1858

Wednesday 24 February

I received a letter from Lord Derby[6] requesting me to call upon him between 5 and 6 in the evening. At that hour I found him in the library surrounded with heaps of papers and with Colville[7] sitting at the same table engaged in writing or copying for him. He came at once to the point and offered me the Under Secretaryship of the Colonial Office. I replied at once that I hoped he would allow me to speak quite frankly to him, that I felt the kindness which had made him propose the post, that I owed him gratitude for the encouragement and assistance which before now he had given me in the House of Lords and which had led me on in the first instance, that whatever he wished as regards office that I would do, that I placed myself entirely in his hands, but that I thought it was due to my strong feelings on one point to ask him the intentions of the Government as to Lord Palmerston's[8] Conspiracy bill.[9] Did they propose to take it up and carry it or to throw it over at once.

He replied that he could satisfy me on this head, that it was intended to write to the French Government to require an explanation of Walewski's Despatch and that having obtained an *amende* from the

[6]Edward George Stanley (1799–1869), 14th Earl of Derby (1851), Chief Secretary for Ireland (1830–1833), Colonial Secretary (1833–1834, 1841–1845), Prime Minister (1852, 1858–1859, 1866–1868). Derby had assumed office on 21 February.

[7]Charles John Colville (1818–1903), Lord Colville of Culross (1849), 1st Baron Colville (1885), 1st Viscount Colville of Culross (1902), Master of the Buckhounds (1866–1868), Whip, House of Lords.

[8]Henry John Temple (1784–1865), 3rd Viscount Palmerston (1802), Tory MP for Newport (1807–1811), for Cambridge University (1811–1831), for Bletchingly (1831–1832), and for Hampshire South (1832–1834), Con. MP for Tiverton (1835–1865), Secretary of State for War (1809–1828), Foreign Secretary (1830–1834, 1835–1841, 1846–1851), Home Secretary (1852–1855), Prime Minister (1855–1858, 1859–1865).

[9]The Conspiracy to Murder Bill had been introduced by Palmerston following the near assassination of the French emperor Napoleon III in Paris on 14 January 1858. The plot had been devised in England. Palmerston was criticized in the Commons for not replying to a despatch by Count Walewski, the French foreign minister, urging the Government not to allow abuse of the right of asylum. The Government were defeated by 234 to 218 votes and Palmerston resigned three days later, on 19 February (*Hansard*, CXLVII, col. 1847).

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French Government he would then be able to proceed with the measure. I urged as quietly and deferentially as I could my strong objections to the bill, the decided repugnance to it on the part of the country, of the Conservatives themselves, and of the radical press at this moment inclined to support him. He answered, "I will not have a war with France", in a tone which made me decide to close the conversation and I rose to go expressing my regret that after sitting on his side and agreeing on almost every subject for the last three years I should now for the first time be unable to concur. He then seemed to soften and begged me not to decide at once but to think it over during the next day, to consult Lord Salisbury[10] "or better consult yourself," and if possible to join him, that he should be very sorry if on such an account he had not my support.

I left him and went at first to Sir William Heathcote[11] who is well aware of my views on the subject of this bill and who has entirely agreed with me from the first, and then to Lord Salisbury. He argued out the case with me, admitting that my view was a very strong one but always fell back on the fear of a quarrel with France, therein reflecting the feeling which influenced the Cabinet and probably emanates from Lord Derby. I dined at the Colchesters'[12] that evening and found the solution of the difficulty, for Walpole[13] and Eglinton[14] were both there. Both had heard of my objections and discussed the question with me and whether I should have felt that their wishes that I should join were sufficient to make me give up this scruple I hardly know. I think however that they would have fairly assumed that, after I had stated my difficulty, I should abandon the point, but Walpole overcame my doubts by at last assuring me that though the course which the Cabinet would pursue was not quite definite as yet, they did not intend to take up the bill but probably to appoint Committees of both Houses to consider if any and what alteration of the law should be made. This relieved my mind and when I found on the following morning that Sir W. Heathcote agreed in thinking that I ought to join Lord Derby I wrote at once an acceptance of his office.[15]

[10]James Brownlow William Gascoyne-Cecil (1791–1868), 2nd Marquess of Salisbury (1823), Lord Privy Seal (1852), Lord President of the Council (1858–1859).

[11]Sir William Heathcote (1801–1881), Con. MP for Hampshire (1826–1832), for Hampshire North (1837–1849), and for Oxford University (1854–1868). He was Carnarvon's guardian.

[12]Charles Abbot (1798–1867), 2nd Baron Colchester (1829), Paymaster-General (1852–1853), Postmaster-General (1858–1859).

[13]Spencer Horatio Walpole (1806–1890), Con. MP for Cambridge University (1856–1882), Home Secretary (1852, 1858–1859, 1866–1867).

[14]Archibald William Montgomorie (1812–1861), 13th Earl of Eglinton (1819), Earl of Winton (1859), Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1852–1853, 1858–1859).

[15]Carnarvon to 14th Earl of Derby, 25 February 1858: Derby Papers, 920 DER (14) 163/5A.

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Saturday 27 February

Commencement of official life. I found Stanley at the Colonial Office at 12 o'clock and we discussed all the necessary arrangements.

Monday 1 March[16]

During the whole of this week I have been engaged at the Colonial Office. At first pressure of work to keep pace with Stanley and to read the greater portion of what was supplied has been considerable. Under ordinary circumstances when work is slack I fancy that from 11 to 4.30 o'clock will not be at all too long.

I began official work with Stanley as my principal. I wrote to ask him his wishes on certain points and I received in reply a very cordial assurance in which he said that he was very glad to have me in his Office: and during the whole time that I served under him I found him very friendly. On one or two occasions I doubted his inclination to give me full opportunities for doing justice to myself, but I am now disposed to believe that what I mistook for an inclination to hold me back was in truth but an extreme caution on his part, joined to the love as far as possible of doing all the work himself. He was really indefatigable in his application to business and generally fair and patient in hearing all that was to be said on a subject, in intention just, not very rapid in conception or even in seeing the whole bearing of a case at a glance but singularly clear in his distinctions and statements when once he had considered the matter.

At times towards the close of his stay in the Colonial Office he talked freely to me on many subjects, gave me some of the credit for my own work and referred long and intricate cases to me to enquire into for him. He was certainly in point of capacity at the head of the Office, and I was surprised to find when he left so general a feeling of regret at his loss.

The work itself I find it harder to describe. At first, I thought it severe and heavy in character but the necessity which Stanley's rule imposed, of clearing each day's work off by the evening, was very useful to me. It compelled me to do something: and brought me regular habits which have been salutary both to myself and to the Office.

I was struck by the manifold character of the business – the great difference in the subject matter of the several colonies, the large questions of Government and principle which were constantly involved, and by the smaller proportion of insignificant detail than I had originally

[16]Carnarvon began this entry in March 1858 and continued it, without a new date, until later in the year.

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expected. My position was an easy one, for before long I saw that Stanley was master of his work, and that if I chose to evade giving an opinion it was in my power to do so. Whilst therefore his superior workmanship raised my own standard – at least in estimation – the security which I felt in his not overlooking any point of importance may often have come in as the advocate of indolence and indecision.

Since then my position has materially altered and I feel it necessary now to understand and advise on every question which arises. I feel that my opinion is looked for and that it is important in its effect upon the ultimate decision. This too may have its advantages and disadvantages. Acting for myself and advising with the knowledge that in nine cases out of ten my advice will be taken, I am in danger of taking myself as my own standard instead of having a higher one continually before my own eyes: but on the other hand, I am under a greater sense of responsibility and under the necessity of forming an opinion on the several questions as they arise.

When Cardwell's Resolution in the House of Commons[17] fell to the ground it became necessary to fill the vacancy which Lord Ellenborough's resignation had created.[18] The negotiations were long and protracted. Gladstone[19] was again asked to join us and I believe that in his heart he desired it. Mrs. Gladstone[20] talked the matter over with me and made no secret of her wish that a junction should be effected. S. Herbert,[21] with whom I dined on the second night's debate in the House of Commons, though not so hostile to us as

[17]Edward Cardwell (1813–1886), 1st Viscount Cardwell (1874), Lib.-Con. MP for Clitheroe (1842–1847) and for Oxford City (1853–1874), President of Board of Trade (1852–1855), Chief Secretary for Ireland (1859–1861). The motion in the Commons, urging the House to abstain from expressing an opinion on the situation, was on 14 May (*Hansard*, CL, col. 686).

[18]Edward Law (1790–1871), 2nd Baron Ellenborough (1819), 1st Earl of Ellenborough (1844). Governor-General of India (1841–1844), four times President of the Board of Control (1828–1830, 1834–1835, 1841, 1858); resigned the latter post on 5 May 1858 for publicizing a despatch to Lord Canning, Governor-General of India, criticizing the latter's proclamation, without first consulting colleagues. See A.L. Imlah, *Lord Ellenborough* (Cambridge, 1939), pp. 251–261.

[19]William Ewart Gladstone (1807–1898), Con. MP for Newark (1832–1846), Peelite MP for Oxford University (1847–1865), Lib. MP for Lancashire South (1865–1868), for Greenwich (1868–1880), and for Midlothian (1880–1895). President of the Board of Trade (1841–1845), Colonial Secretary (1845–1846), Chancellor of the Exchequer (1852–1855, 1859–1866, 1873–1874, 1880–1882), Leader of the House of Commons (1865–1866), Prime Minister (1868–1874, 1880–1885, 1886, 1892–1894), Lord Privy Seal (1892–1894).

[20]Catherine Gladstone (1812–1900), daughter of Sir Richard Glynne of Hawarden Castle, Flintshire. For her interest in Indian affairs, see M. Drew, *Catherine Gladstone* (London, 1919), p. 145.

[21]Sidney Herbert (1810–1861), 1st Baron Herbert of Lea (1861). Con. MP for Wiltshire South (1832–1861), Secretary of State for War (1843–1846, 1852–1855), Colonial Secretary (February 1855, but resigned after a fortnight).

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Mrs. Herbert wished to make him, was decidedly opposed. And so, after many attempts, and a reference to Sir James Graham,[22] the Gladstone negotiations broke off and Stanley was named Minister to the India Board. He was anxious, and felt the greatness of the task he undertook – and certainly, since he has been in Office, his conduct has shown remarkable ability and vigour. He wished me to accompany him to the India Board but Baillie[23] would not resign.

Stanley's removal from the Colonial Office[24] left a Cabinet seat at the disposal of the Government. Sir Edward Lytton was the choice. He had originally been offered office, and indeed he had long before been promised it, when Lord Derby undertook to form his Government. He had accepted it with great satisfaction: but within twenty four hours, the news came to London that his re-election would be opposed by Cowper,[25] or some Whig candidate if the Hertfordshire magnates would give him the necessary sum. This was at once communicated to Lord Derby, who, unfortunately as I think, instead of sending for Lytton or communicating with him personally, sent a message to him, saying that he could not expose the new government to the danger of a contest. Lytton of course withdrew, but he was very much annoyed, and when I dined with him a fortnight afterwards, he prophesied a speedy dissolution of the administration and denounced Disraeli's financial intentions. Now on this second and unexpected opening he curiously enough regained the office originally destined for him.

The change has been a very considerable one as affecting me: but I do not feel that I in any way regret it. I have found Sir Edward so thoroughly friendly, kind, disposed to treat me without jealousy or reserve and to place great confidence in me that working under him has been on the whole very pleasant. His speeches on colonial matters have been remarkably good but his powers of administration are by no means equal. He has no great capacity for business, or method in the small details and arrangement of the daily work, his ideas succeed each other when he takes up keenly any subject too rapidly and his plans undergo too many changes. But his views, when once he has a question fairly before him, are broad and in his sympathies he is far more human than Stanley, who sometimes seemed to have none, except his particular idol, "public opinion." Hayward[26] one day told

[22]Sir James Graham (1792–1861), Leading Peelite MP for various constituencies, Home Secretary (1841–1846), First Lord of the Admiralty (1852–1855).

[23]Henry James Baillie (1804–1885), Under-Secretary of State for India, previously Joint Secretary of the Board of Control until March 1858.

[24]On 4 June.

[25]William Francis Cowper (later Cowper-Temple) (1811–1888), Lib. MP for Hertford (1835–1863), Vice-President, Committee of Council on Education (1857–1858).

[26]Abraham Hayward (1801–1884), essayist and journalist.

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me that, as a young man, Bulwer was very irritable and impatient – if so he has checked and greatly modified the tendency; for though now, occasionally he is quick in speech, it is not to any great extent.

I pointed out to Stanley in a minute of which he approved that the only logical and satisfactory mode of dealing with the abuses [of Chinese Coolie traffic] existing under the present system would be, to permit as now, but under somewhat more stringent regulations, the export of Chinese labourers to English Colonies, but to prohibit it absolutely – so far as English ships are concerned – to any foreign port.[27] Stanley concurred in this view and was prepared to bring in a Bill. When Lytton succeeded to the C.O. I brought the matter before him, and having obtained his assent and the permission, as time was pressing, to introduce it in the House of Lords, I took advantage of a motion of the Bishop of Oxford's[28] to make a statement as to the horrible abuses which do exist in the trade as carried out in English ships to Cuba. Lord Derby was fortunately absent from the House, being laid up with gout, and therefore I had my own way: but not, as may be supposed, much to the satisfaction of my friends on the Treasury Bench – and perhaps it was rather cool in me to take this sort of line *sponte mea*. However, it paved the way to the Bill – which a few days after, I introduced and passed almost without discussion through the House.[29] But on its arrival in the House of Commons a different fate was in store for it. It was at once attacked by the representatives of British shipping – who would, as Lytton once said to me, be ready to sell their grandmothers for a consideration – and after seeing deputations, and writing, and talking, and explaining, *usque ad nauseam*, we were obliged to withdraw the Bill in order to prevent it being rejected, on the ground of the lateness of the Session.

I succeeded in passing three larger measures, all of very considerable importance: 1. The Medical practitioners bill 2. The Local Government bill and the 3rd the bill for the establishment of civil government in the new Colony of British Columbia.[30] But my

[27]Although slavery had been officially banned in the British Empire since 1834, a system of indentured labour, employing 'coolies', akin to slavery, had been allowed.

[28]Samuel Wilberforce (1805–1873), Bishop of Oxford (1845–1869), Bishop of Winchester (1869–1873).

[29]Wilberforce had moved an Address for the production of correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Government of Hong Kong and between the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office on the subject of emigration from Hong Kong and China to the British West Indies and other possessions since 1 January 1856: see *Hansard*, CLI, 2 June 1858, cols 70–73, and cols 73–80 for Carnarvon's reply.

[30]An Act to Regulate the Qualifications of Practitioners of Medicine and Surgery; the Local Government Act; and an Act to Provide for the Government of British Columbia: all received the Royal Assent on 2 August 1858 (*Hansard*, CLI, col. 2369).

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greatest triumph in the way of legislation was the *Jew Bill*[31] which passed under the name of Lord Lucan[32] but was my suggestion and framing in the first instance. When I now after the lapse of several months look back to this I do not regret having solved, as I may fairly say that I did solve, this question which was becoming an awkward and irritating one. Certainly I did good service to the Government by removing from their path a question which threatened to embarrass them during the recess and the next Session.[33]

The advantages of the measure were chiefly these. The bill, though logically perhaps inconsistent, yet admitted the Jews to Parliament whilst at the same time it saved the honour of the House of Lords. It was a compromise which after all under a constitutional Government is the only course when great powers in the State disagree. The Jews gained what they required though little more than what they practically had already obtained. Lord John Russell[34] and Bethell[35] and the troublesome party in the House of Commons were satisfied and at the same time the House of Lords gained two points – the admission of the Jew only to the House of Commons, and his admission not under a law but by a resolution necessarily renewable, if acted upon, every fresh Session of Parliament, and therefore liable to be rescinded if public opinion should change.

The solution, a simple one enough, had occurred to me whilst the bill was being agitated and one day after a conversation with Stanley who alarmed me as to the possible cause of disruption to the Cabinet which the question, if unsettled, contained, I determined to try my scheme. He was sceptical but I immediately propounded it to one or two Peers in the House and the next day I had a visit from Lord Lucan who asked me whether I objected to his undertaking the measure and whether I advised it etc. Of course I highly approved and we launched the measure to the infinite astonishment of Lord Derby, the Treasury Bench, the newspapers and the whole House. The only

[31] An Act to Provide for the Relief of Her Majesty's Subjects Practising the Jewish Religion; first reading, 7 June 1858, Royal Assent, 23 July (*Hansard*, CLI, col. 1967).

[32] George Charles Bingham (1800–1888), 3rd Earl of Lucan (1839), lieutenant-general (1858). Gave orders for the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in 1854.

[33] Derby allowed a free vote on the bill. Carnarvon warned the Prime Minister that he intended to support it (Carnarvon to Derby, 29 May 1858: Derby Papers, 920 DER (14) 163/5A).

[34] Lord John Russell (1792–1878), 1st Earl Russell (1856), Liberal statesman. Colonial Secretary (1839–1841), Prime Minister (1846–1852), Foreign Secretary (1852–1853), Cabinet without portfolio (1853–1854), Lord President (1854–1855), Colonial Secretary (1855), Foreign Secretary (1859–1865), Prime Minister (1865–1866).

[35] Richard Bethell (1800–1873), 1st Baron Westbury (1861). Lib. MP for Aylesbury (1851–1859) and for Wolverhampton (1859–1861), Attorney-General (1856–1861), Lord Chancellor (1861).

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person discontented was old Lord Lyndhurst[36] and he could not get over his disgust at his favourite measure being at last taken out of his mouth and passed in a month and a half – and passed by Lord Lucan! I kept my counsel and though a few persons knew the hand which I had in it the majority were content to believe it to be Lord Lucan's and as he had the trouble of it I was in fairness bound to maintain silence on the subject.

The end of the Session at last arrived when all London was ill with the effect of heat and horrible smells and exhalations from the Thames. The fish dinner and Lord Redesdale's dinner[37] at Greenwich wound up our labours and London became a wilderness. I went for five days to the West of England and commenced a riding holiday with Mr Kent[38] through Cornwall but becoming alarmed at the reports in the newspapers of the state of affairs in British Columbia I went no further than Bude and returned to Downing Street and my work where I have been occupied ever since without interruption beyond Saturdays and Sundays in the country, mainly at home.

[36]John Singleton Copley (1772–1863), 1st Baron Lyndhurst (1826). Tory MP for Ashburton (1818–1820) and for Cambridge (1826–1827), Lord Chancellor (1827–1830, 1834–1835, 1841–1846).

[37]John Thomas Freeman-Mitford (1805–1886), 2nd Baron Redesdale (1830), 1st Earl of Redesdale (1877). Chairman of Committees and Deputy Speaker, House of Lords (1851–1886).

[38]John Kent (1807–?), private tutor to Carnarvon when at Eton.

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