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skill in diagnosis. He then offered to pay invalid rates, but, greatly to his astonishment, was again refused, except at rates which were perfectly prohibitory, and obviously intended so to be. Many years afterwards, he heard from one of the Directors the reason of the refusals. All three doctors were convinced that they had seen in him dangerous symptoms of overwork, and entirely disbelieved that he would ever pay two annual premiums. They were perfectly right; the symptoms were there, and the death might have supervened, only, as it happened, the overwork was temporary, and with its cessation the symptoms ceased also, and the applicant's natural vitality resumed its force. Nor, of course, can the doctor who passes an applicant guarantee him for an hour. He may seem perfectly well in the office, and in returning home catch a cold which in a month has reduced his chance of living fifty per cent. Six months is the longest term for which, taking a large average of patients, any experienced doctor would trust his own guarantee; and with a reserve of six months, within which the office should only pledge itself to repay premiums, it would be as safe without a medical opinion—if the Secretary could reject any applicant obviously sick or unhealthy—as with one. Yet the necessity for taking that opinion is one grand check upon the development of Insuring business. The applicant, who, as we have said, is seldom insuring of his own free-will, and can never insure from hope of personal gain, never likes the process. Not to mention the trouble involved and the time and the guinea, he does not want to be tested,—to have all his weak places found out; to stand a cross-examination from a man he did not select, and regards for the moment as an enemy, as to his habits of life; or to run the risk of the shock involved in a rejection, for reasons left unexplained. He would much rather pay the fee to the office, and, of course, much rather also keep it in his own pocket. He would infinitely prefer to dispense with the whole annoyance, and Insurance is one of the businesses in which a much slighter annoyance than this will turn a waverer, and induce him to resolve that he will save his money for himself. The Offices apparently believe that customers must come, whatever terms they impose; but if they will read the accounts of the Post-Office failure to create Insurance business, they will find that the very slightest obstacles deter applicants, and that they are conducting the only trade in which the dealer has not the advantage of his customers' selfishness. Most customers want the article they buy. The insurer would much rather be without the necessity of buying it.

THE RELATION OF HISTORY TO POLITICS.

WE have lately been, and still are, passing through what may be called a Political epoch, an expression which we use to designate not merely a division between one set of political ideas and another, but an actual predominance of ideas belonging to the political world. We can hardly imagine any one either denying that politics have been the main interest of the last few years, or asserting that this is true of all the years. There are many persons for whom politics have always the strongest interest; there are many for whom they have very little at any time. But between these two lies a shifting class, like the land between tide-marks, whose mind is now flooded with these interests, and now lies high and dry beyond their reach. Our human tides, however, are uncertain, and we know not when the waters now at spring-tide will recede. We see no sign as yet of any chance of a rival interest taking hold of men's minds, to the exclusion or diminution of this, and we wish, while the political fever is at its height, to invite our readers to consider with us how far it resembles, and how far it is dissimilar from, an interest in history.

There may be some persons, perhaps, who will deny that the two are distinguishable. "What do you mean by politics," they may ask, "but the history of our own time? What is the difference between a keen interest in the career of Sir Robert Walpole or Lord Chatham, and the career, for instance, of Mr. Gladstone? Nay, if you come to that, when do politics turn into history? Would you say it was with a political, or with a historical interest, that any one in this year of grace, 1882, sat down to study the career of Sir Robert Peel? Surely politics only differ from history in the sense that June differs from summer, or Middlesex from England. It is history in its contemporaneous aspect."

Even those who would thus argue, however, cannot maintain that an interest in politics is identical with an interest in history. Many a man would think it almost an equal misfortune

to be deprived of a sight of his daily paper, and to be forced to an hour's study of any standard history whatever. The memorable contrast drawn by Mr. Cobden between the information in a single issue of the *Times*, and "all the works of Thucydides," touches a sympathetic chord in the hearts of many who smile at the particular historian selected, apparently, as the type of a voluminous writer; and from Mr. Cobden's point of view, he and they are quite right. We remember a shrewd, sensible man of business, who was intimate with Cobden, saying, about the time this speech was made, that he thought the want of history was a loss to his much-admired friend as a politician; and doubtless the statesman is bound to know history. Still, we question whether a very strong interest in history is an advantage to a politician, and we are sure that a very strong interest in politics is a disadvantage to a historian. Perhaps many readers will consider such an opinion effectually confuted by the specimen of history which we should choose for its illustration, the great work of Grote. What! A history of Greece, many volumes of which are as difficult to lay down as the last new novel, an instance of the adulteration of history with politics? We think it is. Eagerly as the book is devoured on a first perusal, we doubt if anyone takes it up again, after the lapse of years, without something of the feeling with which we take up an old newspaper, or at least an old pamphlet. There is something temporary about it. We lack the mellowing atmosphere of pure literature.

In truth, it does not seem to us enough to say that the *historical* is not identical with the *political* mind, there seems to us a radical opposition between them. We cannot assert that a certain admixture of prejudice is altogether unfavourable to the popularity of a historian. Tacitus is surely one of the most prejudiced of writers. If you tear off the last half of his account of Tiberius, what remains will appear the narrative of a praiseworthy attempt at conscientious rule, and yet the tone of the earlier narration is not more sympathetic than that of the later. If the spirit which sees it a crime in a Prince to be slow to appoint new governors to distant provinces, because, forsooth, the chance of making a fortune ought to be diffused among a greedy oligarchy, at the expense of the unhappy millions whom a permanent governor might be tempted to protect,—if such a spirit as this be no blight to perennial fame, then it is a waste of time to point out minor but more familiar instances of the spirit of the partisan which have not interfered with the fame of the historian. We have heard that Lord Macaulay refused to look at the evidence offered him of William III.'s complicity in the massacre of Glencoe; and the accusation, even if untrue, could not be called unjust. While a Macaulay forces us to realise that such a spirit does not interfere with the rapid spread of a historian's fame, and a Tacitus imposes on us the same conviction as to its permanence, it is vain to deny that the most passionate prejudice may impel or check the pen of a historian, and yet leave his work popular, famous, even great.

Still we may surely say that the prejudiced spirit is the unhistorical spirit. The true historian asks, first of all, How did these things happen? He is not debarred from asking, in the second place, Are these things right or wrong? But we hold it a test of the ideal historian that the second question should be subordinate to the first. He must be ready to listen with patient ear to every word of evidence for the virtues of a Tiberius, the crimes of a William III. The most depraved and the most virtuous of men claim equal attention from him; he must not linger over the portrait of the noblest hero, he must not blur that of the most despicable tyrant. He must have but one object—to see each of them as he was. Can this be said of the politician? Could it be true of any great party leader on any side?

"It is true of a politician," we can fancy the reply, "just so far as it is true of any class of men whatever. You must not contrast an average specimen of one class with an ideal specimen of another. You are speaking of the *ideal* historian. You allow that what you have said is untrue of Tacitus, on the one hand, and Macaulay, on the other, and surely such a very singular couple implies a large retinue to keep them company. You have not even ventured to contrast them with any actual man whose works are known to booksellers and librarians; you use proper names for your prejudiced historians, and leave your ideal historian an abstraction. Only let us use the same method, and your test will not exclude the Politician, any more than it excludes his elder brother."

Certainly there is a point of injustice which no good man will pass, be he politician or historian. We would even concede that a good man would be far more anxious to be just to those whose nerves still quiver at the contumelious epithet and the slanderous imputation, than to those who have been called away to another reckoning than that of public opinion. An honest politician, we should think, would not be tempted more than another honest man to throw a veil over excellence that he discerns, or to impute base motives for which the reality supplies no hints. But how little there is of this kind of injustice in the world, in comparison with the unconscious injustice that is as much more hurtful as it is more innocent! And all that makes the politician wish to avoid the first makes it impossible for him to avoid the last. All that makes him careful to say nothing he does not believe to be true, influences him to believe nothing he does not wish to be true. If his opponents are there to feel the blows, his adherents are also there to profit by them. No one, we believe, can be in a position where he cannot help wishing to believe all the good of one set of men and all the evil of another, and remain perfectly just. We remember a protest from a lawyer against Arnold's view of the hurtfulness of his profession to the sense of truth, which struck us as a curious instance of the confusion by which the very completeness of an adversary's case is sometimes mistaken for its confutation. To put oneself in the position to hear all that was said on one side exclusively, it was urged, was to put oneself in the position of sincerely believing truth to lie on that side. Probably Arnold would not have wished for a better illustration of the dangers of the Bar than such an apology for it. We should say that to throw oneself heartily into the strife of party, is to put oneself in a position to see all the good on one side and all the evil on the other. There will be no need afterwards of insincerity in order to represent all the good on one side and all the evil on the other. The ideal for the politician, at his best (and it is lamentably rare), is that he should treat an opponent with generosity. The higher ideal of justice—how much higher is known to few, because it is also so wonderfully more rare—seems to us simply incompatible with party zeal.

It may be never fully attained by the historian. We are quite unable to point out any history which we could call an adequate illustration of our ideal. Still, we are certain that the more this spirit of impartial investigation (which by no means implies the spirit of tepid judgment) is found in any man, the more fitted he is to write history. But this qualification cannot be said to apply to the politician. Politics, however reluctantly we discern the fact, are, after all, a kind of warfare. To see the good in all we oppose, and yet oppose it vigorously, is, to weak and limited beings such as we are, simply impossible. Two things seem to us equally necessary to the vigorous politician,—the first, that he should see some results of his work clearly; the second, that he should not see some results of his work at all. It has happened once in the world's history that a reformer said to his followers, "The time cometh that whoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." None other than the speaker, we believe, could have done that justice to the persecutor, and yet remained sure of the worth of that for which the persecuted were to die. The clear discernment of the righteous element in opposition would have drained away from another mind all strength to meet it.

"Then the political life is wrong," it may be objected, as an effective *reductio ad absurdum*. "An interest weakened by the love of truth is an illegitimate interest." It is difficult to put the answer to that objection into a few words. We believe, for our own part, that any one who looks upon the world as it is, must take the words "right" and "wrong" in two senses. A soldier may be absolutely certain that the military career was right for him, while another, without disagreeing with him, may consider war not only horrible, like an earthquake, but in a very important sense wrong. To fight may be the absolute duty of individuals, yet war is surely a sign of something wrong in the relation between nation and nation. Something like this seems to us true of party politics. Things being as they are, it may be best for the country that Conservative and Liberal should each throw himself heartily into the cause of his party. And yet it is an evil that a large part of the energies of one set of men should go to discredit the efforts and wishes of another. For it can hardly be said by any candid thinker that a Liberal need only oppose those wishes and efforts of a Conservative which he honestly believes to be hurtful to his country. If such an anxious and careful justice to opponents as a high-minded man

will always strive after in his private relations, were the political ideal, we do not see how party could have any coherence whatever. No doubt, the highest ends are best served by the free play of lower ends, and opposite errors work out in the field of experience the problems of truth. But error and prejudice remain error and prejudice still. Those who allow a political epoch to be a sign of national vigour may yet sigh for an atmosphere less withering to all social questions, more favourable to the development of quiet thought. It is no paradox to say that they may long for a more historical spirit, even towards the present. For the contrast we would set forth is not so much between a view of the present and a view of the past, as between two tempers of mind with which men may regard past or present indifferently. Time is so eloquent a teacher, that the historical spirit is forced, to some degree, on those who look any distance backwards; but it is possible, in what we hold to be an exercise of the historic spirit, to regard the principles of warring parties, even in our own time, as a set of centrifugal and centripetal forces, the due balance of which preserves the orbit of national life. Only we do not believe it is possible for any man to see this through the smoke and din of party warfare; and while we acknowledge that smoke and din to be necessary, we cannot but desire at times that they should roll away, and leave a space for interests that are more fruitful in the hopes and desires that bind man to man.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY AND CARDINAL NEWMAN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—May I offer a few remarks on a notice of Mozley's "Reminiscences," in your issue of July 1st, respecting the relations of Dr. Newman and my father, Archbishop Whately,—a subject on which I am, of course, in a position to offer reliable testimony? The charge which your reviewer brings is a heavy one. It is a grave accusation against a Protestant Archbishop of Dublin that he should consider it his duty to show, by every means in his power, contempt and hatred for the Roman Catholic Church. But the groundlessness of such a charge can be amply attested by many who survive to bear witness that his leading principle, first and last, was to uphold the rights of all whom he deemed to be unfairly treated, no matter what their creed, party, nationality, or station. His impartiality on these points was so nearly absolute, that it exposed him to be frequently blamed by those who thought that his position demanded a more determined championship of the Protestant side. But he never swerved in his firm adherence to the principles of action he had laid down for himself. In support of this assertion, it may suffice to refer to the well-known fact that he laboured for years in behalf of national education, jointly with the Roman Catholic Archbishop, Dr. Murray. And that prelate's own words, in a letter still extant, were, "No matter how he [Dr. Whately] may differ from me in his religious belief, I am sure nothing that was not kind and liberal could come from that eminent individual."

And that these principles continued to actuate him through life is well known by all who knew him personally. Up to the day of his death he maintained friendly relations with members of the Church of Rome, such as Mr. Corballis, who had been his fellow-labourer in the Education Committee.

In a conversation with Mr. Senior, held only a few months before his last illness, he maintained that justice required that Roman Catholic priests should be paid by the State. (See "Memoirs," p. 363, third edition.) That in later life the course of events naturally led him to appear more frequently as an upholder of the claims of his own fellow-religionists is quite true (as, for instance, when the persecutions inflicted on Protestant converts in humble life led him to found a Society for the Protection of Rights of Conscience), but the principle in both cases, with Protestants or Romanists, was in effect the same.

With regard to his relations with Dr. Newman, that Archbishop Whately was not the originator of the breach between the friends is sufficiently proved by the correspondence between them which appeared in the memoir. Dr. Newman's own words are,—"On honest reflection, I cannot conceal from myself that it was generally a relief to me to see so little of your Grace when you were in Oxford; and it is a greater relief now to have an opportunity of saying so to yourself."