

CHAPTER VII

FOUNDATIONS OF RELEASE

I. Knowledge with Power.

It will not, however, appeal to men of good sense that amid the great changes that are now ensuing, we should be too sure of our capacity for "muddling through." Since our greatest successes in emerging from periods of tension very much has happened, and as I show in the last chapter, still more is in process of happening. The destinies of England have passed into the control of the people, who have political power almost as complete as they could possibly enjoy it. The women under thirty only excepted, England to-day has universal suffrage. What is of not less but probably much greater importance, these people have the liberty to use it, free from intimidation or coercion, and they are rapidly becoming conscious of its effective strength. This, together with the growing command of the people over industry and the prospects of their accession to greater material reward, involves, in its cumulative effect, a bigger, more sudden, and more portentous step than anything that has occurred in this country since the Reformation. The great events which produced modern England, for example, occurred in gradual