal advice, the educated Dane has applied himself to and solved the problem of winter idleness, and has revising country reaps the reward."

"Give us Land."

Another cry of the countryside is: "Give us land!" No one knows about this better than Mr. Montague Fordham, secretary of the Land Club League. Writing in the Labor Leader, he says that in Kent it is almost impossible for men to get small holdings. "Why is the result? Men are compelled to emigrate. Here is what happened to a group of six men who were refused land. 'Two had gone to Canada, one to a town, one had taken a public house, one had got land privately, and one is now going to sell up and go to Alberta. All the men are thus removed from the council's list of applications.

"The fact is," adds Mr. Fordham, "that Kent is largely controlled by big landlords and big farmers, and the little men have not had their chance. In many districts even combination among the men and co-operation is looked on with disfavor, and those who advocate it are marked. I am confident that the opposition to the small holdings act is not so much political as a general opposition to the uprising of labor.

"This reminds me of a conversation I heard in a distant hamlet when a would-be small householder, after an hour's conversation on the unpoetic subject of farmyard manure, said, after a pause, to his friend: 'And what do you think is the reason for all this spread of Socialism?' 'Growth of intelligence,' promptly replied his friend.

"It is not only that new thoughts are coming into the villages, but a new despair. From almost every village I heard of the young people leaving and many of the older people go, too.

"Go to the Argentine."

"'If you want land, go to the Argentine, said a landowner member of the small holdings committee to a deputation of men wanting small holdings; and as they are refused land in England the people take this advice to heart. Indeed, all who can get away; the prospects are too narrow; wages are in some cases falling; and there is much sweated labor on the fruit farms; young men and women wanting to get married cannot get a house to live in or a piece of land to till. Such are the general conditions," concludes Mr. Fordham; "and where the people combine to fight them they are liable to persecution and oppression."

A Farm Laborers' Strike.

Here is a further sidelight on the lives of agricultural laborers in Eastern England, given by the Daily News:

"The strike of Norfolk laborers at St. Faith's, which has been waged since May last, was closed on Monday by the action of the executive of the men's union. Thirty-three men returned to work on the same terms as they came out, leaving 42 to be dealt with gradually. Some, it is feared, the farmers will not take back.

A Strike for 14s a Week.

"Various conferences have been held with the employers, who have held to their position. Two ballots of the men's union have been taken, the result of the last showing a small majority in favor of continuing the strike on the demand for 14s a week, the minority favoring the return of the men at 13s if all were taken back. The executive, however, have decided, by six votes to four, to close the strike by withholding further strike pay and recommending that the farmers' terms be accepted. It is expected that the action of the executive will be adversely criticised at the annual meeting of the union next month.

"The strike at St. Faith's thus concluded was begun by 56 agricultural laborers, who came out for two reasons:

1. An increase of 1s a week in their wages.

2. A 6½ instead of a 9½ hour day on Saturday.

"Their wage at the time they struck was 12s per week, or ten hours' work per day for 2s 2d, a trifle less than 2½d per hour. Nine farms were affected by the strike, and of these one farmer owned three, comprising an aggregate of 2,000 acres, and employing 30 out of the 56 men who formed the original strikers. At the time the men came out they were working from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with half an hour for breakfast and two hours' rest in the middle of the day, for six days a week. The men desired to finish on Saturdays at 1 o'clock, but were not obdurate on this point, their main reason for striking being to obtain 14s instead of 12s a week.

"Strike-breakers were secured from Thorpe, just outside Norwich, Cambridge, and other districts in England, and from Ireland, hence the protracted nature of the struggle."

Which means that there were plenty of men willing to work for 13s a week.

An international agricultural congress will be held at Santiago, Chile, in September.

London's Hebrew population numbers about 150,000.

MINARD'S LINIMENT CURES DANDRUFF.

WHAT CAN I DO FOR MY SKIN-TORTURED BABY?

Is the Despairing Cry of Thousands of Mothers. A Scotchwoman Tells How Her Child was Cured.

"What can I do for my skin-tortured baby?" How many worried, worn-out mothers, whose children are suffering with eczema, tetter or other torturing, disfiguring humor, have asked themselves the question! Through neglect or improper treatment, some minor eruption has developed into a distressing and unsightly affliction. Simple treatments fail and stronger ones are tried, sometimes so harsh that the suffering is increased rather than allayed. Even professional aid has proven useless, and the fear is ever-present that the skin disease will become chronic, blighting the child's future into a nightmare of physical and mental misery.

Such mothers, who have witnessed their children's suffering and who have undergone the long, anxious nights and all-trying anxiety which they alone can realize, will understand the gratitude that prompted this letter from Mrs. John Lessie, 5, Victoria St., Inverurie, Scotland, and will read it with keenest interest:

"I use Cuticura Soap steadily for my baby's skin. She had the eczema when she was three months old. She was in an awful mess all over her body. We never thought she would get over it. We sat with her night and day for about a month, expecting every minute to see her die. The doctor gave me an ointment to rub her with but it did her no good. My mother was home from America and she told me to try Cuticura Ointment at 1 to wash her with Cuticura Soap. There was a great difference when I used the first box. It seemed to soothe her and she slept. I used three boxes of Cuticura Ointment and she was quite cured. She has the purest skin and is the fattest baby now! She is a miracle, the doctor declares. I am glad to tell anybody about it."

And that the success of the Cuticura Remedies is not confined to the treatment of eczema, is amply proven by Mrs. M. A. Schwein, 674 Springwells Ave., Detroit, Mich., who writes:

"When my little Vivian was about six months old, her papa had a boil on his forehead. At that time the child was covered with prickly heat and I suppose in scratching it her own head became infected, for it broke out in boils, one after another. She had about sixty in all and I used Cuticura Soap and Cuticura Ointment which cured her of them entirely. We do not think any one can praise Cuticura Remedies too highly."

That mothers may test the efficacy and economy of the Cuticura Remedies for themselves, the Potter Drug and Chem. Corp., 121 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass., will send free on application, a generous trial box of Cuticura Ointment, sufficient to afford immediate relief in the most distressing forms of eczema, rashes, itchings and scalings of the skin and scalp. Under the influence of Cuticura Ointment, the itching and burning stop, the child falls into a refreshing sleep, the mother rests, and for the first time, perhaps, in many weeks, peace falls on a distracted household. The Cuticura Remedies are sold by druggists everywhere.

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