

A History of Our Own Times.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LORCHA "ARROW."

AFTER the supposed settlement of the Eastern Question at the Congress of Paris, a sort of languor seems to have come over Parliament and the public mind in England. Lord John Russell endeavored unsuccessfully to have something done which should establish in England a genuine system of national education. He proposed a series of resolutions, one of which laid down the principle that after a certain appointed time, when any school district should have been declared to be deficient in adequate means for the education of the poor, the Quarter Sessions of the peace for the county, city, or borough should have power to impose a school rate. This was a step in the direction of compulsory education. It anticipated the principle on which the first genuine measure for national instruction was founded many years after. It was, of course, rejected by the House of Commons when Lord John Russell proposed it. Public opinion, both in and out of Parliament, was not nearly ripe for such a principle then. All such proposals were quietly disposed of with the observation that that sort of thing might do very well for Prussians, but would never suit Englishmen. That was a time when a Prussian was regarded in England as a dull, beer-bemused, servile creature, good for nothing better than to grovel before his half-inebriated monarchs,