

ENGLAND AND THE NEW ERA

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England and the new era by Brougham Villiers

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BROUGHAM VILLIERS

**ENGLAND AND
THE NEW ERA**

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THE NEW ERA**

**BOOKS BY
BROUGHAM VILLIERS**

**THE OPPORTUNITY OF
LIBERALISM**

**THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT
IN ENGLAND**

MODERN DEMOCRACY

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ENGLAND AND THE NEW ERA

BY
BROUGHAM VILLIERS

[F. J. Snare]

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PREFACE

BEFORE this book leaves my hands I want to repeat the explanation given in the text for dealing specially with England, rather than with the United Kingdom as a whole. Scotland and England are so closely united, spiritually as well as politically, that it is hardly conceivable that either bond should ever be broken. For all that the qualities of each are so valuable that it would be a great misfortune if either ever lost its identity. This they are little likely to do in a world where it is to be hoped nationality will play a greater part than ever before. Had I been a Scotsman I would gladly have written a book on *Scotland and the New Era*, but I wish throughout to emphasize my position that not merely the United Kingdom but every nationality within it should think out the problems of the New Era for itself, forming its associations whatever they are, even with its most intimate friends, in absolute freedom. Self-determination, in the most complete sense of the term, for England and Scotland is about the last thing in the world to lead to separation or unfriendliness between the two nations.

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Blow, winds of March ! and clear these leaden skies,
Dissolve in driving showers the winter's snows ;
Blow where, in leafless sleep, the woodland lies,
Where the pale snowdrop grows.

Blow ! winds of March, where yet the crocus hides
Its coming wealth of gold blow warm, and fill
With flowers the mossy hollow, where abides
The frost-bound daffodil.

Blow, winds of THOUGHT ! Dispel our winter's gloom,
Blow with stern breath on tyranny and power :
Let human life as doth the spring-tide bloom,
And bring the PEOPLE'S HOUR.

England and the New Era

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

SIXTEEN years ago I published a little book entitled *The Opportunity of Liberalism*. It was written under circumstances in some respects similar to those of the present time. A Conservative Government was in office, supported by a formidable majority, returned not long before for a second time on what was supposed to be the conclusion of a great war. The claims on which the Government had secured its majority had proved to be ill-founded, and pledges given to the electors had already been violated, while the victories of the Opposition at almost every by-election had shown that the people appreciated these facts. Though the war had been proclaimed at an end in 1900, the careers of De Wet and other guerilla leaders had made the claims to a final victory made after Paardeburg look ridiculous; almost as much blood and treasure had been expended after the General Election as before it. Pledges freely