1875

Tuesday 12 January (London)

Steady progress all through the day, more and quieter sleep, food, general repose. I trust now all will go well.

Cabinet

1. *Statement of foreign policy by Derby*

a) Proposals for a renewal of Brussels Conference. Russia, Prussia, Austria all in favour of a Code to regulate warfare, smaller powers against it. He proposed and we all agreed to decline Conference.

b) He described state of Spain. It is true that Bismarck proposes to have recognition on the removal of suspension of Protestant newspapers. German ambassador had spoken to Derby which, whilst he would be glad of all toleration, could not agree to found recognition on such a condition. Recognition for a while suspended.

2. *Colonial* – some explanations as to Gambia exchange.[464]

3. *Financial* – a very strong pressure put on Hunt by Cairns (supported by Derby slightly and by Salisbury) to reduce his proposals for Navy. Northcote estimates his surplus at £80,000 but War Office need addition of £350,000

Admiralty	250,000
Education	200,000
	800,000

Hunt on whole held his ground though he showed signs of yielding. I gave him some support by opposing the proposal to cut down the squadrons and to leave unbuilt the 7 unarmoured ships which are needed.[465]

[464]A proposal to exchange Gambia for French territory – a move which would have simplified Gold Coast administration.

[465]See Vincent, *Derby*, II, p. 189.

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Wednesday 10 February (London)

Cabinet

1. Natal and Cape affairs. I stated the case and they agreed that I should write as I proposed to Cape.[466]

2. Landlord and Tenant bill.

3. Sandon called in and gave explanations as to Compulsory Education.[467]

4. Sclater Booth gave some explanations as to his Sanitary measures.[468]

Tuesday 30 March (Bournemouth)

Drove to see Cairns, who was very cordial. His new house is a strange building, semi-ecclesiastical in appearance which is not exactly what I should have expected. Settled to ride with him Thursday 2.30.

We discussed *inter alia* Judicature Bill and he told me his proposal, viz. to complete the Supreme Court, keeping it as a Court of First Appeal and leaving House of Lords as Court of Second Appeal for United Kingdom for the present and to take time to consider how to proceed. He said the House of Lords had never been so strong in Law Lords and never had had so small an amount of arrears, in fact none. He had proposed this at the last Cabinet when I was absent and all (except Derby) had agreed. I agreed.

Monday 19 April (London)

The Queen, from what Salisbury says – he has just returned from Osborne – does not like the Prince of Wales proposed visit

[466]The previous night, Carnarvon wrote to Hardy, warning of possible trouble in the Cape, 'I must bring the matter before the Cabinet tomorrow. It would be of very great advantage [. . .] if another Regiment should be allowed to stop at the Cape, if only for the next three or four months' (Carnarvon to Hardy, 9 February 1875: CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/12, fo. 33). On 16 February, Carnarvon had appointed Wolseley to act as a special commissioner for six months in Natal (see Carnarvon to Disraeli, 16 February 1875 (copy): CP, BL 60703, fo. 78).

[467]The Elementary Education (Compulsory Attendance) Bill was defeated on its second reading in June. In Sandon's Act of 1876, employers were unable to hire youths under ten years of age. Parents were also obliged to ensure that their children received sufficient elementary instruction.

[468]Sclater Booth obtained an amendment of the sanitary laws in 1874 to strengthen his department's powers.

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to India, especially without the Princess. She fears his getting into scrapes.[469]

Sunday 25 April (London)

A good deal of conversation with Lady Derby who gave me many details. At her wish I agreed to speak to Derby on the general subject.

A long conversation with Froude in the afternoon as to South African matters. He very much likes my draft despatch concerning the Conference of Representatives of different States, and indicating Confederation as an ultimate object.[470]

Monday 26 April (London)

The storm has blown over. Disraeli told me he had pressed the Queen strongly and had told her that unless she assented "matters could not go on". He said that no one ever told Her Majesty the truth except himself which was very hard on him. I replied that it would in such case have the charm of novelty. Saw Lady Derby afterwards.

I received from Sir J. Ferguson[471] this evening some old papers left apparently in an old cabinet in Park Street when the house was sold, and when I opened them I found amongst them written on the subject of my then approaching marriage. How strange it seemed to re-read them.

Saturday 8 May (London)

Cabinet

Derby read over his telegram to Odo Russell[472] desiring him to give the Emperor of Russia strong support in pressing peace upon

[469]Princess Alexandra wished to accompany her husband but, as Derby pointed out, 'whether she goes or not, the P. is sure to run after women' (Vincent, *Derby*, II, p. 203).

[470]After Froude returned from the Cape in February 1875, Carnarvon concluded that a conference made up of the colonies should be held. Sir Henry Barkly, Governor of Cape Colony, was to be chairman and Froude would be Carnarvon's representative. See Dunn, *James Anthony Froude*, II, pp. 412–413.

[471]Sir James Ferguson (1832–1907), Con. MP for Ayrshire (1854, 1857–1865) and for Manchester North-east (1885–1906), Permanent Under-Secretary at the Home Office (1867–1868), Governor of South Australia (1869–1870) and of New Zealand (1870–1875), Postmaster-General (1891–1892).

[472]Odo William Leopold Russell (1829–1884), 1st Baron Ampthill (1881), diplomat, Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office (1870), ambassador at Berlin (1871–1874).

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the Emperor of Germany.[473] The Cabinet concurred – an important move. It pledged us to three things:

1. affirmation that French do not meditate war.
2. strong support of peace through Emperor of Russia.
3. an offer of co-operation to Austria and Italy.

An interview with President Burgers of the Transvaal Republic.[474] He does not seem to me a very able man, and he appears overcome by his civil reception here, his invitation to the Foreign Office tonight and his dinner with me on Monday. Froude was present. I told him that without going into the past, and that probably as in all quarrels there was fault on both sides, I hoped now we might arrive at a good understanding and that it was for the interests of both parties that we should do so. I indicated Confederation as the ultimate object, subject only to securities being taken for the natives, which I said would be I knew consistent with his views. He seemed to reciprocate but to be rather overwhelmed by the attention that he is receiving.[475]

Sunday 9 May (Windsor)

I came down here in the afternoon and after a short talk with General Ponsonby[476] I had a long interview with the Queen. A very large part of it was devoted to purely personal matters and she was kinder than kind [. . .].[477] Afterwards she went to foreign affairs, and we discussed the telegram to Odo Russell.[478] General P. had warned me that she did not originally think it strong enough and that she wished a similar notice to be given to the French. I reassured her as to the first and pointed out that as yet the French had done nothing to

[473]Alexander II met Wilhelm I in Berlin the following day.

[474]Thomas François Burgers (1834–1881), President of the Transvaal (1872–1877).

[475]At a further interview on 11 May, Carnarvon gave Burgers a copy of his despatch concerning the proposed conference. Burgers, according to Carnarvon, 'approved of every word and that he would give me every support and assistance in his power' (Diary, 11 May 1875).

[476]Maj.-Gen. Sir Henry Frederick Ponsonby (1825–1895), private secretary to the Queen (1870–1895).

[477]Carnarvon's wife, Evelyn, had died on 25 January, as a result of complications following childbirth. The Queen wrote in her journal after the meeting, 'Saw poor Lord Carnarvon, who was very much affected in speaking of his terrible loss and who looks thin and ill, but is touchingly resigned. He spoke of his wife, a rare character and great love of her home life' (Queen Victoria, Journal, 9 May 1875: Royal Archives, Z/381).

[478]See previous entry.

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require a caution. She then urged strongly the desirability of writing a private letter to the Emperor of Russia whilst at Berlin urging him to support the cause of Peace. I was cautious supposing Derby was not very favourable to this but she proposed to make the letter *personal* in its character and on family subjects winding up with the hope etc. To this I own I can see no objection. Accordingly at her wish wrote at once to Disraeli stating her desire, requesting a telegram and a F.O. messenger to take it. Late in the evening after the letter was gone Ponsonby showed me a letter of Disraeli in which he said, "Derby will not hear of" a private letter etc. But this must be his mode of expression and it applied to a more formal communication than the one now proposed.

Wednesday 12 May (London)

1. Peace Preservation Act, question how long House of Lords should sit to pass it.
2. Vivisection, decided to issue a Commission.[479]
3. Question as to payment of entrance money at Aquarium and Zoological on Sundays.[480]
4. Salt's bill.[481]
5. Some desultory talk as to Local taxation.

Whit Sunday 16 May (Cowes)

Much conversation with Froude. Amongst other questions discussed:
1. Possibility of restoring one part of Griqualand to Transvaal State, the other part to be taken over by Cape Government. It will be a

[479]A Royal Commission on the practice of subjecting live animals to experiments for scientific purposes, chaired by Lord Cardwell, was established on 22 June 1875 and reported on 8 January 1876. See E. Hopley, *Campaigning against Cruelty: the hundred year history of the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection* (London, 1998), pp. 4–5.

[480]Much public criticism had been generated over a recent legal decision that meant that the Brighton Aquarium and other places of public amusement could not be open on Sundays for money. The situation was saved by a government bill that was hastily passed through Parliament.

[481]Thomas Salt (1830–1904), banker, Con. MP for Stafford (1859–1865, 1869–1880, 1886–1892), Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board (1876–1880), created Baronet (1899). Salt took a great interest in the Friendly Societies Bill, which reached the Committee and Report stages on 13 May, and received its third reading on 22 July: *Hansard*, CCXXIV, *passim*.

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delicate and difficult matter to manage having reference to my earlier despatches, all which I have urged on him.

2. Place of meeting for Conference. Port Elizabeth or Grahamstown, probably not Natal.

3. Request of Burgers to be allowed 2 delegates to the Conference: Froude advises.

4. Question as to Chairmanship of Conference in the failure of Sir H. Barkly[482] and Sir A. Cunynghame.[483] He advises Sir G. Wolseley.

Saturday 29 May (London)

Cabinet

The first part of time was occupied by discussion on state of business. It will be I believe impossible to carry through all we have announced and some bills must be sacrificed. Judicature, agricultural holdings and the new Labour bills were decided to be essential to keep.

A long discussion on these two bills. They were finally agreed to.

Salisbury – despatch as to the Gaekwar's deposal was agreed to. I had given him previously a paper full of criticisms.[484]

Walked home with Cross and talked over the state of public business.[485]

My large official dinner, 42 persons, but how sad to remember its anniversary last year when we were just getting into the house and making all our arrangements.

[482]Sir Henry Barkly (1815–1898), Governor and Commander-in-Chief, British Guiana (1848–1853), Capt.-Gen. and Governor of Jamaica (1853–1856), Governor of Victoria (1856–1863), of Mauritius (1863–1870), and of the Cape of Good Hope (1870–1877).

[483]Lieut.-Gen. Sir Arthur Augustus Cunynghame (1812–1884), Commander-in-Chief, Cape Colony, Natal, and St Helena (1874–1878), Lieutenant-Governor of Cape Colony (1877–1878). His vigorous campaigns against the Kaffirs are described in his *My Command in South Africa, 1874–78* (London, 1879).

[484]See Salisbury to Carnarvon, 29 May 1875: CP, BL 60761, fo. 125. Earlier in 1875 the Gaekwar of Baroda was alleged to have tried to poison the Resident, Colonel Robert Phayre. A commission, consisting of three British and three native members, disagreed, and a not guilty verdict was returned. Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy, nevertheless ordered his deposition, a move which the Cabinet later endorsed. See B. Mallet, *Thomas George, Earl of Northbrook* (London, 1908), pp. 92–96.

[485]Particularly the Vivisection Commission and the Master and Servants Bill (Carnarvon to Cross, 27 May 1875: Cross Papers, BL 51268, fos 99–109).

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Sunday 30 May (London)

Long walk with Northcote in the afternoon. The conversation turned on the contingency of Disraeli's failure of health which Northcote represents as being very great in the House of Commons.

He made the old suggestion that no one could take the Foreign Office but myself, and I gave him much the same answer that I have given to others formerly.

Wednesday 9 June (London)

Cabinet

1. Prince of Wales visit to India.[486] Further discussion as to expenses. Sir B. Frere[487] estimated expenses at £250,000 at which there was a general howl of dismay and derision in the Cabinet. The general opinion was that £100,000 was amply sufficient. The question as to presents remains still unsettled.

2. Some discussion as to Agricultural Holdings bill.

3. Probability of war with Burmah. Salisbury seems to think this likely. Resolution in Parliament will be needed in such case under the Act which allows action to be taken by Indian Government only in certain cases of which this is not one.

I gave a dinner to a number of Colonists this evening, but after the Cabinet there arrived a most serious telegram from Sydney announcing the death of not less than ¼ of whole population of Fiji from measles. It is too horrible, but unhappily it is possible to give very little real help or relief. The ignorance and folly of the people led them to refuse all medicine.

Sunday 27 June (Windsor Castle)

I came down to Windsor by an afternoon train and having ample time I walked down to Eton with Lord Cowley whom I met in the train. The old place looked very pretty and very much like itself. As we reached it Chapel was coming to an end and a crowd of boys poured out. The playing fields were in all their beauty of shadowy tree and

[486]Carnarvon was involved because the itinerary included a visit to Ceylon (Lee, *Edward VII*, I, p. 377).

[487]Sir Henry Bartle Frere (1815–1884), Governor of Bombay (1862–1867), Governor and High Commissioner, Cape Colony (1877–1880).

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glittering river and a good many recollections came before me as we wandered through them.

In the evening after dinner had a good deal of conversation with the Queen. She was very amicable and kind as usual, and desired me to bring all the children to see her at Windsor. Afterwards I settled this with the Duchess of Roxburgh.[488] The matter on which the Queen was most interested was the Vivisection Commission and when she found how much I had thought about it she spoke out most fully. She mentioned to me the name of Lister the Edinburgh[489] surgeon as strongly opposed to the practice.[490]

Friday 2 July (Windsor – London)

I took down all the children, Mrs. Mayson and the nurses to Windsor to see the Queen. Nothing in every way could have been kinder or fuller of the most delicate and pretty consideration for me or for them. They were, poor darlings, rather frightened and shy, but the Queen was so kind that they finally lost their fright and became at home and very much interested. She and Princess Beatrice and Prince Leopold were there and after luncheon we came to them in the corridor. She talked to each of them in turn and ended by making to all of them a little present. She asked Margaret[491] whether she had yet learnt French, knowing how tiresome she is, poor dear, in not trying to speak, and she knew that it was Winifred's birthday.[492] She was very kind to Mrs. Mayson who admitted afterwards she was very much frightened. Altogether they all returned – Margaret with her doll which after the Queen had given it she offered to restore and when she found that restitution was not necessary, expressed her satisfaction very loudly – extremely pleased.[493]

[488]Susanna Stephanie Innes-Ker, wife of 6th Duke of Roxburgh.

[489]Joseph Lister (1827–1912), Professor of Clinical Surgery, Edinburgh University (1869–1877), pioneer of antiseptic surgery.

[490]Carnarvon subsequently brought forward a bill on 22 May 1876 'to prevent Cruel Experiments on Animals'. It received its third reading in June after much opposition. See Carnarvon to Queen Victoria, 21 June 1876: CP, TNL, PRO 30/6/2, fos 298–299.

[491]Lady Margaret Herbert (1870–1958), Carnarvon's second daughter from his first marriage.

[492]Lady Winifred Anne Herbert (1864–1933), Carnarvon's eldest daughter.

[493]Carnarvon's mother reminded him of her children's visit to Windsor many years previously to see the Duchess of Kent: 'You had all practised so carefully, walking out of the room backwards, that she was exceedingly amused, and specially at *your* addressing her with a profound bow and "Yes, Your Royal Family."' (Henrietta, 3rd Countess of Carnarvon to Carnarvon, 29 June 1875: CP, BL 61044, fos 17–18).

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Later I went to the Queen of Holland by appointment and had a long conversation with her. She was very kind and talked much to me of former times.

Saturday 3 July (London)

Cabinet

1. Prince of Wales' visit to India again. Sir B. Frere and the Prince say they want £100,000 this year and £100,000 perhaps next. The fact is that Sir B. Frere wishes to be magnificent and the Cabinet, with the exception of Northcote, is parsimonious. Finally settled that £40,000 be taken this year for Admiralty expenses, leaving a small surplus for next year, and £60,000 to be given for presents and every other expense.

2. Northcote announced the returns of the quarter to be satisfactory, showing a surplus of £900,000. But supplementary estimates will come out of this and they are heavy. He estimates them at not less than £300,000 and Prince of Wales tour £100,000 – £400,000, leaving about £500,000. But this greatly again depends on harvest, etc.

3. Labour Laws – some discussion: agreed to adhere to bills.

4. Some discussion also as to other questions but Disraeli now protests that all we can do is to carry out bills and I see evident signs of an approaching massacre of innocents. Nothing controversial can be admitted.

Wednesday 7 July (London)

Cabinet

1. Prince of Wales, as to his suite. The Queen desires someone of position and character to go. No one answering to this can be found.[494]

2. Mulhar Rao, the Gaekwar, desires to see his solicitor on private business. Northbrook[495] objects. Salisbury has overruled the objection,

[494]The Queen objected particularly to the inclusion in the party of Lord Charles Beresford and Lord Carrington. After a stormy interview with Disraeli in Downing Street, the Prince was eventually allowed to name them in the party of eighteen men accompanying him (see P. Magnus, *King Edward the Seventh* (Harmondsworth, 1967), pp. 173–174). From the outset, Victoria had given 'a very unwilling' consent to the Prince of Wales's visit (Queen Victoria to Disraeli, 17 May 1875: Hughenden Papers, dep. 78/3, fo. 267).

[495]Thomas George Baring (1826–1904), 2nd Baron Northbrook (1866), 1st Earl Northbrook (1876), Under-Secretary of State for War (1861, 1868–1872), for India (1861–1864), and for

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but the solicitor is to state his business and the interview is to be in the presence of a third person. This seems quite reasonable.

3. Trades Union meeting, and some discussion as to accepting Lowe's resolution on the Labour bills. Agreed to adhere generally to the bills with a slight amendment by Cairns.

4. Lord Stanhope's[496] motion as to Irish Peerage.[497] Cairns to reply to it and mainly on technical grounds.

5. Sir J. Whitworth's[498] wish to vest the entire reversion of his whole property (£650,000) in the Nation for the benefit of Science and Art. He makes provision for his wife and a few distant relations.

Presided at the Boys' School Festival at Alexandra Palace, 800 present, rather a bear garden, but the enormous sum of £12,700 collected with more to come in.[499]

Wednesday 14 July (London)

Cabinet

1. Prince of Wales visit to India. Disraeli told us with much energy of zest and language that he had had an interview with the Queen for a full hour on this subject and that was most interesting; that the Prince of Wales had grown in his demands, that the whole state of affairs had altered since it was first mooted and that the Government was thereby placed in a very false position. That some persons (meaning some of the Royal family) had suggested to him that he would take a detachment of Guards with him and even some of the Horse Guards, which of course was utterly repugnant to the Queen's views. That there were two courses (1) that he should go as "the proclaimed representative of the Crown" which the Queen would not hear of and which would cost at least £500,000, (2) "as the guest of the Viceroy" in which case the £60,000 proposed would be a very handsome allowance. That he proposed tomorrow to state the case and advised that we should adhere to the second. To this we all assented. I shrewdly suggest that there is really far less difficulty both

the Home Office (1864–1866), Viceroy and Governor-General of India (1872–1876), First Lord of the Admiralty (1880–1885).

[496]Hon. Edward Stanhope (1840–1893), Con. MP for Mid-Lincolnshire (1874–1885) and for Horncastle division (1885–1895), Vice-President, Committee of Council on Education (1885), President of the Board of Trade (1885–1886), Secretary of State for War (1887–1892).

[497]Motion to relinquish the prerogative of and power of creating future peers of Ireland: *Hansard*, CCXXV, 7 July 1875, cols 1210–1213, Cairns, cols 1214–1224. The motion was withdrawn.

[498]Sir Joseph Whitworth (1803–1887), Manchester steel manufacturer.

[499]'The Royal Masonic Institute for Boys', *The Times*, 8 July 1875, p. 5.

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with the Prince and the Queen than is supposed. Agreed to this, and also to resist Fawcett's[500] motion to put all expenses on Imperial funds.

2. Discussion as to Labour Laws.

[Remainder of entry deleted.]

Thursday 15 July (London)

My cold very bad but I dined with Salisbury and Lady S. alone. After dinner we got upon the old question of political eventualities on Disraeli's retirement. He is evidently very apprehensive that Derby will either fail in courage or that the Queen will, from his strange habit of making himself disagreeable to her, pass him over and that Richmond will succeed. There is I am afraid only too much fear of this, but it is very hard to see how it is to be avoided. "The great spider," as Salisbury calls C[airns] is working for this and Salisbury has almost a superstitious fear of him.

Saturday 17 July (Hatfield)

Went down there with Winifred and Porchy and Mrs. Mayson. There were the Gladstones, the Edward Talbots[501] and one or two of the family. The children have been extremely happy, racing about the house and dragging each other up and down the Gallery on a bear skin.

I have had a good deal of talk with Gladstone who seems to me somewhat softened and quieter since I last saw him to talk with, now nearly a year ago. Theology and ecclesiastical controversy are the subjects on which his mind is mainly moving. I spoke to him also of Pembroke[502] and Lady P.

It has cost me something to go anywhere again – indeed each new thing that I do seems an effort – and Hatfield particularly has many

[500]Henry Fawcett (1833–1884), Lib. MP for Brighton (1865–1874) and for Hackney (1874–1884), Postmaster-General (1880–1884), Professor of Political Economy, Cambridge University from 1863.

[501]Revd Edward Stuart Talbot (1844–1934), First Warden, Keble College, Oxford (1869–1888), Vicar of Leeds (1889–1895), Bishop of Rochester (1895–1905), Bishop of Southwark (1905–1911), Bishop of Winchester (1911–1923), cousin of Salisbury. His wife, Lavinia (1848–1939), was one of the daughters of George, 4th Baron Lyttelton and Mary Glynne. For a description of the Talbots, see B. Askwith, *The Lytteltons: a family chronicle of the nineteenth century* (London, 1975), pp. 171–172.

[502]George Robert Herbert (1850–1895), 13th Earl of Pembroke (1862), Under-Secretary of State for War (1874–1875), brother-in-law of Talbot.

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memories which are very saddening to me. The real and indeed the main charm is to see the enjoyment of the children and particularly of Winifred who enters into the whole history and great interest of the place. She is a very remarkable child in many ways and is growing more and more a companion to me.

Monday 19 July (London)

Returned to town having a narrow escape being run away with down the hill at Hatfield to the station. Happily no evil result, for the children were with me.

A discussion in the House of Lords[503] on the Coolie question in which I think I stated the case fairly on the whole.

A rather curious conversation with Lady Derby as to the future eventualities. Several conclusions to be drawn.

1. that Derby is aware of his danger as regards Richmond's competition with him.

2. that he is so weak that he will make no fight for himself and that he is virtually prepared to serve under Richmond, a man whom he despises and dislikes.

3. that he would wish to throw the whole burden of opposition on Salisbury and myself.

4. that they cannot decide on a Foreign Secretary. Lyons was mentioned but they know he cannot speak. She said to me, "You know, it would never do to move you in the midst of all your Colonial work."

5. She is aware of Cairns' views, and had had evidently some conversation with him.

Wednesday 21 July (London)

Cabinet

A long discussion as to public business. Disraeli proposed to sacrifice the Agricultural holdings bill to the Merchant Shipping, but with the exception of Hardy the feeling of the Cabinet was all in favour of

[503] *Hansard*, CCXXV, 19 July 1875, cols 1637–1640. The supply and transport of Indian and Chinese coolies, and the terms and conditions of their employment in foreign colonies, was a longstanding interest of Carnarvon. A royal commission on the subject was appointed and Carnarvon subsequently issued twenty-seven recommendations to governors on the regulation of such traffic.

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the Agricultural holdings.[504] This was agreed to and a meeting of the House of Commons called for tomorrow in order to explain to them and persuade them to assist the Government.

Monday 26 July (London)

Cabinet at 2 to discuss what steps should be taken as to Plimsoll and the Merchant Shipping Bill. Disraeli declared that "something must be done" and finally a short provisional bill was agreed on.[505] Adderley was told to his amazement that he must announce it tonight. It was altogether a piece of panic legislation, not very creditable to any of us, whether we liked or disliked it.

Tuesday 27 July (London)

Plimsoll again, more discussion on the proposed bill. It is far from satisfactory. We are legislating to meet a supposed popular demand without any real knowledge of the subject or prospect of doing any good by it. It is a sorry proceeding, the worst thing I think we have as yet done.

Met Gavard who announced the French Government accepts the proposals as to the Gambia[506] and that as the Assembly rises on 4 August, some announcement would be made through Papers, etc. This led to much negotiation, etc. Northcote, Derby, Disraeli. It is altogether rather awkward to be driven into a corner.

[504]The Agricultural Holdings Bill, to give legal recognition to tenants' rights, received the Royal Assent on 13 August.

[505]On 24 June 1874, Plimsoll had promoted a Shipping Survey Bill to strengthen the existing legislation, but it was defeated by three votes in the Commons on its second reading in June 1874. It was announced that the Merchant Shipping Bill would not be proceeded with. Plimsoll created a scene in the Commons, using terms such as 'cheats' and 'liars'. For an eye-witness account of the incident, see R.H. Dana, *Hospitable England in the Seventies: the diary of a young American, 1875–1876* (London, 1921), pp. 28–29. In order to dampen growing public and political opposition, an Unseaworthy Ships Bill was introduced by the Government in July 1875.

[506]Meeting with Charles Gavard, first secretary to the French ambassador, on the proposed exchange of West African territories.

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Friday 30 July (London – Cowes)

Cabinet

We only discussed Plimsoll and our temporary Merchant Shipping Bill and the discussion was not edifying.[507] It was clear that a bill was to be carried and the question of details was too long and too difficult to bear much consideration. But after all this merely the way of all Cabinets that have ever been or ever will be.

After the Cabinet I came down here and got on board my yacht, so worn out and exhausted that I slept soundly.

Sunday 1 August (Osborne)

In the afternoon came on from Cowes in the yacht and anchored off Osborne, and walked up to the house where I dined and slept. There were only Princess Louise and Lorne,[508] Prince Leopold and Princess Beatrice, so it was purely a family party, with extremely little form or restraint and everyone full of fun and the love of amusement. Altogether a pleasant picture.

The Queen was in good spirits and as usual extremely kind. She talked much of the Prince of Wales's visit to India and expressed anxiety as to his health, saying that he had not recovered from his illness entirely and was not of the constitution to bear great heat.[509] I told her of Gregory's letter to Meade[510] in which he had advised March as the time for Ceylon but that Fayrer[511] and Charsley[512] were both decidedly in favour of early part of December, and that I had impressed strongly on Fayrer the necessity of speaking plainly. She agreed in all and spoke very sensibly on the whole subject and with great moderation.

I spoke generally as to the Gambia exchanges.

[507]The Unseaworthy Ships Bill received its second reading in the Commons that day: *Hansard*, CCXXVI, 30 July 1875, cols 225–267. It received the Royal Assent on 13 August.

[508]John Douglas Campbell Lorne (1845–1914), Lib. MP for Argyllshire (1868–1878), married Queen Victoria's fourth daughter, Princess Louise (1871), Governor-General of Canada (1878–1883).

[509]See Carnarvon's detailed memorandum to the Queen on possible health hazards: Carnarvon to Queen Victoria, 27 July 1875: Royal Archives, T/6.

[510]Sir Robert Meade (1835–1898), Assistant Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office (1871–1892), Permanent Secretary at the Colonial Office (1892–1896).

[511]Sir Joseph Fayrer (1824–1907), Surgeon-General and Professor of Surgery, Medical College, Calcutta (1859–1874). He accompanied the Prince of Wales on the Indian tour.

[512]William Parker Charsley (1824–1881), former Principal Medical Officer, Ceylon.

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Wednesday 11 August (London – Southampton)

Cabinet. Thank God our last.

1. *Col. Baker's case* A letter from the Queen strongly urging his dismissal for the honour of the Army and general example. Decided to "gazette him out".[513]

2. Instructions to Capt. Murray from Board of Trade as to new Act respecting unseaworthy ships, as to duties, etc. of officers at the several ports. I pressed on Cabinet necessity of appointing men of character and position. The general position was accepted but they were in too much haste to get over their business to settle anything.

3. *Office of Works* Galton's resignation announced. Pension of £1,000 to him agreed to.[514]

4. Circular as to Civil Service. I put in my protest, but otherwise accepted, as to last clause.

5. Northcote stated the expenditure of next year will be increased by about £2,000,000, without allowing for any increase in Army or Navy.

6. *Legal questions* Cairns proposed a departmental or Treasury Committee to consider (financially) the departments of the Irish Courts with a view to judicial changes. He proposed also to give some help to Sir H. Thring.[515] He asked Hunt to reconsider the new system as to a diminution of competition. Derby was very keen for competition.

7. Cross proposed to sell waste land at Balfour Park for artisans' dwellings under the new Act. Agreed to.

8. Sir G. Wolseley despatch requiring troops, etc. in Natal.[516] I stated to the Cabinet, enquired and finally it was agreed that 1. the £20,000 for annual advance to the Colony should *stand over* for the present. 2. the regiment of 840,000 in Natal should now remain there. 3. the question of a battery of mountain guns should be settled by Hardy and myself between this [*word omitted*] and November, pending or subject to arrival of Sir G. Wolseley. 4. the question of a Company of Engineers should be left to Disraeli, Hardy and myself in the same way.

[513]Col. Valentine Baker (1827–1887) had recently received a one-year prison sentence for assaulting a young woman in a train. See *London Gazette*, 2 August 1875.

[514]Douglas Galton (1822–1899), Director of Public Works since 1869.

[515]Sir Henry Thring (1818–1907), Parliamentary draftsman, counsel to the Treasury (1869), created Baron Thring (1886).

[516]On 1 April, Wolseley had replaced the dismissed Benjamin Pine, Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, to restore order in the country.

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Came down to Southampton with G.[517] and came on board the *Aloma*.[518]

Sunday 12 September (Balmoral)

A Presbyterian Service in the dining room in the morning, three-quarters of an hour long including sermon. The prayers were, though extemporary, much formed upon the model of the Prayer book, and sometimes the actual words employed. The sermon was good and at the end very pretty in thought. The preacher was a Mr. Lees,[519] an educated man and incumbent of Paisley, one of the few good livings, I believe.

Later I took a walk with Prince Christian,[520] who is sensible and agreeable. We talked a good deal of Bismarck and Germany and later Princess Christian in a long conversation deplored to me in very strong terms the animosity felt against us in Germany. But they both agreed in this, that the tone of our Government was considered in Germany to be much firmer than formerly and that we were consequently all the more respected. Prince Christian confirmed the fact to me of the existence of ill feeling between the Crown Princess, who is thought to be very English, and Bismarck: and this he said possibly accounts for some of Bismarck's hostility to England, who is *extremely* personal to his policy. Of the animosity in Berlin there can be no doubt.

Later the Prince of Wales walked into my room and sat some time talking of his Ceylon and Indian journey. He was rather vexed, in his very good-humoured way, at a supposed opposition to his going to Ceylon and he asked me if I thought Gregory was unwilling to receive him. I told him that Gregory was certainly poor and was paying off his debts,[521] but it is clear to me that Birch[522] has behaved

[517]Lady Gwendoline Herbert (1842–1915), Carnarvon's younger sister.

[518]That same day Carnarvon told Ponsonby, 'I am very tired out with London work, and the smell of bad drains at the corner of every street, and an atmosphere from which all the oxygen seems to have been exhausted' (Carnarvon to Ponsonby, 11 August 1875: CP, TNL, PRO 30/6/2, fo. 19).

[519]Revd James Cameron Lees (1834–1913), preacher, Paisley Abbey (1859–1879), chaplain to Queen Victoria (1881–1901).

[520]Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein (1831–1917), married Princess Helena, third daughter of Queen Victoria (1866).

[521]Gregory's financial position was already precarious. This was made worse by the fact that governors of colonies receiving a royal visit were expected to provide hospitality out of their own pockets. For the Prince, Gregory reluctantly purchased carriage horses from Australia and imported wines and cognacs in quantities sufficient 'to float an ironclad' (B. Jenkins, *Sir William Gregory of Coole: the biography of an Anglo-Irishman* (Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, 1986), p. 245).

[522]Sir Arthur Birch (1837–1914), Colonial Secretary, Ceylon (1873–1876), Governor of Ceylon from 1876.

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ill and has put himself forward in a very improper and self-seeking manner. I did what I could and had much conversation with Knollys,[523] William Russell and General Ponsonby, and in the evening, with the Queen.

Monday 13 September (Balmoral)

A long conversation with the Queen mainly as to Prince of Wales visit to India. The two points on which she was most earnest were (1) the addition of Lord Aylesford to the Party, which she had only heard rumoured, and to which she not unnaturally objects[524] (2) the desire of the Princess of Wales to go to Copenhagen for a considerable time. She showed me a letter of the Prince of Wales to her, strongly urging it and saying how disappointed the Princess would be and she said that she had reluctantly consented to a compromise, that the Princess should go for Christmas, but that it was an affair for the Government also to speak upon and if this was objected to she would do the best she could "to fight it".

The Prince, she said, had in this as in some other points of a similar kind, secured her consent almost without her knowing it. In all she said, much of which was so private that I do not like putting it down even for my own guidance, she spoke with extreme good sense and feeling, and impressed me again as she has often done before.

Afterwards there was a ball of gillies, etc. at which the Prince of Wales and others from Abergeldie were present. I had a good deal of conversation with Knollys and finally told him that if at any time in India there should be any matters over which he desired to write privately to me he might do so, and I would communicate with Salisbury. He was very grateful and afterwards the Prince thanked me.

The ball was very picturesque. The Queen in excellent spirits danced several times with the grandchildren and the Prince of Wales.

[523]Francis Knollys (1837–1924), Baron Knollys (1902), 1st Viscount Knollys (1911). Private Secretary to the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII (1870–1910), Joint Private Secretary to George V (1910–1913).

[524]Heneage Finch (1849–1885), 7th Earl of Aylesford (1871), known as 'Sporting Joe', was a personal guest in the Prince's party. In February 1876, while in India, his wife announced that she was eloping with another of the Prince's friends, Lord Blandford. For the subsequent scandalous events, see G. St Aubyn, *Queen Victoria: a portrait* (London, 1991), pp. 471–473.

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Thursday 16 September (Balmoral)

I received this afternoon from the Queen a private letter to her from Duckworth (the clergyman going with the Prince)[525] urging the importance of doing nothing whilst in India to shock feeling by a disregard of the Sunday. The Queen accompanied this by a letter to me wishing me to speak to the Prince of Wales as from myself on the subject.[526] I undertook to do so as I dine at Abergeldie.

I asked the Prince accordingly to give me five minutes after dinner and then after discussing some other points connected with his visit I urged this as from myself as of importance. He took it remarkably well and said that he was quite prepared to avoid everything that could reasonably give offence. Of course it might under particular circumstances be necessary to travel, etc. but as the rule he would not hold durbars or have any great public ceremonies which could be construed into a disregard of the day. He talked to me a good deal on foreign affairs, the attitude of Germany and the German Press; and finally on leaving I promised to come up to London to see him off and to take leave of him, which seemed to please him.

General Ponsonby and I met with Prince and Princess Christian [. . .]. I wrote to the Queen on my return a brief report of my conversation with the Prince of Wales.

Friday 17 September (Balmoral)

Rode out by myself towards "Carndavan" and attempted to strike across the hills but was stopped by the boggy ground which seems very shaky. I got back and on my return found that it was perhaps as well that I did return. The Prince and Princess of Wales dined here, a somewhat curious scene, for at 9 p.m. the rest of the Abergeldie Party arrived saying that the Prince had not come back from deer stalking and the Princess was waiting for him. Half-past 9 came and no Prince; then the Abergeldie Party were sent to dinner and the Queen, the Christians, Princess Beatrice, Lady Churchill[527] and myself

[525]Canon Robinson Duckworth (1834–1911), Fellow, Trinity College, Oxford (1860–1876), Canon of Westminster Abbey (1875–1911), and friend of Lewis Carroll (he appears as the Duck in *Alice in Wonderland*).

[526]Ponsonby remarked to his wife, 'Carnarvon is in a funk [. . .] as to whether he should let the Prince go at all' (Ponsonby to Lady Ponsonby, 15 September 1875: Royal Archives, Add. A36/963).

[527]Lady Jennie Churchill (1851–1921), wife of Lord Randolph Churchill, whom she married in 1874.

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waited counting the minutes in the drawing room and trying to make conversation on indifferent subjects. At last when the Queen was evidently becoming a trifle anxious, the sound of wheels was heard and the Prince arrived.

He had gone on too far and had lost his way. The Princess and his clothes were sent for from Abergeldie and finally he came into dinner which was unusually long, not eating until nearly 11 o'clock. The Queen showed to great advantage in this little domestic anxiety, and when the Prince did appear, sat on through this protracted dinner (which she cannot bear) with the greatest good humour, chatting away on every subject.

Sunday 19 September (Balmoral)

Service at the Kirk at Crathie, a very dreary and desperate affair. How the Scotch nation can hear this sort of thing I cannot tell. It perhaps however accounts for some of their defects. I can understand how poor Mary Queen of Scots must have hated Knox and his ecclesiastical colleagues.

I had a long conversation with the Queen in the evening, first on the Prince of Wales and Ceylon, etc. I submitted to her the draft of my confidential despatch to Gregory which they approved. She mentioned also to me her wish that 14 December, the anniversary of Prince Albert's death, should not be made the occasion of any great public show or pageant. This I undertook to do and wrote to Gregory a private letter on the subject. Next we wandered off into a general conversation on various matters, amongst others the character of some of the Prime Ministers. I told her of my recent conversations with Gladstone. She mentioned to me that no doubt a great speaker, he was lengthy and not very clear on paper, which is perfectly true. Whilst speaking of the late Lord Derby I said plainly my opinion of him, that he was hard, ungenerous and by nature cruel. She said that this would have surprised her but that she had of late heard much that agreed with this, and she went on to repeat a saying of the Prince Consort that the turf was not a good school but always seemed to have some taint behind it. This led me on to say something as to Derby, the present man and though it is clear that he is not a very great favourite I thought her manner of speaking of him was kind. I said (which is the truth) that I attributed a good deal of his apparent shyness and dislike of society to his early education with a father who did not, I think, behave well to him and to whom he always

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showed great respect. We spoke a little of Disraeli. She asked me also whether I thought anything was likely to come of his visits to Bretby. I said I thought not and that the real centre of attraction was Lady Bradford.[528]

Sunday 3 October (Highclere)

Much conversation with Northcote on Government affairs.

1. He is equally anxious as I am as to the Slavery instructions issued by Admiralty. They may be right in law but they are against all policy.[529] After much conversation we both wrote to Disraeli urging him to summon a meeting of those of the Cabinet who are in the South to consider what should be done.[530] I wrote to Salisbury also to explain.[531]

2. He tells me that at the end of the Session Disraeli wrote to Adderley virtually dismissing or superseding him at the Board of Trade yet ever since nothing has been done.[532] Adderley does not go near the Office, no preparations are being made to carry out the Act as to unseaworthy ships and all is confusion!

3. Much talk as to the future. We both of us see and admit that Disraeli is fast failing, that Derby is on the whole the best successor: but we are agreed as to his defects, his increasing shyness, his dislike of religion, his dislike of all royal persons. We are equally agreed that a mere figure-head for the chief of the Government would be an utter mistake. I said that in some respects I should be glad to retire. He said this would be a great mistake, as that independently of my own office, it would be impossible to fill the particular position which I occupy in the Government. He then said he always looked to me to take the Foreign Office. I said little on this except that a complete reorganisation of the Office would be necessary.

[528]Selina Louisa Bridgeman (1819–1894), wife of Orlando George Charles Bridgeman, 3rd Earl of Bradford.

[529]The Circular on Fugitive Slaves was issued by the Admiralty on 31 July. It countermanded previous instructions and stated that slaves on board Royal Navy ships in territorial waters should be given up to their owners if requested.

[530]Carnarvon to Disraeli, 5 October 1875: Hughenden Papers, dep. 100/1, fos 18–19. See also Carnarvon to Derby, 4 October 1875: Derby Papers, 920 (DER 15) 16/2/4.

[531]Replying from France, Salisbury admitted, 'I was as much startled as you at the Admiralty circular. I cannot conceive who drafted it' (Salisbury to Carnarvon, 5 October 1875: CP, BL 60758, fo. 162).

[532]See Buckle, *Disraeli*, V, pp. 364–365.

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Thursday 7 October (Highclere)

Long talk with Greenwood.[533]

1. Asked his opinion as to cession of Gambia. He does not seem afraid of any misapprehension if the matter is properly explained, that it is an exchange rather than cession, and that it can be justified on trade grounds.

2. Discussed New Guinea and explained proposed answer. He said he thought nothing could be better.

3. Talked about the Slavery instructions issued by the Admiralty.

He is quite clear that the only thing to be done is to cancel them as a mistake. Any explanations would only lend to set them up, and give ground to belief that they had been considered and adopted deliberately; He said that the only reason why more had not been said or done was the general belief that it was all a mistake and that it was far better to "avow carelessness than error of judgment".

Long conversations with Sir G. Wolseley yesterday and today on Natal and Cape matters, the business part of which I have noted elsewhere.

As regards Sir H. Barkly he believes that it is only wise to remove him, that he cannot, whatever he may say, really give me support such as is necessary in this crisis. He advises the Duke of Manchester!!!

To my objections he repeats his belief that the Duke would answer with Froude by him and that his rank would carry so much weight that he would secure the end in view. I asked him whether he would go. He did not actually decline, but he represented several difficulties:

1. Sir A. Cunynghame, who is his senior.

2. Military contingencies abroad.

3. Doubt as to his success unless Delagoa Bay question can be solved. I think he might be induced to go, but he would not go very willingly. His repeated statement is that Delagoa Bay is the key of the whole question of Confederation.

Friday 15 October (Highclere)

Northcote and Lady N. came. His budget of news was considerable.

[533]Frederick Greenwood (1830–1909), editor of *The Queen* (1861–1863), of the *Cornhill Magazine* (1862–1868), and of the *Pall Mall Gazette* (1865–1880), founder of the *St James's Gazette* (1880).

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1. After much pushing and persuasion Disraeli had agreed to offer the Board of Trade to Cave.[534] Cave wishes for Cabinet: but his looking to the relative positions of Sclater Booth and Beach is impossible. Adderley on the other hand is to be offered the headship of the Civil Service Commission with £2,000 per annum as a new and third Commissioner. This I told Northcote was in my opinion a very doubtful proposition. It would not really save Adderley's fall and it would be open to grave objection.[535]

2. Northbrook has written to announce his resignation of India after the Prince of Wales's visit.[536] It will be very difficult to know how to fill up this great office. I urged strongly that the fact should not be mentioned at present. Something passed between us as to whether I should take it: but Northcote said that I could be very ill spared, which at this moment I believe to be true, and that a reconstruction of the Government would become necessary. He thought Richmond must go – so it would rid us of many difficulties and be no real loss, but I doubt his going.

3. Disraeli had screwed himself up to writing a letter to Hunt as to the *Vanguard* case.[537]

Northcote's general estimation of the position of the Government was little altered.

Thursday 4 November (London)

Cabinet

1. *Slave trade Circular* Cairns proposed to withdraw and substitute another set of instructions and this was finally agreed to: a Committee of Cabinet appointed consisting of him, Derby, and Hunt to draw up fresh rules. I suggested that before publicly promising fresh rules it would be nice to draw them and see if they would stand criticism, but

[534]Sir Steven Cave (1820–1880), Judge-Advocate-General and Paymaster-General since 1874, resigned because of ill-health in December 1875 and was sent on a special mission to Egypt. Carnarvon told Derby, 'Cave, I believe [is] the best man in every way. He knows too the office and the subject' (Carnarvon to Derby, 12 October 1875: Derby Papers, 920 (DER 15) 17/2/5).

[535]In the event, Sclater Booth remained at the Local Government Board and Adderley at the Board of Trade until August 1878.

[536]Northbrook had written to Salisbury at the India Office on 15 September asking him to lay before the Queen his request to resign his office in the spring of 1876.

[537]HMS *Vanguard* had sunk off Iceland after a collision with HMS *Iron Duke* on 1 September. A controversial court martial cleared Admiral Tarleton, who was in charge of the squadron, and relieved Lieutenant Evans, who was on watch on HMS *Iron Duke* at the time of the collision, of responsibility. The Admiralty later reversed the decisions, causing offence to public opinion.

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Disraeli was against any delay, and Cairns said he did not doubt being able to draw them. Agreed to issue a notice in the Papers.

2. *Vanguard minute* Hunt justified the minute, but the feeling of the Cabinet was against him and two real objections were expressed: 1. that it was not right to dismiss Lt. Evans of the *Iron Duke* without trial. 2. that it was wrong not to put Admiral Tarleton[538] on his trial. Generally the Cabinet was very forbearing to Hunt *personally* though the feeling that he had blundered was clear. Duke of Richmond alone showed some desire to attack him and make the worst of the case. The evil of all this is that Hunt is losing all influence and that any proposal which he may make, even in good will, will not be accepted.

3. *Brighton aquarium* Cross said that £3,000 penalties had been incurred by the Co. He proposed to remit them. Agreed.

4. *Alberta and Mistletoe Collision*[539] Hunt explained Admiralty private enquiry, and after discussion it was *on the whole* agreed that Capt. Welch should take the *Queen* over on 14 inst.

Friday 5 November (London)

This morning I received to my great surprise a letter from Disraeli in extremely handsome terms offering and indeed pressing me to accept the Governorship General of India.[540] I answered by requesting a few days to consider.[541] It is a very grave question in all respects public and private, but it is mainly on this latter head that I doubt. I have spoken privately to Herbert, Northcote and Salisbury. All three will be sorry to lose me and all three I think can advise well. I have written to Eveline and I have spoken to G. [Gwendoline] poor dear who was upset at the idea. The not least painful part of the matter is my Mother's health. I can hardly hope to see her again if I go, barring all accidents to myself.

Cabinet

1. Board of Trade and unseaworthy ships. Present staff ineffective and corrupt. 5 more surveyors needed, agreed to appoint them. Committee of Cabinet appointed to consider bill.

[538]Sir John Walter Tarleton (1811–1880), Vice-Admiral (1875), retired 1879.

[539]On 18 August, the Royal yacht *Alberta*, with the Queen on board, collided with a schooner, the *Mistletoe*, in the Solent, leading to two deaths. An Admiralty court of inquiry had exonerated the *Alberta*. This incident greatly distressed the Queen. On a visit to Balmoral shortly afterwards, Carnarvon observed, 'Dined with the Queen who after dinner could talk of little else than the *Mistletoe* collision' (Diary, 11 September 1875).

[540]Disraeli to Carnarvon, 5 November 1875: CP, BL 60763, fos 108–109.

[541]Carnarvon to Disraeli, 5 November 1875: Hughenden Papers, dep. 79/1, fo. 200.

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2. Foot and mouth disease. Disraeli suggested slaughtering all foreign cattle. Cabinet generally against this.

3. I received Ceylon telegraph as to Prince of Wales and cholera.

4. I explained as to murder of Resident at Perak.[542] Settled that I should have troops if needed.

5. I told Cabinet that a confidential paper on Gambia issued to one of them had got into the market. Everyone of course was innocent.

6. Settled to buy land in George Street.

7. Gunboats for China, agreed to postpone decision till end of November. Derby said he "could not guarantee peace".[543]

Saturday 6 November (Highclere – London)

Cabinet

1. Cairns' plan as to Appellate Jurisdiction of House of Lords, on whole accepted. I urged it, said be soon drafted, but Cairns much demurred to it. I guarded myself by saying that all depended on phraseology. Disraeli repeated several times that the tribunal should be brought as much as possible into close contact with House of Lords.

2. Civil Service changes recommended by Northcote, nothing settled.

3. Sir M. Beach's letter proposing great amount of Irish legislation, found little favour.

4. *Vanguard* reported to be hopelessly sunk. The divers cannot bear weight of water.

I saw Gull and consulted him as to India. He thinks that in point of health I can bear it and that in fact the winter would do me good: but, he is very strong against my overworking, also he thinks it far better that I should stay 2 or 3 years rather than 5 or 6. The children may go out for 3 months with safety. But he says that it is a very great sacrifice that I am making, and in almost all points of view it is. He examined me carefully and said that organically all is right.

I came down here, and I have tested Dolly and Mrs Mayson with the secret. It was indeed necessary to do so, for I required their advice.[544]

[542]James Wheeler Woodford Birch, British Resident, was murdered on 2 November. See P.L. Burns, *The Journals of J.W.W. Birch, First British Resident to Perak, 1874–1875* (Kuala Lumpur and London, 1976), pp. 36–37.

[543]Relations with China had deteriorated following the assassination in February of Augustus Raymond Margary of the Chinese consulate service and the tardiness of the Chinese government in agreeing to Britain's demand to establish a trade route across China from Burma.

[544]Carnarvon wrote to Disraeli on 8 November declining the post (Carnarvon to Disraeli, 8 November 1875: Hughenden Papers, dep. 79/1, fo. 208).

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Wednesday 10 November (London)

Cabinet

1. *Rising in Perak* decided that the 300 men should go at once to Hong Kong and that Viceroy should be requested to hold 1,000 men and artillery and mountain gun in readiness and select an officer to take command.[545] The general feeling of the Cabinet is strong in favour of sending sufficient men to suppress the rising. There is an understanding that the expense will have to fall on English Treasury. Telegram agreed to and sent.

2. Some discussion as to *Claremont and New Forest.*

3. Old proposal of last session to stop creation of *Irish Peers* will be revived next session. Discussion on this. Cairns disposed to give way. Disraeli denounced it as a violation of Act of Union. But this was violated in the Irish Church. General feeling of Cabinet that the movement in House of Lords would be too strong to resist.

4. *Burial Acts*. Cross undertook to have a bill prepared.

5. *Sclater Booth* called in and expounded generally a plan for formation of a county board to deal with highways and perhaps some other questions.[546] Settled that he should draw up his scheme. He proposes bills on pollution of mines, and on valuation (for counties?).

Thursday 11 November (London)

Cabinet

1. Heard just before the Cabinet that 300 men this morning sailed from Hong Kong for Penang and that General Colborne had gone with them. This is too bad thus to force himself into the command; the Viceroy had selected at the request of the Cabinet General Ross to take the command. I stated all this to the Cabinet and urged them to let me send Colborne back on *political grounds*. To this they greatly demur on the old notions of red tape and routine, Colborne being by experience, age, character, ability, temper, unfitted to command and Ross being specially selected. The question is postponed to tomorrow,

[545]Telegram detailing troop movements, Carnarvon to Ponsonby, 10 November 1875: Royal Archives, P24/170. Sir William Jervois (1821–1897), the High Commissioner, had issued a proclamation annexing Perak, contrary to Carnarvon's and the Cabinet's approval: this led to an uprising. On 7 December, a British force attacked a stockade, killing between sixty and eighty people. The commanding officers were Major-General Francis Colborne (1817–1895), commander in Hong Kong and the Straits Settlements, and General Sir John Ross (1829–1905), commander of the Laruf Field Force, Malay Peninsula from 1875.

[546]A Highways Bill was introduced in April 1876 but failed in July.

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and meanwhile I have written to the Duke of Cambridge a very hasty letter urging him to support Ross.[547]

2. Sir M. Beach called in. He said he had revoked proclamations in two Counties and directed Police to watch effect, and that if report should be satisfactory he proposed to proceed to revocation. He declares Ireland to be growing quieter every day, but that the North is restless on subject of land and tenant right. He names bills for next Session a) Judicature, b) Prisons, c) Juries, d) Lunatic Asylums.

3. Proposed to consider Enclosures question tomorrow.

Saturday 13 November (London)

A terribly hard day's work beginning with a conference with Northcote and J. Manners as to Cartwright's[548] proposal for a line of steamers from Ireland to Nova Scotia to do the voyage in 5 days, and railway across Canada and 12 days clear to Japan.

The best part of the day spent on Perak. Settled with Salisbury to await Jervois' answer before sending final orders to India to send off the troops. I am utterly disenchanted with Jervois. I believe he is getting up a little war of annexation but I am nearly powerless to stop it. At this distance I cannot take the responsibility of refusing the troops if he persists in calling for them.[549]

I am nearly worn out: for the last week I have hardly had half an hour to myself. The work has been overwhelmingly hard.

Sunday 14 November (London)

Dined with the Derbys. She did not know of the offer of India to me till Friday evening when Disraeli for the first time told

[547]The Commander-in-Chief of the Army, the Duke of Cambridge, informed Carnarvon, 'I wrote to [General Sir Richard] Airey to suggest that *Gen. Colborne* should be *ordered* to have command' (Duke of Cambridge to Carnarvon, 12 November 1875: CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/14, fo. 187). On 12 November, the Cabinet decided to leave Colborne in charge (Carnarvon to Duke of Cambridge, 12 November 1875: Royal Archives, Add. E1/747).

[548]Sir Richard John Cartwright (1835–1912), Canadian Finance Minister (1873–1878), acting Prime Minister (1897, 1907).

[549]Carnarvon to Jervois, 13 November 1875 (copy): CP, BL 60761, fos 137–138. On the same day, Carnarvon informed the Queen that he had written to Jervois on three successive days for 'clear and full explanations of his intentions and objects, without a reply' (Carnarvon to Queen Victoria, 13 November 1875: Royal Archives, P24/175). Salisbury commented, 'A more unsatisfactory explanation of a war I never read' (Salisbury to Carnarvon, 13 November 1875: CP, TNL, PRO 30/6/10). Matters were made worse by the breaking of the telegraph wire between Madras and Penang. Carnarvon remarked, 'It deprives me of all real control over Jervois who will now, I presume carry out his annexation scheme' (Diary, 15 November 1875).

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Derby.[550] He talked much after dinner on many things. I see that she dreams of an old Whig or Liberal combination under Derby as a Premier, but I told her that there was little chance of any but a few discontented men who would only bring themselves, no followers.

Tuesday 16 November (London)

Again a wonderful proposal to me. Northcote came to me to tell me that Disraeli is in very great difficulties not only as to the Board of Trade but as to Hunt, that Cairns is constantly pressing on him Hunt's incapacity and that he himself feels a change is necessary: that Disraeli is at his wits ends and that the only solution that he can think of is for me to take the Admiralty. This however is not a proposal and may not become one but is merely the present outcome of his state of despair at the circumstances. I said that it took me entirely by surprise and that of course *if necessary* I would do anything I could in England to make matters work but that it was altogether a serious change. The desire on Disraeli's part (if it came to that point) seems to be quite genuine. He really does not know exactly where to turn.

The Duke of Cambridge came to me at the Colonial Office to talk about Perak.[551] I read him the telegrams, etc. and then I pressed most strongly on him the question of increasing the troops in Natal.

Wednesday 17 November (London)

Cabinet

1. Derby announced that he had received from a private informant news that the Khedive[552] was in difficulties and was preparing to sell his shares (bought at £7,000,000 – worth £4,000,000) to the French

[550]Lady Derby had written two days earlier, 'I know the secret – but only this evening. Robert told Stanley yesterday. You can't think how well I diplomatised last night to discover if S. knew anything' (Lady Derby to Carnarvon, 12 November 1875: CP, BL 60765, fo. 98). Disraeli had consulted Salisbury about Northbrook's successor from the outset. Lady Derby asked Disraeli as early as 5 November if there was any truth in the rumour about Northbrook's resignation (Buckle, *Disraeli*, V, p. 436).

[551]Following the meeting, the order was given to increase the force to 3,000 men, including two regiments of Indian troops (Carnarvon to Ponsonby, 16 November 1875: Royal Archives, P 25/1).

[552]Ishmael Pasha (1830–1895), Khedive of Egypt (1867), deposed in 1879.

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Société Générale.[553] He telegraphed to Stanton[554] who confirmed the news. Disraeli put the question what we could do and it was carried at once by a sort of whirlwind of argument that Derby would telegraph immediately to say that we would buy if terms could be settled. There was no difference of opinion though it should be said that Cairns, Salisbury and myself with Derby were the only persons who said anything. This suggests a rather serious inference, by the way.

2. I gave the latest accounts of Perak.

3. We discussed Education. *General* feeling in favour of doing something for the Union Party and Schools.

I received this morning a letter from Disraeli asking me to come to him after the Cabinet. I accordingly went and he at once with very little preface said that Hunt had blundered to such an extent that it was necessary to make a change and – would I take the Admiralty. A good deal of conversation ensued of which the following cover the main points.

1. I urged that I could not whilst ready to give any help act ungenerously to Hunt. He charged himself with this and said he could make it pleasant!!! to him.

2. I warned him he would be removing a successful minister from the midst of successful work into other work where success was at least very uncertain.

3. I said that I thought it might be a great mistake *from Government point of view* to remove Hunt.

4. That if I did go I should need, I was sure, an entire change of persons at the Admiralty. To all this he merely replied that a change ought to be made and that he felt sure I could be successful.[555]

I asked to consult Salisbury and Northcote. Salisbury entirely agrees with me, but admits the difficulty of my persistently refusing.

Thursday 18 November (London)

I had a considerable talk with Disraeli as to his offer of the Admiralty. I said 1) that affairs at the Colonial Office were such and so critical

[553]The Suez Canal was completed in 1869 by Ferdinand de Lesseps (1805–1894). Of the 400,000 ordinary shares of the canal, the Khedive held almost half. Frederick Greenwood, editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, informed Derby on 15 November that the bankrupt Khedive was about to sell his shares to a French company.

[554]Gen. Sir Edward Stanton (1827–1907), agent and Consul-General of Egypt.

[555]Carnarvon, as was his practice when decisions had to be made, drew up a memorandum stating the pros and cons of accepting. See 'Memorandum as to Admiralty', 17 November 1875: CP, BL 60763, fos 119–121.

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that it would be *very unfortunate now* to remove me. 2) I urged that it was premature to move Hunt, that he had declared he could defend himself and had appealed to Cave; that it would be regarded as a sacrifice of him, etc. 3) I urged as strongly as I could that he should at least wait till the meeting of Parliament, when if matters were in a satisfactory state I would reconsider the matter 4) that if I did then undertake the Admiralty I should need both a change of persons and probably a change in the constitution of the Office, that as far as I knew the First Lord had not sufficient independent power. He denied this and said that Hunt had declared that he was "Lord Paramount". He listened rather gloomily like a man unconvinced but the final conclusion I understood to be that it should all stand over. One very curious thing occurred. He said the Duke of Richmond had called on him and declared the party in the House of Lords was becoming unmanageable through annoyance at Hunt's blunder. I said at once, "I do not believe a word of it". He said that "the managers of the Party" had so informed Richmond. I asked who? He said probably Colville. I replied, "All I know that Colville last summer did not conceal his strong opinion of the complete mismanagement of the Party by the Duke of Richmond."

Cabinet

1. Suez Canal question. Stanton had telegraphed that Viceroy would not sell his shares without giving us notice and that he would give us the option of purchasing. On discussing the matter further, great doubt as to the nature of the shares arose. No shareholder can have more than 10 votes, which is a serious drawback.
2. Education.

Friday 19 November (London – Munden – Watford)

Cabinet principally engaged in discussing the new regulations to Queen's ships in place of the condemned Slavery Circular. Cairns had drawn them and as usual with great ingenuity; but there were still many expressions that would have brought down much opposition. Some of these we succeeded in removing but it is very doubtful whether our wisest plan would not be to withdraw the instructions altogether. Even these amended instructions are open to severe criticism and will do the Government no good. However the majority of the Cabinet are in favour of issuing them. Meanwhile the Law Officers object to them and they must be heard on the subject.

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I came down here to Sir H. Hollands.[556] The Northcotes, R. Herbert and Venables[557] the only other people. I have heard a good deal from Holland who sees many of the House of Commons people at the Carlton as to Hunt. There *does* seem to be a much stronger feeling than I thought as to his incapacity but it is hard to say exactly what it amounts to.

Monday 22 November (London)

Cabinet

1. Fresh telegram from Singapore and long despatch: a letter from Sir W. Jervois with the proclamation, announcing the virtual annexation of the Province, an outrageous act. Told the Cabinet and proposed to censure Sir W. J. but not to change horses crossing the stream.

2. *Suez Canal* affair. The matter seems to have got out of our hands for the moment. *Virtually* agreed to leave the question in Disraeli's hands, to buy the shares if he gets the chance.

3. *Slavery Circular*. Amended copy. Law Officers objection considered, and Cabinet agreed to over-rule them. I tried to get them to soften them down still more and warned them that the whole question was as delicate and dangerous as possible, but they went on with evident misgivings and finally decided to issue them at once.

4. Sclater Booth's proposals for highway boards and Company organisation – nothing actually decided.

Wednesday 24 November (London)

Cabinet

Very long sitting. 3 hours. One half at least as to Suez Canal affair. Cabinet of opinion that the Khedive's shares should be secured so far as possible. Agreed to advance him the money supposed to be required should that appear to be the only mode of action.

[556]Sir Henry Thurstan Holland (1825–1914), Con. MP for Midhurst (1874–1885) and for Hampstead (1885–1888), Financial Secretary to the Treasury (1885), Vice-President, Committee of Council on Education (1885–1886), Colonial Secretary (1887–1892), 1st Viscount Knutsford (1895).

[557]George Stovin Venables (1810–1888), journalist and barrister. Contributed to the *Saturday Review* (1855) and *The Times* (1857–1888).

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I read telegram just received from Sir. W. Jervois. Opinion of Cabinet was strong that Sir W. J. has behaved ill. Wrote to the Queen afterwards.[558]

Law Officers objections to the Slavery Circular considered and set aside, the Circular finally amended and agreed (though somewhat against my view and Salisbury's) to issue it at once.

Question raised by Hunt as to asking for tenders for the raising of the *Vanguard*: agreed to. Also as to retaining counsel in the case of the *Mistletoe* Coroners Jury: agreed.

Thursday 25 November (London)

Cabinet

1. Suez Canal. Disraeli announced a new phase. It is no longer a question of advancing money on the Khedive's shares but a distinct offer on his part to sell for £4,000,000 with interest at 5 per cent till at the end of the 19 years the shares become free from the mortgage on them and become our absolute property. We telegraphed at once to accept the offer.[559]

2. I read the last telegram from Sir. W. Jervois which Disraeli declared to be very "pernitical",[560] and I told the Cabinet what I proposed generally to do in the way of announcing Sir W. J.'s last despatches [. . .].

A very singular paragraph appeared in the *Post* stating Hunt's resignation and H. Lennox's probable appointment to the Admiralty. Who can have inspired it?[561]

[558]'Sir W. Jervois must of course be disapproved for an act which, intentionally or not, is subordinate in the highest degree' (Carnarvon to Queen Victoria, 24 November 1875: Royal Archives, P25/5).

[559]Disraeli triumphantly wrote to the Queen, 'It is just settled: you have it, Madam. The French Government has been out-generaled' (Buckle, *Disraeli*, V, p. 448). Carnarvon wrote at length to Disraeli four days later, urging that the government 'pause before we make a gratuitous offer to share the advantage we have secured with others' (Carnarvon to Disraeli, 29 November 1875: Hughenden Papers, dep. 100/1, fo. 124). He also told Heathcote, 'We firmly believe the value of the move was moral and political rather than financial' (Carnarvon to Heathcote, 26 November 1875: CP, BL 61074, fo. 4).

[560]The telegram was sent by Carnarvon to Disraeli before the Cabinet meeting (Carnarvon to Disraeli, 25 November 1875: CP, BL 60763, fos 122–124).

[561]In fact, Ward Hunt remained at the Admiralty until August 1877. Lord Henry Lennox (1821–1886), Disraeli's protégé, proved a failure as First Commissioner of Works and left the Government in August 1876. For an example of Lennox's incompetence, see Lord Redesdale, *Memories*, 2 vols (London, 1915), II, pp. 683–684.

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Friday 26 November (London)

As usual a very busy day – what days are not? – but at 3 p.m. I got the telegram (in circulation) announcing that the bargain with the Khedive was completed:[562] and at 5.15 I met Delane who asked me if it was true and gave me all details. The Khedive must have communicated them at once. I telegraphed the news to Disraeli who is at Windsor.

Tuesday 30 November (Highclere)

A hard day's work. Heard from the Prince of Wales through Knollys asking us "advice and assistance" as to his money affairs in India.[563] I wrote to Salisbury at once and I think the request for an increase of money with which to make suitable presents is really very reasonable.[564] His progress through India has become a great state affair.

Thursday 2 December (Highclere)

Evidence keeps pouring in to shun the general belief in poor Hunt's incompetency at the Admiralty. I believe it is in a certain degree unreasonable, though I do not think he is a strong man for the post; but everything that goes wrong will be more or less credited to his account.

Thursday 16 December (Highclere)

Northcote and I had much conversation on many subjects. There are a good many clouds on the horizon and I see that he expects a stormy and a disagreeable session. Our chief change is probably in ourselves and in the happy-go-lucky fashion in which most things arrange themselves.[565]

[562]'You will have seen this morning that the cat is out of the bag and that the Papers have heard of our financial operation' (Carnarvon to Hardy, 26 November 1875: CP, TNL, PRO 30/6/12).

[563]The Prince and his party left for India on 11 October and landed at Bombay on 8 November. From there he travelled to Goa and Ceylon, reaching Colombo on 1 December.

[564]Carnarvon to Salisbury, 30 November 1875 (copy): CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/10, fos 73–74. Parliament had allowed £52,000 to be spent on the Prince's transport and another £60,000 for personal expenditure, including gifts to native rulers.

[565]See Northcote to Carnarvon, 18 December 1875: CP, TNA, PRO 30/6/7, fos 107–108.

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Sandon and Richmond have had a rather serious quarrel, on the old subject. Richmond treats S. as a mere under Secretary and indeed with hardly the attention which most chiefs would pay to their under Secretaries, and S. says (and here reasonably enough) that he stands in the House of Commons on a different footing. It seems the quarrel went so far that S. was on the point of resigning. It was made up, but Richmond's ungracious manner and want of tact, and Sandon's sensitiveness will, it is likely, bring about at no distant time some fresh collision.[566]

Much talk also as to the Admiralty. I cannot but see that the shadow of that office grows more and more visible and though I shrink from it I suspect that I shall have to take it. Curious fate!

Heard from Lytton who has had the offer of India. His letter was very characteristic, very much pleased, very anxious to accept, but held back by certain considerations of health which he set forth to me. I wrote to him to encourage him to undertake it.[567] It was curious that he should write to me for my advice.

[566]In November, the Cabinet decided to undertake legislation on compulsory education. Richmond, the Lord President, insisted that he should introduce the bill in the Lords. Sandon, his Vice-President, was equally adamant that he should introduce it in the Commons. Disraeli had to intervene and the bill was dropped. To Sandon's satisfaction the bill was accepted by the Cabinet on 2 February 1876. See P. Gordon, 'Lords President and Vice-Presidents of the Committee of Council on Education: personalities and policies, 1856–1902', in D. Halpin and P. Walsh (eds), *Educational Commonplaces: essays to honour Denis Lawton* (London, 2005), pp. 164–167.

[567]Carnarvon to Lytton, 16 December 1875: Lytton Papers, Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, D/Ek c 36/47. Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton (1831–1891), 1st Earl of Lytton (1880), was offered the Viceroyalty on 13 December, after the post had been refused by the Earl of Powis, Manners, and Carnarvon. Lytton accepted on 5 January 1876. Derby doubted the wisdom of the appointment on account of his 'weak health and a dreamy absent habit of mind' (Vincent, *Derby*, II, p. 265).

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