1859

Friday 1 July

Since last I wrote the events of the Session, a change has taken place both as regard myself and the Government. We are no longer in Office though the length of the Session and the obstinacies of the new Ministry are matters of very considerable doubt and uncertainty. Palmerston is once more at the helm and the Tories though stronger as a party both numerically and from the prestige of a successful administration than they have been for many years, are again under the shade of opposition. It remains therefore only to note the main circumstances which have occurred up to the present date.

I spent with the exception of a few days in the country the whole summer, the whole autumn and the winter in London. Merivale[39] left England some time I think in October and Sir E. Lytton was chiefly at Knebworth. His health began to show signs of an incapacity to bear the ordinary amount of business and as Elliot[40] could only deal with the usual work and some few additional subjects the main pressure devolved upon me. This however was what I desired and I do not think that, from that time to the present, during which the general administration of the Office passed into my hands and rested practically with me, I have ever wished it to be otherwise. The experience has been greater than normally falls to the majority of men in my position, and I feel that I have gained considerably by it both in actual knowledge and in a greater sense of self-reliance.

It has also been my good fortune during these 9 or 10 months to steer clear of mistakes and to involve neither the Government nor Sir E. Lytton in any real embarrassment. For the last three months of Office, I may say that I alone managed the Office, as Sir Edward was too unwell to attend to any business and as Merivale was again absent in France: but during the autumn and winter, my usual plan of proceeding was to deal with all matters which I felt required an early settlement and either to refer to Sir E. Lytton only those affairs on which it was absolutely necessary that he should be informed or to refer them in such an advanced stage that there need be little or

[39]Herman Merivale (1806–1874), Permanent Under-Secretary for the Colonial Office (1848–1859) and for the India Office (1859–1874).

[40]Sir Thomas Elliot (1808–1880), Assistant Under-Secretary, Colonial Office (1847–1868).

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no delay in securing their completion. Nevertheless, I have frequently felt that the responsibility which I thus assumed, though absolutely necessary, was a severe burden, and called for no slight exercise of tact and discretion towards him.

During the autumn, the Canadian, the Nova Scotian and the New Brunswick Ministers came to this country to discuss with the Imperial Government the schemes for a federation of the North America Colonies and the completion of the Intercolonial Railway.[41] The first of these, I soon ascertained, originated only in the necessities of local politics and of the Canadian Government who were trembling on the verge of dissolution: the second practically amounted to the demand for a large pecuniary contribution from the funds of this country to a great Speculation, which however useful and comprehensive in its objects was hardly worth £1,500,000 at our hands. Both questions were considered with care and attention and I have by me most of the confidential papers and minutes on which it was decided to decline a compliance with the several schemes. But there was this difference, that whilst a gift of money would be refused broadly on financial grounds, it was necessary to evade rather than refuse the proposal of Federation which rested on and could be argued only on political reasons.

An opening for this was fortunately found in the evident contrariety and interests on the part of several North American Colonies and the reluctance of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to come into the proposal, afforded us the opportunity of shelving the question, which I think ought never to have been brought forward by Sir E. Head[42] in Canada without the express sanction of the Secretary of State as was undoubtedly the case.

Failing however as the Canadian Ministers did in the political objects of their mission, I do not think that they returned home altogether discontented. Sir Edward asked them to spend a few days with him at Knebworth and I afterwards invited them to Highclere where I fortunately succeeded in amusing and pleasing them. Cartier,[43] the Attorney-General and Prime Minister, Galt,[44] who represented the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Ross,[45] were our

[41] For the list of ministers, see Hardinge, I, p. 123.

[42] Sir Edmund Walker Head (1805–1868), Lieutenant-Governor, New Brunswick (1847–1854), Governor-General, Canada (1854–1861).

[43] Sir George-Étienne Cartier (1814–1873), Member, Lower Canada Legislature (1848), Attorney-General, Canada East (1856), Prime Minister (1858–1862), Attorney-General (1864), Minister of Militia (1867–1873).

[44] Alexander Tilloch Galt (1817–1893), Inspector-General (1858–1862), Minister of Finance, Canada (1867–1872), High Commissioner in England (1880–1883).

[45] John Ross (1818–1871), Solicitor-General, Canada West (1851–1854), Leader and Speaker of the Legislative Council (1854–1856), Receiver-General (1858), President of the Executive Council and Minister of Agriculture (1858–1862).

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guests and on the whole they were agreeably and easily disposed to be pleased with any civilities on our part. I subsequently asked the Nova Scotian Prime Minister, Tupper, and Smith and Fisher;[46] the New Brunswickers, to Highclere and succeeded also in pleasing them. I am indeed convinced of this, that a Colonial Minister in this country with sufficient tact and etc. might produce an influence on the minds of Colonists which as yet has had no precedent. Their experience of England where they know no one of any position and where they receive none of the courtesies and attention which can so easily be paid is very dull, and their knowledge of the Colonial Office where Merivale sees them and talks to them on little else than public business and where the Secretary of State can give them but five or ten minutes conversation is little less prepossessing in favour of the Mother Country. I have uniformly found that the little attention which I was able to show was repaid tenfold by the disproportionate gratitude which it called for and Sir Edward's particular felicity of expression in all his speeches on Colonial subjects far above the level of a vast majority of Colonial Ministers for many years past – produced a satisfactory impression. In this manner, the Canadian dinner at which we both were present was very successful. My speech which I was not myself disposed to rate highly, was certainly extremely successful and won considerable praise from Lytton.

But as the autumn wore on an important event took place in which I had some considerable share. Affairs for a long time past had been growing more and more perplexing in the Ionian Islands where the Grey–Seaton Constitution of 1849 was bearing the fruits of its impractical nature.[47] Sir E. Head had declared that it was "workable by human power" and Sir J. Young[48] with good temper and a general good disposition to do what was right by the Islands, was alike ignorant of the work to be done and incompetent to perform it, even if dictated by others. One error led to another and before long confusion became so inextricable that it was even then that the mistakes could only be

[46]Sir Charles Tupper (1821–1915), Con. Member, Legislative Council, Nova Scotia (1855), Prime Minister (1864–1867), member of the federal Cabinet (1870), Minister of Railways and Canals (1879–1884), Prime Minister of Canada (1896). Sir Albert James Smith (1822–1883), member of Executive Council, New Brunswick (1854–1862), Attorney-General (1861–1862). Charles Fisher (1808–1880), leader of the New Brunswick reform movement (from 1837), Prime Minister (1854–1861).

[47]Drawn up by John Colborne (1778–1863), 1st Baron Seaton (1839), Governor, Ionian Islands (1843–1849) and Sir Henry Grey (1802–1894), Viscount Howick (1807), 3rd Earl Grey (1845), Colonial Secretary (1846–1852). The constitution of May 1849 established a new system of government, allowing for freedom of election to the Assembly, voting by ballot, and the reduction of qualifications for the franchise.

[48]Sir John Young (1807–1876), Baron Lisgar (1870). Con. MP for Co. Cavan (1831–1835), Chief Secretary of State for Ireland (1852–1855), Lord High Commissioner, Ionian Islands (1855–1859); he opposed union with Greece.

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corrected by some fresh person on the spot. I disagreed indeed with the view which Sir E. Lytton took of the course to be pursued and was in favour of more stringent measures than any which he would sanction but before long the matter passed beyond the stage of consultation and forced upon us the alternative either of recalling Sir J. Young or of sending some special Commissioner to enquire into the state of things, and suggest remedies and if necessary to act. Many names occurred to us but among others I suggested that of Gladstone.

I have become aware through R. Phillimore[49] earlier in the year that he was growing restless of inaction – at least, this was my inference – and that he was actually ready to accept the Embassy to Naples if, as was then the report, we were on the eve of renewing diplomatic relations with the Neapolitan Court. At that time I mentioned this to Malmesbury[50] as I considered it right that he should know it. He however only replied that relations were not to be renewed, but if they were, the sending of Gladstone after the course which he had adopted on Neapolitan affairs "would be a diplomatic impossibility". This therefore fell to the ground; but the wish to attach Gladstone to the Government and the Party remained strongly in mind as I had fair ground for supposing that if he were really willing to go as Minister to Naples he might not be indisposed to undertake a special Commission on the case of a nation or country where his sympathies were more warmly enlisted even than they were in that of Poerio and the Neapolitan prisoners.[51]

I accordingly proposed to Sir E. Lytton that he should write to him to make him the offer and etc; after much consultation it was decided in the affirmative and a note was despatched to Gladstone which found him on a visit at Lord Aberdeen's.[52] He wrote cautiously but came up to town and when night had fairly closed in a long November evening he made his appearance at the Colonial Office under the cover of the friendly shades. Two weeks or so then followed of endless explanations, conversations, interviews and letters and it

[49]Sir Robert Phillimore (1810–1885), Lib.-Con. MP for Tavistock (1852–1857), Judge, High Court of Admiralty (1867), created baronet (1883).

[50]James Howard Harris (1807–1889), 3rd Earl of Malmesbury (1841). Foreign Secretary (1852, 1858–1859), Lord Privy Seal (1866–1868, 1874–1876), Con. Leader in the House of Lords (1868).

[51]Carlo Poerio (1803–1867), politician, lawyer, and poet. Minister of Education, Naples (1848–1849); resigned, and then led parliamentary opposition to Ferdinand II. He was arrested and sentenced to nineteen years' imprisonment in chains. Gladstone's report in 1851, drawing attention to the inhumane conditions under which Poeiro and the other political prisoners were being held, caused an international furore.

[52]George Hamilton-Gordon (1784–1860), 4th Earl of Aberdeen (1801). Peelite Leader, House of Lords (from 1846), Prime Minister (1852–1855). For a fuller background of events leading to the offer to Gladstone, see Diary, 8 January 1884.

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was to the astonishment of all London suddenly made known one morning in the papers that Mr Gladstone was to proceed as High Commissioner Extraordinary to the Ionian Islands.

When once the decision was taken all the steps preliminary to embarkation were rapidly hurried over. But scarcely had Gladstone left this country when a great catastrophe took place which disturbed all our calculations, nearly brought him back again to England, and certainly neutralised the object and intention of the mission. The confidential despatches and papers bearing on the various Ionian questions had been confidentially printed for our use, and one of the copies was seen, through the carelessness of the Librarian in the Library by an unprincipled friend, who stole the document and conveyed it to the *Daily News*, the Editor of which very much to his discredit gave it publicity in his columns.[53] The despatch was precisely the one which at that moment it was desirable should never see the light, and advocating as it did the abandonment of the Protectorate over the southern islands, it was supposed to give the key to Gladstone's mission, its publicity was attributed to design on the part of the Government, and the ferment and confusion which it created here, at the foreign Courts and in the Ionian Islands were very great. Gladstone unquestionably behaved well: for though his friends were indignant and chose to attribute every unworthy and fraudulent motive to the Government, urging him in letters to throw up the mission and to return, he at once stated his belief in our honesty and proceeded to his original destination.

In the due course of time he arrived there to meet an excited people in the Ionians who were persuaded that annexation to Greece was at hand in the persons of Sir John and Lady Young, who gave him no cordial welcome. The accounts of Mr A. Gordon[54] who accompanied G. as private Secretary, of the various encounters and especially among the ladies on either side were highly amusing: but Sir J. Young allowed himself, I think, in one or two instances, to be led too far by his wife. The great gravamen was that no accommodation was provided for Gladstone except two bedrooms and a dressing room!

Time, however, passed on. Gladstone examined and wrote voluminous letters and reports, a large part of which were printed confidentially and give a fair idea of the general course of the inquiry:

[53]Thomas Walker (1822–1895), editor of the *Daily News* (1858–1869) and of the *London Gazette* (1869–1885). See 'Mission of Mr Gladstone to the Ionian Islands', *Daily News*, 5 November 1858, p. 4. The despatch was published in the paper on 12 November.

[54]Arthur Charles Hamilton-Gordon (1829–1912), KCMG (1871), 1st Baron Stanmore (1893). Lib. MP for Beverley (1854–1857), Gladstone's private secretary (1858–1859), Lieutenant-Governor, New Brunswick (1861–1866), Governor of Trinidad (1866–1870), of Mauritius (1871–1874), of Fiji (1875–1878), and of Ceylon (1885–1890).

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and step by step it became evident, as the matter developed still further, that Sir J. Young must be recalled and that Gladstone must take the Government of the Islands, provisionally at all events. Numberless points of difficulty arose in carrying this decision into effect. One of the most embarrassing was when Gladstone would not render himself ineligible for a seat in Parliament by accepting a place of emolument even though he did not accept the normal salary attached to the place. This difficulty was at last overcome by the "dodge" of appointing him Lord High Commissioner and delaying the moving of his writ for a new election to the last possible moment. As soon as the writ for a successor was appointed in the person of Sir H. Storks,[55] he was sent to Malta and instructed to issue a power to Gladstone to act as his deputy whilst he remained absent from the seat of his government.

This on the whole was tolerably successful and Gladstone was enabled to bring forward his proposals of reform, the outline of which he had communicated to us in his several reports and despatches. I for one did not agree in the scheme which he proposed and I doubt whether Sir Edward did not consider them misplaced and mistimed in several important particulars; but the difficulty of resisting Gladstone – who was on the spot exercising full powers and ready to turn upon us in England, supported as he would have been by a considerable party of friends and neutrals who would have agreed readily in saying or doing anything to embarrass the Government – was very great and where doubts might reasonably be maintained, I do not blame anyone for striking the balance of these doubts in favour of concurring with and thereby conciliating Gladstone.

I was however questioned by Lord Grey in the House of Lords as to the concurrence of the Government in their proposed reforms and was obliged to answer in the affirmative: on which Lord Grey fixed a day for the discussion of the whole question. I should have been glad to have had the opportunity of thus discussing the matter, inconsistent as the policy was, which I should have been obliged to defend with my own views: but after fixing and re-fixing the days on which the debate should take place it was at last finally deferred *sine die* at the request of Lord Derby who urged the public inexpediency of a discussion in Parliament at the present time. The question curiously enough was never raised in the House of Commons and scarcely had it blown over in our House when the news arrived that the Assembly had refused the offer which Gladstone had made them. I had had during the month before the meeting of Parliament the opportunity of saying a few words upon the subject at the Fishmongers' Dinner, but with the exception of that and of the

[55]Sir Henry Knight Storks (1811–1874), High Commissioner, Ionian Islands (1859–1863), Governor of Malta (1864–1865) and of Jamaica (1865–1866), lieutenant-general (1871).

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short discussion in the House of Lords, nothing passed on the Ionian question.[56]

Opportunities of speaking on Colonial matters or indeed on any other matter were infrequent during the winter. Just before the meeting of Parliament, Lytton went to the Australian dinner and I went also. We both spoke but there was less interest than at the Indian meeting. Generally speaking the Australians are men of a lower calibre than the Canadians and the New Zealand Colonists, though intellectually of considerable power, are morally lower than the Australians. This at least has been the inference which I have drawn both from the legislation of the Colonies of Australia and New Zealand and from individuals with whom I have been brought into contact. The New Zealand Colonist is generally cleverer but he is shifty and unreliable, ready to take advantage of you whenever an occasion presents itself and withal very sensitive and even touchy.

During the autumn the Cabinet met very often and I was aware that they were engaged by means of a Committee of their members in framing a Reform bill. I had a general idea of the course which they were about to take and which on the whole was pretty nearly that which they finally adopted. But I felt sure at the time that they were falling into a mistake and I told Lytton as much. The mistake was the taking of such a man as Rose[57] into counsel. I told Lytton that I felt certain that if they trusted to him for figures and calculations they would be mistaken, for he was both sanguine and inaccurate. They, however, consulted him then and they consulted him again, I suspect, as to the dissolution: his opinion was, I know, wrong in the latter, and I believe it was equally incorrect in the former. With February, however, came Parliament and the first real question was Reform. Some few topics as to Jamaican Immigration[58] which the Anti-Slavery Society wished us to disallow and which I had infinite trouble in persuading Lytton to confirm, as to Ionian affairs, and as to the transfer of the Straits Settlement to the Colonial Office,[59] were discussed in the House of Lords, but no debate of importance took place. But with regard to Reform our position became immediately one of very great difficulty.[60]

[56]See *Hansard*, CLII, 17 February 1859, Carnarvon, cols 463–465, Grey, cols 463, 465–466. The Ionian Islands were evacuated and handed over to Greece on 2 June 1864.

[57]Sir Philip Rose (1816–1883), 1st Baronet Rose (1874), Conservative Party agent. He wrote to Disraeli on 12 August 1858, 'I had my first Reform interview with Lord Derby yesterday. It lasted for nearly *three* hours' (Buckle, *Disraeli*, IV, p. 182).

[58]The Jamaican Immigration Act, which had been framed by the Jamaican House of Assembly the previous year, encouraged immigration to the country. Stanley, then Colonial Secretary, had sent it back, but Carnarvon favoured the Act: *Hansard*, CLII, 8 February 1859, col. 170.

[59]Singapore. Resolution. *Hansard*, CLII, 10 March 1859, Carnarvon, cols 1605–1606.

[60]The 1859 Reform Bill left the borough franchise unchanged, reduced the occupation franchise in counties from £50 to £10, transferred the right of voting in regard to town

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The debate came on and a junction between Palmerston and Lord John became manifest, and after very able speeches on both sides, the Government was left in a minority of thirty-nine. That the secession of Henley[61] and Walpole was the cause of this large defeat is certainly untrue; but I do not doubt that their secession and the general belief entertained on both sides that there would be no dissolution unless the majority should be a very slender one, contributed to the result. The decision to dissolve was taken on the following day; but not without much opposition and difference of opinion in the Cabinet. Lytton was particularly averse to the measure and when he told me of it afterwards, he went so far as to say that it was the most fatal step since Charles I dissolved his Parliament. Roebuck[62] also, whom I met at the Levée and took home in I my carriage as his own was not to be found, deplored the decision to dissolve, saying that we were ringing our death-knell. For my own part, I felt inclined to regret it also, and had I been in the Cabinet should, I think, have voted for a resignation. I was however otherwise determined and the General Election came on. We were not attacked in North Hampshire as the Whigs could not find one man who could be well put forward but in the Hundred of Cricklade whither I sent Auberon[63] to canvass for Mr Goddard.[64] Sir

freehold from counties to towns where freeholds were located, and did nothing to enfranchise the working classes. On 21 March, in a heated debate in the House, Russell moved an amendment on the bill's second reading. Supported by Palmerston, it was carried on 1 April by 330 to 291 votes. Derby did not resign but decided to fight a general election, which proved to be indecisive. Five days after a meeting with the Liberal Party on 6 June, which cemented the Russell–Palmerston alliance, the Government resigned; Palmerston became the new Prime Minister. See S. Walpole, *The Life of Lord John Russell*, 2 vols (London, 1889), II, pp. 302–309; H.C.F. Bell, *Lord Palmerston*, 2 vols (London, 1936), II, pp. 206–207; J.H. Harris, 3rd Earl of Malmesbury, *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister: an autobiography* (London, 1885), pp. 490–492.

[61]Joseph Warner Henley (1793–1884), Con. MP for Oxfordshire (1848–1871), President of the Board of Trade (1852, 1858–1859). Although it was inevitable that Henley and Walpole's dissatisfaction over the Reform Bill would lead to their resignation, they postponed taking this step, at Derby's request, until late February 1859.

[62]John Arthur Roebuck (1801–1879), Lib. MP for Sheffield (1849–1869, 1874–1879).

[63]Auberon Edward William Molyneux Herbert (1838–1906), Carnarvon's younger brother. Secretary to Stafford Northcote, President of the Board of Trade in Derby's 1866 administration, Lib. MP for Nottingham (1870–1874). Political philosopher and follower of Herbert Spencer. Beatrice Webb called him 'an enthusiast, a Don Quixote of the nineteenth century, who had left the real battle of life to fight a strange ogre of his own imagination – an *always immoral State interference*' (B. Webb, *My Apprenticeship* (Cambridge, 1979, facsimile of 1926 1st edition), p. 189.

[64]Ambrose Lethbridge Goddard (1819–1898), Con. MP for Cricklade (1847–1868, 1874–1880).

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John Neeld[65] lost his seat.[66] On the whole we gained some thirty seats which was less than was necessary to retain us in Office.[67]

From this time Lytton, whose health gave way after a very brilliant speech on the Reform bill, withdrew entirely from any part either in the Cabinet or the Colonial Office. His nerves were for the time completely broken and the Doctors thought very ill of him. I had had for several months the chief management of the Office and therefore I found less difficulty in assuring the entire conduct of it, and perhaps all the more that Merivale left England for a month in order to bring back Mrs. M. from Nice.

Under ordinary circumstances there would probably not be very much to be done during such an interval as that which now passed. But there were many points of importance which Lytton had refrained from settling and then I determined at once to deal with, that if, as I expected, the result of Elections should be unfavourable I might hand over the Office clear of arrears to our successors. And this I succeeded in doing, for when the Duke of Newcastle[68] came to the Colonial Office he found nothing except the current business and that which could not by any effort on my part or the part of others be decided without further correspondence. Other matters also of very considerable consequence grew up during these two months with which I had to deal exclusively.

Of these the main affairs which, as far as I can remember that I decided are as follows:

1. *New Zealand Acts*
2. *Increase of Australia Squadron*
3. *Military Defence of the Colonies*
4. *Recall of Sir G. Grey*[69] *from the Cape.* This was necessitated against my will by Sir G. Grey's perverse disobedience.[70] Among other schemes

[65]Sir John Neeld (1805–1891), Con. MP for Cricklade (1835–1859) and for Chippenham (1865–1868).

[66]The election was on 30 April. Goddard headed the poll with 745 votes; Lord Ashley, the Liberal candidate, was second with 743. Neeld attracted only 712 votes.

[67]The new Parliament consisted of 353 Liberals and 302 Conservatives.

[68]Henry Pelham Fiennes Pelham-Clinton (1811–1864), 5th Duke of Newcastle-under-Lyme (1851), Secretary of State for War and the Colonies (1852–1854), Colonial Secretary (1859–1864).

[69]Sir George Grey (1812–1898), Governor-General of New Zealand (1845–1854, 1861–1867) and of Cape Colony (1854–1861).

[70]Grey's autocratic behaviour and public speeches and actions, although popular with the colonies, were condemned by Parliament and officials. He told the South African legislature in 1856, 'The Governor is, by virtue of his office, the Head of all the Departments. The Colonial Secretary, as far as his position has been defined, is merely the pen or mouth of His Excellency, acting by his orders, whatever his own opinions or advice may have been'

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which his versatile brain continually produced he had propounded a general scheme for the reannexion of the Orange River Territory and the Boer Free States and their federation with the Cape and B. Kaffrania and Natal. We warned him at once on the 5th Nov. to take no further steps in the matter without our concurrence and instruction. This despatch he acknowledged and subsequent to the acknowledgement wrote again to say that he intended to bring the question before the Cape Parliament. We wrote again very strongly telling him that he had been directed to take no steps in the matter and that we required obedience on the part of a Governor. A month afterwards a formal deputation was received from him stating that he had made the proposal for federation to the Cape Parliament, and that he had advised them to arrange the preliminaries! It was in answer to this that I now wrote to express the disappointment of H. M. Government at this conduct. It had been impossible for me to see Lord Derby, whom I felt that I ought to consult on so serious a matter in Sir E. Lytton's absence, till within an hour of the time when the South African mail closed: and my despatch was written under very great pressure of time. On considering it subsequently I found to my satisfaction that I had not omitted any point and that it generally answered the purpose very well.

We waited for another month for the chance of further explanations from Sir G. Grey and then just before leaving Office we formally recalled him.[71] I was anxious that this should be done as to have left him in his Governorship after this formal disapproval would have seemed, and justly, to be an evasion of our responsibilities and a taking advantage of our position. Lytton offered the Governorship (£6000 per annum) to Sir John Lawrence[72] but he declined it and we left the place open when we withdrew.[73]

5. The next measure was hardly less if at all inferior in importance to those already noted. The *Newfoundland Fishery Question* had become

(J. Rutherford, *Sir George Grey, K.C.B., 1812–1898: a study in colonial government* (London, 1961), p. 295).

[71]Lytton to Carnarvon, 30 May 1859: see Hardinge, I, pp. 128–129.

[72]John Laird Mair Lawrence (1811–1879), 1st Baron Lawrence (1869), India Office (1859–1862), Viceroy of India (1863–1869).

[73]After the change of ministry, Grey was reinstated by the Duke of Newcastle, on the understanding that his scheme for the federation of South Africa should be abandoned, and that he would obey instructions issued by the Colonial Office. See G.C. Henderson, *Sir George Grey: pioneer of empire in southern lands* (London, 1907), p. 183.

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a serious difficulty, threatening to compromise our relations with the French Government or with the Colony.[74]

6. *Change of Governors*

We made several changes in the Colonial administration which on the whole were advantageous. I say on the whole, because Wolff,[75] Sir E. Lytton's private Secretary, was too much taken by him into council in the distribution of Patronage, and whenever it was possible to intrigue and to make a bad appointment Wolff invariably recommended it. Nothing more surprised me than to see the influence which Sir E. Lytton allowed a man of such inferior mind and character to acquire.[76] For myself, I could not bear his presence and it always required a strong effort of self-command to be civil to a man whom I despised so heartily but whom I felt was from the power which he exercised on matters of patronage and misfortune to the public service. However *requiescat in pace* – he has obtained the grand success of all his intrigues and machinations in the office of Secretary in the Ionian Islands with a salary of £800 per annum.

The two best appointments were Sir B. Pine[77] to St. Kitts and Sir H. Storks to the Ionian Islands.

7. *Transfer of Straits Settlements to the Colonial Office*

8. *The Hudson Bay Company Question*[78] This was one of extreme difficulty and was indeed hardly possible for me to deal with in the absence of Lytton from the Office.

These were the principal points of importance with which I had to deal. The current work of each day I maintained at a fixed level, and when I left Office there were no arrears for our successors. On the whole the last year and a half, though often bringing with it fully as

[74]On the controversy with France over its demands to fish in the region see The Newfoundland Fisheries, *Hansard*, CLII, 10 March 1859, cols 1667–1676.

[75]Sir Henry Drummond Wolff (1830–1908), private secretary to Lytton (February 1858), Secretary to High Commissioner, Ionian Islands (1859–1864), Con. MP for Christchurch (1878–1880) and for Portsmouth (1880–1885).

[76]Wolff appreciated Lytton's relaxed approach to work, appointing 'gentlemen' rather than regular official subordinates 'not liking to trouble his official secretaries with work' (H. Drummond Wolff, *Rambling Recollections*, 2 vols (London, 1908), I, p. 178).

[77]Sir Benjamin Pine (1809–1891), Governor of Natal (1849–1856, 1873–1875), of the Gold Coast (1856–1859), of St Kitts (1859–1869), and of the Leeward Islands (1869–1873).

[78]The Hudson Bay Company had been granted a charter in 1670 for a monopoly of trade over the vast territories in the north of Canada. The Company's licence over the territory was due to expire in 1859, at the same time as the new colony of British Columbia was created. Shortly after leaving office, Carnarvon urged in the Lords that the privileges of the trading company should not be allowed to stand in the way of improved colonization and that the Government should provide means of good communication with Canada and British Columbia (*Hansard*, CLIV, 14 July 1859, Carnarvon, cols 1189–1193).

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much work as I could dispose of, has not passed unpleasantly, so far as work can affect one's happiness, and I feel sure that I have gained a very considerable advantage from the experience which it has given me in the transaction of public business and from the very large authority and consequently responsibility which fell to my share. Lytton was in many respects a very agreeable principal in the Office except when difficulties arose and parliamentary opposition was threatened. Under ordinary circumstances I was left to the absolute disposal and management of the affairs of the Office, sending him as little or as much work as I pleased, and at such times the intercourse with him was really very delightful. He treated me with complete confidence and talked all matters over with me, and though he insisted generally on talking upon Colonial subjects – rather than general topics his conversation was equal to that of any man whom I have ever met. But when there was a question of a difficulty or an opposition in Parliament he seemed to lose his judgement. For the time he would be almost distraught and would be willing to sacrifice anything to conciliate a few second or third rate speakers in the House of Commons.

The fact clearly was that he had entered Office too late in life with his habits of mind and character formed and unadaptable to the new state of things, and this with his extreme nervousness and sensitiveness combined to make him quite unfit for the conduct of a large and weighty department. The wish to understand and to act rightly was there, and there was ample ability, but there was want of all training for the task and an absence of firmness to act upon what he easily saw was right. My intercourse with him was generally as I have said most agreeable but on one or two occasions when these difficulties arose, difficulties which were not more frequent with us than they had been to every other administration, we had differences of opinion.

In one instance, and in one only as far as I remember, there was an actual dispute. Lytton allowed himself to be carried away and spoke in terms which I did not consider that he had any right to use towards me. I told him so at once and after a coldness for two or three days he wrote to me begging my pardon and expressing his regret with so much real feeling and kindness that all was well again and I never thought more of the affair.

Lord Derby, who it was occasionally necessary for me to consult during Lytton's absence, I found patient and kindly. Disraeli,[79]

[79]Benjamin Disraeli (1805–1881), 1st Earl of Beaconsfield (1876). Con. MP for Maidstone (1837–1841), for Shrewsbury (1841–1847), and for Buckinghamshire (1847–1876), Leader, House of Commons, and Chancellor of the Exchequer (1852, 1858–1859, 1866–1868), Lord Privy Seal (1876–1878), Prime Minister (1868, 1874–1880).

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whenever I met him, was only too civil, and of the other Ministers I saw little *officially*, as I preferred doing business with the permanent Under-Secretaries, who were generally more conversant with the details of each question as it arose.

[On the last page, Lady Carnarvon added: Lord Carnarvon's feeling for Sir E. B. Lytton was a sincere and affectionate one, and this expression of his judgement of Sir E.'s character was for himself alone.]

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