

Herbert stands out as that of a fastidiously honourable and courteous gentleman in his dealings with the public, unselfish, loving, and lovable in his private life.

Sidney Herbert was the son of the eleventh Earl of Pembroke, and Catherine, the only daughter of Simon Count Woronzow, for many years Russian Ambassador in England. His singular charm manifested itself very early for, when between three and four years of age he appeared at a fête as Cupid, Lady Pembroke wrote subsequently "I never did see anything half so like an angel, I must say so, although it was my own performance. He had on a garland of roses and green leaves mixed; a pair of wild duck's wings, put on with wire to make them set well; a bow and arrow and a quiver with arrows in it, tied with a blue ribbon, that went across his sweet neck."

Again, the lady whom he married in 1846—the daughter of General Charles Ashe à Court, brother of the first Lord Heytesbury—fell in love with him at a very early age. There was much intimacy between the two families, who lived near one another in Wiltshire, and "Elizabeth was, as a mere child, fascinated by Sidney's beauty and charm, and announced to her family, as children do, that when she grew up she would marry that boy and no other."

#### A POLITICAL CAREER.

He entered Parliament as Tory member for Wiltshire in that momentous year, 1832, at the age of 22, and thenceforward his life was devoted to politics. In this connection we read "with all his aristocratic and conservative instincts, Sidney Herbert was a born reformer. His energies were always directed not to the petrification of existing institutions, but to improving them into increased usefulness"—an instinct which was of incalculable value to the nation when on the Declaration of War with Russia in 1854, he was filling the important position in Lord Aberdeen's Government of Secretary at War, an office merged since 1855 in that of Secretary of State for War. Up to that time the offices of Secretary of State for War and for the Colonies were combined.

#### THE CRIMEAN WAR.

For the causes which led to that war, the reader must be referred to the book itself, but it is evident that war was declared because of the hot-headed demand for it on the part of the nation rather than because the resources of diplomacy were exhausted. So high did feeling run that "it was whispered in private, and more or less plainly insinuated by the Press, that the Prince Consort and Lord Aberdeen

(who was working hard in the interests of peace), held secret if not treasonable intercourse with the Russian Government. On the day before the opening of Parliament crowds assembled at the Tower gates to see the Prince Consort and the Prime Minister committed to that fortress," and "one of the leading Radical organs—the *Morning Advertiser*—went so far as to intimate that it would be 'better that a few drops of guilty blood should be shed on a scaffold on Tower Hill than that the country should be balked in its desire for war!'"

#### THE SECRETARY AT WAR.

With the outbreak of war Sidney Herbert, who was in constant communication with Lord Raglan, General Estcourt, and others at the front, worked unceasingly to secure the efficiency of his department and to carry out suggestions made by the generals in command. Thus we find General Estcourt writing:—

"I am justified in my opinion in respect to the hospital orderlies of the propriety of having a set of men expressly set apart for that duty, a branch of the ambulance, by the concurrent opinion of every one to whom I have spoken on the subject, medical or military. . . . The step you have therefore taken with respect to these will meet with the thankful approbation of every man here, whether sick or well."

(In view of this statement in 1855, it is curious to find a deputation from the Matrons' Council to the War Office in 1901, still protesting against the employment of orderlies engaged in attending the sick for all kinds of other duties.)

Stores and medical comforts were sent out by Mr. Herbert in abundance, but many never reached their destination owing to the inefficiency of the transport service. Thus we find him insisting on an immediate and searching enquiry into the "scandalous confusion which takes place in the packing and loading of our ships for the East." He had ground for annoyance, for he had just received word from Scutari that the iron beds he had despatched had arrived, but that the legs were put into another ship and sent on to Balaclava! Another disaster which no human foresight could avert was a storm at sea, in which ships were wrecked which were laden with vast quantities of ammunition, provision, forage, and clothing. Worse than all, dysentery and cholera made their appearance,

#### HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

With the details of the nursing arrangements of the South African campaign, fresh in our memories, the story of the Crimea is interesting

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