EVELYN EARL OF CROMER, G.C.B., O.M.

HON. FELLOW OF THE ACADEMY

On the 29th of January Lord Cromer passed away from among us, and a life of singular and successful devotion to the service of his country came to a close. Of the many high qualities by which he was distinguished, the most conspicuous was a constant, steady, tireless energy in the performance of any task which he took in hand. With this he combined a singularly calm, sound judgement, founded on wide experience and reading, perfect honesty of purpose and conduct, a high sense of duty, and undaunted courage and tenacity. It is said of him that he was a great Empire-builder, and it is true that his work led the way to the transfer of Egypt from the Turkish to the British Empire. But it was the liberation rather than the acquisition of Egypt that was the primary object of his conscious effort, and it was his privilege and his great reward that through his instrumentality, by his patient and persistent work, the population of the Nile Valley was freed from the burden of oppression out of which the Pyramids arose, and on which they looked calm and impassive for so many centuries.

Evelyn Baring was born on the 26th of February, 1841, at Cromer Hall in Norfolk, the residence of his father, Mr. Henry Baring, a member of the great financial family of that name.

Mr. Henry Baring was twice married, first to a daughter of Mr. William Bingham, of Philadelphia, by whom he had three sons and two daughters, secondly to the daughter of Admiral William Windham.

Evelyn was the sixth of the seven sons who were the issue of the second marriage. Mr. Baring died in 1848, when the future Lord Cromer was only seven years old. His wife survived him by twenty-six years. Possessed of great social charm, and an accomplished musician, she was also a woman of unusual literary attainments. Her Commonplace Book, which Lord Cromer preserved with the first volume of his own, contains a collection of extracts from Greek, Latin, German, and French, as well as from English authors. It is probable that from her Lord Cromer inherited his instinctive feeling of admiration for the ancient classical writers.

The purely educational period of Lord Cromer's life was comparatively short. After a brief stay at a private school kept by the Rev. F. Bickmore, he went to the Ordnance School at Carshalton, and from thence, in August 1855, to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich,[1] from which he passed into the Royal Artillery at the age of seventeen.

Speaking in 1910 at the University of Liverpool, which had conferred on him an honorary degree, Lord Cromer said that he had never ceased to regret that he had not received a University education, and paid a glowing tribute to its merits as exemplified in the qualities of the men who had served with and under him. But he was one of those whose education continues throughout their life; eager in the acquisition of knowledge, quick to draw conclusions and take lessons from experience, an omnivorous reader. The expression 'studious' seems scarcely appropriate to a disposition so strenuous and robust; but he devoted much patient and methodical labour to the making of extracts and summaries, and his Commonplace Books contain some 1,500 pages of excerpts, mingled with shrewd, frank, and sometimes very humorous comments and anecdotes. He once related to a friend a remark made to him in early days by his cousin, Sir Francis Baring, who had held office as Chancellor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Admiralty, and was eventually created Baron Northbrook. 'You are young and hardworking,' said Sir Francis, 'and you probably keep a Diary. Now don't waste your time in putting down events as they happen—you can always find those in the *Annual Register*. Put down what you think is going to happen, and you will be astonished afterwards to see how wrong you were.' Lord Cromer was chary of prediction, but there is much in these records to show the directions in which his mind worked, and it is interesting to note that at a period of his career, when it might have been supposed that his whole attention would have been absorbed in his actual work, his study of the ancient Greek and Latin authors seems to have constantly increased.

One episode of his school life he has noted rather characteristically, as illustrating a passage in the *Odyssey*.

'One of my first schoolboy recollections', he writes, 'is having a fight with a boy named Gubbins. The news of the approaching

[1] In a discussion on the system of Competitive Examinations at the Society of Arts in 1911, Lord Cromer related with much gusto how on his entrance examination he had been 'very properly' rejected on account of short sight, and how his mother had immediately driven off to see Lord Raglan, then Master-General of the Ordnance, and procured an instruction that the decision should be 'reconsidered'.

contest spread like wildfire through the school, and the cry was "Baring and Gubbins are going to fight in the barn. Come and see it".' The suitors in the *Odyssey* behaved very similarly when Ulysses and Irus were about to fight. (Then follows the passage *Od.* xviii. 36–40.)

The battery to which Lieutenant Evelyn Baring was attached in October 1858 was stationed in the Ionian Islands, then a British Protectorate, and here in 1861 he was appointed by the British High Commissioner, Major-Gen. Sir Henry Storks, to be one of his aides-de-camp. Lord Cromer used to relate that he first came under the High Commissioner's notice by firing a salute at full speed, without the prescribed interval between the guns, in order not to miss an engagement to a shooting party. However this may be, he evidently became a favourite, for when, after the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece, Sir Henry Storks was, in 1864, appointed Governor of Malta, Lieutenant E. Baring continued on his staff.

Some few incidents of this period seem worthy of record:

During his stay in the Ionian Islands he acquired, as might have been expected, a competent knowledge of Modern Greek for all colloquial purposes, and 'being attracted by the language', as he states in the preface to his small volume of *Translations and Paraphrases*, he took the opportunity to commence the study of the Greek classics.[1]

Politically the islands were in a constant state of agitation for the cessation of the British Protectorate and for annexation to Greece, but public order was not disturbed. The country to which the islanders were so passionately attached was less fortunate. Fifty years later, Lord Cromer, on the occasion of the assassination of the late King George of Greece, made a note of his impressions when, at 4 o'clock one morning (in October 1862), he was awakened by the Flag Captain of the Mediterranean fleet in order that he might announce to the High Commissioner the arrival on board a British frigate of King Otho and his Queen, who had been driven from Athens by a revolution, and 'appeared to have come away with only the clothes on their backs'. Sir H. Storks sent him on board the ship

[1] Mr. Gosse, in a very interesting article on Lord Cromer as a man of letters, states that he found an instructor of the name of Romanos, and that their studies opened with the Odes of Anacreon (*Fortnightly Review*, March 1917). During a debate in the House of Lords on Education (July 12, 1916) Lord Cromer stated that he had been placed at a disadvantage by not having begun the study of Greek and Latin till he was long past schoolboy age, and that in his opinion fifteen or sixteen was the latest age for commencing. It must, however, be added that his description of himself as possessing 'only a smattering' of those languages was unduly deprecatory.

to ask whether any services could be rendered to their Majesties. He found the maids of honour perched on the guns while the sailors were swabbing the decks. The King, 'a heavy stupid-looking Bavarian,' was clad in a dirty fustanella, while the Queen, who was much the more intelligent, rushed out of her cabin in floods of tears, and explained at great length that the whole thing was not their fault. In November of the following year, on the withdrawal of the British Administration and garrison from the Ionian Islands, Lord Cromer (who believed that he was the last British officer to quit the islands as a British Protectorate) accompanied Sir Henry Storks with the British fleet to a roadstead off the coast of the Morea, where they met the new King of Greece, then a boy of eighteen.

One other event of considerable personal importance should not be omitted. It was at Corfu that Lord Cromer made the acquaintance of Miss Ethel Errington (whom he married fourteen years afterwards), then a girl of seventeen. Her father, Sir Rowland Errington, who had been left a widower with two daughters in 1859, had at this time a house on the island.

The period of service at Malta was uneventful, but brief. In a review of the *Life of Sir Frederick Weld*, whom he styles a pioneer of Empire, Lord Cromer mentions that early one morning in the summer of 1865 he deciphered a telegram which it was expected would request Sir H. Storks to proceed at once to New Zealand, in consequence of dissensions which had arisen between the Governor and the officer commanding the British troops, and to assume both civil and military command. The message, however, announced that the situation had been relieved by the departure of the military commander, and asked Sir Henry to conduct an inquiry in regard to the outbreak which had recently occurred in Jamaica. Lord Cromer adds that by 3 o'clock that afternoon Sir Henry with his staff were on their way to Marseilles.

Sir H. Storks was appointed Governor of Jamaica on December 12, 1865. On the 30th of that month a Royal Commission was appointed, consisting of him as Chairman, Mr. Russell Gurney, and Mr. J. B. Maull, with Mr. Charles Roundell as Secretary, to inquire into the insurrection and the measures for its repression. The Report of the Commission bears date of April 9, 1866, and Sir H. Storks left Jamaica on the 16th of July following. Lieut. Baring returned with his chief to Malta, where he remained till April 1867. On arrival in England he resumed the study of his profession, entered the Staff College in February 1868, and worked there till the end of the following year.

In March 1870, shortly before the outbreak of war between France and Germany, he published a small volume of *Staff College Essays*, with a short modest preface in which he said that they laid no claim to originality, but that they would serve to show to the public, and particularly to other officers, the nature of the studies pursued at the College. The subjects of the three Essays are: 'Changes in the Art of War from 1792 to 1815'; 'The Campaign of Ulm'; 'Operations in Poland from December 1 to 26, 1806'. It is worthy of notice that at the commencement of the third Essay the writer, after citing a passage from the Duc de Fézensac's *Memoirs*, and two extracts from letters of Napoleon, lets drop quite naturally a quotation from the *Iliad*.

At this period he was living with his mother and others of her sons at 11 Berkeley Square (the house in which Horace Walpole had passed the end of his life, and which had been acquired by Mr. Henry Baring).

In the same month (March 1870) he commenced work in the Topographical and Statistical Department of the War Office—a department which eventually developed into the Intelligence Division, and ultimately into the General Staff, and in this department he was employed until his departure to India two years later. His natural industry was not satisfied by the performance of his official work, and he devoted part of his time to producing translations of some German works on military organization and of an English version of the rules and principles of the newly devised game of Kriegspiel.

In February 1872 the Viceroyalty of India fell suddenly vacant by the assassination of the Earl of Mayo, and the office was offered to and accepted by Thomas George, second Baron (and afterwards first Earl of) Northbrook. He offered to his cousin Evelyn, who was now a second captain and attained the rank of full captain in the following July, the appointment either of Military Secretary or of Private Secretary on his staff. Baring chose the latter in preference to one which would have restricted him to the business of his military profession, and there can be no doubt that he made ample use of the opportunities which his position gave him to study administrative work. It would be out of place to recapitulate here the acts of Lord Northbrook's four years of Viceroyalty. The most salient features were a certain slackening in the course of legislative reforms which had been pushed forward at a rate somewhat disturbing to the Oriental mind; some relief in taxation, while by careful economy a surplus of revenue over expenditure was secured; the trial of the

Gaekwar of Baroda by a mixed British and Indian Commission, his deposition and the appointment of a child selected from a branch of the reigning family to succeed him; the measures taken to relieve the widespread and acute distress occasioned by the famine of 1874 in Bengal, and to provide against similar calamities in the future.

Two folio volumes containing some fifty memoranda on these and many other subjects bear evidence of the active part which the Viceroy's Private Secretary took in their discussions. On Lord Northbrook's departure he drew up a memorandum containing a general review of Lord Northbrook's Administration, and in that portion of it which relates to the Bengal famine he observes: 'From the very commencement to the end the whole of the very voluminous correspondence about it passed through my hands. . . . I was in South Behar at the commencement of the famine, and I travelled all over North Behar at its close. I have fully discussed each several part of the question with, I verily believe, every official or non-official, European or native, who was in a position to afford valuable information about it.'

On the conclusion of Lord Northbrook's Viceroyalty in April 1876, Captain Baring received the Companionship of the Star of India, and returned with his chief to England.

On June 28 he married Ethel, elder of the two daughters of Sir Rowland Stanley Errington, whose acquaintance, as already stated, he had made fourteen years previously in the Ionian Islands.[1] In the autumn he was again working in what had now become the Intelligence Department of the War Office.

The spring of 1877 witnessed the commencement of Baring's official connexion with the country which, with a brief interval, was to be the scene of his continuous labours until the summer of 1907.

Some few lines must be devoted to a description of the problems with which he was to deal.

Egypt since 1841 had been ruled, under the sovereignty[2] of the Sultan, by Mehemet Ali and his hereditary successors, according to Mohammedan law. So far as the native population was concerned,

[1] Sir Rowland Stanley Errington, who had assumed that surname by royal licence in 1828, was the eleventh representative of a baronetcy (now extinct) conferred by Charles II on the eldest branch of the family of Stanley, of which the two younger branches hold the Earldom of Derby and the Barony of Stanley of Alderley.

[2] The term suzerainty, frequently used to describe the Sultan's authority over Egypt, was not quite technically correct. The Viceroys of Egypt were hereditary governors, not vassal princes, and were addressed by the Sultan as his 'Vizirs'.

the government was a pure despotism of the Oriental type. But it was far otherwise with the foreign members of the community. Under the ancient treaties styled the 'Capitulations' and the customs which had grown out of them the nationals of European and American States were only justiciable by the Courts attached to their own Consulates. While therefore the foreign residents enjoyed immunities which were scarcely compatible with efficient and equitable administration, the native population was exposed to every form of arbitrary and capricious oppression. An arrangement negotiated by Nubar Pasha in 1875, under which civil causes between natives and foreigners were adjudicated by European sitting with native Egyptian judges, was an excellent reform, but proved in two respects a somewhat double-edged weapon. It brought into great prominence the principle that no legislation affecting foreigners could take effect without the consent of every Government which was a party to the new arrangement, and it gave to the new tribunals competence to decide suits brought by foreigners against the Egyptian Government. The decisions, if adverse, constituted claims which might at once be supported by diplomatic pressure on the part of the country to which the foreign litigant belonged.

Ismail Pasha, who had succeeded his uncle Said as fifth Viceroy in 1863, and who in 1867 and 1873 obtained from the Sultan the title of Khedive with the right of concluding non-political treaties with foreign States and unrestricted power to contract foreign loans, was a man of restless ambition, ready to take up any projects for the development of the resources of his dominions and the acquisition of personal wealth, and equally prone to abandon them; recklessly extravagant, astute and wily, and, it must be added, very little troubled with scruples. In the first thirteen years of his rule the public debt of Egypt, which on his accession had stood at 3¼ millions sterling, had increased to over £68,000,000 of funded debt, in addition to a floating debt of £26,000,000, and for all this large expenditure there was nothing to show except the Suez Canal, executed at a cost of £16,000,000. There was no pause in the Khedive's spendthrift career; a sum of £4,000,000, paid in 1874 by the British Government for the purchase of the greater portion of his interests in the Suez Canal, was a mere temporary relief from his most pressing embarrassments, and in April 1876 the payment of Treasury bills, on which money had latterly been raised at ruinous rates of interest, was suspended. Something had to be done to restore public confidence. In May a Khedivial Decree was issued instituting a Commission of the Public Debt, and a French, an

Austrian, and an Italian were appointed on the recommendation of their respective Governments. The British Government declined to select a Commissioner. The arrangements made in this Decree, and another enactment consolidating the Egyptian Debt, gave no satisfaction, and at the request of the British Committee of Foreign Bondholders, Mr. (afterwards Viscount) Goschen proceeded to Egypt in October 1876, accompanied by M. Joubert as representing the interests of the French creditors, with the object of obtaining some more satisfactory settlement. As the result of their negotiations a Decree was issued (November 18, 1876) containing more favourable provisions, and appointing two Controllers-General—one (an Englishman) to supervise the revenue, the other (a Frenchman) the expenditure. As the British Government still refused to undertake the responsibility of nominating a member of the Commission of the Public Debt, the Khedive asked Mr. Goschen to make the selection, and Lord Goschen, on the advice of Sir Louis Mallet, then Under-Secretary of State for India, offered the appointment to Captain Baring, who accepted it, and arrived in Egypt in March 1877.

'The state of Egypt', to quote Lord Cromer's own words, 'at this time was deplorable.' About one-fifth of the arable land of the country had passed into the hands of the Khedive, was administered directly by him, and cultivated to a great extent by forced labour. There was no appeal from the arbitrary demands of the officials charged with the collection of the taxes, and these demands were enforced with the most pitiless severity. In addition to the heavy payments required for the service of the funded debt, large sums were due to contractors and others for goods supplied to the Egyptian Government, and the pay of most of the employés was greatly in arrear. To add to these embarrassments an unusually low Nile in 1877 had as its consequence a famine in Upper Egypt in the ensuing year. Another British official, Mr. (afterwards Sir Gerald) Fitzgerald, had been entrusted with the herculean task of introducing order into the system of accounts, if anything so chaotic could be called a system, but his labours only served to emphasize the fact, which daily became more apparent, that whatever rigour might be practised in the collection of the revenue the country was unable to bear the burdens imposed on it, and that it would be necessary for the foreign creditors, even in their own interests, to accept some modification of the arrangements made by the 'Goschen' Decree of 1876. It was only reasonable that the new settlement should be based on a complete investigation of the whole financial situation,

and although the Khedive, as might have been expected, made every effort to evade this condition, he at last, in April 1878, consented to appoint a Commission of Inquiry with sufficient powers of investigation, under the nominal Presidency of M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, with Sir Rivers Wilson and Riaz Pasha as Vice-Presidents, and the four Commissioners of the Debt as members. The inquiry, a task of immense difficulty and complexity, was pursued throughout the summer months, and in August 1878 the Commissioners presented their first Report. It contained a frank and comprehensive statement of the condition to which the country had been brought, and proceeded to enumerate the measures of reform which seemed essential for any permanent amelioration. These included equitable and simplified taxation, a reformed system of public accounts with annual Budgets, a cadastral survey of the country, a reserve fund to provide for extraordinary expenditure, in case of an exceptionally high or low Nile, proper distribution of water, judicial protection against abuses of power, the restriction of forced labour to public works of acknowledged utility, and a reasonable system for the recruitment of the army. Above all it was pointed out that with a view to the gradual and successful introduction of these reforms two principles must be recognized—the substitution of ministerial responsibility for the arbitrary will of the Khedive, and the assignment of a definite sum as a Civil List for his personal expenditure, beyond which all public revenue should be devoted to national purposes. Unconsciously the Commission thus sketched out in bold outline the future life-work of one of its members.

It was scarcely to be anticipated that a ruler of Ismail Pasha's disposition and antecedents would reconcile himself to such a programme. He accepted it however ostensibly, and appointed a Ministry composed of Egyptians and Europeans for the purpose of carrying it into effect.

The next few months were passed in a series of manœuvres, in which the Khedive made use of the convocation of a Chamber of Notables, and of a mutinous assembly of officers placed on half-pay, to assist his attempts at recovering his former arbitrary powers. In the meanwhile the Commission of Inquiry pursued their labours, and in April 1879 they produced a Second Report, containing their specific recommendations for dealing with the financial situation. This paper, the first draft of which had been prepared by Major Baring,[1] was not less uncompromising than its precursor. It began

[1] He had attained the rank of Major in April 1878.

with a statement that the Egyptian Government was bankrupt, and that this state of bankruptcy must be regarded as having commenced on the date in April 1876 when the Khedive suspended payment of the Treasury bills. Starting from these premisses the Commissioners made a number of proposals, which, with some considerable modifications, formed the basis of the settlement eventually arrived at some fifteen months later. For the time being their labours were unsuccessful. The Khedive rejected the scheme and produced a rival but quite inadmissible project. The Commissioners of Inquiry tendered their resignations, which were accepted. The Commissioners of the Public Debt initiated a lawsuit against the Khedive in the International Tribunals. The British and French Governments still abstained from any active intervention, and Major Baring, who saw no prospect of a satisfactory solution under the conditions then prevailing, resigned his appointment and returned to England in May 1879.

A crisis was however inevitable, and was accelerated by the strong line taken by the German Government in support of the claims of German creditors. Towards the end of the following month Ismail Pasha, having rejected the advice of the British and French Governments that he should abdicate, was formally deposed by the Sultan, and his son Tewfik Pasha, a ruler of very different character, was installed in his place, though with some curtailment of the privileges accorded to his father. The offices of British and French Controllers-General instituted by the 'Goschen' Decree of November 1876, but discontinued on the appointment of a mixed European and Egyptian Ministry in 1878, were now revived. M. de Blignieres, the French member of the Commission of the Public Debt, was appointed French Controller of Expenditure, and the British appointment of Controller-General of Receipts was offered by Lord Salisbury to Major Baring, who after some hesitation accepted it in preference to the design which he had formed of standing for Parliament at the next general election.

The terms of these appointments differed in some important respects from those laid down in 1876. The Controllers-General were not to be removable without the consent of their Governments; they were not to be invested with any administrative functions, but they were to have the fullest powers of investigation, and to sit in the Council of Ministers, with the right of offering suggestions and giving their opinion, but not of voting. Two main questions at once presented themselves. The first was that of the division of duties between the two Controllers-General, a point on which

considerable jealousy was felt in France. The matter was eventually left to the Controllers themselves, and they settled it by not attempting any precise definition, but by working together. The second more important question was the attitude which the Controllers-General should assume towards the Egyptian Ministers. In this respect the Controllers-General, both from inclination and policy, at once adopted the rôle of protecting the native taxpayer from excessive demands for the satisfaction of the foreign creditor, whoever he might be. Before their departure from Europe they had already telegraphed that if the funds in hand for the payment of the Tribute due to the Sultan were insufficient, payment of the balance must be deferred, and that a similar course must be followed in regard to the interest falling due for the Unified Debt, but that the taxes should on no account be taken in advance. A Budget for the year 1880 was prepared on a reduced estimate of revenue, and steps were taken to introduce gradually the reforms recommended by the Commission of Inquiry. The effect was soon apparent. In reply to a circular addressed to them by the Agency at Cairo the British Consuls throughout Egypt were able in the summer of 1880 to report a notable improvement in the condition of the country. The taxes were being regularly collected; the rate of interest charged by the village moneylenders had fallen by 50 per cent.; the value of land had risen in an even higher proportion. The use of the whip in collecting taxes had greatly diminished.

After much tedious negotiation a Commission of Liquidation had been appointed in April 1880 to prepare a settlement of the claims of the foreign bondholders and other creditors. It proceeded largely on the lines laid down by the former Commission of Inquiry, and as the result of its labours a Law of Liquidation was signed by the Khedive in the following July. Considerable divergences of opinion had manifested themselves during the discussions, and it remained doubtful whether, notwithstanding the reductions effected in the claims and the rates of interest, the dead weight of debt might not be more than the country could bear. But on the whole all looked well, and the only source of danger appeared to lie in the extent to which the discipline of the army had suffered during recent events.

In the meanwhile, about three weeks before the actual issue of the Law of Liquidation, Major Baring had been offered and had accepted the appointment of Financial Member of the Council of the Governor-General of India, and left for England, previously to taking up his new office, being replaced in the post of Controller-

General by Sir Auckland Colvin, who had been his successor on the Commission of the Public Debt. He visited Cairo at the beginning of December on his way to India,[1] and warned Riaz Pasha of the importance of remedying any grievances of which the army could justly complain, but of dealing severely with any symptoms of insubordination. Riaz Pasha assured him that there was not the slightest ground for apprehension on this score.

'The new Financial Member of Council arrived in India a few days before Christmas and did not at first find his position a bed of roses. The appointment was naturally viewed with considerable jealousy by the members of the Indian Civil Service, and Lord Ripon, the new Viceroy, who might have made matters rather smoother for him, was for the moment too unwell to attend to business. Writing to his friend Sir Louis Mallet at the India Office, with whom he kept up a constant and intimate correspondence, he says, on January 18, 1881, 'My difficulties here are not decreasing; rather the reverse. The conviction is gradually being forced on me that my honourable colleagues and the departments in general regard me as an incarnation of the devil and the India Office, and view anything I propose with extreme mistrust.'

But such difficulties could only be transient. Baring's perfect fairness, broad common-sense, good humour, and ability always disarmed prejudice; and his wife's singular tact, kindness of disposition, and graciousness of manner, made her one of the most popular members of society wherever she went, and allayed any irritation which might occasionally be caused by a certain abruptness of manner and bluntness of speech, which were in some degree a family characteristic, and were enhanced by Baring's habit of intense concentration on the business in hand.

The financial situation with which he had to deal was certainly not too favourable. The military operations which had been necessitated by the policy pursued in Afghanistan had been brought to a successful close, but the withdrawal of the British forces from the southern portion of that country had not yet been effected. By a singular oversight, the cost of the campaign had been estimated without taking into account the issues made by various local treasuries to the military authorities, so that in his Financial Statement for 1881–2 Baring had to announce that an estimated surplus of

[1] *Cairo*, December 2, 1880. We arrived here yesterday in safety, with twenty-four 'Grands colis' and twenty-one absolutely indispensable handbags, &c., as to which my wife assures me that not one could have been spared without seriously injuring our travelling efficiency (Letter to Sir L. Mallet).

£417,000 in the expiring year had been converted into an estimated deficit of £6,263,000. He was able, however, to add that if the net war expenditure were left out of account the total revenue would have exceeded the normal charges by more than five millions sterling, and he brought forward a Budget which by skilful management showed an estimated surplus of £855,000 for the ensuing year, without the imposition of additional taxation. His forecast was fully justified by events. When in March 1882 he made his second Financial Statement the surplus for the expiring year was estimated at over 1½ millions, and promised to attain a yet higher figure. The cessation of extraordinary war expenditure now enabled him to propose some relief of taxation, the main features of which were the abolition of all import duties, except those on alcoholic liquors, arms, and ammunition, and the equalization and reduction of the Salt Tax. Some local burdens were reduced, and an increase of pay was granted to the subordinate native employés. These measures resulted in increased imports of the articles hitherto dutiable, a considerable reduction in the price of salt, and an increased consumption of that commodity. Notwithstanding a loss by exchange in excess of what had been anticipated to the amount of £343,000, and a charge of £797,000 imposed on India for a share in the expenses of the expedition to restore order in Egypt, the year closed with a surplus of £60,000. In his third Financial Statement, brought forward in March 1883, Baring made no proposals for any changes in taxation, and was content to produce estimates very cautiously framed and showing an estimated surplus of £657,000. Both in this and in the Financial Statement for the preceding year he alluded to the unsatisfactory character of the Licence Tax, which formed the principal source of income from direct taxation, and to the need for a reform in this respect. But he refrained from any proposals on the ground that nothing was more undesirable in India than the introduction of frequent changes in the fiscal system, and that the circumstances did not admit of introducing amendments which could be confidently regarded as permanent.

All three Financial Statements were remarkable, not only for careful examination of numerous matters of detail but for very lucid and instructive observations on the general financial situation of the country, and the special difficulties by which it was affected—the disadvantages resulting from the constant fall in the value of silver, the uncertainty of the large revenue derived from the sale of opium to China, the growing pressure of the population on the soil as improved administration lessened the rate of mortality.

His reputation as not merely a capable financier, but as one who both understood and sympathized with the needs of the country, had become thoroughly established. Already in the winter of 1881–2, when his wife's life was in the greatest danger from an attack of typhoid fever, he had been much moved by the innumerable messages of sympathy which he had received, not only from European and native friends, but from natives in all parts of the country with whom he was unacquainted. A less severe illness of the same nature from which he suffered during her convalescence was not allowed to occasion more than a brief interruption of his work, and when in August 1883 he was raised to the rank of Knight Commander of the Star of India, and received the appointment of British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, there was a general chorus of congratulation on the recognition of his services and of regret at his departure.

Baring arrived in Cairo on September 11, 1883. Much had happened since his visit in December 1880. The military mutiny, of which he had unavailingly warned Riaz Pasha, had occurred within a few months, and had developed into a violent fanatical movement against Europeans which the Khedive was powerless to check or control, and which resulted in serious disturbances and much loss of life and property. A joint naval demonstration by Great Britain and France had been met with open defiance, and had eventually led to the bombardment and destruction of the forts of Alexandria by the British Fleet. France declined to take part in this or other acts of intervention. Italy also declined an invitation to co-operate, and after abortive negotiations with the Porte for the employment of Turkish troops under suitable conditions, the British Government landed a large force in Egypt for the restoration of order. The Egyptian army was defeated at Tel-el-Kebir on September 13, 1882, the leaders of the rebellion were arrested, tried and exiled, and the Khedive was reinstated under the protection of the British troops. On January 3, 1883, Lord Granville addressed a circular to the Powers stating that 'Although a British force remains in Egypt for the preservation of public tranquillity, Her Majesty's Government are desirous of withdrawing it as soon as the state of the country and the organisation of proper means for the maintenance of the Khedive's authority will admit of it.' In the meanwhile they undertook the duty of advising the Khedive as to the order of things to be established. In pursuance of this policy the Anglo-French control was abolished, much to the chagrin of the French Government, who refused the offer of the right to nominate the President of the

Commission of the Debt, and whose attitude became thenceforth persistently unfriendly. Lord Dufferin, then British Ambassador at Constantinople, was sent to Egypt in November 1882 to advise on the institutions to be introduced, and drew up a scheme for the eventual creation of two representative assemblies. But he did not conceal his opinion that for some time to come it was necessary that the Government should be under British guidance, and that European assistance in the various departments of the administration would be essential. It was to supervise and direct the execution of the policy thus sketched out that Baring had been selected, and the task from the outset promised to be an arduous one. The suppression of the rebellion had left the country in a deplorable state of disorder. The administration was dislocated, the army completely disorganized, the finances had suffered grievously, and large claims for compensation on account of destruction of foreign property during the disturbances, made a crushing addition to the already severe pressure of the debt. To complete the catalogue of misfortunes Egypt was visited in the summer of 1883 by an epidemic of cholera, which is estimated to have caused between 80,000 and 100,000 deaths, and which was not completely stamped out before November. In accordance with Lord Dufferin's advice the most important branches of the public service had been placed in the hands of highly competent British officials. Sir Evelyn Wood, with the title of Sirdar, had undertaken the reorganization of the new Egyptian Army. Colonel Valentine Baker, who had served with distinction in the Turkish Army and received the rank of General, had been placed in command of the Constabulary; Colonel (afterwards Sir Colin) Scott-Moncrieff had been summoned from India to take charge of the Irrigation Department; Sir Benson Maxwell, formerly Chief Justice of the Straits Settlements, was entrusted with the task of Judicial Reform; while Sir Auckland Colvin, who had been the British Controller-General, was appointed Financial Adviser, to be succeeded shortly by Sir E. Vincent, now Lord D'Abernon. These and numerous other officials would naturally look to the British Representative for counsel and support in their everyday work. But the subject which urgently called for his attention on his arrival was a formidable insurrection which had broken out in the Soudan. The government of this vast territory, comprising about 950,000 square miles, had been conferred on Mehemet Ali by the Sultan in 1841, under the appellation of the provinces of Nubia, Darfur, Kordofan, and Sennaar with their dependencies. No attempt, however, had been made by Mehemet Ali's successors to establish Egyptian rule farther south than the

immediate neighbourhood of Khartoum until in 1870 Ismail Pasha, who had received a further grant of Suakin and Massowah from the Sultan, employed Sir Samuel Baker to explore the country and bring it under subjection. Sir Samuel Baker had been succeeded in 1874 by General Gordon, who during his term of government had exerted himself to repress the slave-trade, which was rife throughout the country, and to reform other abuses. After Gordon's departure in 1879 the administration had become intolerably bad and oppressive, and on the appearance of an insurgent leader, claiming to be the Mahdi or Mohammedan Messiah, the tribes flocked to his standard, and the movement rapidly assumed the most formidable proportions. The Egyptian garrisons sparsely scattered over the country were quite incapable of holding their own against the insurgents, and the choice lay between retreat under great difficulties, or the dispatch of an expedition to quash the rebellion. The British Government were altogether averse to increasing their responsibilities in Egypt by committing themselves to participation in, or even approval of, such an expedition. On the other hand they were reluctant to incur the unpopularity of forbidding the expedition, and nothing short of a positive veto would have induced the Egyptian Government to refrain from the essay. British Ministers did not realize, and do not appear to have been sufficiently warned, of the serious results that must inevitably follow if the expedition were unsuccessful. They accordingly instructed Sir E. Malet, then the British Representative at Cairo, to maintain an attitude of complete abstention in regard to the project. A force inadequate for the task, wanting in proper discipline, organization, and equipment, was collected and dispatched under the command of General Hicks, a brave and capable officer, who must have felt how hazardous was the enterprise, though he shrank from declining to undertake it.

The expedition started on September 8, 1883, three days before Baring's arrival at Cairo; it was led astray by treacherous guides, and on November 23 news reached Cairo of its complete annihilation. The situation, which had previously been one of grave anxiety, became at once extremely menacing. Baring, who had already realized its seriousness, met it with characteristic thoroughness and courage. He had, as we know, devoted himself at one time to the study of strategy, and he was also able to refer to Sir F. Stephenson, the General in command of the British Army of occupation, and to Sir E. Wood, Sirdar of the Egyptian Army. On November 19, after the first arrival of disquieting rumours as to the position of General Hicks's force, he set to work to bring home to the British Govern-

ment the impossibility of their maintaining the passive attitude which they had hitherto adopted in regard to the Soudan, and in subsequent telegrams after receipt of news of the disaster he made it clear that without the assistance either of British, British Indian, or Turkish troops, the Egyptian Government would in all probability be unable to hold Khartoum and must withdraw to Suakin and Wady Halfa. At the same time he warned Lord Granville that the Khedive and his ministers would be most reluctant to resign themselves to this course, and that it would be necessary to insist on their accepting the advice tendered to them if they were to be prevented from drifting on into further calamities. The British Government, refused assistance by British or Indian troops, were ready to assent to the employment of Turkish troops, but only with the proviso that the expenses should be borne by the Sultan and that their operations should be confined to the Soudan, conditions which were practically prohibitive. Failing this alternative Baring was instructed to recommend the abandonment of all territory south of Assouan, or at least of Wady Halfa, and he was authorized to inform the Egyptian Government that so long as the British occupation continued it was essential that, in important questions affecting the administration and safety of Egypt, the advice of Her Majesty's Government should be followed. Baring had not under-estimated the amount of opposition which he would encounter. Cherif Pasha, the Prime Minister, resigned; there seemed some reason to apprehend that no successor would be found, and Baring allowed it to be known that in that case he would take the administration temporarily into his own hands and telegraph to London for instructions. Eventually on January 7, 1884, the Khedive announced his acceptance of the policy of abandonment, and entrusted Nubar Pasha with the formation of a ministry to carry it into execution.

The policy having thus been decided upon, the question of the person to whom the task should be entrusted had to be settled. On December 1, Baring had received a telegram from Lord Granville inquiring whether the services of General Gordon could be usefully employed by him or by the Egyptian Government, and had replied in the negative. On January 10, 1884, when the policy of abandonment had been accepted by the Egyptian Government, Lord Granville again telegraphed inquiring whether General Gordon or Sir Charles Wilson could be of assistance. Baring again declined the offer, after consulting Nubar Pasha, with whom he agreed that the best plan would be to employ Abdul Kader Pasha, a capable officer, who had held the post of Governor-General of the Soudan,

and who had just been appointed Minister of War. Abdul Kader, however, after accepting the appointment, withdrew his acceptance, and Baring, on receiving a third message from Lord Granville, stating that Gordon was ready to go to Suakin to report on the situation, replied on January 16, asking that a British officer might be selected to conduct the retreat, and stating that 'Gordon would be the best man if he will pledge himself to carry out the policy of withdrawing from the Soudan as quickly as is possible consistently with saving life'.

In his work on *Modern Egypt* (vol. i, p. 436) Lord Cromer states that it was with reluctance, and mainly because he seemed to be alone in his opposition, that he thus acquiesced in General Gordon's employment on the third occasion when it was proposed. A more complete knowledge of that remarkable man's character and antecedents could only have increased his misgivings. General Gordon combined in a singular manner the qualities of the hero and martyr with great practical and technical skill as an administrator, military leader, and engineer. But his complete disregard of personal considerations, whether of life, advancement, or reputation, his indifference to any appearance of consistency, his fertility and versatility in the discovery of fresh expedients, and his conviction that each plan which recommended itself to him came by Divine guidance,[1] made him a most dangerous agent for a Government under parliamentary control, dealing with a situation which was the subject of constant and acute public controversy. He left London on January 18, accompanied by Colonel Stewart, with instructions which were based on a memorandum prepared by himself, and were settled in a conference between him and four Cabinet Ministers. They were to the effect that he should proceed to Egypt and report on the military situation in the Soudan and the best mode of effecting the evacuation. But he was also instructed and authorized to perform any other duties which the Egyptian Government might desire to entrust to him and which might be communicated to him by Sir E. Baring. On his way to Brindisi, General Gordon wrote a letter containing suggestions which was received at the Foreign Office on January 22, and the contents of which were at once telegraphed to Baring. The first of these suggestions was that proclamations should be issued by the Khedive appointing General Gordon to be his representative in the

[1] Sir E. Baring wrote to Lord Granville, January 1884: 'It is as well that Gordon should be under my orders, but a man who habitually consults the prophet Isaiah when he is in a difficulty is not apt to obey the orders of any one.'—*Modern Egypt*, vol. i, p. 448.

Soudan, and Governor-General for the time being, to carry out the evacuation of the country and its restoration to the various local Sultans. Baring was authorized either to make immediately the arrangements suggested or to await General Gordon's arrival and consult with him as to the action to be taken. The latter course was adopted. On General Gordon's arrival fresh instructions were drawn up in consultation with him, he received the appointment of Governor-General of the Soudan, and left Cairo with Colonel Stewart on the evening of January 26, reaching Khartoum on February 13. The events which followed form a tragic page of British history, for which space cannot be found in this brief biographical sketch. All that can be said is that so long as communications could be maintained Baring strove indefatigably and whole-heartedly to present the kaleidoscopic suggestions [1] which reached him from Khartoum in such a shape as would secure for them full and, so far as possible, favourable consideration in London, and that when communications were interrupted it was owing to no lack of insistence on his part as to the urgent need of a relief expedition that measures for that purpose were so long delayed.

Khartoum fell, and its heroic defender perished on January 26, 1885, having held out thirty-four days longer than General Gordon had himself anticipated. The Relief Expedition under Sir G. (afterwards Viscount) Wolseley, which had moved up the Nile, and the advanced portion of which had actually pushed in two steamers to the environs of the captured city, fell back, and after abortive operations from Suakin for the capture of Berber, the Soudan was definitively abandoned.

Meanwhile, the Egyptian Treasury, though relieved from expense in connexion with these operations, was again rapidly approaching bankruptcy. A sum of several millions sterling was urgently needed to cover the deficits which had been caused by the disturbances of the last three years, and to satisfy the claims for destruction of foreign property at Alexandria and elsewhere. No new loan could, however, be contracted without international consent.

In June 1884 a Conference of the Great Powers met in London, in which Baring was summoned to take part. It failed, however, to arrive at any agreement in consequence of the opposition of the French Government to any workable settlement. In November of the same year Lord Northbrook was deputed by Mr. Gladstone's

[1] No one whose knowledge is confined to the published correspondence can form any idea of the bewildering rapidity with which fresh and often contradictory projects and proposals were evolved by General Gordon's fertile brain.

Government to visit Egypt for the purpose of reporting on the situation, and on the methods of dealing with it. But his recommendations did not find favour with the Government, who were averse to increasing British responsibilities in Egypt beyond what was absolutely necessary. In the end, but not until March 1885, an agreement was arrived at for the issue of a new Egyptian loan of £9,000,000, under the guarantee of the Great Powers. The conditions imposed on the Egyptian Government to secure the service of this and the previous loans were of an almost inconceivably complicated and cumbrous character. They no doubt greatly retarded the development of Egyptian resources, and the fact that for twenty years the work of development was successfully carried on under such a system is a marvellous example of British patience and steadiness of purpose. The money, however, was obtained, and after providing for all immediate claims, it left to the Egyptian Government a working balance of £500,000, and a sum of £1,000,000 to be devoted to irrigation. This latter was the nucleus of Baring's Egyptian policy. Coupled with his strong feeling that the first and main object of government was the welfare of the governed, was the conviction derived from his Indian experience that relief of taxation would be the reform most welcome to the population of Egypt, and that this relief and many other reforms dependent on increased revenue could only be obtained by increased productivity of the soil. On irrigation therefore he concentrated his main efforts, ably assisted by Sir E. Vincent, Sir A. (now Viscount) Milner, Sir Colin Scott-Moncrieff and his successor, Sir W. Garstin. The results exceeded expectation. It was only by the exercise of the most rigid economy that it was possible in 1887 to resume payment of the full rate of interest on the Debt, but in February 1889 Baring was able to report that the stability of Egyptian finance and the solvency of the Government had been practically secured. The tide had then turned, the improvement rapidly increased, and before the British engineers had been ten years at work both the cotton and sugar crops had trebled, and the country was being rapidly covered with a network of light railways and agricultural roads to enable the produce to be brought to market. In the meanwhile the work of reform had been pushed on gradually as circumstances and the improvement of the revenue permitted. The negotiations conducted by Sir H. Drummond Wolff, on the accession of Lord Salisbury's ministry in 1885, for the eventual withdrawal of British troops from Egypt subject to the right of re-entry if circumstances rendered it necessary, were frustrated by the opposition of the French Government, and from that time forth

it was tacitly acknowledged that the direction and conduct of the work of regeneration must remain for an indefinite period in British hands. It went on steadily, perhaps all the more effectively because on account of many obstacles it was necessarily slow, hampered by financial fetters, obstructed by the jealousy of the foreign communities and their diplomatic and Consular officials, by the obstruction of reactionary native Ministers and employés, and subject to a continual fire of criticism and misrepresentation by a venomous foreign Press.

The British Representative, like a central steam-engine, supplied motive power to the machinery, backing up the officers in charge of the various branches of the public service, deciding between their rival claims on the exchequer, undisturbed by personal attacks, and preserving a good-tempered sense of humour which disarmed his opponents. What most struck those who were working with him was the unfailing loyalty of his support when they found themselves in difficulty, the patience with which he would defer even much needed reforms until they could be effected without undue strain on the exchequer, and the tact with which, notwithstanding a certain bluffness of demeanour and bluntness of language, he succeeded in managing the Egyptian officials. To those at home one of his most remarkable qualities was his ability to understand and appreciate the parliamentary and international difficulties of the government.

The use of the 'courbash' or cowhide whip for the purpose of enforcing labour, collecting taxes, and obtaining evidence, had been officially prohibited by a circular issued at Lord Dufferin's instance in 1883, but it was only by slow degrees that the abandonment of this and other methods of torture was in practice secured. By successive steps, and not without a severe struggle at the outset, in which British financial assistance had to be promised in order to meet the objections raised by the Commissioners of the Debt and the French Government,[1] the employment of forced labour for purposes of irrigation was reduced and finally abolished, except as an emergency measure in cases of inundation. Taxation was gradually diminished. After prolonged and difficult negotiations the excessive privileges of the European residents were in some degree reduced; they were made amenable to some direct taxation, and to by-laws approved by the International Tribunals. The native tribunals were remodelled and reformed under the direction of Sir John Scott and Sir M. McIlwraith, and the whole system of internal administration profoundly modified.

[1] The history of this incident is given in *Modern Egypt*, vol ii, pp. 411–16, and will repay perusal.

Sanitary and educational reforms had their share of attention, the prisons were put into a satisfactory condition, and measures were taken by the institution of a home for freed female slaves to facilitate manumission.

In January 1892 the Khedive Tewfik died, and was succeeded by his son Abbas II, who showed himself far less disposed to accept British tutelage, and whose unsuccessful efforts to return to the old Turkish ways have been recounted in a very amusing and instructive volume forming a sequel to Lord Cromer's *Modern Egypt*. These incidents, however, were thrown into the shade by military and political events of far greater importance.

In April 1885, Sir Francis (now Field Marshal Lord) Grenfell had replaced Sir Evelyn Wood in the command of the reconstituted Egyptian Army, which, under the control of British officers, became a thoroughly efficient fighting force. In 1889 the invasion of Egypt was attempted by the Khalifa Abdulla, who had succeeded the Mahdi on the death of the latter in 1885. The Dervish forces were completely routed at the battle of Toski with the loss of two-thirds of their number. In 1891 a successful expedition from Suakin drove the Dervish forces under Osman Digma from the adjacent province of Tokar. But the frontier of Egypt on the Nile remained fixed at Wady Halfa until 1896, when the necessity of creating a diversion to relieve the pressure on the Italian forces in Northern Abyssinia induced the British Cabinet to decide on an advance to Dongola. This decision, which was made public simultaneously with its communication to Baring, was taken after consultation with Lord Wolseley; but it may be doubted whether the Government had realized its full importance until Baring explained to them that as Dongola constituted no permanent frontier, the advance practically committed us to the reconquest of the Soudan. There was, however, no question of reversing the decision. On Baring's strong recommendation the conduct of the expedition was entrusted to Sir Herbert (afterwards Earl) Kitchener, who in April 1892 had succeeded Sir F. Grenfell as Sirdar. Dongola was occupied in September 1896, but the operations were protracted for another two years. They required the assistance of British reinforcements, the construction of a line of railway across the desert, and much organization of river navigation, and it was not until September 1898 that the forces of the Khalifa were finally crushed at the battle of Omdurman. It then fell to Baring to devise, and eventually to carry through, arrangements for the administration of the re-acquired territory under the joint authority of the British and Egyptian Governments—arrangements which are

probably unique, but which have worked with singular smoothness and efficiency.[1]

An incident which followed very shortly after the battle of Omdurman brought our relations with France into a most critical condition. The Anglo-Egyptian forces proceeding up the Nile Valley encountered at Fashoda, some three hundred miles to the south of Khartoum, a small body of French African troops, which had made their way across from the French Congo under the command of Captain Marchand, and had hoisted the French flag. Baring had called attention beforehand to the necessity of being prepared for this contingency, but when consulted as to the instructions to be given to the British Commander-in-Chief, advised that he should be left with a free hand, and that full confidence should be placed on his diplomatic ability.

This advice was followed, and the result was fully justified by the events. Captain Marchand was treated by Sir H. Kitchener with all the friendliness and consideration which this very remarkable and gallant explorer deserved. Public opinion on both sides of the Channel was much excited, but Lord Salisbury, then Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, treated the question with admirable calmness and moderation, leaving the French Government full time to consider the situation, and eventually, under instructions from the latter, Captain Marchand and his party accepted a passage down the Nile, and so returned to France. In March 1899 an agreement was concluded between the two Governments defining their respective spheres of influence in Central Africa, and from this time forward the attitude of France towards our position in Egypt became more conciliatory, and it was increasingly realized that in the actual political conditions the continuance of the British occupation was advantageous to France as well as to Great Britain.

The next few years were marked by increasing prosperity, and fresh measures to improve the material condition of the population. The financial stability of the Egyptian Exchequer was so firmly established that the elaborate and inconvenient restrictions imposed by the arrangement of 1885 had become little short of an absurdity, and

[1] Lord Cromer visited the Soudan in December 1898, when he made an important speech to the Sheikhs and notables at Khartoum on the system of the government that was to be introduced, again in December 1900, and a third time in January 1903. On the last occasion he wrote the following account of his impressions 'On the Nile off Gondokoro': 'Elephants gaze at us from either bank, hippopotami sport round the steamer, and only yesterday a herd of giraffes came down to drink and stare at the intruders. Smaller animal life is not deficient—never in all my experience have I met with a greater host of biting, stinging, and crawling insects.'

Baring pressed strongly that an endeavour should be made to obtain their abandonment, and to obtain for our *status* in Egypt a more formal recognition.

In all such matters it was necessary in the first instance to approach France, and an excellent opening was afforded for negotiation by the fact that France was equally desirous of obtaining British consent to the forward policy which she found imposed upon her in Morocco. The preliminary overtures which were made at Paris on this subject found the ground well prepared for a settlement of these and other long-standing questions on which the two countries had been at variance. The idea of a general agreement on outstanding differences appears to have been mentioned during King Edward VII's visit to Paris in May 1903; it was further discussed during President Loubet's stay in London in July of that year. The actual negotiations were opened in the spring and terminated in the Agreement of April 8, 1904. The terms of that arrangement are well known and need not be recited here, but what has frequently been passed over without notice is that in regard to those portions of it which concerned Egypt, it was essential to have also the consent of the other Powers before any fresh financial system could be introduced.

Negotiations, therefore, were commenced with Germany on the subject immediately after the signature of the Agreement, and after some bargaining her adhesion was obtained. Austria, Italy, and Russia followed suit.

This may be said to have been the crowning achievement of Baring's labours in Egypt. But the details of execution remained to be settled, and the fascination of the work kept him there longer than was prudent. Since his assumption of the task a succession of marks of distinction had been conferred on him, each marking recognition of some special success. In 1885, on the conclusion of the financial negotiations with the Powers, he was made a Companion, and in 1887 a Knight Commander, of the Bath. In 1888 after the partial abolition of the corvée, and when the financial position of Egypt was fairly safe, he received the Grand Commandership of St. Michael and St. George. In 1892, after the corvée had been totally abolished and on the accession of the new Khedive Abbas II, he was raised to the Peerage by the title of Baron Cromer. In 1895 he received the Grand Cross of the Bath; in 1899, on the arrangements made in connexion with the reconquest of the Soudan, he was made a Viscount; and in 1901 an Earl. In 1906 the additional and rare distinction of the Order of Merit was conferred upon him.

In his family life he had been visited by one great calamity. His

first wife died at Cairo in the autumn of 1898. The affection which was felt for her in Cairo had increased with each year of her stay there, and her loss was deeply felt by the whole European community. Her two sons were already of an age that required absence from home for educational purposes, and Baring sought consolation for his loneliness in his panacea of increased work, devoting his leisure to metrical English translations of portions of the Greek Anthology, which he printed later for private circulation, and eventually published. In 1901 he married Lady Katherine G. L. Thynne, sister of the present Marquis of Bath, and the British Agency had again a hostess, stately and gracious, and prompt to take her share of social duties and benevolent work.[1]

In 1906 there were some warnings that the combined effect of climate, work, and advancing years were telling upon Baring's naturally vigorous constitution. These symptoms he endeavoured to meet, after his manner, by increased physical exercise. The result was not altogether happy, and he was obliged to resort to more scientific treatment. But he returned to Egypt undeterred, and it was not till the following year that the trouble returned in the form of acute digestive disorder, which assumed a very threatening character, and necessitated his resignation of office and return to England as soon as he was in a condition of health to undertake the journey. The announcement of his impending departure was received with a widespread feeling of regret. A Committee was at once formed for the purpose of giving it expression, and he was sufficiently recovered to attend a large meeting on May 6, 1907, at which Count de Sérionne, a leading member of the French community, acknowledged on behalf of the European residents their sense of obligation to Lord and Lady Cromer. The speech was received with great enthusiasm, and was followed by one from the Prime Minister, Mustapha Pasha Fehmi, who made similar acknowledgements in the name of the Government and people of Egypt. Baring in his reply took the opportunity of recognizing the services of those who had worked with him, and refuted with convincing eloquence the charge which had been made in some quarters that while Egypt had advanced in material prosperity her moral and intellectual progress had been neglected.

On the formal acceptance of his resignation in July the Government took the course, almost unprecedented except in the case of great military and naval commanders, of recommending to Parliament that he should receive a grant of £50,000, 'in recognition of his

[1] By this marriage he had a third son, whose school progress and *espiègleries* were to him a subject of constant interest and delight in his last years.

eminent services as Agent and Consul-General in Egypt.' The vote was carried in both Houses *nem. con.*

The friends who met Lord and Lady Cromer on the railway platform when they arrived in London were painfully impressed by his appearance of physical exhaustion. But a period of strict repose, enforced with some difficulty by his doctors, restored him to comparative health, and he soon returned to active political and social work. His position in Egypt had made him for twenty years the centre of every progressive movement, and it required all the entreaties of his friends to induce him to restrict his active participation in similar movements here within the limits dictated by prudence.

He used to say laughingly that he had a singular facility for taking up unpopular causes, and it was quite true that he was entirely indifferent to popular applause, and was always ready to oppose movements which appeared to him to be based on mere sentiment or abstract principles and to be contrary to the dictates of experience and observation. Thus, while he by no means underrated the intelligence of women, he took an active part in opposing female suffrage, being convinced that the direct participation of women in parliamentary politics would be detrimental both to them and to the community. Similarly, although both he and Lady Cromer had placed themselves at the head of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Egypt, he strongly contested the propaganda of the Anti-Vivisection Society as being based on misrepresentation, and calculated to impede scientific progress for the benefit of the human race and the animals themselves. He took much interest in the promotion of the study of Oriental languages, and was always faithful to the cause of education in the Classics —giving very practical expression to his views by a gift of £1,000 to the British Academy for the endowment of a Greek Prize.

He was a regular attendant, and a fairly frequent speaker, in the House of Lords, where he was regarded as the leader of the section of the Unionist party which remained faithful to Free Trade principles. His speeches were such as always command the attention of the House—lucid, outspoken, often lightened by touches of humour, but entirely free from any attempt at ornate rhetoric. They were delivered in a manner peculiar to himself, falling into a series of periods, at the commencement of which the orator raised his voice. The concluding phrases of each passage suffered somewhat, but the general impression produced was that of well-ordered logical thought, a thorough knowledge of his subject, and absolute sincerity.

He incurred much unreasoning obloquy by proposing that the

operation of the Old Age Pensions Bill should be limited to seven years, in order that there might be an opportunity to reconsider the whole system by the light of experience. The greater part of the public ignored his proviso that all pensions granted during the experimental period should be maintained. He was not at all daunted by the abuse which was showered on him, and announced to his friends his intention of taking an early opportunity to explain the whole matter to an audience of working men. It was perhaps fortunate that the occasion for this gladiatorial encounter did not present itself.

He was by nature and by his diplomatic training disposed to compromise where there seemed no hope of successful resistance, and though greatly opposed to the main features of the Budget of 1909, he did his best to prevent its rejection by the House of Lords. Subsequently in the critical period when the fate of the Parliament Bill hung in the balance he took a leading part in efforts to persuade the more moderate Opposition and Cross Bench Peers to vote for the second reading rather than risk the catastrophe which seemed to him to be certain to ensue on a rejection of the measure. He took a full share of Committee work, being generally asked to take the Chair each Session in one or two of the more important Select Committees on Private Bills.

At the same time he began to devote a considerable portion of his time to literary work. In 1908 he brought out his two volumes on *Modern Egypt*, giving a masterly account of events in that country from 1876 to the date of his departure. He contributed a good many articles to various periodicals, the most important perhaps being one on 'The Government of Subject Races' which appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* of January 1908. An address to the Eighty Club on 'The Situation in Egypt', appeared in 1909. In 1910 he published an Essay on *Ancient and Modern Imperialism*, which was an expansion of an Address delivered by him as President for the year of the Classical Society. It is an instructive and interesting statement of the objects and characteristics of British rule, as contrasted with those of Greece and Rome, with some shrewd reflections on the difficulties in store for us. In 1912 he began regularly to contribute signed articles and reviews of books to the *Spectator*, and thenceforward there was a constant flow of these brief notices, terse, vigorous, and full of anecdotes and comments founded on his varied personal experiences and extensive reading. His physical powers, however, began to show signs of exhaustion, and he was again much troubled by digestive weakness.

In May 1914 he was most seriously ill, and for some days appeared to be in imminent danger. Then his strength of constitution began to reassert itself, and in the autumn, though weak, he was once more full of mental activity, and earnestly discussing the phases and prospects of the War. He resumed his literary work, and in February 1915 he published a small volume entitled *Abbas II*, giving an account of the various struggles which he had had with that plausible and wily potentate, and on which he had been discreetly silent until the declaration of a British Protectorate over Egypt, and the change in its ruler removed any objection to disclosure. The recital is humorous enough, and presents a vivid picture of the British Representative quietly watching the development of intrigues and manœuvres till the need and opportunity came for his intervention, and then sweeping the whole fabric away and replacing matters on their proper footing. In the preface he emphasized once more his view that progress in Egypt must be gradual, and that the relief from harsh and burdensome taxation is the benefit most appreciated by an Oriental population.

In the course of the spring he recommenced attendance in the House of Lords and spoke occasionally, though from this time onward in consequence of weakness of the heart the ascent of the flights of stairs by which the 'gilded chamber' is approached was a severe trial to him. Later in the year he wrote a Preface for a volume of Lord Curzon's *Speeches on Subjects of the Day*, and contributed an article to the *Quarterly Review* on 'Modern Austria'. In the early autumn the flow of reviews in the *Spectator* recommenced, and continued until a short time before his death. They ranged over a great variety of subjects. Two on the published volumes of Lord Beaconsfield's Life were reissued separately under the title of *Disraeli*, and a vigorous denunciation of German policy appeared in pamphlet form as *Germania contra Mundum*.

During the Session of 1916 his attendance in the House of Lords became more regular, and his general condition of health seemed sufficiently restored to admit of his being invited by the Government to take the Chairmanship of the Special Commission appointed by Act of Parliament to inquire into the origin and conduct of the operations in the Dardanelles. He had often in conversation deprecated the institution of formal inquiries into these operations and those of the campaign in Mesopotamia before the termination of the War, and still more the publication of the conclusions arrived at. It was obvious that while hostilities were still in progress much of the evidence must for strategical and political reasons be withheld,

that the Report of the Commission could not possibly give anything like a frank and complete statement of all the facts, that the Press would seize upon and publish the most striking passages, omitting of necessity many of the qualifying considerations, and that the public, excited and incensed by the revelation of blunders incidental to all failures in war, would clamour for punishment of those implicated, with little regard for what they might reasonably plead in their own defence. When, however, the post was offered to him he thought it his duty to accept it, only asking (as he explained in the House of Lords) that he might have on the Commission the assistance of a member who was a man of judicial experience accustomed to sift and weigh conflicting statements of fact. When the Commission after a first meeting in August adjourned for four weeks, he employed his leisure in Scotland in writing a number of articles for the *Spectator* in order that the paper should suffer as little as possible from his enforced silence while the Commission was at work. From September 19 till December 4 the Commission held frequent sittings, examining witnesses. The Draft of its First Report was prepared and discussed, and then occurred the catastrophe which the present writer had from the first apprehended. The Chairman was laid up with an attack of influenza. In his earnest desire to get the work through he convened a meeting of the Commission at his house before he was equal to any sustained exertion. The sitting was long and exhausting, and after its conclusion he collapsed and fell into a state of semi-consciousness and complete prostration. In this condition he remained for several weeks, asking for and examining the Draft Report in any moments of temporary lucidity. Towards the end of January the most devoted nursing was rewarded by some indications of returning strength, but the machine was worn out, and just as some hopes were being entertained of partial recovery the silver cord was loosed, and the spirit returned to Him who gave it. A noble spirit intent on high aims and working indefatigably for unselfish objects. A great example and a great encouragement. For the friends who miss him have at least this consolation that the good which he did lives after him, and that his memory, the memory of the just, blossoms where the grass had withered under the iron heel of Turkish rule.

SANDERSON.