

CHAPTER VII.

FROM THE CRIMEAN WAR TO THE DEATH OF LORD PALMERSTON.

1853-1865.

WHEN Lord Derby's ministry was forced to resign, in December 1852, English politics presented a spectacle which has never been exactly paralleled before or since. The Liberals and Conservatives were each divided into two opposing sections, kept apart by the most effective barrier—the personal animosities of their sectional chiefs. After the tricks they had played on each other, Russell and Palmerston could not easily combine, while the Peelite and the Protectionist Conservatives still looked on each other as traitors. The Peelites thought of Disraeli and his friends as the betrayers of their great dead leader; the Protectionists retorted that the Peelites had betrayed the old principles of their party when they followed Sir Robert in his conversion to Free Trade. But every one felt that the business of the country must somehow be carried on, and after a prolonged deadlock a coalition was patched up.

Coalition of
Whigs and
Peelites—
Lord Aber-
deen's minis-
try.

Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston agreed to serve together in the same ministry, but neither was to be premier. They took the Peelites into partnership, and gave the position of prime minister to Lord Aberdeen, who had been Peel's lieutenant at the Foreign Office. He was a worthy, well-intentioned man, and a scholar of merit, but certainly more