

## CHAPTER XI

OWEN AND HUXLEY—THE RADCLIFFE  
LIBRARY—WORK AT OXFORD—DEATH  
OF HIS FATHER

1860-1871.

THE years that followed Acland's return from America were among the busiest and happiest of his life. He was in the prime of his intellectual and physical powers, and his position as the head of the Oxford Medical Faculty gave him a standing in the world of medicine and of science which enhanced his influence in the University. The Museum was now at length an accomplished fact, and, to one with his genius and passion for organization and arrangement, the task of getting it into working order was the most delightful of labours. The authorities of Christ Church had consented, largely through the persistence of Liddell, to the removal, on loan, of the Biological Collection, on which so much money had been spent, from its quarters in the old 'Anatomical Museum' to the new and spacious home in the Parks. Acland's place as Lee's Reader had been filled by Rolleston; but the creation of the Linacre Chair of Physiology, of which he was the first occupant, had now given him the status of a University Professor, and had conferred upon Acland a colleague whose assistance in the carrying out of his plans, both inside the Museum and without its walls, was invaluable.

Of Rolleston no adequate memorial has ever been published, but he was one of the most brilliant and original figures which Oxford has ever produced. Ten years after his death, Acland spoke of him in terms which may fittingly be quoted here<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> *Oxford and Modern Medicine*, p. 27.

It is needless to write to you on the character of that remarkable man. He was filled with Biological conceptions, and engaged in Biological work of the widest kind. To him Man was the crown of the whole. But Man in his material origin and descent; Man in his evolution, social, moral, and intellectual; Man of every time, character, aspiration; Man in his highest relations to his fellow men and to his God. Nothing was amiss to him but meanness and indifference; poetry, philosophy, history, shown in endless quotations from Aristotle to George Eliot, from Homer to Tennyson, from Herodotus to Macaulay. He equally revelled over the dry bones of mummies, the dust of mounds, or the fragments of pottery. He delighted in any sanitary details, in hospital construction and administration. He had been with our sick and wounded in the Crimean War, and there had acquired the deepest sympathy with sickness and suffering on the largest scale and in the least particulars. He had been an Hospital Physician. He was a fierce denouncer of slavery, a passionate supporter of the North in the contest of the United States. His zeal for the Temperance cause in public and private knew no bounds. He dredged for Invertebrates in Torbay in his later years, as he was working on the Hunterian series which he had inherited, with the enthusiasm of a boy. With boundless sympathy for all that was noble in intellect and in morals, among all sorts and conditions of men, he was, when cut off from among us, beginning to inspire the like temper of enthusiasm for science and morality and benevolence in the men that were about him. Unconsciously they, for the most part, drew in the reverent and devout spirit that dominated his eager nature.

Rolleston counted among his demonstrators and pupils such men as Sir William Church, Mr. Pridgin Teale, Professor Ray Lankester, Professor Moseley, Professor Corfield, Professor Poulton, Dr. Hatchett Jackson, Mr. Boyd Dawkins, Dr. Sharkey, and Dr. Champneys. The mere enumeration of these names is sufficient to show the class of man for whose energies the Museum and the new scientific teaching found scope. And there were other names and other minds employed in

advancing the study of Natural Science, which may be justly ranked, in their respective spheres, with Rolleston. Mr. Story-Maskelyne the mineralogist, the second Sir Benjamin Brodie the chemist, Professor Westwood, the first curator of the Hope Entomological Collection, Professor Clifton, Professor Prestwich, and Professor Phillips, were among the first to be housed with their respective apparatus in the new buildings and to give a practical example of what could be done in Oxford now that proper facilities had been provided for the 'Advancement of Natural Knowledge.' The presence of such a band of workers was compensation for all the worries and vexations which had attended the struggle for the Museum. With all of them Acland was on terms of friendship, a strong spirit of *esprit de corps* pervaded the whole body, and they in turn recognized him as the man who had carried his point in the teeth of so much opposition and apathy.

But before serious study had begun within its walls the Museum had been the scene of that conflict between Bishop Samuel Wilberforce and Professor Huxley which has been recounted so often and with so much variety of detail. Early in July, 1860, the British Association paid its third visit to Oxford, and the Museum, structurally complete but as yet only partially furnished, was chosen as the most commodious and appropriate place for its meetings. At one of the meetings of Section D, Professor Owen had caused something like consternation among the anatomists by attempting to re-establish certain physical distinctions between the structure of the brain in Man and in the higher Quadrumana which were supposed to have been abandoned as untenable, and in the process had crossed swords with Huxley. The following afternoon had been appointed for a paper by Dr. Draper which was expected to serve as a peg for a discussion on Darwin's *Origin of Species*, then the book of the hour. It was rumoured that the Bishop of Oxford, with whom Owen had been recently staying at Cuddes-

don, would join in the fray and 'smash Darwin.' The crowd was so great that an adjournment was made from the lecture-theatre to the great gallery, destined to be for so many years the home of the Radcliffe Library, but then destitute of books or shelves and undivided by partitions. Contrary to expectation Owen did not come, and it was by mere chance at the last moment that Huxley changed his plans and put in an appearance, but the Bishop was there on the platform 'resourceful, pugnacious, impregnable, not a little arrogant.'

The scene that followed has been told and retold. Full accounts of it will be found in Mr. Leonard Huxley's Life of his father and in the lively pages of Mr. Tuckwell. The biographer of Bishop Wilberforce leaves the matter alone, on the ground of insufficient material, but he attributes to some 'Professor,' presumably Huxley, a statement which the latter certainly never made—'that he would rather be descended from an ape than a Bishop.' Acland took no part in the discussion. Most unhappily, as he thought, the amazing eloquence of the Bishop of Oxford practically gave the question the aspect of an attack on Revelation and Christianity, and he felt a deep repugnance at anatomical and technical matters being discussed in such a temper before a mixed audience incapable of drawing a correct conclusion on premises so brought forward. The only result must be to undermine their faith in the records of science and destroy their confidence in the calmness and candour of scientific men.

Two years later the Association met at Cambridge, and Owen returned to the charge in a paper on the characters of Man and the Higher Monkeys. In the interval Huxley had devoted much time and labour to demonstrating the existence in the brains of the latter of the structures whose presence Owen denied: chief among these was the once famous *Hippocampus Minor*<sup>1</sup>, a small eminence, shaped more or less like

<sup>1</sup> Familiar to readers of *The Water-babies* as the *Hippopotamus Major*.

the sea-creature of that name, situate in the backward prolongation of the central hollow of the brain. In the discussion on Owen's paper he naturally took a leading part, and was supported amongst others by Rolleston and the late Sir William Flower, the latter producing to the audience a series of anatomical preparations which are now admitted to be conclusive proof of Huxley's contention. Owen bitterly resented the turn taken by the controversy, and expressed himself in a manner which caused pain and regret to those who were jealous for the good fame of the master of scientific anatomy.

Foremost among these was Acland, whose veneration for Owen knew no bounds. He had been a silent spectator at the meeting of the Section, and on the following day he addressed a long letter to his old teacher in the hope of producing a reply which would extricate him from the false position into which he had drifted.

... Your lecture, not addressed to scientific anatomists, but to the public, seemed to some at least to vindicate your old description of the difference between Man and the *Quadrumana*. I am aware that it did not really do so, unless my attention failed me; for I did not hear you positively restate the debated structure to be peculiar to Man. Still the general impression on the non-anatomical hearers would be, I doubt not, that you adhered to the definition which you had before given, and that therefore Mr. Huxley, with Allen Thomson, Rolleston, Schroeder, Van der Kolk, Vrölik, was in error, and his opposition to you more or less groundless.

This impression could not in fairness be left; the contradiction was necessarily reasserted, and the public were left in a state of surprise amounting to bewilderment and of regret exceeding great. You have doubtless gathered what is the nature of my request to you. If you admit the general truth of this recital, and if you accept me as no partisan in such a question, will you consent to tell me, with leave to

publish your answer, in what respect Mr. Huxley has misunderstood your opinion, or misinterpreted your words; and also in what particulars the discussion of these two years has modified your original views as to the facts to be relied on as definitive or differential of the human brain or of man himself? I will not here repeat the urgent reasons that seem to me to exist for doing this. Believe me, the continuance of this feud over a simple fact will be injurious to the confidence of the public in scientific men—and justly so. The consequences may be grievous in this country. A handle will be given to those narrow-minded persons who suspect scientific pursuits; uncertainty as to what science does teach will widely prevail. And in this particular instance there is, in truth, nothing worth fighting about. The question is one confessedly of pure zoology of the most technical kind. The public confound this in a misty manner with the essential nature of man. Whatever views, or hypotheses, or guesses, Mr. Huxley, or you, or Mr. Darwin, or the Bishop of Oxford may have as to the origin of man, you are all agreed that, however he so became, he is in some manner made in the image of God—a spiritual being, clothed in this world with the material conditions essential for his material existence here. His material frame you account as the husk only of the seed within, an earthly casket for the precious jewel of his soul. Nothing can disturb this. If science could show a great revolution in the belief concerning the introduction of man on the planet, as it has concerning the creation of the planet itself, still the essence of his nature (however it may perplex metaphysicians to explain it) will be that he is capable of being a God-fearing, God-loving being, and the only such on the earth. However near to other material natures he may seem to be, nothing can change, nor anything but himself degrade, his higher nature. No time will ever show us the full mystery of life on the earth, any more than it will help us to understand with our reason the nature of the Infinite. 'Him we feel after, if haply we may find Him.' But we may perplex those who cannot give time to master the material questions, we may make them fear where there is no fear, doubt where there is no doubt, question where there is no answer, and break away from the only path of

peace into a black wilderness of conflict, interminable and objectless.

The letter from which this extract is taken assumed the dimensions of a small pamphlet, and was received by Owen in the spirit in which it was written. He returned a prompt and friendly answer and a considerable correspondence ensued, but it was found impossible to agree upon the terms of the proposed Eirenicon, and the idea of publication was abandoned, much to the relief of Professor Phillips, who insisted that Acland's intervention could hardly fail to involve him in a stormy controversy.

No such exception, however, could be taken to the following letter which he addressed a month or two later to Archbishop Longley, his old Harrow head master and constant friend.

Your Grace will remember the Physiological collection at Christ Church which you went over with me with much kindly interest, and on which I lectured for thirteen years as the Reader in Anatomy, and you will not, therefore, charge me with presumption or haste in passing opinions on anatomical questions; nor is there any chance of your suspecting your old pupil of want of due deference to you, if I express my opinion to you on a grave subject at a critical moment.

Two years ago at the British Association Professor Owen alleged that there were three points of marked difference between the Brains of Man and the Brains of Apes (viz. in the posterior lobe, the posterior cornu, and the Hippocampus). Professor Huxley stated that these differences are not so great as exist among the Apes themselves; and thereby as a ground of distinction between Man and the Apes they were valueless signs.

This led to a serious dispute in which the Bishop of Oxford charged Professor Huxley to the effect that his assertions unwarranted by facts had an irreligious tendency.

This was not sound argument. Either Owen was right in his facts or Huxley was right in his. The tendencies are nothing to the point whatever way we and the brutes were

made—so He ordered it, 'God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good'; to pervert facts so as to square with our temporary notions can lead to no good.

Since Bishop Colenso has written his work, every sort of question affecting Genesis is likely to be raised and discussed, among others the Origin of Man. The Bishop of Oxford (whom I cannot allude to without acknowledging his great kindness to me, and the friendship of our fathers, which will, I hope, continue ever with the sons, however we may have to differ on such questions as this) is committed to Mr. Owen's statements. But these statements produce an incorrect impression. The differences Owen alleges to exist do not exist to such a degree as to separate Man from the Quadrumana to the extent which his system would lead non-experts to suppose. The Bishop of Oxford has therefore unintentionally given an unfortunate turn to the debate by resting sentiments dear to all men on at least questionable facts.

You may be also some day unawares drawn into an expression of opinion supporting Owen against Huxley, Rolleston, and Lyell. I have therefore thought it a duty I owe to you and to devout men, to tell you what is the state of the case anatomically considered.

Owen accidentally mis-stated certain differences upon which afterwards great issues were supposed to hang, and he does not like to retract. The question is wholly exaggerated. Nothing of a religious kind turns on it—I wish people could see this. Suppose no difference of a material kind could be found to exist between Man and the Apes, should we be made brutes? or would brutes be men? I repeat, He who made all 'has made it all very good.'

I pray you use your vast influence with the clergy to hinder them from taking sides in scientific disputes, for which they are not thoroughly grounded by thorough training and by full practical knowledge. What is the fear? Scientific inquiry, ever shifting, can only attain to what? To a further knowledge of the facts which He has ordained who made the worlds and us with them. Does not the Spirit of God in the hearts of men speak plain and sweet enough that we should be contented thereby, without always fearing some catastrophe,

if the material instrument through which He speaks is too intimately understood<sup>1</sup>?

Dr. John Radcliffe, who died in 1714, was one of the most munificent of the Founders whom the University of Oxford is proud to commemorate. By his will, dated the 13th of September in that year, were established the Travelling Fellowships and the Library which bear his name; and the Radcliffe Infirmary<sup>2</sup> and Observatory owe their existence to the discretion of his Trustees in applying to charitable uses his residuary estate<sup>3</sup>. The sum of £40,000 was left 'for the building a Library in Oxford, and the purchasing the houses between St. Mary's and the Schools in Cat Street where I intend the Library to be built.' During the years that immediately succeeded his death this bequest was gradually carried into effect; a mass of small tenements was swept away, incidentally reducing the parishioners of St. Mary's to the residents in a small portion of the High Street; and the Camera with its noble dome was erected by Gibbs in suggestive proximity to the buildings of the Bodleian Library. The will contained provision for the maintenance of the fabric, the salary of a Librarian, and the annual purchase of books, which the increasing

<sup>1</sup> How strongly Acland resented these attempts to agitate scientific meetings with things having nothing to do with science is shown by a conversation which the late Professor Hort had with him two years later in Switzerland. 'Acland declared himself, in view of the approaching meeting of the British Association at Birmingham, where he had been chosen to preside over the Physiological Section, as determined to put down at once with a high hand every attempt to introduce arguments connected with theology whether on the Christian or the un-Christian side, and if the meeting will not support him he will leave the chair.' (*Hort's Life*, vol. ii, p. 41.) Fortunately the occasion did not arise.

<sup>2</sup> Erected in 1770.

<sup>3</sup> He bequeathed also the sum of £5,000 'for the building the front of University College down to Logic Lane, answerable to the front already built, and for the building the Master's Lodgings therein and Chambers for my two Travailing Fellows.'

value of the estate permitted the Trustees from time to time largely to augment. The first Librarian, the Rev. Francis Wise of Trinity, was appointed in 1750, and for a period of sixty years the funds at the disposal of the Trustees were devoted to the purchase of works in general literature; while valuable bequests, of which, perhaps, the Kennicott Theological Collection is the best known, were made by the successive Librarians and by other benefactors. In 1811 a regulation was passed by which the purchase of books was confined to works in Medicine and Natural History, and the Library for the first time assumed the character of a Medical and Scientific collection, the sums annually expended on books ranging from £500 to £1,000<sup>1</sup>. In 1834 the money thus expended was fixed at £500 per annum, but in 1841 the Trustees reduced the grant to £200, holding that £500 was unnecessary on account of the little interest the University took in scientific literature.

In 1851, as we have seen, Acland was appointed Librarian in succession to Dr. Kidd, the electors being the same distinguished Board at whose hands he had suffered such disappointment in connexion with the Travelling Fellowship. Though the remuneration was small the office was congenial in itself, and gave him status as an University official in the struggle which was then being waged for the Museum. There was much to be done, if the Library was properly to fulfil its functions. The hours of access were inconvenient to the habits of the University, the absence of artificial light caused it to be closed in the evening, while, owing to the denial of all means of warming it, the temperature of the Library was for two-thirds of the academical year so low that none but those endowed with Siberian fortitude could use it continuously as a place of study. And the diminution of the annual grant rendered the purchase of expensive scientific books impossible<sup>2</sup>. All these

<sup>1</sup> In one year as much as £3,000 was granted by the Trustees.

<sup>2</sup> As Acland expressed it, 'The purchase of any one large work,

points were urged upon the Trustees by Acland in his first annual report, for the moment without success. But they were only palliatives, and his plans embraced a much wider and more far-reaching scheme. An essential part of the new Museum, whose cause he was then pleading, was a great Scientific Library, and Woodward's design provided the necessary accommodation. No sooner had the foundations of the Museum been laid than Acland set to work to persuade the Trustees to transfer to the building in the Parks the scientific works contained in the Radcliffe Library, together with their headquarters' staff in the shape of the Librarian and his assistants. In the autumn of 1856 he presented to the Trustees a special report in which he ventured 'to recommend measures' by which 'Dr. Radcliffe's Trustees may create an additional debt of gratitude to his memory and most materially benefit the Scientific and Literary interests of the University.' 'Why,' he asked, 'must the University provide triplicates when the same books or many of them are already in duplicate at the Bodleian and Radcliffe Libraries? Cannot rather the Foundation of Dr. Radcliffe, his scientific books, annual grant, librarian and sub-librarian be transferred, so that all anomalies may be removed and a great good to Dr. Radcliffe's profession and to science be effected?'

This report was largely circulated, and a memorial in support of it was signed by thirteen Heads of Houses, both Proctors, all the Science Teachers, by a number of the Professors, including Pusey and Jowett, by the Bodleian Librarian, and by a number of names which carried weight in the University. There were

such as those of Gould on Zoology, or Bourgerly on Anatomy, is become a matter of serious consideration; lest, on the one hand, the Library be found wanting in some necessary Standard Work of Reference, or lest, on the other, there be no funds left to purchase the ordinary current scientific literature even of this kingdom.'

some refusals, however, and Acland preserved among his papers the letters in which the Warden of Merton (Dr. Marsham), Professor John Conington, Professor Heurtley and others recorded their dissent.

The Trustees received the Report and the Memorial with favour, but there was no need for hurry while the Museum was still unfinished. There was the further question of what was to be done with the Camera itself, if shorn of its treasures and custodian. The Bodleian, overcrowded and greatly expanded, was in crying need of a Reading-room. Acland urged that the Radcliffe Dome should be devoted to this purpose, and at his instigation Woodward designed an arcade by which the two buildings could be easily and gracefully united. Such a scheme required consideration and elaboration of detail, but in the year 1860 the requisite agreement was come to between the Trustees and the University authorities. The Radcliffe Building was transferred to the University as a loan 'to be used for a Reading-room, or for any other purpose of the Bodleian Library.' The scientific books were to be removed to the apartments in the Museum, and it was provided that the apartments in which they were kept should have the words, 'Radcliffe Library' placed over the doors. In August, 1861, the books were removed from beneath the dome in the Radcliffe Square to the Museum. The removal occupied six days, but fortunately the weather was fine and not a book was injured in the transit.

The Library was housed in the long gallery which occupies the upper storey of the west front of the Museum, and there it was destined to remain for a period of forty years<sup>1</sup>. The gallery was divided into two compartments of equal size, one, the northern, appropriated as the Reading-room, the other as the principal Book-room. They were separated by the

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 215*n* and 493.

central or Tower-room, which was fitted up for the reception of parcels and for the transaction of the general business of the Library. In the *minutiae* of cataloguing, arranging, storing, and planning, Acland was in his element. The bookcases and working-tables were made under his superintendence and to his designs. They were a source of legitimate pride to him, and he was never better pleased than when, as not unfrequently happened, a request would come 'for drawings of such models of convenience and good looks, on a scale that would permit a cabinet-maker to duplicate them.'

In the regulations of the Library, which Acland drew up, was a most important provision which allowed the removal of books, for objects of study, to the court containing the collections. He had always maintained that the illustrative literature of Science was comparatively worthless when the books themselves could not be brought near to the specimens they described. Though the Library was under the sole charge of the Radcliffe Librarian and his assistants, the Professors who taught at the Museum were encouraged to enter their respective wants in a book which it was the duty of the Librarian to submit periodically to the Trustees, and the hours of admission to the Library were especially framed to permit the townspeople to consult the books, the Reading-room being opened twice a week during Term-time from seven to ten p.m. Acland attached especial importance to this. 'One of the best Botanists in Oxford,' he told a Royal Commission in 1870, 'is one of the best makers of portmanteaus, and one of our best electricians is a glazier whom I used to see go past my window with his basket of tools in his hands.'

The Radcliffe Trustees who had taken so enlightened a view of their responsibilities were five in number—Earl Bathurst, Mr. William Dugdale, The Right Hon. Sidney Herbert, The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, and

the Right Hon. T. Sotheron-Estcourt. The chief credit is due to Gladstone and Sidney Herbert, but the latter did not live to see the transfer of the Library carried out, and Acland had the melancholy duty of addressing his Report to 'but four out of the five who have heartily encouraged every sound endeavour to promote the efficiency of the Radcliffe Trust.'

Sidney Herbert's place was taken by the Duke of Marlborough, and one of the first actions of the reconstituted body was to raise the annual grant for books to £500. Even this sum barely sufficed to keep pace with the output of costly works on Science and Natural History. It was quite unequal to the purchase of periodical literature, English and foreign, or of the transactions of the various learned societies; and there seemed no possibility of making up the leeway in this department due to years of ill-judged parsimony. But Acland succeeded in coming to an agreement with the Rev. H. O. Coxe, who had recently become Bodley's Librarian, by which a large number of scientific and medical periodicals and transactions were transferred as they were received, under the Copyright Act or otherwise, from the Bodleian to the Radcliffe Library. Thus, through the liberal and judicious conduct of these two great institutions, but largely through the tact and persistence of Acland, who was now, as Regius Professor of Medicine, a Curator of the Bodleian, the scattered scientific resources of the University were at last gathered under one roof, and a great working library was established in the very midst of workshops, laboratories and lecture-rooms, 'used not only by a few veteran experts, but also by young and earnest students, each of whom is thus brought into contact, from his earliest steps, with the history and progress of the whole domain of natural knowledge<sup>1</sup>.'

On one point, the architectural junction between the

<sup>1</sup> Report to the Radcliffe Trustees, 1871.

Bodleian and the Radcliffe Dome, Acland was unable to make converts. The great Oxford Library remained to his death, as it remains still, separated from its Reading-room by a wide and open space and a double flight of steps, nor is it likely that Mr. Woodward's design or anything approaching it will be the means of solving the difficulty<sup>1</sup>. The expenses of maintaining the fabric of the Camera still rested on the Trustees, and Acland was instrumental in carrying out the various plans for warming and lighting the building which have rendered it so commodious a place of study. He was also successful in a suggestion to the Trustees that grants should be made from time to time out of their funds to enable young medical students of promise to pursue a short course of study at Oxford; and the Trustees were persuaded in the same way to contribute to advanced scientific investigations in the laboratories of the medical department of the Museum. The late Mr. C. C. Pode and Professor Ray Lankester were in this way encouraged in their researches into the processes of Fermentation and Putrefaction.

But Acland's satisfaction with the progress of the Science departments at Oxford was marred by one great disappointment. He had always looked upon the ultimate removal of a portion of the Botanical Gardens and Collections to the neighbourhood of the Museum as essential to 'methodic display and study of the Kosmos,' and he declared that 'to sever the extinct from the existing Flora, was as hateful as to sever the living from the extinct animals, or the Palaeontological from the recent Anatomical and Physiological series.' He disclaimed all desire of interfering with the site or the associations of the beautiful old Garden by the Cherwell, but he pleaded that the

<sup>1</sup> Acland went so far as to state that could he and Panizzi have foreseen that the Reading-room would be for ever separated by a wide street from the main Library, the memorial for the union of the two institutions would never have been presented.

buildings in which the Dried Collections and other Botanical specimens were contained might be rebuilt, and the formal plots relaid, on some of the eight acres in the Parks which had been secured for the ultimate expansion of the Museum. There also it would be possible to construct Laboratories and to develop a new Botanical Garden which might vie with Edinburgh or Kew. Acland was supported in this view by Sir William Hooker, by Professor Daubeny, and his successor in the Chair of Botany, Professor Lawson, and by Professor Phillips, the Keeper of the Museum, but the plan found little favour in Oxford even among the ranks of the Progressives. In 1876 it was finally removed from the sphere of practical politics by the resolution of Convocation to expend a large sum in erecting new Laboratories and Houses in the old Botanical Garden. Acland strove with all the resources at his command to recall the decision, but without effect. To the end of his days he bemoaned the perversity of those who, as he considered, had marred the unity of a great design<sup>1</sup>.

In February, 1861, the death in a railway accident of Dr. Baly, the Queen's Physician Extraordinary, rendered it possible for a moment that the overtures of 1858 might be renewed. However Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Jenner succeeded to the post so sadly vacated, and the question of leaving his Oxford work was never again taken into serious consideration by Acland, though in 1863 he received the appointment of Honorary Physician to the Prince of Wales.

His Royal Highness was now (1861) *in statu pupillari* at Trinity College, Cambridge, with a set of rooms reserved for his use in the Master's Lodge, but with a household and establishment at Madingley Hall. Here Acland was invited to pay the visit described in the following letter.

<sup>1</sup> See *Oxford and Modern Medicine*.



MY DEAREST FATHER,

You will be surprised at my date, and think me nearly as locomotive as yourself. The Prince asked me to come and spend a Sunday with him, and you will believe I was nothing loth.

This is a charming place—an old country house four miles from Cambridge—with large grounds, and capital stables; halls—great drawing-rooms—billiard-table and the paraphernalia of an ancient Country-Gentleman's house—rather disorderly—and not beautiful.

I came yesterday evening in time for dinner and for a little walk before. I wish you could have seen my 'Young Master' doing the honours; taking me to my room up the back stairs, and seeing that all I wanted or could want was there—and the same at bedtime. He is certainly made for the kindly courtesies of life<sup>1</sup>.

After breakfast to-day we were at morning church—having fed the horses with cut carrots and he having been followed about the place by his own horse—then we went into Cambridge to dine in Trinity hall *before Chapel*, afterwards to Chapel. He drove me in a phaeton in and back.

To have seen Cambridge for *the first time* in such a way was remarkable, and is never to be forgotten. I called on Sidgwick, but he was unwell, and of course on the Master of Trinity, Whewell. On the whole it is long since I have seen a day of such interest, in its way like the first entrance to Rome. It seemed so strange to visit at my age, and many years now a Professor at Oxford, the College and haunts of Newton, Barrow, and Bacon.

<sup>1</sup> It was on an earlier occasion, during the Prince's Oxford residence, that Acland described how 'the Prince discovered I could not play whist and therefore Gen. Bruce was made my partner, and the evening passed in frantic endeavours to instruct me, and in the most exuberant merriment on the part of all four.' The only other time when Acland is known to have played cards was at Brantwood in 1893, on his last visit to Ruskin, and as the two sages talked the whole time *de omni scibili* and showed one another their hands for purposes of comparison and advice, the game was scarcely up to the standard of the late Mrs. Martha Battle.

The Prince likes Oxford best<sup>1</sup>—which you will forgive to him—but he is very happy here.

Ever your most affectionate and dutiful son,

H. W. ACLAND.

In the following December the whole nation was thrown into mourning and unfeigned sorrow by the death of Prince Consort. Acland's feelings of admiration and affection for the husband of his Sovereign have already been described in his own words, and the following letter from a leading member of the Royal Household found an echo in his heart.

You are one of these, my dear Acland, who are capable of appreciating my beloved Master, for I think none but the good could estimate all his goodness. He was indeed a wonderful being, for seldom do you find in one person both head and heart so superior to his fellow-creatures. I never saw any one at all equal to him, my affection for him was greater than for the members of my own family, and the blank can never be even partially filled up<sup>2</sup>.

It was with no little awe that he felt how narrowly he had missed a terrible responsibility. Some most interesting letters from Stanley, too intimate for publication, tended if possible to heighten his admiration for the manner in which 'sorrow's crown of sorrows' was borne by the Queen. Canon Stanley, as he then was, had been chosen to accompany the Prince of Wales in his tour to Palestine and the East, which was carried out in the following year. His letters form an interesting record of that journey, while the Prince on his return described to Acland many of the incidents in an expedition which differed so widely from the one they had undertaken together. A gloom, however, was thrown

<sup>1</sup> It ought to be added that the Prince in issuing his invitation had written, 'I am glad to say that I like Cambridge, but do not like making any comparison with my late University.'

<sup>2</sup> Many years afterwards (in 1875) Acland submitted to the Queen his recollections of a talk with the Prince Consort, which are embodied in Sir Theodore Martin's *Life*, vol. iv, p. 13.

over the whole party by the death of General Bruce, who had been unable to shake off a fever which he had contracted in Syria. The regard which Acland had formed for him at Oxford and during their travels in America had been increased by subsequent intercourse, and he shared in the sorrow which pervaded the Household from the Prince downwards.

Acland's holidays were variously spent during these years. The strain of the Oxford work, and the impossibility of what he called 'shortening sail,' made him seize what opportunities presented themselves of obtaining complete change as far away as possible from the scene of his labours. Often the opportunity did not coincide with the children's holidays, and he was unable to join Mrs. Acland at the sea or down in the west, where she made the head quarters for the family. During the summer of 1861 the Duke of Marlborough placed at their disposal a house in Blenheim Park, Home Lodge. It was in the early days of the Volunteer movement, and Acland had been one of the first members of the University corps<sup>1</sup>. During this season of relaxation he attached himself to the Woodstock Company, and, whenever he could find the time, drilled with them 'to the great delectation of body and mind'; and he records with satisfaction 'a good drill with skirmishing and blank cartridge.'

In 1862 he took his wife over to Switzerland, where they fell in with the late Professor Hort, who has recorded his impressions of the pair in language that

<sup>1</sup> His eldest brother was one of the pioneers of Volunteering in Devonshire and took an intense and practical interest in all military matters. The following extract from a letter from Henry Acland to his wife is illustrative of this thoroughness: 'After various scrimmages we elected for Dunkerry shooting, Tom Taylor, Charlie, Gib, and myself on ponies, Tom walking without his coat, carrying a huge bough like Polyphemus and a knapsack of drawing-materials. He seemed to fancy we were all an army and Dunkerry an enemy, and there were orders and counter-orders that might have taken Badajoz.'

deserves quotation: 'I have never seen a more perfect union of deep and fervent Christian feeling with unflinching love and desire of truth on all possible subjects than in Acland; whatever she said was in perfect keeping.' And in the last days of the year he went down to Plymouth to place his sailor son on the *Marlborough*.

1864 was an eventful year. In April he was dispatched to Utrecht by the University to examine the pathological collection of Van der Kolk with a view to its purchase. On his advice the collection was secured for Oxford, and such a practical demonstration of liberality towards scientific teaching was most gratifying to him. In July he paid a short but deeply interesting visit in Ireland to his friend Dr. Stokes, the most distinguished figure amongst Irish physicians, and a man for whom on private as well as professional grounds Acland entertained the highest regard. Part of the time was devoted to an expedition to the coast of Galway. 'Never have I spent,' he wrote, 'three more interesting days, each duly divided by open-air—swimming—dogs—antiquities—discussion—fun—and affectionate hospitality.'

Both his host and Miss Stokes were enthusiastic archaeologists, but Acland's chief interest in the early Irish monuments was derived from the light which they seemed to cast on Irish history. Goldwin Smith's recently published 'Manual' on that subject had just fallen into his hands, and he was brimful, as his letters to Mrs. Acland show, of the ideas which it suggested. In the Ireland of the past and of the present thus unfolded before him he found a clue to much that had surprised him in the conduct of some of his Irish colleagues on the Medical Council, whose proceedings had not altogether contributed to the harmony of that body. The Irish, he declared, 'have been hardly used.' They 'have not their due, neither their due of right, nor the due of their character, energy, and attainments.'

I understand Woodward and Dean as I never did before.'

The following extract from another letter is given as an illustration of the wayside talks in which Acland took such pleasure, and throws a not unimportant side-light on his width of sympathy. He had come across an Irishman of the middle-class, self-made and a Roman Catholic, a flour contractor from Kilrush. The talk had begun about the care of the poor in the Irish work-houses, and it drifted on to many matters.

I asked him some questions about the celibacy of the Priests. He spoke of this, and absolutely and wholly contradicted the objections and imputations raised among us. He gave an instance. 'Now,' he said, 'at Kilkee how is it? Your clergyman has ten children, and must he not have his thoughts in them—and justly? Ours has none, and has no earthly object (if he be an equally good man) but his Flock.' He would not hear either of the objections we make that they are ignorant of domestic relations. 'Why,' said he, 'their life is spent in watching over them.' It was curious to hear him, an illiterate man, describe his son—his eldest. 'He was a studious lad—which was very nice: he was always upon his books—which I don't understand; so once I went to his room at bedtime, and I said: "Well, Tom, what is the end of all this?" meaning his books and his prizes. And so he said (for he thought what I guessed): "Well, father, I do not know what to think, but when I do know I'll acquaint you." And so not long after he came and said: "I have been thinking I could prepare for the Priesthood." And so I said, "Now, Tom, I had rather my son had no cap to his head nor shoes to his feet and scarce a rag to his back, and walked after the poorest of donkeys"—you know how this denotes the lowest Irishmen—"than that he should be a priest unless in his heart he is satisfied he can wholly renounce the world and give his entire heart to God." And he said, "I think I can." And now you see he is Priest of the next Parish and a great pleasure to me and as good a son as can be. He is a fine-looking fellow—and sings beautifully—and he isn't above a glass of punch after dinner or anything in a quiet jovial

way, which I like in him, though I am a teetotaller for twenty-four years; but I like him to be free to serve God, and to be pleasing to his fellow creatures in such way as he feels consistent thereto.'

In the autumn of the same year he had a severe attack of scarlet fever. The malady was a name of dread in the Acland family: for the first Mrs. T. D. Acland had died from it in 1850, and her husband and children had been stricken by it at the same time. Fortunately skilful nursing and a constitution which was far stronger than he could ever be brought to admit pulled him through without any permanent ill-consequence, though there was a period of painful suspense before the crisis of the fever was past. The following letter from Ruskin is an indication of the anxiety which his illness had caused among his friends:

It is my fixed opinion that if you had come to see me long ago you would not have had scarlet fever now and that you ought to have come and looked after me. For you know well enough that there are very few people who have any influence over me at all, and it seems to me much more the duty of those who have, to use it when I am in need of them than to cure indifferent people of stomach-aches and colds in the head!... No man's profession ought ever to occupy him so as to render it impossible for him to look after his friends—I don't say this angrily but steadily and dogmatically. I know you did what you thought right, and couldn't but do it, and I say it was wrong and you've got scarlet fever for it.

In the summer of 1865 Acland, accompanied by his second son, Harry, went on a tour to Switzerland with Dean Liddell. It was the year of the great Matterhorn disaster and was destined to be an unlucky holiday for the Oxford party, for they had scarcely settled down at Engelberg when the Dean slipped on a moss-covered stone as he was descending a steep mountain-path, and broke the small bone in his left leg. It was a week before he could be moved, and the

journey back had to be made by very easy stages. Acland found himself once more in medical attendance on his friend, and was able to alleviate his sufferings and to make the necessary travelling arrangements, and he was the means of procuring for the Dean at Paris the best professional assistance, in the person of M. Nelaton, surgeon to the Emperor. The lost holiday was, however, more than compensated for by a flying tour to Loch Rannoch in company with Mrs. Acland.

In the Easter of the next year he made a short holiday trip to Belgium with two of the elder boys, Harry and Theodore, and the following letter from Waterloo is interesting in many respects. The sketch alluded to, 'Waterloo from the French lines,' was afterwards completed and occupied a prominent position in the dining-room at Broad Street.

We have had a charming day, barring the usual fact that we got too tired, as seems to me with very little. But certainly the Rugby and Winchester 'men' cannot do more than I. We are settled very nicely at the foot of the Belgian Lion, where is the niece of Sergeant-Major Cotton, long dead. She married a Belgian carpenter, M. Vera Lewek. They have built an inn on the ground, Hôtel du Musée, a really nice clean little country inn, and she a very pleasant modest good person. We have just had evening service all together—with three maids and the children, including *the Baby*, 'who might as well be present.' One of the party came from near Bow Common, and knows Arthur's<sup>1</sup> labours and respects him much. Altogether the excitement of Waterloo was too much for me. I could not sleep for charges, and wounds, and horrors of every description, and saw the whole scene of the 18th of June half the night thro'.

To-day we had the great pleasure of a letter from you—our first. It came in at breakfast forwarded from Brussels, written from Mrs. Vizard's. I have bought you a 3d. jug as

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. A. B. Cotton, Mrs. Acland's youngest brother, and incumbent of St. Paul's, the last of the ten churches which Mr. William Cotton built in the East End.

a memorial. Well, after breakfast, we read the Service and then walked three miles to Waterloo Church to see the monuments to officers and men, and home to dinner; then walked over to Belle Alliance and round by Hougoumont home, reading Keble's most appropriate hymn for the day, appropriate as the lesson to me of this place is duty, abnegation of self, and of the world.

We keep to our plan of going to Namur to-morrow, to Ghent Wednesday, and go to Antwerp Friday. But I can get no tidings of a Meuse steamer to Liege. I got to-day after dinner a slight notion of the field of battle in a sketch, just to see the effect at sunset, the end of the engagement. To-morrow I shall try to work it in, if it is a fine day and I am up early, but it is not a subject for rapid sketching, the ground being altogether too delicate. It would require several evenings. But I thoroughly understand it. It is a stupendous instance of heroism, never in the annals of Man surpassed. I am very glad our Sunday was here<sup>1</sup>. It altogether befitted the temper in which one should visit such a scene. I am not, however, disposed to make sermons to-night, so I shall refrain. I could write you a long one. I thought to-day whether I had not better give up my Oxford life and become Leopold's curate for the rest of my days—like an old knight who takes to the cloister. But Keble's hymn for to-day seems to forbid that. Yet how hard is my Oxford life become when taken into conjunction with a susceptible nature. But of this more hereafter. Do read Carlyle's address.

In 1866 a flying visit to Plymouth, where his sailor son was on board the *Ocean*, brought up a flood of old memories, which he embodied in a letter to Mrs. Acland:

I will do as yesterday, write before I go out. I almost forget exactly what I told you yesterday. I did so much that it would be a volume to tell you all. I have not had

<sup>1</sup> Acland does not seem to have remembered that the battle itself was on a Sunday, when—

'He who sought but Duty's iron crown,  
On that loud Sabbath smote the spoiler down.'

a more interesting fifteen hours for many years. I started, I told you, before 8 to go on board the *Osborne*, saw Admiral Seymour and arranged with him to join their inspection of ships at 10.30, went ashore and got breakfast. It was a wet morning. I went on board the *Cambridge*, the *gunnery ship*, where all *men*, not officers, are drilled. It was pouring with rain. I went down into the Captain's cabin against my wish, and on entering was accosted in the most hearty manner by an old *Pembroke* messmate, Captain Ewart, who has entire charge of the ship at exercise. There was a letter from Seymour to me to say that they would just inspect the *boys' ship* and I should go there—to the *Impregnable*. I set off thither and found Captain Tremlett, the head of that department in the service, with all his officers waiting for the Admiralty. He was very courteous and I was dripping. Presently there was a signal 'Inspection postponed till fine weather.' Accordingly the Captain most kindly took me alone, and for an hour and a half explained the whole system of boys' training for the service, mainly drawn up by himself and now superintended by him in the ships stationed at the several harbours, for the same purposes. I conversed very fully with the able Captain and Instructor, Mr. Ridley. Captain Tremlett then took me in his gig to the *Cambridge* again to learn if Captain Ewart had any new orders. He had not, but I was introduced to the surgeon, Dr. Forbes, who happened through Charles Courtenay to know all about me (oddly enough), and with them we had much discussion on the sanitary care of ships. Ewart asked me to dine at 7.30, which I conditionally accepted. He is a great artist and did the *Pembroke* off Cape Matapan in my big notebook.

Thence to the *Ocean* to arrange with Willy to meet me on shore at 6—and to call on Captain —. He is a nice man, at this moment engaged to Miss —, but broken off by the parents, solely on ground of funds—that is like some other people's history. I had half an hour's talk with him, I quite hope to his comfort, poor man. I then went to Captain Mayne's ship and examined his arrangements, gave the *Impregnable* boat's crew (boys) a shilling apiece and explained to them the P. O. Savings Bank to their great amusement, as they had said they should spend their shilling in

'apples and nuts,' which, I remarked, being what monkeys would do, I could never have guessed. Mayne showed me a good deal of interest, spectroscope of Gassiot's and all manner of arrangements. They have six life-boats in the *Nassau* and one steam-cutter. He proposed to take me to the *Wivern*, Captain Burgoyne<sup>1</sup>, the great Cupola ship. On reaching *her* there was, as usual, a friend. The first lieutenant looked very hard at me, and said, 'I think, Sir, you were on the *Satellite*<sup>2</sup>.' 'I was,' I said. 'I am the little midshipman, Renshaw'; and so he took me away then and explained the cupola, guns, and all the wonderful and most perfect apparatus of the kind in existence.

By this time I was very wet, and must say very tired—it was four, and I had no luncheon. I had a glass of wine and biscuit in the *Nassau*, and being so wet as I could be no worse, I thought I would go to the *Osborne* to thank Seymour and call on Sir Alexander Milne, who was Admiral on the American Station when I was there, and occasionally very kind and friendly to me. So I went for this formal purpose, dripping as I was, the *Osborne* having steamed out of harbour into Barn Pool. The weather was most horrible; however, I got there. They were amused to the last degree at my zeal and propriety, and wanted to dress me and to stop to dinner. But I saw they were very busy with hundreds of papers, and said I would go ashore and dress. It happened that the flag-ship's boat was going to Mount Wise. I went in *her*, got home at 6.30, found Willy waiting for me, sent him to tea with Captain Ewart without me, had a cup of tea quietly, dressed, got off to Barn Pool by 7.30 exactly, and sat at dinner between an old friend, young Pakington (who was at school with John Barton at Burn's), and Captain Nott of the *Implacable* (training-ship for boys)—opposite Mayne and Mr. Sheridan, a friend of Arthur's, who knew me when I was at work at Bullock's<sup>3</sup>, and insisted on describing my coming

<sup>1</sup> Who subsequently went down in the ill-fated *Captain*, Sep. 7, 1871.

<sup>2</sup> The ship on which Acland had obtained a passage to Italy in 1836, see p. 45 *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> The apothecary with whom Acland had worked in his St. George's days.

up out of Bullock's cellar, in which some of my work had to be done.

It was an official dinner, but very pleasant; and looking back on the whole day I seem to have acquired a perception of the service such as I had never had. Of course I could not have understood it all unless before familiar with it, but it happened that I saw the training system for *boys*, the gunnery system for *men*—the *newest* surveying-ship, and the best cupola and guns in the world perhaps, in the *Wivern*, with full opportunity of questioning about and examining into every one. It is a day to be remembered. Willy enjoyed his evening with Ewart, who was very kind, and he slept here. I am astonished at his good sense. I suppose he got it from you. There is impressed on me a thankful conviction of the great pains now taken to train our young sailors of all classes in a wise and right way, a conviction that a man has in the Navy at least as good a chance of a useful and happy and Christian life as in any other walk, and a real pleasure in seeing so much energy, morality, and brightness in a service which is essential to England, has been her pride, and is essential to her very existence.

In 1867 his brother the Rev. Leopold Acland accompanied him in an expedition to the Paris Exhibition and through the towns and churches of Brittany. In 1868 the visit of the British Medical Association to Oxford kept him tied to English soil, but in 1869 he accompanied his daughter to Wildbad. The state of her health compelling him to leave her to finish the treatment, he returned home, in attendance on the Prince and Princess of Wales, who had been out there with their children. 'Little Prince Edward said to me to-day, "Why does not your wife come to you?" I suppose he had heard the Prince or some one say so.'

In 1872 he paid, in company with Mrs. Acland, the long-deferred visit to Norway; some of Mrs. Acland's letters describing their experiences have already appeared in print<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *A sketch of the Life and Character of Sarah Acland*, p. 48 et seq.

It was on one of these occasions that he was brought into close connexion with Sir James Paget and his family.

Paget (he wrote to his wife) is becoming one of the most important people in the place; his large family make him conspicuous, his character and their admirable conduct make them beloved. I see how much Paget's resolute family life has done for them and how much more I might have done for our boys. Paget tells me he *never but twice* forgot any engagement. Three qualities lie at the root of his character—regular industry, absolute religious and domestic contentment, inflexible purpose. I think on the whole his character is one of the most *firm* I have known—and while it is to me a great example it almost makes me despair.

Nor was this a solitary expression of Acland's admiration for the great surgeon. 'Paget's conduct,' he wrote after a severe operation on a dear friend at which he had been present, 'and the conduct of his pupils yesterday was just heavenly, and gave me a new love of my professional duties and my profession. And Paget himself is in work almost divine in his tenderness, calmness, and precision.'

During his many absences from home Acland was now as always a voluminous correspondent. The letter-writing was sometimes carried on under conditions of considerable difficulty. A thumbnail pen-and-ink sketch represents him on one occasion seated on his hatbox in the middle of a railway platform 'like an oasis in a desert.'

... Some of the worthies are evidently half astonished, half offended at my imperturbability. We shall never, I should think, reach Pitlochrie or Pit—anywhere. But you must direct Blair Atholl. A gawky girl has nearly upset my ink, tho' tons on tons of luggage have passed within an inch of my toes without touching me.

A few more extracts from Acland's letters to his wife will give some faint idea of the variety of his

occupations and interests during these years. In November, 1865, he was invited to Cambridge to inspect the Medical Examination on behalf of the General Medical Council, and stayed with Whewell at the Lodge.

'The Master of Trinity has just shown me to my bedroom thro' long passages, and when I got to the room I exclaimed, "Why, this must have been the Prince of Wales's sitting-room!" And so it was. I have been telling the Master how in the year 1834 one of my great objects in life was that I might see Whewell, the author of the Bridgwater treatise, which I had read, and of whom Thomas Fisher<sup>1</sup> had written so much. Dr. Whewell is unaltered wholly, so handsome, so kind, so charming. These strong men when pleasant are of all men the most pleasant. He is going to read Harvey<sup>2</sup> for me to-morrow. . . . When he offered me some ale at 10.30 p.m. and I took water, he, taking the ale, said: "For my own part I think that when one takes water so much of the system is poorly occupied." What would Sir W. Trevelyan say?'—Acland adds in a postscript—'I took some ale, and am certainly more comfortable'—together with Whewell's good-night words, 'Chapel is at 7 a.m., you can go if you like. I don't.'

Acland was sometimes the recipient of strange confidences and strange compliments.

A Birmingham merchant in the train told me I was a *sui generis* (!), a mixture of the intellectual and the practical. That when I 'handled a bone' at the Museum before the Architectural Societies he discovered this and settled that it would make him perfect if, having been a practical man all his life, he were to come to Oxford now his fortune is made!

Writing from Concanneau, Brittany, whither as we have seen he had wandered with his brother in 1867, he says:

We had come to our room after dinner at 7.30 meaning to

<sup>1</sup> His old tutor.

<sup>2</sup> The Harveian Oration, which it fell to Acland's lot to deliver that year.

write long letters, when M. Guithon, the owner of the Aquarium, comes to see us and has now left us at 11 o'clock. Originally the son of a fisherman, he has made the most original and extensive Vivarium. He lives by it. He has 15,000 lobsters and crawfish now in his tanks and all kinds of fishes. They know him, and dozens of turbot came when he clapped his hands, some 15 lb. in weight.

Now it is from an early meeting of the Medical Council:

Hard at it! We breakfasted at 8, and Dr. Christison and I were at work here at 10. It is now 2, and the afternoon sitting is beginning and will continue for four hours yet. I doubt whether I shall get to the Ebringtons' till 9. I have to be at the House of Lords at 6, and am going to the House of Commons afterwards<sup>1</sup>. To-morrow it will be the same. I enjoyed my dear visit to Broome very much and derived *great instruction*. I am amazed at the intellectual activity of such men as Christison, Sir David Brewster, and Sir Benjamin.

The following letter discloses another typical day of a different kind:

June 28, 1864.

I reached Rugby at 4.30, went straight to the Temples', where I saw Jacob Ley getting into a fly: was welcomed by him and asked to tea. I went off. It was pouring wet. I came to the George Hotel, put on my Swiss boots and American mackintosh and walked off to the sewage-tanks and filtering-beds a mile off. Examined them, and then a mile to the farm where the sewage is distributed; went to the farmer who farms the land and went into the whole question. Back again to the George by 8, very wet and very hot, 'presbyterian' running down me. Had some

<sup>1</sup> Acland's multiplicity of engagements was sometimes productive of confusion. 'I remember,' writes a lady, 'my mother once asking him if he could come to our house in Oxford on a particular afternoon. He pulled out his engagement-book, looked at it gravely and said, "on that afternoon I've got to be at the House of Lords—the College of Physicians—and Broad Street."'

mutton-chops and a glass of wine, and changed. Off to Temple 8.30 to 9.30. Then to Mr. Campbell, the great gentleman farmer who has superintended the sewage experiments with Dr. Gilbert and Mr. Lawes, whence I have come home now at 11. So farewell. This examination of Rugby has been most satisfactory for my sewage business, giving me information I could not have obtained in any other manner.

And the following extract gives a glimpse of yet another side of his labours:

OXFORD, *Feb. 14, 1868.*

... All well this morning and nothing particular, but I am absolutely devoured by public work. A long memorial of several foolscap pages on the Quarantine Laws for the Government, to be sent directly, and an opinion given on it; and an opinion as to the arrangements of the Chairs of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy at Dublin, to be sent by return of post.

There is a frequent mention of Gladstone and the famous breakfast parties which kept up a flavour of the early Victorian days to so late a period in the century.

*May 30, 1867.*

I had a most pleasant breakfast—Count Strelezcki, Lord Lyttelton, Mr. Lecky (who is a very nice person, modest and quiet), Lord Houghton, the Dean of Ch. Ch., and Willy. It was so funny to see the Dean looking at Gladstone; you can see he is astonished by him without loving him, and it is curious also to see how Mrs. Gladstone and the children idolize him.

On another occasion the guests were Sir Henry Storks<sup>1</sup>, Sir Erskine May, Mr. Nasmyth, Lord Lyttelton, Mr. Charles Howard, Sir Francis Doyle, and Lady Lothian. 'Gladstone's old aunt of ninety-five,

<sup>1</sup> This was just after the 'Eyre' Commission, of which he had been Chairman.

Miss Robertson, died last night, and he thought he ought not to appear. They were very sorry not to see you when you called. Mrs. Gladstone was what Agnes G. calls "gone to the East."

In September, 1868, Acland spent a Sunday at Cliveden, whose 'proud alcoves' were then in the possession of the Duke of Westminster. Gladstone and Panizzi were of the party, and are described as 'going on unceasingly on all sorts of things, political and religious.'

Panizzi does not go to church, so I had four walks alone with Gladstone in full and serious conversation on several matters. I cannot say how he impressed me by his largeness, entire religiousness, love of all nobleness and profound affection for 'humanity.' Then every now and then his astonishing knowledge of details came out, figures and values and details of commodities—from copper, and iron, and tin from Cornwall, America, and Europe, in their values as contrasted with the same articles in Homer's time—to the proportional skill of Spaniards and English in cork-cutting—to the particulars of oecumenical councils and the utmost details of foreign and Italian policy. . . . Fancy my having just now to play on the harmonium to the Duchess, and then to play and sing with G. and Mrs. G. 'Abide with me' as the conclusion of the evening.

This meeting was on the eve of the General Election which swept Disraeli out of office and inaugurated the great epoch of reform. Acland was a little nervous perhaps of the changes which might be in store, but he was under the wand of the magician.

*July 30, 1867.*

A pleasant breakfast with Gladstone. I had gone in rather a fright, expecting at least Mr. Beale and Mr. Odger with Bright and Miall—but who do you think? Dr. Pusey on Mr. Gladstone's right, and the Bishop of Gibraltar on his left, and opposite to him Lady Herbert with me on her left, Arthur Gordon, Strelezcki, and Sir H. Holland completing the party. He talked *most freely* on the Irish Church and,



I confess, entirely carried me away, and convinced my reason and my moral nature. In fact I was more fascinated by him than ever.

The Irish Church question and politics generally formed a bone of contention in the Acland family just then. T. D. Acland was contesting North Devon as an out-and-out Gladstonian. Arthur Mills, who had married Miss Agnes Acland, was the Conservative candidate for Exeter. Sir Thomas had no sympathy with the Liberal party in its modern developments. 'Poor Tom acts as a tremendous blister to my father,' wrote his brother, and Sir Thomas is reported to have said that he had to pay the piper and did not at all like the tune.

But the old home life at Killerton was nearing its close. Let me give a picture, from a letter of Acland's to his wife, written in 1864, of Sir Thomas in his latest days:

I reached here at 11, got in at the back door unannounced and found them in the library. We got to bed at 12, wonderful to relate. This morning at 8 my father routed me up, pulled me about, shouted at the window to Achil<sup>1</sup> (the window happily would not open), and ended by wheeling my fourpost bedstead round to the window, that the light might hinder me from going to sleep. At 8.30, however, I was asleep again, so he got Agnes's boys to pull my legs, which operation continued till 9, when happily they were got out, and I locked the door. Which being discovered, they were set to run at the door full tilt till I was dressed. These ten years I have never seen him appear so well, or on the whole so quiet and happy<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> A favourite dog.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed the routine of the household seems to have altered little. In 1856, Acland wrote to his wife from Killerton: 'After I arrived last night at 9.30, they were still at wine, then there was coffee, tea, my repast combining all with a dismal elegy that I had not had curry, hot mutton, pie, dessert, pudding, and the other things—over and above what I had, you observe. Then prayers, poetry afterwards, and fierce Natural History. Arthur in despair

On the 22nd of July, 1871, Sir Thomas Acland died suddenly. His morning prayers were over, his Bible was ready that he might read the daily lessons as usual, when he became faint and was gone. Not long before his death he had repeated with his wonted emphasis and feeling some favourite lines from Cowper's *Task*.

'And so at last  
My share of duties decently fulfilled,  
May some disease, not tardy to perform  
Its destined office, yet with gentle stroke  
Dismiss me weary to a safe retreat  
Beneath the turf that I have often trod.'

Beneath that turf he was laid by the side of his wife, from whom he had been parted for fifteen years. It has been given to few men to retain the affection and veneration of their children in the same degree as did the old Sir Thomas. Henry Acland seldom concluded a letter which in any way bore upon his home life without thanking God for giving him such a father.

because he was kept up so late; and then into my room, where he stayed till 12.30. I could not tell a tenth part of what has happened, it is more than a month at Oxford; distracted I go about saying I wonder how they live through it.'