whom we have met and helped; or there, the unpitied multitude whom we neglected or despised.

No other Witness need be summoned. No other charge than lovelessness shall be preferred. Be not deceived. The words which all of us shall one Day hear sound not of theology but of life, not of churches and saints but of the hungry and the poor, not of creeds and doctrines but of shelter and clothing, not of Bibles and prayer-books but of cups of cold water in the name of Christ.

Thank God the Christianity of to-day is coming nearer the world's need. Live to help that on. Thank God men know better, by a hairsbreadth, what religion is, what God is, who Christ is, where Christ is. Who is Christ? He who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick. And where is Christ? Where?—whoso shall receive a little child in My name receiveth Me. And who are Christ's? Every one that loveth is born of God.

HERBERT H. ASQUITH

RIGHT HON. HERBERT HENRY ASQUITH, P.C., M.P., K.C., English Liberal statesman and lawyer, was born at Morley, Yorkshire, Sept. 12, 1852. He was educated at the city of London School and Balliol College, Oxford. He was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, London, in 1876, appointed Queen's Counsel in 1890, and elected member of Parliament for East Fife in 1886, and again in 1892. Together with the Lord Chief-justice (then Sir Charles Russell) he was engaged on behalf of the late Irish leader, Charles Parnell, during the Parnell Commission. In August, 1892, he was mover of the amendment to the Queen's Speech, which led to the division fatal to Lord Salisbury's government. When Mr. Gladstone formed his ministry, he was appointed Home Secretary, was sworn of the Privy Council, and placed on the Ecclesiastical Commission. During the labor disputes of 1893, Mr. Asquith took a consistent attitude which commanded the approval of Parliament, and in 1894 he acted as arbitrator in the London cab strike. In February, 1893, he was nominated for the lord rectorship of Glasgow. As a speaker, he has shown high gifts of oratory, somewhat qualified by an academic manner. He belongs to the Imperial wing of the Liberal party.

ISSUES—TRUE AND FALSE

SPEECH DELIVERED AT LADYBANK, ENGLAND, SEPTEMBER 15, 1900

I COME before you this afternoon in the novel and somewhat embarassing position of a man who is under sentence of death, but who has not yet been acquainted with the date of the execution; but if all we hear, or half of what we hear, is true, desperate efforts are at this moment being made by a large number of those who were responsible for bringing the present Parliament into life to hurry it prematurely out of existence. I cannot tell you, for I have no information, whether these endeavours are likely to be successful, but I am happy to think, whether they succeed or fail, that we can view the result in East Fife with considerable equanimity.

Fife, I have more than once in days gone by had occasion to remind you, has an unbroken Liberal tradition, and whether the election comes next week or next spring, or this time next year, I believe we are still as prepared as ever to speak with our enemy within the gate. If I may adopt for a moment the military dialect, which comes so natural to one's lips in these days, I should say that there is not a town or a village in this county in which the Liberal party has not its pom-poms in readiness, and unless I am mistaken there are not a few places at this moment apparently slumbering in quietness—in apathy—in which the moment when hostilities are declared Long Toms of the latest pattern will be unmasked. We have in days gone by, you and I, encountered and defeated opposition more formidable, as far as I can judge, than any which menaces us at the present moment. In the great general stampede of 1895 you stood firm, and inflicted upon a confident enemy a blow from which he seems only now to have partially recovered, and while I am certain that you will omit, when the hour strikes, no precaution, and will strain every nerve, I cannot bring myself for a moment to doubt that East Fife will maintain its historical record as an impregnable fortress of Liberalism.

That the Tory party throughout the country are eager, are anxious, for an immediate dissolution is beyond dispute. It is true that the register is exhausted; it includes numbers who have no title, and excludes numbers who have the best title, to record a vote. But the majority of the Government in both Houses of Parliament is still unimpaired, and to hold a general election under such conditions is without any precedent in our history, and it has been prophetically denounced by the oracle of latter-day Toryism, the late Lord Beaconsfield himself. But all these considerations count for nothing, and are swallowed up in absorbing apprehension of what may happen if an appeal to the country is delayed for twelve months, or even six months. The election is to be hustled on. Why? In order that the issue may be artificially narrowed. The patriotic fervour which has animated the whole nation is to be exploited, if possible, in the interests of a particular party. Finance, domestic legislation, social reform, the unfulfilled pledges of 1895, the subventions by which during these five years the prosperity of our national resources has been frittered away to particular interests and classes, even the conduct and management of the war itself, all these gloomy and inconvenient topics are to be huddled out of sight.

The fear of the future is clothing from top to bottom the Tory party. From the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs down to the humblest member of the rank and file of the supporters of the strongest Government of modern times there has gone up during the past few weeks a pleasing chorus of appeal to the silent figure at the polls. "In Heaven's name let us get it over before all the gas is out of the balloon." Is there any other hypothesis which explains the fact? It is certainly not the case that our opponents have become converted to the doctrine of shorter Parliaments. We are still under a seven years' law, reduced by constitutional practice to six years. There are many of us —I, myself, am one of them—who are strongly of opinion that there ought to be a further curtailment of the normal duration of the life of the House of Commons. But what is the argument which weighs with us in support of that view? It is that you may assure that the representative body at any time should be an accurate reflection, and therefore a more faithful organ of the opinions and sentiments

of those which it professes to represent. We can hardly imagine a method better calculated to defeat the object than to hold an election upon a reduced register, from which is shut out practically every man in the country whose qualification is not at least two years old.

Before I proceed to examine in a little more detail the pretences which are put forth in support of this appeal let me ask you this question—What is the purpose or function of a general election? This—is it not?—that the people may determine upon what lines, in what spirit, and by what men their affairs shall be conducted, it may be, for the next six years. Never in the history of mankind have responsibilities so heavy and interests so complex been entrusted to the stewardship and to the judgment of the democracy. Our empire, if you include in it the territories for which we are indirectly responsible, covers some thirteen millions of square miles, and contains a population largely exceeding four hundred millions of human beings. We have at home some forty millions of people, vast numbers of whom are living and working under conditions which are a disgrace to humanity,—slaves of intemperance, victims of overcrowding, enjoying in many cases of freedom in the real sense nothing but the empty name. Our industrial supremacy was never more seriously menaced; there is not a market in the world in which we are not finding every day we have to face the increasing severity of competition. Our administrative system, in some departments at any rate, under the strain of recent events has exhibited rents and creakings and leakages which are seen of all thinking men. It is time it should be properly and effectively overhauled. We have added steadily year by year to our territorial burdens, and we are adding this year to our National Debt. We have to

face this growing array of problems, the difficulties at home and abroad, and the constantly diminishing share of the goodwill of the rest of the human race. I ask you—I ask my fellow-countrymen—are we to be told that the nation, solemnly invoked to pronounce its judgment upon this world-wide theme of interests and duties, is practically to confine its function to the small corner which we call South Africa, and to think of nothing, to listen to nothing, to vote about nothing but the war? That is not the way in which I read the Constitution, and whenever the dissolution takes place, be it soon or late, there are those of us, at any rate, who will do our best to bring home to the electorate the length and breadth of the issues upon which they will be called upon to make up their minds.

You will not suppose from what I have said that I am going now or hereafter to shirk the question of the war. Indeed, one of my chief purposes in addressing you this evening is to deal with that topic, and to endeavour to discuss, as temperately and candidly as I can, what, if any, are the issues which at the stage we have now reached the war presents. I don't think I can do better than take as my text the electioneering letter that has been published this week from the pen of Mr. Chamberlain. The genesis of that curious document is not obscure; it is written to support the candidature of Mr. Frederick Lambton, who is standing as the Unionist candidate for one of the divisions of Durham. Now, it so happens that up to now no incident in connection with the coming election has done more to disconcert those whom I may call the khaki wirepullers than the appearance as a Liberal candidate of Captain Hedworth Lambton, the gallant defender of Ladysmith, and one of the notable figures of the war. Captain Lambton is not only a Liberal, but

a fighting Liberal, and as at Ladysmith, so now, he keeps his batteries in good working order. It was only a week or two ago that a well-directed shell from one of them severely wounded the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who has since judiciously retired out of range. Well, this kind of thing is peculiarly annoying to Mr. Chamberlain, who cannot understand how anyone can presume to call himself a friend of the Empire, to be proud of its great traditions, and alive to its still greater responsibilities, and yet decline to prostrate himself before this strident and vulgarized Imperialism which of late has been the fashion of the hour. Hence it is, at least we may so conjecture, that Mr. Frederick Lambton is the recipient of this letter, which for boldness of statement and innuendo I think deserves a high place among compositions of its class. What does Mr. Chamberlain tell his correspondent? He says that the majority of the Liberal party are opposed to the war and to a satisfactory settlement, that it was his predecessors in office that allowed the question to drift, and that there is every reason to fear that if they were now to be returned to power they would be ready to throw away, in regard to that settlement the position so hardly gained by the sacrifices of the war.

Let me for a few moments examine those statements in detail. And, first of all, what is the meaning of the first of them—that the majority of the Liberal party are opposed to war? As regards the causes of the war there have, of course, been wide differences of opinion. I am one of those who think, and I have never disguised my views, as you know, that the ultimate responsibility for the war does not rest upon the shoulders of the Government or the people in this country. The holding of the opinion, may I add, does not imply any approval of or sympathy with the manner and methods of what is called the new diplomacy. The real fault of our diplomacy in this particular matter, as it has always seemed to me, is not so much that it was unsuccessful in averting the war as that, we having, as I believe we had, a good case, it was so handled and so presented to the world that a very large proportion of the civilized opinion of mankind believed, and still believes, we had a very bad case indeed.

But that does not affect, nor, I think, ought to affect my judgment. The war was not of our seeking, but was forced upon us against our will. There are distinguished men, some of them of our own party, who have always taken a different view, and who have held that the war was provoked, or at any rate could have been prevented, by this country. But those who hold that view, and hold it conscientiously, should have held it throughout. There is not, I undertake to say, one in a thousand who, after the war was declared, and British territory invaded did not approve of the prosecution of the war and the voting of all the supplies necessary for the purpose. All classes in this country, whatever may have been their views—all classes in this country, without distinction of party, have shared with one heart in the anxieties and in the trials of the struggle. All have contributed freely both from public and private sources, all have shown themselves ready to offer the greatest of all sacrifices—the lives of those whom they love best. I say, then, the question whether the war could or could not have been obviated is one upon which historians and moralists will probably differ to the end of time, but there is no body of responsible politicians in this country but will hold it is the first duty of the country to bring the war to a successful and satisfactory issue.

Mr. Chamberlain's next suggestion or insinuation, whichever it is to be called, that his predecessor allowed affairs in South Africa to drift deserves, I think, only two or three sentences of passing comment. Mr. Chamberlain knows, or ought to know, that for a long time the Outlanders in the Transvaal deprecated any intervention on the part of the home Government, and it was only when their term of office was drawing to a close that Lord Loch was instructed to make representations on their behalf. The arming of the South African Republic began to a serious extent in 1895, when the present Government came into power, and continued with a great and increasing activity for four years, until the Transvaal had become, as we know to our own cost, an armed camp of the most formidable kind. Now, it does not lie in the mouth of the statesman who allowed all this to go on without remonstrance or check and made no endeavour whatsoever to provide for the protection of two British colonies against the risk of invasion—I say it does not lie in the mouth of a statesman with that record to reproach his predecessors or any one else with having pursued a policy of drift. Mr. Chamberlain, I think, was singularly inspired when out of the whole dictionary he selected that word as a missile to throw at us, for it is that word "drift" that is written in the largest possible capitals at the top of every page of our dealings with South Africa from 1895 to 1899.

Mr. Chamberlain, in his anxiety to discredit the Opposition and to make party capital if he can out of the national emergency, goes on to declare that a majority of the Liberal Party are opposed to a satisfactory settlement; that the Liberal Party, if it were returned to power, would throw away the results of the war. What and where is the evidence of

that allegation? Everyone who looks at the matter dispassionately must agree that the state of things at present is too fluid and chaotic, and any information too imperfect and fragmentary, to make the presentation of a cut and dried scheme for the future of South Africa within the range of statesmanship. I speak not my own mind only, but the opinion of the majority of those with whom I am politically associated, when I say that it is clear that the two communities or territories recently annexed must be, and will be, permanently incorporated with the British Empire.

It is quite true, as I believe, that when last year we were seeking to obtain from President Kruger adequate guarantees for the civil and political freedom of our countrymen in the Transvaal, it formed no part of the policy of any responsible statesman to put an end to the existing status of the two Republics. That was not our object at all. We were prepared to guarantee the independence of both if President Kruger on his side would concede reforms which public opinion in this country declared to be both expedient and necessary. I have seen quoted a phrase of my own, used, I think, at Dundee nearly a year ago, as though I had declared that under no conditions or circumstances could annexation be defensible. Anyone who reads the context of what I said will see that I was protesting, as I should protest with equal emphasis now, against annexation in any such sense or shape as to involve the subordination of Boer to Briton, that negation of the doctrine of equality, the substitution of the artificial ascendancy of one race for the artificial ascendancy of another. I repeatedly in speech declared that we ought not to prejudge the form as distinct from the principle of the settlement.

At the same time, I do not hesitate to say that it has not

been without reluctance that I arrived at the conclusion that only by annexation can what are the central, the capital objects of a wise South African policy be attained. Like most liberals, and I suppose a considerable number even of our opponents, I regret, except in a case of clear proof, the necessity of the extinction of small States with a history and a patriotism of their own, and the enlargements of the areas and the burdens of British responsibilities. But no lover of freedom need shed any tears for the disappearance of the South African Republic—an unhappy specimen of one of the worst kinds of political imposture, a caricature or mockery of liberty under a democratic form. The case of the Orange Free State stands on a different footing. It was, on the whole, a well-governed community, with whom we had no cause of quarrel whatever, and whose integrity and independence we were prepared scrupulously to respect, provided only it would maintain neutrality in the war. Whether under the pressure of supposed treaty obligations or under the impulse of a chivalrous sympathy with their kinsmen, or from other and more mixed motives, the Free State, unhappily, became joint aggressors with the South African Republic. They invaded our colonies, they contemplated annexing our territories, and they showed themselves as great enemies as the Boers themselves. We, therefore, are as free in their case as in the case of the Transvaal to take such steps as seems best in the general interests of South Africa. The war has taught us many things which we did not know before. It has revealed to us the existence of dangers which under less favourable conditions—for instance had our hands been entangled in some complication elsewhere—might have cost us South Africa. The possible recurrence of these dangers it is our duty to prevent. A little reflection, I think will show that any measures actually effected for this purpose would require as much interference with the sovereignty or independence in any real sense of these two Republics as their incorporation in the British Empire.

I will go further and I will say this: A little group of protected or vassal States, with their privileges and obligations defined, or sought to be defined, by written conventions, possessing neither the reality of independence nor the full status of partners in the Empire, is, in my judgment, of all possible attempts to solve the South African problem, the one which would be attended with a maximum of friction and a minimum of possible permanence. For these and many other reasons, with which time will not permit me to deal fully to-night, I have come to the conclusion that the annexations recently made are irrevocable, and that no Government, to whatever party in the State it might belong, could or would undo what has been done, and, so far as I know, that is the opinion of the vast majority of the Liberal party. Mr. Chamberlain mentions in his letter Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, our leader in the House of Commons. As far back as last Whitsuntide, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, I think at Glasgow, expressed substantially the same conviction which I have just laid before you. So far, then, as the settlement has yet proceeded—the incorporation of the two Republics in the Empire—there is no shadow of foundation for Mr. Chamberlain's statement that the majority of the Liberal party is opposed to a satisfactory settlement.

The annexation of the conquered territory is of course the first step. It is far easier to tear down a bad state of matters than to build up a good state of matters to take its place; but as to the difficult future which lies before us, two

main aims of our policy have been clearly proclaimed by statements from both sides of politics, and do not, as far as I know, form the subject matter of controversy. Let me recapitulate them in a few sentences. In the first place, as I have said, we must guard against the renewal of the dangers and struggles which we hope are now coming to an end. In the next place, as soon as the exigencies of order will allow, we must set to work to lay the foundations of that system of equal civil and political rights which has been the avowed purpose of our action. Lastly, in the years that are to come it will be our imperative duty to promote by every means in our power the mitigation and gradual extinction of racial animosities, so that in South Africa, as in Canada and elsewhere, the British flag may be alike when it waves over the conquered territories and over our old colonies, the symbol of that which is the life-giving and life-preserving principle of our empire—the union and blending of local patriotism with Imperial loyalty. In working out that task, if we are to succeed, it can only be by removing South Africa from the contentious field of politics here at home, and for my part I deprecate as the worst disservice that could at this moment be done to the Empire, from whatever quarter it may proceed, the creating of fictitious differences for party benefit.

But while neither the origin of the conflict nor the character of the statesmen are matters for the present moment, there are a number of questions arising out of the conduct of the war the answer to which must to a large extent govern our decision on the policy and foresight of the Government, and which also are of vital importance to the efficiency of our army as a fighting and administrative machine and to the maintenance of our Empire in the future. To take

two or three illustrations, I may mention the character and quality of our guns, the constitution and management of the transport and the medical services, the training both of our officers and men, and, above all, the adequacy of our home defences when we are engaged in a distant war. As regards all these matters there is grave, widespread, and well-justified disquietude. I observe that Mr. Brodrick the other day selected—I observed it with a good deal of amusement—as one of the main reasons of what is called the khaki resolution that the Government wanted a mandate from the country to reform the War Office. It was Mr. Brodrick who succeeded in turning out the late Government on a question of army administration. During the first three years of the present Government he himself occupied a distinguished and responsible post at the War Office. They had their mandate, but apparently they were so dissatisfied with the use they had made of it that they are now calling to the country to give them another. Why, some of the most serious problems connected with the condition of the army and the conduct of the war are at this moment a subject of actual or promised inquiry—an additional illustration, if it is neded, of the absurdity and insincerity of this clamour for immediate dissolution. Two things, I submit, are abundantly clear—the first, that the time has come for an overhauling of our army system, both on its civil and military side, in the same large spirit in which a similar task was taken up by Lord Cardwell thirty years ago; and the second is that the task will not be accomplished unless you put at the head of the War Office a man who knows his own mind and can get his own way. Whether the best means of accomplishing these desirable results is to give a fresh mandate to the gentlemen who ask for it on the strength of

five years of failure—that is a matter for the electors to determine.

I have devoted the main part of my observations to questions connected with the war, because it is necessary, first, to clear the ground of false issues in order that the real issues which the country will have to decide may be seen in their true proportion and perspective. The real question, as I said at the outset, is this: In what spirit and by what methods do you desire your Government to be conducted? Are you satisfied with the record of the last five years? Does it inspire you with pride in the past or with confidence for the future? What of the national finances? Six years ago Sir William Harcourt remodelled the death duties. He was denounced by the whole Tory party for striking a death blow at the accumulation of capital and the prosperity of the country. His censors have been living on those death duties ever since, and they have provided out of them a magnificent annual endowment for some of those friendly interests which are their most useful allies. They raided the sinking fund in a time of unexampled prosperity in order to avoid the unpopularity of imposing fresh taxation. It is in the same spirit that they are now dealing with the expenses of the war. Is the country, I ask you, so dead to the great traditions of Peel and of Gladstone that it is going to condone this pusillanimous finance?

Look at the field of social reform. Has there ever been a Government which, with an irresistible majority for five years in both Houses of Parliament, promised so much and accomplished so little? Think of the promises which were placarded over every wall in 1895. Old-age pensions. Well, that was not a promise, by the way; it was only a proposal. Nevertheless it was good enough to catch votes. What has

become of it? Relegated first to one Committee and then to another to try to devise a scheme, until years had elapsed, and there was no money left in the Exchequer. Compensation for accidents—promised to all, and given, even if you take the latest supplement into account, to perhaps little more than half of the working population of the country. The problem of overcrowding, one of the greatest and most urgent which could confront them, met by two tinkering measures which are a mockery to statesmanship. Temperance, declared six years ago by a leading member of the present Government to be the most urgent of all social questions, and not advanced by one single proposal. I might add indefinitely to the list. What has been done for secondary and technical education, our deficiencies in which are threatening our industrial supremacy? What has been done for a fairer and better adjustment of local taxation? What attempt has been made to grasp and grapple with the problems that are connected with ownership and occupation of land? Can we wonder that this catalogue of pledges shirked and reforms attempted—can we wonder at the feverish anxiety to hold an election while the Union Jack is still waving, and criticism, as it is fondly hoped, can be met and drowned in the strains of "Rule Britannia" and "Soldiers of the Queen?"

The last word of counsel I will venture to offer to my fellow-Liberals here and elsewhere is this; it is contained in one single word, "Concentration." Eschew side issues, self interests, personal rivalries. If we fight and work in that spirit, whether the election comes soon or late, and whether fortune smiles or frowns, we shall have done what in us lies to maintain the traditions of a great party, and to open for our country in the dawning century a nobler and more fruitful chapter of its history.