

miringly. John, with all his knowledge of the ugly side of politics at home, was always blind to the cloven hoof. Constantly he makes the reader feel that he has far too much faith in human nature ever to have foreseen the horrors of a world war. He resigned from the Cabinet the moment war was declared. Why? Not that he believed in the violation of Belgium, for he believed in the rights of Ireland. But he was too much of a cultured gentleman to be member of a Cabinet conducting a world-shattering war. No, it was all too ghastly and incredible. Heavens! had not England fought the battles of the rights of man at home, of democracy, of freedom? Was it not possible to conciliate?

We draw the curtain.

Mr. Morley twice met the Kaiser. He describes him, first at Londonderry House when Edward was Prince of Wales, in 1891:

He bowed and shook hands, asked if I had recovered from my illness, and said they had influenza in Germany, and there my intercourse with him ended. But I was immensely interested in watching a man with such a part to play in Europe. He is rather short; pale, but sunburnt; carries himself well; walks into the room with the stiff stride of the Prussian soldier; speaks with a good deal of intense and energetic gesture, not like a Frenchman, but staccato; his voice strong but pleasant; his eye bright, clear and full; mouth resolute; the cast of face grave or almost stern in repose, but as he sat between those two pretty women the hostess and Lady—, he lighted up with gaiety, and a genial laugh. Energy, rapidity, restlessness in every movement. But I should be disposed strongly to doubt whether it is all sound, steady, and the result of a—what Herbert Spencer would call—rightly co-ordinated organization.

Years later when Secretary for India he again met the Kaiser and says:

He greeted me with mock salaams and other marks of Oriental obeisance. Seriously he put me through my paces about India. When I talked, as we all should, about the impossibility of forecasting British rule in the Indian future, he hit his hand vehemently on his knee, with a vehement exclamation to match, that British rule would last forever. When I told this to Lord Roberts he laughed and said: "The Emperor doesn't know much about the facts." He asked how our Radical labor men treated Indian things. I said, "Without any ground for quarrel." He again struck his knee, praying that his own Socialists would only show the same sense. In your most private ear, I confide to you that important talks took place about the Bagdad Railway.

One impression—and in my eyes it is a golden impression—he appears to have left in the mind of everybody, namely, that he does really desire and intend Peace. You may laugh at this in view of the fine brand-new Naval programme which the Germans have launched at a moment supremely inconvenient to H. M.'s Government. . . .

He appreciated Bismarck, who so far as he could see was working sanely to unify Germany. Evidently Mr. Morley thought Bismarck and the Kaiser were human beings. What does he think now? He knew that Bismarck was studying England. Vol. I. he says: "Before the election of 1880 Bismarck observed, quietly enough, that in foreign things the uncanny Liberals must in general follow the same lines as Beaconsfield." Suppose Morley had said a similar thing about an election in Germany—impossible! Bismarck had his hand under every political bed-quilt. Morley was studying—England. But what an England, as described in the *Recollections*! Has any country ever been so described by such a man as real as is in Dickens? Morley could sit up to the small hours, bottles and glasses or none, with such widely divergent characters as John Bright and Huxley; Carlyle and Lord Roseberry; Parnell and Herbert Spencer; George Meredith and Cavour; John Stuart Mill and Ernst Renan; Thiers the Frenchman and George Elliot; Campbell-Bannerman and George Sand; Chamberlain and Balfour; W. T. Stead and Disraeli. He knew them all. And he was the only man that did. He knew them intimately.

Gladstone he knew best of all, and better than anybody else knew him. He served under the G. O. M. until the very last. He thus describes the scene in Gladstone's house when the Old Chief was about to resign and Morley was to break the news to Mrs. Gladstone:

After dinner in the dining-room he at once sat down to backgammon. . . . What a curious scene! Me breaking to her that the pride and glory of her life was at last to face eclipse, that the curtain was falling on a grand drama of fame, power, acclamation; the rattle of the dice on the backgammon board, and the laughter and chucklings of the two long-lived players sounding a strange running refrain.

Morley was twice Secretary for Ireland, and he prided himself that he knew the Irish question through and through. Well, in spite of Morley, Ireland is still Ireland.

As to South Africa, he was not so sure. Seemed to him that England was running her head into a noose when the Boer War came. In one of his talks with Chamberlain he reminded J. C. that if it had been himself and not implacable Milner who had negotiated with Kruger, he would have pushed the tobacco jar across the table and asked Oom Paul to have another smoke.

Among the strange characters on Morley's list was the profound scholar Lord Acton, whose own description of Morley is very frank:

He draws his conclusions from much too narrow an induction; and his very wide culture—wide at least for a man to whom all the problems, the ideas, the literature of religion are indifferent and unknown—does not go to the making of his policy. These are large drawbacks, leaving, nevertheless, a mind of singular elasticity, veracity, and power, capable of all but the highest things.

When Acton died he left Morley his great library, concerning which Morley says:

I shall not forget the feeling—as on the breaking forth of some unexpected vision of the sea—with which I was taken from an upper gallery and looked upon the noble hall that contained his books, now mine, and beheld the seat and table where he had so sedulously read and ruminated and made his diligent sheaves of transcript from the silent masters

round him.

The library was handed on to Cambridge University.

Years ago while mowing sheaves for an Ontario farmer I read Herbert Spencer's *Data of Ethics* on the mow, while the next load was creaking up the lane. Could I then have read Morley's recollections of Spencer, Huxley, Tyndall and all that great lot of scientific leaders, what a joy it would have been!

One evening Grote, the historian of Greece, at a dinner at John Stuart Mill's when Morley was present, requested that Spencer should talk on—the equilibration of molecules. Spencer did. Grote seemed to understand. So did Mill. But another guest asked Morley if he understood a word of it, for blest if he did.

Huxley seems to have interested Morley deeply. In a letter (1883) he says to Morley:

It is a curious thing that I find my dislike to the thought of extinction increasing as I get older and nearer the goal. It flashes across me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of what is going on than I did in 1800. I had sooner be in hell a good deal—at any rate in one of the upper circles where the climate and the company are not too trying.

When Spencer began to contemplate death he asked Morley if he would say a few apt words over the remains before cremation. Afterwards he wrote to advise him not to, as to do such a thing for an avowed agnostic—or worse—might hurt him in the next election. Morley assured him that his good Presbyterian electors in the Montrose Burghs would have no objection. However, he was at Palermo when Spencer suddenly dropped off.

Morley's literary enthusiasm rose to the top of the tube in his appreciation of George Meredith. of whom he said:

He came to the morning meal after a long hard stride in the tonic air and fresh loveliness of cool woods and green slopes, with the brightness of sunrise upon his brow, responsive penetration in his glance, the turn of radiant irony on his lips and peaked beard, his fine poetic head bright with crisp brown hair, Phoebus Apollo descending upon us from Olympus.

Morley spends far more ink, however, on parliamentary people because it was in Parliament that he did the greater part of his work. Of Parliament itself he said:

Most of the men I have known would rather have written the *Decline and Fall* than have been Mr. Pitt. . . . With a rueful memory I many a time recalled that Franklin and Washington never made speeches more than ten minutes long. I thought of their countrymen whose speeches were too lengthy for their pith, and who was compared to a train of fifteen cars only conveying a single passenger. . . . Then there were the troops of men who not only coveted the "loud applause and Avea vehement" of the majority—that was natural—but with whom it seemed axiomatic that "the country" or "our people" could be the dupe of any claptrap that appeared to fit the humor of an hour. This was far from natural. It was just as true of one British party as the other.

It was in 1873 that Morley first met Chamberlain, then a Radical, afterwards a Tory Imperialist, of whom he says:

I have always thought of him, of all the men of action I have known, the frankest and most direct, as he was with two exceptions the boldest and most intrepid. This instinct was one surer of his power as a popular leader.

One anecdote of an interview which Chamberlain had with Carlyle on the temperance question Morley recounts:

When he was busy on temperance and the Gothenburg system we had one of our talks with Carlyle. The sage told him that he rejoiced that this mighty reform was being attempted; then all at once he took fire at thought of compensation for the dispossessed publican and burst into full blaze. Piercely smiting the arm of his chair he summoned an imaginary publican before him. "Compensation!" he cried. "I'll tell you where to go for compensation. Go to your father the devil!" Chamberlain listened, until he was able in patient tone to put the case of the reputable butler whom a grateful master had set up in a licensed and well-conducted tavern.

Among the sometimes tedious but never dull reminiscences of public affairs, Morley sandwiches in a lot of delightful descriptions. In this he is like a man sitting by a fire—just talking. For instance, he describes a reception at Marlborough House, when Edward was Prince of Wales; at a time when Leopold of Belgium was apparently the "cloven hoof" and not the German Emperor. He says:

A band played delightful music in an adjoining room, and I should have liked nothing better than to sit without talking—enjoying the spectacle, the glittering, silver and glowing gold, the superb flowers and fruit, the color of ribands, stars and orders, and the general presence of fame, distinction, greatness of place and power about one. The King of the Belgians sent for me and talked about the Soudan, Universal Suffrage, and other matters, good-natured, free from stiffness, spoke well to the point, and with no sign of cloven hoof. Hatzfeldt introduced himself to me, the German ambassador; a rather barbaric look about him, made one think of Tacitus "Germany," and rude folk camping on the banks of Rhine or Elbe in dark forests.

Every little while he picks up a book. For instance:

Read "All's Well That Ends Well." Found the opening scenes very tiresome—euphemistic and pointless. Thought of Byron's saying to Moore—"I say, Moore, what do you think of Shakespeare? I think it's a damned humbug."

Again—just by way of Irish humor:

Left Paris at 11.30, snow lying all the way to Calais. Tried to read two pieces of French fiction, but found each more disgusting than the other, so I flung them both out of the window, only hoping that the French peasantry are lucky enough never to have learnt to read.

A visit to the Louvre in Paris calls forth a nice little appreciation of art—which like music seems to have been of very little interest to Morley.

Lastly, but most delightful to me of all, because I have long lived with the engraving of it in our small dining-room, Millet's "Gleaners." I felt as if it were worth while to go to Paris if only for the sake of seeing that picture.

What he thought of some parliamentary egotists is tensely expressed in a memo as follows:

Tea with Blank (Labor M.P.), tremendous egotist; not once in the hour and a half we were together did he put one single question, or invite a single remark even on political business in hand, or admit a single doubt, or allow that there may be two sides to any question, or realize that he does not know all that is worth knowing.