

**LADY PALMERSTON  
AND HER TIMES, IN  
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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Lady Palmerston and Her Times, in Two Volumes, Vol. I by Mabell Airlie

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**MABELL AIRLIE**

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LORD BEAUVALE.  
From the picture at Panshanger.

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# LADY PALMERSTON AND HER TIMES

BY

MABELL, COUNTESS OF AIRLIE

AUTHOR OF 'IN WHIG SOCIETY'

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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## INTRODUCTION

THE letters which are published for the first time in this volume formed part of the voluminous correspondence between Lord Beauvale and his sister Lady Cowper, who became later the wife of Lord Palmerston. The writers were the son and daughter of Elizabeth, Lady Melbourne, whose own letters were published in a former volume.<sup>1</sup> The new letters give a picture of Europe in the same state of transition as that in which we ourselves live. We, the puppets of 1922, can compare the daily, nay hourly, events of our own passing times with those which changed the world after the more prolonged but less devastating wars of the Napoleonic Era. The same cries of despair from the poor as bad harvests succeeded one another, the same bitter complaints of the so-called rich at the burden of destructive taxation, were heard as we hear them now. In Ireland, the green land whence St. Patrick cast forth all the venomous beasts save one, the dragon of discontent still menaces the peace of Great Britain. The circumstances are the same, though the times and the men and their methods of dealing with the problems of government are changed.

<sup>1</sup> *In Whig Society.*

The history of the age which succeeded the Napoleonic Wars is concerned chiefly with reconstruction. The peoples of every nation of Europe rose in revolt against the universal absolutism which had stifled and crushed the finer feelings and nobler aspirations of humanity. Canning boasted of having called in the New World in its simplicity to redress the balance of the Old. Anarchy had taken a bitter revenge on the power of absolutism, but Europe was sick of bloodshed and confusion, and sought for peace in freedom, not a liberty bought by a hideous licence. Every nation demanded a constitution to safeguard its rights and aspirations. There is no greater testimony to the sound principles of our English polity than the demand from all the nations of Europe for a constitution resembling that of the British Isles.

The divisions in politics were represented gradually by new names, which were the outcome of the changes in Society. The old Whig aristocracy no longer completely controlled the party of progress and reform. Radicals, Peelites, Repealers were names that, as years went on, were heard jostling each other in political conversations. Socially there was but little alteration until after the death of King George iv., and the letters of young Lady Cowper are often written from Brighton, either from the Pavilion itself, where she was the guest of the Prince Regent, or from the house of Lord