CHARACTER SKETCH: JUNE.

LADY HENRY SOMERSET.

"THE economist who asks of what use are the lords? may learn of Franklin to ask of what use is a baby? They have been a Social Church proper to inspire sentiments mutually honouring the lover and the loved . . . 'Tis a romance adorning English life with a larger horizon; a midway heaven, fulfilling to their sense their fairy tales and poetry. This, just as far as the breeding of the nobleman really made him, brave, handsome, accomplished and great hearted."—EMERSON.

"A ROMANCE adorning English life"—that is Lady Henry Somerset. Her character sketch would, if adequately written, be a kaleidoscopic picture of English life, bright with its splendour and lurid with its gloom—radiant with the glories of ancient fame, and still more radiant with the promise of things to come, but at the same time never entirely free from the shadow of the lowering thunder-cloud. But all that can be done is to sketch lightly a few of the salient features of a singularly varied character; and to trace with rapid pen the stages through which this typical modern woman has passed in the evolution which has landed her at last the acknowledged leader of one of the most important movements of modern times.

LADY HENRY SOMERSET.
(*From a photograph by W. H. Grove.*)

Last month Lady Henry Somerset was re-elected to the presidency of the British Women's Temperance Association, at the close of a campaign which for vehemence, to use no more unpleasant word, could hardly be paralleled in the stormy arena of parliamentary politics. The same month she manifested her solidarity with the cause of labour by sending a subscription to the Strike Fund of the Dockers at Hull. Also in the same merry month of May she published the terrible impeachment, drawn up by the lady emissaries of the World's Women's Temperance Union, against the Indian authorities for persisting in evading the orders of Parliament forbidding the regulation of unfortunate women as chattels for the use or abuse of vicious men. And in all these things she was asserting the conviction which has been driven in upon her by long years of silent study and active work—the conviction, that is, that if the woes of the world are to be lessened, women must grapple bravely with their causes, that in the world's broad field of battle women must range themselves on the side of those who are struggling for justice, and that if any mending or ending of the worst evils of society is to be accomplished in our time, the heart and the instinct and the intellect of women must be felt in the councils of the nation. The aristocratic Lady Clara Vere de Vere has developed into the modern Britomart, couching her lance in the cause of Temperance and Womanhood, Labour and Democracy—a notable evolution indeed.

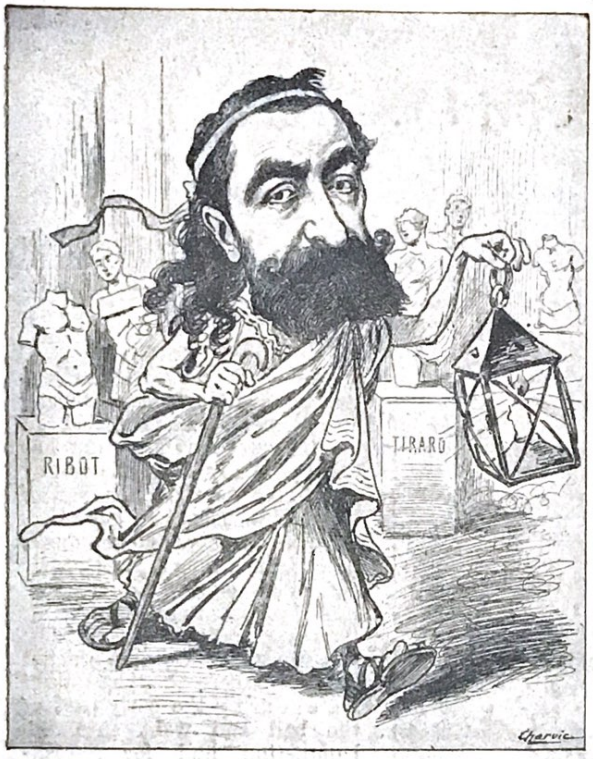
THE LADY ISABEL.

Lady Henry Somerset is a Somerset only by marriage. By birth she was Lady Isabel Somers-Cocks, for she was the daughter of Earl Somers. Lady Isabel in those early days was as punctilious about asserting her caste as Lady Henry is to-day indifferent to the trappings of her order. The story goes that some thirty years ago and more, Lady Isabel, then a pretty little chit of six or seven, was taken by her parents to a ball given by the Queen. When Her Majesty and the Prince Consort quitted the dais where they had been seated during the early part of the ball and went into the banqueting hall for refreshments, the child remained behind. After wandering about for a time she was suddenly attracted by the royal seat, and a childish whim seizing her she clambered up into the Queen's chair and sat herself down. When the Queen returned she smiled to see a pretty little damosel dressed in white, with a wreath of daisies, sitting in state in the chair of majesty. As the Queen reached the seat she said pleasantly, "This is little Isabel." Whereupon the offended little aristocrat, tossing her head, said with aggrieved emphasis to amused Majesty, "*Lady* Isabel!" and fared her forth.

A dozen years passed. The shadows of the Mutiny fell and lifted; the darker shadow of death fell and did not lift across the Royal household; great wars came and went, convulsing continents; King Demos was enthroned as monarch in boroughs, and the young girl, now a woman grown, stood once more before the Queen. It was the day of her presentation at Court. As the *débutante* in white, wearing a daisy wreath, bent forward to kiss her hand, the Queen's marvellous memory asserted itself. The old scene in the ballroom flashed before her mind, and the Sovereign said with a pleasant smile and an unmistakable emphasis: "*Lady* Isabel!"

A ROMANTIC MARRIAGE.

Lady Isabel was the elder of two daughters. Lady Adeline, now Adeline Duchess of Bedford, was the only other living child of one of the romantic marriages of the Middle Century. When Mr. Watts was a young artist in the first triumph of his genius, he painted a



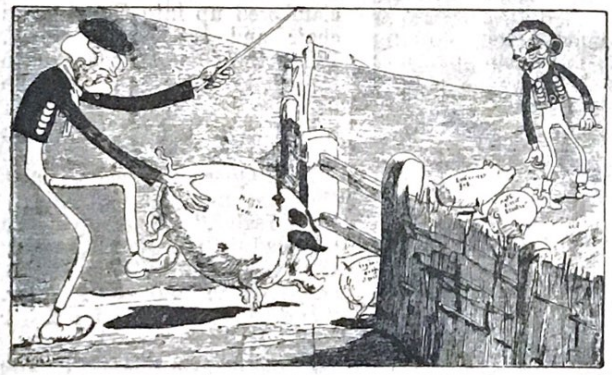
From *La Silhouette.*] [April 9, 1893.

THE NEW DIOGENES.

Disgusted at the bad state of the gallery of ancient ministerial sculpture, M. Carnot decides to seek truth from the Dupuy source.

From *rip.*] [April 15, 1893.

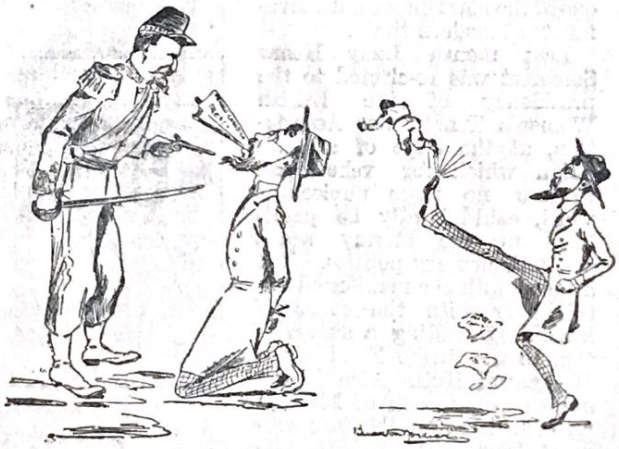
THE RISING TIDE.



From *Kladderadatsch.*] [April 30, 1893.

THE DEADLOCK IN GERMANY: TWO RIVALS.

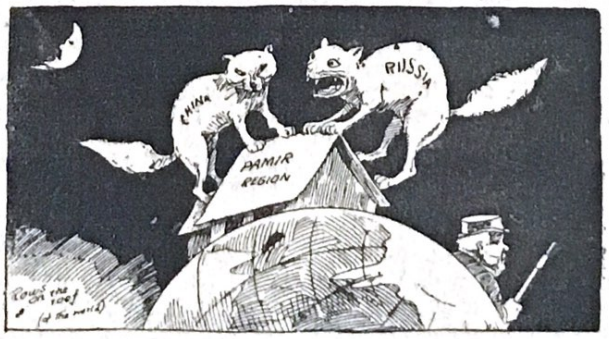
With such a fat sow it will always be difficult to get through.



From *Grip.*] [April 1, 1893.

THE FRANCO-CANADIAN TREATY OF COMMERCE.

FROM THE EUROPEAN STANDPOINT. FROM THE CANADIAN STANDPOINT.



From the *Melbourne Punch.*] [March 16, 1893.

AN AUSTRALIAN VIEW OF THE DISPUTE IN THE PAMIRS.

portrait of Miss Virginia Pattle, the daughter of a prominent director of the East India Company. The picture is still well known, and when it was first hung on the walls of the Academy it became one of the pictures of the year. Every one thronged to see it, and among others came Viscount Eastnor. But while the rest admired and passed on, he remained, unable to tear himself away from the fascinating canvas. At last he exclaimed to his friend: "That woman I must know!" Next day, the Fates being propitious, the young Viscount met the fair original of Mr. Watts' picture at one of Lady Palmerston's famous receptions, and found the artist had not exaggerated her beauty. He pressed his suit with unusual precipitancy; he soon proposed, was accepted, and within a few months of the time he first saw her portrait in the Academy, Miss Virginia Pattle became Viscountess Eastnor. Within twelve months Lady Isabel was born. Two years later the second Earl of Somers died, and the erstwhile Miss Pattle was Countess Somers.

G. F. Watts, R.A., pinxit.] [*Cameron Studio.*

THE COUNTESS SOMERS.

THE CHILD OF EXILE.

The Countess Somers was French on her mother's side, from whom she inherited her radiant beauty, traces of which even three score years have failed to efface. Her grandfather, the Chevalier de l'Etang, was one of the courtiers of the luckless monarch whom the Revolution sent to the guillotine. Her grandmother was one of the ladies-in-waiting of Marie Antoinette. When the French monarchy perished on the block, the Chevalier and his wife fled for their lives from the soil of France. No place in Europe seemed sufficiently distant from the land of the Terror, and after wandering hither and thither like perturbed ghosts, they ultimately took ship for the East Indies, where they remained meditating at that safe distance upon the horrors of the Revolution from which they had so narrowly escaped. It was this flight from the guillotine on the part of her parents which brought Mademoiselle de l'Etang within marriageable range of Mr. James Pattle, then a director of the East India Company residing in Pondicherry. After Mr. Pattle's death Mrs. Pattle was returning to England with two of her daughters, who were as lovely as a poet's dream. The mother died and was buried at sea. Of her six daughters the loveliest was Virginia, whom Mr. Watts's magic brush made Viscountess Eastnor.

THE COUNTESS SOMERS.

The Countess Somers was a lady of the *ancien régime*, French to her fingertips, but not without a Hellenic element, which the ladies of the Bourbon Court too often lacked. Radiant in the pride of her beauty and the joy of life, she brought to Eastnor Castle the atmosphere of the Italian Renaissance. Epicurean rather than Puritan, she reigned among her admiring circle as a queen. Artistic, imaginative, with a passion for all things beautiful, and a certain natural genius for the luxury of existence, Lady Somers was about the last woman in all England whom sober, serious Puritans of the Temperance cause would have expected to be the mother of their chief. In human affairs, however, the law of reaction operates with

great and often irregular force; and no doubt it is because Lady Somers was the patron of all that ministers to the grace and adornment of life that her daughter Lady Henry is to-day the rising hope of the Party of Practical Moral Reform.

EARL SOMERS.

Earl Somers was a noble of a very different stamp from those who are so styled through the courtesy of

LORD SOMERS.
(From a photograph by A. Bassano.)

fortuitous circumstances. He had a strong bond of sympathy with his beautiful wife in their devotion to art. There was, however, in him an element of nobler character than that of the mere virtuoso. He was a man of unalterable fidelity, of sound judgment, who inherited something of the spirit of adventure which has constantly re-asserted itself in his family, and which at this moment is impelling his grandson to pursue a venturesome quest for grizzlies in the unexplored regions of Athabasca. He was one of the companions of Sir Henry Layard in the great expedition which resulted in the unearthing of the ruins of ancient Nineveh, and he was never so happy as when he was camping out on archæological expeditions in the deserted lands of Asia Minor. Next to his delight in excavation and exploration was the pleasure which he took in hunting for curios in Italy. Time and again he and the Earl of Warwick would leave England *incog.*, and rummage for weeks together among the collections and palaces and old curiosity shops of the Peninsula. It was in this way that most of the treasures were collected which make Eastnor the museum of the Western Border. Emerson, in describing the uses of the English aristocracy, said: "It is they who make England that strong-box and museum it is, who gather and protect works of art dragged from amidst busy cities and revolutionary countries and brought hither out of all the world. . . These lords are the treasurers and librarians of mankind, engaged by their pride and wealth to this function." That function Lord Somers performed not merely loyally, but with a passion of great joy.

He found time, however, for much besides. The friend of Turner and Ruskin, the fellow-traveller of Layard and Curzon, the pupil of the Rev. F. D. Maurice, the intimate of Cavour, Garibaldi, and Mazzini, Lord Somers was also the special escort of the third Napoleon, when that ill-fated adventurer visited the English Court. He was more of a scholar than a statesman, more of an artist than a politician. His sterling qualities were highly esteemed by all who knew him, from his Sovereign to his peasants; but it was the misfortune of his country and of his class that he could never overcome a certain modest self-depreciation which kept him out of the ranks of the executive few who govern England. Lady Henry Somerset, in a charming account of her father, which she contributed to the *Union Signal* of April 14, 1892, says that the secret of his popularity was his utter absence of self-consciousness or pride. From everyone he felt he had something to learn, and was always intent on acquiring whatever could be imparted by any. His faith was as simple as his disposition. He retained a deep love and reverence for the Bible and for its inspired teaching, and to the time of his death busied himself daily in making accurate translations from the Greek in the endeavour to acquire new light on the meaning of obscure passages.

"TOO MANY PARENTS."

Lord Somers was devoted to his children, and bestowed special pains upon the education of his daughters. But he was so much abroad that much of his care had to be exercised by proxy. The young children were left of necessity to the tender mercies of innumerable relatives, who were always disagreeing as to what was the best. Little Lady Isabel, before her education was considered conventionally complete, had suffered from the infliction of no fewer than twenty governesses! It is not very surprising that when she was only five years old she astonished Sir Henry Layard one day by telling him in reply to a question if she had a good time in the world, "Yes, I should enjoy life very much if it were not that I have too many parents." The homely adage about the fate of the broth when too many cooks are employed fortunately does not seem to have held good in her case.

From earliest childhood Lady Isabel appears to have been a bright engaging child, with occasional traces of the *enfant terrible*. Among other things which she inherited from her father was a keen sense of humour, and a decided dramatic gift. Lord Somers was a delightful *raconteur*, and Lady Isabel while a mere child acquired the faculty of humorous and dramatic expression which she has never lost. Lord Somers was a scholar although not a pedant, and as he had no son he bestowed especial pains upon his daughters' education. Lady Isabel from childhood was familiar with French as her mother tongue, and she was almost equally at home in Italian and in German. In the society to which Lady Isabel was born it is universally accepted that the children spend most of the time with governesses; and whatever may be the excitements of after life, the monotony of schoolroom drudgery often renders life duller for the

LADY ISABEL.
(*From a photograph by W. H. Grove.*)

children of the aristocracy than for those of the middle class.

AN INCIPIENT DEMOCRAT.

Thus passed from governess to governess, now here and now there, sharing in the social amusements of their circle, but spending most of her time in study, Lady Isabel and her sister grew up to womanhood, subject to many influences, but preserving and developing a very strong and well marked individuality. Of this only two instances may be mentioned. One was the eager interest with which she studied John Stuart Mill, when that philosopher was regarded as a Radical heretic. Often she would steal away with such forbidden books as his "Subjection of Women," and his "Essay on Liberty," to devour them by herself in the solitude of the woods, preferring to evade rather than to defy the censure which the open perusal of such books would undoubtedly have brought upon her. Even more remarkable was the resolute stand which she and her sister took upon the subject of the slaveholders' rebellion. They were but children, the eldest being not more than thirteen, when Lee surrendered his sword; but whether from their perusal of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," or whether from their natural instinct for liberty, they were as passionate for the North as all the rest of their circle were enthusiastic for the South. Whatever else may be said about Lady Isabel, she undoubtedly began well. All the while she was pursuing her studies she was living an active out-of-door life, rejoicing in long rides across country, and all active country pursuits, excepting one. She never could bear to kill bird or beast.

II.—ANCESTORS.

Heredity is in the air, and it is absurd to discuss the latest living representative of a long line of ancestors without referring to those who have gone before. Espe-

G. F. Watts, R.A., pinxit.] LADY ISABEL AND LADY ADELINE. [*Cameron Studio.*

cially is this the case when we have to study, as in this instance, one who represents "an ancient noble family, which hath stood against the waves and weathers of Time" for more than five hundred years. Lady Henry Somerset, half French on her mother's side, is on her father's the descendant of the family of the Cocks, who were considerable people in Kent in the reign of the first Edward, and of the Somerses, best known to history by their most famous representative, Lord Chancellor Somers, who deserves special mention in these verbose days, when argument seems to be measured by the mile instead of being weighed by the judgment, if only because he made his reputation and won his case by a speech in defence of the Seven Bishops only five minutes long.

GREAT HALL, EASTNOR CASTLE, LEDBURY.

The characteristics of the two families reappear in Lady Henry.

A PURITAN SOMERS.

There is a curious contrast between the families of Cocks and Somers. The Cockses were Royalists who held for King Charles; the Somerses were Puritans who sided with the Parliament. But whichever side they took they seem to have borne themselves manfully in the service of the good cause, whichever cause it was that they espoused. My heart warms to Captain Somers, who raised a troop of horse for Cromwell's new model, with his rough-and-ready method of protesting against too great abuse of the liberty of prophesying. While quartered with his troop at Upton, he used dutifully to attend the parish church of Severn Stoke. Now the parson of that parish was a hot and indiscreet advocate of the Divine Right of Kings, and he seized the opportunity of having the Ironside Captain in his congregation to preach violently against the Parliament, justifying his invectives by the most uncompromising doctrines of passive obedience. Captain Somers stood it for a while, then he protested, and complained, until, finding all representations of no avail, he replied to a furious denunciation from the pulpit by pulling out his pistol and firing a bullet at the sounding-board over the parson's head. What effect it had history sayeth not, but the mark of the bullet is said to be visible in the sounding-board even to this day.

A ROYALIST COCKS.

Not less interesting is the story on the other side of the house, how young Captain Hopton battered the Cocks of that day out of Castleditch, the family seat close to where Eastnor now stands, only to be seized by a Royalist foray from Hereford, which carried him off in triumph with his forty foot and twenty horse prisoners from under the very nose of Colonel Massey, who was hurrying up in hot haste to relieve him. The old entrance door was studded thick with slugs and bullets; and when the moat was drained cannon balls were found which had hurtled thick and fast around the ears of Lady Henry's ancestor when he tried to hold the family seat for the King.

SOME NOTABLE ENGLISHMEN.

The Cockses and Somerses before and after the Civil Wars did their full share of service in the cause of England.

One Richard Cocks sailed with Frobisher in his third voyage in 1578; another Richard was head Cape merchant in the English factory at Japan, in 1622, and a Christopher Cocks was sent by James I. as ambassador to the Tzar of Muscovy. A Charles Cocks sat for Droitwich in three parliaments after the expulsion of the Stuarts. One of the earliest of the Somerses, Sir George, was the discoverer of the Bermudas, which were once known as Somers Islands. Baron Somers of Evesham was for fifty-nine years a member of one or other House of Parliament. A younger scion of the family did yeoman's service in the Sikh Wars and in the Punjaub campaign. The eldest son of the second Baron (a soldier of whom the Duke of Wellington said that if he fell during the battle he wished him to take the command) was killed at the assault at Burgos, in Spain, in 1812, five days before his promotion to a Lieutenant-Colonelcy was officially confirmed. The second Earl distinguished himself in the Peninsular War. If the story of the house were told in full it would be a compendium of no small part of the history of England.

REIGATE PRIORY.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS.

The great man of the house was John Lord Somers of Evesham, Lord High Chancellor of England, to whom for his services William of Orange gave Somers Town, in St. Pancras, and Reigate. Of him Horace Walpole wrote: "Lord Somers was one of those divine men, who, like a chapel in a palace, remain unprofaned while all the rest is tyranny, corruption, and folly." All authorities, he added, declare that he was "the most uncorrupt lawyer and the honestest statesman; as a master orator, a genius of the finest lustre, and a patriot of the noblest and most extensive views; a man who dispensed blessings by his life, and planned them for his posterity." Lord Somers had made for himself a reputation at the Bar before his famous defence of the Seven Bishops, which, however, made his fortune. When William came he was one of his staunchest supporters. To him we largely owe the Declaration of Rights. He became Lord Chancellor; and although Dame Fortune played him some ugly pranks, she left his reputation unsullied. Although "his life was one long malady," he never lost his temper, or quailed before his foes. Macaulay says he was equally eminent as a jurist and as a politician, as an orator, and as a writer. "His good temper and his good breeding never failed. The most accomplished men of those times have told us that there was scarcely any subject on which Somers was not competent to instruct and to delight. He had traversed the whole range of polite literature, ancient and modern." In his later years he promoted the Union with Scotland, but his chief delight was in the study of literature. He became President of the Royal Society, and was the veritable Mæcenas of his generation. To number such a worthy among your ancestors is a perpetual inspiration and incentive to live worthily, and to maintain unimpaired the political and literary repute of the family name.

SOME FAMOUS ANCESTRESSES.

The famous woman of the family, prior to Lady Henry, was Mary Cocks, "the Heiress of Castleditch," who, in 1724, succeeded to the ownership of the Eastnor estate. It was she who married into family of the Somerses, who were Whigs, while she herself was a firm Royalist. It is a tradition in the family that when her husband was absent from Castleditch, the portrait of his ancestor, Lord Somers, was turned towards the wall when a picture of Prince Charlie, the young Pretender, appeared on the other side. Notwithstanding this resolute adhesion to the other side in politics, peace seems to have reigned in the family. Her children, of whom she had twelve, declared on the tablet they erected to her memory how much they owed her. "There never was a better mother of children; she taught them all to read herself, and trained them up most diligently in the

G. F. Watts, R.A., pinxit.] LADY ISABEL, ÆTAT 19. [*Cameron Studio.*

way they should go, by example as well as by precept . . . She knew not by her own feelings what narrowness, selfishness, or any wrong affection was . . . No one throughout life was more beloved; her heart was soon touched with the hearing of distress, and her hand as immediately stretched out to relieve it. Her countenance itself shone with the purest benevolence, bespeaking that faith in the Gospel which was the principle firmly rooted at her heart." Mary Cocks was the most famous of the women of the house, but one hundred and forty years before her death another, Judith Cocks, passed away "much lamented for her exemplary piety and charity," while the parish register records that she was "buryed to the greate griefe of all her poore neighbours."

These old entries almost suggest the theory of reincarnation. If that is out of the question, there is undoubtedly in Lady Henry a clear case of reversion to the true type of these famous matrons of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

III.—AN ILL-STARRED MARRIAGE.

When Lady Isabel "came out," as the phrase goes—which, being interpreted, means that she had been presented at Court and was entered as an eligible for engagement in the matrimonial market—she created a mild stir of excitement among matchmaking mammas. For Lady Isabel was a great heiress. Eastnor Castle and Reigate and Somers Town were her destined heritage, and such a dowry would have redeemed the shortcomings of Cinderella's sisters. But Lady Isabel was much more like Cinderella herself—after the beneficent fairy had arrayed her for the ball. She was young, piquant, pretty, accomplished, capital company, and of the highest aristocracy. But pretty Lady Isabel had small notion of being made merchandise of, even to the most eligible suitor who coveted her possessions.

"THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE," ETC.

Lady Isabel had at that time but one dream; like many another girl of eighteen, she longed to meet Prince Charming, to marry him, and to live happily ever afterwards. And now at the very threshold there stood a Prince Charming waiting for her. "They were made for each other," gossip said. The most eminent matchmakers of the day had conspired to bring about a union; but their efforts were destined to fail, and Lady Isabel, at this early period of her career, realised the relentless cruelty of a world that is before all things else opportunist in its view of marriage settlements. There is perhaps nothing that is destined to make a mind more cynical than the barefaced manner in which wealth is sought, whether it be in wife or husband. Every woman who has property in prospect realises the humiliation of a proposal that occurs at the very outset of acquaintance. Lady Isabel was the pursuit of the marriageable youth. Among her other suitors was a younger son of the Beaufort family. He proposed, and Lady Isabel refused. But a course was pursued by this by no means disconcerted aspirant that was likely to prove successful in the present emergency. He withdrew from the world, announced his intention to live for a philanthropic purpose, and seemed to scorn the idle life of the Society lounger. Lady Somers was above all things anxious that her daughter should remain with her after marriage as before, and she saw in Lord Henry Somerset, who had no fortune of his own, a son gained and a daughter regained; and with the influence which such a mother naturally exerted over such a daughter, when Lord Henry Somerset renewed his suit, Lady Isabel passively acquiesced, and then it was that Lady Isabel Somers became Lady Henry Somerset.

THE LORDS OF BADMINTON.

From a worldly point of view it did not seem disadvantageous. The ducal family, to which Lord Henry stood second in succession, is one of the most distinguished in the West Country. The Duke of Beaufort is one of those remarkable men whose character M. Taine would have loved to delineate as the last surviving type of the Nimrod peer. Polished, agreeable, punctilious in the discharge of his duties in Church and in State—as he conceived them—the duke unites the morals of Charles the Second with the primitive tastes of Squire Western. Badminton, that princely pile, is a kind of Mecca of the hunting world, in which the chief end of man is the pursuit of the fox six days a week. Eastnor is a library and a museum. There are books at Badminton, but they are of less account than spurs and stirrups: and as for relics—the armour of the Black Prince, forgotten in the garret, is as nothing compared with the brush of the latest fox. Lord Henry Somerset, the second—legitimate—son of the duke was, as befitted a scion of such a house, in high favour in Court and in the counsels of the Conservative party. He was one of Mr. Disraeli's *protégés*; and when the Tories came in in 1874, he became Comptroller of the Royal Household, with fair prospect of one day becoming a member of the Cabinet. He was already a member of the House of Commons and a Privy Councillor.

MARRIED BUT NOT MATED.

For a time all went well or fairly well. They were married in 1872. Tennyson sent the bride on her bridal day a basket of snowdrops which he had gathered for her with his own hands. In 1874 Lady Henry, then twenty-three years of age, became the mother of a boy, her only child, in whom she found some consolation for the disappointments of an uncongenial marriage; for Lord Henry had few tastes in common with his wife. That, however, would only have resulted in the usual wretchedness of an unhappy marriage, but for the fact that he was addicted to practices the pursuit of which is incompatible even with the large laxity of the English aristocratic life. The result was that the law courts pronounced the mother the guardian of the boy, an amicable separation was arranged, and Lord Henry, after a brief attempt to pose as a martyr in England, retired to maintain the state of a *déclassé* English peer on a handsome allowance from his wife's fortune. There is no need to enter into any further particulars beyond saying that the whole pitiable story was heard *in camerâ*; that the exposure ended his career; and that, although Lord Henry is still said to keep up some show as leader of the exiled English at Florence, he is socially and politically as dead as his younger brother Arthur, who, some years later, at the time of the Cleveland Street scandal, found it advisable to disappear.

ALONE.

Lady Henry, thus disembarrassed of her husband, devoted herself assiduously to the upbringing of her boy and the discharge of the usual social duties of a lady of her position. In addition to these she was, as she had always been, ever ready to help in any work of charity or of mercy. "I first saw Lady Henry," says one of her faithful and devoted domestics, "when she was lighting a fire in my mother's empty hearth in a London slum." That was before the departure of Lord Henry, when he was still Comptroller, and long before the practice of slumming had become fashionable. After Lord Henry went she naturally took a less active part in society, but she kept up the usual round of the woman of the world. Her sister had married the Marquis of Tavistock; her father was in delicate health and much abroad, and Lady Henry had many lonely hours at Reigate Priory, which she sought to enliven by diligent devotion to the management of the estate, the introduction of improved poultry farming with incubators, and the like. She was active, energetic, and independent, but she had not yet felt the great impulse which was soon to transform her whole life.

IV.—THE VOICE UNDER THE ELM.

"The word of the Lord came to Elijah;" "The Lord spake unto Abraham, saying;" and Saul on his way to Damascus heard a voice from heaven;—with all these formulas we are sufficiently familiar. But the possibility of similar utterances being audible to-day is scouted by the majority who have never heard voices or seen visions. The psychologist, however, who recognises the existence of the sub-liminal consciousness equally with the devout of all ages who know nothing of psychology, knows that "heard are the voices," not merely in Canaan of old, but this day and every day where the soul is open on the Godward side. Joan of Arc and St. Teresa are but two of the more conspicuous of those the course of whose life has been determined by the promptings of an invisible monitor apparently speaking to the soul through other avenues than those of the senses, and there is nothing incredible that Lady Henry Somerset should at the fateful moment of her career have heard a voice the echoes of which have been distinctly audible in her life ever since.

LADY HENRY AND HER INFANT SON.

REIGATE PRIORY, FROM GARDENS.

THE PRIORY AT REIGATE.

She was at Reigate when it happened. Reigate Priory has always been the favourite retreat of Lady Henry. Seated on the southern side of the great chalk down which rises to the highest point at Box Hill, the Priory looks out upon the loveliest district in the fair county of Surrey. It is a homely, comfortable country house when compared with the stately splendour of Eastnor, but rejoicing in traditions which its more modern rival cannot boast. The estate in which it stands, with the Priory itself, was given by William of Orange to the Lord Chancellor Somers for his services in securing the expulsion of the Stuarts, and the establishment of the constitutional kingship. Seldom was princely guerdon more nobly earned. But the associations of the Priory go much further back than the days of the glorious Revolution. It was, as its name implies, a monastic establishment in olden time, familiar to the pilgrim thousands who followed the ancient pilgrim way across Surrey to the shrine of Becket at Canterbury. The inn which Chaucer mentions in his "Canterbury Tales" as standing at Reigate has its direct lineal successor which occupies the same site and bears the same sign, although, alas! it is no longer the identical hostelrie in its bricks and mortar. Tradition asserts that it was at the Priory of Reigate, or rather in a cave on the estate communicating by a secret passage with the Priory on one side, and a neighbouring castle on the other, that the draft of the Magna Charta was drawn up which was afterwards imposed upon the king at Runnymede. A great tithing barn of brick still standing at the rear of the house remains as a relic of the old institution which perished in Henry the Eighth's time. The estate is spacious, undulating, and well wooded;—its groves are notable as having been planted largely by Evelyn—as he mentions in his Diary—with fishpond, meadow land, gardens, and all the usual appurtenances of a country house. One of the special glories of the Priory is the Holbein mantelpiece, a photograph of which I reproduce here. The original design is in the British Museum. It was made for the palace at Bletchingley that belonged to Catharine Howard. When that palace was pulled down some 200 years ago the carving was brought by the Howard family to Reigate, as the house at that time belonged to the Howard family. The Priory itself did not belong to the estate of the Chancellor, but was afterwards acquired by the family, as the castle was uninhabitable.

THE MISTS OF UNBELIEF.

It was here that Lady Henry lived in comparative retreat, bringing up her boy. She read much, and thought more. Her father had accustomed her from earliest childhood to follow with keen interest the development of modern Biblical criticism. When a mere child she read Chrysostom and other early fathers with intense delight, although with an ever-deepening sense of wonder at the immense difference between the faith they preached and the conventional Christianity of her own day. When the great catastrophe of her life overtook her, she plunged still more deeply into theological or anti-theological speculation. Strauss, Renan, and other writers of that school, exercised a powerful influence over her mind. The old landmarks seemed to be dissolving away into the mist of myth. Who knew but that after all there had never been such a person as Our Lord; and as for Our Father, was there not enough of suggestion in her own lot without going to "nature red in tooth and claw" and "the iron laws" to justify a confused bewilderment as to whether there was any truth in it at all? Lady Henry was in the Valley of the Shadow, not of Death, but of Doubt; in the midst of a grey dimness that overclouded the sun and left all the old landmarks indistinct, and shadowy, and unreal.

THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

Lady Henry was still "in the swim" of Society. She was, as she had always been, a woman of fashion and of the world. But as she declared long afterwards, "I can say that, though I was long in Society, and had enough to do to keep my head above water, and though I was a woman of the world, I have never been a worldly woman. I never saw the day that I would not gladly have left parks and palaces for fields and woods." It was therefore not a violent change so much as a sudden and well-defined stage in the process of spiritual evolution that was marked by the voice under the elm. So it was with St. Teresa. Long before she had her visions and heard her voices she had been a *religieuse* dedicated to the life of faith. But, as Mr. Froude says in his sketch of the Spanish saint:—

"In the life of every one who has really tried to make a worthy use of existence there is always a point—a point never afterwards forgotten—when the road has ceased to be downhill and the climb upward commenced. There has been some accident, perhaps; or some one has died; or one has been disappointed in something on which the heart has been fixed; or some earnest words have arrested attention—at any rate, some seed has fallen into a soil prepared to receive it. This is called, in religious language, conversion; the turning away from sin and folly to duty and righteousness.

The moment, in Lady Henry's case, had almost come when, one fine summer afternoon, she went out into her garden at Reigate Priory and took her seat at the foot of the great elm which is the most conspicuous tree in the grounds. For to her, as to Joan of Arc, it was in a garden when the summons came, nor was she more unmindful of the mysterious word.

THE VOICE FROM THE UNSEEN.

Luther heard the fateful voice which changed his life as he was toiling on his knees up the sacred stairs at Rome. Lady Henry was seated under the shade of the elm tree one summer afternoon, thinking once more of the old insoluble enigma, "Was He? Was He not? If He was not, from whence came I? If He is, what am I, and what am I doing with my life?" Lady Henry had a party of friends at the Priory. She had strolled out into the garden in a somewhat listless fashion before afternoon tea, not dreaming that anything would happen. But as she sat at the foot of the elm tree, meditating, she heard a voice, not with her bodily ear, but in the inner depths of the soul, which has no need of such material mechanism. And the voice said: "*Act as if I were, and thou shalt know I Am!*"

Lady Henry was somewhat startled. The voice came from no visible speaker. She heard it plainly and unmistakably. What did it mean? From whence did it come? She repeated it over in her mind. "Act as if I were, and thou shalt know I am."

The more she repeated it the more she was impressed with the wisdom of the counsel. Agitated and somewhat thrilled by the strange monition, she rose from the foot of the elm tree and began to walk to and fro up and down a *parterre* of lovely roses, which filled the summer air with fragrance. And ever as she walked a sense of the soundness of the advice impressed itself more and more deeply, and there gleamed before her a far-off welcome hope of peace and confidence, and the assured presence of the Christ.

THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

That night Lady Henry retired early to her room, and read through the Gospel according to St. John. She had long been familiar with the controversy as to its authorship; but the contents of the Gospel were comparatively fresh to her—as they are to many who spend years in asking Whence and by Whom, but who often forget to ask What? As she read chapter after chapter the light of hope that glimmered fitfully in the rose garden grew clearer and brighter, until it became a radiance suffusing all the sky. And in the enthusiasm of her new-found hope she decided, there and then, to obey the Voice—to act, to the best of her ability, as if He were; and to trust that the promise might be fulfilled to her, and that He might reveal Himself to her in due season.

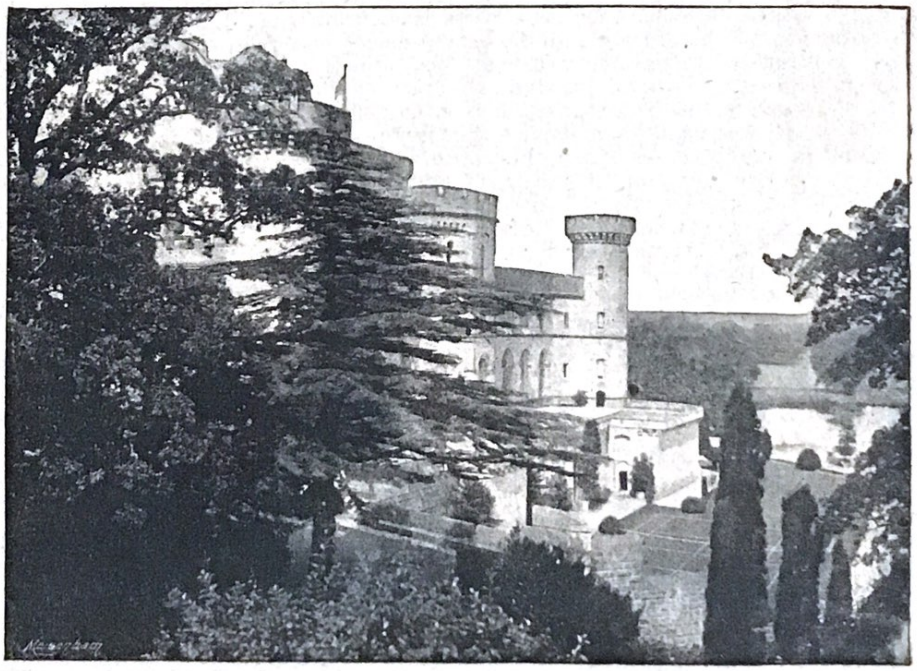
Next morning when she met her guests she told them simply but decidedly that she was going into retirement. She was leaving Society for solitude, if haply she might in privacy find peace and joy in believing. Her friends were amazed. "But you know you never could be quite sure of Isabel," and so with more or less courteously veiled expressions of sarcastic regret they took their leave. Her fashionable friends fell from her fast enough. She had no difficulty in dropping them. They dropped her. And then she betook herself to Eastnor with her boy to carry out her appointed plan.

IN RETREAT.

Ignatius Loyola and Mohammed, and many another of the makers of the world's history, have thus gone into retreat after the first great awakening, and remained there they did not exactly know why, being made ready for a warfare the nature of which they saw but dimly or not at all. It is a natural instinct. The old world has crumbled to pieces beneath your feet. Of the new heaven and the new earth you do not feel sure. There must be meditation in the wilderness, wrestling in silent prayer, and serious waiting upon the Lord, if so be He will graciously make plain our path before us.

ENCHANTED EASTNOR.

Lady Henry could nowhere have found a pleasanter or more secluded Patmos than that which welcomed her at Eastnor. The Castle is like a dream of old romance. Standing at the foot of the storied Malvern hills, its stately towers rise high above the trees, the embodiment of strength and security, in the midst of all that is loveliest in nature. Eastnor Castle has every charm but one, and that the rapidly moving years are steadily supplying. The mysterious charm of eld, the associations of hoar antiquity, are denied to a pile which does not date back further than the beginning of the present century. But with that exception Eastnor possesses every charm of the lordly pleasure house of the poet's dream. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole



EASTNOR CASTLE.

country side, the Castle rises high above one of the most lovely miniature lakes that ever gladdened a landscape. The view from the terrace over the lake, which fills the wooded basin, is like a scene in fairyland. As the swan sails stately across the mere, making long ripples across the glassy water in which the foliage of a hundred trees is reflected as in a burnished mirror, you seem to be transported to the region which the bards of chivalry have made their own. Ariosto dreamed of nothing more lovely than this combination of wood and water, of the great green slope of the mountain on which the deer are browsing, and the lofty turrets and loftier keep which form the background to a perfect picture. Up such a glade as that, beneath the embowering trees, Lancelot rode on his knightly quest; or from such enchanted palace issued forth the jocund throng of knights and squires and ladies fair on their way to the tournament. There is nothing to break the illusion. It might be the palace of the faerie queen; and the whirling work-a-day world of the nineteenth century seems to have furled off like the thunder-clouds of last July, leaving only the wide, infinite expanse of azure sky.

ALONE WITH THE ONE BOOK.

It was at this delightful abode that Lady Henry retired to study and to think. For the most part of the years she spent here her Bible was her chief counsellor. Occasionally she endeavoured to ascertain what kind of counsel or of guidance others had to offer. Lord Radstock's kindly proffered suggestions were listened to as attentively as she had inquired into the teachings of Dr. Pusey. But the genial theology of the great-hearted Quaker preacher, Mrs. Hannah Whitall Smith, found a truer echo in her own nature and experience. Mrs. Josephine Butler, who had always been among her heroines, and whom she met later on, was sympathetic and full of affectionate tenderness. But Lady Henry did not dream at that time that she was ever destined to be as a daughter to that Mother in Israel in her arduous and painful task. Lady Henry lived alone, educating her boy, adored by her domestics, but seeing few visitors; working out for herself, step by step, the duty to which she was called. What it was she knew not, nor could any one tell her. She was oppressed by a hideous sense of the wrongness of things. Sin and sorrow, vice and crime, marred the scene wherever she turned. What could she do to mend it? Was it any good trying to do anything? It all seemed so hopeless. Who was she, indeed, that she could dare to hope to do anything? A deep depressing sense of her own unworthiness and helplessness weighed her down. At times, when suffering from one of her many agonising headaches, the burden seemed greater than she could bear. But out of that blackness of thick darkness she was delivered by the light that streamed from the sacred Book. His word was a lamp to her feet and a light to her path. The passion of motherhood stayed by her and stayed her. Whatever else she was called or was not called to do, she was called to save the little lad who was growing up bright and slight by her side. Behind him lowered what curse of heredity; and between him and it what was there if she failed?

And besides her boy there were those faithful retainers who for years have formed the loyal garrison and bodyguard of the chatelaine of Eastnor. And beyond the Castle gates there were the villagers. Each class brought its own duties and responsibilities; and as Lady Henry timidly essayed to be faithful in small things to each, she was gradually led on and on until she at last arrived at her present position.

V.—FINDING HER WORK.

Lady Henry, although not possessing much genius for detail, has a strong executive instinct. When she wants a thing done, she will, if others fail, do it herself. All men who have done anything have done it in that way. But women have usually been debarred from doing things themselves—no matter how capable they might be; the fatal original sin of their sex has been held to disqualify them from putting their own hand to the plough. The monarchical and aristocratic system has at least the virtue of opening a clear road to the women born in great positions to the exercise of great functions. Only under a monarchy could a woman be installed in the very head and front of the political and administrative management of affairs. Only in a semi-feudal system could women exercise the authority and wield the influence of the chatelaine who reigns as the little queen in her own domains. The recognition of the right of women in such positions to act as freely as if they were men in spheres usually monopolised by the other sex, facilitates the extension of woman's activity into other spheres from which it was a short time ago shut out.

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

Lady Henry began by playing Lady Clara Vere de Vere among the poor at her gates. But being of a practical turn of mind, and with the hereditary instinct for examining into the causes of things, she soon discovered that it was of little use dispensing charity unless you could build up character; and in building up character the first thing to be done was to prevent the perpetual undermining of character which was due to the drinking habits of society. She found intemperance everywhere the first foe with which she had to combat.

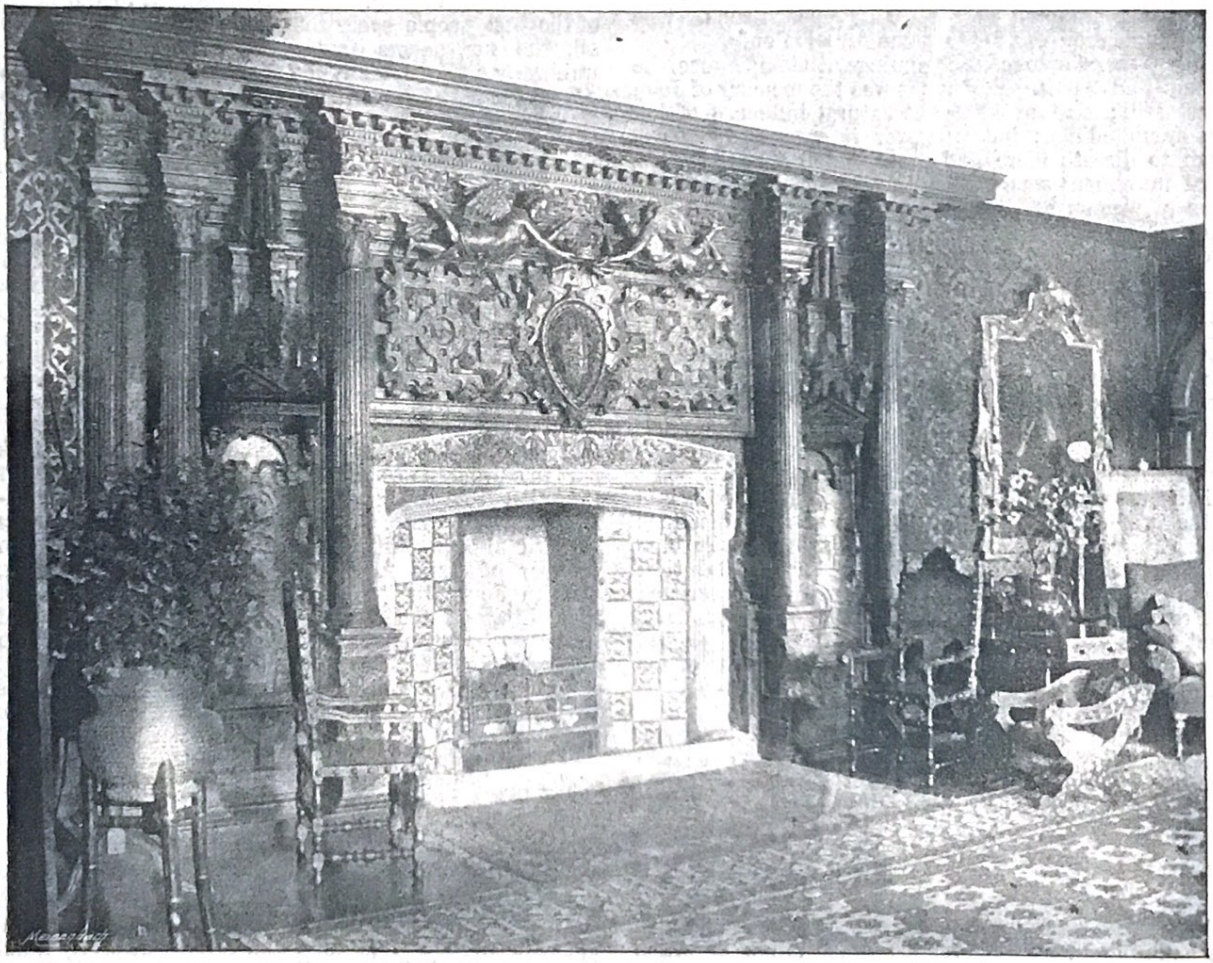
High and low the vice seemed almost universal. Servants imitated their masters, maids their mistresses. Of this Lady Henry tells an amusing story. Before her marriage, after Lord Somers and the family had been absent for a long time on the Continent, they returned to Eastnor. They had left behind them a favourite parrot with the servants, and when they returned Lady Isabel sent for her pet. To her great amusement the bird would do nothing but imitate the sounds with which it had been familiarised during their absence. "Pop," it said, emulating with ludicrous fidelity the popping of a wine cork. "Pop! take a glass of sherry, take another glass." But now the time was coming when the popping of the wine cork was to cease in Eastnor Castle.

APOSTLE OF TEMPERANCE.

For Lady Henry started a small temperance society in the village, and began to make proselytes for total abstinence. Her first speech was delivered to the villagers in a little schoolroom close to the Castle gates. It was carefully prepared, just fifteen minutes long, and at its close she signed the pledge and invited them to follow her example. For she practised what she preached, and became herself a total abstainer. That was the first decided step on the road which has led her to the presidency of the most active temperance association in Britain.

From speaking to a few villagers, the transition was not difficult to addressing a public meeting. She held Bible readings in the kitchens of the farmers on her estate, and held mothers' meetings in the billiard room of the Castle. People heard that her Bible readings were effective, and invited her here and there. Lady Henry has a voice that in itself might do much toward making

any woman speaker's fame; and she did not disdain to take trouble in training it. When she began, she used to station her maid in the gallery with instructions that she must raise her handkerchief whenever her mistress dropped her voice. By these and other means, together with the aid of great self-possession, native and acquired, Lady Henry became one of the most successful platform speakers of our time. At first no one took much notice of her speaking, and for some time little was known of her outside the immediate neighbourhood of Eastnor. Past events in her history had combined with certain natural tendencies to make her shy almost to pain. Whenever she entered a social circle she was always conscious that certain whispered histories were associated with the name she bore, and this extreme shrinking from publicity made her determination to speak on public platforms doubly difficult. In the earlier days of her public work she often said that to stand before an audience amounted to acute physical suffering.



THE HOLBEIN AT REIGATE PRIORY.

THE EXCOMMUNICATED LAWN-TENNIS PARTY.

Lady Henry, finding that some of her neighbouring villagers were left, owing to circumstances into which it is needless to enter here, without any spiritual ministration, put up for them several iron mission houses on different parts of her estate, and arranged for the supply of both resident and visiting evangelists. The need was admitted. The regular ecclesiastical authorities would or could do nothing. Lady Henry took the bull by the horns and met the difficulty. But old fogeydom of the clerical persuasion stood aghast. The parochial system, the recognised conventionalities, and all the ecclesiastical frippery-froppery—which have come to be to so many clergymen as the Urim and Thummim of the chief priest—were outraged. It was necessary to protest. Lady Henry could not be allowed to go on in this scandalous fashion. But how? She was not amenable to episcopal discipline. Over the mistress of Eastnor Castle not even a diocesan council could sit in judgment. At last, however, the benignant Fates opened up a way for meting out to Lady Henry the punishment due for all her sins. It is the custom in that part of the country for the local gentry by way of promoting brotherly union among the clergy to give in turn clerical lawn-tennis parties, to which all the clerics are bidden and which all the clerics attended. Lady Henry's turn came round; invitations were duly sent out; the lawn was made ready, and an ample store of refreshment laid in for the expected guests. But that afternoon in place of the expected brigade of clerics there only arrived one

solitary shamefaced emissary. He came to explain that the clergy had decided that on account of her action in erecting these conventicles, it would not be right or seemly for them to appear to countenance her conduct by putting in an appearance at her lawn-tennis party. They were therefore not coming. Lady Henry, much amused at this self-denying ordinance, summoned the village cricket club to the feast prepared for the parsons, and there was more merriment that day at Eastnor than if the expected guests had arrived. Next time the lawn-tennis party came round Lady Henry sent out her invitations as if nothing had happened, and the clergy came trooping in as equally unconcerned. The excommunication was for that one occasion only.

Lady Henry persevered. Beginning with temperance, she gradually advanced. Perhaps it was the memory of John Stuart Mill; perhaps it was the natural influence of her own surroundings; but whatever it was, Lady Henry began to discern more and more clearly that the whole moral movement was inextricably wrapped up with the cause of woman and the cause of labour. In her own terse phrase she discovered that she who is the "Life-giver" should also be "the Lawgiver."

MISS WILLARD.

It was about this stage in her development when one day at Eastnor she came across Miss Willard's touching tribute to her sister Mary, entitled "Nineteen Beautiful Years." "It was a rainy Sunday, some seven years ago," Lady Henry told me, "that I went down as usual at the Castle to have tea with my capable and faithful housekeeper. We usually sat together on Sunday afternoon, and discussed the affairs of the village, and the wants of the people, as she conducted large mothers' meetings for me in the village. I saw on her table a little blue book, and taking it up read the title, 'Nineteen Beautiful Years.' It was the well-known memorial volume written by Frances E. Willard after the death of her sister Mary. I sat down by the fire and soon became so engrossed that my old housekeeper could get nothing out of me that day, nor did I move until I had finished the little volume. From that time on I was impressed by that personality that has meant so much to so many women. The simplicity, the quaint candour, and the delicate touches of humour and pathos were a revelation to me of a character that remained on my mind as belonging to one whom I placed in a niche among the ideal lives of whom I hoped to know more, and at whose shrines I worshipped. My first visit to America was as much to see and know Miss Willard as for any other purpose, and to understand from her the principle upon which she had worked the marvellous organisation of which she has long been President." Lady Henry's son, who was now growing up to early manhood, had a craving to shoot the great moose deer that wander on the hills north of the Yellowstone. He made up a shooting party for the Far West, and Lady Henry accompanied them as far as Chicago. There she met Miss Willard, and found all her anticipations more than realised. In the Willard household she found for the first time the realisation of her ideal of Woman's Christian Temperance work. Mrs. Willard took to the English stranger as if she had been a re-incarnation of her lost daughter Mary. "Lady Henry has the unobtrusiveness of perfect culture," said the old saint; "she shall be loved always for her sweet ways." In America Lady Henry found much readier appreciation than in her own country. Not only did she find in Miss Willard a sister beloved, but she found everywhere in America the most enthusiastic welcome.

HER RECEPTION IN AMERICA.

Our American kinsfolk were the first to discover her genius, capacity, and charm, and their recognition did much to pave the way for her success in this country on her return. No one born outside the United States since the days of Lafayette ever received so enthusiastic a welcome from Americans as did Lady Henry Somerset when she visited the West. It was not merely that the greatest halls were crowded wherever she was announced to speak, and that the overflow of those unable to get in blocked the streets and stopped the tramcars; it was much more than that. She was welcomed to the hearts of the best people everywhere, and, most marvellous of all, the newspapers from Maine to California were uniformly civil. Usually the mere craze to do something out of the regular run secures an occasional and exceptional outburst of vulgar rudeness, but Lady Henry was spared even this usual exception to the uniform cordiality of the American press. She made good use of her time. She attended Moody's School for Evangelists, and studied still more closely at the feet of the President of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and served her apprenticeship in journalism as one of the editors of the *Union Signal*. What with public meetings, private receptions, interviews, journalism and studying, Lady Henry may be said to have succeeded in acclimatising herself as an American more completely and more rapidly than any English noble has ever done before.

WORK AT CHICAGO.

Lady Henry remained some time at Chicago and took part in editing the *Union Signal*, the organ of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. It was her first journalistic apprenticeship. She was associated with Miss Willard also in editing a memorial volume to the memory of Julia Ames, under the title "A Young Woman Journalist." Miss Ames, who had been one of the editors of the *Union Signal*—a young woman of singularly beautiful character, and of devoted Christian enthusiasm, had been one of Miss Willard's most capable lieutenants. It was in this way that there was begun that close intimacy between the leaders of temperance work in America and England which is of the happiest augury for the future of the two branches of the English-speaking race.

THE AMERICAN INFLUENCE.

Miss Willard has naturally exercised over Lady Henry the ascendancy which the elder woman who has arrived exercises over the younger who has her position still to make. Miss Willard, although starting from the opposite extreme of politics, had arrived at pretty much the same conclusions as those to which Lady Henry had been driven. They were both broadly evangelical in their conception of Christianity, without any of that repugnance and antipathy to Roman Catholicism which so often accompanies evangelical zeal. Both were enthusiastic total abstainers, putting temperance in this age only second to the Gospel. Both also were profoundly convinced that, while beginning with the Gospel, the work of social regeneration must be as comprehensive and many-sided as are the evils which they sought to combat; and both saw—what, indeed, it does not need a very profound perception to discover—that the approaching advent of woman in the political sphere affords the chief ground for hoping that the future times will be better than these. So far it is probable that these two good ladies did more to confirm each other in the faith than anything

else. What Miss Willard taught Lady Henry was the importance of the Labour movement to the temperance and other social questions, and the immense possibilities that lay before the Associated Moral Reformers if America and Britain undertook the leadership of the progressive forces of the world.

AN INCIDENT IN SKYE.

Not that Lady Henry had been indifferent to the condition of the people question. She looks back with gratitude to the year 1880, when she was able to take a practical part in the redressing of the crofters' grievances in the Isle of Skye. She was there with some friends, with whom she had rented twenty thousand acres of shooting, when she discovered that the crofters, maddened by the oppression of some factors, were almost on the verge of a revolt of despair. There had been some rioting, and there was a prospect of more. Lady Henry, with her strong practical sense, set to work to remedy matters. She helped the minister of the kirk to raise a loan fund to get boats for the fishery, and then she posted off to see the landlord whose factors had caused the trouble. He was at first sceptical, but on making inquiries he found that she had correctly represented matters, and the abuses were for a time removed. This was almost at the beginning of the crofters' agitation, and the incident has long since been forgotten. But it left a deep impression on Lady Henry's mind, and filled her with an abiding conviction that a good deal might be done to ameliorate the hardship of life if only those who had the means would use the opportunity. Miss Willard entirely shares this conviction, and believes that in the Labour movement there is to be discerned the promise and potency of a lever strong enough to right many wrongs and clear away much social injustice; and she succeeded in implanting this conviction in Lady Henry's mind, where it is likely to bear good fruit in time to come.

MISSIONING IN WALES.

Her knowledge of the working classes is not derived from theory, nor is it that superficial acquaintance which is gained by the short visits paid by the great lady to the village folk. She was at once impressed that to understand their needs meant to live their life. Her temperance work had led her through the smoke-grimed valleys of South Wales, and she there realised the neglect and miserable monotony of the lives of thousands who toil that others may be rich. She set to work to establish missions in those great centres of darkness where life and death seem brought together with such vivid reality. Her greatest difficulty at the outset was how best to judge the people's needs. She arranged for tents or halls to be hired, and for ten or twelve days' mission to be carried on in each place, herself finding lodgings with some working man's family, and living as one of themselves. On one occasion she said that she was walking through the grimy streets of a great iron manufacturing town, seeking rooms, when she was directed to the house of a coal weigher whose wife, they told her, would let her lodgings. Lady Henry called at the house and told the woman her errand—a lady who was coming for a mission wanted rooms. After much hesitation the woman said, "If it was for you I would not mind, but ladies give so much trouble." Lady Henry finally persuaded her to relent, and without giving any name, secured the rooms. On her return she said to her landlady, "You see I have come instead of 'the lady,' but I will not give you any trouble." She has had wonderful meetings through those Welsh valleys, often addressing five or six hundred men, who seemed as little children in their gentle eagerness to show their appreciation and love in return for her intense desire for their betterment morally and spiritually. She has often said that no hall in which she has ever spoken impressed her so much as the black darkness of the pits in which she has held meetings among the colliers during their dinner-hour, their seamed and grimy faces often bathed in tears as they spoke together of the life beyond that is often so near, for the veil is thin, and death is present often in the dense darkness where they toil.

THE WIDER OUTLOOK.

The wider outlook over the whole world as the sphere of operations for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union naturally fascinated Lady Henry. She is a woman of an Imperial mood, and she constantly marvels at the indifference with which Englishmen and Englishwomen regard the Empire which they have created. The Americans have a keener appreciation of the opportunities for usefulness created by the world-girdling achievements of the English-speaking race, and it is not surprising that Lady Henry came back from the States with a determination to do what she could to

THE COTTAGE, REIGATE.

help to federate the moral reform movements throughout the English-speaking world. Yet by the irony of things this enterprise of hers, prompted as it was by the purest and loftiest feelings of patriotism, was misrepresented by all her opponents as a monstrous attempt to Americanise Britain! In reality, the whole question at issue was whether or not the British Women's Temperance Association possessed sufficient political acumen and patriotic ambition to aspire to the leadership of the moral movement in our own Empire. At present, both in Australia, Africa, and India, earnest workers are looking rather to Chicago than to London for the inspiration of leadership and practical direction in the aggressive work to which they have been called. Lady Henry wished to change that. It remains to be seen how far she will succeed. But whether she succeeds or fails, the last reproach that ought to be brought against her is that of Americanising our institutions.

THE BRITISH WOMEN AND THEIR PRESIDENT.

Lady Henry was elected President of the British Women's Temperance Association in 1891. She has held the office ever since. But it was not until the last twelve months that she has had, as it were, to fight for her life against the reactionary section of her own supporters.

She fought the good fight, however, with commendable pertinacity and good humour, and ultimately at the late council meeting succeeded in receiving a decisive triumph. There is no need to go into the details of this controversy, now happily ended; but it is due to Lady Henry to set forth briefly the nature of the dispute, which, while it lasted, generated an extraordinary amount of heat. Lady Henry, as president, took her office seriously. The majority of the executive committee—now fortunately the minority—wished her to be a mere figure-head. To this Lady Henry objected. In this no doubt she Americanised, while her critics wished her to accept the position of a Constitutional British sovereign. But it is obvious that Lady Henry, upon whom falls the greatest part of the work—last year she was on the platform nearly every other night—should be vested with a corresponding degree of authority. When Lady Henry and the majority of the executive committee differed, the majority suggested that she should resign. Lady Henry flatly refused. "To his own master he standeth or falleth," she said, "and I refuse to recognise any master save the representative Council of the Association." The result justified her attitude, for when the Council met, it emphatically approved Lady Henry's policy. Below were surface squabbles; the root question at issue between the two parties was whether the British Women's Temperance Association should stick solely to the propaganda of Total Abstinence or whether it should develop, as its American forerunner had done, into an Association charged with the oversight of all branches of moral, social, and political reform, which are radically connected with the cause of temperance. After a prolonged and stormy meeting the representatives of the branches of the Association came to a decisive vote, settling once for all that Lady Henry had correctly interpreted the mind of the British women.

"THE JESUIT IN DISGUISE."

The controversy towards the close was enlivened by the familiar apparition of the Jesuit in disguise. Lady Henry, you see, lives in a priory, and is very Catholic in her sympathies, and at one time her boy had a Roman Catholic as a coach. She had also at various times resided in Italy and other popish countries, and the hall at Eastnor is full of altar-pieces and other paintings by artists who were popish, as well as old masters; what better evidence could be required to prove that Lady Henry was a Jesuit in petticoats, commissioned by the Pope for the purpose of subjugating Britain to Rome by means of the British temperance women? That, of course, is the mere drivel of impotent stupidity. What was really interesting was the immense amount of emotion which was general at the meeting of the Council. It is something new in political assemblies to suspend the business to hold prayer meetings and sing the "Rock of Ages;" and it seems to the unprejudiced male observer an unjustifiable refinement of cruelty to sing the "Doxology" in the ears of your defeated opponents. The women in Council did these things, and after the victory was over an enthusiastic deputation made their way to her house in Gordon Square to serenade Lady Henry with the familiar strains of "The Lion of Judah." Whatever else women may bring into politics, they are not likely to leave out emotion, music, or religion.

THE WHITE AS WELL AS THE BLUE RIBBON.

It would be a mistake, however, to regard Lady Henry solely from the point of view of the temperance reformer. She has been not less brave and true in other departments of moral reform. Before the misfortune that terminated her married life, she had repeatedly testified silently, but not the less effectively, against the lax morals in favour in high places. It sometimes requires more moral grit to refuse to invite a king's mistress to dinner than to face a stormy public meeting, and to leave the room of a prince, rather than tolerate a *double entendre*, is an ordeal from which most people would shrink. Lady Henry although an ardent Liberal and temperance woman, did not hesitate to appear on the platform of the Tory candidate in the Forest of Dean, who was not only a Tory, but a brewer to boot, in order to protest against the scandal of Sir Charles Dilke's candidature. The scene was a memorable one—memorable alike for the brutal savagery of those who broke up the meeting and hunted Lady Henry to the station, stoning her carriage, and cursing her as she went, and for the calm courage and imperturbable self-possession with which she comported herself throughout. Lady Henry, from her earliest childhood, never seems to have known what fear meant. The outrage, however, was none the less a scandalous one, only too thoroughly in keeping with the scandal of the candidature against which Lady Henry went to protest.

AT HOME: LADY BOUNTIFUL.

But Lady Henry's life is not spent in public demonstrations, protests, and platform disputations. These things, after all, constitute but a fraction of her existence. She is much engaged in the administration of her estates, and a never-failing effort to be faithful to her stewardship. She has made her seats at Eastnor and at Reigate into guest houses for the recruiting of the weary and heavy laden of every rank, but chiefly of the poorest. Hundreds of convalescents from the most squalid regions of London have found themselves, through her bounty, treated as the guests of a peeress in castle or in priory. At Reigate Lady Henry has long maintained a home of the otherwise unmanageable orphan girls, taking over often the ne'er-do-wells of the workhouse, and turning them out well-trained laundry maids and domestic servants. Of her private benefactions it is impossible to speak. They are unobtrusive and silent, but constantly exercised within the range of her influence. Many there are who will rise up and call her blessed of whom the world has never heard, and never will hear.

DUCHESSE DE MONTMORENCI.

Lady Henry is not merely a Lady Bountiful; she is a woman eminently fitted to shine in society, charming in manner, widely read, keenly observant, with a great fund of humour. Her personal appearance, which has often caused her to be mistaken for Madame Patti, suggests the existence of much dramatic talent the exercise of which is precluded by her position.

A couple of years ago Lady Henry and her cousin, the present Lady Dudley, in a spirit of fun, decided that they would try and see whether they could personate a couple of French *grandes dames* in such fashion as to deceive even the domestics of the Castle. The experiment was a complete success. Lady Henry and her young friend dressed themselves up as French ladies of distinction, and having left the Castle unknown to any one, returned as visitors, Lady Henry signing her name in the visitors' book as the "Duchesse de Montmorenci," and her companion some equally fictitious name. They were received by the housekeeper, a trusted retainer of many years' standing, who showed them round in the ordinary way. Lady Henry wore a veil, carried a lorgnette, and talked French all the time. The housekeeper did not relish their way of making comments on what she showed them; but when they shrugged their shoulders and laughed when shown her ladyship's portrait, the good housekeeper could

stand it no longer, and simply marched them quick step, without note or comment, through the remaining rooms. Later in the day the good soul came to Lady Henry's boudoir to complain of the airs of these French visitors. "That Duchesse de Montmorenci," she exclaimed, "is a wretched cat," and then she expatiated with much emotion upon the satirical and unfeeling way in which she had scoffed at the curios and pictures, especially mentioning her irreverence before Lady Henry's portrait. When at last Lady Henry, hardly able to control her laughter, told the truth, the poor housekeeper was so nonplussed she collapsed into tears. Not even the half-sovereign left at the lodge for the housekeeper by the "Duchesse de Montmorenci" would console that faithful follower. She would not touch the money, she said, but ultimately agreed to treat some of the servants with it by paying their expenses to a neighbouring fair. It was only a trifling incident, but one indicating a reserve of fun and girlish abandonment that it is welcome to find behind the somewhat ascetic pose of a temperance reformer. No one is less of an ascetic than Lady Henry in appearance or in fact. Few have more of the joys of life, and her laughter is as light and clear as the trill of a lark; but her face when in repose is apt to settle down into lines of exceeding sadness—for the secret source of which we have not far to seek.

RECREATION.

Lady Henry is a capital horsewoman, being, as it were, born in the saddle, and never so much at home as when driving a couple of more or less unmanageable steeds. There is plenty of game on her estates, which her son shoots, for the Beaufort hunting strain is strong in his blood, and he will go to the uttermost ends of the earth after great game. The Eastnor estate is well stocked with deer, great herds of which may be seen browsing along the slope of the Malvern. Lady Henry religiously abjures the use of all intoxicants for herself, but she is obliged so far to bow the knee in the house of Rimmon as to supply the accursed things to her son's guests, some of whom are not yet educated up to the high standard of the Blue Ribbon. Smoking also is permitted in the Castle, for the American habit of regarding the cigarette as almost as pernicious as the cocktail has not made much progress on this side the Atlantic. When making a long speech—and at the last convention she spoke two hours and a half on end—she says she finds a cup of tea beaten up with an egg the best refresher.

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN ALLIANCE.

Of the caste feeling which is so strong among many of her order Lady Henry has not a trace. She is more French than English in many respects; and this accounts for many things, including, among others, a gayness of manner and a lucidity of perception which is not the usual characteristic of the British matron. Lady Henry and Miss Willard are like sisters, and the two undoubtedly form a very strong combination, as remarkable for its contrasts as for its resemblances. To help Miss Willard, who was far from well, at the Denver Convention she crossed the Atlantic last autumn, postponing many meetings which had been arranged for until her return. Some of those whose engagements had been postponed were irate, and visited their wrath upon Miss Willard, of whom they were jealous, by displaying their state of mind in mean little ways which only redounded to their own discredit. All that is over and done, and henceforth the banded forces of the moral reform movement here and in the States will march under leaders as perfectly united in heart and in mind as it is possible for leaders to be.

THE WORLD'S W.C.T.U.

Lady Henry is Vice-President of the World's W.C.T.U., with which the British Women's Temperance Association is now organically federated. From this society may come the seed of the first world-wide federation of the whole English-speaking race, which will hold its conventions alternately in each of the great divisions of Englishdom. Miss Helen Hood, a devoted and experienced American organiser, is on the spot for the development of the World's W.C.T.U. The worst thing about these excellent associations is their titles, which display an alarming tendency to annex all the letters of the alphabet. Lady Henry has this year undertaken to edit half of the *Woman's Herald*, as one of the organs of the World's W.C.T.U., which is useful to her as a medium of communication pending the full development of what may be described as an English *Union Signal* on this side the Atlantic. Lady Henry writes well in prose and verse, and has made the most of the admirable opportunities of culture which came to her by her birth. Therein she differs little from other members of her order. Where the difference comes in is that they use their talents to please themselves, whereas Lady Henry uses hers for the benefit of others.

As I have stated, Lady Henry comes of an artistic line, her father being one of the finest amateur artists in England, and her father's cousin, the Marchioness of Waterford, was among the finest amateur artists that England has ever produced. Her aunt, Mrs. Cameron, of the Isle of Wight, has had no peer as an artistic photographer, and her photographs of Tennyson, Carlyle, Sir Henry Taylor, and other distinguished men, are the standards of their kind. Lady Henry had a strong bent for a similar career to that of her distinguished relatives, and evinced remarkable gifts in that direction. She desired to study painting in oils, but her family considered such a career out of keeping with their plans of life for her, and she remains a water-colourist to this day.

A BUNDLE OF CHARPI.

Lady Henry is too easy by natural disposition to be a good disciplinarian. Being a declared philanthropist, every one seems to consider they have a chartered right to demand whatever they need of time, money, or help, on penalty of denouncing her as a whited sepulchre. Do what you can for some people, there are other people who are still waiting to be helped, and discontented that their turn has not come. As a landlord, Lady Henry, in the opinion of many, exists to be put upon, and they consider it monstrous if she should press them to discharge their freely-contracted obligations. Although her subscriptions to temperance and other causes have made her lawyer look aghast, until she rallied him into acquiescence by telling him that this was her mode of racing — an illustration the sporting turfite in time appreciated — she is constantly being levied on in a fashion that is enough to deter any person of title and of fortune from throwing in their lot with the cause of reform. To be at the beck and call of every Tom, Dick, or Harry; to have to subscribe to every trumpery institution that can tack itself on to the sacred cause; to be fawned on by snobs and abused by ingrates—all this is in the day's work. But what Lady Henry should not allow is the frittering away of her strength by endless calls for all manner of trivial duties. She is now, as when she was Lady Isabel, afflicted in having too many *parents*. But she is now a woman, and in a position to hold her own. As commander-in-

chief she must not allow herself to do sentry-go on every platform throughout the country. I remember Madame Novikoff lamenting once that her life was but a bundle of charpi, from which every acquaintance and friend felt free to pull off a piece, until at the end of the day there was none left. Lady Henry is very much like that bundle of charpi at present, and it is neither good for her nor for the passers-by.

MOTHER AND SON.

On one thing Lady Henry may, however, congratulate herself, and that is her son. It is a common fallacy among the fashionable that public work, occupying say one hour, incapacitates a woman for the duties of motherhood much more than private dissipation that consumes six hours. Lady Henry has never neglected her duties as mother in the discharge of her more public functions. Her son, a fine, tall, manly young fellow, who combines the hunting genius of the Beauforts with the higher enthusiasm of his mother and her father, is as devoted to her as she is to him. He is a bright, clever, kindly, high-principled young Englishman. Without any passionate predilection for Latin and Greek, young Somers has a shrewd wit, and a style which, if he finds time to cultivate it so that he may write as well as he talks, will give him a place in English letters. At present, in his twentieth year, he, in company with a good specimen of a young Englishman, is roughing it in the unexplored regions of the old Hudson Bay territory, in search of grizzlies—a pursuit which can hardly be regarded as indicating any degeneration of the Badminton strain of Nimrod under the influence of Lady Henry. That boy may have a great career if things are not made too easy for him, and from that point of view the grizzlies and the wilderness may be more useful to him just now than Balliol College.

HENRY C. S. A. SOMERSET.

THE FUTURE —?

It is impossible to conclude this sketch without casting a glance ahead and wondering what kind of a position Lady Henry Somerset will have at the dawn of the twentieth century? One thing is certain, and that is, that whatever her position will be it will be at least as great in the English-speaking world beyond the sea as in England itself. Lady Henry and Miss Willard have come to be, more than any other living persons, the type and symbol of Anglo-American alliance which ought to be the next new birth of time. They contemplate making the round of the world in a year or two, and presenting their "Polyglot Petition of White Ribboners" against the alcohol and opium trades and licensed impurity (signed in fifty languages by millions of people), and they will not visit any town or city in the Queen's dominions where they will not find enthusiastic welcome and trained workers who for the first time will find that they are thought worthy of attention and consideration by British reformers. Hitherto the only world's women missionaries have come from America. We British are so insular. We create an empire, as Seeley says, in absence of mind, and we cannot be induced to think of it afterwards. But so far as Lady Henry can, all this is to be changed.

Hitherto there has only been one among the younger women whose chances of leadership were equal or superior to those of Lady Henry Somerset. Lady Aberdeen, being happily married, and ensconced in the very heart of the Liberal party, apart from all natural gifts and graces, might have aspired to the premier place among our women. But Lady Aberdeen for the next five years is to live in Canada, where her husband is Governor-General. Lady Aberdeen need not regret the fact. It is a great position, full of magnificent opportunities, in which she will also be a great and potent factor in the promotion of the Anglo-American *entente*, on which the future peace and progress of the world so largely depend. But not even the most brilliant and accomplished of ladies can be in two places at one time, and if Lady Aberdeen is in Canada, the place she might have occupied in London necessarily becomes vacant.

LORD SHAFTESBURY'S SUCCESSOR?

Of our leading women Mrs. Butler is well up in years and frail in health. Mrs. Booth is dead. Mrs. Bramwell Booth is so immersed in rescue work as hardly to have time to take much part in the political field. Mrs. Fawcett is given over, body, soul and spirit, to combating Home Rule. Mrs. Besant, who might have played a great *rôle* in politics, for which she possesses almost every aptitude and every gift, both of character and of talent, is dedicated to the service of Theosophy. The Duchess Adeline of Bedford, Lady Henry's sister, while a most gifted woman, an accomplished Greek scholar, and a remarkable writer, is a trifle too superior ever to do much in the leadership of a cause, although she has undoubtedly helped to mould the minds of women of her class to a truer view of their responsibilities. Where then shall we look for any one who has right of way before Lady Henry to the leading place? I know of none. Of possible rivals some have the talent, but have not the inspiring ambition to serve their fellows; others have ambition enough without the capacity. Long ago, when Lord Shaftesbury died, every one went about anxiously asking where we were to find his successor. They said, "Lo here and lo there!" but no man was discovered who was worthy to wear his mantle. But now, after all these years, it seems as if his mantle had fallen upon the shoulders of a woman.