1868

Monday 13 April (The Coppice)

I went to Phillimore's for the night. At Reading Station I was overwhelmed by the news of Lord Salisbury's most sudden death.[272] The result will be great and I am afraid very unfortunate. Cranborne's removal to the House of Lords though it will strengthen my hands wonderfully and be personally very pleasant to me leaves the Conservative Party without anyone to rally round. Disraeli almost becomes a necessity to them and I am afraid that it will drive them to him and strengthen him.[273] Politically matters look very gloomy to me.

Thursday 23 April (London)

We had a debate in the House of Lords on Church Rates. Lord Derby made as unwise and inconsequential speech for an extremely clever man as I ever heard. I followed him.[274]

Lord Derby took his seat just below the gangway immediately under me. He seemed disinclined to shake hands, so I thought it better to offer to do so. He answered I thought rather coldly and in an embarrassed manner, so having done my duty I left him afterwards alone.

Saturday 2 May (London)

Breakfasted at Grillions, dined at the Academy.[275] I was agreeably placed between Landseer[276] and Lord Clarendon. Lord C. spoke most gloomily of everything from political prospects down to public morals. We got upon the subject of the House of Lords and he said that he had recently spoken with Bright[277] on it. Bright said that he was most

[272]James Brownlow William Cecil, 2nd Marquess of Salisbury, died on 12 April at Hatfield.

[273]Disraeli had become Prime Minister on the resignation of Derby on 27 February.

[274]Compulsory Church Rates Abolition Bill, second reading. *Hansard*, CXCI, 23 April 1868, Derby, cols 1124 –1127, Carnarvon, cols 1127–1129.

[275]Anniversary dinner held at the Royal Academy: see *The Times*, 4 May 1868, p. 10.

[276]Sir Edwin Henry Landseer (1802–1873), noted painter of animals.

[277]John Bright (1811–1889), Lib. MP for Birmingham (1857–1885), President of the Board of Trade (1868–1870), Chancellor, Duchy of Lancaster (1873–1874).

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anxious to see the House maintain its position and influence, that he considered it essential that it should do so but that he every week received communications of the most radical kind for its reform. Life Peerages were the most moderate of their proposals.

Lord Clarendon spoke of Lord Derby. I said that though I had felt that his personal manner to me was unduly bitter and unfriendly that I should never forget his age and our past relations. Lord Clarendon said that as for that he considered that his speech last year in the House on Reform had "squared accounts", and he went on to say that Lord Derby never forgave and that if he could find out a tender point he would endeavour always to rub in salt.

Sunday 3 May (London)

Cranborne, or Salisbury as I must learn to call him, called this afternoon and I talked over several matters with him of consequence.

Monday 4 May (London)

Explanation in the House of Commons by Disraeli. At the end of the first half hour no one could tell whether he meant resignation or dissolution.[278] W. Harcourt[279] dined with us alone. We talked of Confederation and other matters amongst which he mentioned this curious fact, that Delane had told him that in November 1866 Disraeli had shown him (Delane) a copy of the Reform bill with a clause enacting household suffrage! And this at a time when Disraeli would not consent in the Cabinet even to the resolutions being printed for our use.

Friday 26 June (London)

I opened the Irish Church debate,[280] speaking I imagine for nearly an hour. The opposition were of course much pleased, a few, *very*

[278]The Government had been defeated on 30 April in the Commons on the Established Church (Ireland) Bill in Committee by 330 to 265. For Disraeli's statement, see *Hansard*, CXCI, cols 1694–1707.

[279]Sir William Vernon Harcourt (1827–1904), Lib. MP for Oxford (1868–1880), Derby (1880–1895), and Monmouthshire (1895–1904), Solicitor-General (1873–1874), Home Secretary (1880–1885), Chancellor of the Exchequer (1886, 1892–1895).

[280]Established Church (Ireland) Bill, second reading: *Hansard*, CXCIII, 26 June 1868, cols 4–19.

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few, of my own friends like Hardinge were on the whole pleased, but the main body looked very annoyed. The Government seemed to feel particularly the attack on them. The House was crowded and very attentive. I think it was for me a good speech, though I suspect that in *manner* I was too bitter. In fact I was warmed up as I went on.

Salisbury's speech[281] was a very fine one, of a very high order in all respects, but it left open as I thought a dangerous point for the future in deliberately joining for the sake of present argument Ireland with England and in connecting more closely than I liked the fortunes and futures of the English and Irish Churches.

Saturday 27 June (London)

My speech of last night seems to have been very successful. The Government very angry and of course their supporters, but others pleased. Dined at the Duke of Cleveland's.

Last night found on my arrival a letter from Mayo challenging a statement that I had made in the House in my speech. I went to the Athenaeum to refer to Hansard and back files and then wrote my answer which is to go tomorrow morning.

Monday 29 June (London)

Debate renewed for the third night in House of Lords on Irish Church.[282] The Chancellor attacked me with very considerable bitterness and when I attempted to make a personal explanation at the end the Government and the back benchers were so furious that they positively shouted me down. I could not say what I wished.

It was the first time that I ever saw this in the House of Lords and proves how angry they are with me. No one from our side of the House except Rollo[283] voted for the bill. The bishops were all very cross. I did not get to bed till 4, when I reached Grosvenor Square with Somers[284] I still felt so heated and the morning felt so fresh and pleasant that I walked on with him to Hyde Park Corner.

[281]Ibid., Salisbury, cols 39–90.
[282]Ibid., cols 243–283.
[283]John Rogerson (1835–1916), 10th Baron Rollo (1852), Lib. peer, later Unionist.
[284]Charles Somers-Cocks (1819–1883), 3rd Earl Somers (1852), Lord-in-Waiting (1853–1857).

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Thursday 3 December (Oakley – Highclere)

News of Disraeli's resignation.[285] Beach[286] received a circular from D. stating it, and *The Times* had an article on it.[287]

As a matter of political tactics it is the wisest step I think that he could take.

[285]At the general election, the Liberals came into office with 354 seats, the Conservatives holding 272. Disraeli immediately resigned, together with his Cabinet, over Irish Church disestablishment.

[286]Sir Michael Edward Hicks Beach (1837–1916), Con. MP for Gloucestershire East (1864–1885) and for Bristol West (1885–1906), Chief Secretary for Ireland (1874–1878, 1886–1887), Colonial Secretary (1878–1880), Chancellor of the Exchequer (1885–1886, 1895–1902), created Earl St Aldwyn (1913).

[287]See *The Times*, 3 December 1868, p. 9.

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