

nor do I think there is any chance of its improvement. It is difficult to understand the practical object for which our Government is still fighting in the Soudan, after it has surrendered (with the assent of Parliament), to the European powers, all possibility of predominant English influence in Egypt. As regards our relations with Russia, my impression is that, after a good deal of talk, the Russians will quietly remain where they are upon Afghan territory, and that the English Cabinet will then discover numerous reasons for persuading itself and the country that this is the most satisfactory solution of the matter. The fact is, we are quite isolated in Europe, and in spite of the swagger in our press about India springing to arms, the Russians must be well aware that our Indian army is too weak even for its functions as a permanent peace garrison, and that the finances of India cannot support a great increase in her military expenditure. The only satisfactory event of this year has been the offer of military assistance from the Colonies, which has, I really think, been gratefully appreciated by the Home public.

"Can you tell me anything of the reported revolt *chez vous*? I understand nothing about it.

"Yours very truly,

"LYTTON."

The next letter, which is exceedingly valuable, gives us the key to the gravitation of the moderate Liberals to the Conservative camp which practically ended in the formation of the Liberal-Unionist party—an organization still strong and influential in Imperial politics. The situation in Scotland over Church Disestablishment, the anarchy developing in the Liberal party, and the position of the agricultural laborer, and his possible future, are touched on in a most clear and convincing manner. The agricultural laborer, Lord Lytton thought,

would ultimately land in the Radical Camp.

"KNEBWORTH, 12 July, 1885.

"I have to thank you for your letter of the 13th, and the very interesting packet of maps which accompanied it. I should have done so sooner, but that I only returned from the continent in the thick of the late ministerial crisis which has been pregnant with prolonged preoccupations. The mind of the multitude must always be a mystery, and no one can predict, with any approach to certainty, the result of the next general election. But my own impression is that the new ministry, which has started well, and is gaining ground daily, has a very fair chance of longevity. The anarchy in the Liberal camp is profound, and the no longer reconcilable differences between Whigs and Radicals render impossible, in any case, a revival of the late Gladstone cabinet, or the replacement of the present cabinet by one of similarly composite character. The moderate Liberals are beginning to perceive that their support of the Salisbury administration offers the only chance of rescuing the country and themselves from an ultra-Radical régime, of which they are seriously afraid, and which would certainly destroy the last remnant of their influence as a political party. The gravitation of this large section of the Liberals towards the Conservative camp has already begun, and you will find the first public indication of it in the Duke of Argyll's speech of last Friday. In Scotland, which has hitherto been the Liberal stronghold, the Liberal party is menaced with disruption on the Church Question. Most of its candidates are committed to the disestablishment of the Scotch church—a very powerful body which commands a majority in almost every Scotch constituency, and if this question comes to the front at the election, I think it not improbable that the Conservatives will carry every Scotch