1970

T. H. S. Escott, Victorian Journalist

Arthur Walter Lysiak

Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation

http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/1038

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
Copyright © Arthur Walter Lysiak
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION** .................................................. 1

**PART I. THE LIFE OF T. H. S. ESCOTT**

Chapter  I. The Early Career ...................................... 7
II. Escott and *The Fortnightly Review* .......................... 42
III. T. H. S. Escott's Retirement ................................. 92

**PART II. THE WRITINGS OF T. H. S. ESCOTT**

Chapter  I. The Working Classes ................................. 110
II. The Upper Classes ............................................. 145
III. The Empire ..................................................... 166
IV. Escott's Final Years ........................................... 177

**CONCLUSION** .................................................... 235

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** .................................................. 247
INTRODUCTION

We have made for ourselves strange gods, and we live in a state of transition to a yet unknown order.

--T. H. S. Escott, England

There are many questions which can be asked, but only a few of them are of any real importance. Thomas Hay Sweet Escott asked one of them when he asked what gods his countrymen worshipped. What were the ideals, the hopes, the fears, the goals towards which they strove; that which in ancient days had been personified into pagan gods and called by name. Although Escott himself worshipped at the same temples as did the rest of his countrymen, he was able to recognize the contradictory nature of the passing phenomenon which later men have named the Victorian Age.

Conscious works of art are important, but the journal which does not think of posterity, but only of the present, gives the truest picture of days gone by. A good journal or newspaper
does in some mysterious manner reflect the thinking of the public it is reaching. At its best it reaches this public at its highest level; at its worst it puts their basest passions into words, but in some way, in order to survive, it must reflect the mind of its readers. Escott, a Victorian journalist, was capable of both.

If yesterday's newspaper is that important to the historian, how much more important must be the life of the journalist who helped shape this view of the world which his public shared. Since there were few superior to Escott in this difficult art, it is strange that he is all but forgotten today; especially when one considers the company he kept. Of the first five men who edited *The Fortnightly Review*, George Henry Lewes, John Morley, T. H. S. Escott, Frank Harris, and W. L. Courtney, Escott is the only one who has not had a biography written of his life. One of the five, the inimitable Frank Harris, has even had the dubious honor of having his autobiography offered as a best seller in stores specializing in pornography.

Although these men made their fame in various ways, Morley and Courtney in philosophy and politics, Lewes as George Eliot's lover, and Harris as Harris, Escott was much more of a journalist than any of them. Not only is there no biography of him, there is, as far as could be determined, not even an essay outside of the very short articles to be found in such works as *Who Was Who*. 
Escott's own autobiographical works are very non-revealing, being more in the nature of essays on the times.

The bulk of the material for this paper came from the Chamberlain papers, where there are letters written to Escott, by Escott, and about Escott; the Gladstone papers in the British Museum where there are letters by Escott, including comments by either Gladstone or his secretaries, and the Wolseley papers containing letters by Escott. A major problem here was Escott's unbelievably scribbled handwriting. The next major source was Escott's own autobiographical writings which were of limited value. The least helpful were other works, such as Garvin's biography of Joseph Chamberlain, Edmund Yates' Memoirs, etc., which covered the period, but in which only scraps on Escott were to be found. This has an undoubtedly distorted effect in writing his life, since letters which Escott forgot ten minutes after he wrote them, are resurrected seventy-five years later by one who has only a limited idea of what was in his mind or the circumstances surrounding the letter.

Comments by his friends or enemies, perhaps made in spite or anger, are also added to this picture. Yet on the whole, the most important part of Escott's life, his journalistic career, is adequately covered, while the last thirty-five years of his life probably have little to offer the researcher besides the agony of a bed ridden invalid. The attempt to write his life is akin to
reconstructing a jigsaw puzzle in which some of the pieces are missing and in which the edges of others are badly frayed; nonetheless, some sort of picture does emerge. The writer can only put the pieces together as honestly and intelligently as is possible and hope the picture is both clear and true.

He was much like his own age. Snobbish enough to enjoy the company of great lords, wealthy bankers, and powerful statesmen, he also tried hard to help and understand the working people, who he knew held the keys to the future. A man who was intensely proud of the accomplishments of his era, while regretting the passing of that which was old; a man who regarded the future with both fear and optimism.

Few men could have entered as deeply and as widely as did Escott in the spirit of the age; even fewer could have stood aside from it long enough to write with the detachment and objectivity possessed by Escott in those works rare for any writer, for which all of his talents, education and experience fitted him. It is said that there is nothing as dead as yesterday's newspaper; on the contrary, there is nothing more alive. The facts are often incorrectly reported and the reporter may be emotionally involved in the story so that in re-reading these old journals one has the feeling that he is looking at the things through the wrong end of the telescope. But it is only by doing this that the historian can see the world as did those who lived a hundred years ago,
since people of every age have the perverse habit of seeing things through what later generations insist was the wrong end of the telescope. Without yesterday's journals, it is impossible to come close to understanding the people of a past era, since almost everything in a newspaper or periodical from the death notice to a feature article gives us a clue to the world as they saw it.

He was somewhat pompous and self-centered, and at the same time unsure of himself and extremely curious about the world around him. He was a successful well-to-do man who died penniless; a man who in the prime of his life suffered a complete collapse. The keynote to Escott's early career is energy and unquenchable curiosity. Like the age itself, he felt nothing was beyond him, no experience should escape him. He wanted to be a part of it all, and he was. The dark side of his life, the bitterness and the frustrations are only hinted at here. Of the horrors that at least temporarily damaged his mind, ruined his career, and probably crippled his body, little was said. His friends who spoke of it mentioned it only indirectly, as though they feared that it could happen to them at any time.

In happier days Escott once attended a dinner party which was honored by the presence of Robert Browning and Alfred Lord Tennyson. Like Escott, these poets had written of the new gods which the English had set up to worship. Also present was a young man who had still his reputation to make, Algernon Charles
Swineburn, who had written of these new gods:

For the Gods we know not of, who give us our daily breath,
We know they are cruel as love or life, and lovely as death.¹

Escott, too, had found these gods to be both cruel and lovely.

PART I

The Life of T. H. S. Escott
CHAPTER I

The Early Career

The study of T. H. S. Escott's life (1844-1924) is a study in personal tragedy. It is the story of a man of letters who rose to great heights in the journalistic world of late Victorian England, only to fail, precipitately and permanently, at the age of forty-two when overwork brought a serious and almost fatal collapse. J. L. Garvin, a great newspaperman who knew journalistic talent when he saw it, called Escott a gifted journalist.\(^2\) To The Times of London, Escott was one of the most successful journalists of the age, who "occupied a position that can hardly be realized today."\(^3\) For a short time in the early 1880's he seemed to be almost everywhere at once; editing one of the most brilliant periodicals of the day, helping Joseph Chamberlain write the Radical Programme, discussing literature with Robert Browning, consulting with the fiery young Tory,


\(^3\) The Times, June 17, 1924.
Lord Randolph Churchill, writing slashing political articles, and discussing the education of the workers with Matthew Arnold.

Thomas Hay Sweet Escott was born on April 26, 1844 at Taunton, Somersetshire, the eldest son of the Reverend Hay Sweet-Escott, who was an ordained minister of the Church of England. The older Escott was a graduate of Balliol College, Oxford and a member of a distinguished family well known in the county.\(^4\) T. H. S. Escott's memories of his ancestral birthplace always remained fresh, revealing a strong pride in his background and family. As far as the traditions of both the family and the county could tell, the Escotts had always lived in Hartrow Manor, some eleven miles from Taunton in an area which the journalist always remembered for its beauty and serenity.\(^5\) As a child Escott had the opportunity of knowing some of the great men of his time as more than just figures in a textbook. One of his earliest recollections was that of seeing the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, and Lord Lyndhurst walking on the bowling green of his uncle's house in West Somersetshire on a Sunday afternoon.\(^6\)


\(^5\)Ibid.

On this same occasion, when he was not more than five years old, Escott recalled that the Duke of Wellington had suggested a game of bowls, to which Sir Robert Peel replied: "But this is Sunday. Think of the Servants!" Lord Lyndhurst laughed at this and Escott's uncle told the servants to bring the bowls. Escott's uncle, with whom such noble persons sometimes visited, was Bickham Escott, M. P. for Winchester. Bickham Escott was a warm admirer of Sir Robert Peel, and eventually joined the Liberal Party to the dismay of the rest of the family who remained staunchly Conservative. His friends, such as Dr. Pusey, with whom he attended Oxford, held him in high esteem, and his circle of guests included such famous figures as the future Emperor, Napoleon III. Escott's father, Hay Sweet Escott, was also an eminent person in his own right in the county of Somerset where he was Headmaster of Somerset College. One of his pupils, W. L. Courtney, who would one day become editor of The Fortnightly Review, remembered the clergyman as possessing a certain dignity of presence and charm of manner. Although not a brilliant scholar, Courtney considered him a stimulating teacher who had a real love for the boys which was returned tenfold. He also remembered the elder Escott's dislike for corporal punishment of the boys.

7Platform, p. 25.
One of Hay Escott's earliest tutors was A. H. Clough, the poet and friend of Matthew Arnold. In 1877, the Reverend Escott became Rector of Kilve, where he spent most of his time teaching and writing on Church matters. It becomes clear in any study of Escott's life that the friendships which his father and uncle had won, helped young Escott in his career by opening doors that would have been shut to others. One of these connections occurred early in his life, as Escott recalled living with his parents at Budleigh Salterton in South Devon and having his lessons interrupted by the announcement that a strange gentleman who seemed to be in a hurry desired to see Escott's father immediately. The visitor and Escott's father had not seen each other since they had been schoolboys together at Winchester. "The stranger," young Escott recollected, "seemingly added to his naturally large dimensions by a shaggy overcoat . . . making him look like one of those sea captains about whom in the 50's, we used to hear a great deal on the devonshire coast." The stranger was Anthony Trollope, the novelist, who would one day help Escott reach the summit of his brief career.

It was from this same background that Escott's basic conservatism stemmed, since, as he later wrote, he was always

---

9 Platform, p. 45.
encouraged to identify any approach to political liberalism with sheer wrongheadedness. 11 Escott attended Somersetshire College and then left to attend Queen's College, Oxford, in 1861, where he was among the first few to win an open scholarship in the competition for the Hertford. Here for the first time, his father's connections eased Escott's path. As soon as Benjamin Jowett, the great Oxford educator, had heard that the son of his old friend, Hay Sweet-Escott, had arrived in Oxford and was lodging in the old Star hotel, he commanded Escott to transfer himself to more comfortable quarters nearer to the school and Jowett.

Nothing could have exceeded his minute attention to my comfort. A bedroom had been assigned to me just above the porter's ledge, and I have some reason to believe that a sense of responsibility for my physical welfare prompted the kindly professor to satisfy himself . . . that the sheets were properly aired. 12

One might suspect Escott of some exaggeration, since the sight of Jowett supervising the airing of sheets for a young undergraduate would have been a startling sight to any of his pupils or colleagues who might have happened to see him. To Escott, however, Jowett was very kind and his roof and table was available to young Escott as well as to his friends. Years later,

11 Platform, p. 48.
12 Ibid., p. 216.
Escott would write with affection and pleasure of his days in Oxford; Oxford before the days of noisy and dirty automobiles, an Oxford occupied by the sons of the aristocracy, untitled landowners, well-to-do clergymen and the best of the merchant class. He would also remember with intense disappointment his failure to win first class honors in Litteris Humanioribus when he graduated in 1865. The Second Class Honors which he received were far from being a disgrace, but the expectations which he and his teachers had for him were very high indeed and the failure rankled. He was pleasantly surprised, therefore, in 1895 to receive a letter from T. Fowler, President of Corpus and one of his examiners which had some kind words for him.

I well remember with regret that your work though excellent in many respects did not quite justify us in placing you in the first class.\(^1\)

Escott always felt that a great deal of his success both in school and in what later developed to be his profession of journalism was based on his photographic memory, which allowed him to memorize any printed matter as soon as he had read it. After his graduation in 1865, he married the former Kate Liardet, the second daughter of a retired India officer, who was descended from


\(^{14}\)Platform, p. 356.
an aristocratic Austrian family. By all accounts, it was a happy and successful marriage until her death near the turn of the century.\textsuperscript{15} Marriage made it more necessary than ever that Escott seek a profession immediately. Apparently he had always hoped to be a professional writer, so after establishing himself and his family in London, he wrote professionally for the first time in his life and sent the result to the editor of the Saturday Review on Southampton Street. As he wrote later, it seemed natural for a young man such as himself, fresh from a university and desiring to seek his living by writing, to approach the Saturday Review.\textsuperscript{16}

This review, begun in 1855, was one of the most brilliant of its kind in England. The periodical's arrogant assumption that it alone had right on its side won for it the sarcastic title of "The Saturday Reviler." It was, however, for all of its biting wit, a leading organ of culture and was genuinely respected as well as feared by English men of letters.\textsuperscript{17} Escott was confident of his abilities and intended to start at the top where he found quick success. He was pleased to find his article, "Broken Hearts," among the middle articles of the September 5, 1865 number of the Saturday Review. The article parodied the romantic


\textsuperscript{16}Politics, p. 35.

sentimental Guy Livingston articles which were all the rage at the
time and which Escott detested with all of his heart.

This first sight of his work in print determined Escott to
make his career in journalism, although it was not until 1878,
that is after thirteen full years of journalistic work, that he
felt sufficiently financially secure to drop all other activities
such as teaching and devote himself completely to his craft. Up
till that time, Escott still felt that his real profession, at
least in terms of earning money, was in the universities and
schools.

There is also a hint that his wife was an influence in
restraining him from overextending himself this early.

My domestic existence was just beginning and I was
consequently not prepared to accept a professional
offer which would not have left much of my society
for the young bride . . . to whose combined good
sense and courage the writer of these lines has been
so indebted.\textsuperscript{18}

He taught logic at King's College from 1865 to 1872 and
was deputy professor of classical literature to Professor Lonsdale
from 1866 to 1873. He also tutored private students for the
Indian Civil Service Exam, while in the late 1860's he did much
school examining travelling over much of the country for that

\textsuperscript{18}T. R. S. Escott, "30 Years of the Periodical Press,"
Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, October, 1894, p. 535.
purpose. He also had what he referred to as "Oxford Interests."\textsuperscript{19}

It was his work at King's College which opened up a new world to him. He found it a great change from Oxford, where students were ready to resent any excess of zeal on their teacher's part to the King's College classes, which were made up of students from the lower classes and who were very eager to extract all possible information from their teachers.\textsuperscript{20}

Escott found the experience of teaching at this institution to be both valuable and pleasant recalling those days with fondness and mentioning, when he later wrote his memoirs, that he still occasionally heard from some of his former students. James Lonsdale, under whom Escott worked, had been a tutor at Balliol and a friend of Benjamin Jowett. It was because of this connection that Escott received his position at King's College, London. Geoffrey Faber, in his biography of Jowett, described Lonsdale as one of those brilliant young men who never quite lived up to their promise, although admitting that Jowett thought him to be a great teacher. Escott while working under Lonsdale was more interested in the problem of the working classes rather than he was in the study of the classics.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{19}Men and Women of the Time (London: Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1895).

\textsuperscript{20}Platform, p. 358.

whom he discussed this problem, his ideas were based upon actual experience and not mere theory. Most of Escott's day time was taken up with scholastic interests; the evening he devoted to his journalistic endeavors, until gradually these latter pursuits eliminated the classical work.22

There is real difficulty in establishing the exact chronology of Escott's employment in journalism because in his various memoirs, Escott was rarely specific with the dates as to when he began or ceased working, as well as the exact positions which he held. Probably nobody in London was aware of all of his newspaper and periodical connections, not to mention his political. One of his earliest introductions to the Press occurred when he found employment on The Glowworm, which had been started with the idea of bringing the latest news direct to the home of the frequenter of music halls, theatres, and other pleasure resorts.23 Escott described the first interview in vivid terms, as he recalled that The Glowworm's proprietor passed his active career barricaded against bill collectors in a state of perpetual siege at Eccleston Square. Even Escott was admitted only with great caution by the back door through a maze of mews.24 Escott

22Politics, p. 21.
24Ibid.
soon found out that work on a journal was not always very remunerative although it could be exciting. His editorial duties were by far the lightest part of his task; his chief and most arduous business was the vain attempt to find a capitalist who would put money in the paper or, better still, buy it out. In this aspect of the business, he was less than successful.

One contributor who had often tried to collect payment for his literary efforts, told Escott that compared to the cashier of the *Glowworm*, the eel was an adhesive reptile. Escott, who in these early days had a strong desire for money, did not stay long in this particular venture. More congenial employment was found with the *Daily Telegraph*, a penny paper which enthusiastically supported the Conservative cause. It was the first London penny paper and won a large following with its exciting and popular reporting under the control of the eccentric Thornton Hunt, son of Leigh Hunt. The abolishing of the stamp duty in 1855, the advertising tax in 1856, and the duty on paper in 1861, along with the rising tide of prosperity all made it possible for other papers to follow the lead of the *Daily Telegraph* by lowering their prices to one penny. The style of the *Daily Telegraph*, founded in 1855, set the basis of popular journalism with its directness and striving for picturesqueness. The loyalty and ability of its staff, who were called the "Young Turks" by Matthew Arnold,
enabled it to boast that it possessed the largest circulation in the world.\textsuperscript{25}

Escott submitted several topics to MacDonnel, Hunt's right hand man, who then selected one dealing with the dangers of the London streets, which Escott based on a newly published report on the annual number of accidents in London. His longest association was with the \textit{Standard}, with which he was intimately connected for over twenty years. It had been an evening paper until James Johnstone bought it and made it into a penny morning paper and one of the chief supports of the Conservative Party. R. W. Seton-Watson, the English historian, while delving through the Russian archives found a report by one of the Russian foreign affairs staff that at one time, Johnstone had offered to sell the paper secretly to the Russians and turn it into a mouthpiece for their interests. Apparently, however, nothing came of this proposal.\textsuperscript{26} The editor at the time Escott joined it was Captain Thomas Hamber, who had earned his military title honestly enough by fighting with the Swiss legion in the Crimean War. He was a graduate of Oriel at the same time as Lord Salisbury and Cardinal


Newman, and according to Escott possessed intellectual quickness, an erratically brilliant mind and real talent, but was sometimes tactless and ill-tempered.

The Marquis of Hastings had just died and Escott's first article on this great paper was a story on this Peer, whom Escott had once known. There was a bit of said irony in this, since Hastings had once predicted that Escott would soon be writing his obituary. Hamber may have known this when he handed Escott the story and said, "Here is a good subject for an Oxford man like you." Among Escott's colleagues were Sir Henry Lucy, a great journalist and Parliamentary reporter, Alfred Austin, later the poet laureate of England, and Robert Cecil, later Lord Salisbury and the future Prime Minister of England. Salisbury, according to Escott, was a working newspaperman in those days and wrote many of the leaders for the paper. It is quite possible that during their association with the paper, Escott and Cecil may have had a falling out, since Escott viewed him as a malevolent figure for many years afterward. Of the Standard's personnel, one of the editors of the Cambridge History of English Literature wrote, "With a staff such as this, it is no wonder that the Standard

---


28 Politics, p. 17.

29 Platform, p. 232.
itself long occupied a high position in London journalism."

In the early years at least, the paper was closely connected with the Conservative leadership and pursued an anti-Gladstone line consistently. Hamber's temper as well as his sense of political independence led him to resign his position on the Standard and to start his own paper, The Hour, which was ultra-Protestant and Conservative although independent of the party leaders. Escott had already impressed the capable Captain Hamber, who offered Escott very handsome terms to write for the new paper. Since Escott, for unexplained reasons, felt his position on the Standard to be insecure, he accepted the offer and wrote the first leader of his career for The Hour. The paper was never very important in the sense of attracting a wide readership, but its readers did include some important and discriminating figures such as Benjamin Disraeli, who "heard with a pang that The Hour was no more." Hamber had often been a guest of Disraeli's, sometimes discussing politics with him, and it is here that Escott may have first imbibed the political philosophy of Disraeli which would be so important to him in later life. Escott also found time to write for the Manchester Courier and the Edinburgh Courant.

30 Cambridge History, XIV, 189.
31 Cambridge History, XIV, 196.
Escott's strongest and most important connection, however, remained with the Standard, which according to Garvin, was second in importance only to the Times of London. John St. Loe Strachey, who was a leader writer with the paper for more than a year, claimed that the Standard was no mere party organ. "Though it was called a Tory paper and rejoiced in the name, it would have been called 'left Centre' in any other country." It was also strongly Unionist and supported the fixed institutions of the country, such as the Church, the Crown, the House of Lords and the City.

Interestingly enough Strachey also wrote that Gladstone always read the leaders in the Standard, and that it was his favorite paper, possibly, Strachey felt, because of the strong vein of Conservatism in Gladstone's nature. "Though he thought it was his duty to be a Liberal, when he gave himself a holiday . . . from party feelings, what he reverted to was almost exactly the Standard attitude towards the great institutions I have just named."32 This in spite of the fact that the paper often attacked him in the strongest language. Another person Strachey claimed as a regular reader of the paper was no less a figure than Queen Victoria herself, who read it in order to understand the English people exactly, especially the middle-classes.

The range of Escott's activities even before 1878 is astonishing to contemplate. In 1867, for example, he had strenuously explored the whole of the Orkney and Shetland Archipelago and was invited by the inhabitants to make a canvassing tour preparatory to running for Parliament. Escott later wrote that, "after consultation with the local Tory chief, Mr. Balfour of Burleigh . . . I did not press my position to the poll."33

Escott had not lost interest in his classical studies, since besides teaching the classics, he had also edited the Satires of Juvenal and Persius, published in 1866 and the Comedies of Plautus published in 1867. He continued his teaching, private tutoring and examining until the late 1870's along with his journalistic writing and editing. He also began to plan several books on English politics in which he was fast becoming well-informed. Beginning in 1874, with the Public Worship Bill of that year, Escott regularly wrote leading articles for the Standard. He had also begun to have a personal acquaintance with many of the leading political figures of the period and he also regularly attended Parliamentary sessions. Escott, in later life, took a cynical view of one part of his profession, writing leading articles, which he parodied in lively fashion.

33Platform, p. 378.
There was no real difficulty, Escott wrote, in composing a well written editorial. The journalist should simply follow the directions given to him by his editor and the rest would follow as easy as lying. The leading article of "the approved dum dum type" was described as an essay written in three paragraphs never containing more than three ideas and consisting of a series of identical propositions so written as to avoid tautology and to conceal all traces of repetition. This may be a harsh indictment but certainly no harsher than that which Matthew Arnold wrote on the new journalism in the Nineteenth Century. He saw it as being full of ability, variety, sensation, sympathy and generous instinct. Its one great fault was that it contained little real intellectual content, but threw out assertions at random, while never taking the trouble to discover basic causes. Nevertheless, Escott asserted that on the whole the standards for journalists were much higher in his day than they were to be found in the twentieth century. In his day, literary figures such as Froude and George Eliot were "Fleet Street Favorites," as Escott called them, who stimulated the journalists to shun sloppiness of


phrase while aiming for conciseness and clarity.  

Another reason for this higher literary tone which Escott detected in the journals of the nineteenth century was due to the universities which constantly sent recruits to the newspapers and periodicals, thus raising the standards of the profession to a high peak. Benjamin Jowett was especially important since he made a point of training his students well in the virtues of brevity; a virtue which Escott found lacking in a great many journals and newspapers. Furthermore in the middle of the nineteenth century, professional etiquette had forbidden writers from divulging any of the secrets of their craft, since anonymity was the rule. Few know the names of the important writers. By the end of the century all of this had begun to change and any smart writer with a grudge to gratify or an ax to grind could use the press to make a cheap reputation for himself. Escott found good cause to decry the fall of the popular press in his later years recognizing the truth of Lord Salisbury's gibe directed at the paper owned by the most successful of the new press lords; "A paper by office boys for office boys." The popular press of Escott's day might have lowered the standards to attract new readers, but they nevertheless recognized the existence of these standards. The same could not be said of the newspapers which Escott read later in his life.


37 Masters, p. 330.
As Escott contemplated his career from the vantage point of advanced age and retirement, he continually spoke of the period 1865 to 1886 as the golden years of journalism. He wrote affectionately and nostalgically of the unconventional open house held by James Hannay, a famous editor, near Bloomsbury, or the Friday Suppers of Tom Hood's which represented the real Bohemia to Escott; a Bohemia which no longer existed in the London of 1895. He remembered the Saturday dinners at which Douglas Cook of The Saturday Review used to entertain his writers, and where some of the top journalists were present. What, asked Escott mournfully, has happened to the exciting tavern life of years gone by? Escott was always an enthusiastic clubman, who dined at a number of them, but his favorite was the Savage Club, made up mainly of working journalists. If the men thus joined together gloried a litter ostentatiously in their bohemianism, Escott wrote, they were united among themselves by a genuine spirit of mutual assistance in their daily work. It was in Escott's eyes as much as industrial guild as a convivial fellowship. "None of the members had any means of living except by his brains . . . Only a stray Savage . . . was seen in evening dress."³⁸

But even the Savage Club had finally gone respectable in later years and had made the Prince of Wales an honorary member; a

disheartening bit of news to Escott since he hinted that the members of his favorite club had been a rather wild lot.

One ambition Escott never realized. He had been introduced by Bishop Wilberforce, an old friend of the Escott family, to John T. Delane of the Times in 1868 when they lunched together at Serjeant's Inn in Fleet Street. The Archbishop of Canterbury was seriously ill at the time, and after the Bishop left, Delane in a cynical tone said, "I think our right reverend friend has his eyes keenly fixed just now upon Lambeth."39 Escott's account of his subsequent conversation with Delane tells us as much about Escott as of Delane.

I had a vague expectation that he might ask me to join the staff of the Times but when I told him that I was pretty well occupied as a writer of leading articles of the Standard, he congratulated me on my success ... In those days I was full of Oxford interests and being only twenty-four years of age, I believe I looked even younger than I was. It always occurred to me that any notion which Delane may have had ... of inviting me for a trial at the Times was dispelled by the juvenility of my appearance and perhaps the artlessness of my prattle.40

This was Escott's only major disappointment of his career in journalism which was otherwise outstandingly successful. Escott's account of his first meeting with the mighty Delane gives us the portrait of a young man who while very talkative and eager to impress, was not sure of himself at all. Although Escott met

39Politics, p. 10.
40Ibid.
Delane frequently for some time afterward (Escott's office was near Serjeant's Inn), no offer of employment was ever made to him by Delane. He had plenty of opportunity to get to know both Delane and John Walter, the owner of the Times. Escott noted with amused surprise that whenever Walter was present, the awesome Delane always looked ill at ease, as though his employer's silent presence reminded him of the work yet to be done. It was only when Walter left the office, that Delane would relax and become sociable again. Even without the Times, Escott had enough work to keep himself quite busy as the writing of leading articles was a full-time job in itself. In writing his leading articles, Escott always made it a point to embody some special information from various party leaders, and since these gentlemen recognized the importance of a good press, Escott found them very cooperative.

Escott's success as an interviewer came partly from the persistence with which he went after any news. Once when calling upon Sir Stafford Northcote, the leader of the Conservative forces in the House of Commons, Escott arrived late in the evening and asked for an interview. Sir Stafford was asleep and had left orders not to be disturbed, but Escott persisted and finally Sir Stafford descended down the stairs looking rather tired, but as Escott was relieved to notice, not at all out of temper. Instead the leader of the Conservatives merely smiled and said, "You have

He then proceeded to give Escott an informative account of the last Parliamentary session.

Escott interviewed Lord Palmerston, another old family friend, shortly before his death and was advised by a friend to ask the Prime Minister how he came to form the committee which in 1846 put down all of the public gaming houses. Palmerston responded with the following story.

Escott's uncle had sat on the committee. He was a member of Crockford's and looked in there for play almost every night in the week and apparently saw nothing wrong in indulging himself in some games of chance. Although Bickham Escott had seen many friends ruined through gambling clubs, even those patronized by the upper classes, it was not these he was concerned to put down, but rather those of the lower-class. One day, Palmerston continued, a cousin of Bickham Escott's, while an Oxford undergraduate and up for the boat race suddenly disappeared from the opera house lobby where he had been seeing a lady into her carriage while his friends went to a local restaurant. Neither here or elsewhere did he join them, and was never seen or heard from until several years later when he startled his family by entering his father's Oxfordshire rectory as if nothing had
happened. The youth explained that since he had been there last, he had gone to South Africa where he had made some money for the first time and entered the Cape Parliament. He told his family that he had entered a gambling den and lost everything on the night of his disappearance and had felt too ashamed to return home. This experience, Palmerston claimed, turned Bickham Escott into a confirmed opponent of the lower-class dens and was responsible for the law ruling them out of existence in England.\textsuperscript{42}

One may suspect that Lord Palmerston, an old hand at the political game, may have been filling the time up in order to avoid giving young Escott any hard news. Escott, always observant, noticed during his lengthy interview that when any petitioner entered Palmerston's office, the Prime Minister would pick up a pile of papers and claim that he had been studying the problem very closely and would soon come to a decision. It was, Escott noted, always the same pile of papers.\textsuperscript{43}

But there was more to newspaper work than just interviewing. These were exciting days for newspapermen and Escott was eager to be in the thick of it all. Part of the excitement of the newspaper business then apparently lay in dealing with dissatisfied segments of the public as Escott had good reason to discover one day. As he was walking up St. James Street some

\textsuperscript{42}Great Victorians, p. 181.

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid.
time in early 1870, he noticed two gentlemen in what appeared to be a friendly conversation. Soon the interview developed into some sort of scuffle and Escott, "... dimly descried a brandishing of a walking cane by the younger above the elder's head."\textsuperscript{44}

Escott prudently walked by but found out later that Lord Carrington had been "chastising" Mr. Grenvill Murray for lampooning him in the Queen's Messenger, which was, Escott said, one of the first pioneers in the new journalism. This incident might have reminded Escott that there were solid reasons for the anonymity with which most newspapermen covered themselves at that time. Murray started a furious legal battle which ended when he was forced to leave England forever due to the libelous nature of the paper. It was while in France, that Murray got in touch with Edmond Yates to begin a new and much more successful journal, the World. In the autumn of 1874, Yates interviewed Escott in an effort to enlist his services for this new journal which was to be a "miscellany for suburban and provincial entertainment" and which eventually became very successful. Escott found Yates to be a vivacious talker, with a good memory, a quick eye, and great vigor. On the whole it was a pleasant relationship between the two men.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{44}Platform, p. 361.

Yates, himself had long been aware of Escott's growing reputation as a political writer, having met him several years earlier.

... a young gentleman, T. H. S. Escott then fresh from Oxford called on me at the Post Office with a letter of introduction from Tom Hood and had intimated his desire to furnish me with some article... These articles had been written and approved of and though I had not seen much of my young friend, I had sufficient remembrance of his special gift to beg for his collaboration in my new venture. 46

Yates found Escott's political articles on the World to be pointed, and incisive; at once of the first rank. 47 Escott remained connected with the influential World as well as Yates, who had worked under Charles Dickens for the rest of his active career. Henry Labouchere, the Radical politician and journalist, was also part of the original staff, though after some disagreement with Yates, he later founded his own paper, Truth. Both became famous for their daring criticism. The World published every Wednesday, crusaded against shady financiers and had its reputation made when it became the object of a sensational law suit. One might get some idea of Escott's pay by pointing out that Sir Henry Lucy, also a member of the original staff, was paid eight guineas a week. 48


47 Ibid., p. 327.

These were indeed by any count busy years for Escott. From 1865 to 1878, he was absent from London only twice and then only for short periods of time. He was seen everywhere, seeming scarcely to take any time out for rest or sleep. There is little doubt that already Escott was pushing himself too hard and too fast; but far from seeking any let-up in his activities he was constantly looking for more and more work. The Times later reported that he had assumed charge of a weekly paper, The Home News, with a large circulation in India. And yet Escott was confident that his health was strong enough to cope with all of this work, even boasting that he needed no rest and little leisure. This good health, however, was probably beginning to deteriorate.

But Escott still found the London of his early career exciting for more than just the political and journalistic events, as fascinating as they were. Frank Harris, whose zest for life perhaps exceeded Escott's and who eventually became closely connected with him, described the scene which he found as a young man in the 1870's.

In his memoirs Harris reminisced about London as he found it when he was beginning his career. After years of struggle and

49The Times, June 17, 1924.
50Politics, p. 362.
anguish, years of study and preparations, he found London a city which more than fulfilled its promise to young men. He remembered his mantlepiece with ten times as many invitations as he could possibly accept, and streets where everyone was so courteous, kind and helpful. He found it wonderful with all of its myriad wonders; London with its round of receptions and court life, its theatres, and shows, its amusements for the body, mind and soul. To Harris the hours spent in London were hours of enchantment. He recalled evenings in Parliament where world-famous men discussed important policies, or quiet evenings spent with poets who lived forever in English literature. He described London as the center of civilization, the queen city of the world with innumerable delights and confessed that London had made him drunk for years and in memory the magic of those first years still ennobled life for him.\footnote{Frank Harris, \textit{My Life and Loves} (London: Corgi Books, 1967), p. 367.}

Escott plunged head first into everything which London had to offer, and this was much. Some of it he viewed with sardonic humor. He described an evening at George Eliot's home when he arrived with a frequent dinner guest of his, the poet Robert Browning, and was greeted by "the Positivist" as he called George Henry Lewes.

Lewes met his guests with an air of worshipping proprietorship at the threshold and with something between a nod
and a sigh signified where his guest were permitted to deposit their hats and umbrellas within the house. He also indicated a vase for what Escott called "votive flowers sacred to the goddess... Inside the chambers where SHE sat, a space was marked."52 As the journalist put it, though they had seen the Sybil in her splendor, they were not permitted by her owner to touch the garment's hem. Escott described the scene at Eliot's home a number of times, obviously feeling that it was one of the more astonishing sights to be found in London. Many of these functions were more in the nature of a religious ceremony than a social reunion as George Eliot sat in the center of a little crowd of worshippers, of whom only a few were permitted to hold personal conversation with her. The majority, however, gazed at her reverently from a distance as if they were gazing upon the Beatific Vision instead of a very famous writer. If any of the guests spoke in too loud a tone or even at times spoke at all when George Eliot was speaking, he was at once met with a hush of reprehension by Mr. Lewes and made to feel that he committed some sort of iniquity.53

Escott noted that W. T. Stead, editor of the Pall Mall Gazette, was present along with "other equally august pundits of

52Platform, p. 258.
psychical or telepathic research" in a crowd made up of "simpering curates and double eye glassed savants." Eliot did not neglect the possibility of monetary rewards, since there were many publishers present. He also met Darwin there who, as Escott put it, worshipped at the same temple both before and after his apotheosis.

Few of the great literary figures failed to escape Escott's attention. He had met Charles Dickens only once, but others such as Wilkie Collins and Charles Reade were close friends of his. Escott remembered inviting Reade to dinner one day and being forced to stay up till two in the morning listening to an interesting but aggressive conversation. Among historians Escott formed a life long friendship with Charles Kinglake, who had written about the Crimean War. The list of friends and acquaintances in the arts which Escott made in his short career is a long one, ranging from the musician, W. S. Gilbert, to the poet laureate, Lord Tennyson.

Often Escott could be found at one of his favorite clubs, the Thatched House Club, as Yates found him on Monday, February 18, 1878.

Escott gave a dinner tonight . . . which turned out very pleasantly. Present: Colonel Colley, C. B.,

---

54 Platform, p. 258.
Lord Lytton's private secretary ... J. A. Froude, Anthony Trollope, Major Arthur Griffite ... and myself.55

But Escott was not one to stay only in London; instead he saw the greatness of the English country estates at the height of their grandeur, since he was a frequent guest at many of them. At Sir John Lubbock's High Elms Country Estate, he would discuss philosophy with Herbert Spencer and Thomas Huxley,56 while at Grant Duff's Estate he would discuss the old Oxford with Matthew Arnold.57 An eminent figure such as Dr. Tait, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was an important source of information on Church matters as well as being an interesting conversationalist. Escott, a bright, genial man brimming over with interesting talk, wanted to see everything in England and to talk to everyone.58 Perhaps it was this intellectual curiosity which won him so many friends.

Some of his friends parodied his writing style, especially his constant use of alliteration in his titles as in England: Its People, Polity, and Pursuits. This did not stop Escott, since when he later wrote his rather of these same friends enjoyed pulling his leg a bit, perhaps feeling that he was, as he himself confessed, a bit too serious and even at times pompous.

56Country House, p. 134.
57Ibid., p. 442.
58The Times, June 17, 1924.
Thomas Carlyle, a friend of his, once told him that Escott may have heard that the world famous writer was cross-grained and disagreeable, but then denied it vehemently. "Only let me have my own way exactly in everything with all about me precisely as I wish, and a sunnier and pleasanter creature does not live." Once in the 1870's Anthony Trollope stepped into a railway compartment in which Escott was sitting in Euston Station. Recognizing Escott he talked cheerfully for some time, and then putting on a huge fur cap, part of which fell over his shoulders, he suddenly asked Escott if he ever slept while travelling and then answered the question with an emphatic, "I always do." For the rest of the journey, in spite of all of Escott's attempts to awaken Trollope, the writer persisted in his deep and rather loud sleep.

As they neared Preston Station, Trollope next asked, "Do you ever write when you are travelling?" When Escott answered, "No," Trollope quickly replied, "I always do." For the rest of the journey, Trollope said not a word to Escott, but worked away on his story and finally left without a farewell. At other times when they met, Trollope would let Escott chatter away, and then when he had finished would look up and say, "I utterly disagree with you. What is it you were saying?"

59 Great Victorians, p. 209.
60 Trollope, p. 115.
Another friend, Arthur a'Becket teased Escott even more unmercifully after he had been introduced to the austere and grave Cardinal Manning. As Escott bent himself almost double before the prelate, Becket, in a loud whisper which the Cardinal could easily have overheard said, "Don't grovel anymore." No doubt Escott was grateful that his friend was not with him when he was invited to visit Lord Beaconsfield at his estate at Hughenden: a visit in which Beaconsfield showed his usual courtesy towards young men who appeared to be on their way up.

Escott's circle of friends was wide and varied and not always discriminating as was shown when he entered one of his favorite restaurants one day and found the furniture smashed to pieces. The waiter calmly explained the situation by telling Escott, "Faith, sir, the gentlemen were a little merry last night and they had no shillalahs handy."

In 1878, Escott edited his first book on a political topic, Pillars of the Empire. At about the same time, he was in the midst of a greater and much more important work that had long been in his mind; a book in which he wished to be "as nearly as possible exhaustive and accurate on the contemporary condition of

---

62 Platform, p. 257.
64 T. H. S. Escott, ed., Pillars of the Empire (London: Clayman & Hall, 1897).
my native country." To write it, Escott, in spite of his busy schedule travelled to all parts of the country obtaining as far as possible all the information first hand.

For me the writing of it was a kind of education. It gave me a touch of the opinion of whole classes of my countrymen of whom I have had previously been in ignorance. It also gave me many acquaintances and, I hope, friends, especially among the industrial orders of the population.

Work on the book entitled *England, Its People, Polity, and Pursuits*, took him three years, since he personally inspected the great landed properties of wealthy peers, lived among the humble colliers of Northumberland, and passed among the poor agricultural workers of the southwest of England. The most important result of his travels was the discovery that the working classes were inherently conservative in their attitudes and outlook. This discovery was to have a lasting impression on his own thought.

The work was a huge success in its own time, running into three editions and translated into many European languages as well as being used as a text in some countries. A modern historian, Asa Briggs, said of this work: "Of many books on the England of

---

65 *Politics*, p. 16.
66 Ibid.
the last part of the nineteenth century, by far the best is by T. H. S. Escott, England: Its People, Polity, and Pursuits."68

By 1879, Escott had edited three books, written one, travelled over most of England, had done much and varied work in education, and by this time had settled on his main work; journalism. He was also writing six leading articles weekly for his various papers.

His family now included two children, Kate and Cecil, who lived in a fine house at 38 Brompton Crescent in a fashionable and quite expensive part of South Kensington. Part of his relaxation apparently consisted in walking through Kensington Gardens where he found some peace and quiet. A photograph taken of him at this time shows him to be a handsome man with a small moustache, very short hair, and carrying a flower in his lapel. This would have been a good time for Escott to have taken some time out, perhaps as much as a year, in order to relax, but in 1880, he was still confident of his strength. The fact that he had never suffered any severe illness of any kind may have given him a false impression of his health. Certainly, he must have had the money which would have allowed him to take a long vacation as the Times later reported him to be one of the best paid journalists of the day.69 But Escott was an ambitious man, not merely for money, but

---

69 The Times, June 17, 1924.
also for the chance to scale the heights of journalistic fame; an opportunity to really make his name known not only among the politicians in London; but also among the literary figures of the nation.

This led to his accepting a position which was to be the apex of his career; unfortunately this would also prove to be fatal to his health. From now on, his complaints of ill-health and of overwork would begin to be heard and would grow in intensity until the end. In October, 1882, Escott became editor of the *Fortnightly Review*. One may wonder whether or not the journalist experienced any qualms about accepting this assignment, since it greatly increased the work load he would have to carry. There is no evidence that he gave up any of his other positions on newspapers or periodicals, nor that he took any sort of vacation in order to prepare for this new venture. Although he did not realize it, this was to prove the beginning of the end of his active career.
CHAPTER II

Escott and The Fortnightly Review

It was due to the influence of Anthony Trollope, that Escott became editor of the Fortnightly Review. The Review (in spite of its name, it was actually a monthly) was founded in 1865 with George Henry Lewes, the famous positivist, as its first editor. Its real fame was made in the years 1867 to 1882 when John Morley, the Radical and Agnostic journalist made it a medium for some of the most brilliant writers and thinkers of the day. The original prospectus of the periodical stated its intention of modeling itself along the lines of the Revue des Deux Mondes, the great French review of the time. The Fortnightly Review broke through the insularity of English complacency by reviewing European and American writers as well as encouraging foreign contributors such as Kropotkin and Mazzini.

Definitely not a party organ, it expressed intelligent and often advanced opinion on the current questions. It made a point
of refusing anonymous articles, feeling that these tended to allow writers to display a sense of irresponsibility. Morley when he succeeded to the editorship, urged it along liberal, rationalist, and positivist lines. The Review was but one of many great periodicals in a time filled with brilliant periodicals, which helped to form responsible judgment on new writings as well as attempting to find answers to pressing political and social problems. So important were they that nineteenth century critical ideas on politics, literature, and culture cannot be judged without reference to the leading periodicals. Among the great periodicals started at about the middle of the century were the Saturday Review, the Cornhill Magazine, the Contemporary Review, the Nineteenth Century, the National Review as well as others of lesser importance. Older magazines such as Punch, Blackwood's, the Westminster Review, the Edinburgh Review, and the Quarterly Review were still influential, though falling behind the new publications. These periodicals with all of their faults expressed, and often made, the ideas of a cultivated minority opinion, while aiming at the maintenance of high standards in their expression.

John Morley's farewell to his readers in the October, 1882 number of the Review showed the high sense of dedication with which he took his position on the periodical, as well as the issues

---

facing the new editor. In Morley's view, the perplexities of the England of his day were as embarrassing as any in the country's history and could prove even more dangerous unless the proper steps were taken. He mentioned the renovation of Parliamentary government, the transformation of the conditions of ownership of the land and the settlement of the working class problems as among the most important of the many problems facing the land. He found the problems in education and economics almost as pressing and equally dangerous. Meanwhile, he wrote, whatever gave freedom and variety to thought and instruction would make some contribution towards the settlement of these problems. The Review, in his opinion, had made a fervent attempt to do just this by presenting the problems in a clear and concise form, while also presenting possible answers to its readers. Although Morley resigned his editorship in order to work more closely with Joseph Chamberlain and the Radicals in Parliament, he was careful not to break his journalistic ties completely, retaining his editorship of the Pall Mall Gazette for some time longer.

When Harris went to see Escott about a job in October, 1882, he found that the offices of the Review were located in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, and to his eyes resembled a sort

---

71 The Editor, The Fortnightly Review, October 1, 1882, p. 521.

72 Ibid.
of shop. Frederic Chapman, a publisher of the periodical to whom he first talked, was a well-made man of five feet, ten inches, middle aged with thinning hair and somewhat stout. Harris eventually found him a pleasant man to work for but thought his directors to be a stupid group of businessmen with no courage or ideas; a most unfair comment, since the Review was known for the advanced ideas and opinions it espoused. Chapman arranged for Harris to have an interview with Escott which was less than successful. Harris described the journalist as a good looking, personable man, very curious to learn just how he came to know Thomas Carlyle and what Froude had said to him in an earlier conversation. Although the first part of their talk was friendly, with Escott revealing himself to be affable and a little talkative, in the end he turned the young man down for the position on the periodical. Harris, however, was a persistent man who would not give in so easily and asked if he could at least do translations for the Fortnightly Review. Escott replied that this was seldom the case, but that he would keep him in mind. Harris persisted, as he later related in his memoirs.

'Don't do that,' I replied. 'Let me come each day and if you've nothing to do, it won't matter . . .'

'As you please,' he said rudely, shrugging his shoulders as he turned away disdainfully—I couldn't but see.74

73Harris, p. 327.

74Harris, pp. 327-328.
Harris kept his word, but Escott ignored him every day (a difficult thing when it came to Harris, who was impossible to snub), going right by Harris on his way to his office on the back room of the fifth floor. After a week Chapman, probably at Escott's request, asked Harris politely to leave. Eventually Harris' persistence was rewarded as Escott relented and gave Harris German and Italian articles to translate and finally allowed him more and more work.75

Escott had more on his mind than journalism, since he was becoming deeply involved in political activities and had for some years formed an alliance with Joseph Chamberlain, the leader of the Radicals in England. Chamberlain, a brilliant and forceful man, potentially the most explosive force in the country was on the search for men such as Escott who could help him in the press and with new ideas.

One might wonder just how and why Escott, who had worked for Conservative journals all of his life, and had come from a Conservative family, could have come to work as intimately as he did with Chamberlain. Escott's uncle, the Liberal Bickham Escott, no doubt left his mark on his nephew's imagination; also the writing of England exposed Escott to many of the problems which had arisen in England and which he had come to feel could only be solved through Radical measures. His conclusion that the workers

75Ibid., p. 332.
were basically Conservative may have led him to the belief that some changes could be introduced without endangering the stability of the country. There is also the possibility that Escott, an ambitious man, wanted to be close to the source of future political power and there were many in 1880, who felt that Joseph Chamberlain might be the next Liberal Prime Minister.

By November 6, 1880, Chamberlain and Escott had already met and had come to some sort of understanding, since in a note of that date, Chamberlain carefully explained the Liberal government's attitude towards his latest speeches.76

Chamberlain at this time was President of the Board of Trade, but his influence in the country and the Liberal Party was much greater than his nominal position in the Cabinet. Escott was anxious to be kept informed at all times of Chamberlain's views as John Morley explained to Chamberlain in a letter dated November 21, 1880 and marked "Private." Escott had conversed with Morley and had revealed that it was extremely important to him—if he was to influence his paper for good against Conservative pressures—that he should have guidance from Chamberlain or someone close to him. Escott asked Morley to mention this request to the great Radical

leader at the earliest opportunity. Chamberlain apparently responded to this request to keep Escott informed about his views of the political situation and in October, 1881, Escott was a guest at Chamberlain's home. The first letter in the Chamberlain Papers of any real length to Escott is dated April 11, 1882, but one can reasonably assume that there had been others, since Chamberlain refers to previous correspondence between the two men. Few of these letters to Escott are to be found, however, as Chamberlain rarely kept copies of letters he sent out to Escott. In this letter to the journalist, the Radical leader explained that he found it very difficult to reply to his letter or to suggest the lead which should be followed.

There had been articles by Morley in the *Pall Mall Gazette* calling for the resignation of W. E. Forster, the Irish Secretary. Many people had come to the erroneous conclusion that this campaign against Forster had been inspired by Chamberlain, who was Morley's close associate. Chamberlain vigorously denied this, pointing out that he had often tried to get Morley to support the government's Irish policy. In Chamberlain's letter to Escott, he tried to explain this misunderstanding by denying that Morley's

---

77 Morley to Chamberlain, Nov. 21, 1881, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.

78 Chamberlain to Escott, April 11, 1882, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
articles had been inspired by either Chamberlain or by those close to him. On the contrary, Chamberlain pointed out, Morley's articles would produce a reaction in favor of Forster and would now make it impossible for Mr. Gladstone ever to dismiss him. In the course of this letter, Chamberlain hinted at some of Escott's own views on the situation in Ireland.

Whatever you may think of them and however much you dislike them (the Irish leaders) they are for the moment at all events the representatives of the Irish people and no policy can be safely undertaken without a full knowledge of their mind.79

Needless to say, the wily and experienced head of the Liberal Party William E. Gladstone, was aware of these connections between members of his cabinet and the press. As Chamberlain put it, there was a "warm discussion at a cabinet on the subject of these press leaks and this question was revived from time to time."80 Chamberlain pointed out in his Memoirs that several of the Ministers were continually communicating with the press: Forster with Shenery of the Times and Mudford of the Standard, Dilke with Hill of the Daily News, and Chamberlain continued, "I was in constant intercourse with Morley, editor of the Pall Mall Gazette, and Escott who was a writer at that time on the Standard."81 Chamberlain contended that without "special inter-

79Ibid.
81Ibid., pp. 9-10.
course," he found it impossible to secure any sort of defense of his policies in the press. Garvin commented on the same situation that Chamberlain had been accused of giving information to Escott, "then a very rising writer on the Standard--and he did not deny it." 82

It appears therefore, that Chamberlain had been personally accused by Gladstone of leaking information of a confidential nature to Escott. Instead of denying this, Chamberlain had attacked Gladstone by asserting that almost everyone was guilty of this sort of press manipulation. This in turn probably led to heated exchanges between members of the cabinet which was no doubt what Chamberlain wanted as his own individual guilt was soon forgotten.

The manner in which the press could be manipulated is shown in a diary entry of Sir Charles Dilke dated May 6, 1882. Dilke was an aristocratic Radical who worked closely with Chamberlain and, in fact, many thought his chances of succeeding Gladstone as Prime Minister were superior to that of Chamberlain's. Dilke had refused an appointment to the government, because it had not carried Cabinet rank with it. The government in announcing this to the public, however, merely stated that Dilke had refused the offer and did not give any reason for the refusal. Dilke was infuriated.

82 Garvin, I, 328.
As Dilke explained years later, he felt this to be a monstrous perversion of the truth and he took energetic steps to make sure that his side of the story was presented to the English public. He went to see Hill of the *Daily News*, while Chamberlain, probably at Dilke's request, saw Escott of the *Standard* and Lawson of the *Telegraph*. Both men must have been successful in convincing the journalists of their stories, as on the morning of the 9th, Dilke found "my reasons were very fairly stated in the *Standard*, the *Telegraph*, and *Daily News*." As an example of the sort of confusion this use of the press could lead to, Chamberlain mentioned a draft of the Irish Land Bill, which was a private cabinet paper, but which had been published in the *Standard*. Naturally, everyone assumed Chamberlain had leaked the paper to Escott, but for once Chamberlain was innocent; instead, he assumed that Forster had leaked it through his man Mudford. In the end it turned out that both men were innocent, although the mystery was never completely cleared.

Escott kept in close touch with Chamberlain to ensure that he knew that Escott was supporting him in his papers, writing him to make sure that the Radical leader was aware of the support he was receiving in the press through Escott.

---


84 Chamberlain, pp. 9-10.

85 Escott to Chamberlain, Oct. 2, 1881, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
On November 12, 1881, Escott wrote, "I am particularly anxious that you should know that the first leader in the Standard is by me." Escott also tried to ensure that adequate attention was paid to the articles in the press by Conservative leaders, especially Lord Salisbury, for whom Escott had a particularly distaste. He asked Chamberlain in a letter of September 27, 1882, for advice on the action to be taken regarding an article of Lord Salisbury on redistribution which had recently appeared in an unnamed magazine. Escott assumed that some reply had to be opposed to it embodying some substantial proposal and wondered whether the Radical leader could write this answering article as he had done a year earlier. If he could not do so, the journalist asked if Chamberlain could suggest someone who would deal with the subject. Chamberlain had written a number of articles in the Fortnightly Review, sometimes signed, sometimes unsigned, and often collaborated closely in the preparation of other articles. Although Escott still followed Morley's lead in not accepting articles which were to be published anonymously, he did occasionally make exceptions such as in Chamberlain's case.

I have not had any holiday at all this year and I am rather knocked up in consequence. I propose going away for ten days or for a fortnight on Thursday next.

86 Escott to Chamberlain, Nov. 12, 1881, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.

87 Escott to Chamberlain, Sept. 27, 1882, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
and before I go I am anxious to know that some kind of arrangement has been made or can be made for dealing with redistribution and Lord Salisbury in the November number of the Fortnightly. Otherwise I shall be fidgeting the whole time, and I shall have no real rest. I shall be very grateful if you will assist me please on exactly what you think best. 

This was the first time Escott mentioned the toll his work was taking on his health; it was not to be the last time. It was also beginning to affect his work on the periodical according to Frank Harris, who became an irregular sort of secretary and factotum to Escott. It was to Harris that Escott complained that his work on the World was taking up too much of his time, so that Harris eventually claimed to be doing much of Escott's own work. One must take Harris' evaluation of his own brilliance with some suspicion, but Escott's complaints about being overburdened with work sound very genuine. 89

After complaining about his inability to relax, Escott continued in his letter to Chamberlain:

You will see in the October number of the Fortnightly just a page dealing with one or two points of the Salisbury article. It reached me at the 11th hour and I stopped the press in order to take some notice of it. On the whole I think you will find the number a good one. 90

88 Ibid.
89 Harris, p. 332.
90 Escott to Chamberlain, Sept. 27, 1882, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
He also mentioned that an article on Gladstone was being held back until November, as he felt that it would attract a good deal more attention at that time rather than the present. On the whole, this letter like many others exchanged between Chamberlain and Escott showed a very close interchange of ideas between them. Escott would carefully time his articles on political affairs so as to get the maximum impact from them, while always asking Chamberlain for advice on articles and possible contributors to the periodical. Three days later, Escott wrote another letter to Chamberlain in answer to one Chamberlain had just sent him. In it Escott thanked Chamberlain for his suggestions on the political article and assured him that his thoughts on the matter would be followed. Chamberlain had also apparently advised Escott to ask Shaw Lefevre (a member of the cabinet, later Lord Eversley) to collaborate on an article, but Escott informed Chamberlain, he had refused and Escott would ask Dilke to perform the task. If Dilke would refuse, as Escott thought likely, he hoped that Dilke would urge Bodely, Dilke's private secretary, to do it. One can see that the collaboration among this section of the Radicals was quite close, as Escott even asked Chamberlain's advice as to who on the staff of the World should interview Schnadhorst, the Radical Party manager. 91

91 Ibid., Escott to Chamberlain, Sept. 30, 1882.
Escott was not the only writer in Chamberlain's journalistic stable, although he was the most important one. Chamberlain had a staff of capable men who would protect his interests in the press including Escott, who wrote for the Standard, the World, the Fortnightly Review, Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper and others. For a short time he had John Morley, while he was editor of the Pall Mall Gazette, and through Sir Charles Dilke, he had Frank Hill of the Daily News.

Edmund Yates, owner of the World, was another supporter of the Chamberlain team, while the Birmingham base was covered by J. T. Bunce of the Birmingham Daily Post. Escott's connection with the Standard is still somewhat puzzling since, as Garvin pointed out, the Standard, while a very great paper then and one in which Chamberlain through Escott could present his views, was in its editorial columns anything but Chamberlain's journal. 92 Part of the answer might lie with H. W. Mudford who was named manager and editor of the Standard in 1878. According to Alfred Austin, Mudford made major changes in the paper which greatly advanced it both in prestige and circulation. Mudford probably felt that Escott was too good a writer to lose even though he represented the Radical Party; besides which Mudford was far from being a reactionary himself. 93 Escott and Mudford got along well during

their association. Escott was impressed by the literary tastes which Mudford revealed; tastes which Escott found lacking in other editors. More to the point, he won Escott's professional respect as an exceptionally good journalist.

As was obvious from the earlier comments concerning Morley and Forster, it was not always easy for Chamberlain to keep all of his people working in conformity with his own plans. In late 1882, some sort of difficulty occurred between Hill of the Daily News and Escott, although the full story is not known. A letter of December 9, 1882, marked "Private," from Chamberlain to Dilke hinted at some of the action. In it the Radical leader said that he was responsible for what he called the "Escott-Hill" conspiracy which apparently created bad blood between the two men. He also stated that Escott had known all about it and was eagerly waiting for more word from Chamberlain. Before going into any further details, however, Chamberlain then vehemently attacked Hill's management of the Daily News. In the politician's eyes, the editor's handling of the paper was both stupid and ineffective, particularly in those matters affecting Joseph Chamberlain. The editorial columns were subjected to a particularly severe and close scrutiny. One can see that Chamberlain took a close, almost professional, interest in the newspapers which claimed to support him. He also appeared to secure the allegiance of some of them through a judicious use of patronage as Chamberlain had apparently
attempted to have Escott made Clerk of the Roll in the Isle of Man with a stipend of one thousand pounds a year. 94

Chamberlain was very discreet, however, in this matter and did not press the matter of Escott's appointment very hard. He realized that the cabinet might suspect Escott was the Radical's man and would support the Radicals in every way. The Radical leader admitted this to be true, but only up to a certain point. While convinced that the journalist would take his policy from Chamberlain at first, he was not at all sure that Escott would remain loyal for any great length of time. Obviously while Escott was respected as an important and able journalist, Chamberlain did not trust him to any great extent. 95 Nevertheless, Chamberlain still had no scruples about using Escott, especially when it came to some rather underhanded attacks upon political opponents. Harris asserted that Escott, urged on by Chamberlain, had sent Archibald Forbes to report on the manner in which Lord Salisbury housed his tenants. Since some years earlier, Salisbury had written an article in the Nineteenth Century demanding decent housing for the poor, Chamberlain hoped to find that Salisbury gave bad housing to his own tenants and was, therefore, guilty of hypocrisy. 96

94 Dec. 9, 1882, Chamberlain to Dilke, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
95 Ibid.
96 Harris, pp. 347-349.
Forbes returned from the Salisbury estate and wrote an article in which he viciously attacked Lord Salisbury's treatment of his tenants. Escott for all of his dislike of Lord Salisbury was appalled by the article and asked Harris, "Would you go down to Hatfield and check Forbes' account?" Escott added, "I have spoken to Mr. Chamberlain about you and your articles in the Spectator and he hopes you'll undertake the job."[^97]

When Harris went down to Hatfield, he found that Forbes had visited only one house out of the thirty he had described, and that house (described as incredibly filthy) had actually belonged to a leading Radical. Harris discovered that Lord Salisbury was very popular with his tenants, who considered him to be a kind and generous landlord. When Harris reported back to Escott, he answered:

'You must tell Chamberlain about it; he will be disappointed for he had picked Forbes. But I am enormously obliged to you; you must let me pay your expenses, at any rate. I'll get it from Joseph,' he added laughing.

Harris, however, did not want money; instead he asked for a letter of recommendation from Escott for the editorship of the Evening News, one of the more important papers of the day. "'With a heart and a half,' cried Escott, 'I'll give you the best I can write and a tip besides.'" He advised Harris to get Hutton of the Spectator to write also about his editorial qualities and to see

[^97]: Ibid.
Lord Folkstone about the position for, as he explained, despite appearances to the contrary, Lord Folkstone was the real master at the *Evening News*. Kennard always paid great heed to Lord Folkstone as he had promised to get Kennard the baronetcy which he so greatly coveted. Escott, who was quite talkative when warmed to his subject, went on for some length giving Harris the inside stories and gossip on the important people on the *Evening News*. Frank Harris soon found that Escott's connections were good; he received the editorship not long afterwards. There are a number of points to note in this account of behind the scenes journalism; first the irresponsibility and carelessness displayed by a famous newspaperman, Archibald Forbes, who had made an international reputation for himself in his coverage of the Franco-Prussian War. And yet, in spite of the fact that his story was proven to be totally false and malicious, Labouchere later printed the gist of the story in his *Truth*.

Second, this is important because of the care with which Escott attempted to ensure that his old enemy, Lord Salisbury, received fair play in his publication. Third, the reader can note that Escott possessed such power in the newspaper world, that ambitious young men such as Harris felt that he could secure them the editorship of an important paper of the standing of the

---


Evening News. There was a postscript added to this when Escott wrote of it years later, describing a stranger visiting the Salisbury estate in the 1880's and coming across Lady Salisbury. The Marquis' wife soon found out that this gentleman had come to Hatfield to investigate the condition of the Hatfield laborers' cottages, which he understood to be in a very bad condition. She volunteered to act as his guide, and the stranger accepted the offer, ignorant though he was of her identity. He soon found out that the cottages were very well kept and that there was no foundation to any of the charges against Lord Salisbury. The visitor, Escott explained, had been commissioned by a Radical newspaper, then very bitter against the Cecils to investigate the unhealthy housing of the Hatfield dependents. Returning to the office of the journal, he answered the editorial inquiry with two words, "No case." 101

Escott does not mention in this book, written in 1907, that he was the editor of the Radical paper. He was similarly circumspect in other delicate matters when he wrote of them after his active career had come to an end. Escott's connection with Chamberlain revealed itself on a much higher plane when Escott closely collaborated with Chamberlain in one of the most famous

100 Country House, pp. 461-62.
101 Ibid.
political manifestoes in English history, the **Radical Programme**. It was published serially in the *Fortnightly Review* in several sections in 1883 and created a major political sensation. According to Chamberlain, the first three sections—Introductory, Machinery, and Measures were written by Escott; the final paper on local government was, as to the British part, also written by Escott. The other parts were written by Frank Harris, John Morley, Jesse Collings, Francis Adams, and George Footrell. Collings was a close associate of Chamberlain and Secretary of the Local Government Board; Francis Adams was the former Secretary of the National Education League, and George Footrell was Secretary of the Irish Land Commission.\(^{102}\)

The close cooperation between Chamberlain and Escott is shown by Chamberlain's letter to Collings regarding his contribution to the **Radical Programme**.

> I have read your papers. It is excellent—the best thing you have done. I have not cut or altered anything. I have seen Escott and have told him he must print it without any excision and you will accordingly have a proof in a day or two.\(^{103}\)

Chamberlain had all of the articles submitted to him in proof before publication in order to ensure that they would all be writing in unison. At the same time as Escott was working so

---

\(^{102}\) Chamberlain, p. 108.

\(^{103}\) Chamberlain to Collings, Oct. 18, 1883, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
intimately with Chamberlain, he was also closely involved in the public life of Lord Randolph Churchill, the most exciting personality within the Conservative Party. Lord Randolph was suspected of making the same sort of bid to take over control from the "old gang" (in his case Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Salisbury), as Chamberlain was suspected of attempting to do with Gladstone. In both cases these men were appealing to the masses over the heads of their respective parties and making all possible use of the news media for this purpose.

Churchill made use of the *Fortnightly Review* by writing two articles one of which, "Elijah's Mantle" caused a sensation almost equal to that which accompanied Chamberlain's inspired articles. Many saw these articles by Churchill, which called for more vigorous leadership to rebuild the party on mass support, as an attempt to snatch the leadership of the Conservative Party. Although it might appear strange to find Escott willing to work with leading figures in both parties, Churchill and Chamberlain had actually much in common, since despite their Radical talk they were both basically conservative. They were, at times at least, friends and formed, at other times, a tenuous sort of political alliance. Escott had at this period of his career, almost a mania about Salisbury and was quite happy to help Churchill unseat him from his position of leadership. In an unsigned article, one of the few allowed by the review (almost certainly by Escott),
"Marquis of Salisbury, K. G." in the August number of the Fortnightly, Salisbury was violently attacked as being completely out of place in Parliament; he was, the writer asserted, no statesman and his resignation was demanded. Throughout Escott's control, the periodical took a consistently hostile view of Lord Salisbury.

Escott's collaboration with Lord Randolph was based on more than political factors, as Escott was a good friend of Lord Randolph's older brother the Duke of Marlborough and was to be found occasionally dining at Blenheim Palace. Escott later became rather close to Lord Randolph and wrote one of the first biographies of him after his death. During the 1880's they met frequently and according to Escott developed an intimate kind of acquaintance between themselves. It was to Escott, that Churchill laid down his guard and confessed of the terrible strain under which he worked. "No man . . . is so utterly alone and solitary as I am." Coincidently, both Escott and Churchill were only a short period of time away from complete mental and physical breakdowns, ending in the case of Lord Randolph in a premature and horrible death. Escott was fascinated with Churchill finding him an attractive figure and remarking on his "audacity, his

106 Ibid., p. 72.
insouciance, his vehemence, his impetuosity, and his occasional coolness, more exasperating than his vehemence.”\textsuperscript{107}

He was compared most favorably with the old mediocrities of the party, but Escott sensed the instability in Lord Randolph’s character and never quite trusted him as a political leader.\textsuperscript{108} Escott’s relationship with Lord Randolph was not allowed to interrupt his work with Chamberlain, as he kept the Radical leader closely informed of what he was doing. Sometime in late November of 1883, William Marriot, M. P. for Bright and a Liberal who later deserted the party to join the Conservatives, asked Escott to publish an article he had written for the \textit{Review}. Escott agreed, but later changed his mind when he read the proof of the article and found it was "ill written and altogether atrocious!" Escott in his letter to Chamberlain explaining this hinted that the article contained a personal attack on Chamberlain, which would not have been surprising from Marriot, whom Garvin called the "chief Joe baiter." Marriot was a vehement enemy of Chamberlain and had attacked him unfairly in at least one pamphlet.

Escott’s refusal to publish the article led to a wrangle between Escott and Marriot, but Escott stood firm in his refusal. One might be surprised that Escott would even contemplate publishing an article by such a vehement enemy of Chamberlain's,


\textsuperscript{108}Ibid., p. 196.
until one reads Escott's letter of explanation to Chamberlain in which he mentioned that he intended to "publish his paper with an answer accompanying it written possibly by myself, perhaps by some person else." Labouchere now moved into the quarrel and suggested to Escott that he write an article on Marriot, which eventually Labouchere wrote; one which Escott predicted to Chamberlain would prove to be very amusing. Since Labouchere was known as a very hard hitter (to many the most vicious publication in the press was "Labby's" Truth), Escott was obviously prepared to fight back hard against men whom he regarded as Chamberlain's enemies. Chamberlain, himself would find out just how hard his old colleague could hit, when he was attacked in Truth; an attack which left the usually stoical Chamberlain permanently embittered.

The following letter from Escott to Chamberlain reveals how closely Escott timed his articles with Chamberlain's speeches:

I think it would be a good idea to publish in the Fortnightly Review for April, or perhaps March an article about railways, and I have an excellent one on hand. Would that be a good time?—I mean will your measure for renewing the Railway Commission have been introduced? If the February number of the Review is, as I fear some may think it, a little heavy, I do not believe anyone will be able to deny that it is exceedingly strong.

109 Escott to Chamberlain, Dec. 4, 1883, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
110 Ibid.
111 Escott to Chamberlain, Jan. 27, 1884, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
The letters between Escott and Chamberlain reveal an extremely close collaboration between the two men in the placing, timing and content of various articles in all of the journals in which Escott was involved. If Chamberlain would not or could not write an article himself, he would, as Escott mentioned in his letter dated January 12, 1885, suggest men such as Broadhurst and Davis to do the work. Even in this case, however, Chamberlain was expected to instruct them as to the general slant of their articles.\footnote{Escott to Chamberlain, Jan. 12, 1885, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.}

Besides his alliance with the Radical Chamberlain, Escott also attempted to form some sort of tie with the Prime Minister, William E. Gladstone, still the most powerful figure in English politics. Escott wrote him his first letter on November 10, 1879, explaining that they had already met; he informed Gladstone of his new book, \textit{England}, and asked him for his opinion on it.\footnote{Escott to Gladstone, Nov. 10, 1879, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MSs. 44461, ff. 134.} On July 16, 1882, Escott wrote Gladstone a mysterious letter. He began by apologizing for troubling the Liberal leader but demanded to be heard. A communication had been made to him that morning which he thought to be of great importance to the government. He, therefore, asked Gladstone for a short interview in order to enlighten him on the nature of the proposal he wished to make. It was essential, asserted the journalist, that this inter-
view be granted quickly as time was of the essence, and he asked that if at all possible the two should meet in London that Friday. Escott expected the Prime Minister to call upon him at the journalist's home any time up till 7:00 P.M. If this were to prove inconvenient to Gladstone, Escott would be happy to change the time. 

Although Gladstone never saw the letter Escott sent him, Horace Seymour informed him of its contents; Gladstone was not impressed by it. Apparently he felt that it was of no real importance. Escott rather than the Prime Minister of England, and Escott was quickly informed of this by Seymour. Escott immediately wrote back to Seymour asking that his original note be shown to Gladstone, saying that he was sorry to seem a little importunate, "but so far as I am able to pledge, this importunity is justified by facts." Edward Hamilton, Gladstone's private secretary who now handled the matter had little patience with Escott's attempt at mystery, and told Escott that he had better write to Mr. Gladstone whatever it was he had to tell him. Hamilton finally discovered that the object of Escott's letters was to state that his close friend, Mr. Charles Waring, a wealthy contractor, offered

---

114 Escott to Gladstone, July 16, 1882, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS. 44476, ff. 44.

115 Escott to Gladstone, (no date), Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS. 44476, ff. 46.
to do at cost price any work that might be required in Egypt, especially military works and defensive railways. Escott claimed Waring possessed a large and capable staff of men. Gladstone does not seem to have taken advantage of this offer on the part of Waring. 116

The name of Charles Waring figured largely in Escott's correspondence with Gladstone. Waring had been from 1865 to 1868, M. P. for Poole and still had very strong Parliamentary ambitions. Escott described him as a shrewd, genial Yorkshireman of intellectual tastes, who had helped found the *Fortnightly Review*, and later made serious attempts to buy it. 117 Escott temporarily dropped the subject of Mr. Waring and continued his correspondence with Gladstone. On December 3, 1882, he asked the Prime Minister to write an estimate of the life of Bishop Wilberforce, something which apparently had been discussed at a dinner Escott had attended with Gladstone on November 18. Escott ended the letter with a flourish: "I hope that the *Fortnightly Review* may render service to the Liberal camp." 118

116 Escott to Gladstone, July 18, 1882, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS. 44476, ff. 47.

117 Trollope, p. 174.

One might wonder if Chamberlain suspected Escott's efforts to endear himself to the Gladstone wing of the Liberal party and if also this were the reason for his lack of trust in Escott. Since as Gladstone made an obvious point of keeping Escott at arms length, he too seemed to distrust him. It was Escott's job to keep abreast of all of the latest political developments and keep up his contacts, but it does seem as though Escott was keeping a foot in too many camps.

Part of Gladstone's antipathy to Escott may have stemmed from the recognition of Escott's own dislike for him. In his Society in London, Escott portrayed Gladstone as a man of little real talent who had been built up by the penny press, but who had none of the qualifications of a statesman. Gladstone, in Escott's eyes, possessed an excessive idea of his own infallibility.119 Gladstone's followers were described as, "a petty contingent of satellites, sycophants, and toad eaters who are picked up from the pavement."120 His interviews with Gladstone must have been painful affairs. "For myself," Escott wrote, "I cannot say that this most encyclopedic of septuagenarian statesmen has ever struck me as . . . entertaining."121 The book was published anonymously in 1885, but it is quite probably that Gladstone was aware of

119 Society, p. 169.
120 Ibid., p. 163.
121 Ibid., p. 174.
Escott's opinions from other quarters. Nevertheless, Escott continued his interviews with Gladstone, although many of them dealt with clerical matters to which the Prime Minister always lent a willing ear.

In another letter Escott thanked Gladstone for his "kindness in writing me a letter which has gratified me . . . my calling is a very anxious and laborious one." His complaints of overwork were beginning to become quite common. On November 9, 1883, Escott sent Gladstone the proof sheets of an article from the Fortnightly Review, entitled, "The Trusteeship of the Suez Canal," by his friend Charles Waring. Escott expressed a hope that the Prime Minister would be good enough to glance at it before making his speech on that topic. The writer of the article asked that the Suez Canal be thrown open to the commerce of all nations, and that no special privileges should be kept for England. This, he contended, would win for England the gratitude of the entire seafaring world. Also included in this letter to Gladstone were the proofs of an article by Joseph Chamberlain on laborer's dwellings. This sending of proofs on articles soon to appear in the Review seemed to be one of Escott's methods of attempting to influence an important man such as Gladstone.

122 Escott to Gladstone, (no date), Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS. 44483, ff. 215.

123 Escott to Gladstone, Nov. 9, 1883, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS. 44484, ff. 25.
On February 26, 1884, Escott wrote a very lengthy letter in praise of Waring to Gladstone in which he asked for a baronetcy for his "intimate friend" of many years. Escott stressed the fact that Waring had done good service to the Liberal cause, as for instance his standing as a Liberal candidate for Poole four times. He also mentioned that Waring maintained a considerable interest in the *Review*, and was taking steps to purchase the periodical. Strong pressure, Escott warned, was being placed on Waring to turn the magazine into a Conservative organ if he bought it. Escott seemed to threaten Gladstone, although not directly, that this important Liberal periodical might go Conservative if Waring were not humored. This was the sort of threat Escott had made to Chamberlain through Morley as was mentioned earlier in this paper. Gladstone gave Escott a very bland noncommittal reply which promised nothing. 124

Escott felt, probably correctly, that part of the reason for Gladstone's coolness to Waring lay in some shady financial dealings in which his friend had taken part. Escott quickly wrote to Hamilton explaining what had occurred when Waring had testified before a special committee concerning loans to Honduras in which Waring had been involved.

According to Escott, Mr. William Watkins, who had headed the special committee, had completely exonerated Waring of any of £400,000 to Paraguay with which Waring was involved which eventually ended in some sort of scandal. Escott's defense of Waring was that the speculative nature of the enterprise was well known to the public which should have been aware of the risk it was taking. Escott then proceeded to prove Waring's honesty by pointing out how successful he had become since these proceedings, reasoning that success would not have come to him if the City had thought his conduct to be ill-advised and dishonest.  

It must be mentioned that the letter just quoted, as well as others, were written in a very strange manner. In the beginning the handwriting was often the scribble which was the way in which Escott usually wrote; but then in mid-paragraph or even mid-sentence, the handwriting changed completely. It becomes clear and large either as though Escott had made a great effort to write more clearly, or as though someone else had begun to write for him at this point.

If these letters, or parts of them, were written by someone else, one would have to ask why Escott did not mention

---

125 Escott to Gladstone, Feb. 29, 1884, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS. 44485, ff. 258.
this, as courtesy would dictate; or why he did not have the whole letter written by the same writer. Often near the end of one of these letters, Escott's scribble would return, so that only the middle of the letter would be clearly written. If the entire letter had been written by Escott, one might possibly assume that this may have signalled the beginning of his approaching breakdown. All of this, however, is hypothetical, and until more information is available on the exact nature of Escott's illness, further speculation is fruitless.

One March 4, 1884, Escott wrote another letter to Hamilton, this time raising the possibility of Charles Waring running for Parliament as a candidate for Woodstock. The journalist prefaced his letter by saying that the Duke of Marlborough was a very old friend of his and occasionally consulted him in order to secure political advice. The Duke has been asked to join the Carlton Club by the Conservative manager but had refused to do so on the advice, or so Escott claimed, of the journalist. It was also due to Escott's advice that the Duke was not sitting on the Conservative side in the House of Lords. Escott implied, therefore, that he had a commanding influence over this important peer. 126

---

Escott informed Hamilton that the Duke and his brother Lord Randolph had had a falling out over the selling of the Blenheim pictures and that this was a factor in turning the Duke towards the Liberal Party. As Lord Randolph would soon be contesting Birmingham, the Duke had invited Waring to run for the family seat at Woodstock. This invitation to Waring was made less in the interest of politics, according to Escott, than in Waring's "influence and position as a contractor of jobs . . . and a director of large industrial enterprises." The Duke hoped that the material welfare of Woodstock would be improved if Waring were the member of the borough, although Escott did not spell out exactly how the Duke believed this would come about. Escott now presented Gladstone with a proposition. After affirming that Waring's vote might be as depended upon as if he were returned by a Caucus, Escott now asked for a baronetcy for Waring. The implication was plain that without the baronetcy, Waring would not run and Gladstone would lose the vote. 127

Gladstone took a very skeptical view of all of this.

I am afraid this is a rather fishy transaction. The Duke's liberalism seems mainly to consist of securing a rich contractor close to Blenheim. I think one can merely tell Mr. E. that no opinion can be prepared on such a point. 128

127bid.
128bid.
One would have to agree with Gladstone that this was a rather fishy transaction; even Escott, some ten years later when writing of this incident, showed a strong desire to forget most of it. He wrote in 1894, that the Duke of Marlborough was never more than a fitful and precarious supporter of Liberalism; concerning the Waring candidacy which never came off, he merely wrote vaguely, that at the time, the Duke "was supposed to have meditated bringing forward a candidate of his own in opposition to his family borough of Woodstock." By 1894, however, Escott dismissed the whole idea, by writing that the whole project was very unlikely since the idea of it alone was enough to cause of considerable degree of friction in the Marlborough household. Escott never even hinted at his own behind the scenes maneuvering in trying to help his rich friend Waring get Churchill's seat.

Escott was in effect working closely with Lord Randolph, while helping to unseat him behind his back with the aid of his brother. It is a fair bet that Lord Randolph never discovered this, or his connection with Escott would have been quickly broken off. Keeping this incident in mind, it is not difficult to discover why some people close to Escott thought him to be untrustworthy.

Escott, no doubt, persisted in his attempts to attain the baronetcy for his friend, because on March 10, 1884, Hamilton

\[129^{\text{Churchill, p. 68.}}\]
drafted a letter marked "Private, Confidential, R. G.'s idea."
The "R. G." obviously referred to Lord Richard Grosvenor, who was
the Liberal Party Whip in Parliament and one of Gladstone's
advisors in party measures. The first paragraph of the letter
merely repeated Gladstone's usual noncommital and vague answer to
Escott's request, but the rest of the letter, written by Hamilton,
told Escott quite bluntly that Hamilton was quite sure that
Gladstone would never agree to giving Waring the baronetcy. While
stating that Gladstone was always happy to do favors for his
friends, such as Escott, Hamilton pointed out that there were other
considerations which would have to be kept in mind.

Having regard to this Lord Richard Grosvenor has
thought it to be his duty to call attention to the
report of the Foreign Loans Committee; and considering
how prominently the name of Mr. Waring is introduced
in that report, I am bound to say that I think it very
doubtful whether ... Mr. Gladstone would feel
justified in submitting Mr. C. Waring to the Sovereign
for a high mark of Royal favor no matter what
explanation one produces or what proof of attenuating
circumstances or innocence is furnished. 130

Waring was already condemned in the eyes of public opinion
and Gladstone would find it politically dangerous to honor him
now. Moreover, there would be difficulties in "other and higher
quarters where those matters affecting the conduct of individuals
and well known and carefully watched." Hamilton ended the letter

130 Hamilton to Escott, Mar. 10, 1884, Great Britain,
British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS. 44485, ff. 280.
by expressing sorrow at having to write it and denying that he was giving "an authoritative expression" of Gladstone's views. Upon further consideration, however, only the first paragraph of the letter was sent to Escott. Gladstone was too experienced to offend such a powerful writer as Escott, and felt that even the polite and indirect method he took of telling Escott, that he thought his friend Waring was a crook was much too blunt.\(^{131}\)

Escott, a persistent man, did not take the hint and on June 17, 1884, he repeated his request for a baronetcy, stating that Sir Henry James had promised to clear the way for Waring. Hamilton, however, saw Escott and ended the matter, probably by telling Escott personally what Gladstone would not tell him by letter. In any event this was the last time that Escott mentioned Waring to Gladstone, although Escott and Waring remained good friends until Waring's death near the turn of the century.\(^{132}\)

A real explosion occurred when the June, 1884 number of the *Fortnightly Review* appeared containing an article entitled "England's Foreign Policy," which was signed only "g." The article maintained that England should concentrate all of its energies on maintaining its Empire, and should no longer attempt to keep its

\(^{131}\)Ibid.

\(^{132}\)Note, June 17, 1884, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MS. 44486, ff. 269.
commanding position in Europe. The author of the article contended that since England could no longer match the leading continental powers in force, England's only real alternative should be to build a firm friendship with France and Russia.\(^{133}\) By itself the article would not have attracted much attention, but many leading political figures both in England and the continent jumped to the conclusion that the article had been written by Gladstone, or at least had his approval.

This view was reinforced by an article in the *Times* which stated on what it felt to be good authority that the article was written by the Prime Minister. Since many liberal politicians were in the habit of using the *Review* for the purpose of sending up trial balloons, there was some justification for this conclusion. Unfortunately, the article was neither written nor authorized by Gladstone; on the contrary, it embarrassed him both politically and diplomatically and he was extremely angry with Escott whom he blamed for the misunderstanding. Gladstone had written to Delane of the *Times* asking him who had told him that Gladstone had written the article. Delane had answered that the information had come from the acting editor of the paper and expressed his regrets for the misunderstanding.\(^{134}\) Delane also

\(^{133}\) "England's Foreign Policy," *The Fortnightly Review*, CCX, (June, 1884), 705.

told Gladstone that it was Escott who had misinformed the paper concerning the author of the article. Escott wrote to Gladstone and attempted to explain, beginning with the now familiar complaint of overwork.

I have been absent on a short and much needed holiday and have only learned in the last few days what has occurred while I was away . . .

Escott argued that he could not admit responsibility for the article signed "g." He admitted that he had spoken to the acting editor of the Times, but denied that anything he said could have been construed to mean that Gladstone had been responsible for the article.

When that gentleman asked whether you were the author of the article, the question seemed to me so unwarranted that I gave it an answer in which, as I believe, he might have recognized an indication of the fallacy of such a hypothesis.135

Gladstone at this point in Escott's letter might have felt that Escott was evading a plain answer to his question, since Escott did seem to be admitting that he might have said something which the editor (who was not the regular editor) might have honestly misunderstood. Escott stated to Gladstone that he had been astonished to learn that the acting editor claimed on the basis of the conversation with Escott, that Gladstone had written the article. Escott told Gladstone that the article, which

---

135 Escott to Gladstone, June 17, 1884, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MS. 44486, ff. 265.
reached him only a few hours before going to the press, came from a quarter which justified him in placing high importance in the author's ability. Escott never identified the author of the article.

Escott apologized for even indirectly being the cause of any trouble with Gladstone, but he refused to admit any responsibility for the misunderstanding concerning the letter. This answer did not please Gladstone who commented that the letter did no little harm. Gladstone discussed this problem with Granville, his foreign minister, who told him, "I am afraid Escott is quite untrustworthy." Frank Harris talked about this incident with Frederic Chapman and later wrote that Chapman had told him that Escott had made trouble with the Times by telling the editor that the article was by Gladstone, but that Escott later denied this statement when he became frightened by the uproar. The Times, in consequence, refused to mention the Fortnightly Review. Harris then asserted that Chapman was so upset by this that he was willing to give Harris, Escott's position as editor if Walter, the owner of the Times, assured him that this would meet with his approval. This is an unlikely supposition, however, since the

---

136 Escott to Gladstone, June 17, 1884, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS. 44486, ff. 265.
137 Ramm, II, 272.
138 Ibid.
139 Harris, p. 693.
article appeared in June 1884, and Escott did not lose his position until October of 1886, some two years later. Also all of the other sources which discussed Escott's release from the periodical agreed that it was done because of Escott's ill health.

The most likely explanation for the entire story of cross purposes is that Escott made some joking remark attributing the article to Gladstone believing that the editor would understand his meaning. Unfortunately for all concerned, he did not. This entire affair affords reason for supposing that Escott was beginning to lose his grip on things; both in allowing the incident to happen and in his inept handling of the entire matter. Nonetheless, Gladstone continued to receive Escott's assurances that his zeal for Liberalism was still strong and had not been affected by anything which had occurred in the past. He also mentioned that he was writing a political article for Lloyd's every week, carefully mentioning which were his, and asking Gladstone to read and comment on them. Escott also pointed out that he had written an article in defense of the government in the July number of the Review and an article in Lloyd's which was a blow against Salisbury entitled, "Going on Charmingly," which Gladstone found "very interesting." Escott also asked Gladstone for a personal

140 Escott to Gladstone, July 4, 1884, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MS. 44487, ff. 7.
interview which was granted. If Gladstone retained any anger or bitterness over the "g" affair, he was careful to hide it from Escott as they returned to their old relationship.

In one of his last letters to Gladstone, Escott submitted a letter which he wrote for the information of Prince Otto von Bismarck, the Chancellor of Germany. Its purpose was to remove any misapprehension in Bismarck's mind during the current political agitation about the extension of the franchise. Escott, in this letter, claimed that the franchise excitement was merely temporary, because the organic structure of England was perfectly sound. He assured Prince Bismarck that Gladstone was distinctly conservative and moderate and that if the radical elements of the Liberal Party were to predominate in the government, their policy would be entirely reasonable, since Chamberlain would not be called upon to redeem his so-called promises. Escott felt that the tenure of the Conservatives, if they ever secured a nominal majority could only be brief since they had no statesman with the possible exception of Lord Randolph Churchill. (At this point, either Hamilton or Gladstone put an exclamation point after Lord Randolph's name to indicate surprise or disgust.) Lord Salisbury, Escott continued, who was the ostensible leader of the Conservative Party, was dismissed as belonging to the old school of politics and was of little worth.

\[141\] Ibid.
Tory Democracy would be more dangerous than Liberal Democracy, since the Tories were more likely to promote measures of confiscation than their opponents, and would be obliged to ally themselves with the Irish revolutionists. Escott then ended the letter by contending that permanent friendship with France was impossible. After this synthesis of Escott's letter, Hamilton wrote:

This is the letter which Escott declares is to ensure him audience of Bismarck a week or two hence. I shall only believe this when it is an accomplished fact.\(^{142}\)

Hamilton was correct in his skepticism; Escott never did interview Bismarck. The franchise agitation which Escott mentioned had to do with the bill introduced by Gladstone and subsequently passed which aimed at increasing the number of voters in England. It was this franchise bill which took over most of the space in the "Home and Foreign Affairs" section of the Fortnightly. The column was anonymous, but parts, at least, were written by Escott, since it often shows traces of his style; it can certainly be taken as reflecting his viewpoint, since it is unthinkable that he would allow anyone to advocate contrary political opinions on important political matters, in this the heart of his journalistic tool.

This section during the years of Escott's editorship generally supported Gladstone, but showed a special enthusiasm for

\(^{142}\) Oct. 1884, Great Britain, British Museum, Gladstone Papers, Add. MS. 44487, ff. 331. (The letter itself is not in the collection; only an outline of it by Hamilton.)
the Chamberlain wing of the party. There was a consistent attempt to put pressure upon Gladstone to follow the pages of the Radical Programme, although he was always treated respectfully until the Home Rule bomb exploded. Randolph Churchill was portrayed as the coming man in the Conservative Party, while Lord Salisbury was always subjected to sharp attack. In an article on the future of the Radical Party, the writer, probably Escott, claimed that the future belonged to the Radicals alone, describing them as practical men who were bent upon giving effect to the will of the majority of the people. Gladstone was named as one of the truest and most earnest Radicals in England.143 This interest in the exciting politics of the period did not prevent Escott from paying attention to literature, since he did serialize Diana of the Crossways by George Meredith, who was a reader for the Review. Meredith felt, as is true of many writers, displeased with his editor, because Escott thought it necessary to cut down portions of the novel due to lack of space.144

Escott also found time to travel to Cairo where he interviewed Nubar Bey, the Khedive Tewfik's Prime Minister, and


then to Paris, where he interviewed Leon Gambetta, thanks to a mutual friend in Dilke. The interview appeared in the November, 1883 number of the Review as "The French Republic and M. Gambetta." While in France he might have taken advantage of an invitation from Lord Lyons, the English Ambassador who had written him, "When you come to Paris, I shall look forward with much pleasure to seeing you." Lyons and Escott had met at a dinner at Blenheim Palace, where Escott had made a fine impression upon the peer with his ability to recite from memory some verses by Canning. 145

An example of the manner in which Escott went about securing background material for his articles is revealed by his correspondence with Field Marshal Wolseley, England's greatest living soldier. In 1883, Escott wrote Wolseley from Highbury, Chamberlain's country estate, informing him that the Review would be publishing a very important article entitled, "The Army and the Democracy," and asking for Wolseley's help in writing the article. 146

The article was to ask the question, "What would be the attitude of the masses to conscription, to war generally, to the


146 Historical Manuscripts Commission, National Register of Archives, Report on the Papers of Field Marshal Wolseley, W.920 WOL, Escott to Wolseley, Feb. 28, 1883, #2. Hereinafter referred to as Wolseley.
Army as an institution?" When Wolseley informed Escott that he was too busy to be of aid in writing the article, Escott wrote back warning him that he would be persistent in seeking the Field Marshal's help. He also asked Wolseley's aid in becoming a member of the Vine Club. Escott was also prepared to be of service to Wolseley, writing him:

I heard a short time ago . . . that you were preparing a life of the great Duke of Marlborough. I happened to mention this to the present Duke when I was at Blenheim one day and he at once said that he hoped you would look at the family papers.\textsuperscript{147}

Escott also repeated his request for assistance in the military article. A little later he invited the Field Marshal to dine in a private room at the Vine Club with Lord Randolph Churchill and the ubiquitous Mr. Waring. In a postscript he stressed the great pride he took in being a member of the Vine Club, which Wolseley apparently had helped him to join.\textsuperscript{148}

One March 30, 1884, he wrote Wolseley and enclosed an article from the \textit{World} entitled, "Whose Fault Is It?" The article was derived from an after dinner talk which the two men had enjoyed earlier that month. Escott asked to talk to the soldier again on the matter of relations between Radicals and the military which might be written in the \textit{Review}. While not asking Wolseley to write

\textsuperscript{147}Escott to Wolseley, Jan. 26, 1884, Wolseley.

\textsuperscript{148}Escott to Wolseley, (No date), Wolseley.
the article himself, Escott did request that he put his ideas on paper and send them to him. In this as in all of their other matters, Escott assured Wolseley that "you may be absolutely sure of my discretion and my reserve. No one will ever know that I had the advantage of conversing with you."\(^{149}\)

Wolseley had a brilliant mind and was quite aware of it; he was not averse to playing a little politics in order to introduce needed reforms in the English military structure and he was making effective use of Escott for this purpose. The English reader perusing separate articles in different papers would not be aware that he was the object of an intensive campaign on the part of Wolseley, since all of the articles were written anonymously, and Escott continually assured Wolseley that his connections with the articles would never be known.

On April 24, 1884, Escott wrote to Wolseley that he had come down with catarrh and was very run down. He also included a bitter remark on the Sudan situation which by general consent Gladstone had bungled. Wolseley, himself, would soon lead an unsuccessful relief expedition to try to extricate Gordon from his death trap. Escott wrote:

What a hideous situation is . . . the Sudan. The general tone of the letters which I received on the subject---the number is legion---makes one aware our

---

\(^{149}\) Escott to Wolseley, Mar. 30, 1884, Wolseley.
ministers don't know what public feeling on the business is. 150

More about his health came from Escott's letter of May 31, 1884, when he complained about his extreme tiredness and overwork. 151 The major article on which Escott and Wolseley worked on did not appear until March, 1886, and was entitled, "The Army and the Democracy." The writers of the article advocated that the Army had to secure a higher class of recruits in order that it become more national, while also stressing the importance of a professional corps of officers and better pay. 152

In February, 1885, Escott may have taken a short vacation trip, since he sent Lady Wolseley flowers from Monte Carlo. If it were a vacation and not a business trip it must have been a very short one, as there was no letup in Escott's work. 153 In June, 1884, Escott had mentioned to John Bright that he was contemplating writing a book on the history of the House of Commons. 154 This book would eventually be published, but not until many years later.

150 Escott to Wolseley, April 24, 1884, Wolseley.

151 Escott to Wolseley, May 31, 1884, Wolseley.


153 Escott to Wolseley, Feb. 9, 1885, Wolseley.

He was also putting out a new edition of his *England*, writing to Joseph Chamberlain that same year and asking him to allow Jesse Collins to have the unreleased edition of *England* which he had in Birmingham. Collins had promised to look through the chapters on the workers and would make any alterations or excisions which he thought necessary. Escott asked the Radical leader to be prompt in giving Collins the book, as he hoped that a fresh edition would be brought out that spring.  

In 1885, Escott also published *Society in London* which was based on his inside knowledge of English politics. It was published from the safety of anonymity since Escott was occasionally unrestrained in his attacks upon some of the prominent personalities of the day.

In this work, Escott wrote that the Queen had not only the true German love for pageant and ceremonials of state, uniform trappings, and all sorts of shows and ceremonies, but also a passion similar to that of the English working classes for funerals and everything else associated with the Sepulcher. He thought this a rather morbid attitude, but the sort of thing one would expect from such a Queen.  

More intriguing is the teasing to which he subjected his friend, Sir Charles Dilke. It often happened, Escott asserted, that when a man had been severely defeated in a

---

155 Escott to Chamberlain, Jan. 27, 1884, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.

156 *Society*, p. 35.
love affair, jilted by his loved one, or duped by a mistress for whom he had a great passion, he had sworn that he would have nothing to do with women in the future. This was a rash vow as all too often man succumbs again to the influence of the fair sex. Abstention from diplomacy was, therefore, just as much out of the question to "that austere ermite of Radicalism, Sir Charles Dilke, as isolation from feminine society is to the man who . . . cannot subdue the cravings of the old Adam . . . ." 157 One wonders just how much Escott knew of Dilke's private affairs, since this was published at about the time the Dilke Scandal broke open. In any event, assuming Dilke to have been guilty, it must have made very uncomfortable.

Escott found time to help establish a charity school in Greece, when he published an article by Professor R. C. Jebb, who hoped to promote the establishment of a school of Greek studies at Athens. Since the wife of the Prince of Wales, the Princess Alexandra, had a brother on the Greek throne at the time, the Prince became interested in the project and had Escott call upon him to explain the idea. Among other things, they discussed introducing it to the public at a meeting of the distinguished men concerned for the success of the plan. "You can have your meeting here," said the Prince when I waited on him at Marlborough House
the first time. 'Leave some of the papers with me.' Among the eminent men who eventually attended the meeting were Lord Salisbury, Lord Granville, and Mr. Gladstone.\textsuperscript{158} At about the same time, Escott published his sixth book (his fourth on England) entitled \textit{Politics and Letters, A Personal Retrospect}, which was a superficial commentary on the times as well as a short outline of his career. It was published under his own name and a reading of it may suggest to the reader that Escott wrote with more abandon when his own name did not appear on the cover. \textit{Politics and Letters} contains little of any real interest and little care seems to have been taken by Escott in its preparation.

Frank Harris, who was now working closely with Escott, was an occasional dinner guest at the Escott household, where he got to know his wife and "pretty daughter" quite well. Remembering Harris' reputation, one may be pardoned for wondering whether it was Escott's conversational abilities or Kate's attractions which drew him to Brompton. Very little, unfortunately, is known about Escott's family or the sort of home life he had, outside of a few references in Harris' memoirs. What evidence does exist, including Escott's own comments, indicates that he and his wife were well matched, and that when illness blighted his career, she devoted her life to caring for him. One may assume, as there is no evidence to the contrary, that his family life was reasonably happy.

CHAPTER III

T. H. S. Escott's Retirement

These days were the height of Escott's career. Days when ambitious young men such as Frank Harris had to see and impress him in order to gain access to positions of influence in the journalistic world of London. One day he might be interviewing the Prime Minister at Number Ten Downing Street, and a day later dine with a distinguished group at Blenheim Palace with the Duke of Marlborough as Host. On another day he might be found with Field Marshal Wolseley and Lord Randolph Churchill, and later in the evening have Robert Browning as a dinner guest at home; most often he could be found conferring with the figure many called the most dangerous man in England, Joseph Chamberlain. But Escott with the best education England could provide, also needed the companionship which only minds such as Matthew Arnold, Thomas Huxley, and Benjamin Jowett could afford.

He was also involved in the editorship of the Fortnightly Review as well as more than half a dozen other leading newspapers.
and periodicals. The days did not seem to be long enough for him to do everything, so he tried to move faster and faster, and the pace became frantic. Harris, who was himself a phenomenally hard worker, confessed that editing the *Evening News* cost him sixteen to seventeen hours a day, while Lucy suffered a short, but severe breakdown from his work. Escott was acutely aware of the difficult conditions under which journalists of his time worked; all of them knew that their success depended upon the circulation of the papers for which they wrote.

If he writes leading articles he will have to hold himself at the disposition of his editor, and he will very often have to turn night into day . . . the development of telegraphic communications renders it necessary for the professional journalist to hold himself in readiness to write at a moment's notice at any hour.\(^{159}\)

The terms under which Escott worked for the *Review* are not known, but some idea might be obtained from the terms obtained by his successor, Harris. For the first year Harris was to receive 500 pounds and ten percent of the net profit; if the circulation doubled, he was to receive fifteen percent of the net profits.\(^{160}\)

There was no real security in this profession; not even for an Escott. Perhaps it was this nagging sense of insecurity which in the end destroyed him. Somehow in the year either of or

\(^{159}\)England, p. 574.

\(^{160}\)Harris, p. 696.
preceding his breakdown, Escott had lost most of his money under circumstances not yet known. Quite possibly the knowledge that he had to start all over again may have been too much for him. In any event, the breaking point was now reached. On October 17, 1885, Joseph Chamberlain received a letter marked "Confidential" from Yates. In it Yates told Chamberlain that he had heard that Escott was seriously, though perhaps not, dangerously ill. The doctor had forbidden him to see anyone or to write any letters, and it would be many weeks before Escott could even think of work. Although Yates had talked to the doctor at some length about Escott's illness, no mention was made in this letter of the exact nature of his illness. The journalist stressed that he intended to keep himself at Chamberlain's disposal for an indefinite period and would be happy to see the Radical leader at any time. Chamberlain was also assured that Escott's place would be filled by the best available man, and that the tone of the paper (referring to the World) would be kept the same, especially since the illness had come at a particularly unfortunate time for Chamberlain.161

It seems clear that Yates had tried to talk to Escott, but had talked to his family instead since the letter was written

161 Yates to Chamberlain, Oct. 17, 1885, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
from Brighton where Escott went to recuperate. There also seemed to be a hint that Yates would be quite prepared to assume Escott's position in Chamberlain's circle. If so Chamberlain did not feel that Yates could take Escott's place since the connection was never made. Unfortunately Escott may have insisted upon going back to work since he did not officially resign until August, 1886, when Frank Harris took over. In his last year as at least nominal editor of the Review, the periodical struck hard at Gladstone on the issue of Home Rule, referring to it as "his mad proposal." 

By May, the writer of the "Home and Foreign Affairs" section was convinced that the whole world of rank, wealth, and intelligence was against Home Rule, but that in this as in so much else, property and education were at the mercy of ignorance and numbers; a huge gulf existed between those two worlds. Chamberlain's position on Home Rule was enthusiastically supported, while the writer asserted that civil war in England would be preferable to Home Rule and Gladstone.

It was during this period between October, 1885 to October, 1886 which Arthur Waugh later claimed to be his "spasmodic interregnum" that friends such as Dilke began to suspect

163 Ibid., May, 1886, p. 872.
the seriousness of his illness. Little is known of the exact nature of his illness, except that it was both physical and emotional in nature; one source referred to the fact that his "brain work" stopped.\textsuperscript{164} Harris found out about it in the following way.

Chapman asked me to call upon him next day and told me that I could take over the editorship of the Fortnightly Review whenever I pleased. Escott was ill at the time; he had broken down in health. I said I would take over the Review on condition that the first year's salary went to Escott, as I knew that he was not well off.\textsuperscript{165}

Escott, meanwhile, had been sent south to the Mediterranean area by his friends in hopes that he would recover his health. The last letter from Escott to Chamberlain is dated March 9, 1886 and revealed clearly that the trip had not done much good for Escott.

Escott began the letter by apologizing for not writing it in his own hand, but explained that the strain of even this simple action would be much too hard on him so that he was forced to dictate the contents to a secretary. He claimed that while in Rome a few days ago he had received countless offers of hospitality from all sorts of persons and even hinted that he was offered some outstanding opportunities by the Italian and Greek governments.

\textsuperscript{164}The Times, June 17, 1924.
\textsuperscript{165}Harris, p. 694.
which caused him to alter his plans and to go to Egypt on his way to instead of from Athens. Escott did not go into any details regarding these opportunities offered him by the governments and the reader may reasonably assume that he greatly exaggerated them. Certainly there is no indication that Chamberlain was greatly impressed by them.

Escott expressed his gratitude to Chamberlain for paying for at least a part of the cost of the trip and the medical expenses and promised to stay away from England for the six months demanded by the doctors. He promised to do his best to get well even though he was always tempted to do some work. He asserted that he was letting his mind go quite fallow, not thinking of work of any kind and not allowing anyone to read an English newspaper to him. He begged Chamberlain to write to him in Paris, where Escott expected to be in one week.166

In reading this pathetic, rambling, and almost incoherent letter, one is struck by the fact that Escott could still not get his mind off his work. It was written by a man who had badly worked himself out and needed a long rest. The signature, the only part in Escott's handwriting, was an indecipherable scribble. Escott's friends, according to Dilke, had suspected this breakdown

\[166\text{Escott to Chamberlain, March 9, 1886, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.}\]
for some time and had even tried to warn his family; the family, however, refused to believe this. 167

Since Escott had lost most of his money at this time, Chamberlain generously set up what he called the "Escott fund," to which Dilke and others contributed, and which helped send Escott to the continent for a rest cure. 168 Chamberlain was always generous to men who had served him well (Escott was not the only example of this beneficence), indicating both that Chamberlain was not the totally ruthless man his enemies described and that Escott's relationship to him had been a close one. The seriousness with which Escott's friends regarded his illness may be seen from this letter from Chamberlain to Dilke dated June 6, 1888 in which Chamberlain tried to explain why Escott needed funds.

I know nothing of the domestic quarrels in the Escott family. Robson Rosse told me that Escott could not recover and his father told me the same thing.

I have never heard Escott say one word that was other than most friendly to you. At the time of the trial he thought that he was on the track of information that might be useful to you and he gave himself some trouble to procure it. It came to nothing however. 169

The trial to which Chamberlain referred was the divorce case which ruined Dilke politically. Escott during his illness

167 Dilke to Chamberlain, June 4, 1884, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.

168 Chamberlain to Dilke, June 9, 1888, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.

169 Chamberlain to Dilke, June 9, 1888, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain Papers.
had spread some slander about Dilke, possibly involving the scandal, and Dilke was still angry about it. When Chamberlain approached Dilke for contributions to the Escott fund, Dilke used this as an excuse for not contributing. Chamberlain, therefore, wrote to Dilke and tried to smooth things over with the letter just quoted. He ended the letter by telling Dilke that:

Escott has written me once or twice, but never in his own handwriting, except the signature which is all to pieces. I sincerely hope that he may get well again, but I doubt it.170

In response to this letter, Dilke contributed a "handsome sum" for the benefit of the Escott family. After Escott's return from the continent, he lived with his family in the ocean resort city of Brighton at 23 Sackville Road in a pleasant two story house only a few blocks away from the sea. His wife was loyal and devoted to him; a fact to which he as well as other paid generous tribute.

From this time until 1894, one can only assume that Escott lived with his family in Brighton, too ill, both physically and mentally to travel or work. A once prolific writer, he wrote nothing from 1886 to June, 1894; he held no editorial position, and there is no mention of any sort of activity. It is reasonable to suspect that in a passage he later wrote describing the far more serious breakdown of Lord Randolph Churchill, Escott was

170 Ibid.
describing his own symptoms.

Nothing increases the strain of social functions more than the consciousness of their subservience to a political end. There can be no real ease in that private reunion, which for all persons assisting at them, are accompanied by a haunting conception of time lost, of no visible contribution to the practical end in view . . .

Escott continued:

Digestion and temper, spirit and flesh, soul and body, all suffer from the weary interest of the ordeal; nor are matters much improved and the jaded body more likely to repair the waste of tissue, when as his guests depart, he turns to pursuits that may prolong his vigil to the same hours.\footnote{\textit{Churchill}, p. 227.}

Escott then bitterly commented on the inability of doctors to cure disorders of the mind. It is very likely that Escott did not realize that Churchill's breakdown stemmed from causes other than overwork alone; nonetheless the above quoted passage seems to have been written from a very personal point of view. Escott, on the occasions he mentioned his illness, spoke of it only in the vaguest and most general terms, laying particular stress on the physical aspect.

When in July, 1894, his first article, "Possibilities of Liberal Reunion," appeared in \textit{The Contemporary Review}, Escott found that his friends and colleagues had not forgotten him. \textit{Punch}, the famous English periodical, noted with pleasure that his
articles were again appearing and commented, "all will look forward to what Mr. Escott cannot look forward to himself--his reminiscences."\textsuperscript{172}

Shortly afterwards Escott did bring out his memoirs, perversely entitled \textit{Platform, Press, Politics, and Play}, dedicating the work to his wife and children. \textit{The Athenaeum} reviewed the work very favorably pointing out that where others might be bitter over their misfortunes, Escott had written a book which was "overflowing with goodness of heart."\textsuperscript{173} Unfortunately, this was all too true; the memoirs give little information about those aspects of Escott's life in which a biographer would be most interested. The connections with Chamberlain and Dilke are not mentioned and the whole treatment of his life is light and very superficial. Perhaps Escott's sense of loyalty precluded him from revealing the inside stories which might have embarrassed his former associates. In any event this was the first of a great number of books which were to come from Escott's pen. Complete bibliographical citations for the following works, not elsewhere cited, will be found in the bibliography of this paper.

\textit{Lord Randolph Churchill}, 1895.
\textit{Social Transformations of the Victorian Age}, 1897.
\textit{Personal Forces of the Period}, 1898.

\textsuperscript{172}\textit{Punch}, July 14, 1894, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{173}\textit{The Athenaeum}, Oct. 19, 1895, p. 525.
The large number of books which Escott wrote after his enforced retirement from active life, suggest a number of ideas. No doubt they represented an income badly needed for Escott and his family. They also indicate that the publishers for whom he wrote and who accepted these works felt that Escott still had a public ready to read him. Circulation figures on these books are unavailable, but it is inconceivable that the businessmen who published his works would do so for any reasons except that they sold well. The number of books Escott wrote, also indicate that even in retirement Escott could not keep his mind still. It is possible that this incessant work in which Escott indulged may have hindered his complete recovery.

In all, Escott during his life edited three books and wrote nineteen others. Some of them, such as *Sovereigns of the Nineteenth Century*, are of little interest today; others such as *Society in the Country House* are charmingly written and give an insight into aspects of Victorian society not usually treated. His *England* and *Social Transformations of the Victorian Age* are solid, well written works which will be found in any good bibliography on the latter part of the Nineteenth Century.

---


Besides these books, Escott also wrote over a hundred articles for various periodicals during the period of his semi-retirement.

His works on Churchill and Trollope are useful biographies which are based to a considerable extent on first hand knowledge of the figures. The Trollope is one of the basic and essential works on Escott's old friend, while his Masters of English Journalism is a very knowledgeable work in a field which has attracted little attention. It is obvious that Escott took great pleasure in writing these works as he relived the days of his and England's greatness; it is fairly certain that he had little other pleasure in life as the Times referred to the "burden" of his later years. He never completely recovered his health.\textsuperscript{176} There is little

\textsuperscript{176}The Times, June 17, 1924.
doubt that even after his partial recovery in 1894, he never left Brighton nor probably even his home. The club life which he loved so much, the excitement of the newspaper business, the closeness to political and literary greatness were gone.

There is also a hint that Escott spent some time in a hospital being cared for as an invalid. He devoted an entire chapter in one of his books to what he called "Transformations in Invalid Life," in which he detailed the care and treatment of invalids in England. He spoke bitterly of the "decayed billiard markers and scripture readers who have gone wrong," who were often assigned to care for the seriously ill and expressed a hope that a higher class of person might find his vocation in this duty. Escott admitted that part of his research was due "reluctantly to his own personal experience." 177

Escott probably found some solace in reading the book reviews of his publications which were often highly favorable. The Athenaeum in reviewing his Gentlemen of the House of Commons, which was a history of the House, gave it praise almost without reserve asserting that parts of it would stand any test. The book was found to be kindly, wise, and gay, while avoiding party politics as much as possible. Unfortunately the book was also found to be marred by so many obvious errors that the periodical

177 Social Transformations, p. 393.
advised Escott to secure the services of a reputable proofreader. Parts in fact were declared to be unreadable. 178

Escott was careful to keep up his correspondence with his many friends and acquaintances, although it seems doubtful if any of them ever visited him. Tragedy entered Escott's life again in 1899 when his wife died; some time later, unable to endure his loneliness, he married Edith Hilton, a widow who gave him the "long devotion and untiring help he needed." 179 In 1910, his father died. Escott outlived his past; relatives, friends, fellow workers and even the Victorian Age itself passed away and still Escott lived on well into the new century still confident that the old values would hold true as they had done in the past.

Finally, at the age of 79, Escott died in Brighton on June 14, 1924. He would have appreciated the well written obituary of him in The Times, the paper for which he would have given anything to have worked for, which referred to his death as the passing of the last link with Victorian journalism. Escott, himself, had written a short (and anonymous) description of himself when he was at the peak of his career, in which he described himself as a man who had the reputation of paying great attention to his professional pursuits. Nevertheless, the

178 The Athenaeum, June 13, 1903.
179 The Times, June 17, 1924.
journalist never alluded to his profession in his conversations and when talking was not easily enticed into any mention of any part of his career. "This may be wise, but life is short, and on the occasions on which I have met him, it has not seemed to me to be worthwhile to induce him to break his not too courteous repose." Escott was not without his own subtle sense of humor.

In analyzing Escott's career, one is faced with the problem that he never fully lived up to his potential, not only because of the untimely ending to his career (it was only a twenty-one year span), but because he continually dissipated his energy in all directions. No man can be fully and equally proficient in classical studies, university lecturing, periodical editing, and leader writing all at top speed. As a result his work suffered and his talent was never given a chance to develop fully.

Arthur Waugh, writing in the Fortnightly Review in 1929, said that Escott possessed a wide knowledge of the world and presented distinguished articles in the periodical, but that unfortunately his health broke down before he fully got into stride. Waugh took care to stress that Escott did not let the Review down. Among the accomplishments that Waugh laid to Escott was his discovery of the future Lord Kitchener, although unfortunately he

---

\[180\] Society, p. 247.
Another opinion was expressed by W. T. Stead, at the time editor of the sensationalist Pall Mall Gazette, who wrote that Escott was, "a man of smartness and industry unencumbered with the philosophical convictions of his predecessors." On the whole, Stead felt that Escott's editorship was less than a success especially with the "Home and Foreign Affairs" section. He is a less than objective observer, however, since Stead was a determined enemy of Chamberlain and his friends. More weight should be given to the opinion of J. G. Garvin, who writing in the 1930's stated that Escott maintained a very high standard for the Review. The fairest judgment is that Escott never had a chance to show what he could do and that the blame for this must rest with Escott who allowed a desire for money to overcome any sensible concern for his health.

As a reporter, Escott's reputation was built upon his ability to improve circulation rather than the literary quality of his articles. His inside contacts with prominent personalities made it possible for him to use much information not available to less fortunately placed newspapermen. If anything is obvious in Escott's life, it is the fact that he was a highly successful

---

183 Garvin, p. 545.
newspaperman who was looked up to with respect by the professionals of the day in this highly competitive craft. As a political figure, Escott was always on the fringe of events; never actually on the main stage. He came close in 1868 when he almost ran for Parliament and again in the eighties when Chamberlain's influence might have done something for him. Clear proof of Escott's abilities can be found in the association with Joseph Chamberlain who thought highly of him. "The Great Joe" was never one to tolerate mediocrities near him, and no second-rate mind would have been allowed to write the most important sections of the Radical Programme. It is unlikely that Escott could have done anything of much importance by himself politically; too many people such as Chamberlain or Gladstone never really trusted him. Whether this lack of trust was merited is difficult to say, but there are aspects of Escott's career which reveal him to be less than straightforward.

The importance of Escott's life today lies in the view it affords of a journalist who gazed upon the entire scene when English civilization had reached its height. When Escott discussed the politics of a Gladstone, the poetry of a Browning, or the novels of a George Eliot, he was discussing the thought and work of people whom he knew quite well, giving an added dimension to his exposition. His excellent education provided the broad background by which he could best understand the forces of his
period. When Escott fell, many greater men such as Churchill, Parnell, and Dilke were also to disappear from the political scene; lesser figures such as Escott went down scarcely noticed. England was wasting her new generation of leaders before they had even reached their peak. This destruction of leadership would be completed in World War I. Disraeli, Gladstone, and Salisbury, the old custodians of England's power were dead. The new leadership would be found in men such as Balfour, Asquith, and Roseberry; men neither sure of themselves or of England's destiny, while Chamberlain, the last of the giants, was crippled in the Unionist Party. Overseas, the growth of industrial giants such as the United States and Germany was soon to overshadow the British Empire. Escott was not falling alone.

It is Escott's writing on this topic, the condition of England at the beginning of her decline, that established his claim to attention; especially his England, one of the most thorough dissections of a society ever done. This work and his other important writings, which will be discussed in Part II of this paper, were written in his study far from the hectic demands of a deadline, the need to please a fickle public, or the desire to make money. In these writings the reader will see Escott at his best and will read the comments of a skilled, well trained, and deeply thoughtful observer of the times. Escott did not always provide the reader with the right answer, but at his best, he always asked the right question.
PART II

The Writings of T. H. S. Escott
CHAPTER I

The Working Classes

Although Escott was associated for a time with the Radicals and proposed the reforms outlined in the Radical Programme, he was at heart a Conservative. He even seemed to be a little embarrassed by his Radical period as he told how during an interview with W. E. Forster, then Irish Secretary in Gladstone's second ministry, Forster had turned the tables on him and, "with good humored banter . . . rallied at one he was pleased to call a conservative journalist, slack as my toryism, I fear, has often been."\(^1\) This Conservative approach is shown through his writings which are imbued with the ideas of Walter Bagehot, Matthew Arnold, Thomas Carlyle, and especially after 1895, Benjamin Disraeli.

Escott felt, as did all of these writers, that any solution to England's problems which was not securely founded on

\(^{184}\)Platform, p. xxxii.
the rock of English tradition was dangerous and basically unworkable. It was important, therefore, that the middle classes (to which he belonged) and the upper classes (with which he was closely associated) should study the problems of the working classes in order that these lower orders might be guided along constructive paths. The very fact that the working classes were for the first time in history, rising to power, held an element of danger to the existence of the classes above them, since, "it might be found that the natural sequel of a policy of sensation and impulse was the outburst of something very like revolutionary discontent."\textsuperscript{185} This threat of violent revolution was a factor which Escott often kept in mind even though the immediate danger had passed away. It was also a challenge which Escott felt had to be met since the upper classes still had a useful and important role to play in the destinies of England. His writings show a keen awareness of these problems as well as his attempts to find, through a close examination of the English social structure, some sort of solution.

The second part of this paper will reveal how Escott viewed the problems of England, the sources from which he received many of his ideas, and the extent to which he was influenced by them.

Like many of his contemporaries, Escott appeared to betray a vague feeling of horror at the thought of a rise of the

\textsuperscript{185}Pillars, p. xxxii.
lower classes. There was hardly a city in the country, Escott asserted, which they could not turn into a state of siege if they were resolute in the attempt. Any well concerted rising on their part in any of the great trading centers would not merely terrorize the area, but paralyze the trading system of the entire empire.\textsuperscript{186}

In another passage, he stated that there were many people who "can well recollect the ominous spectacle visible from Nottingham Castle of nineteen ricks simultaneously in flames."\textsuperscript{187} The period from 1815 to 1848 was a time of grave social tension in England when many from the upper and middle classes feared violence on the part of the masses. In some cases this violence did explode with such intensity that the Army had to be called upon in order to restore order. Although Escott was too young to remember very much of the riots and outbreaks of near revolutionary passion on the part of the workers, he grew up among men who remembered these events vividly. Fear of the unleashed violence of the workers was still present in 1879, even though any immediate danger of revolution had appeared to fade.\textsuperscript{188}

The same apprehensions were present in Walter Bagehot's \textit{The English Constitution} which Escott had carefully read and called

\textsuperscript{186} \textit{England}, p. 141.
\textsuperscript{187} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 165.
\textsuperscript{188} \textit{Ibid.}
the most useful and practical work on the Constitution in the English language. Bagehot had stressed the need for a more stable government, which was something no barbarous or semi-civilized nation had ever possessed. If, he had written, the mass of uneducated men in England were to be told now to go and choose their own rulers, they would go wild. Their imaginations would see dangers at every point, mobs would run amok, and the elections would end in disaster and tyranny. 189

Matthew Arnold put this even more bluntly when he wrote of the vast portion of the working classes which was finally issuing from its poverty and squalor, raw and half developed, to assert the "Englishman's heaven-born privilege of doing as he likes." 190 To Arnold they were a source of danger and anarchy. This fear of the working classes had always been present in the minds of some of the English intellectuals, but recent developments had made this question even more vital.

Bagehot thought that 1872 was yet too soon to attempt to understand the effects of the Reform Act of 1867, as the workers who received the vote under that act did not realize the significance of their new power. One election so far from teaching

---


the upper classes how the new voters would use their vote, was not enough to make clear to the workers that they held such a vast and potentially destructive power.\textsuperscript{191} There was a sense of urgency in Escott's writings commenting on the same themes. A real and present danger existed in England, he told the reader, since the ultimate political power of the nation now rested in the hands of a vast multitude of uneducated workers. But besides this fear which Escott shared with Arnold and Bagehot, Escott also felt deep concern and sympathy for the workers, as was revealed in his description of the duties of George Smith, a worker, who had told Escott that at the age of nine he had been employed in continually carrying about forty pounds of clay upon his head. This work had to be performed daily for thirteen hours without a break. One night, after his regular labor, he was made to carry 1,200 nine inch bricks from the maker to the floors upon which they were needed. For this labor, Escott noted indignantly, he received sixpence.\textsuperscript{192}

There existed, therefore, every reason for studying the problems of the working classes; compassion for their hard lot, fear of their violence, and concern for the country which would soon be ruled by them. This was the theme of his greatest work, \textit{England}. His contemporaries in the various newspapers and

\textsuperscript{191}Bagehot, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{192}England, p. 152.
periodicals felt that he had written a very significant work, although some, such as the reviewer for the Times, corrected him on several minor errors. The Economist, in its review when the book was republished in 1885, commented that, "the tone and spirit of the book too are eminently English. He is conservative, without being reactionary, liberal, yet not subversive." Other reviews, such as those of the Saturday Review and the Spectator also admired Escott's description of English society. They appeared particularly impressed with Escott's attention to detail as well as the wide sweep of the work, although they tended to criticize isolated chapters such as those on literature and philosophy. Four of the chapters were not written by Escott, and he also secured the cooperation of many eminent and knowledgeable men such as Lord Carnarvon, A. J. Mundella, Drummond Wolff, and others, some of whom had read proofs of the book to better aid with their criticism.

Escott who had lived with the workers while compiling the material for England, never made the mistake of idealizing the workers as did so many other social reformers. He knew their faults and vices all too well. He also realized that to a certain extent their suffering was the inevitable consequence of England's

---

193 The Times, Jan. 5, 1880.
194 The Economist, Jan. 31, 1885, pp. 194-5.
rapid industrialization. There was no conspiracy of the wealthy and aristocratic to keep the poor in poverty and misery. What had happened was that England had undergone the first industrial revolution in history and the workers had learned their lessons of adjustment to this new world with blood and toil. Some of the misery of the workers was their own fault, since the workers' greatest enemy was not the factory owner nor the aristocrat, but the worker's love of drink. Too often, he engaged in labor that he might later indulge in drink. Escott told the story of a laborer, who having saved some money, left for four days and spent it on drink. He walked back to work, several miles from home, but on taking off his coat, he discovered a forgotten sixpence. He immediately put his coat on again, walked back the several miles, and drank his money's worth before resuming work.¹⁹⁵

In discussing the working class areas of Liverpool and Manchester, Escott commented on the excessive number of public houses which were to be found in the area. "Twenty years ago the habit of drinking during business hours was comparatively unknown at Liverpool; today it is so common as scarcely to attract attention, and certainly not to carry with it an adequate degree of stigma."¹⁹⁶ The large number of drinking bars and the extent to

¹⁹⁵England, p. 188.
¹⁹⁶Ibid., p. 95.
which they were patronized by the workers was one feature of the
time which Escott found most disturbing, as he placed much of the
blame for the wretchedness of the workers on their passion for
drink. To him the idea that drink led to crime and that it was an
important cause of pauperism was so obvious as to be beyond the
need of proof. He quoted Redgrave, a factory inspector, in a
report of October, 1877, who said of the workers that, "the
offspring are reared with the bottle and drugged by the mother.
No doubt factory physique is not good, but it is made worse by
factory associations of vice and iniquity."

Escott's attitude, like the Parliamentary Blue Books of which he made good use, was
hard headed and realistic.

Escott was certainly not being either puritanical or
fanatical in his denunciation of drunkeness among the workers. All
observers of the scene were impressed with the harm this vice did
to the working classes; to the men themselves as well as their
family, for financial, moral, and physical reasons. An article in
the Edinburgh Review stated the problem well.

In the Black Country drunkeness is the direct cause of
nine-tenths of all the crimes that are committed. Many
a man who in his sober moments is reasonable, industrious,

\footnote{Ibid., p. 59.}
docile, and kind, is changed by drink into something worse than a wild beast; he quarrels with his equals, insults his superiors, and maltreats his family.¹⁹⁸

This was not only a moral problem, it was also a political hindrance to the workers in their attempt to gain the franchise, since the excess of drunkeness among them was used as an argument against granting them the vote, as was done by Robert Lowe in his notorious speech, in which he implied that the lower classes were impulsive, unreflecting, violent people who were often drunk and therefore unworthy of being granted the franchise.¹⁹⁹

The problem of drunkeness could be solved, according to Escott, only by educating the worker to his own true self-interest, as well as by the creation among them of a public feeling unfavorable to the vice. There were other measures, however, which might be used to alleviate the vice to some extent. Public drinking houses, especially in the country, had been allowed to multiply far beyond the needs of the community. The police, with whom Escott had discussed this problem, had further stated that those drinking houses licensed in accordance with the new system (where beer could not be legally drunk on the premises) were the worst of all. Escott urged that the licensing power should be


given to the magistrate, but that if it continued to reside with
the Excise, the standard of the qualifications in the rate-payers
who signed the petition for the license might be raised till it was
something like a guarantee of character. Until this problem
was solved, there would be little use in giving the ballot to the
workers. There was one group within the working classes, who even
when sober, apparently would never be worthy of receiving the
ballot. These were the people Escott called the drones of the
hive; that element of the working classes incapable of self-

improvement.

These were people who were unable to help themselves. They were without spirit, without energy, and without ambition.
Escott was convinced that this part of the working classes was
beyond any real help; this was the congenital class of beggars and
paupers who were always making demands upon society for support.
This was a conclusion which was not as harsh as it might sound,
since Charles Booth in his famous report on the poor of London
pointed out that it was this part of the lower classes who acted as
a drag upon the deserving poor. Escott admitted that this class of
parasite existed in all classes of society, but that while in the
upper or middle classes they merely sponged off their relatives,
the lower classes were badly hurt by these parasites.

200 England, p. 204.
Of this latter group Escott in common with most Victorians had little good to say. He was convinced that the possibility of relief from the rates and especially of out-door relief entered as much into the calculation of thousands of workers who were about to marry, or even get drunk, as would the possession of stock in a railway to a professional man.

The grasping spirit of this part of the working classes was illustrated in the story of the audacious tramp, who finding himself in a casual ward, at once insisted upon having a bath. When he was refused, he replied in the following manner. "Refer to Consolidated Order So-and-So and you will see I must have my not water bath. Give me your name please; I shall write to the Local Government Board." But Escott did not think that all paupers were unwilling to work, although he was sure that to some the poor rates acted as a stimulant to illicit intercourse and to an early and improvident marriage. There were, however, the very young, the very old, and the women who could no longer support themselves. There were also those who were quite capable of work and skillful work too, but when hard times came, they had little choice but to go to the work-house. Escott had visited a number of work-houses in which the deserving poor had made up a large part of the population and they aroused his just indignation.

---

201 Ibid., p. 188.
The workhouse was described with an almost Dickensian flavor as a gaunt, graceless, red-brick building, where, "everything about it seems to tell of leanness, depression, misery and want."\(^{202}\)

He found the operations of the workhouse a very said sight with the officials assuming all applicants were habitual tramps or loafers and showing very little charity in their dealings. No distinction was made between the deserving poor; the drunken and the sober, the honest, and the dishonest were all treated alike. Most workhouses gave their inmates a worse time than many a prisoner in a convict jail. Escott showed least pity for the children in the workhouse, since here at least they would receive better care than in the streets or alleys; a decent trade would be taught them and they would soon be back in the world able to hold their own. His heart was wrung however, by the old and infirm who were as blameless for their plight as the children, but had no hopes of ever leaving the workhouses.

The true light in which to regard this throng, whose members walk on by twos and threes, is as representing the failures of our civilization. They ought to have saved a competence, or to be supported by grateful children, or to be spending their residue of days in climes where the struggle for existence is less keen than in England. At any rate, they ought not to be here.\(^{203}\)


\(^{203}\) Ibid., p. 203.
The fact remained, that they were there, in England, if not always in the workhouse and the question always remained; what should be done with them? Outdoor relief was one answer if it could be ensured that the money would be given only for the succor of the severest destitution in cases where the receiving party was not at fault. Theoretically, Escott admitted it should be possible to determine this through adequate investigation; in fact, this was practically impossible. The bureaucratic machinery was too small and clumsy to attempt such an investigation and few Victorians would admit the need for a greatly enlarged bureaucracy. Escott gave the figure of 710,175 paupers in England or rather more than three percent of the total population, with the entire cost coming to £7,400,034. To Escott this was an intolerable cost.

The only answer was the substitution of organized but private charity for the mechanical, Benthamite charity of the states, especially as shown in the Poor Law. It was Christian charity alone, which could ever hope to alleviate the condition of the unfortunates among the workers; both in terms of giving the upper classes a greater sense of responsibility, and in helping the lower classes to accept their lot in life.

Escott quoted an article in the Spectator for June 15, 1878, which said, "that the secret of the comparative placidity of

\[204\text{Ibid., p. 207.}\]
the English peasantry, and the little success that socialism . . . has attained among them is that the Poor Law has kept absolute starvation at least from the door of the poorest class . . . " 205

While admitting the force of this argument that the Poor Law had helped prevent revolution, he nonetheless contended that it was inherently an evil, since it was basically a socialist measure. Regarding the controversy between outdoor relief and indoor relief, Escott took a moderate position held by many Victorians, although he felt that, "in process of time there does not seem any reason why, assuming that the remedial agencies of pauperism are properly developed, outdoor relief should not become a dead letter." 206

Just how this was to be done was not made clear by Escott as he now demanded a rigid system of personal supervision in which the merits of every case would be closely investigated. Apparently he had forgotten that a few pages earlier, he had said this was almost impossible. One can excuse Escott by remembering this was an almost insoluble problem which took the resources of the twentieth century welfare state to solve.

The only true answer to poverty was not only the philanthropy of the upper classes, but also self help on the part of the working classes themselves to better their conditions. The

205 Ibid., p. 213.
206 Ibid., p. 214.
friendly societies were a means of self help, since thrift was, "a virtue . . . pre-eminently inculcated by example. The English working classes are singularly quick to catch up to the ways of their social superiors."\textsuperscript{207} Here Escott saw the need for state interference. In France, for example, there existed facilities for the investments of small sums in public securities or land, while in England no such opportunities for the worker existed. In some country districts, he pointed out, the working man had to walk a considerable distance to deposit his money in some savings bank. There was little inducement for him to save and every inducement for him to spend wastefully. Escott found it strange that the state which interfered in so much of the working man's life refused to interfere to the extent of registering friendly societies. It interfered through factory legislation, child labor laws, pure food laws, and sale of liquor laws. Since the state protected the middle classes by registering life insurance companies, why not protect the lower classes by insuring their societies?

There was, of course, only one way in which the lower classes could learn to help themselves, and this was through education. This lack of education on the part of the workers was one of the keys to understanding the attitude of the intellectuals to them. Speaking of the workers, Bagehot had said that they had

\textsuperscript{207}Ibid., p. 219.
no time to improve themselves as they labored the entire day through, and that their early education was so small that in most cases it was dubious whether, even if they had much time, they could use it to any good purpose. Escott recognized this same problem when he wrote that, "we have in England ... a vast multitude of voters who are yet to be educated at all." Matthew Arnold believed that a liberal system of education carried on by a school system modeled on the Prussian structure would give the masses the culture which would enable them to rule with justice and order. Almost all members of the upper classes agreed that a greater education would be necessary before the working classes would be fit to rule in England. Even Low, who fought bitterly against the broadening provisions of the 1867 Reform Bill, was forced to admit, after it was passed, that England had to educate its new masters.

In Escott's view, the Education Act of 1870 was revolutionary, since it struck at English freedom and heavily increased the rates of taxes. More importantly, the Education Act of 1870 was completely novel in its effects, unlike the Reform Bill of 1867 which merely elaborated on a previous act. One of these

208 Bagehot, p. 15.
209 Pillars, p. xxxi.
effects was the attempt to cure the worker of his disregard for the economies of life which in turn was caused by his ignorance. This could be partially remedied by an intensive schooling, and in fact, Escott wanted the schools to provide a completely practical education. Escott found that too often the teaching lacked any direct reference to the occupations in which the children would engage after they left school. It did not give them a greater interest in their work and, therefore, did not make them better workmen. Here Escott disagreed with Arnold who saw education in a much broader sense; as a means of bringing sweetness and light into the lives of the lower classes. He also disagreed with Arnold's idea of an organized system of state inspection to rectify unsatisfactory teaching. Escott asked, "does it follow that the cure is fresh legislation and more school inspection?"  

This dislike of state interference in the schools was shown by another Victorian in a leading article in the *Economist* in 1851, which took great pride in pointing out the accomplishments of the various private and local schools which had been established and that, "Lancasterian schools, National schools, model schools, and normal schools are all the product of this century."  

The article also took pride in the fact that Parliament had voted


211 *Pike*, p. 42.
£150,000 a year for education, "liberally and ungrudgingly." Arnold would have found this attitude typical of the school of pharisees whom he criticized so bitterly and so often. Also Arnold saw these sectarian and local schools as worse than useless since they often merely inculcated the children with a sectarian bias and did little to make them useful citizens.

To Escott, the meaning of the Education Act was plain. It guaranteed to every subject a certain amount of education, although it did not guarantee any higher education such as would be found in a university. He was sure, however, that supplemented as the system was by private enterprise, any boy of talent and ambition would rise to the top.

It is likely that Escott was making the careful distinction between the different working classes; those who were willing and able to learn much abstract theory (these would rise to the top), and the great majority to whom school could be nothing more than a preparation for a trade. Escott's interest in education is plain to see. In his England, the Index for Education, Educational Act, and Education Office takes up most of a page. It also contains a cross index inviting the reader to, "See also School Boards, Universities, and Schools." Escott was involved in education on several levels in the early part of his career, not only with the upper and middle classes, but also with the lower classes; he thus took a professional interest in it.
For the most part, however, the political education of the masses must, he felt, depend upon their statesmen.

The statesman who for the while is in possession of their confidence, molds and educates them by the very means which he uses to secure their confidence. It is here, that the real danger arises, that the need for political sobriety is most apparent.212

This agreed with what Walter Bagehot called the third function of Parliament which was its teaching function. "The leading statesmen in a free country have great momentary power. They settle the conversation of mankind."213 But until some real education was granted the masses, most intellectuals would agree with Disraeli's character who said to Coningsby that the people were not yet ready to govern England since they could not even govern themselves.

... I for one have no faith in the remedial qualities of a government carried on by a neglected democracy, who, for three centuries have received no education. What prospect does it offer us of those high principles of conduct with which we have fed our imagination and strengthened our will?214

Escott questioned whether the middle classes would recognize their duty to provide a free education for all of the children of England? He also hinted at the problem which would trouble England for many years to come; whether the compromise

---

212England, p. 18.
213Bagehot, p. 18.
between public secular and private denominational schools would last? This was a question which the Radicals under Joseph Chamberlain had already raised.

Although Escott felt that religion and secular education should not be mixed, he nonetheless saw religious feeling as a sure guide to morality. After all, was it possible to raise children, especially of the lower orders, so as to make them truthful, moral, law abiding, good subjects of the state, without teaching them that there was a God who judged mankind? Escott answered his own question in the negative. Religious training of some sort was an absolute prerequisite for ensuring order in the state.

While admitting that atheistical doctrines, especially those of the positivists, held a great charm and might be embraced by those of a strong character, he dismissed their importance to the masses by declaring them to have no practical force. The opinions of John Morley and Harriet Martineau ignored the categorical imperative of supernatural hopes and fears which was essential to the masses. An institution, such as the Church of England was useful in its everyday activities, especially in the country districts. In his opinion the future of the Church was in the hands of the clergy as the people had not shown themselves

anxious to dispense with the organized assistance of a national clergy. 216

Escott seemed to believe that religion was necessary for the same reason that the crown was necessary; not for any real supernatural power it represented, but because it was necessary for the stability of the state. Escott took note of Matthew Arnold's position on the Church of England, in which Arnold stated that the Church should be a center of religious sweetness, light and culture against the attacks of political nonconformists. To Arnold, the Church was a national society for the diffusion of goodness. Escott pointed out that the two essentials of the Church in attaining its end were Christianity and the Bible and then, rather skeptically asked in what sense Arnold could be said to accept either of them. 217 Escott made it plain that he thought that Arnold's conception of the Bible and Christianity, and consequently the Church was much too vague and broad to have any effect on the masses. Arnold's version of religion was very open to satire or parody as was done by W. H. Mallock in one of the most popular works written in the late 1870's, The New Republic. Though the speaker in the following passage was named Mr. Luke, he was readily identifiable as Matthew Arnold.

216 Ibid., p. 21.
217 Ibid., p. 459.
... religion in any civilized, any reasonable, any
sweet sense, can never be found except embodied in
action; that it is in fact, nothing but right action,
pointed, winged as it were--by right emotion, by a
glow, an aspiration--an aspiration towards God... not
of course that petulant Pedant of the theologians--
that irritable angry Father, with the very uncertain
temper... 218

Escott considered himself a practical man, and the
religious ideas of Arnold, no matter how beautiful or profound
they might be, could never seem anything but ludicrous to the
masses; thus Escott rejected them. Escott would agree much more
readily with Disraeli who had one of his characters claim that
man, by his very nature, was made to adore and obey. If man was
no longer provided with something to worship outside of himself,
he would be guided by his own passions and create his own
institutions. 219 Men such as Disraeli and Escott felt a great
preference for the institutions of the past; they also felt that
it was impossible to rule without the use of institutions of some
sort. The masses needed something more tangible and traditional
than either the vague "aspirations" of an Arnold, or the hard,
mechanical machine of a Bentham.

There has been an attempt to reconstruct society on a
basis of material motives and calculations. It has
failed under any circumstances; its failure in an

and Welford, 1878), p. 286.

219 Disraeli, p. 222.
ancient and densely populated kingdom was inevitable ... Even Mormon counts more votaries than Bentham.\textsuperscript{220}

It was not a pragmatic attitude alone which accounts for Escott's respect for old English institutions; it was also a deep need for a stable element to which he can cling in those days of change and turmoil when nothing seemed secure.

If religion and education had not yet made all of the working classes capable of self-government, how could this be done? The question of just what part of the working classes deserved to be enfranchised was an important one to men such as Bagehot, who asserted that it had once been held that there existed a class of intelligent artisans who could form sound opinions on national matters, and that for that purpose elaborate schemes of electoral enfranchisement had been framed. Most of the intellectuals admitted the existence of a large part of the working classes which was incapable of anything except drunkenness and riots; the intellectuals were usually ready to bar this part of the working classes from any share in the managing of national political affairs.

Unfortunately, the Reform Act of 1867 had enfranchised unskilled labor along with skilled labor, thus presenting the vote to a class which needed guidance even more than the others. To

\textsuperscript{220} Ibid.
Bagehot, the important question was, "Will they submit to it, will they defer in the same way to wealth and rank?" Escott in answering this question took pains to point out that even the bottom order of the working classes possessed at least one virtue; a habit of obedience to the government. He attempted to prove this point by describing a badly dressed worker he met as he was walking through Hyde Park, who praised the idea of an English Republic while bitterly condemning the monarchy. But, asked Escott, where was he a few hours ago? This terrible republican, Escott assured the reader, was wildly cheering the Queen along with the rest of her loyal subjects. This was typical of the attitude of most so-called democrats and republicans in England. Escott thought it a factor of incalculable importance that almost all working men, however much they might grumble, possessed this basic loyalty to the monarchy.

It was this belief in the loyalty of the working class to the monarchy and the upper classes which accounts for the confidence with which Escott anticipated the coming to power of the workers, and with which he stated his faith in the good sense, the good feeling, and most important, what he calls "the political docility of the English working man." Bagehot brought out the

---

221 Bagehot, p. 15.
223 Ibid., p. 142.
same point when he wrote that the mass of English people yielded a deference not to their rulers as such, but to what Bagehot called the theatrical show of society. "Courts and aristocracies have the great quality which rules the multitude."\textsuperscript{224} The English government, headed by the crown, was an intelligible government which could be understood by the masses. No other kind could be understood by them and, therefore, Bagehot implied, no other kind could exist in England at that time.

Escott's ideas on the monarchy were a little different from Bagehot's but only in emphasis. Everyone knew, Escott wrote, that while in name a monarchy, the government of England was really a republic. It was the idea of monarchy rather than the ruler herself who dominated the English mind.

Escott foresaw a long reign of power for the institution of the monarchy, since he looked upon the English court as the most important social institution in England. The monarch would always be an important factor as long as society and politics interacted with each other. If the upper classes looked out after the interests of the workers, there was no real need to fear revolution. If, on the other hand, the upper classes became heedless of the cries of the multitudes, then the threat of revolution in Escott's eyes would be that any attempt to take

\textsuperscript{224} Bagehot, p. 287.
active steps against the working classes would be the prelude to
the union of these loosely coherent sections of the workers into
one solid mass which could prove dangerous to the state. This
paralleled some of Bagehot's own writing on the subject, where he
expressed his own fear at the political combination of the
working classes. This could be done as the result of the raising
of and continual agitation of certain questions which were of real
emotional or practical significance to the workers. If this
occurred, the upper class would be faced with a dangerous dilemma:
should they give in to the worker's demands, or should they take
the risks of facing and defying the workers.225

If they gave in they would have established a dangerous
precedent, while if they proved stubborn, the crisis would come to
a head. This fear of the combination of the working men taking
over the control of the state legally was one which was shared by
John Stuart Mill, who felt that rule by an ignorant majority might
be dangerous to human freedom as was the rule by any upper class or
monarchy. To Mill, the growth of social egalitarianism and mass
culture foreshadowed an oppressive uniformity of opinion and action.
The people themselves could be the greatest enemy to human
freedom.226 This would be a great disaster to Bagehot who looked

225 Bagehot, p. 21.

226 Max Lerner, ed., Essential Works of John Stuart Mill
upon the political combination of the lower classes as such and for their own object, as an evil of the first magnitude. It would have meant the supremacy of ignorance over instruction and of numbers over knowledge.\footnote{Bagehot, p. 21.} This desire to restrict the franchise and to dole it out sparingly was based upon no selfish desire to oppress the workers, but was motivated by fear that these workers themselves might be guilty of a far worse oppression than any practiced by their former rulers.

It was when observing the workings of the caucus that many intellectuals in England found their worst fears realized, since it was in the caucus that the workers had apparently combined for political ends. Escott described it in the following manner:

Every parliamentary borough is divided into a certain number of municipal wards. In each of these wards a meeting of all the members of the party is annually convened... The electors so brought together choose, first, their representatives to the general committee... second a smaller number... to the executive committee, ... and lastly, a ward committee... which selects the candidates and controls the policy of the party in the ward at municipal contests.\footnote{England, p. 343.}

Escott approved the caucus which was not surprising as this was Joseph Chamberlain's most important political weapon. While admitting that the caucus implied the subordination of the individual to the will of the majority, Escott contended that this
was simply a reflection of the principle of association. The caucus, as Escott rationalized it, was an association of ratepayers to secure representatives who would be in accord with their view, and who would represent their interests in Parliament.

He disposed of the objections made by its enemies that the caucus tended to pass into the hands of the political bosses by pointing out that this objection assumed that citizens would not follow the proceedings closely. On the contrary, Escott believed, a great growth in political maturity had been continuing for some years, and he saw no reason to believe that this would change. To the objection that the caucus would override public opinion, Escott answered that the caucus did not manufacture public opinion, but expressed it. He agreed with Chamberlain's statement that the goal of the caucus was essentially democratic; it was to provide for the most perfect representation of the majority as was possible. For all of that, however, Escott had some qualms about the caucus since he was guiltily aware that it represented an organization which stood between the English people and the men they elected. Even worse, it was a non-English institution since it was originally born in the United States, and was not part of the great English tradition which Escott so revered. As it was too late to do anything about it now, one could only accept the
caucus as "a perhaps unwelcome, but certainly inevitable condition of a democratic age." 229

There were others who had even deeper forebodings about this new institution. One of them, Leonard Courtney, a leader writer for the *Times* and later a Liberal M. P., supported John Stuart Mill's plan for the minority representation through cumulative voting, while at the same time waging a strong fight against the caucus. In an article in the *Fortnightly* of June, 1876, he called for an ending of the party system. 230 The present system, according to Courtney, had turned Parliament into a chamber of mediocrities with no chance for a man of independent views. The most successful candidate was the man who had not troubled with anything beyond the program of his party. John Morley had also had early qualms about the caucus and had often discussed this question with Courtney, who eventually resigned office to fight Chamberlain on this question. When Morley finally made up his mind in favor of the caucus, it was because he believed that Parliament was a governing assembly (to Courtney, its main function was that of discussion), and because it was important to have a strong government. To Chamberlain, the caucus was a very effective means of gaining power, and he troubled himself little

229 Ibid., p. 346.

about the abstractions involved. One of the few times he did, occurred when he discovered that Morley had some sympathy with Courtney's schemes. Chamberlain wrote Morley:

What is the effect of this system on the voters? They will give their preferential votes as men give used postage stamps to the first asker . . . The result will surely be that even if the little rills of political thought are represented, the main current will be broken up and effaced.231

To Mill, these "little rills of political thought" of which Chamberlain spoke so contemptuously, were of prime importance; to Chamberlain they were obstructions which were to be eliminated in the interest of greater efficiency and power. For the present, Escott agreed with Chamberlain on the need for the caucus, but he was never an enthusiastic supporter of it, as he remembered Mill's and Bagehot's warnings against the dangers of the majority running wild with their new-found power. Mill had taken special pains to comment on the tyranny of the majority. Definition here was of prime importance and to Mill the will of the people meant the will of the most numerous, or even more likely, the most politically active part of the people who have succeeded in making themselves accepted by the majority. This part of the people, therefore, might desire to oppress the rest of the people, and to safeguard against this, special precautions were necessary.

231 Peter Fraser, Joseph Chamberlain (London: Cassell, 1966), p. 56.
It was in the caucus that the possibility of the union of the working classes in a political manner could most easily take place, and here that men such as Mill and Bagehot saw great peril. Escott saw no immediate danger of any serious combination of the working classes since he felt that the working man generally had a high opinion of his ruling classes.\(^{232}\) The same confidence was shown by Escott when he discussed the further extension of the franchise, writing, "the influences which leaven the masses are not democratic, but aristocratic . . . that admiration for rank seems almost innate in the English breast."\(^{233}\) A distinct safeguard for the social and political order was what he called the interfusion of classes with a unity of upward aspiration, whereby the subordinate classes took their tone from the classes above them. This turned the English nation into a democracy with definitely aristocratic tendencies. The English masses instinctively looked up to and imitated—or at least attempted to do so—the classes above them.\(^{234}\)

Thomas Carlyle also felt that the workers had a natural need for deferring to their superiors, though he probably would

\(^{232}\) England, p. 144.
\(^{233}\) Ibid., p. 409.
\(^{234}\) Ibid., p. 349.
have disagreed with Escott as to just who these superiors were. To Carlyle, man's entire nature centered around this need for gregariousness and leadership. Man, said Carlyle, would always obey a virtual aristocracy of the wise, the brave, and the better, no matter what the society may happen to be. This virtual aristocracy, said Carlyle, in turn develops into an aristocracy with its own laws and systems and attitudes. 235

Still another reason for this feeling of confidence which Escott manifested in the power of the workers was the variety of opinion and ambition in them. This through the medium of free speech and opinion enabled the laborers to work out their anger and frustration through free associations such as the Eleusis Club with its traditionally radical platform. The charter of this club demanded the following:

1. Universal adult suffrage.
2. Abolition of all hereditary privileges.
3. Complete separation of church and state.
4. Compulsory, free and secular education.
5. Payment of M. P.'s.
6. Payment of election expenses from local taxation.

The club took its stand upon the true principles of democracy and publicly declined in its printed declaration of the club's political faith to pledge its adherence to the existing

235 Carlyle, p. 233.
constitution in Church and State. Escott's comments upon this traditionally radical manifesto are revealing. Instead of being horrified by it, he claimed that it was a source of unmixed good. This was a fully flavored safety valve in which worker dissatisfaction either never advanced beyond the negative stage or, when it contained some justification, commanded the action of the legislature. To say that Escott approved of the club is not to say that he approved of their aims. Points one and two, especially, he would oppose. His explanation was that such propaganda as they might use may have sounded terrible, but it was really harmless. "Its promoters may speak daggers, but they use and desire to use none." Basically it was more of a social club than a political one. The fact that the aristocratic Sir Charles Dilke had ties with the club may have tempered Escott's judgment somewhat, as Dilke's leadership of the organization could be taken as an assurance that the Eleusis Club would always be kept under some sort of control.

Another set of organizations which had had an ameliorating effect upon the working classes were the labor unions, which had been responsible for a real improvement in good feeling between labor and capital. The trade unions were only an

236 England, p. 143.
237 Ibid., p. 143.
application of the principle of association which was part of human nature; they were also an improvement over the terroristic secret societies of the past, and they channelled possible destructive tendencies (especially class warfare) along more constructive lines. Arnold was less enthusiastic about these worker organizations, referring to them as a great working class power, distinct from the other classes, which tried through sheer size alone to rule the nation. Quantity, not quality, was their guide. Arnold ranked this part of the working classes with the Philistines, since it affirmed a class instinct, not its best self.\textsuperscript{238}

Escott, however, viewed the workers as taking an admirable, practical, and temperate view of the functions of the state. The worker did not deny the possession of rights to his employers, nor did the worker display any inclination to impose fancifully exacting duties upon the government for the enforcement of imagined rights. Best of all, the English worker was the least socialistic in the world, mainly because the upper classes had done well by him.

The worker was secure in the knowledge that the state was watching over his interests at all times. The satisfaction which the worker derived from this knowledge was proven by the

\textsuperscript{238}Arnold, p. 142.
fact that in all this time, no petitions had been offered to Parliament asking for any interference with the conditions of adult labor. This, to Escott was conclusive testimony of the soundness of the worker's views of the responsibilities of the state. \(^{239}\) Escott even questioned whether there was any more real need for further interference, since, thanks to the upper classes, the factory legislation had reached, "a culminating point of efficiency and comprehensiveness, beyond which in the present century it is not likely to advance." The working classes were basically sound and capable of self rule under the right sort of leadership, which could be provided only by the upper classes.

---

\(^{239}\) England, p. 349.
CHAPTER II

The Upper Classes

The upper classes were of crucial importance in determining the future of the nation, since only they could provide the stable base on which England could build its new industrial society. Escott viewed the aristocratic principle in politics as being in a process of transmission and felt assured that a considerable portion of the most important administrative work of the nation would be in the hands of men who had the ear of good society. The condition of the working classes was intrinsically bound up with the faith of the upper classes, since they had to provide the leadership of the nation. In English society at that time, Escott saw three rival elements; the aristocratic principle still formed the foundation of the social structure and had been strengthened by the plutocratic element, while the democratic principle asserted itself in the possibility of a career conditionally open to talents.

---

The interfusion between the aristocracy and the new wealth of the middle classes was one of the most important governing principles of the day. The process, according to Escott, had been one of leveling up. The increase of the wealth of the middle classes and their intermarriage with their social superiors had caused them to take on the attitudes of those classes above them.\textsuperscript{241} Bagehot although less optimistic about the future of the aristocracy said much the same thing about this leveling up attitude. The aristocracy, according to Bagehot, ought to be at the head of the plutocracy, since in all countries, new wealth is always ready to worship old wealth, if the possessors of this old wealth would only be wise enough to take advantage of this. The possessors of the new material distinctions would always worship the possessors of the immaterial distinctions. It would be folly, asserted Bagehot, for the aristocracy to ignore these important facts.\textsuperscript{242} Escott believed that the tendency in England was for the plutocracy to assume more and more of an aristocratic complexion, while the aristocracy was being perpetually recruited from men who rose by acquiring money through commerce and trade.

The typical country gentleman still sat in the House of Commons, but his interest was no longer in conflict with the

\textsuperscript{241} Ibid., p. 328.

\textsuperscript{242} Bagehot, pp. 26-7.
interest of the urban members of the House. The territorial nobles, the squires, the country landlords and other rural gentlemen have in many cases become involved in commerce, while the merchants of the city have themselves become country gentlemen. The reason for this latter development was obvious to Escott, since, "The possession of land is the guarantee of respectability, and the love of respectability and land is inveterate in our race."\(^{243}\)

The social position of England was formed by a blending of the plutocratic and aristocratic elements, usually in marriage. If this blending was not completely realized in one generation, it would come closer to perfection in the next, until the ideal was reached.\(^{244}\) There were two important reasons why this union between the Patriciate, as Escott called the aristocracy, and the upper middle classes took place. One was the Reform Bill of 1832 which warned the aristocracy that it could no longer rely on the advantages of birth alone, but must now come forth with a greater effort. This gave a great impetus to the aristocracy to enter new fields of enterprise or else re-enter old fields with greater energy and eagerness.

The second reason was the tradition of primogeniture in England which is the basis of the aristocracy. It was also one

\(^{243}\)England, p. 311.

\(^{244}\)Ibid., p. 311.
of the guarantees of the union between the upper and middle classes which has helped give England the domestic stability not found elsewhere. To Escott the chief fundamental fact of English society is the absence of a noblesse. Where in a country such as Austria, the aristocracy was bound together more or less remotely, the possibility of meeting a "doubtful person" was remote. Austrian society is as a consequence less stiff and constrained, since it always felt assured of its neighbor's antecedents. "In England where the antecedents of many of those who mingle in the best society are obscure . . . it is natural, and it is right that considerable caution should be used."245 This accounted for the shyness and reserve manifested by Englishmen since they were never really sure either of their position or that of their companions. This problem resulted in the present position of the principles of English society.

"Precedence," it is written in the book of Dod, "is not regulated by mere conventional arrangements; it is no fluctuating practice of fashionable life, the result of voluntary compacts of society; but on the contrary is part and parcel of the law of England."246

To Escott, as contradictory as the theories of social precedence may sound to the uninitiated, it was perfectly logical. Its theory was aristocratic theory, based upon personal rank; its logic was shown in the thorough application of the aristocratic

---

245 Ibid., p. 313.
246 Ibid., p. 314.
principle. With all of its absurdities, Escott accepted the basic principles of English society, probably basing his ideas on those expressed by Trollope's Duke of Omnium, who said that men's intellects were so various that it was impossible to realize the idea of equality, while the attempts made to reach it had made the word odious to people in England. "Equality would be a heaven if we could attain it . . . its perfection is unattainable." 247

These aristocratic ideals were, of course, held by Disraeli. In his *Lord George Bentinck*, he wrote that England was the only important European community that was still governed by an aristocratic principle, "as the aristocracy of England absorbed all aristocracies, and received every man in every order and every class who deferred to the principles of English society . . . ." 248

Not all of the aristocracy was capable, however, since both Disraeli and Escott regarded the Whig elements as representing a reactionary and dangerous party. These were men, who though born into positions, were incapable of realizing the dangers through which England was passing and did not give serious thought to the answers which had to be found. Escott's ideas of the Whigs were little different from those of Disraeli's character Coningsby, who saw them as attempting to establish a high, aristocratic republic.

---


of the Venetian sort in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Coningsby went on to say, "the Whigs are worn out . . . Conservatism is a sham and Radicalism is a pollution." Throughout Disraeli's book this same theme was pursued through the use of Coningsby.249

Escott's views on contemporary politics were colored by this view of history, which looked upon the history of England as a conflict between Monarch, Church, and People against the oligarchic rule of the Whigs. The most important reason for Escott's long antipathy to Gladstone was because of his, "social sympathy being in the main with the opulent and cultured Whigs." Escott consistently criticized Gladstone for his close association with this group in English politics.250

One might also assume from earlier pages of this paper that there were some personal reasons for Escott's strong dislike of the G.O.M. With the Liberal Party under the control of the Whigs, there was little comfort to be found with the Conservatives who were led by another old enemy of Escott's, Lord Salisbury. Under Salisbury's leadership, Escott feared that the once highly successful Conservative Party would fall to complete defeat. Lord Salisbury possessed two major faults in Escott's eyes; he had been an enemy to Disraeli and he had vied with Gladstone in pandering to Demos, who represented mob rule to Escott.251

249 Disraeli, p. 244.
250 Society, p. 169.
251 Ibid., p. 233.
There was little leadership to be found in the person of the Queen. Although Escott publicly paid great respect to the Queen's name in his writings, and sincerely did have admiration for the institution of the monarchy, his anonymous writings showered her with a mild sort of ridicule, portraying her as a morbid old woman with kindly intentions but no real intelligence. Obviously no constructive leadership could be found here.

With Disraeli dead (by 1885), Gladstone in the hands of the Whigs, and the Monarch unable to take control of the situation, Escott would seem to have had only the Radicals under Joseph Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke. In Escott's opinion, Chamberlain was a man modeled very much after the style of William Pitt, the Elder. The Radical was prompt, resourceful, courageous, and a first rate man of business, while his colleague, Dilke, was characterized as a man possessing sanity of judgment and a true strength of will. Lord Randolph Churchill was still an unknown quantity, since he had yet to prove himself in office. As Escott had said; he can bowl but can he bat. Although possessed of real ability it was still too early to tell whether he possessed character and principle.

This analysis of Escott's view of the politicians in England in the 1880's is important because the political education of the workers depended upon the statesmen, or else, Escott believed, a revolutionary situation could easily develop. The
workers would give their allegiance to the present system only if "they are dealt with in a suitable manner and by rulers whom they instinctively trust."252 Certainly during those days of change and crisis, men were needed who could and would exercise firm authority.

Escott seemed to have some doubts as to whether the present leadership of Parliament still fitted this definition. It was perhaps this combination of fear and anger at the thought of the neglect of their duties, which impelled him to join the Radical faction and lash out at the upper classes.

The great fact in the political situation in England is that the party machinery, which underlay political life has broken down. Its machinery is exhausted or hopelessly out of repair. What was once a whole is split up into factions and sects, which reduce each other to paralysis and impotence. There is only one progressive principle at work ... It is Radicalism; it is the revolutionizing spirit.253

The aims of this radical and revolutionizing spirit were most clearly outlined in the Radical Programme which Escott helped to write. They were:

1. Free Primary Education.
2. Land Reform.
4. The Consolidation of Local Government.
5. The Creation of Nation-Councils for Irish and Scottish Affairs.

252 Ibid., p. 349.
253 Society, p. 247.
7. Manhood Suffrage.
8. Payment of M. P.'s.

Land Reform, which was never even close to being land nationalization, had as its purpose the multiplication of land ownership; a distinctly conservative principle as Escott correctly observed. He also called for the restitution of common land which had been illegally appropriated centuries ago. The project for land reform was at its most radical in calling for the transfer of indirect taxation to direct taxes. The more one studies this Radical Manifesto, the more one realizes that for all of its use of the terms Radical and revolutionary, it contained no threat to the upper classes. On the contrary it was a call to action for them to recognize their duties to the masses; to resume effective leadership of the people.

Disraeli in the "Young England" part of his career had always insisted that property had its duties as well as its rights, although these tenets were forgotten when the Manchester School of economics was at the height of its influence. Peter Fraser, in his biography of Joseph Chamberlain, pointed out that the Radical Programme had something of the backward-looking characteristics of "Young England."

Both Disraeli and Chamberlain had observed that under the feudal system, land ownership was linked with the provision of armies, but that this obligation had disappeared; it was shuffled
off to other forms of taxation. Private ownership, having taken the place of common rights of ownership, was too intermixed with the whole social system to be abolished, but, Chamberlain contended, it must still pay ransom for its security. To Fraser, this was the language of the eighteenth century Whig. Chamberlain, himself, realized this when he wrote to his Conservative friend, Lady Dorthey Nevill, he could not understand why her friends so violently opposed him. "Some day they will discover what a good friend I have been to them, and how I have saved them from the 'wrath to come'".

And yet for all of the traditional aspects of the Radical proposals, it seems doubtful if Escott could ever really feel at home with the Radicals since, as he put it, no one in England was really important unless he was looked upon as being respectable. Chamberlain, for all that he possessed a good bit of property, was still not considered quite respectable. Not a university man, not a member of the aristocracy nor the gentry, he was still an outsider trying to make his way, and Escott could never relax in his company.

The Radicals were playing a dangerous game. It was always dangerous to stir the masses; and once stirred, who could tell the excesses to which this would lead. One example of this

---

254 Fraser, p. 50.
255 Ibid., p. 51.
was shown in the Hyde Park riots in 1886, when the wealthiest section of London was frightened out of its wits. It was quite possible, even though Chamberlain was no revolutionary himself, that he might lose control of the masses, who after having their appetites whetted, might follow the lead of real revolutionaries. Hyde Park in 1886 might just be a taste of what could follow and Escott, even before 1886, was becoming disenchanted with the Radicals.

Society, however, was more than just the politicians in Parliament. He compared London society to a piece of patchwork; one may look at it from many different points of view, but basically it was one. The naïve may have thought that since there were Liberal Houses, Radical Houses, and Conservative Houses, that society was divided, but nothing could be further from the truth. These divisions were artificial and forced—Society was one in London.256

Political distinction was not a social distinction in London; and when the ruling classes felt that its interests were threatened, it united. Almost anything was allowed in this society so long as it did not penetrate into the outer world of the respectable middle classes. Society, according to Escott, was extremely sensitive to the opinions of its inferiors, both in the

256Society, p. 50.
middle and the lower classes. "The public opinion of society on itself may be defined as the inarticulate utterance of the apprehensions with which society is inspired by the actual or possible censure of the common herd." Society demanded that its members appear respectable to this outer world, and yet perversely enough they wanted to appear to be gaudily wicked; so long as no one took it very seriously, and so long as the unwritten laws of society were not broken, this was accepted. Escott held many of these people in contempt, calling them grown up men and women who laughed at the recital of imbecilities and were as easily entertained as children.

The golden rule of Society which every newcomer had to learn by heart, was never to be amusing since the social genius of the English was solemnity. Only a Disraeli could get away with being witty and clever.

But after all, Escott asked with mock seriousness, what can one expect from this race which was still laboriously endeavoring to emancipate itself from the fetters of puritanism? This was a cruel, cynical, and sick society. These people had no heart; only a silly sentimentality. To illustrate this point, Escott remembered how often he had met a woman who had left a very

---

257 Ibid., p. 99.

258 Ibid., p. 58.
sick son or husband in order to attend some party or ball. Escott, a middle-class journalist devoted to his family, was horrified by these manifestations of aristocratic heartlessness. Perhaps the story which horrified him most, was that of a Peer whose son had just died. While travelling on the train carrying the coffin, this Peer suddenly recalled that he had promised his friend, near whose estate they were travelling, that he would accompany him on a fox hunt. Immediately the Peer stopped the train, and left to keep his appointment, while the train bearing his son's coffin continued on its way.

It was true that England was a nation in which the workers and peasants had been trained to defer to the upper classes and where the lower orders had always trusted in the faith and judgment of the upper classes; but Escott felt that this all-important asset which the governing classes possessed was in danger of being wasted.

Escott was especially critical of the upper classes in the counties for neglecting their responsibilities to those below them. Escott's complaint was not that the Duke, Marquis, or Earl, who was the true ruler of the county, was a tyrant or amiable despot, but that this great magnate was sometimes not managing his affairs at all. Often, too often, he was an absentee landlord. With this example being set, the smaller peers all tended to neglect their own duties. This neglect was particularly evil,
since in most cases, titular power and governmental power went hand in hand. Escott's description of the hierarchy of rural England was much like that given in Trollope's novels with its world of careful gradations, but based on the Tory gentry whose estates covered much of the country. This was the class which, along with the clergy, effectively governed much of England outside of London and other metropolitan centers. It was this world which so impressed the parvenu Disraeli, who wrote in April, 1857 to Lady Londonderry of the visits he had been paying to some of his principle supporters in the north of the country. These were people who were comparatively unknown in London society, and yet lived in greater splendor than many German princes. It was evident to Disraeli that much of the real power of England still resided in rural areas.259

Just as the great lords tended to be great figures (such as Lord Lieutenants), the minor territorial rulers (such as the untitled squires), tended to be the magistrates, therefore, possessing ex officio powers, often as members of the local board of guardians. Their powers for good and evil were practically unlimited, but depended upon constant work and effort; something Escott feels may sometimes be lacking. At the heart of this social system sat the squire, who was described as kind and good to his

259 Bladke, p. 279.
tenants, although, "he has never been guilty of the indiscriminate 
bounty which is the parent of pauperism." Although careful not 
to encourage pauperism, the squire nevertheless gave money to the 
poor in a very philanthropic manner. His assistant Escott told 
the reader, was "a respectable gentleman who has no social ambition 
of an aggressive character." There was a trace of irony in 
Escott's description of what he called the ideal of English life 
which was the country parish under which there was absolute 
unanimity between the action and the will of representatives of the 
spiritual and temporal powers, "that is between the parson and 
the squire—and where the inhabitants acquiesce in the decision 
and policy of these as in the dispensation of a beneficent 
wisdom." 

Yet for all of Escott's irony at the expense of the Tory 
Squire, Escott still felt that this English village was a 
microcosm not only of the English nation, but also of the English 
Constitution. When this ideal was altered or disfigured, it was 
not the system, but clumsiness or error in its administration 
which was at fault. Although recent legislation had modified this 
relationship to some extent, its basic structure was still solid.

261 Ibid., p. 8.
262 Ibid., p. 10.
263 Ibid., p. 328.
Nonetheless it would be a mistake to pretend that the aristocracy had lost all of its power in the country; it was still there if the desire to use it were also present. The aristocratic families still had great influence in the formation of cabinets, and though the popular champions of Parliament were now elected by popular suffrage, it was still the aristocratic families who held power in the country. The masses could by 1885 secure as Prime Minister any statesman they wished and any national administration which was to exist, had to be composed of men approved of in the constituencies, but, Escott contended, this still left a great deal of margin in which the aristocracy could work. The Whigs in the Liberal Party and the Old Tories, both of whom were described as, "the illustrious depositories of aristocratic power," retained the balance of power in England.

No Prime Minister would put up important legislation without first consulting these men; at the same time no representative of the people would begin his career by defying the power of these great titular and territorial magnates. Negotiation, compromise, and mutual concession were the important elements in England's domestic politics. The balance of power had shifted somewhat, but the manner in which this power was exercised was not too different from earlier days in England.\textsuperscript{264} The

\textsuperscript{264}Ibid., p. 328.
English political genius lay not only in the ability to compromise, but also in its aptitude in discerning exactly where real power rested. No one group intended to push things to any extreme; the aristocratic camp because it had too much to lose, the democratic camp because it had too much to gain. The privileged classes in England had great powers and knew that if these powers were to be preserved, there had to exist a tacit understanding that whatever in the last resort the multitude willed, it must have.\textsuperscript{265} But the aristocracy would not submit tamely to the orders of this headless Demos. On the contrary, it still, although very subtly, gave the orders in society.

Escott saw the English Country House as the important converging point between English politics and English society. The reality of its power was great, although it, like the Constitution, was not officially recognized. To Escott, the English country house was the microcosm of the chief forces at work in modern society, as all sorts of personalities were to be found there. Although Society liked to be amused, it had a highly edifying taste for instruction as well, so it "invites to its houses professors who can be facetious when wanted, or philosophers who can either solve the riddle of the universe or assist in the guessing of a double acrostic."\textsuperscript{266} But there was a much more

\textsuperscript{265}Ibid., p. 328.
\textsuperscript{266}Ibid., p. 331.
important aspect to this, since the country house was where hard and fast class lines tended to be eroded. The guest list was all encompassing and all met on equal grounds. There were among them men of business as well as pleasure; members of all the professions were represented including Bishops and other members of the clergy. "Professors are found to relax a good deal of their professorial dignity . . . Highly scientific jurists, as well as natural philosophers, very often blend admirably." 267

In these surroundings, the political element filled a prominent place; after all there was no better place to tame a Radical than with an invitation to a fashionable Country House. It was here that the Conservatives made their political influence most felt. What the caucus was to the Liberals, the Church, the aristocracy, and the great landed interests of the country were to the Conservatives who used these levers in the Country House. Both parties had their clubs, but in the Carlton, the club of the Conservative Party, the titled chiefs of the Tories met the rank and file of their party on a common ground. With the Liberals, the rank and file, as well as many others who had no political views went to the Reform Club, while the party leaders went to Brooks. The Carlton was a purely "political-social" institution, the rendezvous and headquarters of the accredited representatives of

267 Ibid., p. 330.
the Conservatives. Here the Tory could associate with his inferiors with "that air of well-bred condescension, of frank, unsupercilious patronage, which answers so well with Englishmen in the bulk." Modern Conservatism, to Escott, was successful only so far as it allied the aristocratic and democratic elements, and here the Carlton Club atmosphere was perfect.268

The real political and social importance of these clubs lay in the fact that they helped to create public opinion and also consolidate a sense of union. But here as elsewhere in England, clubs as a connecting link between society and politics depended very largely upon the skill and tactics of their managers; if their tactics lacked any of the subtlety which was required, they would fail. Escott had some amusing comments on the nature of membership in a club. Denying the popular belief that men joined clubs in order to avoid the expense of eating in their own apartments, he pointed out that club living was much more expensive. What a good club did give its member was a very considerable degree of luxury and comfort. "For all practical purposes he is the inhabitant of a palace."269 Neither did one join a club in order to enjoy a great number of friends and acquaintances, since membership in a club did not carry the risk of personal friendship with any of the

268 Ibid., p. 337.
269 Ibid., p. 332.
members. He admitted, however, that in some clubs where there existed a less rigid set of rules, "it is not thought irregular for one member to address another of whom he knows nothing, if they happen to occupy contiguous chairs in the smoking room."\textsuperscript{270}

Escott had very little to say of the middle classes, but concentrated almost all of his attention upon the working classes and the upper classes. When he did write of the middle classes, he judged their professions by criterion which were communicated by the aristocracy. The degree of respect allotted to the different professions in England were based to a great extent upon aristocratic ideals. "Roughly . . . professions in England are valued according to their stability, their renumerativeness, their influence, and their recognition by the state."\textsuperscript{271} The merchant was contrasted with the stock broker as the example of a man with a stable business; as his house of business was practically a public institution with a long and honorable tradition behind it. There was no risk-taking in his profession, while a suspicion of precariousness attached itself to the stockbroker. A commonly held attitude was shown by Anthony Trollope in his portrayal of Lopez, who speculated in stock and married into a respectable middle-class family. Though not overtly dishonest, Lopez in his role of stock speculator, was obviously on the fringes of respectability.

\textsuperscript{270}Ibid., p. 331.
\textsuperscript{271}Ibid., p. 320.
The manner in which the middle classes received their money was crucial in determining their social standing. Escott admitted that all professional men received their payment from the public but he seemed to think it very distinctive that some of them received their money through a middleman, while others received their payment direct from their clients. Those who received their payment indirectly had greater social standing than the rest. For this reason the barrister had a superior social status than the solicitor. The degree of influence which the professional held over the public mind was equally important. None of the men in professions had the same power of appealing to the mind or the moral convictions which guide everyday life. In the respect the clergyman, the statesman, and the writer all stood on a much higher plane than the others. The state itself judged the professions according to these same standards, which Escott admitted might perhaps be "foolish prejudices and superstitions."\(^{272}\)

CHAPTER III

The Empire

Many of the middle classes as well as the aristocracy made their living through the empire in which Escott was very interested. In the late 1870's he wrote for a newspaper which was circulated in India, articles of which were published in his Pillars of the Empire. The empire was not only the newest of empires, but, Escott claimed, was the most justly and generously administered in the world. Where other countries had cruelly exploited their empire for their personal advantage, the exact opposite was true of England, which spent at least a million and a half pounds of sterling in supporting its vast empire. Even the twelve million pounds assigned on the Navy was spent mainly for the protection of that empire. In the case of India, he quoted Sir James Lubbock that, "no English laborer, no English taxpayer derives a penny of direct advantage, or pays a penny less towards the revenues of the country because we hold India."\footnote{Pillars, p. xv.}
Escott held that England ruled India for the good of the people of India and that if a plebiscite were held, the natives would record their preference for the rule of England above that of any other foreign power. Interestingly enough, he did not ask what would happen if the natives had had the chance to vote on independence, rather than a simple exchange of masters. As would be expected, however, the other side of the imperial argument was well represented by other Victorian writers. The Victorians were usually their own severest critics.

Sir Charles Dilke had written a very popular book entitled Greater Britain which was published in 1886 and which quickly went through five editions. Although he took great pride in English accomplishments, he was harsh on some aspects of British rule. John Stuart Mill had read the book and agreed with many of the criticisms of English rule in India, writing Dilke that the insolence of the English had become not only a disgrace, but also a danger to continued English dominion in India.\(^{274}\)

Sir John Seeley, who held the chair of Modern History at Cambridge, wrote an even more powerful book, The Expansion of England, which developed the imperialist idea even further. According to Seeley, England had accomplished a noble duty in governing India, since India was "of all countries that which is

\(^{274}\)Gwynn, p. 70.
least capable of evolving out of itself a stable government." To leave India now would result in terrible anarchy for the subcontinent and would be a great crime. Unlike Escott, Seeley had his doubts about England's civilizing mission in India, as he wondered whether or not England was not producing more harm than good with its rule in India.275

According to Escott, the importance of India and the other colonies to England lay in the fact that they served as an extremely important outlet for much of her capital and factory produce.

... it is quite certain that if our colonies were severed from the mother country, a great and profitable outlet for English capital would be closed. What is from one point of view an Imperial question, is thus from another an industrial and economical, and a social question ... ambitions cannot in all cases be gratified at home.276

As usual, Escott had his eyes fastened closely upon the dangers of class conflict. If, for example, India were to be cut off from England, Escott feared that the event would be full of political perils. The working classes might become dangerous with the depression which would undoubtedly hit England as a consequence, but the middle classes would also be hard hit, since, "Their marriageable daughters and their fairly intelligent and


276 Pillars, p. xxiv.
educated son" would have no chance at the military or civil career which Indian service now afforded them. At this point, Escott seemed to have forgotten his earlier claim that England ruled India as a humanitarian duty; he now found a number of reasons why England needed India for her own benefit.

Seeley also was cognizant of the great trade which had sprung up between India and England, but he saw no other advantages which England gained from the possession of that vast land. The empire, according to Seeley, was founded out of an empty ambition of conquest and partly out of a philathropic desire to end the evil mis-government in India. Even the one advantage of trade was purchased at the expense of a heavy dread of Russian and other complications. In spite of this, Seeley claimed that England had no choice but to remain in India as a solemn and unavoidable duty.

To Escott, however, India existed as a splendid testimony to the aggressive force of England's national arms, as a land in which there was a career open to the military adventurer. He denied, however, that England's imperialism was a mere, "spread-eaglism, braggadocio, menace, restless activity, an ever present passion of territorial aggressiveness." The true definition of

---

277 Ibid., p. xxiv.
278 Pillars, p. xxx.
imperialism as practiced by England was, "a resolute determination to retain and consolidate our foreign possessions, to allow of no encroachment upon them by aggressive powers, and to administer them, as far as may be done for the benefit and improvement of those who are already subject to us." 279

Escott took notice of the English speaking colonies which existed with an entirely different type of relationship from that of India to the mother country. He mentioned with approval the proposals for a federation of the English speaking countries (apparently including the United States of America) which would be self-governing in local affairs, but would have representation in some imperial council in London. He admitted that there were too many problems connected with this scheme to have hope for its immediate fruition; nevertheless, Escott pointed to recent history to prove that some sort of union was inevitable.

He took note of recent history which had revealed the unification of Italy, the German Empire, and the re-unification of the American Union. "The same influence can scarcely fail to make itself felt among the English-speaking race throughout the world." 280 These ideas were becoming popular at this time.

Disraeli's fascination with India, culminated in his bestowing the

279 Ibid., p. xxx.
title of Empress of India upon a pleased Queen, while his dispatch of Indian troops to the Mediterranean also reminded the English people that thought the Island itself might not have the men with which to fight the growing mass armies of the continent, England had vast resources overseas with which to redress the balance. As was so often true, Disraeli had no real philosophy of imperialism, but instead relied on his brilliant improvisation with which to bewilder a watching world.

Dilke, more than anyone else, popularized the idea of the union of the English speaking people, when he spoke of the race which was destined to overspread the world. In America, he pointed out that the people were being fused in an English mold. Throughout America, as well as the rest of the English speaking colonies, Dilke saw the making of what he called Greater Britain.  

Escott asked that certain steps be taken to cement the union of the colonies and the mother country. Distinguished colonists should be elevated to the peerage or made members of the Privy Council; important positions on the superior civil service should be open to them; Oxford and Cambridge should found scholarships and fellowships bearing colonial names for sons of the colonists; and there should be Australian and Canadian regiments as there were Irish and Highland regiments.  

---

281 Gwynn, p. 71.
possibly the Imperial League which had been founded in 1884 to prepare for the Jubilee of 1887 had started Escott's thoughts to turn more seriously towards the problems of the empire. Some of the league's members, such as Lord Roseberry, Froude, and W. E. Forster were men who were well known to Escott; there is little doubt that he discussed this question with many of them.

When Escott viewed the progress of the colonies which were English-speaking, he became optimistic. The colonists enjoyed blessings not available to Englishmen at home. The colonists enjoyed, for example, the consciousness of taking part in the formation of a new community, the sense of individual power, the open-air life, the vast areas open to occupation, and the enjoyment of plenty. Most important of all, there were prospects of advancement to wealth and influence.

The colonists were a superior breed compared to the Englishman who stayed at home in his dingy factory city or wretched farm. To Escott, this proved the truth of the popular conception of Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest, since the colonists represented the people who had the energy and courage to go overseas to improve their position. This was reflected in the more modern form of government enjoyed by the colonists, which seemed to presage the road over which England would one day travel.
There were signs of danger in this empire. The absence of any central direction in the control of the empire might plunge England at any moment into some sort of colonial war in which it had little interest and no warning. In trade the situation was even worse. England was a nation of free traders, yet England's colonists were the most bitter enemies of free trade. Although the empire had no imperial tariff, the colonies imposed protective duties on British exports so heavy as to be almost prohibitive. England was now faced with some hard decisions, since in order to survive in the European jungle of big armaments, England needed to draw upon larger resources than those contained in her island base alone.

"Free trade and international exhibitions," Escott wrote sarcastically, "have not brought the millenium appreciably nearer to mankind." By itself England could not maintain itself against the colossal powers of such giants as Germany and Russia. Organization on an imperial scale was the only means by which England could maintain her position as a major power, and Escott contended that it was for the statesman of the future to assist in the development of that imperial idea. Imperialism was not necessary for purposes of national defense alone, but also as an answer to the terrible problems associated with industrialization.

---

We have spoken of the excited prosperity of the years 1872-1874. . . since that period we had a still more protracted era of depression. The causes of it have also been numerous and various.²⁸⁴

Although this quote is from the chapter entitled, "Commercial and Financial England," which was written by J. Scott Henderson, for Escott's England, one can reasonably assume that Escott also was troubled by the cycles of depression which Henderson believed England to be undergoing.

This was in fact the beginning of the end of the Victorian Age. There would be no spectacular collapse or even steady decline, but England would no longer hold a monopoly over the commerce and industry of the world. New answers would have to be found for new problems. The failure in leadership which Escott thought he had detected in the upper classes, especially after the death of Disraeli, could be catastrophic.

Escott was cautious, apprehensive, and at times, fearful of the future, but basically he was optimistic. Although the potential for a revolutionary situation did exist, Escott did not think that this would ever explode. It was inconceivable that the upper classes would not respond to this new situation with new and great leadership. Escott had faith not only in the ability of the aristocracy to come back in strength, he also had a firm belief in the essential stability of the mass of Englishmen. Admitting

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 123.
that such innovations as the granting of household suffrage to the county voters would change the entire aspect of party politics, the organic structure of the country would not be changed.

This new majority would enable Liberal statesmen to proceed in a more daring spirit and to attempt bolder conceptions than they had yet attempted to do. While admitting that there were those who held that the latent revolutionary instincts of the English people would display themselves in the open and that a new order of subversive legislative enterprise would take place, he contended that, "household suffrage in counties would bring us no nearer to revolution than did the Reform Bill of 1832." Only a great national catastrophe such as the loss of a major war would lead to revolution. Concerning such a danger to the crown, Escott thought that it was not possible to conceive of the English monarchy perishing except amid a universal cataclysm. It was only as a result of such an event and not as a consequence of any, "national fit of political destruction, however deep or long, that the destruction of the monarchy can represent itself as a contingency that need be reckoned with." With all of its imperfections, the governing system had worked well for the masses and they realized it. What was true of education, was true of

\[285\textit{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 409.\]
\[286\textit{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 297.\]
labor, capital, poor laws, cooperation and other very important matters.

The system was not yet complete, the different duties to be performed by its component parts were not yet decided, the links between the different parts did not yet exist, but what was once a void was now filled by complex and successful machinery. The devices of the industrial society had been used to aid the workers; ultimately it would give them a much more meaningful life which would make them worthy to govern England. 287

Something of what we have done in the case of our manufacturing industries we have done in the case of education. We have economized force. The great machine for the improvement of humanity has at last been fairly put in motion . . . The masses in the country have had the means of self-elevation afforded them, and we know that there is springing up around us a new generation which will not be like its predecessors . . . 288

The forces of the new society which filled men such as Matthew Arnold with deep foreboding, produced confidence in the new generation for men such as T. H. S. Escott.

287 Ibid., p. 297.
288 Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

Escott's Final Years

After his partial recovery in 1894, Escott began writing again with the same energy he had displayed before. As previously mentioned in this paper, Escott wrote sixteen books from this period until his death in 1924, as well as hundreds of articles, some times as many as one a week, in the next thirty years. By this time, he not only wrote articles for The Fortnightly Review, but also The Quarterly Review, The Pall Mall Magazine, Chambers Journal, The New Century Review, Living Age, and others. He apparently held no editorships, and probably did no writing for any newspapers, since this would have required more work and a closer contact with people than Escott would have been capable of after his breakdown.

His most important book after 1894 was Social Transformations of the Victorian Age which was essentially a continuation of his England, although it was not nearly as
detailed as the earlier work. Nor did he claim to have travelled widely in preparing the work; instead it was based on general observations, complemented by the assistance of the highest experts in their different departments to whom Escott had access. Unlike England, this later work was not based upon personal visits to the actual scene, so that it lacked the vivid sense of reality and some of the insight with which England was filled. Escott had continued his reading, at least after 1894, and still maintained a voluminous correspondence with all classes. Some of the experts who aided him in the later work were Sir Henry Fowler, Henry Chaplin, Sir W. H. Russell, and Sir John Gorst. Escott was also in correspondence with the many friends he had made and still possessed in the industrial orders, due to his earlier work on England, who kept him in touch with the prevailing moods of their classes.

Of less importance in assessing Escott's thoughts were Personal Forces of the Period, which was a group of character studies of the eminent men of the time, his biography of Lord Randolph Churchill, and some of his other works. Use was also

---


made of a number of the articles which Escott wrote for the periodical press from 1894 to 1923.

Nearly twenty years after the publication of his first survey of England, Escott displayed a consistently optimistic attitude towards the nation of his day. He saw that, "a new generation has sprung up which is demonstrably better educated and more humanized than any of its predecessors."\(^{291}\) This improvement, especially in the life of the working man, was a constant theme of *Social Transformations*. His fear of the mob had also abated considerably as he asserted that the people of London, who once held the reputation of forming the most dangerous riots in Europe, were the best behaved and the least drunkest in Europe.\(^{292}\) A key factor in this optimism was the return of prosperity brought about by the increased foreign trade with the great markets of the world. This in turn brought about a great increase in employment, thus lowering much of the social tension.

Escott firmly believed that increased foreign trade led to economic prosperity and in turn to domestic tranquility. He pointed out that economic distress in England inevitably led to social disorder. The great prosperity of the late Victorian Age had spread through all of the classes of England as was shown in the example of railways which, like other inventions, had

\(^{291}\) *Social Transformations*, p. 152.

materially benefitted all of the people. This meant that the present economic condition of England was sound and long-lasting. That which was considered a luxury to the working classes a generation ago, was by the 1890's looked upon as an absolute necessity. The task which now awaited the upper orders was to develop further the intelligence and thrift of the masses.

If this work be carried to the point which may be expected from the progress made during the last half century, the condition of the national life in England cannot fail to improve more rapidly than anywhere else in the world.293

In an article entitled, "False Cant of our Social Decadence," Escott took issue with those who contended that England was nearing the end of the road as a great power. On the contrary, he was convinced of the moral superiority of his age over that of any other in history. Intellectually as well as materially, England was becoming greater with each year that passed.294 Escott was not the only Victorian to feel so keenly the present and future greatness of England near the turn of the century. Lord Salisbury, Queen Victoria's last Prime Minister, spoke in much the same sense at his Queen's funeral, when he said few nations have passed through their trials so peaceably, so easily, and with so much success as the English. Every change had

293 Ibid., p. 304.

been accompanied with constant prosperity for the island as well as the empire, while there had been no friction to endanger the peace and stability of civil life.\textsuperscript{295} Elinor Glyn, the writer, in watching the Queen's funeral procession was struck by more sombre thoughts and wondered whether England's greatness could possibly continue much longer. She wrote that, "I felt that I was witnessing the funeral procession of England's greatness and glory."\textsuperscript{296}

Some years earlier, even Kipling the champion of England's greatness, wrote "Recessional," which while praising the empire, also hinted at its demise. The \textit{Times} leader of July 17, 1897 in commenting on the poem probably reflected the sentiment of the majority of Englishmen. The \textit{Times} admitted that England was sometimes in danger of falling into boastful pride and patronizingly thanked Kipling for the warning. Nonetheless, the \textit{Times} claimed that the people of England had a strong and sincere conviction of moral responsibility which would prevent them from neglecting their duty. Other criticisms of the English were more specific, such as that by Major-General Frederick Maurice that sixty percent of the English were physically unfit for military service, which so aroused the nation that the government formed an


Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration to look into the charge. The report which appeared in August, 1904 seemed to bear out the General's claim, since it revealed that though the urban population of England had increased from fifty percent of the population to seventy-seven percent, there had been no corresponding increase in meeting their needs through any increase of social services. 297

As a result the English poor were worse off than ever before; infant mortality, for example, had actually increased between 1850 and 1900. 298 Escott had not apparently read these reports or did not agree with them as he always stressed the superiority of the present age over that of the past; more importantly, Escott was convinced that this superiority would continually increase. To highlight the optimistic point of view he held, he entitled one chapter in his Social Transformations, "From An Untaught Generation to Free Schools," pointing out that the illiteracy of a semibarbarous generation had almost disappeared as educational facilities were not available to all the people. His criticism of the education of the workers was the same as before; it was still too theoretical and not sufficiently practical. The teachers were urged to use more common sense in

297 Hynes, p. 23.
298 Hynes, p. 23.
instructing these children as not every workingman's son had the ability or the desire to go to an institution of higher learning. Since most of them would stay in the workshop or on the farm, only those of pre-eminent abilities should be given any theoretical learning.

One minor complaint Escott voiced was that because of the flood of cheap literature, many of the lower orders, instead of using their new found literacy to educate themselves further, were reading nothing but trash. These were relatively minor complaints, however, as Escott admitted himself immensely pleased with the educational success of this new generation of Englishmen. The question he had earlier asked in his England, as to whether the nation would recognize its duty to educate it new masters, had been answered in a successful manner.

In deciding whether Escott's conclusion that England had become an educated nation was correct, one must remember that not all groups were satisfied with the Education Act of 1891, while the Education Act of 1902 would stir up such a hornet's nest that Lloyd-George advocated the closing of elementary schools in Wales as a protest against the hated act.299 Most informed persons agreed that much improvement was necessary in the schools, since attendance was often lax, the quality of the teachers was

sometimes quite low, and there was little supervision from the top.

On the whole, however, the statistics proved Escott to be correct when he saw a great improvement in educating the workers. The percentage of persons unable to sign their name in the marriage register had fallen between 1873 and 1893 from 18.8 percent to 5 percent for the men and from 25.4 percent to 5.7 percent of the women. Escott did have some cause for his complacent satisfaction as he wrote, "The establishment of Free Trade, the removal of religious disabilities, the national prosperity . . . and the practical application of services left the English people without a single ground of complaint."301

Although much of this optimism rested upon the basis of material gain, Escott viewed changes which were potentially even more important. There had come about in the last few years a new emphasis in politics. Every institution had to defend itself in terms of its usefulness in the preservation of civil or religious liberty; the rights of property, the Church, the House of Lords, and the Crown itself could be maintained only so far as the people felt a need for them.302

302 Churchill, p. 159.
The ruling classes had to give an account of their stewardship to the people in this new democratic epoch. The influence of individuals counted for little today, since, "The... influence of a democratic epoch has reduced to a uniformity of unheroic proportions those who represent in public places, the enterprise, the occupations, the achievement, or the society of the day." Tradition was still respected and revered, but new questions were being asked and answers were demanded of those who were in power. But though the people were by 1900 the ultimate power in the land, it was still the upper classes who exercised real power. Escott was sure that in the practical details of life, the system by which they got their way was beyond any real danger. Fortunately, this power exercised by the upper classes had been used most wisely, as the patrician landowners of England had recognized the opportunity of removing the remnant of the traditional estrangement between themselves and their countrymen.

One of the elements which had helped to remove this estrangement was the more generous policy shown to the poor and advocated by Escott in the 1880's.

... the administrative methods of the new councils have very generally shown a reaction from the more stringent and less sympathetic policy of the old Board.
of guardians. Thus the workhouse test, is far less often . . . the condition of poor relief. 306

This sort of attitude as well as the passing of acts such as the County Councils had removed much of the traditional hostility between the classes which existed fifty years ago. In fact this class hostility seemed to Escott so much a part of the past, that he advised those who would like to learn of it, to read Disraeli's Sybil, which was "the most vivid and not the least trustworthy," work on that period of English history. 307 Sybil, as was shown by his frequent references to the book, as well as to others of the social novels of Disraeli, had an immense influence upon Escott. His view of the working classes was shown through the prism of Disraeli's novels. Perhaps the most famous passage in Sybil, and typical of the type of writing which influenced Escott was the description of the infant miners in England.

Disraeli wrote of the punishment which philosophical philanthropy had invented for the direst criminals, and which those criminals considered more terrible than death itself. Hour after hour elapsed in the coal mines and all that reminded the infant miner of the outside world and all he had left behind him was the passage of the coal wagons. The plight of the adults was equally horrible as Disraeli described the sixteen-hour day spent hauling

306 Ibid., p. 189.
307 Ibid., p. 113.
tubs of coal up subterranean roads under inhuman conditions.\footnote{308} This was a thing of the past by the time \textit{Sybil} was published in 1845, and certainly by the time Escott was writing in the 1890's, but the feeling of indignation was still warm in Escott. Today even the poorest villagers, claimed Escott in 1897 found it possible to live in a clean and sometimes comfortable fashion. The points in the Great Charter, the demands for which led to the wild rioting and bloodshed described in \textit{Sybil}, had been quietly conceded to the lower classes by their betters. Escott looked upon this as a key factor in the reconciliation between the classes. Beyond question, the most far-reaching and important change brought about in country life was the presence of the elective element in the process of nominating the magistracy. This had given the villagers the opportunity to take some part in the control of their own area.

Universal Suffrage was a reality almost everywhere in England so that, "The authority of the Manor House has been divested of the superstitious sanctions with which its lord had once been clothed."\footnote{309} Even so, while it was true that the farmer's attitude towards the squire and magistrate had lost


\footnote{309}Social Transformations, p. 78.
something of its old deference, the basis of the social system was still the same. The county councils, which were the expression of the fusion of the classes rather than the cause, had not brought about the revolution and the Red Republic any more than any of the earlier Parliamentary reforms had done.\textsuperscript{310} Escott was careful to point out that most of these reforms were reversions to the past; that they all had some precedent in the tradition of England. In many respects they were revivals of the authority which the freeholders had held in the old Manor Courts.\textsuperscript{311} Of another reform he wrote, "The Corporation Act of 1838 and the County Council Act of 1884 were the same. Both marked a return . . . rather than a sudden introduction of a new measure."\textsuperscript{312}

This idea of the restoration of the ancient rights of the lower classes was found in \textit{Coningsby}, where Disraeli had one of his characters contend that the peasantry was an ancient, legal and recognized order with the same right to their own privileges as any order above them, though for centuries these rights had been usurped.\textsuperscript{313} Although Escott often talked of social fusion, he was not referring to any sort of classless society. What he did mean

\textsuperscript{310} Ibid., p. 98.
\textsuperscript{311} Ibid., p. 90.
\textsuperscript{312} Ibid., p. 93.
was that the classes should, while remaining distinct and separate, band more closely together in order to fulfill their various duties. The major duties of the upper classes was to lead the rest of the nation; work which was being successfully attempted by people such as the sister of Joseph Chamberlain, though here Escott had a word of caution for those who would seek to uplift the worker. "Above all let him never offer his hand to shake." Although the upper class reformer may think that the handshake may gratify the workingman by showing his lack of false pride, no greater mistake could be made as the workingman will simply feel himself to be in a false position.

Although Socialism was a rising force at this period, Escott did not at any time feel any great danger from it. The only time the word Socialist was mentioned in Social Transformations, it was used as a joke and the Socialist was shown up as a ridiculous and ineffectual person. Escott's lack of fear of Socialism was shared by many people including some of the writers for Punch, one of whom parodied Socialist doctrine in 1908 in the following manner.

Reader, tell me, if you know,
What, on earth, is Socialism.
Is it--men have told me so--
Some preposterous abysm,
Into which we all may drop--
With the criminals on top?315

314Social Transformations, p. 130.
315Graves, p. 129.
And another verse asked:

Do you think it can be true
That the death of competition
Guarantees for me and you
Sinless Edens--new edition?
Or was Stuart Mill correct--
Will there be some grave defect?\textsuperscript{316}

A cartoon in \textit{Punch} of the same period revealed the Socialist agitator as a stupid and uneducated person who while desirous of sharing other people's wealth, would not share his own good.\textsuperscript{317}

If one realizes that many of the middle classes had the same sort of image of the Socialist as a rather bungling but not really vicious person, one can understand Escott's lack of concern for either their activities or their philosophy. To Escott the Socialist was either some one of the upper classes who was simply acting a confused role to placate his humanitarian sympathies or a disgruntled worker who was unable to lead any movement since the workers distrusted him. This distrust was based on the relative prosperity Escott found in the economy as well as the English workers dislike of any ideology, especially one with foreign connotations.

Both \textit{Punch} and Escott thought quite differently about the Socialist menace in the 1890's when during the Hyde Park riots,

\textsuperscript{316}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{317}Ibid., p. 128.
Punch had referred to them as the "cowardly Catalines of the gutter," and as "blatant trumpeters of sedition" in a tremendous tirade against socialism. Though more restrained, Escott had also been clearly frightened by the menace of the Socialists. By the turn of the century, however, Escott may have thought that the great mass of trade unionists were possessed of middle class attitudes. Certainly, like many others of the middle classes, Escott was unaware of the militant new unionism of the 1890's which resulted in the miners' lock-out in 1893 and the engineers' strike of 1897.

It cannot be denied that Escott revealed a degree of blindness in his survey of England in 1897 as well as in his later works. In a number of strikes, pitched battles occurred between rival groups of workers as well as between workers and police, while in other instances, the troops had to be called in as at Featherstone, leaving behind a lasting bitterness. Escott rarely paid any attention to the great poverty which still existed, the bitterness between the classes, as well as England's decline, which in a relative sense at least had already begun. He was convinced that any faults in the structure of England would be rectified by the upper classes who still made the important decisions.

Charitable work on the part of the upper and middle classes would

---

318 Graves, p. 76.
alleviate much of the poverty which still existed among the lower classes, since Escott apparently felt that poverty where it existed was due either to unusual conditions, such as in a local shutdown or physical illness or else due to lack of desire. He was aware of the activities of Hull House in Chicago and Andover House in Boston and wrote with approval of the work of Horace Mayhew and young Arnold Toynbee, but he seemed to consider them as humanitarian activities intended to give charity to the poor, or to impose middle class values upon the workers.

Such governmental action as was necessary to provide for the needy or unfortunate would be minor and provided by the upper classes in government. The greatest difficulty he saw in the future was that "Seasons of transitions such as the present always generate a certain amount of personal friction or social displacement." Nonetheless as the working classes adjusted to their new condition in the order of things, tranquility would return. It was in helping the workers adjust to this new series of transitions that the upper orders would be most helpful.

Of great importance for the coming years with their difficult periods of transition was the fact that in spite of all of the recent reforms, the offices of local government were still filled by the same gentry class that had filled them more than

---

319 Social Transformations, p. 166.
twenty years ago. These were the same classes, but different families now held these positions; men with backgrounds as bakers, solicitors, and brewers. The great changes in the composition of the families holding these positions had come about because of the constantly increasing cost of modern life and the constant buying up of the estates of small country gentlemen by prosperous traders.

Escott, in an article in Chambers Magazine entitled "Memoirs of a Submerged Class," described how the English squire had overbuilt and overspent himself into decline. He also spoke disparagingly of Balfour, then Prime Minister, who preferred the company of millionaires to that of honest but poor squires. Escott did not woefully bemoan the coming of the new men, since basically they were no different from those whom they displaced. In speaking of the Jewish financiers, for example, he wrote:

The Rothschilds themselves are only one of several Semitic families that have shown this characteristic facility in adapting themselves to the social condition fortune has given them, and in assimilating the prejudices and habits of the better-to-do classes of their adopted country.

This was not because class consciousness was so weak but because it was so strong. The personnel of the class may have changed, but the distinctness of the class remained, since the old

---

321 Personal Forces, pp. 177-8.
classes had been able to communicate to the new entries, the
tastes, pursuits, habits, and most important of all, the
institutions upon which the ideas of class rested.

Although the method by which men reached the upper
classes may have differed, the ideas of the class structure itself
remained the same. There was, however, some change in attitude
and to Escott, one of the most important of the transformations
which had taken place in England in the last century was that the
conventional distinctions between the aristocracies of birth and
money, and of manufacture and land had disappeared.322 It was in
the English public schools that most of the fusion between the
aristocracies of birth and money had taken place. Here the young
plutocrat's son mixed with the son of the Duke and learned
manners and bearing; eventually both began to appreciate the
better points of the other. This was the sort of relationship
delineated by Disraeli; young Coningsby, the aristocrat, becoming
close friends with Millbank the son of the manufacturer. The
completeness of the union between the old aristocracy and the new,
rising middle class, each bringing its own virtues and strengths
into the union, accounted for much of the stability which Escott
saw in his late Victorian English society.323

323 Personal Forces, p. 180.
The Jews (for whom Escott had a great respect and admiration) were used as an example of this fusion. They had integrated well into the upper reaches of English society; one of them even climbing to the post of Prime Minister. So long as the wealthy Jews sent their sons to English universities and schools, they would not be looked upon as aliens or foreigners by the native English, or at the very least, their differences would not be very noticeable. This concentration of wealth and titles was accepted and welcomed by all classes of the British public.\footnote{Ibid.}

England's aristocracy (which was both old and new) was composed of men who had earned their way not through their titles alone, but through ability as well. The titled and untitled aristocracy had always represented ability and intelligence, asserted Escott, perhaps even more than antiquity of descent.\footnote{Social Transformations, p. 15.}

There were some Englishmen who were not as pleased as Escott over this development. His friend John Morley had spoken angrily of "an assembly composed of patricians who had nothing but their birth and rich merchants who have nothing but their money." Morley feared that because of the high cost of elections, the people would always choose the richest candidate; eventually England would have a Parliament of millionaires.\footnote{Hist, p. 143.}
Escott would not agree with Morley's gloomy prognostications; instead he agreed with the answer Disraeli's Coningsby received, when he asked where the natural aristocracy was to be found in the England of his day and was told, "Among those men who a nation recognizes as the most eminent for virtue, talents, and property, and, birth and standing in the land." The old and true aristocracy of England may have been merged with the rising plutocracy, but it also renewed faith with the most important element in England by the turn of the century--the democracy. If the civic association of the nobility with the new democracy were not popular, Escott claimed, it could not exist.

Problems of great importance still existed in England, even with this fusion of classes, and now, more than ever, it was the responsibility of the upper classes through Parliamentary means to help solve them. Escott recognized that the advance of civilization created new problems which must be rectified by new legislation. The state must interfere on behalf of the poor in order to provide for them a better life. Not that the national wealth had to be divided equally between all of the classes, but that the workers had to possess a greater share of that wealth than they now possessed.

In order to provide these various services for the people, the function of the legislature itself was now changing. 

---

327 Disraeli, p. 158.
More and more Escott saw that the tendency was for the constitution to call into existence a government to undertake a specific task of legislation whose scope was defined by the individual who possessed for the moment the national self confidence. In discussing this changing role of Parliament, Escott enumerated the two most important factors which had helped bring this about. One was the existence of the democratic electorate, for whose votes both parties had to bid; the other was the rising importance of the penny press which had begun to perform the duty of educating and stimulating the country which once had been done by Parliament. This had resulted in the diminuation of Parliamentary prestige. Escott had contempt for much of the new sensationalist press writing that: "In these days of music halls, skirt dancing, and divorce agencies brought home to the business and to the bosom of the community, the precise newspaper sensation wanted can never fail." Escott claimed that this had begun in the 1880's, probably having Stead in mind, but by 1896 Alfred Harmsworth, later Lord Northcliffe, had begun operations and had already reached a very large circulation figure.

A public which would receive its information and education from Steads and Northcliffes, instead of from

---

328 Social Transformations, p. 247.

Parliament, would not be a well informed public in Escott's eyes. This was one of the most disturbing features of the new age, as even the Daily News, which had not been above a touch of sensationalism itself, criticized the vulgarity, sensationalism and moral menace of this cheap journalism.330

In studying Escott's attitudes towards the members of Parliament, one becomes aware that by the 1890's he had made some significant shifts in judgment. Like his former leader, Joseph Chamberlain, Escott had gone over to the Conservative Party, probably feeling that his real affinity was with the progressive Conservatives who took a more organic and paternalistic view of society than the Gladstonian Liberals, headed by Lord Roseberry. The loss of Chamberlain combined with Gladstone's concentration upon Home Rule for Ireland, had helped take much of the drive for reform away from the Liberals.

Escott's turn to the Conservatives was influenced by many factors such as his personal dislike for Gladstone and his abhorrence of Home Rule, but as Escott admitted, he was always at heart a Conservative. By 1895, Lord Randolph Churchill was dead and Escott had forgotten his earlier suspicions about his principles. Escott now saw Churchill as the direct heir to his

great hero, Disraeli, the man who had introduced progressive principles into the dying Conservative Party. In his first book written after his illness, Escott discussed these principles in his Lord Randolph Churchill, which was described as a personal and political monograph and was dedicated to the Duke of Marlborough.

The heart of Churchill's policy was to be found in the two articles which he had written for The Fortnightly Review entitled, "The State of the Opposition," in November, 1882 and "Eliza's Mantle," for May, 1882 from which Escott quoted approvingly and at length in his biography of Lord Randolph. It was from these articles that Escott received many of his own principles of government.

To Lord Randolph, the leaders of the Conservatives were drawn from the aristocracy and lived in an atmosphere of class privilege from which they disregarded the opinions of the common people whom they secretly despised and feared. At best the working classes were looked upon as dangerous allies. The strength of the Conservative leadership came from the landlords who pressured their tenants into voting for them, while in the boroughs, they used influence, social prestige and, all too often, outright bribery to give them sufficient seats to win for them faction the command of the House of Commons. After the Representation of the

People Act had swept away the possibility of their ever again obtaining a majority by manipulating the boroughs, the aristocratic chiefs abandoned the cause in 1868 in despair.

The great Conservative victory of 1874 came as a surprise to the aristocrats when the people put themselves on the Conservative side and a Tory administration came into control. As soon as this success became known, the leaders who had despaired rushed back to take office, forming a cabinet made up almost entirely of peers and county members, while those who had really fought the campaign were forgotten. Meanwhile, Disraeli who was the architect of Conservative victory devoted himself to foreign policy and the interests of the British Empire.

Domestic affairs and the leadership of the party was left to the "old gang," who were too blind to realize what had occurred. The distinction between county and borough members was revived with the latter being made to feel inferior even though they were now the main source of strength to the party. In legislation the interests of the boroughs were subordinated to those of the counties and acts such as the Merchant's Shipping Bill were abandoned to make way for acts more to the liking of the old leadership such as the Agricultural Holdings Act. The desires of the landowners were preferred to those of the people. As a result the Conservative Party declined and met a stunning defeat at the hands of Gladstone in the 1880 General Election. Even
after this defeat the Conservatives, with the exception of Lord Beaconsfield, learned nothing from the debacle. The ring by which the party was governed was as exclusive as ever; decisions were made by small groups of men and then communicated to the rest of the membership. No attempt was even being made to repair former errors, since the leadership would not acknowledge that errors had ever been made. In individual measures, such as the opposition to the Arrears Bill of 1882, the leaders were more cognizant of inconvenience to the Irish landlord, than of injustice to the British subject.

No Conservative organization which could rival the Liberal organization existed, as the Conservatives were managed by a committee in London, whose names were unknown to the rest of the party while the National Union of Constitutional Associations had no funds and was practically powerless. Although the individual associations were growing in number, they were becoming less and less powerful as there was little connection between them and any central organization. When some of the leadership did condescend to visit these local associations, the people were, "compelled to witness an idle resuscitation of a dead Tory Cabinet, to listen to a vain defense of its policy and virtues."

All the while the weary audience knew there was no essential difference between

\[332\] Churchill, p. 169.
the Tory and the Liberal, except that the Liberal would at least drop a few words of sympathy for the working man. The Tory would not give the working man even this much satisfaction. Gladstone with all of his many faults always exhibited a passionate sympathy with the masses and thus secured their allegiance for his party. The Conservative leaders, on the other hand, had no idea of the thoughts and feelings of the lower orders and did not care to try and find out.

Disraeli, now in his old age, was powerless to stop this rot in the party he had once invigorated, but he was not ignorant of it, and more than once he, according to Lord Randolph, had told his friends that an entire reorganization of the party was necessary. This was ignored so that when Disraeli died, the party had taken no steps to improve its position. Intrigue within the party was so rife, that for important months the party could not even agree on a leader; neither faction would give in to the other. Part of the reason for the lack of a rapid succession to the leadership was due to Disraeli who had chosen aristocrats of no ability for most of the posts, while other posts had been filled by able men from the middle-classes. His lieutenants, therefore, were in no position to fill his shoes, while Sir Stafford Northcote, the leader of the Conservatives in the House in 1883, was entirely unable to match Gladstone in Parliament. Whatever else happened, Lord Randolph asserted, the Conservative Party had
to be united under firm determined leadership. Few who read Churchill's articles in the *Fortnightly* doubted that he meant himself. Escott spent most of a chapter quoting from this manifesto of Churchill's asserting that by 1884, Lord Randolph had become "the idol of the Conservative democracy who Mr. Disraeli had called into existence, and whom he himself was summoning into full activity."\(^{333}\)

Escott felt that on the whole Churchill had been unfairly treated by the London press which was closely controlled by the Conservative leadership. But here Escott agreed with men such as Gladstone, Chamberlain, and Bright, that "London opinion is always wrong; the masses in the country are never wrong."\(^{334}\) Although Churchill did not enjoy the admiration of the upper circles of London, he had popularity in the provinces. In the years of his prime, Churchill had been responsible for whatever successes the Tories had won, while the leadership gave him scant credit for it, and in fact treated him as if he had been a "rebellious schoolboy or a crude academic doctrinaire."\(^{335}\)

Escott admitted that Churchill's speeches were often violent and occasionally intemperate; he was often guilty of personal invective, but, contended Escott, ample parallel could be

\(^{333}\)Ibid., p. 191.

\(^{334}\)Ibid., p. 192.

\(^{335}\)Ibid., p. 193.
found in the slashing attacks by Disraeli against Robert Peel. Besides Churchill was well aware that he held the future of the Conservative Party in his hand; the situation was desperate and desperate measures were required.

When in the summer of 1884 the National Union of Conservative Associations met at Sheffield, Battle was joined between Churchill and the leadership of the Conservatives. On the field Churchill was hopelessly overmatched since his popular support was not represented at this Association. A little later Churchill made known his strength when he was chosen president of the Tory delegates assembled from the boroughs and counties of the United Kingdom. Escott outlined the rest of Churchill's career stressing the appeal which he made to the masses as well as the antagonisms Lord Randolph had developed among the leaders of his party. Escott summed up his life by stating that Churchill had been far in advance of his time; he alone had realized the key elements in modern politics. "That confidence in the moderation, common sense, as well as patriotism of Englishmen, must be the keystone in Conservative statesmanship."336 Conservative leaders had to show themselves possessed with a love of popular liberty in its broadest sense. Long before Churchill died, his political creed as defined in the Sheffield propaganda of 1884 had been

\[336\] Ibid., p. 393.
accepted as essential doctrines by the Conservative Party.  

Escott's analysis of Churchill's career is more important as indicating Escott's outlook and philosophy than as an outright biography. Lacking access to the pertinent records, and being circumscribed by his respect for his former friend, Escott was unable to go into much detail about some of the more painful episodes of his life. Churchill's opportunistic character, his frequent demagogy, the nature of his resignation from the government, as well as his hideous end are all glossed over by Escott, who wrote what reads much like an official biography. The importance of the work, apart from the aspects of his life of which Escott had personal knowledge, lies in its being the first work which helped to create the Churchill legend. Escott was convinced that Lord Randolph had a firm consistent philosophy by which the Tory Party could be rebuilt and led to victory. Unfortunately, it is doubtful that any such philosophy existed; Churchill, at his best a brilliant tactician, was most concerned with achieving the leadership of the Conservative Party rather than in imposing any particular philosophy. Most of Churchill's modern biographers agree that he had evolved no logical or doctrinaire political system; on the contrary Churchill rarely followed any argument to the end, being most concerned to seize whatever suited his immediate purpose.

337 Ibid.
Both Disraeli and Churchill had left behind them just enough material so that their disciples, of whom Escott was one, could build up some sort of satisfying doctrine. What they left behind in the form of novels, speeches, articles, etc. was vague enough so that almost anything could be made, although in actual practice it was rarely followed when in power. The myth of Tory democracy was powerful enough to keep the confidence of the party intact during the years when out of power and helped to retain the loyalty of a substantial part of the electorate. In actual fact, the real power of the Conservatives was based upon much more mundane and material factors than the novels and speeches of Disraeli and Churchill and both men realized it. Nevertheless Escott's attitudes towards the men in power were heavily influenced by the myth he himself had been instrumental in creating, as was revealed in his writings on Lord Salisbury.

When writing about Salisbury in the 1880's, Escott had condemned him for his hatred of Disraeli and for pandering to the wishes of the masses, but by 1898 Escott's evaluation of the noble Marquis was completely different. Salisbury, Escott now believed, was full of practical sympathy for the needs of the working classes, even to the extent of supporting legislation for increasing the opportunities for them to make their power felt at General Elections.338

338 Personal Forces, pp. 28-9.
Escott claimed that Salisbury while writing for The Standard (for part of that period at the same time as Escott) had come under the influence of Voltaire who modified his views of democracy to a considerable extent. Lord Salisbury's attitude was characterized as quite different from that of other nobles who looked down upon and distrusted their inferiors. Rather Salisbury had the attitude of an intellectual and literary critic who exercised his right to test the value of popular traditions in politics before embodying them in his creed.339 Randolph Churchill had exercised a great influence upon Salisbury by impressing upon him the importance of two great ideas. One was the evil wrought by the use of party titles and names which did not correspond any longer to present political realities. The other was the desirability of extending self-government to every aspect of national life.340 This was Escott's own attitude, since as early as 1885 Escott had been writing that the moderate politicians of England, regardless of their parties and factions, had to combine to provide safe and constructive leadership; if this were not done, the mob under the leadership of demagogues and charlatans might endanger the social structure.

Escott saw the destruction of parties and their partisanship as being a guiding principle in Churchill's life; a

339 Ibid., p. 29.
340 Ibid., p. 31.
principle which was close to fruition in Salisbury's coalition, since the Marquis, in Escott's eyes had no great love for Parliamentary rule. He may like J. A. Froude, "have inclined to the belief that the country and the empire have exhausted the blessings of Parliamentary and representative rule."\textsuperscript{341} In answer to complaints that Conservative principles had been surrendered, Escott answered for Salisbury that since the rule of the people of England had become supreme, these principles had been forgotten. This was the time of expediency and compromise and if Salisbury and his friends used their power for the good of England, Escott could see no just cause of complaint. Though Escott betrayed some sarcasm in the last remark (quite possibly a last flicker of his old hostility), Escott made it plain that the Marquis was the politician most able and most worthy to guide England in his day. Salisbury, according to Escott, had inherited from Disraeli his "faculty for exciting the personal interest of all classes in himself."\textsuperscript{342}

Some had criticized Lord Salisbury for not possessing intellectual convictions in the guidance of the country, but Escott defended him by reminding his critics that these were not needed in England in political affairs. Something more loose and accommodating was necessary for the day to day working of the

\textsuperscript{341}\textsuperscript{Ibid.}, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{342}\textsuperscript{Ibid.}, p. 17.
state. Escott, like Walter Bagehot, valued common sense and a certain understanding of human nature as of more importance than any consistent doctrine. "So too thought, in such spirit acted, Benjamin Disraeli. So thinks, so acts his erstwhile restive and complaining colleague, but now loyally disciplined follower."\textsuperscript{343}

Thanks to Salisbury, as well as to Disraeli, the Conservatives had become the popular party and were, "the most elastic, eclectic, all embracing, all enduring organization known in our public life."\textsuperscript{344} While Escott now praised Lord Salisbury as England's finest statesman, Escott had found another Cecil upon whom to pour forth his scorn. Arthur James Balfour, according to Escott, had a great deal of Scotch shrewdness veneered by English urbanity, but outside of theology or metaphysics, he was little troubled by principle.\textsuperscript{345}

Although possessed of great intelligence and an unusual charm, "It is doubtful whether Mr. Arthur Balfour possesses a heart. Such an organ might interfere with the winning finish of his parliamentary pose."\textsuperscript{346} Balfour sat in Disraeli's seat but had no faith in the principles which motivated Disraeli nor did he take either pride or pleasure in his work. Like his uncle,

\textsuperscript{343} Ibid., p. 17.
\textsuperscript{344} Ibid., p. 32.
\textsuperscript{346} Ibid., p. 86.
Balfour had lost his faith in the necessity for a Parliament and found the entire situation ludicrous in the extreme. Part of the reason for Escott's dislike for the younger Cecil might have been contained in the suspicion that Balfour, a former member of the "fourth party," might have betrayed Churchill. Salisbury at least had been an open enemy.

The second most powerful man in the country, thought not fully a member of the Conservative Party, was Joseph Chamberlain. Escott approved of his resignation from the Liberal Party feeling that his evolution into a Conservative was inevitable, and quoted approvingly from a Tory's characterization of Chamberlain as a man who had once been much impressed with "democratic flummery" but who had no real sympathy with the Radical Cobdenites. The Cobdenites were called as "hard as Manchester paving-stones," while Chamberlain was a man with mild republican leanings.347

Escott also pointed out that Chamberlain's Radicalism largely "originated in feelings the most alive to aristocracy of any."348 Strangely enough, Escott felt that Chamberlain's Radicalism came from a youthful association with the son of the poet Thomas Hood. Captivated by the boyish brilliance of his young friend, Chamberlain, according to Escott, caught his Radicalism as he might have caught the measles.349

---

347 Social Transformations, p. 75.
348 Personal Forces, p. 76.
349 Ibid.
Similar to Chamberlain's conversion to Conservatism had been that of Lord Lytton, whose life Escott had written in 1910. Lytton's Liberalism, according to Escott, had always been national and not democratic; after his conversion, he had in his Caxtons presented the chief articles of his public faith in the form of a narrative. These involved the consolidation of the colonial empire, and the maintenance on high ground of England's imperial power. Chamberlain's break with Gladstone was for much the same reason. Just as Lytton had fought against Peel and his Whig allies, Chamberlain fought against Gladstone, Peel's disciple, and his Whig allies. Escott's attitude towards the Whigs even after the passage of many years was still one of consistent hostility.

In discussing his one time associate, Sir Charles Dilke, Escott may surprise the reader in three ways. First Escott never alluded to the scandal itself. Secondly, he wrote as though he still believed that Dilke had an important political future ahead of him. Third he seemed to assume the continuance of a close political partnership between Dilke and Chamberlain. Of course, feelings of delicacy not to mention friendship may account for points one and two. Of both Dilke and Chamberlain, Escott wrote that they had reverted to what he called the old Radicalism which he identified with Cromwell rather than Cobden and Bright. Both

Dilke and Chamberlain preferred the sword and the Empire to what Escott called contemptuously, "the well-meant but ineffectual instruments of commercial treaties and international exhibitions." Neither of the two had apostasized from any earlier convictions but had merely illustrated the inevitable laws of political developments.

Gladstone was still regarded with a feeling of warm dislike, since he had never understood or appreciated the social fusion which had been taking place during his own lifetime nearly as well as had Disraeli. What Escott called the New Conservatism, started by Disraeli and carried on by Churchill, was much too cosmopolitan and novel to ever endear itself to Gladstone, who was as old fashioned in social tastes as he was tenacious in his official views.

Nevertheless, the final illness of Gladstone moved Escott to write of his fine personal qualities, culminating in a description of him as a great and good man. The reader may feel, however, that this eulogy of Gladstone was merely the customary tribute one paid a dead opponent; certainly one never found any other reference to Gladstone as a great and good man.

The Whigs, most of whom had left the Liberal Party, were blamed for the present weakness of the Liberals. If they had

---

351 *Personal Forces*, p. 82.
only shown social wisdom or combined sympathetic insight into human nature with prevision in politics, the Liberals would have had a greater chance for victory.353 Towards Lord Roseberry, the present leader of the Liberal Party, Escott revealed a feeling of mild contempt, writing that this young Lord lacked a most important ingredient in his character; discipline. Roseberry, although possessed of great gifts, was a pampered pet of fortune. No help could be sought from the men around him, since "his judgment of men has not been calculated to inspire unbounded confidence."354 Perhaps, Escott speculated, Roseberry was simply in the wrong party.

The real leadership of the Liberal Party was to be found not in Lord Roseberry, who was vain rather than ambitious, but in Sir William Harcourt who was, "incomparably the ablest man of mature standing the Liberals have." Sir William was not only the most commanding figure in the active forces of the Liberal Party of 1898, but also its greatest; he alone was the indispensible force preventing the disintegration of the Party.355

As Escott had prophesied in the 1880's, the monarchy had continued to grow in influence and power. The Queen, although too old to be able to rule effectively, was loved and honored. The future King, then the Prince of Wales, was described as the

354Ibid., p. 60.
355Ibid., p. 103.
best of English politicians in foreign affairs, and in the
effective exercise of the art, one of the best diplomats in the
world. Escott's praise of the Prince seems rather extreme in
describing him as, "not only the first gentleman in England, but
to a great extent also the head of every department of our complex
social polity." 356 Escott compared the divisions of politics,
sport, art, etc. to some European power whose representatives were
accredited to foreign courts. They were best completed in their
organization in society by their recognition in his official
capacity by the Prince and their reception into his circles of
personal friends.

One of the aspects of English life over which the
Prince of Wales presided was the Church of England. As the son
of an Anglican clergyman, Escott was always deeply interested
and well informed in the affairs of the Church; as the companion
of Joseph Chamberlain, the representative of the Dissenters, he
was connected with the affairs of the Dissenters, while his
friendship with men such as John Morley acquainted him with the
thinking of atheistic and positivist philosophy. By the 1890's
Escott had drawn much closer to the church of his birth, possibly
because of his illness which may have made him more reflective.
Here as elsewhere, Escott felt that things had improved, since,
"so far from the combined forces of Radicalism, Dissent,

infidelity, and Romanism having prevailed still further appreciably to weaken that Church as a national organization, the very opposite has happened."357

To Escott the second half of the nineteenth century had been an unbroken series of religious revivals in which the visits of the two Americans, Dwight L. Moody and I. D. Sankey had been especially important. Their trips to England in 1873-75, 1881-84 and 1891-92 popularized their Gospel Hymns and Moody's colloquial sermons, although many respectable Victorians had been shocked by their version of American Christianity.

Moody's translation of the Bible into the American vernacular as well as his sensationalist prayer meetings met with both praise and criticism, but their influence spread widely as was evidenced by Disraeli's calling Plimsoll a "Moody and Sankey in politics," and feeling sure that all would understand the connotation. Vanity Fair wrote that Moody had, "every cause to be satisfied with the amenability of the English to American methods."358 Escott, always intensely pro-American, probably felt that though at times vulgar and common, the visits of Moody and Sankey had helped renew the interest in religion among the working classes and the fact that they spoke to their audiences in

---

their own vernacular helped them to understand the message. Escott was always more interested in results than in the forms.

Escott also took note of the work of the Churches on the social questions of the day. Here Cardinal Manning was held up as an example to be emulated by the Protestant Churches, with his work on various commissions to aid the poor as well as his success in labor negotiations. His praise of Manning was tinged with that distrust that Escott always felt for the Catholic Church. Although the Catholics under Manning and organizations such as the Salvation Army were making inroads among the poor, the Church of England and the more respectable bodies of Protestant Churches were still strong.

Strangely at a time when many of the working classes were falling away from organized religion, Escott was convinced that atheism was weaker than every among the poor. Not only did he see the churches reaching out towards the lower orders, but atheism, in his eyes, could never make any permanent impact upon any large group of Englishmen since it had no real doctrine or content to offer them. He found the Church of England to be solid from top to bottom; the poor were being drawn closer to its bosom than ever before, while the hierarchy had never been, "more solid, more useful, and more various."\(^{359}\) The Churchmen combined physical

\(^{359}\) Personal Forces, p. 211.
activity, pulpit vigor with pastoral usefulness; they were men
thoroughly in tune with the times in which they lived.

Much of the strength of the Church of England came from
the person and character of the Queen, who by example had
fostered an interest in the Church, while Prince Albert, in his
short life span, had devoted himself to the work of the church
and had helped to remove many of the old abuses which had given
it such a bad name both among the intellectuals as well as the
working classes. By 1897, Escott felt that there were few
institutions in England more national than the Church which was
in the process of gathering together all of the Evangelical creeds
under her banners.

Escott admitted that there had been much wrong with the
Church in the past, quoting the verger of St. Mary's Church in
Oxford who had told him that after listening for over thirty
years to sermons by Anglican clergymen, it was a miracle that he
yet remained a Christian. As proof of the Church's new attitude,
Escott recalled that when his old teacher, Benjamin Jowett had
written his "Essays and Reviews" in 1860, it had created a stir
which almost resulted in a scandal. By the 1890's, however, the
book had become respectable.\textsuperscript{360} Although Escott took a fairly
liberal attitude toward church doctrine, he nonetheless warned

\textsuperscript{360} Social Transformations, p. 71.
that the "higher criticism" which was attacking the Bible was a very dubious ally of the Church. 361

The Anglican Church did have much to learn from the Non-Conformists. Men such as Canon Gore had adopted the vernacular simplicity of Non-Conformist preaching without losing the innate dignity of the Anglican Church, while the Dissenters moved closer to the Church of England in points of doctrine. 362

Men such as Dean Arthur Stanley of Westminister and R. W. Dale, the Congregationalist Clergyman of Birmingham, were above sectarian prejudices and jealousies; both worked hard to bring into closer union all of the denominations of the Protestant Church. R. W. Dale's son, A. W. Dale was continuing his father's work although in a manner more appropriate to the age. Where his father had done much to bring the gospel to the businessmen of Birmingham and the Midlands, A. W. Dale carried on his work by acting as tutor at Trinity Hall among the undergraduates. 363 The forces of unity and organization were working as strongly in the various religious denominations as they were elsewhere in Escott's view of England near the turn of the century.

361 Ibid., p. 407.
362 Personal Forces, p. 219.
363 Ibid., p. 224.
Nowhere was this desire for unity more marked than in the Empire which England had built earlier in the century without much thought or concern for the future, but which was now a matter of national concern. Although some felt that it would be best if England simply let the component parts of the Empire drift apart, Escott was sure that a closer connection with the mother country was the only answer, preferably through a federative scheme built around a greatly enlarged Privy Council. The demand for a closer union of the English-speaking colonies was one which was desired by both the mother country and the colonists, although wise measures would be necessary to bring it to a successful completion.

Part of the fascination of the colonies lay in the fact that they often anticipated the mother country in constitutional innovations. New Zealand and Australia, for example, had stolen much of the thunder of Socialistic Radicals in England with such measures as the Hare system of proportional representation, National Banks, the referendum, and the legally enforced one-day-a-week for servants. Escott did not approve of all of these measures, but with his usual enlightened and open mind, felt that they were useful experiments. Of Woman's Suffrage, Escott seemed to be a little more skeptical, writing of "the legislative freaks which seem to be its sequel." Nevertheless, the fact that

---

364 Social Transformations, p. 432.
this was being done in the colonies meant that England could look on and profit from the mistakes of these innovators. As usual Escott identified the beginning of a national outlook with the publication of a book; in this case Bulwer-Lytton's *The Caxtons*.

The true cult of the colonies at home was founded by Bulwer-Lytton in *The Caxtons*. Eight years before, in the Derby Cabinet, he began to educate his colleague, Disraeli into considering the upholding of England's Empire to be the great pillar of Conservative policy.\(^{365}\)

The theme of the work according to Escott was that the oceans which separated England from her colonies could be turned into unifying forces to bind them more strongly than ever. In filling these colonies, however, it was important to emulate the example of the Greeks who were careful not to allow the least talented or able to become the future citizens of the colonies. Instead, Escott contended, the colonies should be turned into areas of exploitation, in the best sense of the word, for the surplus of intelligence in England. Escott quoted one of the characters in *The Caxtons* who spoke to a young man who was thinking of leaving for Australia in the following manner: "This old world contains many young men like you, able, intelligent, active, but confronted by obstacles in the pursuit of our conventional professions."\(^{366}\)

\(^{365}\) Trollope, p. 273.

\(^{366}\) Ibid., p. 273.
Escott seemed less frightened in the 1890's by the possibility of war with a European power than he had been in the 1880's; the main interest in the colonies was less in their potential contribution to England's defense in the eventuality of war, rather than as a means of alleviating the problems of a growing population crowded into a small island. Even this was not a real problem to Escott as he related how during a tour of Sheffield, Mr. Mundella, the M. P., had shown him a factory which turned refuse into some sort of commercial product which was then sold.\footnote{Social Transformations, p. 236.}

This was proof to Escott that the English genius would solve the problem of overpopulation as it had solved other problems. Another solution was discreetly hinted at, when he referred to the "disinclination reflected from French and American precedent of Englishwomen indefinitely to fulfill the functions of maternity."\footnote{Ibid., p. 236.}

When Escott did turn his eyes to the armed forces of the United Kingdom, his first concern was not with their power or might, which he obviously thought was ample for any emergency, but with the state of their organization and the education of the officers and men. The officers of the Army and the Navy were scientific professionals who were well read and trained in their
calling, men eager to add to their already great store of knowledge. "There are," Escott claimed, "no better read men than those who serve their sovereign ashore or afloat." The military had now acquired all of that learning and education, which when he had published England many years ago, some had predicted would be the ruin of the services. Escott was not alone in his time in the pride he revealed in the Royal Navy as a service journal wrote, "Of really powerful, formidable navies there does not exist at the present moment one in the world except our own."370

A modern historian, Arthur Marder, wrote in a quite different sense as he described the Navy as in certain respects, "a drowsy, inefficient, moth-eater organism."371 Marder particularly criticized the neglect of higher officer's training and the lack of a staff college, nor was there much encouragement for young officers to learn the principles of strategy and tactics by reading naval history.

The chief figure in the Navy to Escott was Lord Charles Beresford, who would in a few years run afoul of Admiral Lord

---

369 Ibid., p. 307.


371 Ibid., p. 7.
Fisher and be professionally destroyed. Escott had met Lord Beresford at a party given by Baron Rotschild which he attended with Lord Randolph Churchill, where one of the guests told Churchill, "as you are democratizing Toryism, so Charles Beresford has already made the Navy a democratic interest." Lord Beresford had already become a popular favorite with the masses who liked his personality and his occasional bit of rowdiness. No doubt Beresford realized this and played up to the masses. To Escott it was plain that only in that age of advertisement could such a quality of popularity be obtained since, "a Beresford, a Churchill, a Chamberlain, a Dilke without a cheap press would have no more chance than a Pitt without a Parliament."

The Admiral's interest in the service had led him to enter Parliament which pleased Escott as he felt that military men who represented industrial districts, as apparently Beresford had, would be in close touch with the democracies in a union mutually beneficial to both sides. Occasionally in his analysis of the important men of his time, Escott mentioned the great man's wife believing that this would provide some insight into his subject's character. Lady Beresford was described as one of the adroitest hostesses in society, and had the good fortune, as Escott put it,

---

372 Personal Forces, p. 142.

373 Ibid., p. 145.
of coming from stock neither Naval, military, nor titularly enobled, but was instead the daughter of a Conservative M. P. of the new school.

England's greatest military leader was Lord Wolseley, not so much because of any particular military victories, although he had his share of them, as because he was the epitome of the scientific soldier. He was as Gilbert and Sullivan characterized him, "the model Major General," and his greatest victories were in the political and administrative fields of action. At the time of the Cardwell reforms of 1871, when the Army was bitterly critical of change, Lord Wolseley, even though he like most of the soldiers held the Gladstonian Liberals in contempt, loyally supported the great reforms of the war minister.

Escott twenty years earlier had been much concerned with the influence of the democracy and the Army, with part of his correspondence with Field Marshal Wolseley being taken up with this problem. Some of the officers were from the working or lower middle classes in the military establishment of 1897, but did not affect the tone or the personnel of the officer class, who would continue to be as before, "men born to the social advantages of the gentle society." Men such as Lord Wolseley were a guarantee, however, that the Army and the masses would never drift far apart in sentiment or interest.

---

374 Ibid., p. 310.
As was usual in Escott's writings, he showed little interest in the activities of the great middle classes of England, appearing to believe that they either emulated the upper classes or were stimulated by the classes below them. He did see the beginning of changes in their attitudes as "the laws of middle class orthodoxy were subjected to a process of general relaxation like to what, rightly or wrongly, was found to have taken place in more exalted circles." The daughters of this class, and it was always the women who set the tone of society, were as well educated as those above them and now felt that they were entitled to the same pleasures.

The new activities in which these young ladies indulged, such as skating, lawn tennis, bicycle riding, suppers after the play, etc. were all expressions of this new attempt to break free from the old rules of society. The daughters of the middle classes wanted the same freedom which they imagined the upper classes to possess with results not always pleasant for Escott to contemplate. All too often these young ladies met the wrong sort of man at these affairs, so that "the records of the law courts show that the daring youth of subscription ballrooms are not invariably conducive to the domestic happiness of middle class homes." But Escott informed the reader, these were, "the

---

375 Social Transformations, p. 197.
376 Ibid., p. 204.
social miscarriages incidental to the strangeness of the new order."377

All classes were finding the turn of the century a difficult time of transition, but both the working classes and the middle classes would meet the challenge under the leadership to the upper classes who were making this adjustment best of all. The closer union existing between the classes was shown through the activities of the Cambridge Extension Lectures, whereby members of the Cambridge academic community travelled throughout England delivering lectures on a regular basis to workers.

Escott praised these lectures highly but asked that they be better organized so that more of the working classes could be reached. There was little doubt in Escott's mind that this would soon take place since, "if in a few words the contrast between the England of the later and the earlier part of the Queen's reign were to be summed up, it might be expressed in the single word, organization."378

In all of Escott's writings between 1894 and 1914, Escott showed amazingly little trepidation about the future. When he took cognizance of the danger of German competition, for example, it was only to assert that the danger, if any, was

---

377 Ibid., p. 204.
378 Ibid., p. 326.
greatly exaggerated. World trade was sound and economic prosperity had returned to England; Disraeli and Salisbury had led the workers under the standard of the Conservative Party and class conflict was a nightmare of the past; most important of all, the English worker was showing himself fit to rule England.

The Labour representatives, by their exemplary course and bearing, have disarmed frightened hostility, proved an accession to the debating and deliberative strength of the Assembly; in the case of Mr. Burt and Mr. Broadhurst they have proved successful administrators.379

The experiment in democracy which Escott had watched so carefully, at times fearfully, was proving successful, but in 1914, Escott would watch England meet her greatest test; a full scale European war. The one thing, he had written in the 1880's, which could destroy England.

Escott continued his writing during the war years, 1914 to 1918, but took little notice of the war itself. He appeared to partake to some degree of the hatred against all of Germany when in August, 1915, he wrote that the most valuable spiritual and energizing elements in the knowledge and thought of the Western World were not of Teutonic origin, but really Slavonic.380 He stressed, in another article, that one of the most important

---


aspects of the great conflict was the bringing together of the
two great English-speaking nations, the United States and England.
To Escott, Walter Page, the American ambassador was the soul of
Anglo-American unity. He was a great ambassador, one of many
which England had received from the United States, who had
helped to promote feelings of unity between the two peoples,
while not neglecting the interests of his own country. 381

American philanthropy had a great job to do when an end
came to the war, Escott wrote, since the vast wealth of such
organizations as the Rockefeller Institute could do much to repair
the damage done to Europe by the war. He had every confidence
that this would be done as he wrote of the "world-wide service
to humanity which American plutocracy is rendering every day in
all parts of our planet." 382 In England itself, King George V had
done much to raise the morals of his people with the example he
gave of strenuous industry, the love of work for duty's sake,
self-sacrifice, and self-denial. Escott also pointed with pride
to the fact that King George was the first monarch to visit the
factories and talk personally to the workers. His visits to the
factories were so frequent and accompanied by such shrewd and
intelligent questions, that Escott claimed if it were not for his

382 Ibid.
kingly bearing, he might almost have been mistaken for a factory inspector.383

The one book Escott wrote during the war years, *Great Victorians*, did not mention the conflict and was, as the title suggests, a series of reminiscences of the nineteenth century. Escott seemed instinctively to shy away from the topic of the European Civil War.

By 1922, England had emerged from this bitter and costly war; one which many have seen as marking the end of the British Empire as well as the end of the Victorian Age with all it had meant. Escott saw the war as being in some measure, God's chastisement upon the English people. The English, Escott remembered Gladstone saying, had great qualities, but they needed a firmer discipline and Gladstone went on to predict that some sort of public chastisement would be inflicted upon England by God. Escott felt that this punishment had begun with the great war and had been continuing ever since with little interruption. About the causes of the war, Escott had no doubts, feeling certain that it had been caused by German ambition on a world-wide scale.

Now more than ever, Escott asserted, men must return to God, difficult though it might be after all of the horrors of

---

the last few years. As in the first century, God had been testing man's faith with war and turmoil to see if he was worthy of salvation. Part of this chastisement was the coming to power of the Bolsheviks.

The men who eye witnessed the French Revolution of an earlier Georgian epoch have their political descendants in the twentieth century Bolsheviks whose goal is worldwide anarchy . . . and whose means may at any moment become indiscriminate massacre. 384

Nothing, however, could shake Escott from his deep and fundamental belief in the continuity of British power and greatness, as he asserted that at no point had the new in English life broken with the old; rather had the new adopted itself to and assimilated itself with the old. 385 The continuity of British life and institutions had asserted itself in both social and personal aspects. "The objects and methods of British diplomacy may have been on the whole as unbrokenly uniform as the agencies employed." 386 The war itself had the effect of immensely increasing the popular interest in the diplomatic processes by which a general peace was to be brought about. There was nothing really new in this, since it was "but the echo of the charge made

385 Ibid., p. 117.
386 Ibid.
just sixty-one years ago . . . of war being made without the consent of the people."387

The closing years of the Victorian Age was linked up to the 1920's by the presence in the House of Commons of a figure as remarkable and powerful as any Escott had ever remembered. This was the magnetic figure of David Lloyd George, in whom Escott no doubt saw traces of the earlier Radical, Joseph Chamberlain.

Like Chamberlain, Lloyd George, after his earlier Tory baiting days, had with assumption of ministerial power become more conservative and had even allied himself, as did Chamberlain, to the Tory Party. Escott viewed him as the man who had foreseen and declared the obsolescence of the old party slogans and who was not disconcerted by the disappearance of the once familiar landmarks.388 In looking over Lloyd George's past record, Escott found much to praise. The Budget of 1909 and the National Health Insurance Act two years afterwards had created a great impression of Lloyd George's resourcefulness and creativity in the popular mind. Escott predicted that Lloyd George would hold the reins of power for a great period of time in the future. Unfortunately for the Prime Minister, the leaders of the Tory Party would soon tire of his brilliant, but sometimes sordid, leadership, and would take

---

387 Ibid.
388 Ibid., p. 299.
steps to remove him from power. Many of the qualities which endeared him to Escott, estranged Lloyd George from the members of the Conservative Party, especially in some of the most important leaders. Lloyd George would then spend the rest of his years outside of the halls of power, and his talents, which amounted to genius, would be wasted in futile criticism.389

The continuity which Escott discovered in the areas of statesmanship and politics was also found in business. Sir Ernest Cassel was the representative figure in this respect. Sir Ernest, a German Jew, had first arrived in England in 1868 as a grain merchant and had risen rapidly in royal favor. There was nothing strange in this as the royal favor shown to the merchants of trade and commerce, as well as their titles, only exemplified the twentieth century's fidelity to the ancient precedent embodied in so many of England's old nobility.390 King Edward VII had harmonized the nineteenth and twentieth century traditions by duly recognizing the new industrial and commercial peerage whose fame rested on trade foundations not much different than that which had made the Salisburys and Warwicks such faithful servants of the nation.391 It was not, as Escott was careful to explain, simply a matter of the new nobility driving out the old nobility; instead

389Ibid., p. 300.
390Ibid., p. 32.
391Ibid.
the new and the old blended together. New men such as Lloyd George were needed by the country but the old stock as represented by Winston Churchill were just as necessary in forming the Prime Minister into the correct and traditional pattern, since, "in politics heredity may prove not a bad working principle." It was the balance between the old and new which was important. 392

At the age of seventy-nine, Escott wrote a short survey of John Morley's life for the Fortnightly Review. For the last time he relived many of the old days in the newspaper and periodical business, as he related his memories of John Morley. He recalled being present with John Morley and John Stuart Mill in Hyde Park at the height of the disturbances which so frightened Matthew Arnold, but Escott was exhilarated by the memory of seeing Morley and Mill walking arm in arm through the crowd.

Meanwhile a perfectly well-behaved and good humored crowd had pressed against the frail and ancient rails, then surrounding the enclosure, so that they almost automatically gave way. There was never any real danger of a disturbance. 393

This, of course, had not always been the way Escott had felt about the people of England. In earlier times in his career he had feared the danger of a disturbance and of things much worse than that. But now, near the end of his life, Escott began

392 T. H. S. Escott, City Characters Under Several Reigns (London: Effingham Wilson, 1922), p. 75.

to believe that the danger never really existed, at least so long as the fence rails, or anything else which hindered the people from their rights, automatically gave way. Throughout his career, Escott had always cautioned the ruling classes, that in the final analysis the people must always have their own way.

In all probability Escott was working on yet another article or book, but this would be the last he ever published, since a number of issues later, the Fortnightly Review of July 1, 1924 carried a small slip inserted in its opening page which read:

On the 14th of June, at 33 Sackville Road, Hove
died
T. H. S. Escott, M.A.
former editor of the Fortnightly Review
Mr. Escott succeeded John Morley in the editorship from 1882 to 1886.
CONCLUSION

T. H. S. Escott, cultured, well read, and highly educationed, was open to many of the intellectual and scientific viewpoints of the day; he was aware of most of the writings on the social, political, and imperial ideas and to varying degrees was influenced by them, if only in a negative sense. Walter Bagehot's common sense attitude towards politics, the idea of getting to the realities behind the forms while recognizing the importance of both, is readily apparent in Escott's writings. Escott, himself, quoted extensively from Bagehot in dealing with the powers of the crown. Escott diverged, however, from Bagehot in believing that the aristocracy was capable of much more real or efficient power than Bagehot felt was possible. Escott thought that the House of Lords had acquired a new interest and importance, and that an unusually large number of national measures had originated in the chamber of the hereditary legislators.

To Bagehot, the full power of the House of Lords had to be used much more cautiously and timidly. While recognizing their
importance, Bagehot also traced their decline, after the passing of the 1867 Reform Bill. He felt that the middle class element had gained greatly, while the aristocratic element had lost very heavily. After examining carefully the lists of prominent members of either side of the House, he found very few aristocratic names. Considering the power and position of the titled aristocracy, Bagehot was astonished at the small degree in which it contributed to the active part of the governing assembly. There was also, according to Bagehot, a gulf between the plutocracy and the aristocracy, as he wrote that the spirit of the House of Commons of the 1870's was, "plutocratic not aristocratic; its most prominent statesmen are not men of ancient descent or of great hereditary estate." Bagehot had written this in 1872 shortly after the Second Reform Bill had been passed. Possibly he might have become more optimistic regarding the powers of the Aristocracy if he had lived twenty more years to witness the Aristocratic revival of the 80's and 90's when men such as Salisbury, Churchill, Rosebery, Balfour, Dilke and others rose to ruling positions and reasserted the power of the old families.

The strength of this aristocratic revival is shown when one looks at Lord Salisbury's cabinet which contained eight peers, three of whom were heads of great families. Throughout the

---

394Bagehot, p. 29.
country this respect for the great nobles was shown through the fact of many municipal bodies having chosen peers to head them. The peerage had never enjoyed a more solid popularity than from 1880 to the First World War. Both Bagehot and Escott did agree in assessing the amount of deference which the English felt towards their leaders as well as fearing the rise of the uneducated democracy.

Matthew Arnold, with his contempt for mob action provides an interesting contrast with Escott. Arnold, for example, constantly referred to the mob which in 1867 pulled down a railing in Hyde Park, apparently feeling that this was what might be expected from uneducated and ignorant workers, who were trying to free themselves from the restraints imposed upon them by their cultured superiors. Arnold often expressed great concern for the plight of the working classes, but had difficulty in understanding them or their aspirations. While expressing a belief that a good educational system would repair many of their defects, he sometimes seemed to feel that this would not ever take place.

On the whole, Arnold was much more skeptical regarding the possibility of ever solving the immense social problems which were arising in England around the passing of the Second Reform Bill. While sincerely desirous of helping the workers to fit into the new society, he never lost an innate fear and distrust of them. Arnold's writings reveal his inability to truly
understand the workers and, even more importantly, to preserve a sense of balance in judging the mass of the workers by the minority who misbehaved in Hyde Park. The root of the problem lay not so much in his temperament or lack of faith, as in his lack of contact with the workers themselves. Escott possessed these contacts with the lower orders and used them to gain an unusual insight into their thoughts, while his presence in Hyde Park in 1867, allowed him to judge for himself just how revolutionary the mob was in pulling the railings down. Perhaps if Arnold had viewed the demonstrations himself instead of relying on second hand reports, he might have reached different conclusions.

In other aspects of their social thought, Arnold believed in a liberal education for the masses, along the model of the Prussian system, where Escott, like most Victorians, was in favor of a more practical education for the workers' children. The Prussian example held little attraction for men such as Escott.

Although both were the sons of Anglican clergymen who were headmasters of public schools, they disagreed in their views on religion. Escott, always a practical man, felt that Arnold's ideas on religion were simply too vague and abstract to be understood by the masses. There is little doubt also that as Escott grew older, he became more attached to his religious beliefs, where Arnold seemed to lose more of them as he grew older.
Thomas Carlyle with his complete rejection of democracy, his demand for a benevolent despotism run along military lines, and his search for the hero has a certain affinity with Escott's own ideas, but basically he is far apart from Escott. Where Arnold appears almost personally frightened at the thought of mob violence, Carlyle's writings seem almost drenched with the thoughts associated with violence. Escott's own views of the people of England were much better balanced and more realistic than either Carlyle's or Arnold's, as Escott's faith in the capacities of the English people kept him from the fear which overrode Arnold or Carlyle. Carlyle's writings, however, on the need for redress of the just grievances of the oppressed workers found a ready and sympathetic reader in Escott. Escott agreed with Carlyle that a revolutionary situation would arise in England unless justice was done to the workers, but Escott believed that this could be done within the framework of the present system.

John Stuart Mill's influence upon Escott is somewhat doubtful. Escott appeared at times to look upon Mill with a mild distaste, feeling that Mill was too abstract, non-English, and did not recognize the importance of tradition in England, which was the same argument Escott used against most followers of Bentham. Yet Mill, Arnold, Carlyle, and Bagehot all held one view in common which agreed with Escott's own views; this was a distrust in the ability of the democracy to govern itself, and a belief
that only an elite could govern such a country as England. While admitting that democracy was theoretically possible, they felt that conditions in England were such that, for a time at least, this creative elite, as Mill called it, must rule. Escott's distrust of the people was less deep, but he never really seemed to free himself completely from forebodings on the future of England unless the old ruling classes kept a firm hand on the machinery of government.

If one searched for the most important influences upon Escott, one would find them in the novels of the Earl of Beaconsfield, Benjamin Disraeli. Escott, himself, constantly referred to them as important historical documents as well as guidelines to social and political movements of the present and the future. It is quite probable that Escott read carefully every novel published by Disraeli.

Disraeli, in his fifth edition of _Coningsby_ (1849), explained that he used the literary form of the novel for the purposes of influencing opinion. It is certainly evident that Disraeli was very successful in influencing the opinion of Escott, by Escott's own admission, and one may wonder to what extent Disraeli influenced the opinion of others of his contemporaries. Disraeli's Tory interpretation of history saw the Whigs as a factious aristocracy whose principles excluded all other interests including the Crown, the Church, and the people.
In the selfish strife of factions, two great existences have been blotted out of the history of England, the Monarch and the Multitude; as the power of the Crown has diminished, the privileges of the people have disappeared; till at length the scepter has become a pageant and its subject had degenerated into a serf.395

Disraeli was never too clear as to just how this was to be done, since he revealed little respect for either the Whigs or the Conservatives. Disraeli was aware of this criticism which he tried to answer by pointing out that his novels recognized that the element of romance in the governing of kingdoms might be as important as reason. His economic principles asserted the importance of the health and knowledge of the workers as an important element for the well being of the state, while his political principles rested upon the heroic tradition of a free aristocracy.

The difference between the aristocracy (which Disraeli praised) and the oligarchy of the Whigs (which he condemned) may appear purely metaphysical, until one notes this political motive which was the mainspring of Disraeli's philosophy. To Disraeli, the Whigs were always characterized as a selfish political clique who had stupidly betrayed their own political interest. The true aristocracy to Disraeli consisted of rural England based upon the wealthy Tory squires who governed most of the country. As Blake points out his biography of Disraeli, Disraeli believed in a

---

territorial aristocracy partly because he was a romantic and partly because he hated centralization and Benthamism. "He felt the same sort of reverence that Burke had for the many independent corporations and institutions which . . . were the true bulwarks of English liberty."396

This was Escott's own vision of England, but in assessing it, one must take into account the factors which were peculiar to Escott. He was raised on a vicarage by a socially prominent clergyman who had been educated in an upperclass institution. He attended the same institution and spent most of his early life attaining substantial wealth and associating with important political figures.

But one must realize also that Escott was not one of the upper classes either, even though his money and education might, along with the opportunities offered by his profession, gave him access to their friendship. This sense of never being one of the aristocracy, along with the gulf which separated him from the workers, might account for the occasionally romantic view he took of the upper classes. The apparent success with which the aristocracy was dealing with the rising working classes might have blinded him to their weaknesses and defects. One advantage which Escott possessed in assessing the situation which few others of

396 Blake, p. 211.
his class had, was his experience with the workers. Escott in writing England had lived with many of the different classes of workers and had become quite friendly with some of them; even after his breakdown, he still relied upon them for valuable information. His writings on the workers tended to be less stereotyped than that of other analysts since much of it was based upon personal knowledge rather than pure theory. Men such as John Stuart Mill had little of this contact, while Matthew Arnold, although he had the opportunity through his work in the schools, seemed to have taken little time to talk to the workers and understand their problems.

Escott, on the other hand, revealed in his writings on the working classes a strong sense of reality as well as a fervent sympathy for their position which was lacking in most writers. He did not idealize them, as he did to a certain extent the aristocracy, nor did he hold them in contempt, but accepted them as increasingly important factors in England's destiny. More importantly, they were people whom he knew and respected.

One must beware of a simplistic approach to the problem of Escott's image of society; it is not difficult to find contradictions in his writings. Sometimes this is due to poor writing as when he refers to class fusion, when the context makes it apparent that he means class reconciliation. At other points it seems due to a lack of clarity in his thinking. His
occasional use of the word Socialism, for example, is nothing more than the expression of a vague humanitarianism with some collectivist tendencies. At other times, he used the term to refer to someone with extremely radical and levelling ideas. He professed a strong faith in laissez-faire, but he was often willing to violate these principles when necessary to secure the working classes some needed benefits. Escott was never dogmatic in either his thinking or his writing.

This apparent set of contradictions in his writings would seem to reflect the conflict in his own mind. A real fear and contempt for the ignorance and brutality of the lowe stratum of the working classes was mingled with genuine admiration and respect for the honest, hardworking artisans and mechanics. Later in life, Escott grew to have more trust and faith in the workers. On the whole, Escott judged England's position shrewdly, as at times his analysis showed profound insight. The great shock of World War I revealed the intrinsic soundness of the English workers as their loyalty to the state was steadfast and they were able to compete in every way with those opposing them. Where the workers of other nations eventually lost faith in their rulers, the English working classes stayed in the fight until victory was won.

In summing up Escott's social and political beliefs, it is clear that he saw English society as an organic whole; any attempt at sudden change on a large scale would destroy this
delicate balance called English society and produce disaster for all classes. The upper classes had to continue to lead the nation, since only they possessed the education which gave them the knowledge necessary for decision making. As Escott read the past, these natural leaders of England had many times revealed their fitness to lead the nation, and would continue to do so.

They also had the leisure which allowed them to reflect upon these decisions, the tradition of just and wise government, and the independence which allowed them to rule in an independent manner. Most of all the upper classes had a tremendous stake in English society through the ownership of property which forced them to take a responsible attitude towards government. Part of this responsible attitude consisted in taking an intelligent interest in the welfare of the workers, since if they failed to do so, the workers would take over their tasks. If this became necessary, and at times Escott seemed to suspect this would eventually happen, the workers would have received the education from the upper classes which would permit them to rule over England.

As already stated, Escott had no false idealistic view of the working men; instead he realized that no such person existed. There were many men who made up this class and generalization were difficult and often inaccurate even at best. The working man was no more uniformly sober than he was uniformly
drunken. "A socially and morally perfect and faultless working man is as impossible as the irredeemably vicious baron in novels or the spotless angelic child in nursery story books."^{397}

This was a realistic outlook which was also very optimistic as Escott was convinced that the general influences of the time were almost all flowing in the direction of some sort of improvement. The agricultural laborer and the urban worker were seeing themselves as men with rights and duties and had acquired a growing sense of enlightenment. "Talk to the average country laborer today, and you will find him no longer the dull, despondent being that he was a decade since . . . His senses have been quickened, his moral and mental nature has been breathed upon with the breath of life."^{398} This passage explains much of Escott's optimism concerning the future. No man who views his fellow creatures in this light can ever truly fear entrusting his country's destinies in their hands.

^{397}England, p. 144.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources
Joseph Chamberlain Papers, Birmingham University Library.
William E. Gladstone Papers, British Museum.
Historical Manuscripts Commission, National Register of Archives, Report on the Papers of Field Marshal Wolseley, W.920 WOL.

THE WORKS OF T. H. S. ESCOTT

Books
City Characters Under Several Reigns. London: Effingham Wilson, 1922.
The Comedies of Plautus. Editor.

247


King Edward and His Court. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1903.


Personal Forces of the Period. London: Hurst & Blackett, 1898.


Satires of Juvenal and Persius. Editor.


Articles


"American Literature Abroad." Living Age, April, 1920.


"Behind the Scenes in Fleet Street." Living Age, February, 1913.

"Bernal Osborne." The Fortnightly Review, November, 1884.

"Broken Hearts." The Saturday Review, September, 1865.

"Cabinet Counsels and Candid Friends." Contemporary Review, October, 1894.


"Court and Crowd at Exeter Hall." The Fortnightly Review, August, 1908.
"Culture in the Crucible." Living Age, June, 1907.

"Decline and Fall of the Parochial System." The Fortnightly Review, May, 1909.


"Diplomatic Cards on the Table." The Contemporary Review, May, 1912.


"From Father to Son." The Fortnightly Review, August, 1911.

"Great Teachers of My Time." Living Age, February, 1904.


"Heredity in British Brains." Living Age, June, 1918.
"Historians I Have Known." Living Age, February, 1907.

"House, the Country House and the Time Table." Living Age, November, 1915.

"House of Rothschild." The Quarterly Review, April, 1919.


"King George V and His People." Living Age, September, 1915.


"Last of the Patrons." The Quarterly Review, October, 1898.

"Literary Cham and His Court." The Fortnightly Review, November, 1913.


"Lord Macaulay." Belgravia, 1876.


"Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain, A Chapter In Personal Politics." The Westminster Review, July, 1894.

"Mr. Hayward." The Fortnightly Review, May, 1884.

"Mr. Henry Reeve." The Fortnightly Review, November, 1898.


"R. H. Hutton--An Estimate of His Life and Work." The Bookman, October, 1897.


"Royalties I Have Seen." Living Age, November, 1898.


"Social Pioneers of Science." Living Age, May, 1905.


"Story of the Times." Living Age, July, 1907.


"Thirty Years of the Periodical Press." Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, October, 1894.

"Title Givers and Takers Then and Now." The Contemporary Review, October, 1922.

"Two Epochs Behind the Fleet Street Scenes." Living Age, January, 1915.


"What the Newspaper Owes to the Magazine." Living Age, September, 1917.


"Young Idea Betwixt Square and Thwackum." The Fortnightly Review, October, 1912.
Secondary Sources


The Times of London.


APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Arthur W. Lysiak has been read and approved by members of the Department of History.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Date       Signature of Advisor

May 13, 1970       James C. O'Neill