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EDITORIAL NOTE

WHEN his Majesty the King decided to sanction the publication of the Second Series of *The Letters of Queen Victoria*, it was intended that the Royal correspondence should be brought down to the close of 1885. This seemed to be the natural break, as it was in the winter of 1885–6 that Mr. Gladstone definitely adopted the policy of Irish Home Rule, and by so doing changed the whole face of national politics; and it was just after 1885 that there emerged, to take a leading part in public affairs during the closing years of the Queen's reign, some statesmen who are happily still with us, notably Lord Rosebery and Lord Balfour.

Owing, however, to various circumstances, the original scheme was not carried out in its entirety, and the two volumes published in February 1926 only covered the years 1862–1878. The present volume, therefore, covering the years 1879–1885, completes the Second Series as originally conceived. The Editor has to thank the same ready helpers as before, with the addition of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who has kindly placed at his disposal some letters of Queen Victoria written in 1882.

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