

CAREER OF THE SALISBURY MINISTRY.

LONDON, February 4, 1886.

Now that the Tory Ministry of 1885 has expired, your readers may expect to have some observations on its short but interesting life. It has been the briefest Ministry of the last half century, having lasted just seven months. When, on Mr. Gladstone's resignation last June, after the unexpected defeat which he suffered on the Budget, office was offered to Lord Salisbury, there was much difference of opinion in Tory circles as to whether it would or would not be better to remain in opposition. The common view in both parties was, that whichever party was in opposition would have the better chance at the general election, because it would be able to assail its adversaries, instead of standing on the defensive. This view made the Liberals well pleased to quit office, and equally dissuaded the Tories from coming in. But in a party which has been out of power for some years there are always many men eager for the spoils, even such limited spoils as our system awards to the victors. There are peerages and other titles of honor; there is the patronage of the civil-service posts that may fall vacant; there are the great offices of state themselves. The desire for these tells potently on the chiefs through their relatives and friends, and in this instance Lord Randolph Churchill, who had been the most active combatant in the House of Commons, was anxious at all hazards to come in and taste power. His counsels prevailed, and a Tory Cabinet was formed in which he held a place of influence scarcely second to that of Lord Salisbury. The result seems to have justified his boldness. Although the Tories have been beaten at the general election, their defeat is nowise due to their having taken office. So far as one can judge, they stood to be beaten in any case, and they have probably gained somewhat more than they lost by being the party in power. Their tenure had been too short to permit them to make serious blunders, or to make the blunders of their Liberal predecessors forgotten. The courage which they showed in taking office while in a minority in the House of Commons, inspired their supporters with zeal and hope. Some of their chief figures, and notably Lord Randolph Churchill himself, gained importance by their official status, which turned them from mere skirmishers into responsible statesmen.

I believe, therefore, that this general election has condemned the view held in June that the Liberals would gain and the Tories lose by the change of Ministry which then took place. That the latter did not carry the country at the election was due to other and preëxisting causes which were too strong for them. Scotland remained steadily Liberal. The new voters in the English counties went Liberal, partly because they felt that their admission to the franchise was a gift of the Liberals, partly, in the agricultural districts, out of hostility to the farmers, who have long been Tories. The Irish vote in the English boroughs gave Lord Salisbury twenty-five seats, but even with this gain he was left in a minority of eighty-four as against the Liberals. Yet their defeat was no disgrace to the Tory party. They fought with great spirit and developed an unexpectedly strong organization. The Established Church, acting not merely through its pastors, but also through the district visitors and other feminine agencies, did splendid work among the humbler class of voters. Toryism rejoices to find that it may be, if properly handled, just as vigorous and popular among the poor as among the rich, and, therefore, while political philosophers shake their heads over an extended suffrage, Tory party managers perceive that they have a better chance than they ever expected of fighting the Radicals on their own ground.

Of the personal qualities of the outgoing Ministry there is not very much to be said. When it was formed, it was deemed weak in comparison to that of Mr. Gladstone. It contained fewer men of acknowledged capacity either for speaking or for administration. Nor has its career developed any reputations. The nobodies of whom it largely consisted remain nobodies still. Only two persons have improved their position. Lord Salisbury has, by the confession of his opponents, done well as Foreign Secretary. He threw overboard, in the most hearty and unapologetic way, the Eastern policy of which he had been the organ in Lord Beaconsfield's Government from 1878 to 1880, and promoted, when he might have been expected to disapprove and retard, the union of the two Bulgarias. The irritation which had existed between the German Chancery and our Foreign Office under the previous Government disappeared, and Bismarck seems to have almost gone out of his way to make things smooth for the rivals of those whom he considered unfriendly to himself. The violent tone which Lord Salisbury had used toward Russia was quickly dropped, and the question of the Afghan frontier settled upon the lines which Mr. Gladstone's Government had approved; so that here, also, Liberal critics found nothing to condemn.

On the whole, Lord Salisbury stands now before the country with a character for administrative judgment, as well as vigor, which he never enjoyed before. It is the same with Lord Randolph Churchill. Whether or no he has really proved a good executive official, the public cannot tell, because it knows very little of what goes on inside the walls of our departments. But, at any rate, he has done better than might have been predicted from the reckless violence of his speeches in opposition. He has made no conspicuous mistakes. In the only large enterprise he has had to direct, the expedition against Burmah, he has acted, or allowed the Indian Viceroy to act, with promptitude and decision, and gains credit for these qualities even from those who doubt the need for the war and condemn the annexation to which it has led. In his Parliamentary, as well as his platform harangues, he has occasionally relapsed into the abusive vein by which he rose to eminence; but these lapses have been fewer and fewer, while his serious speeches have shown plenty of force and courage. Those who have watched him closely do not think any better of his statesmanship or patriotism than they did before, but they admit that he has made himself more than ever the fighting leader of the mass of the Tory party, the man whom its bolder spirits are prepared to follow in any new departure. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who was nominally leader of the House of Commons, has behaved very much as was expected, neither raising nor lowering his reputation as a solid, dry, resolute man, with little pliability and no brilliance. He was not severely tested in the House of Commons, because during last July and August the Ministry carried on its business at sufferance, the Liberals wishing to keep them in; and during the election campaign he did not shine, for his platform manner is heavy and his ideas want freshness.

On the domestic policy of the Salisbury Ministry there is nothing to say, because they did not develop any. They began by dropping the Irish Coercion Act, not alleging, as they might have done, that it would have been all but impossible to procure its renewal at so late a period of the session as the end of June, but declaring that they conceived coercion to be justified only by extreme necessity, and that no extreme necessity existed. Such a declaration, followed as it was by strictures upon Lord Spencer's government of Ireland, severely tried the aristocratic section of

their followers, who would like to put Ireland under martial law. But the murmurs of disapproval soon died away, and nothing else arose to cause division in the Tory ranks. When the election campaign began, it became necessary to set some sort of policy before the country. This might have been expected to open fissures in the compact structure of the party. But Lord Salisbury confined himself to adopting, with considerable modifications, some of the proposals Mr. Gladstone had already made, and he was relieved from the necessity of doing more by the highly aggressive tactics of the advanced Liberals. Their hostility to the Established Church enabled him to pose, quite honestly, as the advocate of the principle of establishments, and to assume, with less justification, the position of Defender of the Faith. The whole Tory party rallied to the cry; the battle became a defensive one. There was no more risk of internal dissensions; there was no longer much need of an attractive programme. Had the Ministry obtained a majority, they would have had to frame a positive policy and submit it in the form of bills to Parliament. They would in particular have been forced to prepare a comprehensive scheme for rural local government, and would have found it extremely difficult to make such a scheme popular without alienating the landed aristocracy. But the Irish difficulty was nearer and more menacing. Having won from twenty to thirty seats by Parnellite votes, they were under a prima-facie obligation to adopt a friendly tone to the Nationalists, to abstain from coercive measures, and go as far as they dared in the direction of home rule. Lord Carnarvon seems to have been sent to Ireland as Viceroy in the hope of carrying out such a policy. But when the result of the elections showed that even with the aid of the Parnellites they would have a majority of only four in the House of Commons; when they had reason to think that Mr. Gladstone was willing to go at least as far toward home rule as their most loyal supporters would follow them; when the reception given in the press and by society to the scheme ascribed to him had shown how little the English people, and especially the upper class, were inclined toward Nationalist ideas, they could not but stop short. For a time they seemed to have hesitated, and it is a plausible conjecture that the Cabinet was divided. When they drew up the Queen's speech they were still in doubt whether or no to propose a coercion bill, and their plan was to amend the procedure rules of the House of Commons before attempting anything else. After the debate on the address had begun, and they had felt the pressure of their own supporters, anxious to see strong measures taken in Ireland, they resolved to gain a few days by sending over Mr. W. H. Smith as Irish Secretary to advise them on the state of the country. Two days later, when it was plain that they could not hope to keep office, because the Parnellites were going to vote against them, and the Liberals were sure to turn them out on some early day—these two parties being in so great a majority that an accidental defeat must come if an intentional one did not—they nerved themselves to a more decided course, and gave notice, without waiting for Mr. Smith's report, or even referring to his mission, that they would bring in an Irish coercion bill and ask precedence for it; whereupon they were forthwith turned out.

Nothing in their life became them so little as their entering it and quitting it. They entered it by throwing overboard their former advocacy of repressive legislation for Ireland, and determining to govern without it—a resolution laudable in itself, but less laudable in them, and rendered suspicious by the aid they had so frequently obtained against Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet from Irish votes. They died, or at least they hastened their death, by an equally sudden change of front to

the policy of repression, when it was plain that the Irish vote would be thrown against them, and that the best thing to play for was a reputation for vigor in the eyes of the English. The weakness, however, of their counsels during the previous week has been little redeemed by this death-bed resolution; and the comparative quiet of Ireland, where outrages have been few, and convictions generally obtained at the assizes, has made the proposal of a coercion bill seem more like a party stroke than a dictate of firm policy. Yet whoever considers the whole difficulties of the Irish problem will not judge, harshly the faults of any English Government. Mr. Gladstone's Ministry also erred, every ministry is sure to err, in dealing with such a tangle. There is so much to be said against every course and so little for any course, that one cannot be surprised that fourteen men should find it hard to hold to the same course even for a week. This is the first and chief moral of the short but eventful annals of the departed Administration. It came in by Irish help, it lived so long as it kept aloof from Irish questions, it fell so soon as it was forced to touch them. The same Serbonian bog will probably engulf other English ministries before at last some one drains it off or fills it up.

The other moral is that Conservatism in its old sense, in the sense of Sir Robert Peel's days, has almost vanished from England. There was little or nothing, except their defence of the Established Church at the general election, to distinguish the Salisbury Government from a Liberal Government. It never took its stand on Conservative principles. It never talked Conservative language. Three of the measures which it passed in the closing weeks of the last Parliament savored of State Socialism at least as much as any that passed under Mr. Gladstone's auspices. Even when it was resisting the amendment (to the address) about allotments for agricultural laborers last week, it left the economic and Conservative view to be stated by Mr. Goschen and Lord Hartington, and declared itself willing to go in for an allotment scheme. Electoral power has now so completely passed to the working classes that no ministry, on either side, ventures to oppose what the working classes are believed to desire, and few are the politicians who have the courage even to tell the working classes that they are wrong in any wish they express.

Since their fall, little has been said or thought about the outgoing Cabinet, nor will any of their doings, except the annexation of Burmah, be long remembered. All eyes are turned toward the rising sun; and since the question whether Mr. Gladstone would form a Cabinet has been settled, curiosity is at work on the direction its Irish policy will take. The Tory party has this consolation for its defeat, that it marches out in good order, loyal to its leaders, unpledged to any particular Irish or English measures, full of fighting spirit, and hopeful of improving its position at that general election which every one believes to be not far distant. Y.

PAUL BAUDRY.

PARIS, January 28, 1886.

THE funeral of Paul Baudry took place yesterday at the Church of Notre Dame des Champs, not far from the house which was long the home of the man who may well be called the first artist of our modern French school. It was some consolation for those who had known him to see the immense concourse of people which was attracted by this funeral. There were not only the usual deputations from the Institute, from the Beaux-Arts, the official representatives of art; there were all the young *rapins* who live in the studios of the Latin quarter; there were workmen mingled with men and women of

the best society; there were models, and even small Italian children in their picturesque rags. Baudry was beloved by all those who knew him, and he will be regretted as a man as well as an artist.

His origin was of the most humble sort. His father made wooden shoes at Bourbon-Vendée, where Paul was born November 7, 1828. He entered the School of the Beaux-Arts in 1845, as one of the pupils of that great establishment. The young Vendean obtained a prize as the result of his three years' study, and this prize gave him entrance to the French School of Painting at Rome. It was certainly curious, in an ethnological point of view, to see a young Breton, a Celt, find himself so immediately at home in Rome and in Italy. Baudry was made, as it were, for Italy, and he found himself, at the age of twenty, in his own element, among the great works of art of Raphael and Michael Angelo. No painter of our time can be said to have assimilated so well, without being a mere copyist, Italian art, its color, its methods, its noble simplicity, its idealism. Baudry was completely seduced by Rome, and not only seduced, transformed. His first master had been Drolling, a classic of the classic, but one of those classics who had never understood the Italian genius, its elegance and its liberty. Drolling belonged to the school of David, a school which had rehabilitated the study of the nude, but which had, so to speak, no soul and no life. Baudry found masters in Rome who taught him new lessons, and his genius was all ready to receive them. A sort of preëstablished harmony placed him in direct communication with the greatest masters.

While he was at Rome (the pupils of the School of the Villa Medici remain there five years, at the expense of the state), he sent a few pictures to Paris. The best of them, the "Torture of a Vestal," is now at the Museum of Lille; it is dated 1857. There is every year an official report on these remittances from Rome. Speaking of this work of Baudry's, the reporter expressed the fear lest the painter should abandon too much the traditions of art—a singular judgment, as nobody has been, in one sense, more faithful to tradition than Baudry; only he found it where it really was, not with David, but with the great masters of the old times.

Besides his "Vestal," Baudry had sent, for his first public exhibition, a picture which is now in the Museum of the Luxembourg, and which is a true revelation of his own peculiar genius. It was "Fortune and the Child." It is a charming picture; the sleeping infant, the goddess in her chaste nudity, the landscape, all remind the spectator forcibly of the Venetian masters, of Palma Vecchio, of Giorgione, of Titian himself. Baudry had assimilated the grace, the golden color, the easy and harmonious lines, the *je ne sais quoi* of the school of Venice. He had sent also some smaller pictures—"Saint John the Baptist in his childhood," a lovely picture: the portrait of the young son of Mme. S—; and a "Leda." To this first period belong also the "Magdalene," painted in 1858 (which is now in the Museum of Nantes), and the "Toilet of Venus" (which is in the Museum of Bordeaux). These indications show that Baudry's pictures were bought, as an encouragement, by the state, and presented to the provincial museums; the public was not yet acquainted with him, though he had risen as it were almost immediately to the highest regions of art.

The Milanese and the Venetian painters were the first masters of Baudry. While he inspired himself with their works, he did not forget that nature is the greatest master after all, and he made portraits. I have sometimes heard people lament over the necessity under which some painters were placed to produce portraits in order

to make a living. I cannot sympathize with this sentiment. I am convinced that the greatest painters lose nothing and can gain much by portrait making. Nothing is really so rare as a good portrait, one which shows not only the physical man, but the intellectual, the moral man. Raphael made portraits; those of Van Dyck, of Rembrandt, of Rubens are among the highest works of art. The portraits of Baudry are also worthy of all attention. He exhibited in the Salon of 1857 his portrait of Beulé, who was a professor and a member of the French Academy, the author of a life of Augustus and of the Cæsars. It is impossible to forget this picture, full of realism and of life, which gave all the character of the personage. We can see in it the essential characteristics of the talent of Baudry. Why is it that he was in the end equally admired and beloved by the disciples of the old classic schools and by the most advanced realists and impressionists? It is because he always copied life, he painted what he saw; but he saw it not only with his optic nerve, he saw it also with his mind. He was able to choose in nature what suited him best, and what could take a place in some preconceived harmony of form and of color, but he did not create in his mind a factitious nature, he was at the same time a realist and an idealist.

Baudry painted portraits, among other persons, of M. Guizot (and this may be considered a masterpiece), of Guillaume, the sculptor, of Charles Garnier, the architect of the new Opéra, of Edmond About. Curiously enough, his portraits of men are more admired and are perhaps better than his portraits of women, though he was essentially the painter of feminine grace and beauty. There was perhaps something in the modern fashions which offended or crossed his taste. He made his portraits of men somewhat in the Flemish style, generally on dark grounds; he adopted, however, the Clouet style in the portraits of small dimensions, such as those of About, of Garnier, with their bluish or greenish background. The portrait of About is a marvel. It is not a miniature—it has more life, more independence; it is a concentrated form of art. Baudry, who was disdainful of money, often refused to make portraits; he always wished to have interesting models—interesting to him for some reason or other.

While he painted portraits, he never forgot the form of art for which he was peculiarly fitted. His "Pearl and Wave," which was exhibited in 1863 and was bought by Mr. Stewart, is a conception of exquisite charm. The Pearl is a woman who has been rolled by the waves, the color of which is opaline and pearly. The atmosphere is clear; the color has the blueness, the transparency which characterizes what may be called the decorative part of this artist's work.

We now arrive at the great work of Baudry—the decorative painting of the foyer of the Opéra. He had tried his hand, in the decorative style, in the small hôtel of Mme. de Païva, in the Champs Élysées, where he had treated some ceilings. He had also painted two panels, "Cybele" and "Amphitrite," for Mme. de Nadaillac's house. He had made some figures, symbolizing the towns of Italy, for the Duchess of Galliera. From the year 1865 Baudry disappears, as it were, for eight years; he devotes himself completely to the largest decorative work of our time. He first went to Rome again, and shut himself up in the Sistine Chapel; he made some copies of the Sibyls and of other figures, which, though they are copies, are masterpieces in their way. They are now in the Palace of the Beaux-Arts. It was not possible, of course, to recommence the Sistine Chapel, or the famous Hall of the Ten of the Ducal Palace of Venice in a modern opera-house. Baudry had to make a new and complete programme: it was a sort of apotheosis of the fine