1887

Friday 7 January (London)

A long conversation with Stead. He told me some curious things, amongst others that the remarkable report of the Cabinet meeting in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of . . .[1104] upon R. Churchill's resignation was a transcript verbatim from an autograph letter of Salisbury's to him. S. gave him this information with his own hand, but on condition that it should not be known that it had in any way come from him. Stead did not know at first how under such conditions he would make any use of it, but at last it occurred to him that he could publish it as his own report of the Cabinet meeting leaving everyone to guess how far it was true and if so how he had got it. Randolph of course was furious at this publication as it contained Salisbury's version of the quarrel, whilst he, Randolph, was bound not to give his statement till Parliament met. At the same time he did not know how such a report had got into the paper, not knowing of this secret communication. It was a very pretty piece of jockeying.

Tuesday 11 January (London)

Holland appointed to the Colonial Office and Northcote (Lord Iddesleigh) resigned and with him his son.[1105] N. has certainly been shabbily and even cruelly treated considering his age and long service. But it is much of a piece with Salisbury's conduct to others. I cannot forget his conduct to Derby in /78 when he ousted him from the Foreign Office and then attacked him with an extraordinary bitterness. This last act as regards Iddesleigh has provoked much comment in the Press and is from all I hear a good deal resented in the Party. I hear that when Cross saw himself gazetted out of Office in the morning papers he wrote direct to the Queen to ask if it was her pleasure and hence he remains!

[1104] *Pall Mall Gazette*, 28 December 1886.

[1105] Henry Stafford Northcote (1846–1911), Baronet Northcote (1887), Baron Northcote (1900). Con. MP for Exeter (1880–1899). Financial Secretary to the War Office (1885–1886), Surveyor-General of Ordnance (1886), Governor of Bombay (1899–1903), Governor-General of Australia (1903–1908).

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We have determined D.V. to start on Thursday.

Thursday 20 January (Porto Fino)

My letter on poor Northcote in yesterday's *Times*.[1106]

Thursday 14 July (London)

The Second Reading of the Coercion Bill. Ashbourne opened it – why Cadogan did not have charge I do not know – Granville followed in a dextrous and temperate speech, and I followed him. My speech was listened to with very great attention and general satisfaction by my own party, less so I think by the Unionist Liberals, but without any signs of strong dissent from the front Opposition Bench. I am glad to have had this opportunity of speaking on this part of the question and on the whole I think I put my own case fairly. The Duke of Argyll's speech was not very relevant, but was discursive and in parts good; but *very* bitter. His attack on Granville for not defending Lansdowne was as bitter as anything I have heard. The intestinal quarrels of the two sections of the Liberal Party are growing in intensity. It is a curious spectacle.[1107]

Friday 15 July (London)

We had a heavy thunderstorm today. How will it be for the next forty days?

A discussion again in the House on the Coercion Bill on going into Committee. Granville spoke again with a good deal of his usual tact and dexterity but rather feebly. Northbrook made a violent attack on him. At first I thought it was impromptu but it was supported by a bundle of MSS, and it was not in very good taste though rhetorically it was better than Northbrook's speeches generally are. He was followed by Rosebery who made, to my mind, a very clever reply, especially if as it seemed the greater part was made on the spur of the moment. In it he referred at some length to my speech not only of last night but

[1106] *The Times*, 19 January 1887, p. 8. Northcote died suddenly on 12 January, in the ante-room of 10 Downing Street. The event greatly shocked Salisbury (Cecil, III, pp. 343–345).

[1107] Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill: *Hansard*, CCCXVII, 14 July 1887, Ashbourne, cols 710–724, Granville, cols 724–731, Carnarvon, cols 731–737, Argyll, cols 737–747.

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of the 17 July 1885 when I assumed Office in Ireland. I was obliged in one part to correct him. It was altogether an animated discussion, but the spectacle of the front Opposition Bench, a very small minority with hardly any real supporters, and having on their flanks a larger section of their own party, bitterly enraged and ready to tear them to pieces, is a very curious one.[1108]

[1108]Ibid., Granville, cols 899–907, Northbrook, cols 901–908, Rosebery, cols 908–918 (the report for Northbrook's speech overlaps that for Granville because many of the speakers interrupted one another as the debate became heated).

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