Title: A History of the Four Georges, Volume II

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Release date: November 22, 2007 [eBook #23470]

Language: English

VOLUME II (OF 4)*

E-text prepared by Al Haines

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A HISTORY OF THE FOUR GEORGES

by

JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M.P.

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In Four Volumes

VOL. II.

New York Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square 1901

NOTE.

While this volume was passing through the press, *The English Historical Review* published an interesting article by Prof. J. K. Laughton on the subject of Jenkins's Ear. Professor Laughton, while lately making some researches in the Admiralty records, came on certain correspondence which appears to have escaped notice up to that time, and he regards it as incidentally confirming the story of Jenkins's Ear, "which for certainly more than a hundred years has generally been believed to be a fable." The correspondence, in my opinion, leaves the story exactly as it found it. We only learn from it that Jenkins made a complaint about his ear to the English naval commander at Port Royal, who received the tale with a certain incredulity, but nevertheless sent formal report of it to the Admiralty, and addressed a remonstrance to the Spanish authorities. But as Jenkins told his story to every one he met, it is not very surprising that he should have told it to the English admiral. No one doubts that a part of one of Jenkins's ears was cut off; it will be seen in this volume that he actually at one time exhibited the severed part; but the question is, How did it come to be severed? It might have been cut off in the ordinary course of a scuffle with the Spanish revenue-officers who tried to search his vessel. The point of the story is that Jenkins said the ear was deliberately severed, and that the severed part was flung in his face, with the insulting injunction to take that home to his king. Whether Jenkins told the simple truth or indulged in a little fable is a question which the recently published correspondence does not in any way help us to settle.

J. McC.

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A HISTORY

OF

THE FOUR GEORGES.

CHAPTER XXI.

BOLINGBROKE ROUTED AGAIN.

While "the King's friends" and the Patriots, otherwise the Court party and the country party, were speech-making and pamphleteering, one of the greatest English pamphleteers, who was also one of the masters of English fiction, passed quietly out of existence. On April 24, 1731, Daniel Defoe died. It does not belong to the business of this history to narrate the life or describe the works of Defoe. The book on which his fame will chiefly rest was published just twenty years before his death. "Robinson Crusoe" first thrilled the world in 1719. "Robinson Crusoe" has a place in literature as unassailable as "Gulliver's Travels" or as "Don Quixote." Rousseau in his "Émile" declares that "Robinson Crusoe" should for a long time be his pupil's sole library, and that it would ever after through life be to him one of his dearest intellectual companions. At the present time, it is said, English school-boys do not read "Robinson Crusoe." There are laws of literary reaction in the tastes of school-boys as of older people. There were days when the English public did not read Shakespeare; but it was certain that Shakespeare would come up again, and it is certain that "Robinson Crusoe" will come up again. Defoe

had been {2} a fierce fighter in the political literature of his time, and that was a trying time for the political gladiator. He had, according to his own declaration, been thirteen times rich and thirteen times poor. He had always written according to his convictions, and he had a spirit that no enemy could cow, and that no persecution could break. He had had the most wonderful ups and downs of fortune. He had been patronized by sovereigns and persecuted by statesmen. He had been fined; he had been pensioned; he had been sent on political missions by one minister, and he had been clapped into Newgate by another. He had been applauded in the streets and he had been hooted in the pillory. Had he not written "Robinson Crusoe" he would still have held a high place in English literature, because of the other romances that came from his teeming brain, and because of the political tracts that made so deep and lasting an impression even in that age of famous political tracts. But "Robinson Crusoe" is to his other works like Aaron's serpent, or the "one master-passion in the breast," which the poet has compared with it—it "swallows all the rest." "While all ages and descriptions of people," says Charles Lamb, "hang delighted over the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, and will continue to do so, we trust, while the world lasts, how few comparatively will bear to be told that there exist other fictitious narratives by the same writer—four of them at least of no inferior interest, except what results from a less felicitous choice of situation. 'Roxana,' 'Singleton,' 'Moll Flanders,' 'Colonel Jack,' are all genuine offsprings of the same father. They bear the veritable impress of Defoe. Even an unpractised midwife would swear to the nose, lip, forehead, and eye of every one of them. They are, in their way, as full of incident, and some of them every bit as romantic; only they want the uninhabited island, and the charm, that has bewitched the world, of the striking solitary situation." Defoe died in poverty and solitude—"alone with his glory." It is perhaps not uncurious to note that in the same month of the same year, 1731, on {3} April 8th, "Mrs. Elizabeth Cromwell, daughter of Richard Cromwell, the Protector, and granddaughter of Oliver Cromwell, died at her house in Bedford Row, in the eighty-second year of her age."

[Sidenote: 1733—Gay's request]

The death of Gay followed not long after that of Defoe. The versatile author of "The Beggars' Opera" had been sinking for some years into a condition of almost unrelieved despondency. He had had some disappointments, and he was sensitive, and took them too much to heart. He had had brilliant successes, and he had devoted friends, but a slight failure was more to him than a great success, and what he regarded as the falling-off of one friend was for the time of more account to him than the steady and faithful friendship of many men and women. Shortly before his death he wrote: "I desire, my dear Mr. Pope, whom I love as my own soul, if you survive me, as you certainly will, if a stone should mark the place of my grave, see these words put upon it:

"'Life is a jest and all things show it:
I thought so once, but now I know it.'"

Gay died in the house of his friends, the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry, on December 4, 1732. He was buried near the tomb of Chaucer in Westminster Abbey, and a monument was set up to his memory, bearing on it Pope's famous epitaph which contains the line, "In wit a man, simplicity a child." Gay is but little known to the present generation. Young people or old people do not read his fables any more—those fables which Rousseau thought worthy of special discussion in his great treatise on Education. The gallant Captain Macheath swaggers and sings across the operatic stage no more, nor are tears shed now for pretty Polly Peachum's troubles. Yet every day some one quotes from Gay, and does not know what he is quoting from.

Walpole was not magnanimous towards enemies who had still the power to do him harm. When the enemy could hurt him no longer, Walpole felt anger no longer; {4} but it was not his humor to spare any man who stood in his way and resisted him. If he was not magnanimous, at least he did not affect magnanimity. He did not pretend to regard with contempt or indifference men whom in his heart he believed to be formidable opponents. It was a tribute to the capacity of a public man to be disliked by Walpole; a still higher tribute to be dreaded by him. One of the men whom the great minister was now beginning to hold in serious dislike and dread was Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield. Born in 1694, Chesterfield was still what would be called in political life a young man; he was not quite forty. He had led a varied and somewhat eccentric career. His father, a morose man, had a coldness for him. Young Stanhope, according to his own account, was an absolute pedant at the university. "When I talked my best I quoted Horace; when I aimed at being facetious I quoted Martial; and when I had a mind to be a fine gentleman I talked Ovid. I was convinced that none but the ancients had common-sense; that the classics contained everything that was either necessary, useful, or ornamental to me; . . . and I was not even without thoughts of wearing the *toga virilis* of the Romans, instead of the vulgar and illiberal dress of the moderns." Later he had been a devotee of fashion and the gambling-table, was a man of fashion, and a gambler still. He had travelled; had seen and studied life in many countries and cities and courts; had seen and studied many phases of life. He professed to be dissipated and even

licentious, but he had an ambitious and a daring spirit. He well knew his own great gifts, and he knew also and frankly recognized the defects of character and temperament which were likely to neutralize their influence. If he entered the House of Commons before the legal age, if for long he preferred pleasure to politics, he was determined to make a mark in the political world. We shall see much of Chesterfield in the course of this history; we shall see how utterly unjust and absurd is the common censure which sets him down as a literary and political {5} fribble; we shall see that his speeches were so good that Horace Walpole declares that the finest speech he ever listened to was one of Chesterfield's; we shall see how bold he could be, and what an enlightened judgment he could bring to bear on the most difficult political questions; we shall see how near he went to genuine political greatness.

[Sidenote: 1733—Chesterfield's character]

It is not easy to form a secure opinion as to the real character of Chesterfield. If one is to believe the accounts of some of the contemporaries who came closest to him and ought to have known him best, Chesterfield had scarcely one great or good quality of heart. His intellect no one disputed, but no one seems to have believed that he had any savor of truth or honor or virtue. Hervey, who was fond of beating out fancies fine, is at much pains to compare and contrast Chesterfield with Scarborough and Carteret. Thus, while Lord Scarborough was always searching after truth, loving it, and adhering to it, Chesterfield and Carteret were both of them most abominably given to fable, and both of them often, unnecessarily and consequently indiscreetly so; "for whoever would lie usefully should lie seldom." Lord Scarborough had understanding, with judgment and without wit; Lord Chesterfield a speculative head, with wit and without judgment. Lord Scarborough had honor and principle, while Chesterfield and Carteret treated all principles of honesty and integrity with such open contempt that they seemed to think the appearance of these qualities would be of as little use to them as the reality. In short, Lord Scarborough was an honest, prudent man, capable of being a good friend, while Lord Chesterfield and Carteret were dishonest, imprudent creatures, whose principles practically told all their acquaintance, "If you do not behave to me like knaves, I shall either distrust you as hypocrites or laugh at you as fools."

We have said already in this history that a reader, in getting at an estimate of the character of Lord Hervey, will have to strike a sort of balance for himself between {6} the extravagant censure flung at him by his enemies and the extravagant praise blown to him by his friends. But we find no such occasion or opportunity for striking a balance in the case of Lord Chesterfield. All the testimony goes the one way. What do we hear of him? That he was dwarfish; that he was hideously ugly; that he was all but deformed; that he was utterly unprincipled, vain, false, treacherous, and cruel; that he had not the slightest faith in the honor of men or the virtue of women; that he was silly enough to believe himself, with all his personal defects, actually irresistible to the most gifted and beautiful woman, and that he was mendacious enough to proclaim himself the successful lover of women who would not have given ear to his love-making for one moment. Yet we cannot believe that Chesterfield was by any means the monster of ugliness and selfish levity whom his enemies, and some who called themselves his friends, have painted for posterity. He was, says Hervey, short, disproportioned, thick, and clumsily made; had a broad, rough-featured, ugly face, with black teeth, and a head big enough for a Polyphemus. "One Ben Ashurst, who said few good things, though admired for many, told Lord Chesterfield once that he was like a stunted giant, which was a humorous idea and really apposite." His portraits do not by any means bear out the common descriptions of his personal appearance. Doubtless, Court painters then, as now, flattered or idealized, but one can scarcely believe that any painter coolly converted a hideous face into a rather handsome one and went wholly unreproved by public opinion of his time. The truth probably is that Chesterfield's bitter, sarcastic, and unsparing tongue made him enemies, who came in the end to see nothing but deformity in his person and perfidy in his heart. It is easy to say epigrammatically of such a man that his propensity to ridicule, in which he indulged himself with infinite humor and no distinction, and with inexhaustible spirits and no discretion, made him sought and feared, liked and not loved, by most of his acquaintance; it is easy to say that {7} no sex, no relation, no rank, no power, no profession, no friendship, no obligation, was a shield from those pointed, glittering weapons that seemed only to shine to a stander-by, but cut deep in those they touched. But to say this is not to say all, or to paint a fair picture. It is evident that he delighted in passing himself off on serious and heavy people as a mere trifler, paradox-maker, and cynic. He invited them not to take him seriously, and they did take him seriously, but the wrong way. They believed that he was serious when he professed to have no faith in anything; when he declared that he only lived for pleasure, and did not care by what means he got it; that politics were to him ridiculous, and ambition was the folly of a vulgar mind. We now know that he had an almost boundless political ambition; and we know, too, that when put under the responsibilities that make or mar statesmen, he showed himself equal to a great task, and proved that he knew how to govern a nation which no English statesman before his time or since was able to rule from Dublin Castle. If the policy of Chesterfield had been adopted with regard to Ireland, these countries would have been saved more than a century of trouble.

We cannot believe the statesman to have been only superficial and worthless who anticipated in his Irish policy the convictions of Burke and the ideas of Fox.

[Sidenote: 1733—Chesterfield's governing ability]

The time, however, of Chesterfield's Irish administration is yet to come. At present he is still only a rising man; but every one admits his eloquence and his capacity. It was he who moved in the House of Lords the "address of condolence, congratulation, and thanks" for the speech from the throne on the accession of George the Second. Since then he had served the King in diplomacy. He had been Minister to the Hague, and the Hague then was a very different place, in the diplomatist's sense, from what it is now or is ever likely to be again. He had been employed on special missions and had been concerned in the making of important treaties. He was rewarded for his services with the Garter, and was made Lord Steward {8} of the Household. He had distinguished himself highly as an orator in the House of Lords; had taken a place among the very foremost parliamentary orators of the day. But he chafed against Walpole's dictatorship, and soon began to show that he was determined not to endure too much of it. He secretly did all he could to mar Walpole's excise scheme; he encouraged his three brothers to oppose the bill in the House of Commons. He said witty and sarcastic things about the measure, which of course were duly reported to Walpole's ears. Perhaps Chesterfield thought he stood too high to be in danger from Walpole's hand. If he did think so he soon found out his mistake. Walpole's hand struck him down in the most unsparing and humiliating way. Public affront was added to political deprivation. Lord Chesterfield was actually going up the great stairs of St. James's Palace, on the day but one after the Excise Bill had been withdrawn, when he was stopped by an official and bidden to go home and bring back the white staff which was the emblem of his office, of all the chief offices of the Household, and surrender it. Chesterfield took the demand thus ungraciously made with his usual composure and politeness. He wrote a letter to the King, which the King showed to Walpole, but did not think fit to answer. The letter, Walpole afterwards told Lord Hervey, was "extremely labored but not well done." Chesterfield immediately passed into opposition, and became one of the bitterest and most formidable enemies Walpole had to encounter. Walpole's friends always justified his treatment of Chesterfield by asserting that Chesterfield was one of a party who were caballing against the minister at the time of the excise scheme, and while Chesterfield was a member of the Government. Chesterfield, it was declared, used actually to attend certain private meetings and councils of Walpole's enemies to concert measures against him. There is nothing incredible or even unlikely in this; but even if it were utterly untrue, we may assume that sooner or later Walpole would have got rid of Chesterfield. {9} Walpole's besetting weakness was that he could not endure any really capable colleague. The moment a man showed any capacity for governing, Walpole would appear to have made up his mind that that man and he were not to govern together.

[Sidenote: 1733—Walpole's animosity]

Walpole made a clean sweep of the men in office whom he believed to have acted against him. He even went so far as to deprive of their commissions in the army two peers holding no manner of office in the Administration, but whom he believed to have acted against him. To strengthen himself in the House of Lords he conferred a peerage on his attorney-general and on his solicitor-general. Philip Yorke, the Attorney-general, became Lord Hardwicke and Chief-justice of the King's Bench; Charles Talbot was made Lord Chancellor under the title of Lord Talbot. Both were men of great ability. Hardwicke stood higher in the rank at the bar than Talbot, and in the ordinary course of things he ought to have had the position of Lord Chancellor. But Talbot was only great as a Chancery lawyer, and knew little or nothing of common law, and it would have been out of the question to make him Lord Chief-justice. So Walpole devised a characteristic scheme of compromise. Hardwicke was induced to accept the office of Lord Chief-justice on the salary being raised from 3000 pounds to 4000 pounds, and with the further condition that an additional thousand a year was to be paid to him out of the Lord Chancellor's salary. This curious transaction Walpole managed through the Queen, and the Queen managed to get the King to regard it as a clever device of his own mention. It is worth while to note that the only charge ever made against Hardwicke by his contemporaries was a charge of avarice; he was stingy even in his hospitality, his enemies said—a great offence in that day was to be parsimonious with one's guests; and malignant people called him Judge Gripus. For aught else, his public and private character were blameless. Hardwicke was the stronger man of the two; Talbot the more subtle and {10} ingenious. Both were eloquent pleaders and skilled lawyers, each in his own department. Hervey says that "no one could make more of a good cause than Lord Hardwicke, and no one so much of a bad cause as Lord Talbot." Hardwicke lived to have a long career of honor, and to win a secure place in English history. Lord Talbot became at once a commanding influence in the House of Lords. "Our new Lord Chancellor," the Earl of Strafford, England's nominal and ornamental representative in the negotiation for the peace of Utrecht, writes to Swift, "at present has a great party in the House." But the new Lord Chancellor did not live long enough for his fame. He was destined to die within a few short years, and to leave the wool-sack open for Lord Hardwicke.

[Sidenote: 1734—The Patriots]

The House of Commons has hardly ever been thrilled to interest and roused to passion by a more heated, envenomed, and, in the rhetorical sense, brilliant debate than that which took place on March 13, 1734. The subject of the debate was the motion of a country gentleman, Mr. William Bromley, member for Warwick, "that leave be given to bring in a bill for repealing the Septennial Act, and for the more frequent meeting and calling of Parliaments." The circumstances under which this motion was brought forward gave it a peculiar importance as a party movement. Before the debate began it was agreed, upon a formal motion to that effect, "that the Sergeant-at-arms attending the House should go with the mace into Westminster Hall, and into the Court of Bequests, and places adjacent, and summon the members there to attend the service of the House."

The general elections were approaching; the Parliament then sitting had nearly run its course. The Patriots had been making every possible preparation for a decisive struggle against Walpole. They had been using every weapon which partisan hatred and political craft could supply or suggest. The fury roused up by the Excise Bill had not yet wholly subsided. Public opinion still throbbed and heaved like a sea the morning after a storm. {11} The Patriots had been exerting their best efforts to make the country dissatisfied with Walpole's foreign policy. The changes were incessantly rung upon the alleged depredations which the Spaniards were committing on our mercantile marine. Long before the time for the general elections had come, the Patriot candidates were stumping the country. Their progress through each county was marked by the wildest riots. The riots sometimes called for the sternest military repression. On the other hand, the Patriots themselves were denounced and discredited by all the penmen, pamphleteers, and orators who supported the Government on their own account, or were hired by Walpole and Walpole's friends to support it. So effective were some of these attacks, so damaging was the incessant imputation that in the mouths of the Patriots patriotism meant nothing but a desire for place and pay, that Pulteney and his comrades found it advisable gradually to shake off the name which had been put on them, and which they had at one time willingly adopted. They began to call themselves "the representatives of the country interest."

The final struggle of the session was to take place on the motion for the repeal of the Septennial Act. We have already given an account of the passing of that Act in 1716, and of the reasons which in our opinion justified its passing. It cannot be questioned that there is much to be said in favor of the principle of short Parliaments, but in Walpole's time the one great object of true statesmanship was to strengthen the power of the House of Commons; to enable it to stand up against the Crown and the House of Lords. It would be all but impossible for the House of Commons to maintain this position if it were doomed to frequent and inevitable dissolutions. Frequent dissolution of Parliament means frequently recurring cost, struggle, anxiety, wear and tear, to the members; and; of course, it meant all this in much higher measure during the reign of George the Second than it could mean in the reign of Victoria. Walpole had {12} devoted himself to the task of strengthening the representative assembly, and he was, therefore, well justified in resisting the motion made by Mr. Bromley on March 13, 1734, for the repeal of the Septennial Act. Our interest now, however, is not so much with the political aspect of the debate as with its personal character. One illustration of the corruption which existed at the time may be mentioned in passing. It was used as an argument against long Parliaments, but assuredly at that day it might have been told of short Parliaments as well. Mr. Watkin Williams Wynn mentioned the fact that a former member of the House of Commons, afterwards one of the judges of the Common Pleas, "a gentleman who is now dead, and therefore I may name him," declared that he "had never been in the borough he represented in Parliament, nor had ever seen or spoken with any of his electors." Of course this worthy person, "afterwards one of the judges of the Common Pleas," had simply sent down his agent and bought the place. "I believe," added Mr. Wynn, "I could without much difficulty name some who are now in the same situation." No doubt he could.

[Sidenote: 1734—A supposititious minister]

Sir William Wyndham came on to speak. Wyndham was now, of course, the close ally of Bolingbroke. He hated Walpole. He made his whole speech one long denunciation of bribery and corruption, and gave it to be understood that in his firm conviction Walpole only wanted a long Parliament because it gave him better opportunities to bribe and to corrupt. He went on to draw a picture of what might come to pass under an unscrupulous minister, sustained by a corrupted septennial Parliament. "Let us suppose," he said, "a gentleman at the head of the Administration whose only safety depends upon his corrupting the members of this House." Of course Sir William went on to declare that he only put this as a supposition, but it was certainly a thing which might come to pass, and was within the limits of possibility. If it did come to pass, could not such a minister promise himself more success in a septennial than he {13} could in a triennial Parliament? "It is an old maxim," Wyndham said, "that every man has his price." This allusion to the old maxim is worthy of notice in a debate on the conduct and character of Walpole. Evidently Wyndham did not fall into the mistake which posterity appears to have made, and attribute to Walpole himself the famous words about man and his price. Suppose a case

"which, though it has not happened, may possibly happen. Let us suppose a man abandoned to all notions of virtue and honor, of no great family, and of but a mean fortune, raised to be chief Minister of State by the concurrence of many whimsical events; afraid or unwilling to trust to any but creatures of his own making, and most of these equally abandoned to all notions of virtue or honor; ignorant of the true interest of his country, and consulting nothing but that of enriching and aggrandizing himself and his favorites." Sir William described this supposititious personage as employing in foreign affairs none but men whose education made it impossible for them to have such qualifications as could be of any service to their country or give any credit to their negotiations. Under the rule of this minister the orator described "the true interests of the nation neglected, her honor and credit lost, her trade insulted, her merchants plundered, and her sailors murdered, and all these things overlooked for fear only his administration should be endangered. Suppose this man possessed of great wealth, the plunder of the nation, with a Parliament of his own choosing, most of their seats purchased, and their votes bought at the expense of the public treasure. In such a Parliament let us suppose attempts made to inquire into his conduct or to relieve the nation from the distress he has brought upon it." Would it not be easy to suppose all such attempts discomfited by a corrupt majority of the creatures whom this minister "retains in daily pay or engages in his particular interest by granting them those posts and places which never ought to be given to any but for the good of the public?" Sir William pictured this minister {14} pluming himself upon "his scandalous victory" because he found he had got "a Parliament, like a packed jury, ready to acquit him at all adventures." Then, glowing with his subject, Sir William Wyndham ventured to suggest a case which he blandly declared had never yet happened in this nation, but which still might possibly happen. "With such a minister and such a Parliament, let us suppose a prince upon the throne, either from want of true information or for some other reason, ignorant and unacquainted with the inclinations and the interest of his people, weak, and hurried away by unbounded ambition and insatiable avarice. Could any greater curse befall a nation than such a prince on the throne, advised, and solely advised, by such a minister, and that minister supported by such a Parliament? The nature of mankind," the orator exclaimed, "cannot be altered by human laws; the existence of such a prince, of such a minister, we cannot prevent by Act of Parliament; but the existence of such a Parliament, I think, we may; and, as such a Parliament is much more likely to exist, and may do more mischief while the Septennial Law remains in force than if it were repealed, therefore I am most heartily in favor of its immediate repeal."

[Sidenote: 1734—An effective reply]

This was a very pretty piece of invective. It was full of spirit, fire, and force. Nobody could have failed for a moment to know the original of the portrait Sir William Wyndham professed to be painting from imagination. It was not indeed a true portrait of Walpole, but it was a perfect photograph of what his enemies declared and even believed Walpole to be. Such was the picture which the *Craftsman* and the pamphleteers were painting every day as the likeness of the great minister; but it was something new, fresh, and bold to paint such a picture under the eyes of Walpole himself. The speech was hailed with the wildest enthusiasm and delight by all the Jacobites, Patriots, and representatives of the country interest, and there is even some good reason to believe that it gave a certain secret satisfaction to some of those who most {15} steadily supported Walpole by their votes. But Walpole was not by any means the sort of man whom it is quite safe to visit with such an attack. The speech of Sir William Wyndham had doubtless been carefully prepared, and Walpole had but a short time, but a breathing-space, while two or three speeches were made, in which to get ready his reply. When he rose to address the House it soon became evident that he had something to say, and that he was determined to give his adversary at least as good as he brought. Nothing could be more effective than Walpole's method of reply. It was not to Sir William Wyndham that he replied; at least it was not Sir William Wyndham whom he attacked. Walpole passed Wyndham by altogether. Wyndham he well knew to be but the mouth-piece of Bolingbroke, and it was at Bolingbroke that he struck. "I hope I may be allowed," he said, "to draw a picture in my turn; and I may likewise say that I do not mean to give a description of any particular person now in being. Indeed," Walpole added, ingenuously, "the House being cleared, I am sure no person that hears me can come within the description of the person I am to suppose." This was a clever touch, and gave a new barb to the dart which Walpole was about to fling. The House was cleared; none but members were present; the description applied to none within hearing. Bolingbroke, of course, was not a member; he could not hear what Walpole was saying. Then Walpole went on to paint his picture. He supposed, "in this or in some other unfortunate country, an anti-minister . . . in a country where he really ought not to be, and where he could not have been but by an effect of too much goodness and mercy, yet endeavoring with all his might and with all his art to destroy the fountain from whence that mercy flowed." Walpole depicted this anti-minister as one "who thinks himself a person of so great and extensive parts, and of so many eminent qualifications, that he looks upon himself as the only person in the kingdom capable of conducting the public affairs of the nation." {16} Walpole supposed "this fine gentleman lucky enough to have gained over to his party some persons of really great parts, of ancient families, and of large fortunes, and others of desperate views, arising from disappointed and malicious hearts." Walpole grouped with fine freehand-drawing the band of conspirators thus formed under the

leadership of this anti-minister. All the band were moved in their political behavior by him, and by him solely. All they said, either in private or public, was "only a repetition of the words he had put into their mouths, and a spitting forth of the venom which he had infused into them." Walpole asked the House to suppose, nevertheless, that this anti-minister was not really liked by any even of those who blindly followed him, and was hated by the rest of mankind. He showed him contracting friendships and alliances with all foreign ministers who were hostile to his own country, and endeavoring to get at the political secrets of English administrations in order that he might betray them to foreign and hostile States. Further, he asked the House to suppose this man travelling from foreign court to court, making it his trade to betray the secrets of each court where he had most lately been, void of all faith and honor, delighting to be treacherous and traitorous to every master whom he had served and who had shown favor to him. "Sir, I could carry my suppositions a great deal further; but if we can suppose such a one as I have pictured, can there be imagined a greater disgrace to human nature than a wretch like this?"

[Sidenote: 1734—An unstable alliance]

The ministers triumphed by a majority of 247 to 184. Walpole was the victor in more than the mere parliamentary majority. He had conquered in the fierce parliamentary duel.

There is a common impression that Walpole's speech hunted Bolingbroke out of the country; that it drove him into exile and obscurity again, as Cicero's invective drove Catiline into open rebellion. This, however, is not the fact. A comparison of dates settles the question. The debate on the Septennial Bill took place in March, 1734; {17} Bolingbroke did not leave England until the early part of 1735. The actual date of his leaving England is not certain, but Pulteney, writing to Swift on April 29, 1735, adds in a postscript: "Lord Bolingbroke is going to France with Lord Berkeley, but, I believe, will return again in a few months." No one could have known better than Pulteney that Bolingbroke was not likely to return to England in a few months. Still, although Bolingbroke did not make a hasty retreat, history is well warranted in saying that Walpole's powerful piece of invective closed the door once for all against Bolingbroke's career in English politics. Bolingbroke could not but perceive that Walpole's accusations against him sank deeply into the heart of the English people. He could not but see that some of those with whom he had been most closely allied of late years were impressed with the force of the invective; not, indeed, by its moral force, but by the thought of the influence it must have on the country. It may well have occurred to Pulteney, for example, as he listened to Walpole's denunciation, that the value of an associate was more than doubtful whom the public could recognize at a glance as the original of such a portrait. There had been disputes now and then already. Bolingbroke was too much disposed to regard himself as master of the situation; Pulteney was not unnaturally inclined to believe that he had a much better understanding of the existing political conditions; he complained that Wyndham submitted too much to Bolingbroke's dictation. The whole alliance was founded on unstable and unwholesome principles; it was sure to crumble and collapse sooner or later. There can be no question but that Walpole's invective precipitated the collapse. With consummate political art he had drawn his picture of Bolingbroke in such form as to make it especially odious just then to Englishmen. The mere supposition that an English statesman has packed cards with a foreign enemy is almost enough in itself at any time to destroy a great career; to turn a popular favorite into an object of national distrust {18} or even national detestation. But in Bolingbroke's case it was no mere supposition. No one could doubt that he had often traded on the political interests of his own country. In truth, there was but little of the Englishman about him. His gifts and his vices were alike of a foreign stamp. Walpole was, for good or ill, a genuine sturdy Englishman. His words, his actions, his policy, his schemes, his faults, his vices, were thorough English. It was as an Englishman, as an English citizen, more than as a statesman or an orator, that he bore down Bolingbroke in this memorable debate.

[Sidenote: 1734—Bolingbroke a hurtful ally]

Bolingbroke must have felt himself borne down. He did not long carry on the struggle into which he had plunged with so much alacrity and energy, with such malice and such hope. Pulteney advised him to go back for a while to France, and in the early part of 1734 he took the advice and went. "My part is over," he wrote to Wyndham, in words which have a certain pathetic dignity in them, "and he who remains on the stage after his part is over deserves to be hissed off." His departure—it might almost be called his second flight—to the Continent was probably hastened also by the knowledge that a pamphlet was about to be published by some of his enemies, containing a series of letters which had passed between him and James Stuart's secretary, after Bolingbroke's dismissal from the service of James in 1716. The pamphlet was suppressed immediately on its appearance, but its contents have been republished, and they were certainly not of a character to render Bolingbroke any the less unpopular among Englishmen.

The correspondence consisted in a series of letters that passed between Bolingbroke, through his secretary, and Mr. James Murray, acting on

behalf of James Stuart, from whom he afterwards received the title of Earl of Dunbar.

The letters are little more than mere recriminations. Bolingbroke is accused of having brought about the failure of the insurrection of 1715 by weakness, folly, and {19} even downright treachery. Bolingbroke flings back the charges at the head of James's friends, and even of James himself. There was nothing brought out in 1734 and 1735 to affect the career and conduct of Bolingbroke which all England did not know pretty well already. Still, the revival of these old stories must have seemed to Bolingbroke very inconvenient and dangerous at such a time. The correspondence reminded England once more that Bolingbroke had been the agent of the exiled Stuarts in the work of stirring up a civil war for the overthrow of the House of Hanover. No doubt the publication quickened Bolingbroke's desire to get out of England. But he would have gone, in any case; he would have had to go. The whole cabal with Pulteney had been a failure; Bolingbroke would thenceforward be a hinderance rather than a help to the Patriots. His counsel was of no further avail, and he only brought odium on them; indeed, his advice had from first to last been misleading and ill-omened. The Patriots were now only anxious to get rid of him; Pulteney gave Bolingbroke pretty clearly to understand that they wanted him to go, and he went.

Walpole's speech, and the whole of the debate of which it made so striking a feature, could not but have a powerful effect on the general elections. Parliament was dissolved on April 10, 1734, after having nearly run the full course of seven years. Seldom has a general election been contested with such a prodigality of partisan fury and public corruption. Walpole scattered his purchase-money everywhere; he sowed with the sack and not with the hand, to adopt the famous saying applied by a Greek poetess to Pindar. In supporting two candidates for Norfolk, who were both beaten, despite his support, he spent out of his private fortune at least 10,000 pounds; one contemporary says 60,000 pounds. But the Opposition spent just as freely—more freely, perhaps. It must be remembered that even so pure-minded a man as Burke has contended that "the charge of systematic corruption" was less applicable, perhaps, to Walpole "than to any other minister who ever {20} served the Crown for such a length of time." The Opposition were decidedly more reckless in their incitements to violence than the friends of the Ministry. The *Craftsman* boasted that when Walpole came to give his vote as an honorary freeman at Norwich the people called aloud to have the bribery oath administered to him; called on him to swear that he had received no money for his vote. All the efforts of the Patriots, or the representatives of the country interest, as they now preferred to call themselves, failed to bring about the end they aimed at. They did, indeed, increase their parliamentary vote a little, but the increase was not enough to make any material difference in their position. All the wit, the eloquence, the craft, the courage, the unscrupulous use of every weapon of political warfare that could be seized and handled, had been thrown away. Walpole was, for the time, just as strong as ever.

[Sidenote: 1735—Swift's opinion of Arbuthnot]

We turn aside from the movement and rush of politics to lay a memorial spray on the grave of a good and a gifted man. Dr. Arbuthnot died in February, 1735, only sixty years old. "Poor Arbuthnot," Pulteney writes to Swift, "who grieved to see the wickedness of mankind, and was particularly esteemed of his own countrymen, is dead. He lived the last six months in a bad state of health, and hoping every night would be his last; not that he endured any bodily pain, but as he was quite weary of the world, and tired with so much bad company." Alderman Barber, in a letter to Swift a few days after, says much the same. He is afraid, he tells Swift, that Arbuthnot did not take as much care of himself as he ought to have done. "Possibly he might think the play not worth the candle. You may remember Dr. Garth said he was glad when he was dying, for he was weary of having his shoes pulled off and on." A letter from Arbuthnot himself to Swift, written a short time before his death, is not, however, filled with mere discontent, does not breathe only a morbid weariness of life, but rather testifies to a serene and noble resignation. "I am going," he tells Swift, "out {21} of this troublesome world, and you, amongst the rest of my friends, shall have my last prayers and good wishes. I am afraid, my dear friend, we shall never see one another more in this world. I shall to the last moment preserve my love and esteem for you, being well assured you will never leave the paths of virtue and honor for all that is in the world. This world is not worth the least deviation from that way." Thus the great physician, scientific scholar, and humorist awaited his death and died. We have spoken already in this history of Arbuthnot's marvellous humor and satire. Macaulay, in his essay on "The Life and Writings of Addison," says "there are passages in Arbuthnot's satirical works which we, at least, cannot distinguish from Swift's best writing." Swift himself spoke of Arbuthnot in yet higher terms. "He has more wit than we all have," was Swift's declaration, "and his humanity is equal to his wit." There are not many satirists known to men during all literary history of whom quite so much could be said with any faintest color of a regard for truth. Swift was too warm in his friendly panegyric on Arbuthnot's humor, but he did not too highly estimate Arbuthnot's humanity. Humor is among man's highest gifts, and has done the world splendid service; but humor and humanity together make the mercy winged with brave actions, which,

according to Massinger, befit "a soul moulded for heaven" and destined to be "made a star there."

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CHAPTER XXII.

THE "FAMILY COMPACT."

[Sidenote: 1735—The Polish throne]

The new Parliament met on January 14, 1735. The Royal intimation was given to the House of Commons by the Lord Chancellor that it was his Majesty's pleasure that they should return to their own House and choose a Speaker. Arthur Onslow was unanimously elected, or rather re-elected, to the chair he had filled with so much distinction in the former Parliament. The speech from the throne was not delivered until January 23. The speech was almost all taken up with foreign affairs, with the war on the Continent, and the efforts of the King and his ministers, in combination with the States General of the United Provinces, to extinguish it. "I have the satisfaction to acquaint you," the King said, "that things are now brought to so great a forwardness that I hope in a short time a plan will be offered to the consideration of all the parties engaged in the present war, as a basis for a general negotiation of peace, in which the honor and the interest of all parties have been consulted as far as the circumstances of time and the present posture of affairs would admit." The Royal speech did not contain one single word which had to do with the internal condition of England, with the daily lives of the English people. No legislation was promised, or even hinted at, which concerned the domestic interests of these islands. The House of Lords set to work at once in the preparation of an address in reply to the speech from the throne; and they, too, debated only of foreign affairs, and took no more account of their own fellow-countrymen than of the dwellers in Jupiter or Saturn.

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The war to which the Royal speech referred had been dragging along for some time. No quarrel could have less direct interest for the English people than that about which the Emperor Charles the Sixth and the King of France, Louis the Fifteenth, were fighting. On the death of Augustus the Second of Poland, in February, 1733, Louis thought it a good opportunity for putting his own father-in-law, Stanislaus Leszczynski, back on the throne of Poland, from which he had twice been driven. Poland was a republic with an elective king, and a very peculiar form of constitution, by virtue of which any one of the estates or electoral colleges of the realm was in a position to stop the action of all the others at any crisis when decision was especially needed. The result of this was that the elected king was always a nominee of one or another of the great Continental Powers who took it on themselves to intervene in the affairs of Poland. The election of a King of Poland was always a mere struggle between these Powers: the strongest at the moment carried its man. Stanislaus, the father of Louis the Fifteenth's wife, had been a *protégé* of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden. He was a man of illustrious family and of great and varied abilities, a scholar and a writer. Charles drove Augustus the Second, Augustus, Elector of Saxony, from the throne of Poland, and set up Stanislaus in his place. Stanislaus, however, was driven out of the country by Augustus and his friends, who rallied and became strong in the temporary difficulties of Charles. When Charles found time to turn his attention to Poland he soon overthrew Augustus and set up Stanislaus once again. But "hide, blushing glory, hide Pultowa's day"; the fall of the great Charles came, and brought with it the fall of Stanislaus. Augustus re-entered Poland at the head of a Saxon army, and Stanislaus was compelled to abdicate. Now that Augustus was dead, Louis the Fifteenth determined to bring Stanislaus out from his retirement of many years and set him for the third time on the Polish throne. On the other hand, the Emperor and Russia alike favored the son of {24} the late king, another Augustus, Elector of Saxony. The French party carried Stanislaus, although at the time of his abdication, three or four and twenty years before, he had been declared incapable of ever again being elected King of Poland. The Saxon party, secretly backed up by Russia, resisted Stanislaus, attacked his partisans, drove him once more from Warsaw, and proclaimed Augustus the Third. Louis of France declared war, not on Russia, but on the Emperor, alleging that the Emperor had been the inspiration and support of the Saxon movement. A French army under Marshal Berwick, son of James the Second of England, crossed the Rhine and took the fort of Kehl—the scene of a memorable crossing of the Rhine, to be recrossed very rapidly after, in days nearer to our own. Spain and Sardinia were in alliance with Louis, and the Emperor's army, although led by the great Eugene, "Der edle Ritter," was not able to make head against the French. The Emperor sent frequent urgent and impassioned appeals to England for assistance. George was anxious to lend him a helping hand, clamored to be allowed to take the field himself and win glory in battle; camps and battle-fields were what he loved most, he kept dinning into Walpole's unappreciative ear. Even the Queen was not disinclined to draw the sword in defence of an imperilled and harassed ally.

[Sidenote: 1735—The Emperor's denunciation of Walpole]

Walpole stuck to his policy of masterly inactivity. He would have wished to exclude Stanislaus from the Polish throne, but he was not willing to go to war with France. He could not bring himself to believe that the interests of England were concerned in the struggle to such a degree as to warrant the waste of English money and the pouring out of English blood. But he did not take his stand on such a broad and clear position; indeed at that time it would not have been a firm or a tenable position. Walpole did not venture to say that the question whether this man or that was to sit on the throne of Poland was not worth the life of one British grenadier. The time had not come when even a great minister might venture {25} to look at an international quarrel from such a point of view. Walpole temporized, delayed, endeavored to bring about a reconciliation of claims; endeavored to get at something like a mediation; carried on prolonged negotiations with the Government of the Netherlands to induce the States General to join with England in an offer of mediation. The Emperor was all the time sending despatches to England, in which he bitterly complained that he had been deceived and deserted. He laid all the blame on Walpole's head. Pages of denunciation of Walpole and all Walpole's family are to be found in these imperial despatches. Walpole remained firm to his purpose. He would not go to war, but it did not suit him to proclaim his determination. He kept up his appearance of active negotiation, and he trusted to time to settle the question one way or the other before King George should get too restive, and should insist on plunging into the war. He had many an uneasy hour, but his policy succeeded in the end.

The controversy out of which the war began was complicated by other questions and made formidable by the rival pursuit of other ends than those to be acknowledged in public treaty. It would be unjust and even absurd to suppose that Walpole's opponents believed England had a direct interest in the question of the Polish succession, or that they would have shed the blood of English grenadiers merely in order that this candidate and not that should be on the throne of Poland. What the Opposition contended was that the alliance of France and Spain was in reality directed quite as much against England as against the Emperor. In this they were perfectly right. It was directed as much against England as against the Emperor. Little more than forty years ago a collection of treaties and engagements entered into by the Spanish branch of the Bourbon family found its way to the light of day in Madrid. The publication was the means of pouring a very flood of light on some events which perplexed and distracted the outer world in the days at {26} which, in the course of this history, we have now arrived. We speak especially of the Polish war of succession and the policy pursued with regard to it by France and Spain. The collection of documents contained a copy of a treaty or arrangement entered into between the King of France and the King of Spain in 1733. This was, in fact, the first family compact, the first of a series of family compacts, entered into between the Bourbons in Versailles and the Bourbons in Madrid. The engagement, which in modern European history is conventionally known as "the family compact" between the Bourbon Houses, the compact of 1761, the compact which Burke described as "the most odious and formidable of all the conspiracies against the liberties of Europe that ever have been framed," was really only the third of a series. The second compact was in 1743. The object of these successive agreements was one and the same: to maintain and extend the possessions of the Bourbons in Europe and outside Europe, and to weaken and divide the supposed enemies of Bourbon supremacy. England was directly aimed at as one of the foremost of those enemies. In the compact of 1733 the King of France and the King of Spain pledged themselves to the interests of "the most serene infant Don Carlos," afterwards for a time King of the Sicilies, and then finally King of Spain. The compact defined the alliance as "a mutual guarantee of all the possessions and the honor, interests, and glory" of the two Houses. It was described as an alliance to protect Don Carlos, and the family generally, against the Emperor and against England. France bound herself to aid Spain with all her forces by land or sea if Spain should see fit to suspend "England's enjoyment of commerce," and England should retaliate by hostilities on the dominions of Spain, within or outside of Europe. The French King also pledged himself to employ without interruption his most pressing instances to induce the King of Great Britain to restore Gibraltar to Spain; pledged himself even to use force for this purpose if necessary. There were full and precise {27} stipulations about the disposition of armies and naval squadrons under various conditions. One article in the treaty bluntly declared that the foreign policy of both States, France and Spain, was to be "guided exclusively by the interests of the House." The engagement was to be kept secret, and was to be regarded "from that day as an eternal and irrevocable family compact." No conspiracy ever could have been more flagrant, more selfish, and more cruel. The deeper we get into the secrets of European history, the more we come to learn the truth that the crowned conspirators were always the worst.

[Sidenote: 1735—Compact between the Houses of Bourbon]

This first family compact is the key to all the subsequent history of European wars down to the days of the French Revolution. The object of one set of men was to maintain and add to the advantages secured to them by the Treaty of Utrecht; the object of another set of men was to shake themselves free

from the disadvantages and disqualifications which that treaty imposed on them. The Bourbon family were possessed with the determination to maintain the position in Spain which the will of Charles the Second had bequeathed to them, and which after so many years of war and blood had been ratified by the Treaty of Utrecht. They wanted to maintain their position in Spain; but they wanted not that alone. They wanted much more. They wanted to plant a firm foot in Italy; they wanted to annex border provinces to France; they saw that their great enemy was England, and they wanted to weaken and to damage her. No reasonable Englishman can find fault with the Kings of Spain for their desire to recover Gibraltar. An English sovereign would have conspired with any foreign State for the recovery of Dover Castle and rock if these were held by a Spanish invader too strong to be driven out by England single-handed. Many Englishmen were of opinion then, some are of opinion now, that it would be an act of wise and generous policy to give Gibraltar back to the Spanish people. But no Englishman could possibly doubt that if England were determined to keep Gibraltar she must {28} hold it her duty to watch with the keenest attention every movement which indicated an alliance between France and Spain.

Spain had at one time sought security for her interests, and a new chance for her ambitions, by alliance with the Emperor. Of late she had found that the Emperor generally got all the subsidies and all the other advantages of the alliance, and that Spain was left rather worse off after each successive settlement than she was before it. The family compact between the two Houses of Bourbon was one result of her experience in this way. Of course, when we talk of France and Spain, we are talking merely of the Courts and the families. The people of France and Spain were never consulted, and, indeed, were never thought of, in these imperial and regal engagements. Nor at this particular juncture had the King of Spain much more to do with the matter than the humblest of his people. King Philip the Fifth was a hypochondriac, a half-demented creature, almost a madman. He was now the tame and willing subject of the most absolute petticoat government. His second wife, Elizabeth of Parma, ruled him with firm, unswerving hand. Her son, Don Carlos, was heir in her right to the Duchies of Parma and Placentia, but she was ambitious of a brighter crown for him, and went into the war with an eye to the throne of Naples. The Emperor soon found that he could not hold out against the alliance, and consented to accept the mediation of England and the United Provinces.

The negotiations were long and dragging. Many times it became apparent that Louis on his part was only pretending a willingness to compromise and make peace in order to strengthen himself the more for the complete prosecution of a successful war. At last a plan of pacification was agreed upon between England and Holland and at the same time the King of England entered into an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the King of Denmark, this latter treaty, as George significantly described it in the speech from the throne, "of great importance in {29} the present conjuncture." These engagements did not pass without severe criticism in Parliament. It was pointed out with effect that the nation had for some time back been engaged in making treaty after treaty, each new engagement being described as essential to the safety of the empire, but each proving in turn to be utterly inefficacious. In the House of Lords a dissatisfied peer described the situation very well. "The last treaty," he said, "always wanted a new one in order to carry it into execution, and thus, my Lords, we have been a-botching and piecing up one treaty with another for several years." The botching and piecing up did not in this instance prevent the outbreak of the war. The opposing forces, after long delays, at length rushed at each other, and, as was said in the speech from the throne at the opening of the session of 1736, "the war was carried on in some parts in such a manner as to give very just apprehensions that it would unavoidably become general, from an absolute necessity of preserving that balance of power on which the safety and commerce of the maritime powers so much depend." With any other minister than Walpole to manage affairs, England would unquestionably have been drawn into the war. Walpole's strong determination and ingenious delays carried his policy through.

[Sidenote: 1735—"Bonnie Prince Charlie"]

The war has one point of peculiar and romantic interest for Englishmen. Charles Edward Stuart, the "bonnie Prince Charlie" of a later date, the hero and darling of so much devotion, poetry, and romance, received his baptism of fire in the Italian campaign under Don Carlos. Charles Edward was then a mere boy. He was born in the later days of 1720, and was now about the age to serve some picturesque princess as her page. He was sent as a volunteer to the siege of Gaeta, and was received with every mark of honor by Don Carlos. The English Court heard rumors that Don Carlos had gone out of his way to pay homage to the Stuart prince, and had even acted in a manner to give the impression that he identified himself with the cause of the exiled family. There were demands {30} for explanation made by the English minister at the Spanish Court, and explanations were given and excuses offered. It was all merely because of a request made by the Duke of Berwick's son, the Spanish prime-minister said. The Duke of Berwick's son asked permission to bring his cousin Charles Edward to serve as a volunteer, and the Court of Spain consented, not seeing the slightest objection to such a request; but there was not the faintest idea of receiving the boy as a king's son. King George and Queen Caroline

were both very angry, but Walpole wisely told them that they must either resent the offence thoroughly, and by war, or accept the explanations and pretend to be satisfied with them. Walpole's advice prevailed, and the boy prince fleshed his maiden sword without giving occasion to George the Second to seek the ensanguined laurels for which he told Walpole he had long been thirsting. The Hanoverian kings were, to do them justice, generally rather magnanimous in their way of treating the pretensions of the exiled family. We may fairly assume that the conduct of the Spanish prince in this instance did somewhat exceed legitimate bounds. George was wise, however, in consenting to accept the explanations, and to make as little of the incident as the Court of Spain professed to do.

[Sidenote: 1735—Success of Walpole's policy]

Incidents such as this, and the interchange of explanations which had to follow them, naturally tended to stretch out the negotiations for peace which England was still carrying on. Again and again it seemed as if the attempts to bring about a settlement of the controversy must all be doomed to failure. At last, however, terms of arrangement were concluded. Augustus was acknowledged King of Poland. Stanislaus was allowed to retain the royal title, and was put in immediate possession of the Duchy of Lorraine, which after his death was to become a province of France. The Spanish prince obtained the throne of the Two Sicilies. France was thought to have done a great thing for herself by the annexation of Lorraine; in later times it seemed to have been an ill-omened acquisition. {31} The terms of peace were, on the whole, about as satisfactory as any one could have expected. Walpole certainly had got all he wanted. He wanted to keep England out of the war, and he wanted at the same time to maintain and to reassert her influence over the politics of the Continent. He accomplished both these objects. Bolingbroke said it was only Walpole's luck. History more truly says it was Walpole's patience and genius.

Did Walpole know all this time that there was a distinct and deliberate family compact, a secret treaty of alliance, a formal, circumstantial, binding agreement, consigned to written words, between France and Spain, for the promotion of their common desires and for the crippling of England's power? Mr. J. R. Green appears to be convinced that "neither England nor Walpole" knew of it. The English people certainly did not know of it; and it is commonly taken for granted by historians that while Walpole was pursuing his policy of peace he was not aware of the existence of this family compact. It has even been pleaded, in defence of him and his policy, that he did not know that the war, in which he believed England to have little or no interest, was only one outcome of a secret plot, having for its object, among other objects, the humiliation and the detriment of England. There are writers who seem to assume it as a matter of certainty that if Walpole had known of this family compact he would have adopted a very different course. But does it by any means follow that, even if he had been all the time in possession of a correct copy of the secret agreement, he would have acted otherwise than as he did act? Does it follow that if Walpole did know all about it, he was wrong in adhering to his policy of non-intervention? A very interesting and instructive essay by Professor Seely on the House of Bourbon, published in the first number of the *English Historical Review*, makes clear as light the place of this first family compact in the history of the wars that succeeded it. Professor Seely puts it beyond dispute that in every subsequent movement of France and Spain the {32} working of this compact was made apparent. He shows that it was fraught with the most formidable danger to England. Inferentially he seems to convey the idea that Walpole was wrong when he clung to his policy of masterly inactivity, and that he ought to have intervened in the interests of England. We admit all his premises and reject his conclusion.

Walpole might well have thought that the best way to mar the object of the conspirators against England was to keep England as much as possible out of continental wars. He might well have thought that so long as England was prosperous and strong she could afford to smile at the machinations of any foreign kings and statesmen. We may be sure that he would not have allowed himself to be drawn away from the path of policy he thought it expedient to follow by any mere feelings of anger at the enmity of the foreign kings and statesmen. He might have felt as a composed and strong-minded man would feel who, quite determined not to sit down to the gaming-table, is amused by the signals which he sees passing between the cheating confederates who are making preparations to win his money. Besides, even if he knew nothing of the family compact, he certainly was not ignorant of the general scope of the policy of France and of Spain. He was not a man likely at any time to put too much trust in princes or in any other persons, and we need not doubt that in making his calculations he took into full account the possibility of France and Spain packing cards for the injury of England. The existence of the family compact is a very interesting fact in history, and enables us now to understand with perfect clearness many things that must have perplexed and astonished the readers of an earlier day. But, so far as the policy of Walpole regarding the war of the Polish Succession was concerned, we do not believe that it would have been modified to any considerable extent, even if he had been in full possession of all the secret papers in the cabinet of the King of France and the Queen of Spain.

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[Sidenote: 1735—Professor Seely and the secret treaty]

But is it certain that Walpole did not know of the existence of this secret treaty? It is certain now that if he did not know of it he might have known. Other English statesmen of the day did know of it—at least, had heard that such a thing was in existence, and were or might have been forewarned against it. Professor Seely puts it beyond doubt that the family compact was talked of and written of by English diplomatists at the time, was believed in by some, treated sceptically by others. The Duke of Newcastle actually called it by the very name which history formally gives to the arrangement made many years after and denounced by Burke. He speaks of "the offensive and defensive alliance between France and Spain, called the *pacte de famille*." Is it likely, is it credible, that Walpole had never heard of the existence of a compact which was known to the Duke of Newcastle? Archdeacon Coxe, in his "Life of Walpole," contends that Newcastle was not by any means the merely absurd sort of person whom most historians and biographers delight to paint him. "He had a quick comprehension and was a ready debater," Coxe says, although without grace or style. "He wrote with uncommon facility and great variety of expression, and in his most confidential letters, written so quickly as to be almost illegible, there is scarcely a single alteration or erasure." But certainly Newcastle was not a man likely to keep to himself the knowledge of such a fact as the family compact, or even the knowledge that some people believed in the existence of such an arrangement. For ourselves, we are quite prepared to assume that Walpole had heard of the family compact, but that it did not disturb his calculations or disarrange his policy. From some of his own letters written at the time it is evident that he did not put any faith in the abiding nature of family compacts between sovereigns. More than once he takes occasion to point out that where political interests interfered family arrangements went to the wall. As to the general rule Walpole was quite right. We have seen the fact illustrated over and over again even in our {34} own days. But Walpole appears to have overlooked the important peculiarity of this family compact; it was an engagement in which the political interests and the domestic interests of the families were at last inextricably intertwined; it was a reciprocal agreement for the protection of common interests and the attainment of common objects. Such a compact might be trusted to hold good even among Bourbon princes. On the whole, we are inclined to come to the conclusion that if Walpole knew anything about the compact—and we think he did know something about it—he was quite right in not allowing it to disturb his policy of non-intervention, but that he was not quite sound in his judgment if he held his peaceful course only because he did not believe that such a family bond between members of such a family would hold good. "Tenez, prince," the Duc d'Aumale wrote to Prince Napoleon-Jérôme in a pamphlet which was once famous, "there is one promise of a Bonaparte which we can always believe—the promise that he will kill somebody." One pledge of a Bourbon with another Bourbon the world could always rely upon—the pledge to maintain a common interest and gratify a common ambition.

[Sidenote: 1735—Death of Berwick]

The war cost one illustrious life, that of the brave and noble Duke of Berwick, whom Montesquieu likened to the best of the heroes of Plutarch, or rather in whom Montesquieu declared that he saw the best of Plutarch's heroes in the life. When Bolingbroke was denouncing the set of men who surrounded James Stuart at St. Germains he specially exempted Berwick from reproach. He spoke of Berwick as one "who has a hundred times more capacity and credit than all the rest put together," but added significantly that he "is not to be reckoned of the Court, though he has lodgings in the house." Berwick was the natural son of James the Second and Arabella Churchill, sister to the Duke of Marlborough. When the day of James's destiny as King of England was over, Berwick gave his bright sword to the service of France. He became a naturalized Frenchman and rose to the command {35} of the French army. He won the splendid victory of Almanza over the combined forces of England and her various allies. "A Roman by a Roman valiantly o'ercome," defeated Englishmen might have exclaimed. He was killed by a cannon-ball on ground not far from that whereon the great Turenne had fallen—killed by the cannon-ball which, according to Madame de Sevigne, was charged from all eternity for the hero's death. Berwick was well deserving of a death in some nobler struggle than the trumpery quarrel got up by ignoble ambitions and selfish, grasping policies. He ought to have died in some really great cause; it was an age of gallant soldiers—an age, however, that brought out none more gallant than Berwick. Of him it might fairly be said that "his mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes." This unmeaning little war—unmeaning in the higher sense—was also the last campaign of the illustrious Prince Eugene. Eugene did all that a general could do to hold up against overwhelming odds, and but for him the victory of the French would have been complete. The short remainder of his life was passed in peace.

Walpole gave satisfaction to some of those who disliked his peace policy by the energy with which he entered into the settlement of a petty quarrel between Spain and Portugal. The dispute turned on a merely personal question concerning the arrest and imprisonment of some servants of the Portuguese minister at Madrid. Walpole was eagerly appealed to by Portugal, and he took up her cause promptly. He went so far as to make a formidable "naval demonstration," as we should now call it, in her favor. But he was reasonable, and he was determined that Portugal too should be reasonable. He

recommended her to show a willingness to come to terms, while at the same time he brought so much pressure to bear on Spain that Spain at last consented to refer the whole dispute to the arbitrament of England and France. The quarrel was settled, and a convention was signed at Madrid in July, 1736. It was a small matter, but it might at such a time have led {36} to serious and increasing complications if it had been allowed to go too far. Walpole unquestionably showed great judgment and firmness in his conduct, and he bore himself with entire impartiality. Spain was in the wrong, he thought, but not so absolutely or wilfully in the wrong as to justify Portugal in standing out for too stringent terms of reparation. At one time it seemed almost probable that the English minister would have to employ force to coerce his own client into terms as well as the other party to the suit. But Walpole "put his foot down," as the modern phrase goes, and the danger was averted. Even Cardinal Fleury, who co-operated with Walpole in bringing about the settlement, thought at one time that Walpole was too strenuous and was likely to overshoot the mark.

[Sidenote: 1736—Walpole's peace policy]

England had troubles enough of her own and at home about this time to occupy and absorb the attention of the most devoted minister. To do Walpole justice, it was no fault of his if the activity of English statesmanship was compelled to engage itself rather in the composing of petty quarrels between Spain and Portugal than in any continuous effort to improve the condition of the population of these islands. He had at least a full comprehension of the fact that domestic prosperity has a good deal to do with sound finance, and that sound finance depends very much upon a sound foreign policy. But the utter defeat of his excise scheme had put Walpole out of the mood for making experiments which might prove to be in advance of the age. He had no ambition to be in advance of his age. He was not dispirited or disheartened; he was not a man to be dispirited or disheartened, but he was made cautious. He had got into a frame of mind with regard to financial reform something like that into which the younger Pitt grew in his later years with regard to Catholic emancipation: he knew what ought to be done, but felt that he was not able to do it, and therefore shrugged his shoulders and let the world go its way. Walpole was honestly proud of his peace policy; more {37} than once he declared with exultation that while there were fifty thousand men killed in Europe during the struggle just ended, the field of dead did not contain the body of a single Englishman. Seldom in the history of England has English statesmanship had such a tale to tell.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

ROYAL FAMILY AFFAIRS.

[Sidenote: 1736—The Sovereign of Hanover]

George, and his wife Caroline Wilhelmina Dorothea, had a somewhat large family. Their eldest son, Frederick Lewis, Prince of Wales and Duke of Gloucester, was born on January 20, 1706. Two other sons died, one the moment after his birth, the other after scarcely a year of breath. William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, was born in 1721. There were five daughters: Anne, Amelia or Emily, Caroline, Mary, and Louisa. The Princess Caroline seems to have been by far the most lovable of the whole family. She inherited much of her mother's cleverness without her mother's coarseness. "Princess Caroline," says Lord Hervey, "had affability without meanness, dignity without pride, cheerfulness without levity, and prudence without falsehood." Her figure indeed is one of the bright redeeming visions in all that chapter of Court history. She stands out among the rough, coarse, self-seeking men and women somewhat as Sophy Western does among the personages of "Tom Jones." Her tender inclination towards Lord Hervey makes her seem all the more sweet and womanly; her influence over him is always apparent. He never speaks of her without seeming to become at once more manly and gentle, strong and sweet. Of the other princesses, Emily had perhaps the most marked character, but there would appear to have been little in her to admire. Hervey says of her that she had the least sense of all the family, except, indeed, her brother Frederick; and we shall soon come to appreciate the significance of this comparison.

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Frederick, the eldest son, like George the Second himself, had not been allowed to come to England in his early days. The young prince was in his twenty-second year when, on the accession of his father to the throne, he was brought over to this country and created Prince of Wales. At that time he was well spoken of generally, although even then it was known to every one that he was already addicted to some of the vices of his father and his grandfather. The Court of Hanover was not a good school for the

training of young princes. The sovereign of Hanover was a positive despot, both politically and socially. Everything had to be done to please him, to amuse him, to conciliate him. The women around the Court were always vying with each other to see who should most successfully flatter the King, or, in the King's absence, the Royal Prince. It was intellectually a very stupid Court. Its pleasures were vulgar, its revels coarse, its whole atmosphere heavy and sensuous. Frederick was said, however, to have given some evidence of a more cultivated taste than might have been expected of a Hanoverian Crown Prince. He was said to have some appreciation of letters and music. When he settled in London he very soon began to follow the example of his father and his grandfather; he threw his handkerchief to this lady and to that, and the handkerchief was in certain cases very thankfully taken up. Some people said that he entered on this way of life not so much because he really had a strong predilection for it as because he thought it would be unbecoming of the position of a Prince of Wales not to have an adequate number of women favorites about him; so he maintained what seemed to him the dignity of his place in society and in the State.

The prince's character at his first coming over, says Hervey in his pleasantest vein, though little more respectable, seemed much more amiable than, upon his opening himself further and being better known, it turned out to be; for, though there appeared nothing in him to be {40} admired, yet there seemed nothing in him to be hated—neither anything great nor anything vicious; his behavior was something that gained one's good wishes though it gave one no esteem for him. If his best qualities prepossessed people in his favor, yet they always provoked contempt for him at the same time; for, though his manners were stamped with a good deal of natural or habitual civility, yet his habit of cajoling everybody, and almost in an equal degree, made what might have been thought favors, if more sparingly bestowed, lose all their weight. "He carried this affectation of general benevolence so far that he often condescended below the character of a prince; and, as people attributed this familiarity to popular and not particular motives, so it only lessened their respect without increasing their good-will, and, instead of giving them good impressions of his humanity, only gave them ill ones of his sincerity. He was indeed as false as his capacity would allow him to be, and was more capable in that walk than in any other, never having the least hesitation, from principle or fear of future detection, of telling any lie that served his present purpose. He had a much weaker understanding and, if possible, a more obstinate temper than his father; that is, more tenacious of opinions he had once formed, though less capable of ever forming right ones. Had he had one grain of merit at the bottom of his heart, one should have had compassion for him in the situation to which his miserable poor head soon reduced him, for his case in short was this: he had a father that abhorred him, a mother that despised him, sisters that betrayed him, a brother set up against him, and a set of servants that neglected him, and were neither of use nor capable of being of use to him, nor desirous of being so."

[Sidenote: 1736—Resolved on a marriage]

The King's eldest daughter, Anne, was married soon after Frederick's coming to England. Up to the age of twenty-four she had remained unmarried, a long time for a princess to continue a spinster. Many years before, she had had a good chance of marrying Louis the Fifteenth {41} of France. George was anxious for the marriage; the Duc de Bourbon, then minister to Louis, had originated the idea; Anne was only sixteen years old, and would no doubt have offered no objection. But the scheme fell through because when it was well on its way somebody suddenly remembered, what every one might have thought of before, that if the English princess became Queen of France she would be expected to conform to the religion of the State. Political rather than religious considerations made this settle the matter in the English Court. George and Caroline had certainly no prejudices themselves in favor of one form of religion over another, or of any form of religion over none; but, as they held the English Crown by virtue of their at least professing to be Protestants, and as the Pretender would most assuredly have got that Crown if he had even professed to be a Protestant, it did not seem possible that they could countenance a change of Church on the part of their daughter. Years passed away and no husband was offering himself to Anne. Now at last she was determined that she would wait no longer. Suddenly the Prince of Orange was induced to ask her to be his wife. She had never seen him; he was known to be ugly and deformed; King George was opposed to the proposition, and told his daughter that the prince was the ugliest man in Holland. Anne was determined not to refuse the offer; she said she would marry him if he were a Dutch baboon. "Very well," retorted the King, angrily; "you will find him baboon enough, I can tell you."

The princess persevered, however; she was as firmly resolved to get married as Miss Hoyden in Vanbrugh's "Relapse." The King sent a message to Parliament announcing the approaching marriage of his daughter to the Prince of Orange, and graciously intimating that he expected the House of Commons to help him to give the princess a marriage-portion. The loyal Commons undertook to find eighty thousand pounds, although George was surely rich enough to have paid his daughter's dowry out {42} of his own pocket. George, however, had not the remotest notion of doing anything of the kind. The Bill was run through the House of Commons in a curious sort of way, the vote for the dowry being

thrown in with a little bundle of miscellaneous votes, as if the House of Commons were rather anxious to keep it out of public sight, as indeed they probably were. The bridegroom came to England in November, 1732, and began his career in this country by falling very ill. It took him months to recover, and it was not until March 24, 1733, that the marriage was celebrated. It must have been admitted by Anne that her father had not misrepresented the personal appearance of the Prince of Orange. The Queen shed abundance of tears at the sight of the bridegroom, and yet could not help sometimes bursting into a fit of laughter at his oddity and ugliness. Anne bore her awkward position with a sort of stolid composure which was almost dignity. To add to the other unsatisfactory conditions of the marriage, the prophets of evil began to point to the ominous conjuncture of names—an English princess married to a Prince of Orange. When this happened last, what followed? The expulsion of the father-in-law by the son-in-law. Go to, then!

[Sidenote: 1736—Massachusetts Bay retaliates]

On the same day on which the House of Commons voted the grant of the princess's dowry, a memorial from the council and representatives of the colony or province of Massachusetts Bay, in New England, was presented and read from the table. The memorial set forth that the province was placed under conditions of difficulty and distress owing to a royal instruction given to the governor of the province restraining the emission of its bills of credit and restricting the disposal of its public money. The memorial, which seems to have been couched in the most proper and becoming language, prayed that the House would allow the agent for the province to be heard at the bar, and that the House, if satisfied of the justice of the request, would use its influence with the King in order that he might be graciously pleased to withdraw {43} the instructions as contrary to the rights of the charter of Massachusetts Bay, and tending in their nature to distress if not to ruin the province. The House of Commons treated this petition with the most sovereign contempt. After a very short discussion, if it could even be called a discussion, the House passed a resolution declaring the complaint "frivolous and groundless, a high insult upon his Majesty's Government, and tending to shake off the dependency of the said colony upon this kingdom, to which by law and right they are and ought to be subject." The petition was therefore rejected. To the short summary of this piece of business contained in the parliamentary debates the comment is quietly added, "We shall leave to future ages to make remarks upon this resolution, but it seems not much to encourage complaints to Parliament from any of our colonies in the West Indies." Not many ages, not many years even, had to pass before emphatic comment on such a mode of dealing with the complaints of the American colonies was made by the American colonists themselves. Massachusetts Bay took sterner measures next time to make her voice heard and get her wrongs redressed. Just forty years after the insulting and contemptuous rejection of the petition of Massachusetts Bay, the people of Boston spilled the stores of tea into Boston harbor, and two years later still "the embattled farmer," as Emerson calls him, stood up to the British troops at Lexington, in Massachusetts, and won the battle.

On Wednesday, May 30th, the second reading of the Bill for the princess's dowry came on in the House of Lords. Several of the peers complained warmly of the manner in which the grant to the princess had been stuck into a general measure disposing of various sums of money. It was a Bill of items. There was a sum of 500,000 pounds for the current service of the year. There was 10,000 pounds by way of a charity "for those distressed persons who are to transport themselves to the colony of Georgia." There was a vote for the repairing of an old church, and there {44} were other votes of much the same kind; and amid them came the item for the dowry of the Royal Princess. The Earl of Winchelsea complained of this strange method of huddling things together, and declared it highly unbecoming to see the grant made "in such a hotch-potch Bill—a Bill which really seems to be the sweepings of the other House." The Earl of Crawford declared it a most indecent thing to provide the marriage-portion of the Princess Royal of England in such a manner; "it is most disrespectful to the royal family." The Duke of Newcastle could only say in defence of the course taken by the Government that he saw nothing disrespectful or inconvenient in the manner of presenting the vote. Indeed, he went on to argue, or rather to assert, for he did not attempt to argue, that it was the only way by which such a provision could have been made. It could not well have been done by a particular Bill, he said, because the marriage was not as yet fully concluded. But the resolution of the House of Commons was that out of the money then remaining in the receipt of the Exchequer arisen by the sale of the lands in the island of St. Christopher's his Majesty be enabled to apply the sum of 80,000 pounds for the marriage-portion of the Princess Royal. What possible difficulty there could be about the presenting of that resolution in the form of a separate Bill, or how such a form of presentation could have been affected by the fact that the marriage had not yet actually been concluded, only a brain like that of the Duke of Newcastle could settle. Of course the Bill was passed; each noble lord who criticised it was louder than the other in declaring that he had not the slightest notion of opposing it. "I am so fond," said the Earl of Winchelsea, "of enabling his Majesty to provide a sufficient marriage-portion for the Princess Royal that I will not oppose this Bill." There was much excuse for being fond of providing his Majesty in this instance, seeing that the money was not to be found by the tax-payers. Probably the true

reason why the grant was asked in a manner which would not be {45} thought endurable in our days, was that the Government well knew the King himself cared as little about the marriage as the people did, and were of opinion that the more the grant was huddled up the better.

[Sidenote: 1736—A projected double alliance]

We get one or two notes about this time that seem to have a forecast of later days in them. An explosion of some kind takes place in Westminster Hall while all the courts of justice were sitting. No great harm seems to have been done, but the event naturally startled people, and was instantly regarded as evidence of a Jacobite plot to assassinate somebody; it was not very clear who was the particular object of hatred. Walpole wrote to his brother, telling him of the explosion, and adding, "There is no reason to doubt that the whole thing was projected and executed by a set of low Jacobites who talked of setting fire to the gallery built for the marriage of the Princess Royal" by means of "a preparation which they call phosphorus, that takes fire by the air." About the same time, too, we hear of an outbreak of anti-Irish riots in Shoreditch and other parts of the east end of London. The "cry and complaint" of the anti-Irish was, as Walpole described the matter, that they were underworked and starved by Irishmen. Numbers of Irishmen, it would seem, were beginning to come over to this country, not merely to labor in harvesting in the rural districts, as they had long been accustomed to do, but undertaking work of all kinds at lower wages than English workmen were accustomed to receive. "The cry is, Down with the Irish," Walpole says; and Dr. Sheridan, Swift's correspondent, proclaiming in terms of humorous exaggeration his desire to get out of Cavan, protests that, failing all other means of relief, "I will try England, where the predominant phrase is, Down with the Irish."

George had at one time set his heart upon a double alliance between his family and that of King Frederick William of Prussia. The desire of George was that his eldest son, Frederick, should marry the eldest daughter of the Prussian King, and that the Prussian King's eldest {46} son should marry George's second daughter. The negotiation, however, came to nothing. The King of Prussia was prevailed upon to make objections to it by those around him who feared that he might be brought too much under the influence of England; and, indeed, it is said that he himself became a little afraid of some possible interference with his ways by an English daughter-in-law. The only interest the project has now is that it put the two kings into bad humor with each other. The bad humor was constantly renewed by the quarrels arising out of the King of Prussia's rough, imperious way of sending recruiting parties into Hanover to cajole or carry off gigantic recruits for his big battalions. So unkingly did the disputation at last become that George actually sent a challenge to Frederick William, and Frederick William accepted it. A place was arranged where the royal duellists, each crossing his own frontier for the purpose, were to meet in combat. The wise and persistent opposition of a Prussian statesman prevailed upon Frederick to give up the idea, and George too suffered himself to be talked into something like reason. It is almost a pity for the amusement of posterity that the duel did not come off. It would have almost been a pity, if the fight had come off, that both the combatants should not have been killed. The King of Prussia and the King of England were, it may safely be said, the two most coarse and brutal sovereigns of the civilized world at the time. The King of Prussia was more cruel in his coarseness than the King of England. The King of England was more indecent in his coarseness than the King of Prussia. For all their royal rank, it must be owned that they were *arcades ambo*—that is, according to Byron's translation, "blackguards both."

[Sidenote: 1736—Following the ways of his ancestors]

The fight, however, did not come off, and George had still to find a wife for his eldest son. She was found in the person of the Princess Augusta, sister of the Duke of Saxe-Gotha. The duke gave his consent; the princess offered no opposition, and indeed would not have been {47} much listened to if she had had any opposition to offer. King George wished his son to get married to anybody rather than remain longer unmarried; and the prince, who had tried to make a runaway match with a young English lady before this time, appeared to be absolutely indifferent on the subject. So the Princess Augusta was brought over to Greenwich, and thence to London, and on April 28, 1736, the marriage took place. The princess seems to have been a very amiable, accomplished, and far from unattractive young woman. The Prince of Wales grew to be very fond of her, and to be happy in the home she made him. He continued, of course, to follow the ways of his father and his grandfather, and had his mistresses as well as his wife. The Prince of Wales would probably have thought he was not acting properly the part of royalty if he had been contented with the companionship of one woman, and that woman his wife. His wife had to put up with the palace manners of the period. Frederick had at one time been noted for his dutiful ways to his mother; but more lately the mother and son had become hopelessly estranged. George hated Frederick, and the hatred of the mother for the son seemed quite as strong as that of the father.

A courtly chronicler and genealogist, writing at a period a little later, describes George the Second as in the height of glory, a just and merciful prince, but dryly adds, "He resembles his father in his too

great attachment to the electoral dominions." So indeed he did. The whole policy of his reign was affected or controlled by his love for Hanover, or, at least, his love for his own interest in Hanover. He had no patriotic or unselfish attachment to the land of his ancestry and his birth; he was incapable of feeling any such exalted emotion. But the electoral dominions, which were his property, he clung to with ardor, and Hanover was the garden of the pleasures he enjoyed most highly. He never could understand English ways. He once scolded an English nobleman, the Duke of Grafton, for his delight in the hunting field. It was a {48} pretty occupation, the King said, for a man of the duke's years, and of his rank, to spend so much of his time in tormenting a poor fox, that was generally a much better beast than any of those that pursued him; for the fox hurts no other animal but for his subsistence, while the brutes who hurt the fox did it only for the pleasure they took in hurting. One might admire such a declaration if it could be thought to come from a too refined and sensitive humanity. An eccentric, but undoubtedly benevolent, member of the House of Commons declared, in a speech made in that House some years ago, that he only once joined in a hunt, and then it was only in the interest of the fox. George had no such feeling; he simply could not understand the tastes or the sports of English country life.

[Sidenote: 1736—To Hanover at all hazards]

George came back from an expedition to Hanover in a very bad humor. He hated everything in England; he loved everything in Hanover. It was with the uttermost reluctance that he dragged himself back from the place of his amusements and his most cherished amours. He had lately found in Hanover a new object of adoration. This was a Madame Walmoden, a fashionable young married woman, with whom George had fallen headlong into love. He wrote home to his wife, telling her of his admiration for Madame Walmoden, and describing with some minuteness the lady's various charms of person. He induced Madame Walmoden—probably no great persuasion was needed—to leave her husband and become the mistress of a king. George, it is said, paid down the not very extravagant sum of a thousand dollars to make things pleasant all round. During his stay in Hanover he and his new companion behaved quite like a high-Dutch Antony and Cleopatra. They had revels and orgies of all kinds in the midst of a crowd of companions as refined and intellectual as themselves. George had paintings made of some of these scenes, with portrait likenesses of those who took a leading part in them, and these paintings he brought home to England, and was accustomed {49} to exhibit and explain to the Queen, or to anybody else who happened to be in the way. But he did not as yet venture to bring Madame Walmoden to England; and his having to part with her threw him into a very bad temper. The curious reader will find an amusing, but at the same time very painful, account of the manner in which George vented his temper by snubbing his children and insulting his wife. The Queen bore it all with her wonted patience. George had made a promise to get back to Hanover very soon to see his beloved Madame Walmoden. Walpole restrained him for a long time, which made the King more and more angry. Once, when the Queen was urging him to be a little more considerate in his dealings with some of the bishops, the King of England, Defender of the Faith, told her he was sick of all that foolish stuff, and added, "I wish with all my heart that the devil may take all your bishops, and the devil take your minister, and the devil take the Parliament, and the devil take the whole island, provided I can get out of it and go to Hanover." Caroline herself could be sharp enough in her tone with the bishops sometimes, but the manners of the King seemed to her to go beyond the bounds of reason.

The King was determined to get back to Hanover by a certain date. Walpole swore to some of his friends that the King should not go. The King did go, however, and left the Queen to act as regent of the kingdom during his absence. This time George was to be absent from his wife on his birthday, and the poor Queen took this bitterly to heart. She consulted Walpole, and Walpole was frank, although on this particular occasion he does not seem to have been coarse. He reminded the Queen that she was ceasing to be young and attractive, and, as it was necessary that she must keep a hold over the King's regard, he strongly urged her to write to George and ask him to bring Madame Walmoden over to England with him. Even this the Queen, after some moments of agonized mental struggle, consented to do. She wrote to the {50} King, and she began to make preparations for the suitable reception of the new sultana. She carried her complacency so far as even to say that she would be willing to take Madame Walmoden into her own service. Even Walpole thought this was carrying humbleness too far. "Why not?" poor Caroline asked; was not Lady Suffolk, a former mistress of the King, in the Queen's employment? Walpole pointed out, with the worldly good-sense which belonged to him, that public opinion would draw a great distinction between the scandal of the King's making one of the Queen's servants his mistress and the Queen's taking one of the King's mistresses into her service.

[Sidenote: 1736—Handelists and anti-Handelists]

The quarrels between the Prince of Wales and the other members of the royal family kept on increasing in virulence. The prince surrounded himself with the Patriots, and indeed openly put himself at their head. The King and Queen would look at no one who was seen in the companionship of the prince. The Queen is believed to have at one time cherished some schemes for separating the

Electorate of Hanover from the English Crown, in order that Hanover might be given to her second son. With the outer public the Prince of Wales seems to have been popular in a certain sense, perhaps for no other reason than because he was the Prince of Wales and not the King. When he went to one of the theatres he was loudly cheered, and he took the applause with the gratified complacency of one who knows he is receiving nothing that he has not well deserved. He would appear to have been continually posturing and attitudinizing as the young favorite of the people. The truth is that the people in general knew very little about the prince, and knew a good deal about the King, and naturally leaned to the side of the man who might at least turn out to be better than his father.

Even the seraphic realms of music were invaded by the dispute between the adherents of the King and the adherents of the prince. The King and Queen were supporters {51} of Handel, the prince was against the great composer. The prince in the first instance declared against Handel because his sister Anne, the Princess of Orange, was one of Handel's worshippers, therefore a great number of the nobility who sided with the prince set up, or at least supported, a rival opera-house to that in which Handel's music was the great attraction. The King and Queen, Lord Hervey tells, were as much in earnest on this subject as their son and daughter, though they had the prudence to disguise it, or to endeavor to disguise it, a little more. They were both Handelists, "and sat freezing constantly at his empty Haymarket opera, whilst the prince, with all the chief of the nobility, went as constantly to that of Lincoln's Inn Fields." "The affair," Hervey adds, "grew as serious as that of the Greens and the Blues under Justinian at Constantinople; an anti-Handelist was looked upon as an anti-courtier, and voting against the Court in Parliament was hardly a less remissible or more venial sin than speaking against Handel or going to the Lincoln's Inn Fields Opera." Hervey was a man of some culture and some taste; it is curious to observe how little he thought of the greatest musician of his time, one of the very greatest musicians of all time. The London public evidently could not have been gifted with very high musical perception just then. Indeed, later on, when Handel brought out his "Messiah," it was met with so cold and blank a reception in London that the composer began to despair of the English public ever appreciating his greatest efforts. He made up his mind to try his "Messiah" in Ireland. He went to Dublin, and there found a splendid reception for his masterpiece, and he remained there until the echo of his great success had made itself heard in England, and he then came back and found his welcome in London. This, however, is anticipating. At present we are only concerned with the fact, as illustrating the existing condition of things in London, that to be an admirer of Handel was to be an enemy of the Prince of Wales, and not to be an {52} admirer of Handel was to be an enemy of the King. The feud ran so high that the Princess Royal said she expected in a little while to see half the House of Lords playing in the orchestra in their robes and coronets. She herself quarrelled with the Lord Chamberlain for preserving his usual neutrality on this occasion, and she spoke of Lord Delaware, who was one of the chief managers against Handel, "with as much spleen as if he had been at the head of the Dutch faction who opposed the making her husband Stadtholder." It seems needless to say that George himself had no artistic appreciation of Handel. He subscribed one thousand a year to enable Handel to fight his battle, but he talked over the matter with unenthusiastic prosaic common-sense. He said he "did not think setting one's self at the head of a faction of fiddlers a very honorable occupation for people of quality, or the ruin of one poor fellow so generous or so good-natured a scheme as to do much honor to the undertakers, whether they succeeded in it or not; but, the better they succeeded in it, the more he thought they would have reason to be ashamed of it." There were some gleams of manhood shining through George still, and he could appreciate fair play although he could not quite appreciate Handel. For the ruin of one poor fellow! The poor fellow was Handel. The faction of fiddlers that could ruin that poor fellow had not been found in the world, even if we were to include Nero himself among the number. One poor fellow! We wonder how many sovereigns living in George's time the world could have spared without a pang of regret if by the sacrifice it could secure for men's ennobling delight the immortal music of Handel.

[Sidenote: 1736—William Pitt]

On April 29, 1736, an event of importance took place in the House of Commons; the event was a maiden speech, the speech was the opening of a great career. The orator was a young man, only in his twenty-eighth year, who had just been elected for the borough of Old Sarum. The new member was a young officer of {53} dragoons, and his name was William Pitt. Pitt attached himself at once to the fortunes of the Patriot, or country, party, and was very soon regarded as the most promising of Pulteney's young recruits. His maiden speech was spoken of and written of by his friends as a splendid success, as worthy of the greatest orator of any age. Probably the stately presence, the magnificent voice, and the superb declamation of the young orator may account for much of the effect which his first effort created, for in the report of the speech, such as it has come down to us, there is little to justify so much enthusiasm; but that the maiden speech was a signal success is beyond all doubt. A study of the history of the House of Commons will, however, make it clear, that there is little guarantee, little omen even, for the future success of a speaker in the welcome given to his maiden speech. Over and over again has some new member delighted and thrilled the House of Commons by his maiden

speech, and never delighted it or thrilled it any more. Over and over again has a new member failed in his maiden speech, failed utterly and ludicrously, and turned out afterwards to be one of the greatest debaters in Parliament. Over and over again has a man delivered his maiden speech without creating the slightest impression of any kind, good or bad, so that when he sits down it is, as Mr. Disraeli put it, hardly certain whether he has lost his Parliamentary virginity or not; and a little later on the same man has the whole House trembling with anxiety and expectation when he rises to take part in a great debate. On the whole, it is probable that the chances of the future are rather in favor of the man who fails in his maiden speech. At all events, there is as little reason to assume that a man is about to be a success in the House of Commons because he has made a successful maiden speech as there would be to assume that a man is to be a great poet because he has written a college prize poem. The friends of young William Pitt, however, were well justified in their expectations; and the magic of {54} presence, voice, and action, which led to an exaggerated estimate of the merits of the speech, threw the same charm over the whole of Pitt's great career as an orator in the House of Commons.

[Sidenote: 1736—Pitt—Pulteney]

Pitt came of a good family. His grandfather was the Governor of Madras to whom Mary Wortley Montagu more than once alludes: the "Governor Pitt" who was more famous in his diamonds than in himself, and whose most famous brilliant, the Pitt diamond, was bought by the Regent Duke of Orleans to adorn the crown of France. William Pitt was a younger son, and was but poorly provided for. A cornet's commission was obtained for him. The family had the ownership of some parliamentary boroughs, according to the fashion of those days and of days much later still. At the general election of 1734 William Pitt's elder brother Thomas was elected for two constituencies, Okehampton and Old Sarum. When Parliament met, and the double return was made known to it, Thomas Pitt decided on taking his seat for Okehampton, and William Pitt was elected to serve in Parliament for Old Sarum. He soon began to be conspicuous among the young men—the "boy brigade," who cheered and supported Pulteney. William Pitt was from almost his childhood tortured with hereditary gout, but he had fine animal spirits for all that, and he appears to have felt from the first a genuine delight in the vivid struggles of the House of Commons. He began to outdo Pulteney in the vehemence and extravagance of his attacks on the policy and the personal character of the ministers. His principle apparently was that whatever Walpole did must *ipso facto* be wrong, and not merely wrong, but even base and criminal. Walpole was never very scrupulous about inflicting an injury on an enemy, especially if the enemy was likely to be formidable. He deprived William Pitt of his commission in the army. Thereupon Pitt was made Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales. When the address was presented to the King on the occasion of the prince's marriage with the Princess of {55} Saxe-Gotha, it was Pulteney, leader of the Opposition, and not Walpole, the head of the Government, who moved its adoption. It was in this debate that William Pitt delivered that maiden speech from which so much was expected, and which was followed by so many great orations and such a commanding career. As yet, however, William Pitt is only the enthusiastic young follower of Pulteney, whom men compare with, or prefer to, other enthusiastic young followers of Pulteney. Even those who most loudly cried up his maiden speech could have had little expectation of what the maturity of that career was to bring.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PORTEOUS RIOTS.

[Sidenote: 1736—The gin riots]

A good deal of disturbance and tumult was going on in various parts of the provinces. Some of our readers have probably not forgotten the riots which took place in the early part of the present reign, in consequence of the objection to the turnpike gate system, and in which the rioters took the name of "Rebecca and her daughters." Riots almost precisely similar in origin and character, but much more extensive and serious, were going on in the western counties during the earlier years of George the Second's reign. The rioting began as early as 1730, and kept breaking out here and there for some years. The rioters assembled in various places in gangs of about a hundred. Like "Rebecca and her daughters," they were usually dressed in women's clothes; they had their faces blackened; they were armed with guns and swords, and carried axes, with which to hew down the obnoxious turnpike gates. The county magistrates, with the force at their disposal, were unable at one time to make any head against the rioters. The turnpike gates were undoubtedly a serious grievance, and at that time there was hardly any idea of dealing with a grievance but by the simple process of imprisoning, suppressing, or punishing those who protested too loudly against it.

The Gin riots were another serious disturbance to social order. Gin-drinking had grown to such a height among the middle classes in cities that reformers of all kinds took alarm at it. A Bill was brought into Parliament by Sir Joseph Jekyll, the Master of the Rolls, in 1736, for the purpose of prohibiting the sale of gin, or at least laying so heavy a duty on it as to put it altogether out of {57} the reach of the poor, and absolutely prohibiting its sale in small quantities. The Bill was not a ministerial measure, and indeed Walpole seems to have given it but a cool and half-hearted approval, and the Patriots vehemently opposed it as an unconstitutional interference with individual habits and individual rights. The Bill, however, passed through Parliament and was to come into operation on the 29th of the following September. At first it appears to have created but little popular excitement; but as the time drew near when the Act was to come into operation, and the poorer classes saw themselves face to face with the hour that was to cut them off from their favorite drink, a sudden discontent flashed out in the form of wide-spread riot. Only the most energetic action on the part of the authorities prevented the discontent from breaking into wholesale disturbance.

It does not seem as if the Gin Act did much for the cause of sobriety. Public opinion among the populace was too decidedly against it to allow of its being made a reality. Gin was every day sold under various names, and, indeed, it was publicly sold in many shops under its own name. The Gin Act called into existence an odious crew of common informers who used to entrap people into the selling and drinking of gin in order to obtain their share of the penalty, or, perhaps, in some cases to satisfy a personal spleen. The mob hated the common informers as bitterly as a well-dressed crowd at a race-course in our own time hates a "welsher." When the informer was got hold of by his enemies he was usually treated very much after the fashion in which the welsher is handled to-day.

It would be needless to say that the Gin Act and the agitation concerning it called also into existence a whole literature of pamphlets, ballads, libels, and lampoons. The agitation ran its course during some two years, more than once threatened to involve the country in serious disturbance, and died out at last when the legislation which had caused so much tumult was quietly allowed to become a dead letter.

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Suddenly Edinburgh became the theatre of a series of dramatic events which made her, for the moment, the centre of interest to the political world. It is, perhaps, a sufficient proof of the delicate condition of the relations between the two countries that the arrest of two smugglers came within measurable distance of awaking civil war. These two smugglers, Wilson and Robertson, being under sentence of death, made, while in church under armed escort, a desperate effort to escape. Wilson, a man of great strength, by holding two soldiers with his hand, and a third with his teeth, gave Robertson the chance, which he gladly seized, of plunging into the crowd of the dispersing congregation, and vanishing into space.

[Sidenote: 1736—John Porteous]

The Edinburgh magistrates, alarmed at the escape, offended by the display of popular sympathy with the escaped smuggler, and fearing, not, as it was said, without good cause, that an attempt would be made to rescue the single-minded and not unheroic Wilson, resolved to take all possible precautions to insure the carrying out of the sentence of the law. To do this the more effectively they ordered out nearly the whole of their own city guard under the command of Captain Porteous, and in doing so made one of the greatest mistakes recorded in their annals.

Captain John Porteous was in his way and within his sphere a remarkable man. He belonged to that large crew of daring, resolute, and unscrupulous adventurers who, under happy conditions, become famous free companions, are great in guerilla wars, make excellent explorers, and even found colonies and lay the foundations of States, but who, under less auspicious stars, are only a terror to the peaceable and an example to the law-abiding. To the romancist, to the dramatist, the character of such a man as John Porteous is intensely attractive; even in the graver ways of history he claims the attention imperatively, and stands forward with a decisive distinctness that lends to him an importance beyond his deserts. {59} His life had been from the beginning daring, desperate, and reckless. He was the son of a very respectable Edinburgh citizen, who was also a very respectable tailor, and whose harmless ambition it was to make the wild slip of his blood a respectable tailor in his turn. Never was the saying "Like father, like son" more astonishingly belied. Young John Porteous would have nothing to do with the tailor's trade. He was dissipated, he was devil-may-care; there was nothing better to be done with him than to ship him abroad into the military service of some foreign State, the facile resource in those days for getting rid of the turbulent and the troublesome. John Porteous went into foreign service; he entered the corps known as the Scotch-Dutch, in the pay of the States of Holland, and plied the trade of arms.

Time went on, and in its course it brought John Porteous back to Edinburgh. Here his military training served the city in good stead during the Jacobite rising of 1715. He disciplined the city guard

and got his commission as its captain. But, if wanderings and foreign service had turned the tailor's son into a stout soldier, they had in no degree mended his morality or bettered his reputation. Edinburgh citizenship has always been commended for keeping a strict eye to the respectabilities, and the standard of public and private decorum was held puritanically high in the middle of the last century; but even in the most loose-lived of European cities, even in the frankest freedom of barracks or of camp, John Porteous, if his reputation did not belie him, might have been expected to hold his own among the profligate and the brutal. It seems to be uncertain whether he was the more remarkable for his savage temper or for the dissolute disorder of his life. Naturally enough, perhaps in obedience to that law of contrast which seems so often to preside over the destinies of such men, his appearance did not jump with his nature. We read that he was of somewhat portly habit, by no means tall; that his face was rather benign than otherwise, and that his eyes suggested a sleepy {60} mildness. Such as he was, he had lived a queer, wild life, but its queerest and its wildest scenes were now to come in swift succession before the end.

[Sidenote: 1736—Scene at an execution]

The city guard, of which Porteous was the commander, were scarcely more popular than their chief. Ferguson, the luckless tavern-haunting poet, the François Villon of Edinburgh, the singer whose genius some critics believe to be somewhat unfairly overshadowed by the greater fame of Burns, has branded them to succeeding generations as "black banditti." They were some 120 in number; they were composed of veteran soldiers, chiefly Highlanders; they were considered by such of the Edinburgh population as often came into conflict with them to be especially ferocious in their fashion of preserving civic order. Captain John Porteous seems to have found them men after his own heart, to have been very proud of them, and to have considered that they and he together were equal to coping with any emergency that a disturbed Edinburgh might present. He was therefore deeply affronted when the magistrates, after according to him and his men the duty of guarding the scaffold on which Wilson was to die, considered it necessary for the further preservation of peace and the overawing of any possible attempt at rescue to order a regiment of Welsh fusileers to be drawn up in the principal street of the city. Wrath at the escape of Robertson, and indignation at the slight which he conceived to be put upon him and his men, acting upon his old hatred for his enemies, the Edinburgh mob, seems to have whipped the fierce temper of Porteous into wholly ungovernable fury. The execution took place under peculiarly painful conditions. Porteous insisted on inflicting needless torture upon the unhappy Wilson by forcing upon his wrists a pair of handcuffs that were much too small for the purpose. When Wilson remonstrated, and urged that the pain distracted his thoughts from those spiritual reflections which were now so peremptory, Porteous is said to have replied with wanton ruffianism that such reflections would matter very {61} little, since Wilson would so soon be dead. The prisoner is reported to have answered with a kind of prophetic dignity that his tormentor did not know how soon he might in his turn have to ask for himself the mercy which he now refused to a fellow-being. With these words, almost the latest on his lips, the smuggler went to his death and met it with a decent courage.

While the execution took place no signs were shown on the part of the great crowd that had assembled of any desire to rescue the prisoner. But the sentence had hardly been carried out when the temper of the mob appeared to change. Stones were thrown, angry cries were raised, and the mob, as if animated by a common purpose, began to press around the scaffold. One man leaped upon the gibbet and cut the rope by which the body was suspended; others gathered round as if to carry off the body. Then it is asserted that Porteous completely lost his head. The passion that had been swaying him all day entirely overmastered him. He is said to have snatched a musket from the hands of the soldier nearest to him, to have yelled to his men to fire, and to have shown the example by pointing his own piece and shooting one of the crowd dead.

Whether Porteous gave the order or not, it is certain that the attack upon the gibbet was followed by a loose fire from the guard which killed some six or seven persons and wounded many others. Then Porteous made an attempt to withdraw his men, and as they were moving up the High Street the now infuriated mob again attacked, and again the guards fired upon the people, and again men were killed and wounded. Thus, as it were, fighting his way, Porteous got his men to their guard-house.

The popular indignation was so great that the Edinburgh authorities put Porteous upon his trial. Porteous defended himself vigorously, denied that he had ever given an order to fire, denied that he had ever fired his piece, proved that he had exhibited his piece to the magistrates immediately after the occurrence unused and still loaded. This defence was met by the counter-assertion {62} that the weapon Porteous had used was not his own, but one seized from the hands of a soldier. A large number of persons gave evidence that they heard Porteous give the order to fire, that they saw him level and discharge the piece he had seized, and that they had seen his victim fall. After a lengthy trial Porteous was found guilty and sentenced to death.

[Sidenote: 1736—Attacking the Tolbooth]

The sentence was received with practically general approval in Edinburgh, but with very different feelings in London. The Queen, who was acting as regent in the absence of George II., felt especially strongly upon the subject. Lamentable as the violence of Captain Porteous had been, it was still urged that he had acted in obedience to a sense of duty. It was feared, too, that the sufficiently lawless attitude of the lower population of Edinburgh towards authority would be gravely and dangerously intensified if so signal an example were to be made of an officer whose offence was only committed under conditions of grave provocation and in the face of an outbreak which might well appear to resemble riot. The Government in London came to the conclusion that it would not do to hang John Porteous, and a message was sent by the Duke of Newcastle notifying her Majesty's pleasure that Porteous should have a reprieve for a period of six weeks—a preliminary step to the consequent commutation of the death sentence.

But, if the Government in London proposed to reprieve Porteous, the wild democracy of Edinburgh were not willing to lose their vengeance so lightly. The deaths caused by the discharge of the pieces of Porteous's men had aroused the most passionate resentment in Edinburgh. Men of all classes, those directly affected by the deaths of friends and relatives, and those who looked upon the quarrel from an attitude of unconcerned justice, alike agreed in regarding Porteous's sentence as righteous and deserved; now, alike, they agreed in resenting the interference of the Queen, and the apparently inevitable escape of Porteous from the consequences of his crime.

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What followed fills one of the most dramatic of all the many dramatic pages in the history of Edinburgh town. John Porteous was imprisoned in the Tolbooth, in the very thick of the city. Some of his friends, stirred by fears which if vague were not imaginary, urged him to petition to the authorities to be removed to the Castle, perched safe aloft upon its rock. But Porteous, filled with a false security, and rejoicing in the reprieve that had arrived from London, took no heed of the warnings. Perhaps, like the Duke of Guise on something of a like occasion, he would, if warned that there was any thought of taking his life, have answered, secure in the sanctity of the old Tolbooth, in the historic words, "They would not dare." Porteous remained in the old Tolbooth; he gave an entertainment in honor of his reprieve to certain privileged friends; he was actually at supper, with the wine going round and round, and his apartment noisy with talk and laughter, when the jailer entered the room with a pale face and a terrible tale. Half Edinburgh was outside the Tolbooth, armed and furious, their one demand for the person of Porteous, their one cry for his life.

The tale was strange enough to seem incredible even to minds more sober than those of Porteous and his companions, but it was perfectly true. Edinburgh had risen in the most mysterious way. From all parts of the town bands of men had come together; the guard-house of the city guard had been seized upon, the guards disarmed, and their weapons distributed among the conspirators. In a very short space of time Edinburgh was in the hands of an armed and determined mob; the magistrates, who attempted to enforce their authority, were powerless, and the crowd, with a unanimity which showed how well their plans had been preconcerted, directed all their energies to effecting an entrance into the Tolbooth. This proved at first exceedingly difficult. The great gate seemed to defy the force of all the sledge-hammer strokes that could be rained against it, and its warders were obstinate alike to the demands and the threats of the besiegers. But some {64} one in the ranks of the besiegers suggested fire, and through fire the Tolbooth fell. Fagots were piled outside the great gate and lighted, and the bonfire was assiduously fed until at last the great gate was consumed and the rioters rushed to their purpose over the glowing embers and through the flying sparks.

[Sidenote: 1736—A "respectable" mob]

They found Porteous in his apartment, deserted by his companions, dizzy with the fumes of wines, and helpless with the horror of the doom that menaced him. He might perhaps have escaped when the first alarm was sounded, but, as he lost his head before through passion, so he seems to have lost it again now through dismay. The poor wretch had indeed at the last moment, when it was too late, sought refuge in the chimney of his room; his flight was stopped by a grating a little way up; to this grating he clung, and from this grating he was plucked away by his assailants. In a few moments he was carried into the open air, was borne, the bewildered, despairing, struggling centre of all that armed and merciless mass, swiftly towards the Netherbow. In the midst of the blazing torches, the Lochaber axes, the guns and naked swords, that hemmed him in, the helpless, hopeless victim was swept along. A rope was readily found, but a gibbet was not forthcoming; a byer's pole served at the need. Within a little while after the forcing of the Tolbooth gate, Porteous was hanged and dead, and his wild judges were striking at his lifeless body with their weapons. It is said, and we may well believe it, that Porteous died, when he found that he had to die, bravely enough, as became a soldier. In that wild, mad life of his he had faced many perils, and if he pleaded for his life with his self-ordained executioners while there was any chance that pleading might prevail, it is likely enough that he

accepted the inevitable with composure. Wilson was avenged; the victims of the fusillade of the city guard had been atoned for by blood, and Edinburgh had asserted with a ferocity all her own that England's will was not her will, and England's law not her law.

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The peculiar characteristics of the crowd that battered down the Tolbooth gate and carried off Porteous to his death in the Grassmarket were its orderliness, its singleness of purpose, and the curious "respectability," if such a term may be employed, of its composition. Its singleness of purpose and its orderliness were alike exemplified by the way in which it went about its grim business and by the absolute absence of all riot or pillage of any kind, or indeed of any sort of violence beyond that essential to the carrying out of its intent. No peaceable persons were molested; no buildings other than the Tolbooth were broken into; the very rope which hanged the unhappy Porteous was immediately and amply paid for. No one except the central victim of the conspiracy received harm at the hands of the mob. The "respectability" of a large proportion of the mob and of those controlling its actions was afterwards vouched for in many ways. Ladies told tales of their carriages being stopped by disguised individuals of courteous bearing and marked politeness, who with the most amiable apologies turned their horses' heads from the scene of action. It was afterwards reported and commonly believed that the Edinburgh authorities knew more about the purpose of the self-appointed executions than was consonant with a due regard for law and order. In fact, if the passions of the mob were aroused they were undoubtedly organized, directed, and held in check by those who knew well how to command, and to give to an illegal act the gravity and decorum of legality.

News travelled slowly in those days. There were no telegrams, no special editions, no newspapers, to tell the Londoner in the morning of the grim deed that had been done in Edinburgh overnight. But when the news did come it certainly startled London, and it raised up a perfect passion of rage, a *hysterica passio*, in the heart and brain of one person. That person was the Queen, who had herself specially ordered the reprieve of the condemned man. Queen Caroline's reason seemed for the {66} moment to be wellnigh unhinged by her anger at the news. She uttered the wildest threats, and talked vehemently of inflicting all manner of impossible punishment upon Edinburgh for the offences of its mob.

[Sidenote: 1737—Scottish dignity]

Fortunately for the maintenance of peace between the two countries, the question of the justice or the injustice of Porteous's fate was not to be settled by the caprice of an irritated woman. In obedience, however, to the Queen's wishes, the Government introduced into the House of Lords, in April, 1737, a Bill the terms of which proposed to disable the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Alexander Wilson, "from taking, holding, or enjoying any office or place of magistracy in the city of Edinburgh, or elsewhere in Great Britain, and for imprisoning the said Alexander Wilson, and for abolishing the town guard kept up in the said city, commonly called the Town Guard, and for taking away the gates of the Netherbow port of the said city, and keeping open the same." The Bill was the occasion of long and bitter debates, in which Lord Carteret made himself the most conspicuous advocate of the Government measure, and the Duke of Argyll acted as the chief champion of the Scotch peers, who resolutely opposed it. The debate was curious and instructive, in serving to show the extreme delicacy of the relations between England and Scotland, and the difficulties presented by the differences between the Scotch law and the English law. Porteous was tried and condemned naturally by Scotch law, and many, if not most, of the English advocates of the Bill seemed to find it hard to put it out of their heads that because the trial was not conducted in accordance with the principles of English legislation it could possibly be a fair or a just trial.

If the Bill was calculated to irritate the susceptibilities of the Scotch peers, there were attendant circumstances still more irritating. The three Scotch judges were summoned from Scotland to answer certain legal questions connected with the debate. On their arrival a fresh debate sprang up on the question whether they should be {67} examined at the Bar of the House of Lords or upon the wool-sacks. The Scotch peers considered it disrespectful to their judges to be examined at the Bar of the House of Lords, and urged some of their arguments against it in terms of ominous warning. It is curious to find a speaker in this debate telling the Government that the strength of the legal union that existed between England and Scotland depended entirely upon the way in which the people of Scotland were treated by the majority in the two Houses. If any encroachment be made, the speaker urged, on those articles which have been stipulated between the two countries, the legal union will be of little force: the Scotch people will be apt to ascribe to the present royal family all the ills they feel or imagine they feel; and if they should unanimously join in a contrary interest they would be supported by a powerful party in England as well as by a powerful party beyond the seas. For such reasons the speaker urged that any insult, or seeming insult, to the people of Scotland was especially to be avoided, and any disrespect to the Scotch judges would be looked upon by the whole nation as a violation of the Articles of Union and

an indignity to the Scottish people.

The use of such words in the House of Lords within two-and-twenty years of the rising of 1715 ought to have been found most significant. No one who was present and who heard those words could guess indeed that within eight more years Scotland and England would witness a rising yet more formidable than that of the Old Pretender, a rising which would put for a moment in serious peril the Hanoverian hold of the throne. But they might well have been accepted as of the gravest import by those who voted for the attendance of the Scotch judges at the Bar of the House of Lords, and who carried their point by a majority of twelve.

The question of the judges being settled, the debate on the Bill went on, and the measure was read a third time, on Wednesday, May 11th, and passed by a majority of fifty-four to twenty-two. On the following Monday, May 16th, {68} the Bill was sent down to the House of Commons, where it occasioned debates even warmer than the debates in the Upper House. The Scotch opposition was more successful in the Commons than it had been in the Lords. So strenuously was the measure opposed that at one time it seemed likely to be lost altogether, and was only saved from extinction by a casting vote. When at last it was read a third time, on June 13th, it was a very different measure, in name and in form, from the Bill which had come down from the Peers a month earlier. The proposal to abolish the Edinburgh city guard and to destroy the gate of the Netherbow port disappeared from the Bill, and the proposed punitive measures finally resolved themselves into the infliction of a fine of two thousand pounds upon the city of Edinburgh, and the declaration that the provost, Alexander Wilson, was incapable of holding office. Such was the pacific conclusion of a controversy that at one time seemed likely to put a dangerous strain upon the amicable relations between the two countries. It may indeed be shrewdly suspected that the memory of the Porteous mob, and of the part which the Hanoverian Queen and the Whig Government played in connection with it, may have had no small share in fanning the embers of Jacobite enthusiasm in Scotland in swelling the ranks of the sympathizers with King James and Prince Charles over the water, and in precipitating the insurrectionary storm which was to make memorable the name of the Forty-five. Perhaps to the world at large the most momentous result of that wild and stormy episode is to be found in the enchanting fiction which has illuminated, with the genius of Walter Scott, the stirring scenes of the Porteous riots, and has lent an air of heroic dignity and beauty to the obscure smuggler, George Robertson. It is the happy privilege of the true romancer to find history his handmaid, and to make obscure events immortal, whether they be the scuffles of Greeks and barbarians outside a small town in Asia Minor, or the lynching of a dissolute adventurer by an Edinburgh mob at the Grassmarket.

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CHAPTER XXV.

FAMILY JARS.

[Sidenote: 1737—Unpopularity of George the Second]

"How is the wind now for the King?" "Like the nation—against him." Such was the question put, and such the answer promptly given, by two persons meeting in a London street during certain stormy days of December, 1736. The King had been on a visit to his loved Hanover. When the royal yachts were returning, some fierce tempests sprang up and raged along both coasts; and the King's vessel was forced to return to Helvoetsluis, in Holland, from which she had sailed. She had parted company with some of the other vessels. The storms continued to rage, and the King, who had been most reluctant to leave Hanover, was wild with impatience to get away from Helvoetsluis. Having had to take leave of Madame Walmoden, he was now anxious to get back to the Queen. He sailed for Helvoetsluis while the tempest was still not wholly allayed, and another tempest seemed likely to spring up. News travelled slowly in those times, and there were successive intervals of several days, during which the English Court and the English public did not know whether George was safe in a port, or was drifting on a wreck, or was lying at the bottom of the sea.

That was a trying time for the Queen and those who stood by her. George the Second was just then very unpopular in London, and indeed all over England. "The King's danger," Lord Hervey says, "did not in the least soften the minds of the people towards him; a thousand impertinent and treasonable reflections were thrown out against him every day publicly in the streets—such as wishing him at the bottom of the sea; that he had been {70} drowned instead of some of the poor sailors that had been washed off the decks—and many other affectionate *douceurs* in the same style." A man went into an ale-house where several soldiers were drinking; he addressed them "as brave English boys," and called on them to drink "damnation to your master." The man went on to argue that there was no reason why

the English people should not hate the King, and that the King had gone to Hanover only to spend the money of England there, and to bring back his Hanoverian mistress. There is not much in this of any particular importance; but there is significance in what followed. The man was arrested, and the sergeant who was with the soldiers when the invitation to drink was given went to Sir Robert Walpole to tell him what had happened. Sir Robert thanked the sergeant and rewarded him, but enjoined him to leave out of the affidavit he would have to make any allusion to the English money and the Hanoverian mistress. There was quite enough in the mere invitation to drink the disloyal toast, Sir Robert said, to secure the offender's punishment; but the Prime-minister was decidedly of opinion that the less said just then in public about the spending of English money and the endowment of Hanoverian women, the better for peace and quietness.

[Sidenote: 1737—The Prince of Wales]

The Queen and Sir Robert and Lord Hervey were in constant consultation. They would not show in public the fear which all alike entertained. The Queen went to chapel, and passed her evenings with her circle just as usual; but she was in the uttermost alarm and the deepest distress. Any hour might bring the news that the King was drowned; and who could tell what might not happen in England then? Of course in the natural order of things the Prince of Wales would succeed to the throne; and what would become of the Queen and Walpole and Hervey then? Hervey, indeed, tried to reassure the Queen, and to persuade her that her son would acknowledge her influence and be led by it; but Caroline could not be prevailed upon to indulge in such a hope even for {71} a moment. To add to her troubles, her daughter, the Princess of Orange, was lying in a most dangerous condition at the Hague—her confinement had taken place; she had suffered terribly; and, to save her life, it had been found necessary to sacrifice the unborn child, a daughter. Every hour that passed without bringing news of the King seemed to increase the chance of the news when it came proving the worst. Such was the moment when the Prince of Wales made himself conspicuous by several bids for popularity. He gave a dinner to the Lord Mayor and aldermen of the City of London on the occasion of their presenting him with the freedom of the city. The Queen, who, for all her philosophical scepticism and her emancipated mind, had many lingering superstitions in her, saw an evil omen in the fact that the only two Princes of Wales who before Frederick had been presented with the freedom of the city were Charles the First and James the Second. The prince was reported to the Queen to have made several speeches at the dinner which were certain to ingratiate him in popular favor. "My God!" she exclaimed, "popularity always makes me sick; but Fritz's popularity makes me vomit." People told her that the prince and those around him talked of the King's being cast away "with the same *sang-froid* as you would talk of a coach being overturned." She said she had been told that Frederick strutted about as if he were already King. But she added, "He is such an ass that one cannot tell what he thinks; and yet he is not so great a fool as you take him for, neither." The Princess Caroline vowed that if the worst were to prove true, she would run out of the house *au grand galop*. Walpole described the prince to Hervey as "a poor, weak, irresolute, false, lying, dishonest, contemptible wretch," and asked, "What is to become of this divided family and this divided country?" It is something of a relief to find that there was in one mind at least a thought of what might happen to the country.

We have to take all these pictures of Frederick on {72} trust—on the faith of the father who loathed him, of the mother who detested and despised him, of the brothers and sisters who shrank away from him, of the minister who could not find words enough to express his hatred and contempt for him. Of course the mere fact that father and mother, brothers and sisters, felt thus towards the prince is terrible testimony against him. But there does not seem much in his conduct, at least in his public conduct, during this crisis, which might not bear a favorable interpretation. He might have given his dinners, as the Queen held her public drawing-rooms, for the purpose of preventing the spread of an alarm. No doubt the entertainment to the Lord Mayor and aldermen had been long arranged; and the prince may have thought it would be unwise to put it off at such a moment. Every report was believed against him. A fire broke out at the Temple, and the prince went down and stayed all night, giving directions and taking the control of the work for the putting out of the flames. His exertions undoubtedly helped to save the Temple from destruction; and he became for the time a hero with the populace. It was reported to Caroline that either the prince himself or some of his friends were going about saying that the crowd on the night of the fire kept crying out, "Crown him! crown him!"

[Sidenote: 1737—Monarchy a prosaic institution]

So far as the alarm of the Queen and Walpole had to do with the state of the country, it does not seem that there was any solid ground. What would have happened if the bloated King had been tossed ashore a corpse on the coast of England or the coast of Holland? So far as the public affairs of England are concerned, nothing in particular would have happened, we think. George would have been buried in right royal fashion; there would have been an immense concourse of sight-seers to stare at the royal obsequies; and Frederick would have been proclaimed, and the people would have taken little notice of the fact. What could it have mattered to the English people whether George the Second or his eldest

son was {73} on the throne? No doubt Frederick was generally distrusted and disliked wherever he was known; but, then, George the Second was ever so much more widely known, and therefore was ever so much more distrusted and disliked. The chances of a successful Jacobite rising would not have been affected in any way by the fact that it was this Hanoverian prince and not that who was sitting on the throne of England. It would be hardly possible to find a more utterly unkingly and ignoble sovereign than George the Second; it is hardly possible that his son could have turned out any worse; and there was, at all events, the possibility that he might turn out better. Outside London and Richmond very few people cared in the least which of the Hanoverians wore the crown. Those who were loyal to the reigning family were honestly loyal on the principle that it was better for the country to have a Hanoverian sovereign than a Stuart. Many of those who in their feelings were still devoted to the Stuart tradition did not think it would be worth while plunging the country into a civil war for the almost hopeless chance of a revolution. England was beginning to see that, with all the corruption of Parliament and the constituencies under Walpole's administration, there was yet a very much better presentation of constitutional government than they had ever seen before. The arbitrary power of the sovereign had practically ceased to affect anybody outside the circles of the Ministry and the Court. The law tribunals sat and judged men impartially according to their lights, and person and property were at least secure against the arbitrary intrusion of the sovereign power. The old-fashioned chivalric, picturesque loyalty was gone; not merely because royalty itself had ceased to be chivalric and picturesque, but because men had, after so many experiments and changes, come to regard the monarchy as a merely practical and prosaic institution, to be rated according to its working merits. The majority in England at the time when George was tossing about the North Sea, or waiting impatiently at Helvoetsluis, had come to the conclusion {74} that on the whole the monarchy worked better under the Hanoverians than it had done under the Stuarts, and was more satisfactory than the protectorate of Cromwell. Therefore, we do not believe there was the slightest probability that the loss of George the Second would have brought any political trouble on the State. One can imagine objections made even by very moderate and reasonable Englishmen to each and all of the Hanoverian kings; but we find it hard to imagine how any reasonable Englishman, who had quietly put up with George the Second, should be at any pains to resist the accession of George the Second's eldest son.

But the truth is that although in her many consultations with Walpole and with Hervey the Queen did sometimes let drop a word or two about the condition of the country and the danger to the State, she was not thinking much about the state of the country. She was thinking honestly about herself and those who were around her, and whom she loved and wished to see maintained in comfort and in dignity. Her conviction was that if her son Frederick came to the throne she and her other children would be forced to go into an obscure life in Somerset House, the old palace which had been assigned to her in her jointure, and that they would even in that obscurity have to depend very much on the charity of the new King. This was the view Walpole took of the prospect. He thought those most in peril, those most to be pitied, were the Queen and the duke, her son, and the princesses. "I do not know," said Walpole to Hervey, "any people in the world so much to be pitied as that gay young company with which you and I stand every day in the drawing-room, at that door from which we this moment came, bred up in state, in affluence, caressed and courted, and to go at once from that into dependence on a brother who loves them not, and whose extravagance and covetousness will make him grudge every guinea they spend, as it must come from out of a purse not sufficient to defray the expenses of his own vices."

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Walpole, to do him justice, did think of the country. For all his rough, coarse, selfish ways, Walpole was an English patriot. He thought of the country, but he saw no danger to national interests in the change from George to Frederick. He saw, indeed, a great prospect of miserable mismanagement, blundering, and confusion in the Government. He foresaw the reliance of the coming King on the most worthless favorites. He foresaw more corruption and of a worse kind, and more maladministration, than there had been before at any time since the accession of George the First. He feared that it might not be possible for him to remain at the head of affairs when Frederick should have come to reign. But he does not appear to have had any dread of any immediate cataclysm or even disturbance. The troubles Walpole looked for were troubles which might indeed make government difficult, disturb the House of Commons, and bring discomfort of the bitterest kind into Court circles, but which would be hardly heard of in the great provincial towns, and not heard of at all in the country—at least not heard of outside the park railings of the great country-houses.

[Sidenote: 1737—A Royal love-letter]

Whatever the alarm, it was destined suddenly to pass away. While Caroline was already secretly putting her heart into mourning for her husband the news was suddenly brought that George was safe and sound in Helvoetsluis. He had been compelled to return, and there he had to remain weather-bound. He wrote to the Queen a long, tender, and impassioned love-letter—like the letter of a youthful

lover in whose heart the first feeling on an unexpected escape from death is the glad thought that he is to look once again on the fair face of his sweetheart. George really had a gift for love-letter writing, the only literary gift which he seems to have possessed. It is impossible to read the letters from Helvoetsluis without believing that they were written under the inspiration of genuine emotion. Their style might well raise over again that interesting subject of speculation—whether it is in the power of man to be in love with two or more women {76} the same time. King George was unquestionably in love with Madame Walmoden: while he was near her he could think of nothing else. He was in Hanover, feasting and dancing, always in Madame Walmoden's company, while his daughter was lying on what seemed at one time like to be her death-bed at the Hague. It is not a very far cry from Hanover to the Hague, but it never occurred to George to entertain the idea of leaving Madame Walmoden to go and pay a visit to his daughter. Out of Madame Walmoden's presence his thoughts appear to have flown at once back to his wife. To her he wrote, not in the mere language of conjugal affection and sympathy, but with the passionate raptures of young love itself. The Queen was immensely proud of this letter, although she took care to say that she believed she was not unreasonably proud of it. She showed it to Walpole and to Hervey, who both agreed that they had a most incomprehensible master. Walpole was a very shrewd and keen-sighted man, but he did not understand Queen Caroline or her feeling towards her husband. He had told Hervey more than once that he did not know whether the Queen hated more her son or her husband; and, indeed, he said there was good reason why she should hate the husband the more of the two, seeing that he had treated her so badly while she had been all devotion to him. The love of a woman is not always governed by a sense of gratefulness. There are women whose hearts are like the grape, and give out their best juices to him who tramples on them. If anything is certain in all the coarse and dreary story of that Court, it is that Queen Caroline adored her husband—that she was too fond of her most filthy bargain.

[Sidenote: 1737—A fickle, inconsiderate Prince]

The danger in which George had been, and out of which he had escaped, did not in any way soften the hearts of King and prince, of father and son, towards each other. The prince still occupied a suite of rooms in St. James's Palace, and the King and he met on public occasions, but they never spoke. The Queen was even more constant in her hatred to the prince than the King himself. It does {77} not seem possible to find out how this detestation of the son by the mother ever began to fill the Queen's heart. She was not an unloving mother; indeed, where her affection to the King did not stand in the way, she was fond and tender to nearly all her children. But towards her eldest son she seems to have felt something like a physical aversion. Then, again, the King was a dull, stupid, loutish man, over whose clouded faculties any absurd prejudice or dislike might have settled unquestioned; but Caroline was a bright, clever, keen-witted woman, who asked herself and others why this or that should be. She must have many times questioned her own heart and reasoned with herself before she allowed it to be filled forever with hatred to her son. Lord Hervey, who had a true regard for her, and in whom she trusted as much as she trusted any human being, does not appear to have ever fully understood the cause of the Queen's feelings towards the prince; nor does he appear to have shared her utter distrust and dislike of him. As far as one can judge, the prince appears to have been fickle, inconsiderate, and flighty rather than deliberately bad. He sometimes did things which made him seem like a madman. Such a person would not be charmed into a healthier condition of mind and temper by the knowledge daily thrust upon him that his own father and mother, and his own sister, were the three persons who hated him most in the world. Of course, in this as in other cases of a palace quarrel between a king and an eldest son, there was a bitter wrangle about money. The prince demanded an allowance of one hundred thousand a year to be secured to him independently of his father's power to recall or reduce it. The King had hitherto only given him what Frederick called a beggarly allowance of fifty thousand a year, and even that had not been made over to the prince unconditionally and forever. The prince argued that his father's civil list was now much larger than that of George the First at the time when the Prince of Wales of that day, George the Second now, was allowed an income of one {78} hundred thousand a year. The Princess of Wales had as yet received no jointure, and she and the prince were thus kept, as Frederick's friends insisted, in the condition of mere pensioners and dependants upon the royal bounty. The prince's friends were, for the most part, eager to stir him up to some open measure of hostility; especially the younger men of the party were doing their best to drive the prince on. Pulteney, it must be said, was not for any such course of action, indeed, was against it, and had given the prince good advice; and Carteret was not for it. But Lord Chesterfield and several other peers, and Lyttelton and William Pitt in the House of Commons, were eager for the fray, and their counsels prevailed. To use an expression which became famous at a much later day, "the young man's head was on fire," and it soon became known to the King and Queen that the prince had resolved to act upon a suggestion made by Bolingbroke two years before, and submit his claim to the decision of Parliament. More than that, when Walpole was consulted Walpole felt himself obliged to declare his belief, or at least his fear, that if the prince should persist in making his claim he would find himself supported by a majority in the House of Commons. The story had reached the Queen in the first instance through Lord Hervey, and the manner of its reaching Lord Hervey is worth mentioning, because it brings in for the first time a name destined

to be famous during two succeeding generations. The prince, having been persuaded to appeal to Parliament, at once began touting for support and for votes after the fashion of a candidate for a Parliamentary constituency. He sent the Duke of Marlborough to speak to Mr. Henry Fox, a young member of Parliament, and to ask Mr. Fox for his vote. Henry Fox was the younger of two brothers, both of whom were intimate friends of Lord Hervey. He had not been long in the House of Commons, having obtained a seat in 1735, as member for Hendon, in Wiltshire. He had come into Parliament in the same year with William Pitt, whose foremost political rival he was soon destined {79} to be. He was also destined to be the father of the greatest rival of his opponent's son. English public life was to see a Pitt and a Fox opposed to each other at the head of rival parties in one generation, and a far greater Fox and a not inferior Pitt standing in just the same attitude of rivalry in the generation that succeeded.

[Sidenote: 1737—A Royal liar]

Henry Fox went at once to Lord Hervey and told him how he had been asked to support the prince, and how he had answered that he should do as his brother did, whatever that might be. Lord Hervey at first was not inclined to attach much importance to the story. He said he had heard so often that the prince was going to take up such a course of action and nothing had come of it so far, and he did not suppose anything would come of it this time. Fox, however, assured him that the attempt would now most certainly be made, and was surprised to find that the ministers appeared to know nothing about it. He declared that he did not believe there was a man on the side of the Opposition who had not already been asked for his vote. Lord Hervey hurried to the Queen and told her the unpleasant news. Caroline sent for Walpole; and at last the story was told to the King himself. The Queen was urged by Lord Hervey to speak to her son privately, and endeavor to induce him not to declare open war upon his father. The Queen would not do anything of the kind. She declared that her speaking to her son would only make him more obstinate than ever, and that he was such a liar that it would not be safe for her to enter into any private conference with him. Other intercessors were found, but the prince was unyielding; and George himself, as obstinate as his son, could not be induced at first by Walpole, or by any one else, to make any show of concession or compromise. The Princess Caroline kept saying ever so many times a day that she prayed her brother might drop down dead; that he was a nauseous beast, and she grudged him every hour he continued to exist. These sisterly expressions did not contribute much to any manner of settlement, and the prince held on his course. {80} The calculations of Frederick's friends gave him in advance a majority of forty in the House of Commons; and even the most experienced calculators of votes on the King's side allowed to the prince a majority of ten. Walpole began to think the crisis one of profound danger. He felt it only too likely that the fate of his administration would depend on the division in the House of Commons.

[Sidenote: 1737—Frederick's "dutiful expressions"]

Something must be done; something at least must be attempted. Walpole saw nothing for it but to endeavor to arrange a compromise. Parliament had opened on February 1st, and the day appointed for the debate on this important question of the prince's allowance was to be Tuesday, the 22d of the month. On the Monday previous, Walpole made up his mind that if the King did not offer some fair show of compromise his party would be beaten when the question came to be put to the vote. His plan of arrangement was that the King should spontaneously send to the prince an intimation that he was willing to settle a jointure at once on the princess, with the added remark that this had already been under consideration—which indeed was true—not a very common occurrence in Royal messages of that day; and that he was also prepared to settle fifty thousand a year on the prince himself forever and without condition. Walpole did not believe that the prince would accept this offer of compromise. He knew very well that Frederick, full of arrogant confidence and obstinacy, and backed up by the zeal and passion of his friends, would be certain to refuse it. But Walpole was not thinking much about the impression which the offer would make on the prince. The thought uppermost in his mind was of the impression it would make on the House of Commons. Unless some new impression could be made upon the House, the triumph of the prince was absolutely certain; and Walpole felt sure that if any step could now alter the condition of things in the House of Commons it would be the publication of the fact that the King had spontaneously held out the olive-branch; that {81} he had offered a fair compromise, and that the prince had refused it.

Walpole had much trouble to prevail upon the King to make any offer of compromise. Even Lord Hervey was strongly of opinion that the attempt would be a failure, that the proffered concession would be wholly thrown away; such a movement, he said, would neither put off the battle nor gain the King one single desertion from the ranks of the enemy, while to the King's own party it would seem something like a lowering of the flag. Walpole, however, persevered, and he carried his point. A deputation, headed by the new Lord Chancellor, Lord Hardwicke, who had succeeded to the Great Seal on the death of his famous rival, Lord Chancellor Talbot, was sent to wait on the prince and submit to him the proposition of his father. The prince answered rather ungraciously that the matter was entirely out of his hands now, and that therefore he could give no answer to the Royal message. It must be

gratifying to every patriotic soul to know that his Royal Highness accompanied this declaration with "many dutiful expressions" towards his father, and that he even went so far as to say he was sorry it was not in his power to do otherwise than as he had done. The dutiful expressions did not by any means charm away the wrath either of the King or the Queen. The two stormed and raged against Frederick, and called him by many very hard names. Both were much disposed to storm against Walpole too, for the advice he had given, and for his pertinacity in forcing them on to a step which had brought nothing but humiliation. Walpole bore his position with a kind of patience which might be called either proud or stolid, according as one is pleased to look at it. With all his courage, Walpole must have felt some qualms of uneasiness now and then, but if he did feel he certainly did not show them.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

A PERILOUS VICTORY.

[Sidenote: 1737—Incentives to valor]

On Tuesday, February 22d, the debate took place in the House of Commons. It came on in the form of a motion for an address to the Sovereign, praying that he would make to the Prince of Wales an independent allowance of one hundred thousand a year. The motion was proposed by Pulteney himself. Lord Hervey seems to be surprised that Pulteney, after having advised the prince not to press on any such motion, should, nevertheless, when the prince did persevere, actually propose the motion himself. But such a course is common enough even in our own days, when statesmen make greater effort at political and personal consistency. A man often argues long and earnestly in the Cabinet or in the councils of the Opposition against some particular proposal, and then, when it is, in spite of his advice, made a party resolve, he goes to the House of Commons and speaks in its favor; nay, even it may be, proposes it. Pulteney made a long and what would now be called an exhaustive speech. It was stuffed full of portentous erudition about the early history of the eldest sons of English kings. The speech was said to have been delivered with much less than Pulteney's usual force and fire; and indeed, so far as one can judge by the accounts—they can hardly be called reports—preserved of it, one is obliged to regard it as rather a languid and academical dissertation. We start off with what Henry the Third did for his son, afterwards Edward the First, when that noble youth had reached the unripe age of fourteen. He granted to him the Duchy of Guienne; he put him in possession of the Earldom of {83} Chester; he made him owner of the cities and towns of Bristol, Stamford, and Grantham, with several other castles and manors; he created him Prince of Wales, to which, lest it should be merely a barren title, he annexed all the conquered lands in Wales; and he created him Governor of Ireland. All this, to be sure, was mightily liberal on the part of Henry the Third, and a very handsome and right royal way of providing for his own family; but it might be supposed an argument rather to frighten than to encourage a modern English Parliament. But the orator went on to show what glorious deeds in arms were done by this highly endowed prince, and the inferences which he appeared to wish his audience to draw were twofold: first, that Edward would never have done these glorious deeds if his father had not given him these magnificent allowances; and next, that if an equal, or anything like an equal, liberality were shown to Frederick, Prince of Wales, it was extremely probable that he would rush into the field at the first opportunity and make a clean sweep of the foes of England.

We need not follow the orator through his account of what was done for Edward the Black Prince, and what Edward the Black Prince had done in consequence; and how Henry the Fifth had been able to conquer France because of his father's early liberality. The whole argument tended to impress upon the House of Commons the maxim that in a free country, above all others, it is absolutely necessary to have the heir-apparent of the crown bred up in a state of grandeur and independency. Despite the high-flown sentiments and the grandiose historical illustrations in which the speaker indulged, there seems to the modern intelligence an inherent meanness, a savor of downright vulgarity, through the whole of it. If you give a prince only fifty thousand a year, you can't expect anything of him. What can he know of grandeur of soul, of national honor, of constitutional rights, of political liberty? You can't get these qualities in a prince unless you pay him at least a hundred thousand a year while his {84} father is living. [Sidenote: 1737—Providing for a Prince] The argument would have told more logically if the English Parliament were going into the open market to buy the best prince they could get. There would be some show of reason in arguing that the more we pay the better article we shall have. But it is hard indeed to understand how a prince who is to be worth nothing if you give him only fifty thousand a year, will be another Black Prince or Henry the Fifth if you let him have the spending of fifty thousand a year more. Walpole led the Opposition to the motion. Much of the argument on both sides was essentially sordid, but there was a good deal also which was keen, close, and clever, and which may

have even now a sort of constitutional interest. The friends of the prince knew they would have to meet the contention that Parliament had no right to interfere with the Sovereign's appropriation of the revenues allotted to him. They therefore contended, and, as it seems to us, with force and justice, that the Parliament which made the grants had a perfect right to see that the grants were appropriated to the uses for which they were intended, to follow out the grants in the course of their application, and even to direct that they should be applied to entirely different purposes; even, if need were, to resume them. It would naturally seem to follow from this assumption, that Parliament had a right to call on the King to make the allowance to the prince, but it would seem to follow also that the allowance ought not to be made independent and absolute. For, if the Prince of Wales had an allowance absolutely independent of the will of any one, he had something which Pulteney and his friends were contending, as it was their business just then to contend, that the English Parliament had never consented to give to the King. On the other hand, it was pointed out with much effect that there never had been any express regulation in England to provide that the Prince of Wales should be made independent of his father, and there was clear good-sense in the contempt with which Walpole treated the argument that the State dependency upon his father in {85} which the son of a great family usually lives, must necessarily tend to the debasing of the son's mind and the diminishing of his intelligence, or that the dignity and grandeur even of a Prince of Wales could not be as well supported by a yearly allowance as by a perpetual and independent settlement. Some of the speakers on Walpole's side—indeed, Walpole himself occasionally—strove to show their willingness to serve the prince by utterances which must have caused the prince to smile a grim, sardonic smile if he had any existing sense of humor. Please do not imagine—this was the line of observation—that we think one hundred thousand a year too much for his Royal Highness. Oh dear, no; nothing of the kind; we do not think it would be half enough if only the nation had the money to give away. "Why," exclaimed one gushing orator, "if we had the money the only course we could take would be to offer his Royal Highness whatever he pleased to accept, and even in that case we should have reason to fear lest his modesty might do an injury to his generosity by making him confine his demand within the strictest bounds of bare necessity." "Were we," another member of the Court party declared, "to measure the prince's allowance by the prince's merit, as we know no bounds to the latter, we could prescribe no bounds to the former." Therefore, as it was totally impossible that the treasury of any State could reward this extraordinary prince according to his merit, the speakers on Walpole's side mildly pleaded that they had only to fall back on the cold and commonplace rules of ordinary economy, and try to find out what sum the nation could really afford to hand over.

The men who talked these revolting absurdities were saying among themselves an hour after that the prince was an avaricious and greedy beast, and were openly proclaiming their pious wish that Providence would be graciously inclined to rid the world of him. Nothing strikes one as more painful and odious in the ways of that Court and that Parliament than the language of sickening sycophancy which is used by all statesmen alike in public {86} with regard to kings and princes, for whom in private they could find no words of abuse too strong and coarse, no curse too profane. Never was an Oriental despot the most vain and cruel addressed in language of more nauseous flattery by great ministers and officers of State than were the early English sovereigns of the House of Hanover. The filthy indecency which came so habitually from the lips of Walpole, of other statesmen, of the King—sometimes even of the Queen herself—hardly seems more ignoble, more demoralizing, than the outpouring of a flattery as false as it was gross, a flattery that ought to have sickened alike the man who poured it out and the man whom it was poured over. Poor, stupid George seems to have been always taken in by it. Indeed, in his dull, heavy mind there was no praise the voice of man could utter which could quite come up to his perfections. The quicker-witted Queen sometimes writhed under it.

[Sidenote: 1737—Comparisons]

Walpole, however, did not depend upon argument to carry his point. The stone up his sleeve, to use a somewhat homely expression, which he meant to fling at his enemy, was something quite different from any question of Constitution or prescription or precedent; of the genius of the Black Prince, and the manner in which Wild Hal, Falstaff's companion, had been endowed and allowanced into Henry, the victor of Agincourt. Walpole flung down, metaphorically speaking, on the table of the House the record of the interview between the Prince of Wales and the great peers who waited on him, bearing the message of the King. The record set forth all that had happened: how the King had declared himself willing to provide at once a suitable jointure for the Princess of Wales; how he had shown that this had been under consideration, and explained in the simplest way the reason why the arrangement had been delayed; how his Majesty had voluntarily taken it on himself that the prince should have fifty thousand a year absolutely independent of the Sovereign's future action, and over and above the revenues arising from the duchy of Cornwall, which his Majesty {87} thinks a very competent allowance, considering his own numerous issue and the great expenses which do, and which necessarily must, attend an honorable provision for his whole royal family. And then the record gave the answer of the Prince of Wales and its peculiar conclusion; "Indeed, my lords, it is in other hands—I am sorry for it;" "or," as the

record of the peers cautiously concluded, "to that effect."

The reading of this document had one effect, which was instantly invoked for it by Walpole. It brought the whole controversy down to the question whether the prince's father or the prince's friends ought to be the better authority as to the amount which the King could afford to give, and the amount which the prince ought to be encouraged to demand. It shrunk, in fact, into a mean discussion about the cost of provisions and the amounts of the land-tax; the number of children George the Second had to maintain as compared with the small family George the First had to provide for; the fact that George the Second had a wife to maintain in becoming state in England, whereas George the First had saved himself from the occasion of any such outlay; the total amount left for George the Second to spend as compared with the total amount which the differing conditions left at the disposal of his illustrious father. Let us see what the income of the Prince of Wales was computed to be by his friends at that time. He had fifty thousand a year allowance. From that, said his friends, we must deduct the land-tax, which at two shillings in the pound amounts to 5000 pounds a year. This brings the allowance down to 45,000 pounds. Then comes the sixpenny duty to the Civil List lottery, which has also to be deducted from the poor prince's dwindling pittance, and likewise the fees payable at the Exchequer; and the sixpenny duty amounts to 1250 pounds, and the fees to about 750 pounds, so that altogether 7000 pounds would have to be taken off, leaving the prince only 43,000 pounds allowance. Then, to be sure, there was the duchy of Cornwall, the revenues of which, it was insisted, {88} did not amount to more than 9000 pounds a year, so that, all told, the prince's income available for spending purposes was but 53,000 pounds a year. And yet, they pleaded pathetically, the yearly expense of the prince's household, acknowledged and ratified by the King himself, came to 63,000 pounds without allowing his Royal Highness one shilling for the indulgence of that generous and charitable disposition with which Heaven had so bounteously endowed him.

[Sidenote: Wealthy King; semi-starved people]

Walpole's instinct had conducted him right. The reading of the message, which Walpole delivered with great rhetorical effect, carried confusion into the Tory ranks. Two hundred and four members voted for the Address, two hundred and thirty-four voted against it. The King's friends were in a majority of thirty. Archdeacon Coxe in his "Life of Walpole" gives it as his opinion that the victory was obtained because some forty-five of the Tories quitted the House in a body before the division, believing that they were thus acting on constitutional principles, and that the interference of the House of Commons would be an unconstitutional, democratic, and dangerous innovation. But it is hardly possible to believe that the managers of the prince's case could have been kept in total ignorance up to the last moment of the fact that forty-five Tories were determined to regard the interference of Parliament as unconstitutional, and to abstain from taking part in the division. It is declared to be positively certain that the "whips," as we should now call them, of the prince's party had canvassed every man on their own side, if not on both sides. They could not have made up anything like the number they announced in anticipation to the prince if they had taken into account forty-five probable or possible abstentions among their own men. The truth evidently is that the reading of the King's message compelled a good many Tories to withdraw who already were somewhat uncertain as to the constitutionalism, in the Tory sense, of the course their leaders were taking. They would probably have swallowed {89} their scruples but for the message; that dexterous stroke of policy was too much for them. How can we—they probably thus reasoned with themselves—back up to the last a prince who positively refused to listen to the offer of a compromise spontaneously made by his father?

Money went much further in those days than it does in ours. Fifty thousand pounds a year must have been a magnificent fortune for a Prince of Wales in the earlier part of the last century. On the other hand, George the Second was literally stuffed and bloated with money. He had between eight and nine hundred thousand a year, and his wife was richly provided for. Odious bad taste, selfishness, and griping avarice were exhibited on both sides of the dispute; it would be hard to say which side showed to the lesser advantage. There was much poverty all this time in London, and indeed over the whole country. Trade was depressed; employment was hard to get; within a stone's-throw of St. James's Palace men, women, and children were living in a chronic condition of semi-starvation. The Court and the Parliament were wrangling fiercely over the question whether a king with a revenue of nearly a million could afford to give his eldest son an extra fifty thousand a year, and whether a Prince of Wales could live in decency on fifty-three thousand a year. The patient, cool-headed people of England who knew of all this—such of them as did—and who hated both king and prince alike, yet put up with the whole thing simply because they had come to the conviction that nothing was to be gained by any attempt at a change. They had been passing through so many changes, they had been the victims of so many experiments, that they had not the slightest inclination to venture on any new enterprise. They preferred to bear the ills they had; but they knew that they were ills, and put on no affectation of a belief that they were blessings.

The debate in the House of Lords took place on Friday, February 25th. Lord Carteret proposed the

motion for the Address to the King, and went over much of the {90} same historical ground that Pulteney had traversed in the Commons. The Duke of Newcastle replied in his usual awkward and bungling fashion, with the uneasy attitudes and clownish gestures which were characteristic of him. He was not able to make any effective use of the King's message, and the Lord Chancellor read it for him. The division in the House of Lords showed seventy-nine votes and twenty-four proxies for the King, in all one hundred and three; and twenty-eight votes and twelve proxies for the prince, in all forty; the King had a majority, therefore, of sixty-three. Some of the peers, among them Lord Carteret and Lord Chesterfield, signed a protest against the decision of the House. The protest is like so many other protests of the Lords—a very interesting and even valuable State paper, setting forth as it does all the genuine arguments of the prince's supporters in the clearest form and in the fewest words. The House of Lords at that time was a more independent body than it has shown itself in later years. Even already, however, it was giving signs of that decay as an effective political institution which had begun to set in, and which was the direct result of Walpole's determination to rely upon the representative Chamber for the real work of governing the country. Neither Walpole nor any one else seemed to care very much about the debate or the division in the House of Lords. Already discussions in that Chamber, no matter how eloquent and earnest in themselves, were beginning to assume that academic character which always, sooner or later, is exhibited where political debate is not endowed with any power to act directly on legislation.

[Sidenote: 1737—A man of consequence]

Walpole's victory was a very cheap affair in one sense; it cost only 900 pounds, of which 500 pounds were given to one man and 400 pounds to another. Even these two sums, Walpole used to say, were only advances. The bribed men were to have had the money at the end of the session in any case, but they took advantage of the crisis to demand their pay at once. But in another sense it was a dear, {91} a very dear, victory to the minister. The consent of the King to the offer of compromise had been extorted, more than extorted, by Walpole. Indeed, as Walpole often afterwards told the story, it was on his part not an extortion, but an actual disregard and overriding of the King's command. The King refused at the last moment to send the message to the prince; Walpole said the Peers were waiting to carry it, and that carry it they should, and he would not allow the King time to retract his former consent, and thereupon rushed off to the Lords of the Council and told them to go to the prince with the message. Even the Queen, Walpole said, had never given a real assent to the policy of the message. When the victory in the Commons was won, the King and Queen were at first well satisfied; but afterwards, when the prince became more rude and insolent in his conduct, they both blamed Walpole for it, and insisted that his policy of compromise had only filled the head and heart of the young man with pride and obstinacy, and that he regarded himself as a conqueror, even though he had been nominally conquered. The King felt bitterly about this, and the grudge he bore to Walpole was of long endurance and envenomed anger. The King and Queen would have got rid of him then if they could, Walpole thought. "I have been much nearer than you think," he said to Lord Hervey, "to throwing it all up and going to end my days at Houghton in quiet." But he also told Hervey that he believed he was of more consequence than any man before him ever was, or perhaps than any man might ever be again, and so he still held on to his place. No doubt Walpole meant that he was of more consequence than any man had been or probably would be in England. He did not mean, as Lord Hervey would seem to give out, that he believed he was a greater and more powerful man than Julius Caesar. Lord Hervey's comment, however, is interesting. "With regard to States and nations," he coldly says, "nobody's understanding is so much superior to the rest of mankind as to be missed in a week after they have gone; and, with {92} regard to particulars, there is not a great banker that breaks who does not distress more people than the disgrace or retirement of the greatest minister that ever presided in a Cabinet; nor is there a deceased ploughman who leaves a wife and a dozen brats behind him that is not lamented with greater sincerity, as well as a loss to more individuals, than any statesman that ever wore a head or deserved to lose it." There is a good deal of wholesome, although perhaps somewhat melancholy, truth in what Lord Hervey says. Perhaps we ought not to call it melancholy; it ought rather to be considered cheerful and encouraging, in the national sense. The world, some modern writer has said, shuts up the shop for no man. Yet there is, nevertheless, a tinge of melancholy in the thought of a great man toiling, striving, giving up all his days and much of his nights to the service of some cause or country, all the while firmly believing his life indispensable to the success of the cause, the prosperity of the country; and he dies, and the cause and the country go on just the same.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

"ROGUES AND VAGABONDS."

[Sidenote: 1737—The English stage]

The condition of the English stage became a subject of some anxiety about this time, and was made the occasion for the introduction of an important Act of Parliament. The reader of to-day, looking back on the dramatic literature of the second George's reign, would not be apt to think that it called for special measures of restriction. The vices of the Restoration period had apparently worked out their own cure. The hideous indecency of Dryden, of Wycherley, and of Vanbrugh had brought about a certain reaction. The indecency of such authors as these was not merely a coarseness of expression such as most of the Elizabethan writers freely indulged in, and which has but little to do with the deeper questions of morality; nor did its evil consist merely in the choice of subjects which are painful to study, and of questionable influence on the mind. Many of the finest plays of Ford and Massinger and Webster turn on sin and crime, the study of which it might reasonably be contended must always have the effect of disturbing the moral sense, if not of actually depraving the mind. But no one can pretend to find in the best of the Elizabethan writers any sympathy with viciousness, any stimulus to immorality. Of the Restoration authors, in general, the very contrary has to be said. They revel in uncleanness; they glorify immorality. It is the triumph and the honor of a gentleman to seduce his friend's wife or his neighbor's daughter. The business and the glory of men is the seduction of women. The sympathy of the dramatic author and his readers goes always with the seducer. The husband of the {94} faithless wife is a subject of inextinguishable merriment and laughter. His own friends are made to laugh at him, and to feel a genuine delight in his suffering and his shame. The question of morality altogether apart, it seems positively wonderful to an English reader of to-day why the writers of the Restoration period should have always felt such an exuberant joy in the thought that a man's wife was unfaithful to him. The common feeling of all men, even the men meant to be best, in the plays of Wycherley and Vanbrugh, seems one that might find expression in some such words as these: "I should like to seduce every pretty married woman if I could, but if I have not time or chance for such delight it is at least a great pleasure and comfort to me to know that she has been seduced by somebody; it is always a source of glee to me to know that a husband has been deceived; and, if the husband himself comes to know it too, that makes my joy all the greater." The delight in sin seems to have made men in a certain sinful sense unselfish. They delighted so in vice that they were glad to hear of its existence even where it brought them no direct personal gratification.

[Sidenote: 1737—Audacious attempt a black-mailing]

All this had changed in the days of George the Second. There had been a gradual and marked improvement in the moral tone of the drama, unaccompanied, it must be owned, by any very decided improvement in the moral tone of society. Perhaps the main difference between the time of the Restoration and that of the early Georges is that the vice of the Restoration was wanton school-boy vice, and that of the early Georges the vice of mature and practical men. In the Restoration time people delighted in showing off their viciousness and making a frolic and a parade of it; at the time of the Georges they took their profligacy in a quiet, practical, man-of-the-world sort of way, and made no work about it. One effect of this difference was felt in the greater decorum, the greater comparative decorum, of the Georgian drama.

Yet this was the time when Walpole thought it necessary to introduce a measure putting the stage under new {95} and severe restrictions. Walpole himself cared nothing about literature, and nothing about the drama; and he was as little squeamish as man could possibly be in the matter of plain-spoken indecency. What troubled him was not the indecency of the stage, but its political innuendo. It never occurred to him to care whether anything said in Drury Lane or Covent Garden brought a blush to the cheek of any young person; but he was much concerned when he heard of anything said there which was likely to make people laugh at a certain elderly person. As we have seen, he had never got the best of it in the long war of pamphlets and squibs and epigrams and caricature. It was out of his power to hire penmen who could stand up against such antagonists as Swift and Bolingbroke and Pulteney. He was out of humor with the press; had been out of humor with it for a long time; and now he began to be out of humor with the stage. Indeed, it should rather be said that he was now falling into a new fit of ill-humor with the stage; for he had been very angry indeed with Gay for his "Beggars' Opera," and for the attempt at a continuation of "The Beggars' Opera" in the yet more audacious "Polly," which brought in more money to Gay from its not having been allowed to get on the stage than its brilliant predecessor had done after all its unexampled run. The measure of Walpole's wrath was filled by the knowledge that a piece was in preparation in which he was to be held up to public ridicule in the rudest and most uncompromising way. Walpole acted with a certain boldness and cunning. The play was brought to him, was offered for sale to him. This was an audacious attempt at black-mailing; and at first it appeared to be successful. Walpole agreed to the terms, bought the play, paid the money, and then proceeded at once to make the fact that such a piece had been written, and but for his payment might have been played, an excuse for the introduction of a measure to put the whole English stage under restriction, and to brand it with terms of shame. He picked out carefully all the worst passages, {96} and had them

copied, and sent round in private to the leading members of all parties in the House of Commons, and appealed to them to support him in passing a measure which he justified in advance by the illustrations of dramatic licentiousness thus brought under their own eyes. By this mode of action he secured beforehand an amount of support which made the passing of his Bill a matter of almost absolute certainty. Under these favorable conditions he introduced his Playhouse Bill.

[Sidenote: 1737—The Press and the Theatre]

The Playhouse Bill was a measure that attracted much attention, and provoked a very fierce controversy. It was a Bill to explain and amend so much of an Act made in the twelfth year of the reign of Queen Anne, entitled "An Act for reducing the laws relating to rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars, and vagrants, and sending them whither they ought to be sent," as relates to the common players of interludes. One clause empowered the Lord Chamberlain to prohibit the representation of any theatric performance, and compelled all persons to send copies of new plays, or new parts or prologues or epilogues added to old plays, fourteen days before performance, in order that they might be submitted to the Lord Chamberlain for his permission or prohibition. Every person who set up a theatre, or gave a theatrical exhibition, without having a legal settlement in the place where the exhibition was given, or authority by letters-patent from the Crown, or a license from the Lord Chamberlain, was to be deemed a rogue and vagabond, and subject to the penalties liberally doled out to such homeless offenders. The system of license thus virtually established by Walpole is the same that prevails in our own day. We do not, indeed, stigmatize managers and actors as rogues and vagabonds, even if they should happen to give a theatrical performance without the fully ascertained permission of the authorities, and we no longer keep up the monopoly of what used to be called the patent theatres. But the principle of Walpole's Act is the principle of our present system. A play must have the permission of the Lord Chamberlain before {97} it can be put on the stage; and while it is in course of performance the Lord Chamberlain can insist on any amendments or alterations in the dialogue or in the dresses which he believes necessary in the interest of public morality. A manager is, therefore, put under conditions quite different from those which surround a publisher; an actor is fenced in by preliminary restrictions which do not trouble an author. There is no censorship of the press; there is a censorship of the theatre. If a publisher brings out any book which is grossly indecent or immoral or blasphemous, he can be prosecuted, and if a conviction be obtained he can of course be punished. But there is no way of preventing him from bringing out the book; there is no authority which has to be appealed to beforehand for its sanction.

"Is this right?" The question is still asked, Why should the people of these countries submit to a censorship of the press? What can be the comparison between the harm done by a play which is seldom seen more than once by the same person, and is likely to be forgotten a week after it is seen, and the evil done by a bad book which finds its way into households, and lies on tables, and may be read again and again until its poison has really corrupted the mind? Again, a parent is almost sure to exercise some caution when he is taking his children to a theatre. He will find out beforehand what the play is like, and whether it is the sort of performance his daughter ought to see. But it is out of the question to suppose that a parent will be able to read beforehand every book that comes into his house in order to make sure that it contains nothing which is unfit for a girl to study. Why then not have a censorship of the press as well as of the theatre, or why have the one if you will not have the other? The answer to the first question is that a censorship of the press is impossible in England. The multitude of publications forbids it. The most imaginative person would find his imagination fail him if he tried to realize in his mind the idea of the British public waiting for its morning {98} newspaper several hours while the censor was crawling over its columns to find out whether they contained anything that could bring a blush to the cheek of a young person. It would be ridiculous to put in force a censorship for books which had no application to newspapers. But it is quite easy to maintain a certain form of censorship over the theatres. The number of plays brought out in a year is comparatively small. The preparation for each new play after it has been written and has passed altogether out of its author's hands must necessarily take some time, and there is hardly any practical inconvenience, therefore, in its being submitted to the Lord Chamberlain for his approval. But then comes the question, Is the censorship of any use? Are we any the better for having it? Should we not get on just as well without it? The answer, as it seems to us, ought to be that the censorship is on the whole of some use; that we are better with it than without it. It would be idle to contend that it is of any great service to public morality in the higher sense, but is certainly of considerable advantage as a safeguard to public decency and decorum. The censorship of the stage in England to-day does not pretend to be a guardian of public morality. In all that relates to the higher moral law the public must take care of itself. Let us give one or two illustrations. Many sincere and not unintelligent persons firmly believe that the cause of public morality is injured by the representation of any play in which vice of a certain kind is brought under public notice, even though the object of the play may be to condemn the vice it exposes; but no censor of plays now would think of refusing to permit the performance of "Othello" on that account. To take a lower illustration: many people believe, and on better ground, that such a piece as "The Lady of

Lyons" is injurious to public morals, because in that play the man who makes himself a leading actor in an infamous fraud becomes glorified into a hero and wins fame, fortune, and wife in the end. But no censor would think of refusing to allow the performance of "The Lady of Lyons." The {99} censor regards it as his duty to take care that indecent words are not spoken, and that what society considers indecent dressing is not exhibited. That is not much, it may be said, but it is better than nothing, and it is all we can get or would have. The censor cannot go ahead of the prevailing habits and the common opinion of the society of his day. If we had a censor who started a lofty code of morality and propriety all his own, public opinion would not stand him and his code. Suppose we had a censor who considered "Othello" shocking, and an ordinary *décolletée* dress or an ordinary ballet costume indecent, an outcry would soon be raised against him which would compel him to resign his purposes or his office. All he can do is to endeavor to order things so that nothing is said or exhibited which might shock society's sense of propriety, and this he can as a rule fairly accomplish. He must also take his society as he finds it. A West End audience in London will stand allusions and jests and scantiness of costume which an East End audience, made up almost exclusively of the working-people and the poor, would not endure for a moment. The censor of plays can be much more rigid in his discipline when he is protecting the proprieties of poverty than when he is protecting the proprieties of fashion. The censorship works well in England on the whole, because it has almost always been worked by capable men of the world who understand that they are not dealing with children, who do not magnify their office, and do not strain after an austere authority which it would be quite impossible for them to exert.

[Sidenote: 1737—The Playhouse Bill]

The Playhouse Bill passed through the House of Commons easily enough. No one of any mark took much account of it, except Pulteney, who opposed it. The opposition offered by Pulteney does not appear to have been very severe or even serious, for no division was taken in the representative Chamber. The feeling of every one was not so much concerned about what we should now call immorality or indecency, but about lampoons on public men. This fear was common to the Opposition as well as to the {100} Government, was shared alike by the Patriots and the Court party; and so the Bill was sent speedily through both Houses.

[Sidenote: 1737—The censorship of the stage]

The debate was made memorable by the brilliant speech of Lord Chesterfield in the House of Lords. All contemporary accounts agree in describing this speech as one of the most fascinating and impressive ever heard in Parliament. Chesterfield strongly opposed the measure in the interests of public liberty and the freedom of the press. He knew where to hit hard when he called the licensing department which the Bill proposed to create "a new excise." The real object of the measure, he insisted, was not so much to restrain the stage as to shackle the press. "It is an arrow that does but glance at the stage; the mortal wound seems destined against the liberty of the press." His argument to this effect was decidedly clever, keen, plausible, and telling. "You can prevent a play from being acted," he said, "but you do not prevent it from being printed. Therefore a play which by your censorship you refuse to allow to come on the stage, and in the interests of public morals very properly refuse, you allow to come in a printed form on the shelves of the booksellers. The very fact that a play was not allowed to be put on the stage will only make people the more eager to read it in book form; prohibited publications are in all countries diligently and generally sought after. Plays will be written in order to be prohibited by the censor and then to be sold in book form. What will come of this? Unquestionably an extension of the present measure for the purpose of preventing the printing as well as the public representation of plays. It is out of the question that society could allow a play to be read by all the public which it would not allow to be recited on the boards of a theatre. Now then you have got so far as the preventing of plays from being printed, what happens next? That a writer will turn his rejected, prohibited play into a novel or something of the kind; will introduce a little narrative as well as dialogue, and in this slightly {101} altered form offer his piece of scandalous work to the general reader. Then it will be asked, What! will you allow an infamous libel to be printed and dispersed merely because it does not bear the title of a play? Thus, my Lords, from the precedent before us, we may, we shall be induced, nay, we can find no reason for refusing to lay the press under a general license, and then we may bid adieu to the liberties of Great Britain."

There was a great deal of force and of justice in Chesterfield's reasoning. But its defect was that it made no account of the amount of common-sense which must go to the administration of law in every progressive country. If the censorship of the stage had been worked in the spirit and style which Chesterfield expected, then it is beyond question that it would have to be followed up by a censorship of the press or withdrawn altogether. It would clearly be impossible to allow the very words which were not to be spoken on the stage to be set out in the clearest type on the shelves of every bookseller. But Chesterfield's own speech showed that he had entirely misconceived the extent and operation of a censorship of the stage in a country like England. The censorship of the stage which Chesterfield assumed to be coming, and which he condemned, could not possibly, as we have shown, exist in those

islands. The censorship of the stage, if it were to move in such a direction, would not be paving the way for a censorship of the press, but simply paving the way for its own abolition. The speech was a capital and a telling piece of argument addressed to an audience who were glad to hear something decided and animated on the subject; but it never could have deceived Chesterfield himself. It took no account of the elementary political fact that all legislation is compromise, and that the supposed logical and extreme consequences of no measure are ever allowed to follow its enactment. The censorship of plays has gone on since that time, and it has not interfered with the general liberty of acting and of publishing dramatic pieces. It has not compelled {102} Parliament to choose between introducing a censorship of the press or abolishing the censorship of plays. We have never heard of any play worth seeing which was lost to the English stage through the censorship of the drama, nor was the suggestion ever made by the most reactionary Ministry that it should be followed up by a censorship of the press.

[Sidenote: 1737—Educated libellers]

Indeed in Walpole's day it might almost have seemed as if the stage required censorship less than the ballad. Probably, if it had been thought humanly possible to prevent the publication and the circulation of scurrilous poems against eminent men and women, Walpole might have ventured on the experiment. But he had too much robust common-sense not to recognize the impossibility of doing anything effective in the way of repression in that field of art.

Certainly the Muse of Song made herself very often a shrieking sister in those days. When she turned her attention to politics, and had her patrons to be sung up and her patrons' enemies to be sung down, she very often screamed and called names, and cursed like an intoxicated fish-wife. Pope, Swift, Gay, Hervey, flung metrical abuse about in the coarsest fashion. There seemed to be hardly any pretence at accuracy of description or epithet. If the poet or the poet's patron did not like a man or woman, no word of abuse was too coarse or foul to be employed against the odious personage. Women, indeed, got off rather worse than men on the whole; even Lord Hervey did not suffer so much at the hands of Pope as did Mary Wortley Montagu. The poets of one faction did not spare even the princes and princesses, even the King or Queen, of another. Furious and revolting lines were written about George and his wife by one set of versifiers; about the Prince of Wales by another. No hour, no event, was held sacred. Around a death-bed the wits were firing off their sarcasms on its occupant. Some of the verses written about Queen Caroline, verses often containing the foulest and filthiest libels, followed her into the sick-chamber, {103} the bed of death, the coffin, and the grave. One could easily understand all this if the libellers had been vulgar and venal Grub Street hacks who were paid to attack some enemy of their paymaster. But the vilest calumnies of the time were penned by men of genius, by men of the highest rank in literature; by men whose literary position made them the daily companions of great nobles and of princes and princesses. Political and social hatred seemed to level all distinctions and to obliterate most of the Christian virtues.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE BANISHED PRINCE.

[Sidenote: 1737—An important affair]

The conduct of the Prince of Wales was becoming more and more insolent to the King and Queen every day. Perhaps King George was right in his belief that Walpole's policy of compromise had made Frederick think himself of some real account in public affairs. It is certain that he began to act as if he were determined the whole nation should know how thoroughly independent he was of the authority of his father and mother. He had soon a peculiar opportunity of making a display of this ferocious independence.

The Princess of Wales was about to have her first child. For some reason, which no one could well explain, the news of the coming event was not made known to the King and Queen until the hour of its coming was very near. Even then there seems to have been some conscious or unconscious misleading of the King and Queen as to the actual time when according to calculations the child was to be born. The King and Queen were left under the impression that it was a good deal further off than it really proved to be. The Queen, with all her natural goodness of heart, was painfully suspicious. She was suspicious sometimes even of those she loved and trusted; and she hated both the Prince and the Princess of Wales. She had taken it into her head that the Princess of Wales was not likely to have a child. She persisted in asserting to those around her that the princess was not pregnant and never would be. Naturally when she allowed her mind to be filled with this idea, the next conclusion for her to

jump at was the conviction that a supposititious infant was about to be palmed off on the Palace and the {105} country. This idea took full possession of her mind, and she kept constantly telling those around her that, no matter when or where the event might take place, she was determined to be in at that birth. In the most explicit and emphatic way she told people that she would make sure for herself that no child was imported in a warming-pan this time.

The King and Queen were now in Hampton Court Palace; the Prince and Princess of Wales were also living there. Nothing would have been easier for the Queen than to carry out her purpose if the princess were allowed to remain in the palace until after her confinement. It was reported to her that the prince had said he was anxious that his wife should be confined in London—in St. James's Palace. This the Queen was determined to prevent if she could. The Princess Caroline fully shared her mother's belief that the Prince of Wales was quite capable of palming off a spurious child on the country; and indeed the King became after a while as well convinced of it as his wife and his daughter. It was resolved that a message should be sent from the King to the Prince of Wales, giving a sort of Royal command that the princess should remain at Hampton Court until after her confinement. Lord Hervey shook his head at all this. He did not believe in the warming-pan fantasy; and he felt sure that in any case the Prince of Wales would contrive to get his wife out of Hampton Court if he wished to do so. What was to prevent the princess going up to London a little before her time, and then affecting to fall suddenly ill there, and declaring that she could not endure the pain and danger of removal? Lord Hervey had seen a good deal of the prince in old days. They had had friendships and quarrels and final estrangement, and he knew his prince pretty well.

What Hervey had predicted came to pass, but in a worse way than he had ventured to predict. The Queen kept urging Walpole to send the King's order to the prince. Walpole kept putting it off. For one reason, the {106} minister had been told the confinement was to be expected in October, and this was only July. It is very likely, too, that he shared Hervey's scepticism alike as to the supposititious child and the possibility of keeping the prince's wife at Hampton Court against the prince's will. The Royal command was never sent.

[Sidenote: 1737—Neighbors requisitioned]

On Sunday, July 31, 1737, the Prince of Wales and the princess dined publicly with the King and Queen in Hampton Court Palace. Not a word was said to any one about an early approach of the confinement. The princess seemed in her usual condition. The two sets of royal personages did not talk with each other at this time, although they thus had ceremonial meetings in public. The Queen called the attention of some one near her to the princess's appearance, and insisted that she was not going to have a child at all. When dinner was over, the prince and princess went back to their own apartments, and later that evening the princess was taken with the pains of labor. Then followed what has hardly ever happened in the story of the life of a poor washer-woman or a peasant's wife. The unfortunate princess was far gone in her agony before any one had time to think; and before those around them had much time to think the Prince of Wales had determined to carry her off, groaning in labor as she was, and take her ten miles to London. The whole story is a shocking one; and we shall put it into a very narrow compass. But it has to be told somehow. By the help of an equerry and a dancing-master, the writhing princess was hoisted down-stairs and got into a carriage. The dancing-master, Dunoyer, was a hanger-on and favorite of the prince; and, being employed to teach dancing to the younger children of George the Second, acted as a kind of licensed spy, so Hervey says, on the one family and the other. In the carriage with the prince and princess came Lady Archibald Hamilton, who was understood to be the prince's mistress. No royal movement in those days would seem to be thought quite complete without the presence of some mistress of the {107} King or prince. The carriage reached London about ten o'clock. It had been driven at full gallop, the poor princess writhing and screaming all the time, and the prince scolding at her and telling her it was nonsense to cry and groan about pain which would so soon be over. When they got to St. James's Palace there were naturally no preparations made for a lying-in. The prince and Lady Archibald Hamilton set to work to get some things in readiness, and found they had to send round the neighborhood to collect some of the most necessary appliances for such an occasion. So pitifully unprovided was the palace that no clean sheets could be found, and the prince and his mistress put the princess to bed between two table-cloths. At a quarter before eleven the birth took place. A tiny baby was born; "a little rat of a girl," Lord Hervey says, "about the bigness of a good large tooth-pick." The little rat of a girl grew up, however, to be a handsome woman. She was seen by John Wilson Croker in 1809 and had still the remains of beauty. The Lords of the Council had been hurriedly sent for to be present at the birth; but the event was so sudden and so unexpected that only Lord Wilmington, the President of the Council, and Lord Godolphin, the Privy Seal, arrived in time to be able to testify that no warming-pan operation was accomplished.

The unsuspecting King and Queen had gone to bed, according to their usual quiet custom, at eleven o'clock. Their feelings, as a certain class of writers are in the habit of saying, may be more easily imagined than described when they were roused from sleep about two in the morning by the couriers,

who came to tell them that the princess had become the mother of a girl, and that the prince and princess were at St. James's Palace, London. There was racing and chasing. Within half an hour the Queen was on the road to London with the two eldest princesses, Lord Hervey, and others. The Queen comported herself with some patience and dignity when she saw the prince and princess. The child was shown to her. {108} No clothes had yet been found for it but some napkins and an old red cloak. "The good God bless you, poor little creature," said the Queen in French; "you have come into a very disagreeable world!"

[Sidenote: 1737—Applying a precedent]

The King and Queen consented to become the godfather and godmother of the poor little creature who had been brought thus disagreeably into this disagreeable world. But the conduct of the prince was regarded as unpardonable, and he was banished by Royal letter from the King's palace, whether at Hampton Court or St. James's. The prince's own party, Pulteney and his colleagues, utterly refused to give their sanction to the extraordinary course which Frederick had taken. Bolingbroke wrote from France, angrily and scornfully condemning it. But the Patriots were willing, and resolved to stand the prince's friends all the same, and they had not even the courage to advise him to make a frank and full apology for his conduct. Indeed the action of the prince seems to suggest an approach to insanity rather than deliberate and reasoned perverseness. He had forced his wife to run the risk of losing her own life and her child's life, he had grossly and wantonly offended his father and mother, and he had thrown a secrecy and mystery round the birth of the infant which, if ever there came to be a dispute about the succession, would give his enemies the most plausible excuse for proclaiming that a spurious child had been imposed upon the country. As a friend of the Queen said at the time, if ever the Crown came to be fought for again, the only question could be whether the people would rather have the Whig bastard or the Tory bastard.

The whole business, as might be expected, caused a terrible scandal. Not merely was the prince banished from the palace, not merely did the King refuse to see him or to hold further communication with him, but it was formally announced by the Secretaries of State to all the foreign ministers that it would be considered a mark of respect to the Sovereign if they would abstain from visiting the prince. Furthermore, a message was sent in {109} writing to all peers, peeresses, and privy councillors, declaring that no one who went to the prince's court would be admitted into the King's presence. Never probably was domestic dirty linen more publicly washed. Nevertheless, it very soon was made apparent that the course taken by the King was in strict accordance with a precedent which at one time had a very direct application to himself. Some of the prince's friends thought it a clever stroke of policy just then to print and publish the letters which passed between the late King and the present Sovereign when the latter was Prince of Wales and got into a quarrel with his father. The late King sent his vice-chamberlain to order his son "that he and his domestics must leave my house." A copy was also published of a circular letter signed by the honored name of Joseph Addison, then Secretary of State, addressed to the English ministers at foreign courts, giving the King's version of the whole quarrel, in order that they might report him and his cause aright to the unsatisfied.

Lord Hervey is inclined to think that it was not the friends of the prince, but rather Walpole himself, who got these letters printed. Hervey does not see what good the publication could do to the prince and the prince's cause, but suggests that it might be a distinct service to Walpole and Walpole's master to show that the reigning king in his early days had been treated with even more harshness than he had just shown to his own son, and with far less cause to justify the harshness. Still it seems to us natural for the prince's friends to believe it would strengthen him in popular sympathy if it were brought before men's minds that the very same sort of treatment of which George the Second complained when it was visited on him by his own father he now had not scrupled nor shamed to visit upon his son. Among other discoveries made at this time with regard to the more secret history of the late reign, it was found out that George the First actually entertained and encouraged a project for having the Prince of Wales, now George the Second, put on board {110} some war-vessel and "carried off to any part of the world that your Majesty may be pleased to order." This fact—for a fact it seems to be—did not get to the public knowledge; but it came to the knowledge of Lord Hervey, who probably had it from the Queen herself, and it is confirmed by other and different testimony. A Prince of Wales kidnapped and carried out of civilization by the command of his royal father would have made a piquant chapter in modern English history.

[Sidenote: 1737—Bishop Hoadley and the Test Act]

The prince and princess went to Kew in the first instance, and then the prince took Norfolk House, in St. James's Square, for his town residence, and Cliefden for his country place. The prince put himself forward more conspicuously than ever as the head of the Patriot party. It was reported to Walpole that in Frederick's determination to make himself popular he was resolved to have a Bill brought forward in the coming session of Parliament to repeal the Test Act. The Test Act was passed in the reign of

Charles the Second, 1673, and it declared that all officers, civil or military, of the Government must take the sacrament according to the forms of the Church of England, and must take the oaths against the doctrine of transubstantiation. This Act was, of course, regarded as a serious grievance by the Dissenters of all denominations. Some few eminent Churchmen, like Dr. Hoadley, Bishop of Winchester, had always been opposed to the narrow-minded policy of the Act. Hoadley, indeed, had made himself a sort of leader of the dissenting communities on this subject. For that and other reasons he had been described as the greatest Dissenter who ever wore a mitre. When the report got about that an attempt was to be made to have the Test Act repealed, Walpole, with his usual astuteness, sent for the bishop, knowing very well that, if such a determination had been come to, Dr. Hoadley would be among the very first men to be consulted on the subject. Walpole expressed his mind very freely to Hoadley. A coldness had long existed between them, which Walpole's gift of the Bishopric of Winchester had not removed. {111} Hoadley had thought Walpole slow, lukewarm, and indifferent about movements in reform of Church and State, which Hoadley regarded as essential parts of the programme of the Whig party. Walpole was perfectly frank with him on this occasion, and explained to him the difficulty which would come up in English affairs if the Prince of Wales were encouraged to seek popularity at the expense of the King and Queen by making himself the champion of the Dissenters' grievances. Hoadley met Walpole in a spirit of similar frankness. He declared that he always had been and always should be in favor of the repeal of the Test Act, but that he disapproved altogether of the prince being set up in opposition to the King; and he believed that even the repeal of the Test Act would be bought at too dear a cost if it were the means of bringing the King into a distressing family quarrel. Therefore the bishop declared that he would give no encouragement to such a scheme, of which, he said, he had lately heard nothing from the prince; and that, whatever kindnesses he might receive from Frederick, he should never forget his duty to George. Walpole was delighted with Hoadley's bearing and Hoadley's answer, and seemed as if he never could praise him enough. No one can question Hoadley's sincerity. We must only try to get ourselves back into the framework and the spirit of an age when a sound patriot and a high-minded ecclesiastic could be willing to postpone indefinitely an act of justice to a whole section of the community in order to avoid the risk of having the Sovereign brought into disadvantageous comparison with the Sovereign's eldest son. Walpole approved of the Test Act no more than Hoadley did, although the spirit of his objection to it was far less positive and less exalted than that of Hoadley. But Walpole was, of course, an avowed Opportunist; he never professed or pretended to be anything better. There is nothing surprising in the fact that he regarded an act of justice to the Dissenters as merely a matter of public convenience, to be performed when it could be performed without disturbing anybody of {112} importance. Hoadley must have looked at the subject from an entirely different point of view; it must have been to him a question of justice or injustice; yet he, too, was quite ready to put it off indefinitely rather than allow it to be made the means of obtaining a certain amount of popular favor for the Prince of Wales as opposed to his father the King. We shall see such things occurring again and again in the course of this history. The agreement of Walpole and Hoadley did, indeed, put off the repeal of the Test Act for a pretty long time. The brand and stigma on the Protestant Dissenters as well as on the Roman Catholics was allowed to remain in existence for nearly another century of English history. We are now in 1737, and the Test Act was not repealed until 1828. Historians are sometimes reproached for paying too much attention to palace squabbles; yet a palace squabble becomes a matter of some importance if it can postpone an act of national justice for by far the greater part of a century.

[Sidenote: 1737—A question of price]

There was a good deal of talk about this time of the possibility of adopting some arrangement for the separation of Hanover from the English Crown. The fact of the Princess of Wales having given birth to a daughter and not a son naturally led to a revival of this question. The electorate of Hanover could not descend to a woman, and if the Prince of Wales should have no son some new arrangement would have to be made. The Queen was very anxious that Hanover should be secured for her second son, to whom she was much attached, and the King was understood to be in favor of this project. On the other hand, it was given out that the Prince of Wales would be quite willing to renounce his rights in favor of his younger brother on condition of his getting the fifty thousand a year additional for which he had been clamoring in Parliament. Nothing could be more popular with the country than any arrangement which would sever the connection between the Crown of England and the electorate of Hanover. If the prince were seeking popularity, such a proposal coming from him would be popular indeed, provided {113} it were not spoiled by the stipulation about the fifty thousand a year. The Queen's comment upon the rumors as to the prince's intention was that in her firm belief he would sell the reversion of the Crown of England to the Pretender if only the Pretender offered him money enough. Nothing came of the talk about Hanover just then. The King and the Queen had soon something else to think of.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE QUEEN'S DEATH-BED.

[Sidenote: 1737—Caroline's death-stroke]

The Queen had long been dying; dying by inches. In one of her confinements she had been stricken with an ailment from which she suffered severely. She refused to let any one, even the King, know what was the matter with her. She had the strongest objection to being regarded as an invalid; and she feared, too, that if anything serious were known to be the matter with her she might lose her hold over her selfish husband, who only cared for people as long as they were active in serving and pleasing him. An invalid was to George merely a nuisance. Let us do Caroline justice. She was no doubt actuated by the most sincere desire to be of service to the King, and she feared that if she were to make it known how ill she was, the King might insist on her giving up active life altogether. Not only did she take no pains to get better, but in order to prove that she was perfectly well, she used to exert herself in a manner which might have been injurious to the health of a very strong woman. When at Richmond she used to walk several miles every morning with the King; and more than once, Walpole says, when she had the gout in her foot, she dipped her whole leg in cold water to be ready to attend him. "The pain," says Walpole, "the bulk, and the exercise threw her into such fits of perspiration as routed the gout; but those exertions hastened the crisis of her distemper." History preserves some curious pictures of the manner in which the morning prayers were commonly said to Queen Caroline. The Queen was being dressed by her ladies in her bedroom; the door of the bedroom was left partly open, the {115} chaplain read the prayers in the outer room, and had to kneel, as he read them, beneath a great painting of a naked Venus; and just within the half-open bedroom door her Majesty, according to Horace Walpole, "would frequently stand some minutes in her shift, talking to her ladies."

Robert Walpole was the first to discover the real and the very serious nature of the Queen's malady. He was often alone with her for the purpose of arranging as to the course of action which they were to prevail upon the King to believe to be of his own inspiration, and accordingly to adopt. Shortly after the death of Walpole's wife he was closeted with the Queen. Her Majesty questioned him closely about the cause of his wife's death. She was evidently under the impression that Lady Walpole had died from the effects of a peculiar kind of rupture, and she put to Walpole a variety of very intimate questions as to the symptoms and progress of the disease. Walpole had long suspected, as many others had, that there was something seriously wrong with the Queen. He allowed her to go on with her questions, and he became satisfied in his own mind that the Queen herself was suffering from the disorder about which she was so anxious to be told.

On August 26, 1737, it was reported over London that the Queen was dead. The report was unfounded, or at least premature. Caroline had had a violent attack, but she rallied and was able to go about again at Hampton Court with the King. On Wednesday, November 9, 1737, she was suddenly stricken down, and this was her death-stroke. She did not die at once, but lingered and lingered.

There are few chapters of history more full of strange, sardonic contrast, and grim, ghastly humor, than those which describe these death-bed scenes. The Queen, undergoing a succession of painful operations; now groaning and fainting, now telling the doctors not to mind her foolish cries; now indulging in some chaff with them—"Is not Ranby [the surgeon] sorry it isn't his own cross old wife he is cutting up?"—the King sometimes blubbering, and sometimes telling his dying wife that her staring eyes {116} looked like those of a calf whose throat had been cut; the King, who, in his sudden tenderness and grief, would persist in lying outside the bed, and thereby giving the poor, perishing sufferer hardly room to move; the messages of affected condolence arriving from the Prince of Wales, with requests to be allowed to see his mother, which requests the mother rejects with bitterness and contempt—all this sets before us a picture such as seldom, happily for the human race, illustrates a death-bed in palace, garret, or prison cell. The King was undoubtedly sincere in his grief, at least for the time. He did love the Queen in a sort of way; and she had worked upon all his weaknesses and vices and made herself necessary to him. He did not see how life was to go on for him without her; and as he thought of this he cried like a child whose mother is about to leave him. Over and over again has the story been told of the dying Queen's appeal to her husband to take a new wife after her death, and the King's earnest disclaimer of any such purpose; the assurance that he would have mistresses, and then the Queen's cry of cruel conviction from hard experience, "Oh, mon Dieu, cela n'empêche pas!" "I know," says Lord Hervey, who tells the story, "that this episode will hardly be credited, but it is literally true." One does not see why the episode should hardly be credited, why it should not be taken at once as historical and true. It is not out of keeping with all other passages of the story, it is in the closest harmony and symmetry with them. The King always made his wife the confidante of his amours and intrigues. He had written to her once, asking her to bring to Court the wife of some nobleman or gentleman, and he told her frankly that he admired this lady and wanted to have her near him in order that he might have an intrigue with her, and he knew that she, his wife, would always be glad to do him

a pleasure. Thackeray, in his lecture, often speaks of the King as "Sultan George." George had, in the matter of love-making, no other notions than those of a sultan. [Sidenote: 1737—George's settled belief] He had no more idea of his wife objecting to his mistresses than {117} a sultan would have about the chief sultana's taking offence at the presence of his concubines. The fact that the Queen lay dying did not put any restraint on any of George's ways. He could not be kept from talking loudly all the time; he could not be kept from bawling out observations about his wife's condition which, if they were made only in whispers, must have tended to alarm and distress an invalid. It is not the frank brutality of George's words which surprises us; it is rather the sort of cross-light they throw on what was after all a tender part of his coarse and selfish nature. Every reader of the history and the memoirs of that reign must be prepared to understand and to appreciate the absolute sincerity of the King's words; the settled belief that the Queen could not possibly have any objection to his taking to himself as many mistresses as he pleased. One is a little surprised at the uncouth sentimentality of the thought that nevertheless it might be a disrespect to her memory if he were to take another wife. What a light all this lets in upon the man, and the Court, and the time! As regards indiscriminate amours and connections, poor, stupid, besotted George was simply on a level with the lower animals. Charles the Second, Louis the Fourteenth, Louis the Fifteenth even—these at their worst of times were gentlemen. It was only at the Hanoverian Court of England that such an interchange of appeal and reassurance could take place as that which was murmured and blubbered over the death-bed of Queen Caroline. "Horror," says one of the great Elizabethan poets, "waits on the death-beds of princes." Horror in the truest sense waited on the death-bed of that poor, patient, faithful, unscrupulous, unselfish Queen.

The Queen kept rallying and sinking, and rallying again; and the King's moods went up and down with each passing change in his wife's condition. Now she sank, and he buried his face in the bedclothes and cried; now she recovered a little, and he rated at her and made rough jokes at her. At one moment he appeared to be all {118} tenderness to her, at another moment he went on as if the whole illness were a mere sham to worry him, and she might get up and be well if she would only act like a sensible woman. The Prince of Wales made an attempt to see the Queen. The King spoke of him as a puppy and a scoundrel; jeered at his impudent, affected airs of duty and affection, declared that neither he nor the Queen was in a condition to see him act his false, whining, cringing tricks now, and sent him orders to get out of the place at once. His Majesty continued all through the dying scenes to rave against the Prince of Wales, and call him rascal, knave, puppy, and scoundrel. The Queen herself, although she did not use language quite as strong, yet expressed just as resolute a dislike or detestation of her son, and an utter disbelief in his sincerity. She declared that she knew he only wanted to see her in order that he should have the joy of knowing she was dead five minutes sooner than if he had to wait in Pall Mall to hear the glad tidings. She told the listeners that if ever she should consent to see the prince they might be sure she had lost her senses. Princess Caroline was in constant attendance on the Queen. So was Lord Hervey. The princess, however, became unwell herself and the Princess Emily sat up with the Queen. But Caroline would not consent to be removed from her mother. A couch was fitted up for her in a room adjoining the Queen's; and Lord Hervey lay on a mattress on the floor at the foot of the princess's bed. The King occasionally went to his own rooms, and there was peace for the time in the dying woman's chamber. Probably the only two that truly and unselfishly loved the Queen were occupying the couch and the mattress in that outer room.

The Queen talked often to Princess Caroline, and commended to her the care of her two younger sisters. She talked to her son William, Duke of Cumberland, then little more than sixteen years old, admonished him to be a support to his father, and to "try to make up for the disappointment and vexation he must receive from your {119} profligate and worthless brother." But she also admonished him to attempt nothing against his brother, and only to mortify him by showing superior merit. She asked for her keys, and gave them to the King. She took off her finger a ruby ring which he had given her at her coronation, and put it on his finger, and said to him, almost as patient Grizzel does, "Naked I came to you, and naked I go from you." All who were present at this episode in the dying were in tears, except the Queen herself. She seemed absolutely composed; indeed she was anxious that the end should come. She had no belief in the possibility of her recovery, and she only wanted to be released now from "the fever called living." Except for the bitter outbursts of anger and hatred against the Prince of Wales, the poor Queen seems to have borne herself like a true-hearted, resigned, tender wife, kind mother, and Christian woman.

[Sidenote: 1737—A fatal mistake]

An operation was tried, with the consent of the King. Thereupon arises a controversy not unlike that which followed an imperial death in very modern European history. Lord Hervey insists that the surgeons showed utter incapacity, made a shocking and fatal mistake; cut away as mortified flesh that in which there was no mortification whatever. Then Sir Robert Walpole, who had been sent for, comes on the scene. The King ordered him to be brought in from the outer room, and Walpole came in and tried to drop on his knees to kiss the King's hand. It was not easy to do, Sir Robert was so bulky and

unwieldy. He found it hard to get down, and harder still to get up again. However, the solemn duty was accomplished somehow, and then Sir Robert was conducted to the Queen's bedside. He dropped some tears, which we may be sure were sincere, even if by no means unselfish. He was in utter dread of losing all his power over the King if the Queen were to die. The Queen recommended the King, her children, and the kingdom to his care, and Sir Robert seems to have been much pleased with the implied compliment of the recommendation.

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The moment Walpole got to private speech with Lord Hervey, he at once exhibited the nature of his grief and alarm. "My lord," he exclaimed, "if this woman should die, what a scene of confusion will there be! Who can tell into whose hands the King will fall, or who will have the management of him?" Lord Hervey tried to reassure him, and told him that his influence over the King would be stronger than ever. Walpole could not see it, and they argued the matter over for a long time. The talk lasted two or three hours, much to Lord Hervey's dissatisfaction, for it kept him out of bed, and this happened to be the first night since the Queen had fallen ill when he had any chance of a good night's rest; and now behold, with the Prime-minister's unseasonable anxiety about the affairs of State, Lord Hervey's chance is considerably diminished. Even this little episode has its fit and significant place in the death-bed story. The Prime-minister will insist on talking over the prospects—his own prospects or those of the nation—with the lord-in-waiting; and the lord-in-waiting is very sleepy, and, having had a hope of a night's rest, is only alarmed lest the hope should be disappointed. No one appears to have said a word as to what would be better or worse for the Queen.

The Queen was strongly under the belief that she would die on a Wednesday. She was born on a Wednesday, married on a Wednesday, crowned on a Wednesday, gave birth to her first child on a Wednesday; almost all the important events of her life had befallen her on Wednesday, and it seemed in the fitness of things that Wednesday should bring with it the close of that life. Wednesday came; and, as Lord Hervey puts it, "some wise, some pious, and a great many busy, meddling, impertinent people about the Court" began asking each other, and everybody else they met, whether the Queen had any clergyman to pray for her and minister to her. Hervey thought all this very offensive and absurd, and was of opinion that if the Queen cared about praying, and that sort of thing, she could pray for herself as well as any one else could do it. {121} Hervey, however, kept this free and easy view of things discreetly to himself. He was shocked at the rough cynicism of Sir Robert Walpole, who cared as little about prayer as Hervey or any other man living, but was perfectly willing that all the world should know his views on the subject. The talk of the people about the Court reached Walpole's ears, and he recommended the Princess Emily to propose to the King and Queen that the Archbishop of Canterbury should be sent for. The princess seemed to be a little afraid to make so audacious a proposal to the King, Defender of the Faith, as the suggestion that a minister of the Church should be allowed to pray by the bedside of the dying Queen. Sir Robert encouraged her in his characteristic way. In the presence of a dozen people, Hervey tells, Sir Robert said to the princess: "Pray, madam, let this farce be played; the archbishop will act it very well. You may bid him be as short as you will. It will do the Queen no hurt, no more than any good; and it will satisfy all the wise and good fools who will call us atheists if we don't pretend to be as great fools as they are."

[Sidenote: 1737—Praying with the Queen]

The advice of the statesman was taken. The wise and good fools were allowed to have it their own way. The archbishop was sent for, and he came and prayed with the Queen every morning and evening; the King always graciously bolting out of the room the moment the prelate came in. But the wise and good fools were not satisfied with the concession which enlightenment had condescended to make. Up to this time they kept asking, "Has the Queen no one to pray with her?" Now the whispered question was, "Has the Queen taken—will the Queen take—the sacrament?" Some people hinted that she could not receive the sacrament because she could not make up her mind to be reconciled to her son; others doubted whether she had religious feeling enough to consent to ask for the sacrament or to receive it. All this time the King chattered perpetually to Lord Hervey, to the physicians and surgeons, and to his children, about the virtues {122} and gifts of the Queen. He deplored in advance the lonely, dull life he would have to lead when she was taken from him. He was in frequent bursts of tears. He declared that he had never been tired one moment in her company; that he could never have been happy with any other woman in the world; and he paid her the graceful and delicate compliment of saying that if she had not been his wife he would rather have her for a mistress than any other woman with whom he had ever held such relationship. Yet he hardly ever went into her room, after one of these outpourings of tender affection, without being rough to her and shouting at her and bullying her. When her pains and her wounds made her move uneasily in her bed, he asked her how the devil she could sleep when she would never lie still a moment. He walked heavily about the room as if it were a chamber in a barrack; he talked incessantly; gave all manner of directions; made the unfortunate Queen swallow all manner of foods and drinks because he took it into his head that they would do her good; and she submitted, poor,

patient, pitiable creature, and swallowed and vomited, swallowed again and vomited again, and uttered no complaint.

[Sidenote: 1737—Would not play second fiddle]

Even in his outbursts of grief the King's absurd personal vanity constantly came out; for he was always telling his listeners that the Queen was devoted to him because she was wildly enamoured of his person as well as his genius. Then he told long stories about his own indomitable courage, and went over and over again an account of the heroism he had displayed during a storm at sea. One night the King was in the outer room with the Princess Emily and Lord Hervey. The puffy little King wore his nightgown and nightcap, and was sitting in a great chair with his thick legs on a stool; a heroic figure, decidedly. The princess was lying on a couch. Lord Hervey sat by the fire. The King started the old story of the storm and his own bravery, and gave it to his companions in all its familiar details. The princess at last closed her eyes, and seemed to be fast asleep. The King presently went into {123} the Queen's room, and then the princess started up and asked, "Is he gone?" and added, fervently, "How tiresome he is!" Lord Hervey asked if she had not been asleep; she said no; she had only closed her eyes in order to escape taking part in the conversation, and that she very much wished she could close her ears as well. "I am sick to death," the dutiful princess said, "of hearing of his great courage every day of my life. One thinks now of mamma, and not of him. Who cares for his old storm? I believe, too, it is a great lie, and that he was as much afraid as I should have been, for all what he says now," and she added a good many more comments to the same effect. Then the King came back into the room, and his daughter ceased her comment on his bravery and his truthfulness.

"One thinks of mamma, and not of him." That was exactly what George would not have. He did dearly love the Queen after his own fashion; he was deeply grieved at the thought of losing her; but he did not choose to play second fiddle even to the dying. So in all his praises of her and his laments for her he never failed to endeavor to impress on his hearers the idea of his own immense superiority to her and to everybody else. There is hardly anything in fiction so touching, so pitiful, so painful, as this exposition of a naked, brutal, yet not quite selfish, not wholly unloving, egotism. The Queen did not die on the Wednesday. Thursday and Friday passed over in just the same way, with just the same incidents —with the King alternately blubbering and bullying, with the panegyrics of the dying woman, and the twenty times told tale of "his old storm." The Queen was growing weaker and weaker. Those who watched around her bed wondered how she was able to live so long in such a condition of utter weakness. On the evening of Sunday, November 20th, she asked Dr. Tesier quietly how long it was possible that her struggle could last. He told her that he was "of opinion that your Majesty will be soon relieved." She thanked him for telling her, and said in French, "So much the better." About {124} ten o'clock that same night the crisis came. The King was asleep in a bed laid on the floor at the foot of the Queen's bed. The Princess Emily was lying on a couch in a corner of the room. The Queen began to rattle in her throat. The nurse gave the alarm, and said the Queen was dying. The Princess Caroline was sent for, and Lord Hervey. The princess came in time; Lord Hervey was a moment too late. The Queen asked in a low, faint voice that the window might be opened, saying she felt an asthma. Then she spoke the one word, "Pray." The Princess Emily began to read some prayers, but had only got out a few words before the Queen shuddered and died. The Princess Caroline held a looking-glass to the Queen's lips, and, finding the surface undimmed, quietly said, "'Tis over"; and, according to Lord Hervey, "said not one word more, nor as yet shed one tear, on the arrival of a misfortune the dread of which had cost her so many."

"Pray!" That was the last word the Queen ever spoke, All the wisdom of the Court statesmen, all the proud, intellectual unbelief, all the cynical contempt for the weaknesses of intellect which allow ignorant people to believe their destiny linked with that of some other and higher life—all that Bolingbroke, Chesterfield, Walpole, would have taught and sworn oaths for—all was mocked by that one little word, "pray," which came last from the lips of Queen Caroline. Bring saucy Scepticism there; make her laugh at that!

The story would be incomplete if it were not added that while the Queen's body was yet unburied the King came to Hervey and told him, laughing and crying alternately, that he had just seen Horace Walpole, the brother of Robert, and that Walpole was weeping for the Queen with so bad a grace "that in the middle of my tears he forced me to burst into laughter." Amid this explosion of tears and laughter the story of the Queen's life comes fittingly to an end.

[Sidenote: 1737—Walpole strengthens his position]

The moment the breath was out of the Queen's body, {125} Walpole set about a course of action which should strengthen his position as Prime-minister of the King. At first his strong fear was that with the life of the Queen had passed away his own principal hold upon the confidence of George. He told Hervey that no one could know how often he had failed utterly by argument and effort of his own

to bring the King to agree to some action which he considered absolutely necessary for the good of the State, and how after he had given up the attempt in mere despair the Queen had taken the matter in hand, and so managed the King that his Majesty at last became persuaded that the whole idea was his own original conception, and he bade her send for Walpole and explain it to him, and get Walpole to carry it into execution. Hervey endeavored to reassure him by many arguments, and among the rest by one which showed how well Hervey understood King George's weaknesses. Hervey said the one thing which was in Walpole's way while the Queen lived was the fear George had of people saying Walpole was the Queen's minister, not the King's, and suggesting that the King's policy was ruled by his wife. Now that the Queen was gone, George would be glad to prove to the world that Walpole had always been his minister, and that he retained Walpole's services because he himself valued them, and not because they had been pressed upon him by a woman. Hervey proved to be right.

Walpole, however, was for strengthening himself after the old fashion. He was determined to put the King into the hands of some woman who would play into the hands of the minister. The Duke of Grafton and the Duke of Newcastle tried to persuade Walpole to make use of the influence of the Princess Emily. They insisted that she was sure to succeed to the management of the King, but that if Walpole approached her at once he might easily make her believe that she owed it all to him, and that she might thus be induced to stand by him and to assist him. Walpole would have nothing of the kind. He only believed in the ruling power of a mistress now that the {126} Queen was gone. He gave his opinions in his blunt, characteristic way. He meant, he said, to bring over Madame de Walmoden, and would have nothing to do with "the girls." "I was for the wife against the mistress, but I will be for the mistress against the daughters." Accordingly he earnestly advised the King not to fret any longer with a vain sorrow, but to try to distract himself from grief, and urged him, for this purpose, to send over at once to Hanover for Madame Walmoden. Walpole's way of talking to the young princesses would seem absolutely beyond belief if we did not know that the reports of it are true. He told the princesses that they must try to divert their father's melancholy by bringing women round him; he talked of Madame Walmoden, and repeated to them what he had said to Lord Hervey, that, though he had been for the Queen against Lady Suffolk and every other woman, yet now he would be for Madame Walmoden, and advised them in the mean time to bring Lady Deloraine, a former mistress, to her father, adding with brutal indecency that "people must wear old gloves until they get new ones." He offended and disgusted the Princesses Caroline and Emily, and they hated him forever after. Walpole did not much care. He was not thinking much about "the girls," as he called them. He believed he saw his way.

{127} CHAPTER XXX.

THE WESLEYAN MOVEMENT.

[Sidenote: 1738—John Wesley]

In 1738 John Wesley returned to London from Georgia, in British North America. He had been absent more than two years. He had gone to Georgia to propagate the faith to which he was devoted; to convert the native Indians and to regenerate the British colonists. He did not accomplish much in either way. The colonists preferred to live their careless, joyous, often dissolute lives, and the stern spirit of Wesley had no charm for them. The Indians refused to be Christianized; one chief giving as his reason for the refusal a melancholy fact which has kept others as well as him from conversion to the true faith. He said he did not want to become a Christian because the Christians in Savannah got drunk, told lies, and beat men and women. Wesley had, before leaving England, founded a small religious brotherhood, and on his return he at once set to work to strengthen and enlarge it.

John Wesley was in every sense a remarkable man. If any one in the modern world can be said to have had a distinct religious mission, Wesley certainly can be thus described. He was born in 1703 at Epworth, in Lincolnshire. John Wesley came of a family distinguished for its Churchmen and ministers. His father was a clergyman of the Church of England, and rector of the parish of Epworth; his grandfather was also a clergyman, but became a Non-conformist minister, and seems to have been a good deal persecuted for his opinions on religious discipline. John Wesley's father was a sincere and devout man, with a certain literary repute and well read in {128} theology, but of narrow mind and dogmatic, unyielding temper. The right of King William to the Throne was an article of faith with him, and it came on him one day with the shock of a terrible surprise that his wife did not altogether share his conviction. He vowed that he would never live with her again unless or until she became of his way of thinking; and he straightway left the house, nor did he return to his home and his wife until after the

death of the King, when the controversy might be considered as having closed. The King died so soon, however, that the pair were only separated for about a year; but it may fairly be assumed that, had the King lived twenty years, Wesley would not have returned to his wife unless she had signified to him that she had renounced her pestilent scepticism.

The same stern strength of resolve which Wesley, the father, showed in this extraordinary course was shown by the son at many a grave public crisis in his career. The birth of John Wesley was the result of the reconciliation between the elder Wesley and his wife. There were other children, elder and younger; one of whom, Charles, became in after-life the faithful companion and colleague of his brother. John and Charles Wesley were educated at Oxford, and were distinguished there by the fervor of their religious zeal and the austerity of their lives. There were other young men there at the time who grew into close affinity with the Wesleys. There was George Whitefield, the son of a Gloucester innkeeper, who at one time was employed as a drawer in his mother's tap-room; and there was James Hervey, afterwards author of the flowery and sentimental "Meditations," that became for a while so famous—a book which Southey describes "as laudable in purpose and vicious in style." These young men, with others, formed a sort of little religious association or companionship of their own. They used to hold meetings for their mutual instruction and improvement in religious faith and life. They shunned all amusement and all ordinary social intercourse. They were ridiculed {129} and laughed at, and various nicknames were bestowed on them. One of these nicknames they accepted and adopted; as the Flemish *Gueux* had done, and many another religious sect and political party as well. Those who chose to laugh at them saw especial absurdity in their formal and methodical way of managing their spiritual exercises and their daily lives. The jesters dubbed them Methodists; Wesley and his friends welcomed the title; and the fame of the Methodists now folds in the orb of the earth.

[Sidenote: 1738—Torpor of the English Church]

Wesley and his friends had in the beginning, and for long years after, no idea whatever of leaving the fold of the English Church. They had as little thought of that kind as in a later generation had the men who made the Free Church of Scotland. Probably their ideas were very vague in their earlier years. They were young men tremendously in earnest; they were aflame in spirit and conscience with religious zeal; and they saw that the Church of England was not doing the work that might have been and ought to have been expected of her. She had ceased utterly to be a missionary Church. She troubled herself in nowise about spreading the glad tidings of salvation among the heathen. At home she was absolutely out of touch with the great bulk of the people. The poor and the ignorant were left quietly to their own resources. The clergymen of the Church of England were not indeed by any means a body of men wanting in personal morality, or even in religious feeling, but they had as little or no religious activity because they had little or no religious zeal. They performed perfunctorily their perfunctory duties; and that, as a rule, was all they did.

Atterbury, Burnet, Swift, all manner of writers, who were themselves ministering in the Church of England, unite in bearing testimony to the torpid condition into which the Church had fallen. Decorum seemed to be the highest reach of the spiritual lives of most of the clergy. One finds curious confirmation of the statements {130} made publicly by men like Atterbury and Burnet in some of the appeals privately made by Swift to his powerful friends for the promotion of poor and deserving clergymen whose poverty and merit had been brought under his notice. The recommendation generally begins and ends in the fact that each particular man had led a decent, respectable life; that he was striving to bring up honestly a large family; and that his living or curacy was not enough to maintain him in comfort. We hardly ever hear of the work which the good man had been doing among the poor, the ignorant, and the sinful. Swift has said many hard and even terrible things about bishops and deans, and vicars and curates. But these stern accusations do not form anything like as formidable a testimony against the condition into which the Church had fallen as will be found in the exceptional praise which he gives to those whom he specially desires to recommend for promotion; and in the fact that the highest reach of that praise comes to nothing more than the assurance that the man had led a decent life, had a large family, and was very poor. Such a recommendation as that would not have counted for much with John Wesley. He would have wanted to know what work the clergyman had done outside his own domestic life; what ignorance had he enlightened, what sinners had he brought to repentance.

[Sidenote: 1738—An "archbishop of the slums"]

Things were still worse in the Established Church of Ireland. Hardly a pastor of that Church could speak three words of the language of the Irish people. Lord Stanhope, in his "History of England from the Peace of Utrecht," writes as if the Irish clergymen—the clergymen, that is, of the Established Church of Ireland—might have accomplished wonders in the way of converting the Irish peasantry to Protestantism if they only could have preached and controverted in the Irish language. We are convinced that they could have done nothing of the kind. The Irish Celtic population is in its very nature

a Catholic population. Not all the preaching since Adam {131} could have made them other than that. Still it struck John Wesley very painfully later on that the effort was never made, and that the men who could not talk to the Irish people in their own tongue, and who did not take the trouble to learn the language, were not in a promising condition for the conversion of souls. The desire of Wesley and his brother, and Whitefield and the rest, seems only at first to have been an awakening of the Church in these islands to a sense of her duty. They do not appear to have had any very far-reaching hopes or plans. They saw that the work was left undone, and they labored to bring about a spirit which should lead men to the doing of it. At first they only held their little meetings on each succeeding Sunday; but they found themselves warming to the task, and they began to meet and confer very often. Their one thought was how to get at the people; how to get at the lowly, the ignorant, and the poor. Soon they began to see that the lowly, the ignorant, and the poor would not come to the Church, and that, therefore, the Church must go out to them. In a day much nearer to our own a prelate of the Established Church indulged in a very unlucky and unworthy sneer at the expense of the first Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster. He called him an "Archbishop of the slums." The retort was easy and conclusive. It was an admission. "Exactly; that is just what I am. I am an archbishop of the slums; that is my business; that is what I desire to be. My ministry is among the hovels and the garrets and the slums; yours, I admit, is something very different."

This illustrates to the life the central idea which was forming itself gradually and slowly into shape in the mind of John Wesley and in the minds of his associates. They saw that archbishops of the slums were the very prelates whom England needed. Their souls revolted against the apparently accepted idea that the duties of a priest of the Church of England were fulfilled by the preaching of a chill, formal, written sermon once a week, and the attendance {132} on Court ceremonials, and the dining at the houses of those who would then have been called "the great." An institution which could do no more and strove to do no more than the Church of England was then doing did not seem to them to deserve the name of a Church. It was simply a branch of the Civil Service of the State. But Wesley and his brother, and Whitefield and the rest, fully believed at first that they could do something to quicken the Church into a real, a beneficent, and a religions activity. Most of them had for a long time a positive horror of open-air preaching and of the co-operation of lay preachers. Most of them for a long time clung to all the traditional forms and even formulas amid which they had grown up. What Wesley and the others did not see at first, or for long after, was that the Church of England was not then equal to the work which ought to have been hers. A great change was coming over the communities and the population of England. Small hamlets were turning into large towns. Great new manufacturing industries were creating new classes of working-men. Coal-mines were gathering together vast encampments of people where a little time before there had been idle heath or lonely hill-side. The Church of England, with her then hide-bound constitution and her traditional ways, was not equal to the new burdens which she was supposed to undertake. She suffered also from that lack of competition which is hurtful to so many institutions. The Church of Rome had been suppressed for the time in this country, and the most urgent means had been employed to keep the Dissenters down; therefore the Church of England had grown contented, sleek, inert, and was no longer equal to its work. This fact began after a while to impress itself more and more on the minds of the little band who worked with John Wesley. They resisted the idea to the very last; they hoped and believed and dreamed that they might still be part of the Church of England. They found themselves drawn outside the Church, and they found, too, that when once they had gone even a very little way out of the {133} fold, the gates were rudely closed against them, and they might not return. It was not that Wesley and his associates left the Church of England. The Church would not have them because they would persist in doing the work to which she would not even attempt to put a hand.

[Sidenote: 1738—John Wesley's Charity]

John Wesley had been profoundly impressed by William Law's pious and mystical book, "A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life," which was published in 1729. Law lived in London, and Wesley, who desired to be in frequent intercourse with him, used to walk to and from the metropolis for the purpose. The money he thus saved he gave to the poor. He wore his hair at one time very long in order to save the expense of cutting and dressing it, and thus have more money to give away in charity. He and his little band of associates, whose numbers swelled at one time up to twenty-five, but afterwards dropped down to five, imposed on themselves rules of discipline almost as harsh as those of a monastery of the Trappist order. They fasted every Wednesday and Friday, and they made it a duty to visit the prisons and hospitals. Wesley's father, who was growing old, was very anxious that his son should succeed him in the rectory of Epworth. John would not hear of it. In vain his father pressed and prayed; the son could not see his way in that direction. John Wesley has been blamed by some of his biographers for not accepting the task which his father desired and thought right to impose on him. But no one on earth could understand John Wesley's mission but John Wesley himself. When it was pressed upon him that in the living of Epworth he would have the charge of two thousand souls he said, "I see not how any man can take care of a hundred." It was pointed out to him that his little band of companions had been

growing smaller and smaller; he only answered that he was purifying a fountain and not a stream. The illustration was effective and happy.

The truth is that the tremendous energies of John {134} Wesley could not possibly find employment within the narrow field of work adopted by the Established Church of his day. Wesley was a fighter; he had to go out into the broad living world and do battle there. He had originality as well as energy; he must do his work his own way; he could not be a minister of routine. He soon found it borne in upon him that he must speak to his fellow-man wherever he could find him. For a long time he held back from the thought of open-air preaching, but now he saw that it must be done. There was a period of his life, he says, when he would have thought the saving of a soul "a sin almost if it had not been done in a church." But from the first moment when he began to preach to crowds in the open air he must have felt that he had found his work at last. His friend and colleague Whitefield, who had more of the genius of an orator than Wesley, had preceded him in this path. One is a little surprised that such men as Wesley and Whitefield should ever have found any difficulty about preaching to a crowd in the open air. The Hill of Mars at Athens listened to an open-air sermon from an apostle, and Whitefield himself observed at a later date that the "Sermon on the Mount is a pretty remarkable precedent of field preaching."

[Sidenote: 1738—Wesley's superstition]

Meanwhile, however, Wesley's father died, and Wesley received an invitation to go out to Georgia with General Oglethorpe, the governor of that settlement, to preach to the Indians and the colonists. He sailed for the new colony on October 14, 1735. He was accompanied by his brother Charles and two other missionaries, and on board the vessel was a small band of men from "the meek Moravian Missions." The Moravian sect was then in its earliest working order. It had been founded—or perhaps it would be more fitting to say restored—not many years before, by the enthusiastic and devoted Count Von Zinzendorf. Wesley was greatly attracted by the ways and the spiritual life of the Moravians. It is worthy of note that when Count Zinzendorf began the formation or {135} restoration of Moravianism he had as little idea of departing from the fold of the Confession of Augsburg as Wesley had of leaving the Church of England. John Wesley did not, as we have said, accomplish much among the colonists and the Indians. Perhaps his ways were too dogmatic and dictatorial for the colonists. He departed altogether from the Church discipline in some of his religious exercises, while he clung to it pertinaciously in others. He offended local magnates by preaching at them from the pulpit, giving them pretty freely a piece of his mind as to their conduct and ways of life, and, indeed, turning them to public ridicule with rough and rasping sarcasms. With the Indians he could not do much, if only for the fact that he had to speak to them through an interpreter. The tongue, says Jean Paul Richter, is eloquent only in its own language, and the heart in its own religion. It certainly was not from lack of zeal and energy that Wesley failed to accomplish much among the Indians. He flung himself into the work with all his indomitable spirit and disregard for trouble and pain. One of his biographers tells us that "he exposed himself with the utmost indifference to every change of season and inclemency of weather; snow and hail, storm and tempest, had no effect on his iron body. He frequently lay down on the ground and slept all night with his hair frozen to the earth; he would swim over rivers with his clothes on and travel till they were dry, and all this without any apparent injury to his health." It is no wonder that Wesley soon began to regard himself as a man specially protected by divine power. He was deeply, romantically superstitious. He commonly guided his course by opening a page of the Bible and reading the first passage that met his eye. He saw visions; he believed in omens. He tells us himself of the instantaneous way in which some of his prayers for rescue from danger were answered from above. Those who believe that the work Wesley had to do was really great and beneficent work will hardly feel any regret that such a man should have allowed himself to be governed {136} by such ideas. It was necessary to the tasks he had to execute that he should believe himself to bear a charmed life.

Wesley was very near getting married in Georgia. A clever and pretty young woman in Savannah set herself at him. She consulted him about her spiritual salvation, she dressed always in white because she understood that he liked such simplicity of color, she nursed him when he was ill. The governor of the colony favored the young lady's intentions, which were indeed strictly honorable, being most distinctly matrimonial. At one time it seemed very likely that the marriage would take place, but Wesley's heart was evidently not in the affair. Some of his colleagues told him plainly enough that they believed the young lady to be merely playing a game, that she put on affection and devotion only that she might put on a wedding-dress. Wesley consulted some of the elders of the Moravian Church, and promised to abide by their decision. Their advice was that he should go no further with the young woman, and Wesley kept his word and refused to see her any more. She married, soon after, the chief magistrate of the colony, and before long we find Wesley publicly reprehending her for "something in her behavior of which he disapproved," and threatening even to exclude her from the communion of the Church until she should have signified her sincere repentance. Her family took legal proceedings against him. Wesley did not care; he was about to return to England, and he was called on to give bail

for his reappearance in the colony. He contemptuously refused to do anything of the kind, and promptly sailed from Savannah.

This little episode of the Georgian girl is characteristic of the man. He did not care about marrying her, but it did not seem to him a matter of much importance either way, and he doubtless would have married her but that he thought it well to seek the advice of his Moravian friends, and bound himself to abide by their decision. That decision once given, he had no further wavering or {137} doubt, but the course he had taken and the manner in which he had completely thrown over the woman did not prevent him in the least from visiting her with a public rebuke when he saw something in her conduct of which he disapproved. He saw no reason why, because he refused to be her lover, he should fail in his duty as her minister.

[Sidenote: 1738—Wesley's unhappy marriage]

We may anticipate a little as to Wesley's personal history. Later in his life he married. He was not happy in his marriage. He took for his wife a widow who plagued him by her narrow-mindedness, her bitterness, and her jealousy. Wesley's care and kindness of the women who came under his ministrations set his wife wild with suspicion and anger. She could not believe that a man could be kind to a woman, even as a pastor, without having evil purpose in his heart. She had the temper of a virago; she stormed against her husband, she threatened him, she sometimes rushed at him and tore his hair; she repeatedly left his house, but was prevailed upon by him to return. At last after a fierce quarrel she flung out of the house, vowing that she would never come back. Wesley's comment, which he expressed in Latin, was stern and characteristic: "I have not left her, I have not put her away, I will never recall her." He kept his word.

Wesley started on his mission to preach to the people and to pray with them. Whitefield and Charles Wesley did the same. Charles Wesley was the hymn writer, the sweet singer, of the movement. The meetings began to grow larger, more enthusiastic, more impassioned, every day. John Wesley brought to his work "a frame of adamant" as well as "a soul of fire." No danger frighted him, and no labor tired. Rain, hail, snow, storm, were matters of indifference to him when he had any work to do. One reads the account of the toil he could cheerfully bear, the privations he could recklessly undergo, the physical obstacles he could surmount, with what would be a feeling of incredulity were it possible to doubt the unquestionable evidence of a whole cloud of {138} heterogeneous witnesses. Not Mark Antony, not Charles the Twelfth, not Napoleon, ever went through such physical suffering for the love of war, or for the conqueror's ambition, as Wesley was accustomed to undergo for the sake of preaching at the right time and in the right place to some crowd of ignorant and obscure men, the conversion of whom could bring him neither fame nor fortune.

All the phenomena with which we have been familiar in modern times of what are called "revivalist" meetings were common among the congregations to whom Wesley preached. Women especially were affected in this way. They raved, shrieked, struggled, flung themselves on the ground, fainted, cried out that they were possessed by evil spirits. Wesley rather encouraged these manifestations, and indeed quite believed in their genuineness. No doubt for the most part they were genuine: that is, they were the birth of hysterical, highly strung natures, stimulated into something like epilepsy or temporary insanity by the unbearable oppression of a wholly novel excitement. No such evidences of emotion were ever given in the parish church where the worthy clergyman read his duly prepared or perhaps thoughtfully purchased sermon. Sometimes a new form of hysteria possessed some of Wesley's congregations, and irrepressible peals of laughter broke from some of the brethren and sisters, who declared that they were forced to it by Satan. Wesley quite accepted this explanation, and so did most of his companions. Two ladies, however, refused to believe, and insisted that "any one might help laughing if she would." But very soon after these two sceptics were seized with the very same sort of irrepressible laughter. They continued for two days laughing almost without cessation, "a spectacle to all," as Wesley tells, "and were then upon prayer made for them delivered in a moment." It is almost needless now to say that bursts of irrepressible laughter are among the commonest forms of hysterical excitement.

[Sidenote: 1738—Whitefield's oratory]

The cooler common-sense of Charles Wesley, however, {139} saw these manifestations with different eyes. He felt sure that there was sometimes a good deal of affectation in them, and he publicly remonstrated with some women who, as it appeared to him, were needlessly making themselves ridiculous. He was probably right in these instances: the instinct of imitation is so strong among men and women that every genuine outburst of maniacal excitement is sure to be followed by some purely mimetic efforts of a similar demonstration. The novelty of the whole movement was enough to account for the genuine and the sham hysterics. It was an entirely new experience then for English men and women of the humblest class, and of that generation, to be addressed in great open-air masses by

renowned and powerful preachers. Whitefield's first great effort at field-preaching was made for the benefit of the colliers at Kingswood, near Bristol. Before many weeks had gone by, he could gather round him some twenty thousand of these men. Whitefield had a marvellous fervor and force of oratory. His voice, his gestures, his sudden and startling appeals, his solemn pauses, the dramatic and even theatric energy which he threw into his attitudes and his action, his flights of lofty and sustained declamation, contrasting with sentences of homely colloquialism, were overwhelming in their effect on such an audience. "The first discovery," he says himself, "of their being affected was to see the white gutters made by their tears, which plentifully fell down their cheeks, black as they came out of the coal-pits." It was not only miners and other illiterate men whom Whitefield impressed by the fervor and passion of his eloquence. Hume, Benjamin Franklin, Horace Walpole, and other men as well qualified to judge, and as little likely to fall under the spell of religions or sentimental enthusiasm, have borne willing testimony to the irresistible power of a sermon from Whitefield.

Wesley and Whitefield did not remain long in spiritual companionship. They could not agree as to the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. Wesley was opposed to {140} the doctrine; Whitefield willing to accept it. They discussed and discussed the question, but without drawing any nearer together. Indeed, as might naturally have been expected, they only fell more widely asunder, and after a while the difference of opinion grew to something like a personal estrangement. Wesley had already broken away from spiritual communion with some of his old friends, the Moravians. Probably he felt all the stronger for his own work now that he stood as a leader all but alone. He walked his own wild road; Whitefield took a path for himself. Wesley soon found that he was gaining more followers than he had lost. He had to adopt the practice of employing lay preachers; it was a matter of necessity to his task. He could not induce many clergymen to work under his guidance and after his fashion. The movement was spreading all over the country. Wesley became the centre and light of his wing of the campaign. The machinery of his organization was simple and strong. A conference was called together every year, which was composed of preachers selected by Wesley. These formed his cabinet or central board, and lent their authority to his decisions.

This was the germ of the great Wesleyan organization, which has since become so powerful, and has spread itself so widely over Great Britain and the American States. The preachers were sent by Wesley from one part of the country to another, just as he thought best; and it never occurred to any missionary to refuse, remonstrate, or even delay. The system was admirable; the discipline was perfect. Wesley was as completely in command of his body of missionaries as the general of the order of Jesuits is of those over whom he is called to exercise control. The humblest of the Wesleyan preachers caught something, caught indeed very much, of the energy, the courage, the devotion, the self-sacrifice, of their great leader. No doubt there were many errors and offences here and there. Good taste, sobriety of judgment, prudence, common-sense, were now and then offended. Most of the preachers were {141} ignorant men, who had nothing but an untaught enthusiasm and a rude, uncouth eloquence to carry them on. They had to preach to multitudes very often more ignorant and uncouth than themselves. It would be absolutely impossible under such conditions that there should not sometimes be offence, and, as Hamlet says, "much offence too." But there was no greater departure from the lines of propriety and good taste than any one who took a reasonable view of the whole work and its workers must have expected to find.

[Sidenote: 1738—Opposition to Wesleyanism]

Of course a strong opposition to the movement showed itself in many parts of the country. The Wesleyans were denounced; they were ridiculed; they were caricatured; they were threatened; they were set upon by ruffians; they were stoned by mobs. In some places it was said that the local magistrates actually connived with the attempt to drive them out by force. Projects are actually declared to have been formed for their complete extermination. Such projects, however, do not succeed. No amount of violence has ever yet exterminated religious zeal and impassioned, even let it be fanatical, enthusiasm. John Wesley went his way undismayed. He even appears to have positively enjoyed the excitement and the danger. The persecution began after a while to languish in its efforts, and the Wesleyans kept growing more and more numerous and strong. But the movement in growing grew away from the Church of England. Wesley had been drawn out of his original intent step after step. He could not help himself, once his movement had been started. He had had to take to field preaching, for the good reason that he could not otherwise reach the people whom it was his heart's warmest longing to reach. He had to take to employing lay preachers, because without them he could not have got his preaching done. At last he began to ordain ministers, and even, it is said, bishops, for the missions in America. He had, in fact, broken away altogether from the discipline of the Church of England, although he persisted to his dying day that he never had any design of {142} separating from the Church, "and had no such design now." Near to the close of his long life he declared, "I live and die a member of the Church of England, and none who regard my judgment or advice will ever separate from it." No one can doubt that Wesley spoke in full sincerity. When he stepped outside the pale of

Church practice it was only to do what he believed ought to have been the work of the Church itself, but which the Church did not then care to attempt, and which, as he felt convinced, could not afford to wait for the indefinite time when the Church might have the spirit, the energy, and the resources needed for such an undertaking.

Wesley was a thorough despot; as much of a despot as Peter the Great or Napoleon. He took no trouble to disguise his despotic purpose. He did not shelter himself, as Napoleon once wished to do, under the draperies of a constitutional king. Wesley was satisfied in his own mind that he knew better than any other man how to guide his movements and govern his followers, and he told people that he knew it, and acted accordingly. The members of his conference, or what we have called his cabinet, were only like Clive's council of war; Wesley listened to their advice and their arguments, but acted according to his own judgment all the same. Late in his career it was charged against him that he was trying to turn himself into a sort of Methodist pope. He asked for some explanation of this, and was told that he had invested himself with arbitrary power. His answer was simple and straightforward. "If by arbitrary power you mean a power which I exercise singly, without any colleagues therein, this is certainly true; but I see no hurt in it." All the actions of his life show this complete faith in himself where the business of his mission was concerned. He was dogmatic, masterful, overbearing, very often far from amiable, sometimes all but unendurable, to those around him. But if he had not had these peculiar qualities or defects he would not have been the man that he was; he would not have been able to bear the charge of such a task at such a {143} time. It is probable that Hannibal did not cut through the Alps with vinegar; it is certain that he could not have pierced his way with honey.

[Sidenote: 1738—Religion out of fashion]

Nothing can better show than the rise and progress of the great Methodist movement how vast is the difference between a people and what is commonly called society. In society everywhere throughout England, in the great provincial cities as well as in the capital, religion seemed to have completely gone out of fashion. The Court cared nothing about it. The King had no real belief in his heart; he had as little faith in Divine guidance as he had in the honor of man or the chastity of woman. The Queen's devotional exercises were nothing but a mere performance carried on sometimes through a half-opened door, the attendant minister on one side of the door and the gossiping, chattering ladies on the other. The leading statesmen of the age were avowedly indifferent or professedly unbelieving. Bolingbroke was a preacher of unbelief. Walpole never seems to have cared to turn his thoughts for one moment to anything higher than his own political career, the upholding of his friends if they stood fast by him, and the downfall of his enemies. Chesterfield was not exactly the sort of man to be stirred into spiritual life. Morals were getting out of fashion as much as religion. Society had all the grossness without much of the wit which belonged to the days of the Restoration. Yet the mere fact that the Wesleyan movement made such sudden way among the poor and the lowly shows beyond question that the heart of the English people had not been corrupted. Conscience was asleep, but it was not dead. The first words of Wesley seemed to quicken it into a new life.

We have somewhat anticipated the actual course of events in order to show at once what the Wesleyan movement came to. During the lifetime of its founder it had grown into a great national and international institution. Since his time it has been spreading and growing all over the world where Christianity grows. It is the severest in {144} its discipline of all the Protestant churches, and yet it exercises a charm even over gentle and tender natures, and makes them its willing servants, while it teaches the wilder and fiercer spirits to bend their natures and tame their wild passions down. [Sidenote: 1738—The Wesleyan work] In the United States of America Wesleyanism is now one of the most popular and powerful of all the denominations of Christianity. It has since been divided up into many sections, both here and there, on questions of discipline, and even on questions of belief; but in its leading characteristics it has been faithful to the main purpose of its founder. Its success did not consist mainly in what it accomplished for its own people; it achieved a great work also by the impulse it gave to the Church of England. That Church for a while seemed to be filled with a reviving spiritual and ministerial activity. It appeared to take shame to itself that it had remained so long apathetic and perfunctory, and it flung itself into competition with the younger and more energetic mission. The English Church did not indeed retain this mood of ardor and of eagerness very long. After a time it relapsed into comparative inactivity; and a new and very different movement was needed at a period much nearer to our own to make it once again a ministering power to the people—to the poor. But for the time the revival of the Church was genuine and was beneficent. With the quickened religious vitality of the Wesleyan movement came also a quickened philanthropic spirit; a zeal for the instruction, the purification, and the better life of men and women. The common instinct of humanity always is to strive for higher and better ways of living, if only once the word of guidance is given and the soul of true manhood is roused to the work. Indeed, there is not much about this period of English history concerning which the modern Englishman can feel really proud except that great religious revival which began with the thoughts and the teachings of John Wesley. One turns in relief from the partisan

struggles in Parliament and out of it, from the intrigues and counter-intrigues of selfish and perfidious statesmen, and {145} the alcove conspiracies of worthless women, to Wesley and his religious visions, to Whitefield and his colliers, to Charles Wesley and his sweet devotional hymns. Many of us are unable to have any manner of sympathy with the precise doctrines and the forms of faith which Wesley taught. But the man must have no sympathy with faith or religious feeling of any kind who does not recognize the unspeakable value of that great reform which Wesley and Whitefield introduced to the English people. They taught moral doctrines which we all accept in common, but they did not teach them after the cold and barren way of the plodding, mechanical instructor. They thundered them into the opening ears of thousands who had never been roused to moral sentiment before. They inspired the souls of poor and commonplace creatures with all the zealot's fire and all the martyr's endurance. They brought tears to penitent eyes which had never been moistened before by any but the selfish sense of personal pain or grief. They pierced through the dull, vulgar, contaminated hideousness of low and vicious life, and sent streaming in upon it the light of a higher world and a better law. Every new Wesleyan became a missionary of Wesleyanism. The son converted the father, the daughter won over the heart of the mother. There was much that was hard, much that was fierce, in the doctrine and the discipline of Methodism, but that time was not one in which gentler teachings could much prevail. Men and women had to be startled into a sense of the need of their spiritual regeneration. Wesley and the comrades who worked with him in the beginning, and with some of whom, like Whitefield, he ceased after a while to work, were just the men needed to call aloud to the people and make sure that their voices must be heard. They had to talk in a shout if they were to talk to any purpose. There was much in their style of eloquence against which a pure and cultured criticism would naturally protest. But they did not speak for the pure and cultured criticism. They came to call ignorant sinners to repentance. They have the one great abiding {146} merit, they have the one enduring fame—that they saw their real business in life; that they kept to it through whatever disadvantage, pain, and danger; and that they accomplished what they had gone out to do. Their monument lives to-day in the living history of England and of America.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

ENGLAND'S HONOR AND JENKINS'S EAR.

[Sidenote: 1738—The passion of war]

"Madam, there are fifty thousand men slain this year in Europe, and not one Englishman among them." This was the proud boast which, as has been already mentioned, Walpole was able to make to Queen Caroline not very long before her death, when she was trying to stir him up to a more agressive policy in the affairs of the Continent. Walpole's words sound almost like an anticipation of Prince Bismarck's famous declaration that the Eastern Question was not worth to Germany the life of a single Pomeranian grenadier. But Prince Bismarck was more fortunate than Walpole in his policy of peace. He had secured a position of advantage for himself in maintaining that policy which Walpole never had. Prince Bismarck had twice over made it clear to all the world that he could conduct to the most complete success a policy of uncompromising war. Walpole had all the difficulty in keeping to his policy of peace which a statesman always has who is suspected, rightly or wrongly, of a willingness to purchase peace at almost any price. It is melancholy to have to make the statement, but the statement is nevertheless true, that in the England of Walpole's day, and in the England of our own day as well, the statesman who is known to love peace is sure to have it shrieked at him in some crisis that he does not love the honor of his country. A periodical outbreak of the craving or lust for war seems to be one of the passions and one of the afflictions of almost every great commonwealth in Europe. A wise and just policy may have secured a peace that has lasted for years; but the mere fact that peace has lasted for years {148} seems to many unthinking people reason enough why the country should be favored with a taste of war. We are constantly declaring that England is not a military nation, and yet no statesman is ever so popular for the hour in England as the statesman who fires the people with the passion of war. Many a minister, weak and unpopular in his domestic policy, has suddenly made himself the hero and the darling of the moment by declaring that some foreign state has insulted England, and that the time has come when the sword must be drawn to defend the nation's honor. Then "away to heaven, respective lenity" indeed! The appeal acts like a charm to call out the passion and to silence the reason of vast masses of the population in all ranks and conditions. Even among the working-classes and the poor—who, one might imagine, have all to lose and nothing to gain by war—it is by no means certain that the war fever will not flame for the hour. There are seasons when, as Burke has said, "even the humblest of us are degraded into the vices and follies of kings."

[Sidenote: 1738—The patriots' war-cry]

War had no fascination for Walpole. He saw it only in its desolation, its cruelty, its folly, and its cost. At the time which we have now reached he looked with clear gaze over the European continent, and he saw nothing in the action of foreign Powers which concerned the honor and the interest of England enough to make it necessary for her to draw the sword. But, unfortunately for his country and for his fame, Walpole was not a statesman of firm and lofty principle. He was always willing to come to terms. In the domestic affairs of England he allowed grievances to exist which he had again and again condemned and deplored, and which every one knew he was sincerely desirous to remove; he allowed them to exist because it might have been a source of annoyance to the King if the minister had troubled him about such a subject. He acted on this policy with regard to the grievances of which the Dissenters complained, and, as he always admitted, very justly complained. Much as he detested a policy of war, he was not the minister who would {149} stand by a policy of peace at the risk of losing his popularity and his power. Much as he loved peace, he loved his place as Prime Minister still more. It is probable that his enemies gave him credit for greater fixity of purpose in regard to his peace policy than he really possessed. They believed, perhaps, that they had only to get up a good, popular war-cry in England, and that Walpole would have to go out of office. They told themselves that he would not make war. On this faith they based their schemes and founded their hopes. It would have been well for Walpole and for England if their belief had been justified by events.

The Patriots raised their war-cry. The honor of England had been insulted. Her claims had been rejected with insolent scorn. Her flag had been trampled on; her seamen had been imprisoned, mutilated, tortured; and all this by whom? By whom, indeed, but the old and implacable enemy of England, the Power which had sent the Armada to invade England's shores and to set up the Inquisition among the English people—by Spain, of course, by Spain! In Spanish dungeons brave Englishmen were wearing out their lives. In mid-ocean English ships were stopped and searched by arrogant officers of the King of Spain. Why did Spain venture on such acts? Because, the Patriots cried out, Spain believed that England's day of strength had gone, and that England could now be insulted with impunity. What wonder, they asked, in patriotic passion, if Spain or any other foreign state should believe such things? Was there not a Minister now at the head of affairs in England, now grasping all the various powers of the state in his own hands, who was notoriously willing to put up with any insult, to subject his country to any degradation, rather than venture on even a remonstrance that might lead to war? Let the flag of England be torn down and trailed in the dust—what then? What cared the Minister whose only fear was, not of dishonor, but of danger.

This was the fiery stuff which the Patriots kept {150} flooding the country with; which they poured out in speeches and pamphlets, and pasquinades and lampoons. Some of them probably came in the end to believe it all themselves. Walpole was assailed every hour—he was held up to public hatred and scorn as if he had betrayed his country. Bolingbroke from his exile contributed his share to the literature of blood, and soon came over from his exile to take a larger share in it. The *Craftsman* ran over with furious diatribes against the Minister of Peace. Caricatures of all kinds represented Walpole abasing himself before Spain and entering into secret engagements with her, to the prejudice and detriment of England. Ballads were hawked and sung through the streets which described Walpole as acknowledging to the Spanish Don that he hated the English merchants and traders just as much as the Don did, and that he was heartily glad when Spain applied her rod to them. The country became roused to the wildest passion; the Patriots were carrying it all their own way.

What was it all about? What was Spain doing? What ought England to do?

[Sidenote: 1738—The treaties with Spain]

The whole excitement arose out of certain long-standing trade disputes between England and Spain in the New World. These disputes had been referred to in the Treaty of Utrecht, which was supposed to have settled them in 1713; and again in the Treaty of Seville, which was believed to have finally settled them in 1729. England had recognized the right of Spain to regulate the trade with Spanish colonies. Spain agreed that England should have the privilege of supplying the Spanish colonies with slaves. This noble privilege English traders exercised to the full. It is not very gratifying to have to recollect that two of England's great disputes with Spain were about England's claim to an unlimited right to sell slaves to the Spanish colonies. To England, or at least to the English South Sea Company, was also conceded the permission to send one merchant vessel each year to the South Seas with as much English goods to sell to the Spanish colonies as a {151} ship of 500 tons could carry. As everybody might have expected, the provisions of the treaty were constantly broken through. The English traders were very eager to sell their goods; the Spanish colonists were very glad to get them to buy. All other commerce than that in slaves and the one annual shipload of English goods was strictly prohibited by Spain. The whole arrangement now seems in the highest degree artificial and absurd; but it was not an uncommon sort of international arrangement then. As was to be expected, the English traders set going

a huge illicit trade in the South Seas. This was done partly by the old familiar smuggling process, and partly, too, by keeping little fleets of smaller vessels swarming off the coasts and reloading the one legitimate vessel as often as her contents were sent into a port. This ingenious device was said to have been detected by the Spanish authorities in various places. The Spaniards retaliated by stopping and searching English vessels cruising anywhere near the coast of a Spanish colony, and by arresting and imprisoning the officers and sailors of English merchantmen. The Spaniards asserted, and were able in many instances to make their assertions good, that whole squadrons of English trading vessels sometimes entered the Spanish ports under pretence of being driven there by stress of weather, or by the need of refitting and refreshing; and that, once in the port, they managed to get their cargoes safely ashore. Sometimes, too, it was said, the vessels lay off the shore without going into the harbor; and then smugglers came off in their long, low, swift boats, and received the English goods and carried them into the port. The fact undoubtedly was that the English merchants were driving a roaring trade with the Spanish colonies; just as the Spanish authorities might very well have known that they would be certain to do. Where one set of men are anxious to sell, and another set are just as anxious to buy, it needs very rigorous coastguard watching to prevent the goods being sent in and the money taken away.

This fact, however, does not say anything against the {152} right of Spain to enforce, if she could, the conditions of the treaties. On that point Spain was only asserting her indisputable right. But would it be reasonable to expect that Spain or any other country could endeavor to maintain her right in such a dispute, and under such conditions, without occasional rashness, violence, and injustice on the part of her officials? There can be no doubt that many high-handed and arbitrary acts were done against English subjects by the officers of Spanish authority. On every real and every reported and every imaginary act of Spanish harshness the Patriots seized with avidity. They presented petitions, moved for papers, moved that this injured person and that be allowed to appear and state his case at the bar of the House of Commons. Some English sailors and other Englishmen were thus allowed to appear at the bar, and did make statements of outrage and imprisonment. Some of these statements were doubtless true, some were probably exaggerated; the men who made them were not on oath; there was every temptation to exaggerate, because it had become apparently the duty of every true Patriot who loved old England to believe anything said by anybody against Spain. The same sort of thing has happened again and again in times nearer to our own, where some class of English traders have been trying to carry on a forbidden traffic with the subjects of a foreign sovereign. We see the same things, now in China, and now in Burmah; dress goods in one place, opium in another, slaves in another; reckless smuggling by the traders, overdone reprisals by the authorities; and then we hear the familiar appeal to England not to allow her sons to be insulted and imprisoned by some insolent foreign Power.

Walpole was not inclined to allow English subjects to be molested with impunity. But he saw no reason to believe that Spain intended anything of the kind. The advices he received from the British Minister at the Spanish Court spoke rather of delays and slow formalities, and various small disputes and misunderstandings, than of {153} wilful denial of justice. Walpole felt satisfied that by putting a little diplomatic pressure on the proceedings every satisfaction fairly due to England and English subjects could be obtained. He, therefore, refused for a long time to allow his hand to be forced by the Opposition, and was full of hope that the good sense of the country in general would sustain him against the united strength of his enemies, as it had so often done before.

[Sidenote: 1738—Alderman Perry's motion]

Walpole did not know how strong his enemies were this time. He did not know what a capital cry they had got, what a powerful appeal to national passion they could put into voice, and what a loud reply the national passion would make to the appeal. On Saturday, March 2, 1738, a petition was presented to the House of Commons from divers merchants, planters, and others trading to and interested in the British plantations in America. The petition was presented by Mr. Perry, one of the representatives of London, and an alderman of the City. The petition set forth a long history of the alleged grievances, and of the denial of redress, and prayed the House to "provide such timely and adequate remedy for putting an end to all insults and depredations on them and their fellow-subjects as to the House shall seem meet, as well as procure such relief for the unhappy sufferers as the nature of the case and the justice of their cause may require; and that they may be heard by themselves and counsel thereupon."

On the same day several other petitions from cities, and from private individuals, were presented on the same subject. The debate on Mr. Perry's motion mainly turned, at first, on the minor question, whether the house would admit the petitioners to be heard by themselves and also by counsel, or, according to the habit of the House, by themselves or counsel. Yet, short and almost formal as the debate might have been, the opponents of the Government contrived to import into it a number of assumptions, and an amount of passion, such as the earlier stages of a difficult and delicate international dispute are seldom allowed to exhibit. Even so cautious and respectable a man as Sir {154} John Barnard, a typical English merchant of the highest class, did not hesitate to speak of the

grievances as if they were all established and admitted, and the action of Spain as a wilful outrage upon the trade, the honor, and the safety of Great Britain. Walpole argued that the petitioners should be heard by themselves and not by counsel; but the main object of his speech was to appeal to the House "not to work upon the passions where the head is to be informed." Mr. Robert Wilmot thereupon arose, and replied in an oration belonging to that "spread-eagle" order which is familiar to American political controversy. "Talk of working on the passions," this orator exclaimed; "can any man's passions be wound up to a greater height, can any man's indignation be more raised, than every free-born Briton's must be when he reads a letter which I have received this morning, and which I have now in my hand? This letter, sir, gives an account that seventy of our brave sailors are now in chains in Spain. Our countrymen in chains, and slaves to Spaniards! Is not this enough to fire the coldest? Is not this enough to rouse all the vengeance of a national resentment? Shall we sit here debating about words and forms while the sufferings of our countrymen call out loudly for redress?"

[Sidenote: 1738—An unlucky argument]

Pulteney himself, when speaking on the general question, professed, indeed, not to assume the charges in the petitions to be true before they had been established, but he proceeded to deal with them on something very like a positive assumption that they would be established. Thereupon he struck the key-note of the whole outcry that was to be raised against the Ministry. Could any one believe, he indignantly asked, that the Court of Spain "would have presumed to trifle in such a manner with any ministry but one which they thought wanted either courage or inclination to resent such treatment?" He accused the Ministry of "a scandalous breach of duty" and "the most infamous pusillanimity." Later in the same day Sir John Barnard moved an Address to the Crown, asking for papers to be laid before the House. Walpole did not actually oppose {155} the motion, and only suggested a modification of it, but he earnestly entreated the House not, at that moment, to press the Sovereign for a publication of the latest despatches. He went so far as to let the House understand that the latest reply from Spain was not satisfactory, and that it might be highly injurious to the prospects of peace if it were then to be given to the world; and he pointed to the obvious fact that "when once a paper is read in this House the contents of it cannot be long a secret to the world." The King, he said, had still good hopes of being able to prevail on Spain to make an honorable and ample reparation for any wrongs that might have been done to Englishmen. "We ought," Walpole pleaded, "to wait, at least, till his Majesty shall tell us from the throne that all hopes of obtaining satisfaction are over. Then it will be time enough to declare for a war with Spain." Unfortunately, Walpole went on to a mode of argument which was, of all others, the best calculated to give his enemies an advantage over him. His language was strong and clear; his sarcasm was well merited; but the time was not suited for an appeal to such very calm common-sense as that to which the great minister was trying in vain to address himself. "The topic of national resentment for national injury affords," Walpole said, "a fair field for declamation; and, to hear gentlemen speak on that head, one would be apt to believe that victory and glory are bound to attend the resolutions of our Parliament and the efforts of our arms. But gentlemen ought to reflect that there are many instances in the history of the world, and some in the annals of England, which prove that conquest is not always inseparable from the justest cause or most exalted courage."

The hearts of the Patriots must have rejoiced when they heard such an argument from the lips of Walpole. For what did it amount to? Only this—that this un-English Minister, this unworthy servant of the crown, positively admitted into his own mind the idea that there was any possibility of England's being worsted in any war with {156} any state or any number of states! Fancy any one allowing such a thought to remain for an instant in his mind! As if it were not a settled thing, specially arranged by Providence, that one Englishman is a match for at least any six Spaniards, Frenchmen, or other contemptible foreigners! Walpole's great intellectual want was the lack of imagination. If he had possessed more imagination, he would have been not only a greater orator, but a greater debater. He would have seen more clearly the effect of an argument on men with minds and temperaments unlike his own. In this particular instance the appeal to what he would have considered cool common-sense was utterly damaging to him. Pulteney pounced on him at once. "From longer forbearance," he exclaimed, "we have everything to fear; from acting vigorously we have everything to hope." He admitted that a war with Spain was to be avoided, if it could be avoided with honor; but, he asked, "will it ever be the opinion of an English statesman that, in order to avoid inconvenience, we are to embrace a dishonor? Where is the brave man," he demanded, "who in a just cause will submissively lie down under insults? No!—in such a case he will do all that prudence and necessity dictate in order to procure satisfaction, and leave the rest to Providence." Pulteney spoke with undisguised contempt of the sensitive honor of the Spanish people. "I do not see," he declared—and this was meant as a keen personal thrust at Walpole—"how we can comply with the form of Spanish punctilio without sacrificing some of the essentials of British honor. Let gentlemen but consider whether our prince's and our country's honor is not as much engaged to revenge our injuries as the honor of the Spaniards can be to support their insolence." There never, probably, was a House of Commons so cool-headed and cautious as not to be stirred out of reason and into passion by so well-contrived an appeal. The appeal was

followed up by others. "Perhaps," Sir William Wyndham said, "if we lose the character of being good fighters, we shall at least gain that {157} of being excellent negotiators." But he would not leave to Walpole the full benefit of even that doubtful change of character. "The character of a mere negotiator," he insisted, "had never been affected by England without her losing considerable, both in her interest at home and her influence abroad. This truth will appear plainly to any one who compares the figure this nation made in Europe under Queen Elizabeth with the figure she made under her successor, King James the First. The first never treated with an insulting enemy; the other never durst break with a treacherous friend. The first thought it her glory to command peace; the other thought it no dishonor to beg it. In her reign every treaty was crowned with glory; in his no peace was attended with tranquillity; in short, her care was to improve, his to depress the true British spirit." Even the cool-headed and wise Sir John Barnard cried out that "a dishonorable peace is worse than a destructive war."

[Sidenote: 1738—Wyndham's taunts]

We need not go through all the series of debates in the Lords and Commons. It is enough to say that every one of these debates made the chances of a peaceful arrangement grow less and less. The impression of the Patriots seemed to be that Walpole was to be held responsible for every evasion, every delay, every rash act, and every denial of justice on the part of Spain. With this conviction, it was clear to them that the more they attacked the Spanish Government the more they attacked and damaged Walpole. Full of this spirit, therefore, they launched out in every debate about Spanish treachery, and Spanish falsehood, and Spanish cruelty, and Spanish religious faith in a manner that might have seemed deliberately designed to render a peaceful settlement of any question impossible between England and Spain. Yet we do not believe that the main object of the Patriots was to force England into a war with Spain. Their main object was to force Walpole out of office. They were for a long time under the impression that he would resign rather than make war. Once he resigned, the Patriots would very soon abate {158} their war fury, and try whether the quarrel might not be settled in peace with honor. But they had allowed themselves to be driven too far along the path of war; and they had not taken account of the fact that the great peace Minister might, after all, prefer staying in office and making war to going out of office and leaving some rival to make it.

[Sidenote: 1738—Walpole almost alone]

Suddenly there came to the aid of the Patriots and their policy the portentous story of Captain Jenkins and his ear. Captain Jenkins had sailed on board his vessel, the *Rebecca*, from Jamaica for London, and off the coast of Havana he was boarded by a revenue-cutter of Spain, which proceeded to subject him and his vessel to the right of search. Jenkins declared that he had been fearfully maltreated; that the Spanish officers had him hanged up at the yard-arm and cut down when he was half-dead; that they slashed at his head with their cutlasses and hacked his left ear nearly off; and that, to complete the measure of their outrages, one of them actually tore off his bleeding ear, flung it in his face, and bade him carry it home to his king and tell him what had been done. To this savage order Jenkins reported that he was ready with a reply: "I commend," he said, "my soul to God, and my cause to my country"—a very eloquent and telling little sentence, which gives good reason to think of what Jenkins could have done after preparation in the House of Commons if he could throw off such rhetoric unprepared, and in spite of the disturbing effect of having just been half-hanged and much mutilated. Jenkins showed, indeed, remarkable presence of mind in every way. He prudently brought home the severed ear with him, and invited all patriotic Englishmen to look at it. Scepticism itself could not, for a while at all events, refuse to believe that the Spaniards had cut off Jenkins's ear, when, behold! there was the ear itself to tell the story. Later on, indeed, Scepticism did begin to assert herself. Were there not other ways, it was asked, by which Englishmen might have lost an ear as well as by the fury of the hateful Spaniards? {159} Were there not British pillories? Whether Jenkins sacrificed his ear to the cause of his country abroad or to the criminal laws of his country at home, it seems to be quite settled now that his story was a monstrous exaggeration, if not a pure invention. Burke has distinctly stigmatized it as "the fable of Jenkins's ear." The fable, however, did its work for that time. It was eagerly caught up and believed in; people wanted to believe in it, and the ear was splendid evidence. The mutilation of Jenkins played much the same part in England that the fabulous insult of the King of Prussia to the French envoy played in the France of 1870. The eloquence of Pulteney, the earnestness of Wyndham, the intriguing genius of Bolingbroke, seemed only to have been agencies to prepare the way for the triumph of Jenkins and his severed ear. The outcry all over the country began to make Walpole feel at last that something would have to be done. His own constitutional policy came against him in this difficulty. He had broken the power of the House of Lords and had strengthened that of the House of Commons. The hereditary Chamber might perhaps be relied upon to stand firmly against a popular clamor, but it would be impossible to expect such firmness at such a time from an elective assembly of almost any sort. In this instance, however, Walpole found himself worse off in the House of Lords than even in the House of Commons. The House of Lords was stimulated by the really powerful

eloquence of Carteret and of Chesterfield, and there was no man on the ministerial side of the House who could stand up with any effect against such accomplished and unscrupulous political gladiators.

Walpole appealed to the Parliament not to take any step which would render a peaceful settlement impossible, and he promised to make the most strenuous efforts to obtain a prompt consideration of England's claims. He set to work energetically for this purpose. His difficulties were greatly increased by the unfriendly conduct of the Spanish envoy, who was on terms of confidence with the Patriots, and went about everywhere declaring {160} that Walpole was trying to deceive the English people as well as the Spanish Government. It must have needed all Walpole's strength of will to sustain him against so many difficulties and so many enemies at such a crisis. It had not been his way to train up statesmen to help him in his work, and now he stood almost alone.

The negotiations were further complicated by the disputes between England and Spain as to the right of English traders to cut logwood in Campeachy Bay, and as to the settlement of the boundaries of the new English colonies of Florida and Carolina in North America, and the rival claims of England and Spain to this or that strip of border territory. Sometimes, however, when an international dispute has to be glossed over, rather than settled, to the full satisfaction of either party, it is found a convenient thing for diplomatists to have a great many subjects of disputation wrapped up in one arrangement. Walpole was sincerely anxious to give Spain a last chance; but the Spanish people, on their side, were stirred to bitterness and to passion by the vehement denunciations of the English Opposition. Even then, when daily papers were little known to the population of either London or Madrid, people in London and in Madrid did somehow get to know that there had been fierce exchange of international dislike and defiance. Walpole, however, still clung to his policy of peace, and his influence in the House of Commons was commanding enough to get his proposals accepted there. In the House of Lords the Ministry were nowhere in debate. Something, indeed, should be said for Lord Hervey, who had been raised to the Upper House as Baron Hervey of Ickworth in 1733, and who made some speeches full of clear good-sense and sound moderating argument in support of Walpole's policy. But Carteret and Chesterfield would have been able in any case to overwhelm the Duke of Newcastle, and the Duke of Newcastle now was turning traitor to Walpole. Stupid as Newcastle was, he was beginning to see that the day of Walpole's destiny was nearly over, and he was taking {161} measures to act accordingly. All that Newcastle could do as Secretary for Foreign Affairs was done to make peace impossible.

[Sidenote: 1739—The Convention]

Walpole thought the time had fully come when it would be right for him to show that, while still striving for peace, he was not unprepared for war. He sent a squadron of line-of-battle ships to the Mediterranean and several cruisers to the West Indies, and he allowed letters of marque to be issued. These demonstrations had the effect of making the Spanish Government somewhat lower their tone—at least they had the effect of making that Government seem more willing to come to terms. Long negotiations as to the amount of claim on the one side and of set-off on the other were gone into both in London and Madrid. We need not study the figures, for nothing came of the proposed arrangement. It was impossible that anything could come of it. England and Spain were quarrelling over several great international questions. Even these questions were themselves only symbolical of a still greater one, of a paramount question which was never put into words: the question whether England or Spain was to have the ascendent in the new world across the Atlantic. Walpole and the Spanish Government drew up an arrangement, or rather professed to find a basis of arrangement, for the paying off of certain money claims. A convention was agreed upon, and was signed on January 14, 1739. The convention arranged that a certain sum of money was to be paid by Spain to England within a given time, but that this discharge of claims should not extend to any dispute between the King of Spain and the South Sea Company as holders of the Asiento Contract; and that two plenipotentiaries from each side should meet at Madrid to settle the claims of England and Spain with regard to the rights of trade in the New World and the boundaries of Carolina and Florida. This convention, it will be seen, left the really important subjects of dispute exactly where they were before.

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Such as it was, however, it had hardly been signed before the diplomatists were already squabbling over the extent and interpretation of its terms, and mixing it up with the attempted arrangement of other and older disputes. Parliament opened on February 1, 1739, and the speech from the throne told of the convention arranged with Spain. "It is now," said the Royal speech, "a great satisfaction to me that I am able to acquaint you that the measures I have pursued have had so good an effect that a convention is concluded and ratified between me and the King of Spain, whereby, upon consideration had of the demands on both sides, that prince hath obliged himself to make reparation to my subjects for their losses by a certain stipulated payment; and plenipotentiaries are therein named and appointed for redressing within a limited time all those grievances and abuses which have hitherto interrupted our commerce and navigation in the American seas, and for settling all matters in dispute in such a

manner as may for the future prevent and remove all new causes and pretences of complaint by a strict observance of our mutual treaties and a just regard to the rights and privileges belonging to each other." The King promised that the convention should be laid before the House at once.

Before the terms of the convention were fully in the knowledge of Parliament, there was already a strong dissatisfaction felt among the leading men of the Opposition. We need not set this down to the mere determination of implacable partisans not to be content with anything proposed or executed by the Ministers of the Crown. Sir John Barnard was certainly no implacable partisan in that sense. He was really a true-hearted and patriotic Englishman. Yet Sir John Barnard was one of the very first to predict that the convention would be found utterly unsatisfactory. There is nothing surprising in the prediction. The King's own speech, which naturally made the best of things, left it evident that no important and international question had been touched by the convention. {163} Every dispute over which war might have to be made remained in just the same state after the convention as before. Lord Carteret in the House of Lords boldly assumed that the convention must be unsatisfactory, and even degrading, to the English people, and he denounced it with all the eloquence and all the vigor of which he was capable. Lord Hervey vainly appealed to the House to bear in mind that the convention was not yet before them. "Let us read it," he urged, "before we condemn it." Vain, indeed, was the appeal; the convention was already condemned. The very description of it in the speech from the throne had condemned it in advance.

[Sidenote: 1739—Petition against the Convention]

The convention was submitted to Parliament and made known to the country. The reception it got was just what might have been expected. The one general cry was that the agreement gave up or put aside every serious claim made by England. Spain had not renounced her right of search; the boundaries of England's new colonies had not been defined; not a promise was made by Spain that the Spanish officials who had imprisoned and tortured unoffending British subjects should be punished, or even brought to any manner of trial. In the heated temper of the public the whole convention seemed an inappropriate and highly offensive farce. On February 23d the sheriffs of the City of London presented to the House of Commons a petition against the convention. The petition expressed the great concern and surprise of the citizens of London "to find by the convention lately concluded between his Majesty and the King of Spain that the Spaniards are so far from giving up their (as we humbly apprehend) unjust pretension of a right to visit and search our ships on the seas of America that this pretension of theirs is, among others, referred to the future regulation and decision of plenipotentiaries appointed on each side, whereby we apprehend it is in some degree admitted." The petition referred to the "cruel treatment of the English sailors whose hard fate has thrown them into the {164} hands of the Spaniards," and added, with a curious mixture of patriotic sentiment and practical, business-like selfishness, that "if this cruel treatment of English seamen were to be put up with, and no reparation demanded, it might have the effect"—of what, does the reader think?—"of deterring the seamen from undertaking voyages to the seas of America without an advance of wages, which that trade or any other will not be able to support."

[Sidenote: 1739—Carteret's attack]

The same petition was presented to the House of Lords by the Duke of Bedford. Lord Carteret moved that the petitioners should be heard by themselves, and, if they should desire it, by counsel. It was agreed, after some debate, that the petitioners should be heard by themselves in the first instance, and that if afterwards they desired to be heard by counsel their request should be taken into consideration. Lord Chesterfield in the course of the debate contrived ingeniously to give a keen stroke to the convention while declaring that he did not presume as yet to form any opinion on it, or to anticipate any discussion on its merits. "I cannot help," he said, "saying, however, that to me it is a most unfavorable symptom of its being for the good of the nation when I see so strong an opposition made to it out-of-doors by those who are the most immediately concerned in its effects."

A debate of great interest, animation, and importance took place in the House of Lords when the convention was laid before that assembly. The Earl of Cholmondeley moved that an address be presented to the King to thank him for having concluded the convention. The address was drawn up by a very dexterous hand, a master-hand. Its terms were such as might have conciliated the leaders of the Opposition, if indeed these were to be conciliated by anything short of Walpole's resignation, for, while the address approved of all that had been done thus far, it cleverly assumed that all this was but the preliminary to a real settlement; and by ingenuously expressing the entire reliance of the House on the King's taking care that proper provision should be made for the redress of various {165} specified grievances, it succeeded in making it quite clear that in the opinion of the House such provision had not yet been made. The address concluded most significantly with an assurance to the King that "in case your Majesty's just expectations shall not be answered, this House will heartily and zealously concur in all such measures as shall be necessary to vindicate your Majesty's honor, and to preserve to your

subjects the full enjoyment of all those rights to which they are entitled by treaty and the Law of Nations." An address of this kind would seem one that might well have been moved as an amendment to a ministerial address, and understood to be obliquely a vote of censure on the advisers of the Crown. It seems the sort of address that Carteret might have moved and Chesterfield seconded. Carteret and Chesterfield opposed it with spirit and eloquence. "Upon your Lordships' behavior to-day," said Carteret at the close of a bitter and a passionate attack upon the Ministry and the convention, "depends the fate of the British Empire. . . . This nation has hitherto maintained her independence by maintaining her commerce; but if either is weakened the other must fail. It is by her commerce that she has been hitherto enabled to stand her ground against all the open and secret attacks of the enemies to her religion, liberties, and constitution. It is from commerce, my Lords, that I behold your Lordships within these walls, a free, an independent assembly; but, should any considerations influence your Lordships to give so fatal a wound to the interest and honor of this kingdom as your agreeing to this address, it is the last time I shall have occasion to trouble this House. For, my Lords, if we are to meet only to give a sanction to measures that overthrow all our rights, I should look upon it as a misfortune for me to be either accessary or witness to such a compliance. I will not only repeat what the merchants told your Lordships—that their trade is ruined—I will go further; I will say the nobility is ruined, the whole nation is undone. For I can call this treaty nothing else but a mortgage of {166} your honor, a surrender of your liberties." Such language may now seem too overwrought and extravagant to have much effect upon an assembly of practical men. But it was not language likely to be considered overwrought and extravagant at that time and during that crisis. The Opposition had positively worked themselves into the belief that if the convention were accepted the last day of England's strength, prosperity, and glory had come. Carteret, besides, was talking to the English public as well as to the House of Lords. He knew what he meant when he denounced the enemies of England's religion as well as the enemies of England's trade. The imputation was that the Minister himself was a secret confederate of the enemies of the national religion as well as the enemies of the national trade. Men who but a few short years before were secretly engaged in efforts at a Stuart restoration, which certainly would not be an event much in harmony with the spread of the Protestant faith in England, were now denouncing Walpole every day on the ground that he was caballing with Catholic Spain, the Spain of Philip the Second, the Spain of the Armada and the Inquisition, the implacable enemy of England's national religion.

[Sidenote: 1739—Argyle's anecdote]

The Duke of Argyle made a most vehement speech against the proposed address. He dealt a sharp blow against the Ministry when he declared that the whole convention was a French and not a Spanish measure. He said he should never be persuaded that fear of aught that could be done by Spain could have induced ministers to accept "this thing you call a convention." "It is the interest of France that our navigation and commerce should be ruined, we are the only people in the world whom France has reason to be apprehensive of in America, and every advantage that Spain gains in point of commerce is gained for her. . . . So far as I can judge from the tenor of our late behavior, our dread of France has been the spring of all our weak and ruinous measures. To this dread we have sacrificed the most distinguishing honors of this kingdom. This dread of France has changed {167} every maxim of right government among us. There is no measure for the advantage of this kingdom that has been set on foot for these many years to which she has not given a negative. There is no measure so much to our detriment into which she has not led us." He scornfully declared that what the reasons of ministers might be for this pusillanimity he could not tell, "for, my Lords, though I am a privy councillor I am as unacquainted with the secrets of the Government as any private gentleman that hears me." Then he told an anecdote of the late Lord Peterborough. "When Lord Peterborough was asked by a friend one day his opinion of a certain measure, says my lord, in some surprise, 'This is the first time I ever heard of it.' 'Impossible,' says the other; 'why, you are a privy councillor.' 'So I am,' replies his lordship, 'and there is a Cabinet councillor coming up to us just now; if you ask the same question of him he will perhaps hold his peace, and then you will think he is in the secret; but if he opens once his mouth about it you will find he knows as little of it as I do.' No, my Lords," exclaimed the Duke of Argyle, "it is not being in Privy Council or in Cabinet Council; one must be in the Minister's counsel to know the true motives of our late proceedings." The duke concluded his oration, characteristically, with a glorification of his own honest and impartial heart.

The address was sure to be carried; Walpole's influence was still strong enough to accomplish that much. But everybody must already have seen that the convention was not an instrument capable of satisfying, or, indeed, framed with any notion of satisfying, the popular demands of England. It was an odd sort of arrangement, partly international and partly personal; an adjustment, or attempted adjustment here of a dispute between States, and there of a dispute between rival trading companies. The reconstituted South Sea Company—which had now become one of the three great trading companies of England, the East India Company and the Bank being the {168} other two—had all manner of negotiations, arrangements, and transactions with the King of Spain. All these affairs now became mixed up with the national claims, and were dealt with alike in the convention. The British

plenipotentiary at the Spanish Court was—still further to complicate matters—the agent for the South Sea Company. The convention provided that certain set-off claims of Spain should be taken into consideration as well as the claims of England. Spain had some demands against England for the value of certain vessels of the Spanish navy attacked and captured during the reign of George the First without a declaration of war. The claim had been admitted in principle by England, and it became what would be called in the law courts only a question of damages. Then the convention contained some stipulations concerning certain claims of Spain upon the South Sea Company; that is, on what was, after all, only a private trading company. When the anomaly was pointed out by Lord Carteret and others in the House of Lords, and it was asked how came it that the English plenipotentiary at the Court of Spain was also the agent of the South Sea Company, it was ingeniously answered on the part of the Government that nothing could be more fitting and proper, seeing that, as English plenipotentiary, he had to act for England with the King of Spain, and as agent for the South Sea Company to deal with the same sovereign in that sovereign's capacity as a great private merchant. Therefore the national claims were made, to a certain extent, subservient to, or dependent on, the claims of the South Sea Company. Whether we may think the claims of the English merchants and seamen were exaggerated or not, one thing is obvious: they could not possibly be satisfied under such a convention.

[Sidenote: 1739—The Prince's first vote]

The debate in the House of Lords was carried on by the Opposition with great spirit and brilliancy. Lord Hervey defended the policy of the Government with dexterity. Possibly he made as much of the case as could be made of it. The motion for the address was carried {169} by seventy-one votes against fifty-eight—a marked increase of strength on the part of the Opposition. It is to be recorded that the Prince of Wales gave his first vote in Parliament to support the Opposition. The name of "His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales" is the first in the division list of the peers who voted against the address and in favor of the policy of war. There was nothing very mutinous in Frederick's action so far as the King was concerned. Very likely Frederick would have given the same vote, no matter what the King's views on the subject. But every one knew that George was eager for war, that he was fully convinced of his capacity to win laurels on the battle-field, and that he was longing to wear them. A Bonaparte prince of our own day was described by a French literary man as an unemployed Caesar. King George believed himself an unemployed Caesar, and was clamorous for early employment.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

WALPOLE YIELDS TO WAR.

[Sidenote: 1739—Horatio Walpole's prediction]

The nation was plunging, not drifting, into war. Walpole himself, while still striving hard to put off any decisive step, and even yet perhaps hoping against hope that the people would return to their senses and leave the Patriots to themselves, did not venture any longer to meet the demands of the Opposition by bold argument founded on the principles of justice and wisdom. He had sometimes to talk the same "tall talk" as that in which the Patriots delighted, and to rave a little about the great deeds that would have to be done if Spain did not listen to reason very soon. But he still pleaded that Spain would listen to reason soon, very soon, and that if war must come sooner or later he preferred to take it later. That, it need hardly be said, was not Walpole's expression—it belongs to a later day—but it represents his mode of argument.

On March 6th the House of Commons met for the purpose of taking the foredoomed convention into consideration. So intense was the interest taken in the subject, so highly strung was political feeling, that more than four hundred members were in their places at eight o'clock in the morning. Seldom indeed is anxiety expressed in so emphatic and conclusive a form among members of the House of Commons. Readers may remember one day within recent years when a measure of momentous importance was to be introduced into the House of Commons, and when, long before eight in the morning, every seat in the House was occupied. On this March 6, 1739, the House resolved itself into committee, and spent the whole {171} day in hearing some of the merchants and other witnesses against the convention. The whole of the next day (Wednesday) was occupied in the reading of documents bearing on the subject, and it was not until Thursday that the debate began. The debate was more memorable for what followed it than for itself. In itself it was the familiar succession of fierce and unscrupulous attacks on the policy of peace, mixed up with equally fierce but certainly very well-deserved attacks on the character of the convention. William Pitt wound up his speech by declaring

that "this convention, I think from my soul, is nothing but a stipulation for national ignominy; an illusory expedient to baffle the resentment of the nation; a truce without a suspension of hostilities on the part of Spain; on the part of England a suspension, as to Georgia, of the first law of nature, self-preservation and self-defence; a surrender of the rights and the trade of England to the mercy of plenipotentiaries, and, in this infinitely highest and sacred point, future security, not only inadequate, but directly repugnant to the resolutions of Parliament and the gracious promise from the throne. The complaints of your despairing merchants, the voice of England, have condemned it; be the guilt of it upon the head of its adviser! God forbid that this committee should share the guilt by approving it!"

One point in the debate is worthy of notice. The address to the King approving of the convention was moved by Horatio Walpole, the diplomatist, brother of Sir Robert. In the course of his speech Horatio Walpole declared that the outbreak of war between England and any great continental State would be certain to be followed by a new blow struck by the Pretender and his followers. Some of the orators of Opposition spoke with immense scorn of the possibility of a Jacobite movement ever again being heard of in England. The Walpoles both generally understood pretty well what they were talking about. The prediction of Horatio Walpole came true.

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[Sidenote: 1739—The secession]

The address was carried by 260 against 232. The ministerial majority had run down to 28. Next day the battle was renewed. According to parliamentary usage, the report of the address was brought up, and Pulteney seized the opportunity to make another vehement attack on the convention and the ministers. He accused the Prime-minister of meanly stooping to the dictates of a haughty, insolent Court, and of bartering away the lives and liberties of Englishmen for "a sneaking, temporary, disgraceful expedient." But the interest of the day was to come. The address was agreed to by a majority of 262 against 234. This was exactly the same majority as before, only with both sides slightly strengthened. Then the principal leaders of Opposition thought the time had come for them to intervene with a deliberately planned *coup de théâtre*. Acting, it is understood, under the advice of Bolingbroke, they had been looking out for an opportunity to secede from the House of Commons on the ground that it was vain for patriotic men to try to do their duty to their country in a House of which the majority, narrow though it was, was yet the absolute slave of such a minister as Walpole. They hoped that such a step would have two effects. It would, they believed, create an immense sensation all over England and make them the heroes of the hour; and they fondly hoped that it would scare Walpole, and prevent him from passing in their absence the measures which their presence was unable to prevent. Such, we have no doubt, were the ideas of Bolingbroke and of Pulteney and of others; but we do not say that they were the ideas of the man who was intrusted with the duty of announcing the intentions of his party. This was Sir William Wyndham; and we do not believe that any hope of being one of the heroes of the hour entered for a moment into his mind. He only in a general honest thought, and common good to all, made one of them. Wyndham rose, and in a speech of great solemnity announced that he was about to pay his last duty to his country as a member of that {117} House. What hope, he asked, was there when the eloquence of one man had so great an effect within the walls of the House of Commons, and the unanimous voice of a brave, suffering people without had so little? He implied that the majority of the House must have been determined "by arguments that we have not heard." He bade an adieu to Parliament. "Perhaps," he said, "when another Parliament shall succeed, I may again be at liberty to serve my country in the same capacity." In other words, if the next Parliament should declare war on Spain after having got rid of Walpole, then Wyndham and his friends might be prevailed on to return. "I therefore appeal to a future, free, uninfluenced Parliament. Let it be the judge of my conduct and that of my friends on this occasion. Meantime I shall conclude with doing that duty to my country which I am still at liberty to perform—which is to pray for its preservation. May, therefore, that Power which has so often and so visibly before interposed on behalf of the rights and liberties of this nation continue its care over us at this worst and most dangerous juncture; while the insolence of enemies without, and the influence of corruption within, threaten the ruin of her Constitution."

This speech created, as will readily be imagined, an immense sensation in the House. A member of the Administration, one of the Pelhams, lost his head so completely that he sprang up with the intention of moving that Wyndham be committed to the Tower. Walpole, who was not in the habit of losing his head, prevented the ardent Pelham from carrying out his purpose. Walpole knew quite well that something better could be done than to evoke for any of the Patriots the antiquated terrors of the Tower. Walpole delivered a speech which, for its suppressed passion and its stern severity, was well equal to the occasion. The threat of Wyndham and his friends gave him, he said, no uneasiness. The friends of the Parliament and the nation were obliged to them for pulling off the mask—"We can be upon our guard {174} against open rebellion; it is hard to guard against secret treason." "The faction I speak of never sat in this House, they never joined in any public measure of the Government but with a

view to distress it and to serve a Popish interest." Walpole was delighted to have an opportunity of paying off the Opposition for their constant denunciations of his alleged subservience to the throne of France, by flinging in Wyndham's teeth his old devotion to the cause of the Stuarts. "The gentleman," he said, "who is now the mouth of this faction was looked upon as the head of those traitors who, twenty-five years ago, conspired the destruction of their country and of the royal family to set a Popish Pretender on the throne. He was seized by the vigilance of the then Government and pardoned by its clemency, but all the use he has ungratefully made of that clemency has been to qualify himself according to law, that he and his party may some time or other have an opportunity to overthrow all law." For himself, Walpole declared he was only afraid that the gentlemen would not be as good as their word, and that they would return to Parliament. "For I remember," he said, "that in the case of their favorite prelate who was impeached of treason"—Atterbury—"the same gentleman and his faction made the same resolution. They then went off like traitors as they were; but their retreat had not the detestable effect they expected and wished, and therefore they returned. Ever since they have persevered in the same treasonable intention of serving that interest by distressing the Government."

[Sidenote: 1739—The policy of secession]

The House broke up in wild excitement; such excitement as had not been known there since the Excise Bill or the South Sea Bubble. About sixty of the Opposition kept for the time their promise of secession. Sir John Barnard, and two or three other men of mark in the party, had the good-sense to see that they could serve their cause, whatever it might be, better by remaining at their posts than by withdrawing from public life. The secession of a party from the House of Commons can {175} hardly ever be anything but a mistake. We are speaking now, of course, of a secession more serious and prolonged than that which concerns a particular stage of some measure. There have been occasions when the party in Opposition, after having fought their best against some obnoxious measure in all its former stages, and finding that further struggle would be unavailing, consider that they can make their protest more effectively, and draw public attention more directly to the nature of the controversy, by withdrawing in a body from the House of Commons, and leaving the Government alone with their responsibility. Such a course as this has been taken more than once in our own days. It can do no practical harm to the public interest, and it may do some service as a political demonstration. But a genuine secession, a prolonged secession, must, in the nature of things, do harm. It is wrong in principle; for a man is elected to the House of Commons in order that he may represent his constituents and maintain their interests there. To do that is his plain duty and business, which is not to be put away for the sake of indulging in any petulant or romantic impulse to withdraw from an assembly because one cannot have one's way there. No matter how small the minority on one side of the question, we have seen over and over again what work of political education may be done by a resolute few who will not cease to put forward their arguments and to fight for their cause.

In the case with which we are now dealing Wyndham and his friends only gratified Walpole by their unwise course of action. They enabled him to get through some of the work of the session smoothly and easily. A division hardly ever was known, and of some debates on really important questions there is positively no record. There was, for instance, a motion made in the House of Commons on March 30th for leave to bring in a Bill "to repeal so much of an Act passed in the 25th of King Charles the Second, entitled An Act for preventing {176} Dangers which may happen from Popish Recusants, as obligeth all persons who are admitted to any office, civil or military, to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper within a time limited by the said Act; and for explaining and amending so much of the said Act as relates to the declaration against trans-substantiation." This proposal was supported by some of Walpole's friends; and, of course, Walpole himself was in favor of its principle. But he was not disposed in the least to trouble his master or himself about the repeal of Test Acts, either in the interest of the Roman Catholics or the Non-conformists, and he opposed the motion. There was a long debate, but the record says that "the particulars of it not having been made public, we can give no further account of it, but that many of the members being retired from Parliament, as before mentioned, and most of those concerned in the Administration being against it, the question passed in the negative, 188 noes to 89 yeas."

The Government were also enabled to pass without any resistance in the House of Commons a very ignoble and shabby little treaty with the King of Denmark, by which England undertook to pay to Denmark seventy thousand pounds a year for three years on condition that Denmark should furnish to King George a body of troops, six thousand men in all, these troops to be ready at any time when the King of England should call for them, and he being bound to pay a certain sum "by way of levy-money" for each soldier. This was not really an English measure at all. It had nothing to do with the interests of England, or of George as Sovereign of England. It was merely an arrangement between the King of Denmark and the Elector of Hanover, and was the settlement or composition of a miserable quarrel about a castle and a scrap of ground which George had bought from the Duchy of Holstein, and which Denmark claimed as her own. The dispute led to a military scuffle, in which the Danes got the worst of

it, and it might have led to a war but that the timely treaty and the promised annual {177} payment brought the King of Denmark round to George's views. The treaty met with some opposition, or at all events some remonstrance, in the House of Lords. Carteret, however, gave it his support, and declared that he thought the treaty a wise and a just measure. Carteret was always in favor of the Hanoverian policy of King George.

[Sidenote: 1739—Walpole has it his own way]

So far, therefore, Walpole had things his own way. He was very glad to be rid of the Opposition for the time. He might well have addressed them in words like those which a modern American humorist says were called out with enthusiasm to him when he was taking leave of his friends and about to sail for Europe: "Don't hurry back—stay away forever if you like."

But war was to come all the same. Walpole was not strong enough to prevent that. The incessant attacks made in both Houses of Parliament had inflamed the people of Spain into a passion as great as that which in England was driving Walpole before it. The Spanish Government would not pay the amount arranged for in the convention. They put forward as their justification the fact, or alleged fact, that the South Sea Company had failed to discharge its obligations to Spain. The British squadron had been sent to the Mediterranean, and the Spaniards declared that this was a threat and an insult to the King of Spain. The claim to the right of search was asserted more loudly and vehemently than ever. Near to the close of the session there was a passionate debate in the House of Lords on the whole subject. The Opposition insisted that the honor of England would not admit of further delay, and that the sword must be unsheathed at once. The Duke of Newcastle could only appeal to the House on the part of the Government not to pass a resolution calling upon the King to declare war, but to leave it to the King to choose his own opportunity. Newcastle feebly pleaded that to pass a resolution would be to give untimely warning to England's enemies, and reminded the House that England was likely to have to {178} encounter an enemy stronger and more formidable than Spain. Lord Hardwicke and Lord Scarborough could only urge on the House the prudence and propriety of leaving the time and manner of action in the hands of the Ministry, in the full assurance that the ministers would do all that the nation desired. In other words, the ministers were already pledged to war. The session was brought to an end on June 14th, and on October 19th England declared war against Spain. The proclamation was greeted with the wildest outburst of popular enthusiasm; an enthusiasm which at the time seemed to run through all orders and classes. Joy-bells rang out their inspiring chimes from every church. Exulting crowds shouted in a stentorian chorus of delight. Cities flamed with illuminations at night. The Prince of Wales and some of the leaders of the Opposition took part in the public demonstration. The Prince stopped at the door of a tavern in Fleet Street, as if he were another Prince Hal carousing with his mates, and called for a goblet of wine, which he drank to the toast of coming victory. The bitter words of Walpole have indeed been often quoted, but they cannot be omitted here: "They may ring their bells now; before long they will be wringing their hands." Walpole was thinking, no doubt, of the Family Compact, and of "the King over the Water."

Parliament met in November, 1739, and the seceders were all in their places again. They had been growing heartily sick of secession and inactivity, and they insisted on regarding the declaration of war against Spain as a justification of their return to parliamentary life. Pulteney made himself their spokesman in the debate on the Address. "Our step," he said, meaning their secession, "is so fully justified by the declaration of war, so universally approved, that any further vindication of it would be superfluous." They seceded when they felt that their opposition was ineffectual, and that their presence was only made use of to give the appearance of a fair debate to that which had already been ratified. "The {179} state of affairs is now changed; the measures of the ministers are altered; and the same regard for the honor and welfare of their country that determined these gentlemen to withdraw has now brought them hither once more, to give their advice and assistance in those measures which they then pointed out as the only means of asserting and retrieving them." Walpole's reply was a little ungracious. It was, in effect, that he thought the country could have done very well without the services of the honorable members; that they never would have been missed; and that the nation was generally wide-awake to the fact that the many useful and popular measures passed towards the close of the last session owed their passing to the happy absence from Parliament of Pulteney and his friends. One might well excuse Walpole if he became sometimes a little impatient of the attitudinizing and the vaporing of the Patriots.

[Sidenote: 1739-1740—Death of Wyndham]

One of the Patriots was not long to trouble Walpole. On July 17, 1740, Sir William Wyndham died. Wyndham was a man of honor and a man of intellect. We have already in this history described his abilities and his character, his political purity, his personal consistency. He had always been in poor health; his incessant parliamentary work certainly could not have tended to improve his physical condition; and he was but fifty-three years old when he died. Had he lived yet a little longer he must

have taken high office in a new administration, and he might have proved himself a statesman as well as a party leader and a parliamentary orator. Perhaps, on the whole, it is better for his fame that he should have been spared the test. It proved too much for Carteret. We may give Bolingbroke credit for sincerity when he poured out, in letter after letter, his lament for Wyndham's death. There is something, however, characteristic of the age and the man in Bolingbroke's instant assumption that Walpole must regard the death as a fine stroke of good-luck for himself. "What a star has our Minister," Bolingbroke wrote to a friend—"Wyndham dead!" It seems strange {180} that Bolingbroke should not even then have been able to see that the star of the great minister was about to set. The death of Wyndham brought Walpole no profit; gave him no security. But Wyndham's premature end withdrew a picturesque and a chivalric figure from the life of the House of Commons. He was one of the few, the very few, really unselfish and high-minded men who then occupied a prominent position in Parliament. He was not fighting for his own hand. He was not a mere partisan. He had enough of the statesman in him to be able to accept established facts, and not to argue with the inexorable. He was not a scholar like Carteret, or an orator like Bolingbroke; he was not an ascetic; but he had stainless political integrity, and was a true friend to his friends.

[Sidenote: 1740—Walpole's fatal mistake]

Walpole committed the great error of his life when he consented to accept the war policy which his enemies had proclaimed, and which he had so long resisted. Even if we consider his conduct not as a question of principle, but only as one of mere expediency, it must still be condemned. No statesman is likely to be able to conduct a great war whose heart is all the time filled only with a longing for peace. Walpole was perhaps less likely than any other statesman to make a war minister. He could not throw his heart into the work. He went to it because he was driven to it. It was simply a choice between declaring war and resigning office, and he merely preferred to declare war. This is not the temper, these are not the conditions, for carrying out a policy of war. But, as a question of principle, Walpole's conduct admits of no defence. His plain duty was to refuse to administer a policy of which he did not approve, and to leave the responsibility of the war to those who did approve of it. It is said that he tendered his resignation to the King; that the King implored Walpole to stand by him—not to desert him in that hour of need—and that Walpole at last consented to remain in office. This may possibly be true; some such form may have been gone through. But it does not alter the historical judgment about Walpole's {181} action. Walpole ought not to have gone through any forms at such a time. He hated the war policy; he knew that he was not a war minister; he ought to have refused to administer such a policy, and have stood by his refusal. It is said that, in his conversation with the King, Walpole pointed out that to the minister would be attributed every disaster that might occur during a war, his opposition to which would always be considered a crime. But would there be anything very unfair or unreasonable in that? When a statesman who has fought hard against a war policy suddenly yields to it, and consents to put it into action, would it be unreasonable, if disaster should occur, that his enemies should say, "This comes of trying to conduct a war in which you have no heart or spirit?" Burke passes severe censure even on Walpole's manner of carrying on his opposition to the war party. "Walpole," says Burke, "never manfully put forward the strength of his cause; he temporized; he managed; and, adopting very nearly the sentiments of his adversaries, he opposed their inferences. This, for a political commander, is the choice of a weak post. His adversaries had the best of the argument as he handled it; not as the reason and justice of his cause enabled him to manage it." Then Burke adds this emphatic sentence: "I say this after having seen, and with some care examined, the original documents concerning certain important transactions of those times; they perfectly satisfied me of the extreme injustice of that war, and of the falsehood of the colors which, to his own ruin, and guided by a mistaken policy, he suffered to be daubed over that measure." To his own ruin? Yes, truly. The consequence of Walpole's surrender was to himself and his political career fatal—irretrievable. His wrong-doing brought its heavy punishment along with it. He has yet to struggle for a short while against fate and his own fault; he has still to receive a few successive humiliations before the great and final fall. But the day of his destiny is over. For all real work his career may be said to have closed on the day when he consented to remain in {182} office and become the instrument of his enemies. With that day he passed out of the real world and life of politics, and became as a shadow among shadows.

We need not trouble ourselves much about the war with Spain. On neither side of the struggle was anything done which calls for grave historical notice. Every little naval success one of our admirals accomplished in the American seas, as they were then called, was glorified as if it had been an anticipated Trafalgar; and our admirals accomplished blunders and failures as well as petty victories. The quarrel very soon became swallowed up in the great war which broke out on the death of Charles the Sixth of Spain, and the occupation of Silesia by Frederick of Prussia. England lent a helping hand in the great war, but its tale does not belong to English history. Two predictions of Walpole's were very quickly realized. France almost immediately took part with Spain, in accordance with the terms of the Family Compact. In 1740 an organization was got up in Scotland by a number of Jacobite noblemen and other gentlemen, pledging themselves to stake fortune and life on the Stuart cause whenever its

standard, supported by foreign auxiliaries, should be raised in Great Britain. This was the shadow cast before by the coming events of "forty-five"—events which Walpole was not destined to see.

[Sidenote: 1743—George at Dettingen]

One link of personal interest connects England with the war. George sent a body of British and Hanoverian troops into the field to support Maria Theresa of Hungary. The troops were under the command of Lord Stair, the veteran soldier and diplomatist, whose brilliant career has been already described in this history. George himself joined Lord Stair and fought at the battle of Dettingen, where the French were completely defeated; one of the few creditable events of the war, so far as English arms were concerned. George behaved with great courage and spirit. If the poor, stupid, puffy, plucky little man did but know what a strange, picturesque, memorable figure he was as he stood up against the enemy at that battle of Dettingen! {183} The last king of England who ever appeared with his army in the battle-field! There, as he gets down off his unruly horse, determined to trust to his own stout legs —because, as he says, they will not run away—there is the last successor of the Williams, and the Edwards, and the Henrys; the last successor of the Conquerer, and Edward the First, and the Black Prince, and Henry the Fourth, and Henry of Agincourt, and William of Nassau; the last English king who faces a foe in battle. With him went out, in this country, the last tradition of the old and original duty and right of royalty—the duty and the right to march with the national army in war. A king in older days owed his kingship to his capacity for the brave squares of war. In other countries the tradition lingers still. A continental sovereign, even if he have not really the generalship to lead an army, must appear on the field of battle, and at least seem to lead it, and he must take his share of danger with the rest. But in England the very idea has died out, never in all probability to come back to life again. If one were to follow some of the examples set us in classical imaginings, we might fancy the darkening clouds on the west, where the sun has sunk over the battlefield, to be the phantom shapes of the great English kings who led their people and their armies in the wars. Unkingly, indeed unheroic, little of kin with them they might well have thought that panting George; and yet they might have looked on him with interest as the last of their proud race.

We have been anticipating a little; let us anticipate a little more and say what came of the war, so far as the claims originally made by England, or rather by the Patriots, were concerned. When peace was arranged, nearly ten years after, the *asiento* was renewed for four years, and not one word was said in the treaty about Spain renouncing the right of search. The great clamor of the Patriots had been that Spain must be made to proclaim publicly her renunciation of the right of search; and when a treaty of settlement came to be drawn up not a {184} sentence was inserted about the right of search, and no English statesman troubled his head about the matter. The words of Burke, taken out of one of his writings from which a quotation has already been made, form the most fitting epitaph on the war as it first broke, out—the war of Jenkins's ear. "Some years after it was my fortune," says Burke, "to converse with many of the principal actors against that minister (Walpole), and with those who principally excited that clamor. None of them—no, not one—did in the least defend the measure or attempt to justify their conduct. They condemned it as freely as they would have done in commenting upon any proceeding in history in which they were totally unconcerned." Let it not be forgotten, however, that, while this is a condemnation of the Patriots, it is no less a condemnation of Walpole. The policy which none of them could afterwards defend, which he himself had always condemned and reprobated, he nevertheless undertook to carry out rather than submit to be driven from office. Schiller in one of his dramas mourns over the man who stakes reputation, health, and all upon success—and no success in the end. It was to be thus with Walpole.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

"AND WHEN HE FALLS——"

[Sidenote: 1741—Motions against Walpole]

Walpole soon found that his enemies were no less bitter against him, no less resolute to harass and worry him, now that he had stooped to be their instrument and do their work. Every unsuccessful movement in the war was made the occasion of a motion for papers, a motion for an inquiry, a vote of want of confidence, or some other direct or indirect attack upon the Prime-minister. In the House of Lords, Lord Carteret was especially unsparing, and was brilliantly supported by Lord Chesterfield. In the House of Commons, Samuel Sandys, a clever and respectable country gentleman from Worcestershire, made himself quite a sort of renown by his motions against Walpole. On Friday, February 13, 1741, a motion was made in each of the Houses of Parliament calling on the King "to

remove the Right Honorable Sir Robert Walpole, Knight of the most noble Order of the Garter, First Commissioner for executing the office of Treasurer of the Exchequer, Chancellor and Under-Treasurer of the Exchequer, and one of his Majesty's most honorable Privy Council, from his Majesty's presence and councils forever." In the House of Lords the motion was made by Lord Carteret; in the House of Commons by Mr. Sandys, who was nicknamed "the motion-maker." The motion was lost by a large majority in the House of Lords; and in the House of Commons there were only 106 for it, while there were 290 against it. This was a victory; but it did not deceive Walpole. There would soon be a new Parliament, and Walpole knew very well that the country was already growing sick of the unmeaning war, and that he was held {186} responsible alike for the war policy which he had so long opposed, and the many little disasters of the war with which he had nothing to do. In Walpole's utter emergency he actually authorized a friend to apply for him to James Stuart at Rome, in the hope of inducing James to obtain for him the support of some of the Jacobites at the coming elections. What he could possibly have thought he could promise James in return for the solicited support it is hard, indeed, to imagine; for no one can question the sincerity of Walpole's attachment to the reigning House. Perhaps if James had consented to go into the negotiations Walpole might have made some pledges about the English Catholics. Nothing came of it, however. James did not seem to take to the suggestion, and Walpole was left to do the best he could without any helping hand from Rome. Lord Stanhope thinks it not unlikely that King George was fully aware of this curious attempt to get James Stuart to bring his influence to bear on the side of Walpole. The elections were fought out with unusual vehemence of partisanship, even for those days, and the air was thick with caricatures of Walpole and lampoons on his policy and his personal character. When the election storm was over, it was found that the Ministry had distinctly lost ground. In Scotland and in parts of the west of England the loss was most manifest. Walpole now was as well convinced as any of his enemies could be that the fall was near. He must have felt like some desperate duellist, who, having fought his fiercest and his best, is conscious at last that his strength is gone; that he is growing fainter and fainter from loss of blood; and conscious, too, that his antagonist already perceives this and exults in the knowledge, and is already seeking out with greedy eye for the best place in which to give the final touch of the rapier's point.

The new Parliament met on December 1, 1741, and re-elected Mr. Onslow as Speaker. The speech from the throne was almost entirely taken up with somewhat cheerless references to the war with Spain, and the debate on {187} the address was naturally made the occasion for new attacks on the policy of the Government. "Certainly, my Lords," said Chesterfield, "it is not to be hoped that we should regain what we have lost but by measures different from those which have reduced us to our present state, and by the assistance of other counsellors than those who have sunk us into the contempt and exposed us to the ravages of every nation throughout the world." This was the string that had been harped upon in all the pamphlets and letters of the Patriots during the progress of the war. Walpole had done it all; Walpole had delayed the war to gratify France; he had prevented the war from being carried on vigorously in order to assist France; he had obtained a majority in Parliament by the most outrageous and systematic corruption; he was an enemy of his country, and so forth. All these charges and allegations were merely founded on Walpole's public policy. They simply came to this, that a certain course of action taken by Walpole, with the approval of Parliament, was declared by Walpole to have been taken from patriotic motives and for the good of England, and was declared by his enemies to have been taken from unpatriotic motives and in the interest of France. It was of no avail for Walpole to point out that everything he had done thus far had been done with the approval of the House of Commons. The answer was ready: "Exactly; and there is another of your crimes: you bribed and corrupted every former House of Commons."

[Sidenote: 1742—Pulteney's attempt to refer]

On January 21, 1742, Pulteney brought forward a motion to refer all the papers concerning the war, which had just been laid on the table, to a select committee of the House, in order that the committee should examine the papers, and report to the House concerning them. This was simply a motion for a committee of inquiry into the manner in which ministers were carrying on the war. The House was the fullest that had been known for many years. Pulteney had 250 votes with him; Walpole had only 253—a majority of three. Some of the efforts made {188} on both sides to bring up the numbers on this occasion remind one of Hogarth's picture of the "Polling Day," where the paralytic, the maimed, the deaf, and the dying are carried up to record their vote. Men so feeble from sickness that they could not stand were brought down to the House wrapped up like mummies, and lifted through the division. Walpole seems to have surpassed himself in the speech which he made in his own defence. At least such is the impression we get from the declaration of some of those who heard it, Pulteney himself among the rest. Pulteney always sat near to Walpole on the Treasury bench; Pulteney, of course, not admitting that he had in any way changed his political principles since Walpole and he were friends and colleagues. Pulteney offered to Walpole his warm congratulations on his speech, and added, "Well, nobody can do what you can." Pulteney might afford to be gracious. The victory of three was a substantial defeat. It was the prologue to a defeat which was to be formal as well as substantial. The

Patriots were elated. The fruit of their long labors was about to come at last.

All this was telling hard upon Walpole's health. We get melancholy accounts of the cruel work which his troubles were making with that frame which once might have seemed to be of iron. The robust animal spirits which could hardly be kept down in former days had now changed into a mournful and even a moping temperament. His son, Horace Walpole, gives a very touching picture of him in these decaying years. "He who was asleep as soon as his head touched the pillow—for I have frequently known him snore ere they had drawn his curtains—now never sleeps above an hour without waking; and he who at dinner always forgot he was minister, and was more gay and thoughtless than all the company, now sits without speaking, and with his eyes fixed for an hour together." Many of his friends implored him to give up the hopeless and thankless task. Walpole still clung to office; still tried new stratagems; planned new combinations; racked {189} his brain for new devices. He actually succeeded in inducing the King to have an offer made to the Prince of Wales of an addition of fifty thousand pounds a year to his income, provided that Frederick would desist from opposition to the measures of the Government. The answer was what every one—every one, surely, but Walpole, must have expected. The prince professed any amount of duty to his father, but as regards Walpole he was implacable. He would listen to no terms of compromise while the great enemy of himself and of his party remained in office.

[Sidenote: 1742—"The thanes fly from me!"]

The Duke of Newcastle had notoriously turned traitor to Walpole. Lord Wilmington, whose "evaporation" as Sir Spencer Compton marked Walpole's first great success under George the Second, was approached by some of Walpole's enemies, and besought to employ his influence with the King to get Walpole dismissed. It is said that even Lord Hervey now began to hold aloof from him. It was only a mere question of time and the hour. Walpole's enemies were already going about proclaiming their determination not to be satisfied with merely turning him out of office; he must be impeached and brought to condign punishment. Walpole's friends—those of them who were left—made this another reason for imploring him to resign. They pleaded that by a timely resignation he might at least save himself from the peril of an impeachment. Walpole showed a determination which had much that was pitiable and something that was heroic about it. He would not fly—bear-like, he would fight the course.

The final course soon came. The battle was on a petition from the defeated candidates for Chippenham, who claimed the seats on the ground of an undue election and return. Election petitions were then heard and decided by the House of Commons itself, and not by a committee of the House, as in more recent days. The decision of the House was always simply a question of party; and no one had ever insisted more strongly than Walpole himself that it must be a question of party. The Government desired the Chippenham petition to succeed. On some disputed {190} point the Opposition prevailed over the Government by a majority of one. It is always said that Walpole then at once made up his mind to resign; and that the knowledge of his intention put such heart into those who were falling away from him as to bring about the marked increase which was presently to take place in the majority against him. We are inclined to think that he even still hesitated, and that his hesitation caused the increase in the hostile majority. He must go—he has to go—people said; and the sooner we make this clear to him the better. Anyhow, the end was near. The Chippenham election was carried against him by a majority of sixteen—241 votes against 225. A note at the bottom of the page of the Parliamentary Debates for that day says: "The Chippenham election being thus carried in favor of the sitting members, it was reported that Sir Robert Walpole publicly declared he would never enter the House of Commons more." This was on February 2, 1742. Next day the Lord Chancellor signified the pleasure of the King that both Houses of Parliament should adjourn until the eighteenth of the month. Everybody knew what had happened. The long administration of twenty years was over; the great minister had fallen, never to lift his head again. The Parliamentary record thus tells us what had happened: "The same evening the Right Honorable Sir Robert Walpole resigned his place of First Commissioner of the Treasury and Chancellor and Under-Treasurer of the Exchequer, which he had held ever since April 4, 1721, in the former of which he succeeded the Earl of Sunderland, and in the latter Mr. Aislabie."

That, however, was not the deepest depth of the fall. The same record announces that "three days afterwards his Majesty was pleased to create him Earl of Orford, Viscount Walpole, and Baron of Houghton." "Posterity," says Macaulay, "has obstinately refused to degrade Francis Bacon into Viscount St. Albans." Posterity has in like manner obstinately refused to degrade Robert Walpole into the Earl of Orford. He will be known {191} as Robert Walpole so long as English history itself is known.

[Sidenote: 1742—The new Administration]

Walpole, then, was on the ground—down in the dust—never to rise again. Surely it would seem the close of his career as a Prime-minister must be the opening of that of his rival and conqueror. Any one now—supposing there could be some one entirely ignorant of what did really happen—would assume,

as a matter of course, that Pulteney would at once become Prime-minister and proceed to form an administration. This was naturally in Pulteney's power. But Pulteney suddenly remembered having said long ago that he would accept no office, and he declared that he would positively hold to his word. At a moment of excitement, it would seem, and stung by some imputation of self-seeking, Pulteney had adopted the high Roman fashion, and announced that he would prove his political disinterestedness by refusing to accept any office in any administration. The King consulted Walpole during all these arrangements, and Walpole strongly recommended him to offer the position of Prime-minister to Lord Wilmington. Time had come round indeed—this was the Sir Spencer Compton for whom King George at his accession had endeavored to thrust away Walpole, but whom Walpole had quietly thrust away. He was an utterly incapable man. Walpole probably thought that it would ruin the new administration in the end if it were to have such a man as Compton, now Lord Wilmington, at its head. Lord Wilmington accepted the position. Lord Carteret had desired the post for himself, but Pulteney would not hear of it. The office of Secretary of State—of the Secretary of State who had to do with foreign affairs—was the proper place, he insisted, for a man like Carteret. The secretaries then divided their functions into a Northern department and a Southern department. The Northern department was concerned with the charge of Russia, Prussia, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Poland, and Saxony; the Southern department looked after France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Switzerland, Turkey, {192} and the States along the southern shore of the Mediterranean. So Carteret became one secretary, and the grotesque Duke of Newcastle remained the other. The duke's brother, Henry Pelham, remained in his place as Paymaster, Lord Hardwicke retained his office as Lord Chancellor, and Mr. Samuel Sandys, who had moved the resolution calling for Walpole's dismissal, took Walpole's place as Chancellor of the Exchequer. There seems some humor in the appointment of such a man as successor to Robert Walpole.

[Sidenote: 1742—The combined four]

Then Pulteney's career as a great Prime-minister is not beginning? No—not beginning—never to begin. By one of the strangest strokes of fate the events which closed the career of Walpole closed the career of Pulteney too. Yet but a few months, and Pulteney ceases as completely as Walpole has done to move the world of politics. The battle is over and the rival leaders have both fallen. One monument might suffice for both, like that for Wolfe and Montcalm at Quebec. Pulteney was offered a peerage, an offer which he had contemptuously rejected twice before. He accepted it now. It will probably never be fully and certainly known why he committed this act of political suicide. Walpole appears to have been under the impression that it was by his cleverness the King had been prevailed upon to drive Pulteney into the House of Lords. Walpole, indeed, very probably made the suggestion to the King, and no doubt had as his sole motive in making it the desire to consign Pulteney to obscurity; but it does not seem as if his was the influence which accomplished the object. Lord Carteret and the Duke of Newcastle both hated Pulteney, who as cordially hated them. Newcastle was jealous of Pulteney because of his immense influence in the House of Commons, which he fancied must be in some sort of way an injury to himself and his brother; and, stupid as he was, he felt certain that if Pulteney consented to enter the House of Lords the popularity and the influence would vanish. Carteret's was a more reasonable if not a more noble jealousy. He was determined to come {193} to the head of affairs himself—to be Prime-minister in fact if not in name; and he feared that he never could be this so long as Pulteney remained, what some one had called him, the Tribune of the Commons. Once get him into the House of Lords and there was an end to the tribune and the tribune's career. As for himself, Carteret, he would then be able to domineer over both Houses by his commanding knowledge of foreign affairs, now of such paramount importance to the State, and by his entire sympathy with the views of the King. The King hated Pulteney—had never forgiven him his championship of the Prince of Wales—and would be delighted to see him reduced to nothingness by a removal to the House of Lords. But if it was plain alike to such men of intellect as Walpole and Carteret, and to such stupid men as King George and the Duke of Newcastle, that removal to the House of Lords would mean political extinction for Pulteney, how is it that no thought of the kind seems to have entered into the mind of Pulteney himself? Even as a question of the purest patriotism, such a man as Pulteney, believing his own policy to be for the public good, ought to have sternly refused to allow himself to be forced into any position in which his public influence must be diminished or destroyed. As regarded his personal interests and his fame, Pulteney must have had every motive to induce him to remain in the House where his eloquence and his debating power had won him such a place. It is impossible to believe that he could have been allured just then, at the height of his position and his renown, by the bauble of a coronet which he had twice before refused—contemptuously refused. Probably the real explanation may be found in the fact that Pulteney, for all his fighting capacity, was not a strong but a weak man. Probably he was, like Goethe's Egmont, brilliant in battle but weak in council. All unknown to himself, four men, each man possessed of an overmastering power of will, were combined against him for a single purpose—to drive him into the House of Lords—that is, to drive him out of the {194} House of Commons. His enemies prevailed against him. As Lord Chesterfield put it, he "shrank into insignificance and an earldom." We are far from saying that a man might not be a good minister and a statesman of influence after having

accepted a seat in the House of Lords. But it was beginning to be found, even in Pulteney's time, that the place of a great Prime-minister is in the House of Commons; and certainly the place of a tribune of the people can hardly be the House of Lords. Pulteney was born for the House of Commons: transplantation meant death to a genius like his. When the news of his "promotion" became public, a wild outcry of anger and despair broke from his population of admirers. He was denounced as having committed an act of perfidy and of treason. He had accepted a peerage, it was said, as a bribe to induce him to consent to let Robert Walpole go unimpeached and unpunished. The outcry was quite unjust, but was certainly not unnatural. People wanted some sort of explanation of an act which no ordinary reasoning could possibly explain. Pulteney's conduct bitterly disappointed the Tory section of the Opposition as well as the populace of his former adorers out-of-doors. Bolingbroke, who had hurried back to England, found that all his dreams of a genuine Coalition Ministry, representing fairly both wings of the forces of Opposition, had vanished with the morning light. Except for the removal of Walpole, hardly any change was made in the composition of recent English administration. The Tories and Jacobites, who had helped so signally in the fight, were left out of the spoils of victory. Bolingbroke found that he was no nearer to power than he would have been if Walpole still were at the head of affairs. Nothing was changed for him; only a stupid man had taken the place of a statesman. Pulteney appears to have acted very generously towards his immediate political colleagues, and to have remained in the House of Commons, where he now had all the power, until he had got for them the places they desired. Then he was gazetted as Earl of Bath; and we {195} have all heard the famous anecdote of the first meeting in the House of Lords between the man who had been Robert Walpole and the man who had been William Pulteney, and the greeting given by the new Lord Orford to the new Lord Bath; "Here we are, my lord, the two most insignificant fellows in England." With these words the first great leader of Opposition in the House of Commons, the man who may almost be said to have created the parliamentary part of leader of Opposition, may be allowed to pass out of the political history of his time.

Many attempts were made to impeach Walpole, as we still must call him. Secret committees of inquiry were moved for. Horace Walpole, *the* Horace Walpole, Sir Robert's youngest son, made his first speech in the House of Commons, in defence of his father, against such a motion. A secret committee was at last obtained, but it did not succeed, although composed almost altogether of Walpole's enemies, in bringing out anything very startling against him. Public money had been spent, no doubt, here and there very freely for purely partisan work. There could be no question that some of it had gone in political corruption. But everybody had already felt sure that this had been done by all ministries and parties. The report of the committee, when it came at last, was received with cold indifference or unconcealed contempt.

[Sidenote: 1742-1745—Death of Walpole]

Walpole still kept a good deal in touch with the King. George consulted him privately, and indeed with much mystery about the consultations. The King sometimes sent a trusty messenger, who met Walpole at midnight at the house of a friend. It was indeed a summons from George which hastened the great statesman's death. The King wished to consult Walpole, and Walpole hurried up from Houghton for the purpose. The journey greatly increased a malady from which he suffered, and he was compelled by pain to have recourse to heavy doses of opium, which kept him insensible for the greater part of every day during more than six weeks. When the stupefying effect of the opium was not on him—that is, for {196} some two or three hours each day—he talked with all that former vivacity which of late years seemed to have deserted him. He knew that the end was coming, and he bore the knowledge with characteristic courage. On March 18, 1745, he died at his London house in Arlington Street. Life could have had of late but little charm for him. He had always lived for public affairs and for power. He had none of the gifts of seclusion. Except for his love of pictures, he had no in-door intellectual resources. He could not bury himself in literature as Carteret could do; or, at a later day, Charles James Fox; or, at a later day still, Mr. Gladstone. Walpole's life really came to an end the day he left the House of Commons; the rest was silence. He was only in his sixty-ninth year when he died. It was fitting that he should lose his life in striving to assist and counsel the sovereign whose family he more than any other man or set of men had seated firmly on the throne of England. His faults were many; his personal virtues perhaps but few. One great and consummate public virtue he certainly had: he was devoted to the interests of his country. In the building of Nelson's ships it was said that the oak of Houghton Woods excelled all other timber. Oak from the same woods was used to make musket-stocks for Wellington's soldiers in the long war against Napoleon. Walpole's own fibre was something like that of the oaks which grew on his domain. His policy on two of the most eventful occasions of his life has been amply justified by history. He was right in the principles of his Excise Bill; he was right in opposing the war policy of the Patriots. The very men who had leagued against him in both these instances acknowledged afterwards that he was right and that they were wrong. It was in an evil moment for himself that he yielded to the policy of the Patriots, and tried to carry on a war in which he had no sympathy, and from which he had no hope. He was a great statesman; almost, but not quite, a great

man.

[Sidenote: 1744—Death of Pope]

Not very long before Walpole's death a star of all but {197} the first magnitude had set in the firmament of English literature. Alexander Pope died on May 30, 1744, at his house in Twickenham, where "Thames' translucent wave shines a broad mirror," to use his own famous words. He died quietly; death was indeed a relief to him from pain which he had borne with a patience hardly to be expected from one of so fitful a temper. Pope's life had been all a struggle against ill-health and premature decrepitude. He was deformed; he was dwarfish; he was miserably weak from his very boyhood; a rude breath of air made him shrink and wither; the very breezes of summer had peril in them for his singularly delicate constitution and ever-quivering nerves. He was but fifty-six years old when death set him free. Life had been for him a splendid success indeed, but the success had been qualified by much bitterness and pain. He was sensitive to the quick; he formed strong friendships, fierce and passionate enmities; and the friendships themselves turned only too often into enmities. Unsparing with the satire of his pen, he made enemies everywhere. He professed to be indifferent to the world's praise or censure, but he was nevertheless morbidly anxious to know what people said of him. He was as egotistic as Rousseau or Byron; but he had none of Byron's manly public spirit, and none of Rousseau's exalted love of humanity. Pope's place in English poetry may be taken now as settled. He stands high and stands firmly in the second class: that is, in the class just below Shakespeare and Milton and a very few others. He has been extravagantly censured and extravagantly praised. Byron at one time maintained that he was the greatest English poet, and many vehement arguments have been used to prove that he was not a poet at all. One English critic believed he had settled the question forever when he described Pope as "a musical rocking-horse." Again and again the world has been told that Pope has disappeared from the sky of literature, but the world looks up, and behold, there is the star shining just as before. Many scholars and many poets have scoffed at his translations of {198} Homer, but generations of English school-boys have learned to love the "Iliad" because of the way in which Pope has told them the story; and as to the telling of a story, the judgment of a school-boy sometimes counts for more than the judgment of a sage. Pope's "Iliad" and "Odyssey" are certainly not for those who can read the great originals in their own tongue, or even for those who have a taste strong and refined enough to enjoy the severe fidelity of a prose translation. But Pope has brought the story of Achilles' wrath, and Helen's pathetic beauty, and Hector's fall, and Priam's agony home to the hearts of millions for whom they would otherwise have no life. We have no intention of writing a critical dissertation on the poetry of Pope. One fact may, however, be remarked and recorded concerning it. After Shakespeare, and possibly Milton, no English poet is so much quoted from as Pope. Lines and phrases of his have passed into the common vernacular of our daily life. We talk Pope, many of us, as the too-often cited *bourgeois gentilhomme* of Molière talked prose, without knowing it. There is hardly a line of "The Rape of the Lock" or "The Dunciad" that has not thus passed into the habitual conversation of our lives. This of itself would not prove that Pope was a great poet, but it is a striking testimony to his extraordinary popularity, and his style is not that which of itself would seem calculated to insure popularity. The very smoothness and perfection of his verse make it seem to many ears nothing better than a melodious monotony. Pope had not imagination enough to be a great poet of the highest order—the order of creative power. He had marvellous fancy, which sometimes, as in "The Rape of the Lock" and in passages of the fierce "Dunciad," rose to something like imagination. Every good Christian ought no doubt to lament that a man of such noble gifts should have had also such a terrible gift of hate. But even a very good Christian could hardly help admitting that it must have been all for the best, seeing that only for that passion of hatred we should never have had "The Dunciad."

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

"THE FORTY-FIVE."

[Sidenote: 1720—Birth of "Prince Charlie"]

Thirty years had come and gone since England had been alarmed, irritated, or encouraged, according to the temper of its political inhabitants, by a Jacobite rising. The personality of James Stuart, the Old Pretender, was little more than a memory among those clansmen who had rallied round the royal standard at Braemar. In those thirty years James Stuart had lived his melancholy, lonely, evil life of exile, the hanger-on of foreign courts, the half grotesque, half pitiable, sham monarch of a sham court, that was always ready to be moved from place to place, with all its cheaply regal accessaries, like the company and the properties of some band of strolling players. Now there was a new Stuart in the field, a new sham prince, a "Young Pretender." After the disasters of the Fifteen, James Stuart had become

the hero of as romantic a love-story as ever wandering prince experienced. He had fallen in love, in the hot, unreasoning Stuart way, with the beautiful Clementine Sobieski, and the beautiful Clementine had returned the passion of the picturesquely unfortunate prince, and they had carried on their love affairs under conditions of greater difficulty than Romeo and Juliet, and had overcome the difficulties and got married, and in 1720 Clementine had borne to the House of Stuart a son and heir. Every precaution was taken to insure the most public recognition of the existence of the newly born prince. It was determined that none of the perplexity, the uncertainty, the suspicion, which attended upon the birth of James, should be permitted to arise now. There must be no *haro* about warming-pans, no accusations of {200} juggling, no possible doubts as to the right of the new-born babe to be regarded as the son of James Stuart and of Clementine Sobieski. The birth took place in Rome, and cardinals accredited from all the great Powers of Europe were present on the occasion to bear witness to it. The city was alive with such excitement as it had seldom witnessed since the days when pagan Rome became papal Rome. The streets in the vicinity of the house where Clementine Sobieski lay in her pain were choked with the gilt carriages of the proudest Italian nobility; princes of the Church and princes of royal blood thronged the antechambers. Gallant gentlemen who bore some of the stateliest names of England and of Scotland waited on the stair-ways for the tidings that a new prince was given unto their loyalty. Adventurous soldiers of fortune kicked their heels in the court-yard, and thought with moistened eyes of the toasts they would drink to their future king. From the Castle of St. Angelo, where long ago the besieged had hurled upon the besiegers the statues that had proved the taste of a Roman emperor, where Rienzi lay yesterday, and where Cagliostro shall lie to-morrow, thunders of artillery saluted the advent of the new rose of the House of Stuart.

In the years that followed, while the young Prince Charles was growing up to his tragic inheritance, it can hardly be maintained, even by the most devoted adherent of the Stuart line, that James showed himself in the slightest degree worthy of the crown towards which he reached. Indeed, his conduct showed a reckless indifference to the means most likely to attain that crown which it is difficult to account for. When everything depended for the success of his schemes upon the friends he made abroad and the favor he retained at home, he wantonly acted as if his dearest purpose was to alienate the one and to wholly lose the other. His conduct towards his wife, and his persistent and stupid favoritism of the Mar man and woman—especially the woman—drove the injured and indignant Clementine into a convent, and made the great European {201} princes of Spain, Germany, and Rome his adversaries. Spain refused him entrance to the kingdom unaccompanied by his wife; the Pope struck him a heavier blow in diminishing by one-half the income that had hitherto been allowed him from the Papal treasury. But worse than the loss of foreign friends, worse even than the loss of the Sistine subsidy, was the effect which his treatment of his wife produced in the countries which he aspired to rule. His wisest followers wrote to him that he had done more to injure his cause by his conduct to Clementine than by anything else in his ill-advised career. At last even James took alarm; his stubborn nature was forced to yield; the obnoxious favorites were dismissed, and a reconciliation of a kind was effected between the Stuart king and queen. But fidelity was a quality difficult enough for James to practise, and when the Queen died in 1735 it is said that she found death not unwelcome.

[Sidenote: 1734-1735—Charles in his first campaign]

In the mean time the young Prince Charles grew up to early manhood. Princes naturally begin the world at an earlier age than most men, and Charles may be said to have begun the world in 1734, when, as we have seen, at the age of fourteen, he took part in the siege of Gaeta as a general of artillery, and bore himself, according to overwhelming testimony, as became a soldier. Up to this time his education had been pursued with something like regularity; and if at all times he preferred rowing, riding, hunting, and shooting to graver and more secluded pleasures, he was not in this respect peculiar among young men, princes or otherwise. If, too, he never succeeded in overcoming the difficulties which the spelling of the English language presented, and if his handwriting always remained slovenly and illegible, it must be remembered that in that age spelling was not prized as a pre-eminent accomplishment by exalted persons, and that Charles Stuart could spell quite as well as Marlborough. He knew how to sign his name; and it may be remarked that though he has passed into the pages of history and the pages of romance as Charles Edward, he himself never signed his {202} name so, but always simply Charles. He was baptized Charles Edward Louis Philip Casimir, and, like his ancestors before him, he chose his first name as his passport through the world. If he had marched to Finchley, if Culloden had gone otherwise than it did go, if any of the many things that might have happened in his favor had come to pass, he would have been Charles the Third of England.

His education was, from a religious point of view, curiously mixed. He was intrusted to the especial care of Murray, Mrs. Hay's brother, and a Protestant, much to the grief and anger of his mother. But he professed the tenets of the Catholic Church, and satisfied Pope Clement, in an interview when the young prince was only thirteen, that his Catholic education was sound and complete. For the rest, he was a graceful musician, spoke French, Spanish, and Italian as readily as English, and was skilled in

the use of arms. As far as the cultivation of mind or body vent, he might fairly be considered to hold his own with any of the preceding sovereigns and princes of the House of Stuart. When in 1737 he set out on a kind of triumphal tour of the great Italian towns, he was received everywhere with enthusiasm, and everywhere made the most favorable impression. So successful was this performance, so popular did the prince make himself, and so warmly was he received, that the Hanoverian Government took upon itself to be seriously offended, ordered the Venetian ambassador Businiello to leave London, and conveyed to the Republic of Genoa its grave disapproval of the Republic's conduct. The zealous energy of Mr. Fane, our envoy at Florence, saved that duchy from a like rebuke. Mr. Fane insisted so strongly that no kind of State reception was to be accorded to the travelling prince that the Grand Duke gave way. Yet the Grand Duke's curiosity to meet Charles Stuart was so great that he had prevailed upon Fane to allow him to meet the stranger on the footing of a private individual; but sudden death carried off the poor Grand Duke before the interview could take place.

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[Sidenote: 1734-1737—The omen accepted]

When Charles Stuart, as a general of fourteen, was helping to besiege Gaeta, he had been hailed by Don Carlos as Prince of Wales, and as Prince of Wales he was invariably addressed by those outside the little circle of the sham court who wished to please the exiled princes or show their sympathy with their cause. The young Charles soon began to weary of being Prince of Wales only in name. It seems certain that from a very early age his thoughts were turned to England and the English succession. There is a legend that at Naples once the young prince's hat blew into the sea, and when some of his companions wished to put forth in a boat and fetch it back he dissuaded them, saying that it was not worth while, as he would have to go shortly to England to fetch his hat. The legend is in all likelihood true in so far as it represents the bent of the young man's mind. He was sufficiently intelligent to perceive that masquerading through Italian cities and the reception of pseudo-royal honors from petty princes were but a poor counterfeit of the honors that were his, as he deemed, by right divine. So it was only natural that with waxing manhood his eyes and his thoughts turned more often to that England which he had never seen, but which, as he had been so often and often assured, was only waiting for a fit opportunity to cast off the Hanoverian yoke and welcome any lineal descendant of the Charleses and the Jameses of beloved memory.

More than one expedition had been planned, and one expedition had decisively failed, when in the summer of 1745 Prince Charles sailed from Belleisle on board the *Boutelle*, with the *Elizabeth* as a companion vessel. He started on this expedition on his own responsibility and at his own risk. Murray of Broughton, and other influential Scottish friends, had told him, again and again, that it would be absolutely useless to come to Scotland without a substantial and well-armed following of at least six thousand troops, and a substantial sum of money in his pocket. To ask so much was to ask the impossible. {204} At one time the young prince had believed that Louis the Fifteenth would find him the men and lend him the money, but in 1745 any such hope had entirely left him. He knew now that Louis the Fifteenth would do nothing for him; he knew that if he was ever to regain his birthright he must win it with his own wits. It is impossible not to admire the desperate courage of the young aspirant setting out thus lightly to conquer a kingdom with only a handful of men at his back and hardly a handful of money in his pocket. Judging, too, by the course of events and the near approach which the prince made to success, it is impossible not to accord him considerable praise for that instinct which makes the great soldier and the great statesman, the instinct which counsels when to dare. The very ships in which he was sailing he had got hold of, not only without the connivance, but without the knowledge, of the French Government. They were obtained through two English residents at Nantes. On August 2d the *Boutelle* anchored off the Hebrides alone. The *Elizabeth* had fallen in with an English vessel, the *Lion*, and had been so severely handled that she was obliged to return to Brest to refit, carrying with her all the arms and ammunition on which Prince Charles had relied for the furtherance of his expedition. So here was the claimant to the crown, friendless and alone, trying his best to derive encouragement from the augury which Tullibardine grandiloquently discerned in the flight of a royal eagle around the vessel. Eagle or no eagle, augury or no augury, the opening of the campaign was gloomy in the extreme. The first clansmen whose aid the prince solicited were indifferent, reluctant, and obstinate in their indifference and reluctance. Macdonald of Boisdale first, and Clanranald of that ilk afterwards, assured the prince, with little ceremony, that without aid, and substantial aid, from a foreign Power, in the shape of arms and fighting-men, no clansman would bare claymore in his behalf. But the eloquence and the determination of the young prince won over Clanranald and the Macdonalds of {205} Kinloch-Moidart; Charles disembarked and took up his headquarters at Borrodaile farm in Inverness-shire. A kind of legendary fame attaches to the little handful of men who formed his immediate following. [Sidenote: 1745—The Seven Men of Moidart] The Seven Men of Moidart are as familiar in Scottish Jacobite legend as the Seven Champions of Christendom are to childhood. Tullibardine; Sir Thomas Sheridan, the prince's tutor; Francis Strickland, an English gentleman; Sir

John Macdonald, an officer in the service of Spain; Kelly, a non-juring clergyman; Buchanan, the messenger, and Aeneas Macdonald, the banker, made up the mystic tale. Among these Seven Men of Moidart, Aeneas Macdonald plays the traitor's part that Ganelon plays in the legends of Charlemagne. He seems to have been actuated, from the moment that the prince landed on the Scottish shore, by the one desire to bring his own head safely out of the scrape, and to attain that end he seems to have been ready to do pretty well anything. When he was finally taken prisoner he saved himself by the readiness and completeness with which he gave his evidence. No more of him. There were, happily for the honor of the adherents of the House of Stuart, few such followers in the Forty-five.

The position of the young prince was peculiar. His engaging manners had won over many of the chiefs; his presence had set on fire that old Stuart madness which a touch can often kindle in wild Highland hearts; his determination to be a Scotchman among Scotchmen, a determination which set him the desperate task of trying to master the Gaelic speech, insured his hold upon the affections of the rude chivalry whom his presence and his name had already charmed. But some of the greatest clans absolutely refused to come in. Macdonald of Sleat, and Macleod of Macleod, would have none of the "pretended Prince of Wales" and his "madmen."

Though these chieftains were appealed to again and again, they were resolute in their refusal to embark in the Stuart cause. They pledged themselves to the House of Hanover, they accepted commissions in the royal army; {206} the cause of Charles Stuart must sink or swim without them. With them or without them, however, Charles was going on. The number of clans that had come in was quite sufficient to fill him with hope; the little brush at Spean's Bridge between two companies of the Scots Royal, under Captain Scott, and the clansmen of Keppoch and Lochiel, had given the victory to the rebels. The Stuarts had drawn first blood successfully, and the superstitions saw in the circumstance yet another augury of success. The time was now ripe for action. All over the north of Scotland the Proclamation of Prince Charles was scattered. This proclamation called upon all persons to recognize their rightful sovereign in the young prince's person as regent for his father, invited all soldiers of King George, by offers of increased rank or increased pay, to desert to the Stuart colors, promised a free pardon and full religious liberty to all who should renounce their allegiance to the usurper, and threatened all who, after due warning, remained obdurate with grave pains and penalties. Everywhere through the west this document had been seen and studied, had inflamed men's minds, and set men's pulses dancing to old Jacobite tunes. In Edinburgh, in Berwick, in Carlisle, copies had been seen by astonished adherents of the House of Stuart, who were delighted or dismayed, according to their temperaments. Scotland was pretty well aware of the presence of the young prince by the time that it was resolved to unfurl the flag.

[Sidenote: 1745—An auspicious opening]

The royal standard of crimson and white was raised by Tullibardine on August 19th in the vale of Glenfinnan, in the presence of Keppoch and Lochiel, Macdonald of Glencoe, Stuart of Appin, and Stuart of Ardshiel, and their clansmen. No such inauspicious omen occurred as that which shook the nerves of the superstitious when James Stuart gave his banner to the winds of Braemar a generation earlier. Indeed, an invading prince could hardly wish for happier conditions under which to begin his enterprise. Not only was he surrounded by faithful clansmen, prepared to do or die for the heir to the House of Stuart, but the {207} stately ceremony of setting up the royal standard was witnessed by English prisoners, the servants and the soldiers of King George, the first-fruits of the hoped-for triumph over the House of Hanover. "Go, sir," Charles is reported to have said to one of his prisoners, Captain Swetenham, "go and tell your general that Charles Stuart is coming to give him battle." That clement of the theatrical which has always hung about the Stuart cause, and which has in so large a degree given it its abiding charm, was here amply present. For a royal adventurer setting out on a crusade for a kingdom the opening chapter of the enterprise was undoubtedly auspicious reading.

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CHAPTER XXXV.

THE MARCH SOUTH.

[Sidenote: 1715-1716—The chances in his favor]

The condition of Scotland at the time of the prince's landing was such as in a great degree to favor a hostile invasion. Even educated Englishmen then knew much less about Scotland, or at least the Highlands of Scotland, than their descendants do to-day of Central Africa. People—the few daringly adventurous people—who ventured to travel in the Highlands were looked upon by their admiring

friends as the rivals of Bruce or Mandoville, and they wrote books about their travels as they would have done if they had travelled in Thibet; and very curious reading those books are now after the lapse of something over a century. The whole of the Highlands were wild, unfrequented, and desolate, under the rude jurisdiction of the heads of the great Highland houses, whose clansmen, as savage and as desperately courageous as Sioux or Pawnees, offered their lords an almost idolatrous devotion. Nominally the clans were under the authority of the English Crown and the Scottish law; actually they recognized no rule but the rule of their chiefs, who wielded a power as despotic as that of any feudal seigneur in the days of the old régime. The heroes of the Ossianic poems—the Finns and Dermats whom colonization had transplanted from Irish to Scottish legend—were not more unfettered or more antiquely chivalrous than the clansmen who boasted of their descent from them. Scotland was more unlike England in the middle of the last century than Russia is unlike Sicily to day.

There were several things in Charles's favor. To begin with, the disarmament of the clans, which had been insisted {209} upon after "the Fifteen," had been carried out in such a fashion as was now to prove most serviceable to the Young Pretender; for the only clans that had been really disarmed were the Mackays, Campbells, and Sutherlands, who were loyal enough to the House of Hanover, and gave up their weapons very readily to prove their loyalty. But the other clans—the clans that ever cherished the lingering hope of a Stuart restoration—were not in reality disarmed at all. They made a great show of surrendering to General Wade weapons that were utterly worthless as weapons of war, honey-combed, crippled old guns and swords and axes; but the good guns and swords and axes, the serviceable weapons, these were all carefully stowed away in fitting places of concealment, ready for the hour when they might be wanted again. That hour had now come. So that, thanks to the Disarming Act of 1716, the Government found its chief allies in the north of Scotland practically defenceless and unarmed, while the clans that kept pouring in to rally around the standard of the young invader were as well armed as any of those who had fought so stoutly at Sheriffmuir. Yet another advantage on the adventurer's side was due to the tardiness with which news travelled in those times. Charles had been for many days in the Highlands, preparing the way for the rising, before rumors of anything like an accredited kind came to the Court of St. James. The Highlands and islands of Scotland were then so far removed from the great world of government that it had taken something like half a year on one occasion before the dwellers in the stormy Shetlands had learned that their sovereign, King William the Third, was dead and buried; and in the years that had elapsed since William of Orange passed away the means of communication between London and the far north were little if at all better. Charles had actually raised his standard and rallied clan after clan around him before the Government in London could seriously believe that a Stuart in arms was in the island. There were other and minor elements of success, too, to be noted in the great game that the Stuart prince {210} was playing. The Ministry was unpopular: the head of that Ministry was the imbecile Duke of Newcastle, perhaps the most contemptible statesman who has ever made high office ridiculous. The King was away in Hanover. England was in the toils of a foreign war, and her prestige had lately suffered heavily from the sudden defeat at Fontenoy. There were very few troops in England to employ against an invasion, and the Scottish commander-in-chief, Sir John Cope, whose name lives in unenviable fame in the burden of many a Jacobite ballad, was as incapable a well-meaning general as ever was called upon to face a great unexpected emergency. It must be admitted that all these were excellent points in the prince's favor, and that they counted for much in the conduct of the campaign.

From the first, young Charles Stuart might well have come to regard himself as the favorite of fortune. The history of the Forty-five divides itself into two distinct parts: the first a triumphant record of brilliant victories, and the picture of a young prince marching through conquest after conquest to a crown; the second part prefaced by a disastrous resolution, leading to overwhelming defeat, and ending in ignominious flight and the extinction of the last Stuart hope. From the moment when the Stuart standard fluttered its folds of white and crimson on the Highland wind it seemed as if the Stuart luck had turned. Charles might well conceive himself happy. Upon his sword sat laurel victory. Smooth success was strewn before his feet. The blundering and bewildered Cope actually allowed Charles and his army to get past him. Cope was neither a coward nor a traitor, but he was a terrible blunderer, and while the English general was marching upon Inverness Charles was triumphantly entering Perth. From Perth the young prince, with hopeless, helpless Cope still in his rear, marched on Edinburgh.

[Sidenote: 1745—The advance of the clans]

The condition of Edinburgh was peculiar: although a large proportion of its inhabitants, especially those who were well-to-do, were stanch supporters of the House of Hanover, there were plenty of Jacobites in the place, and {211} it only needed the favor of a few victories to bring into open day a great deal of latent Jacobitism that was for the moment prudently kept under by its possessors. The Lord Provost himself was more than suspected of being a Jacobite at heart. The city was miserably defended. Such walls as it possessed were more ornamental than useful, and in any case were sadly in want of repair. All the military force it could muster to meet the advance of the clans was the small but

fairly efficient body of men who formed the Town Guard; the Train Bands, some thousand strong, who knew no more than so many spinsters of the division of a battle; the small and undisciplined Edinburgh regiment; and a scratch collection of volunteers hurriedly raked together from among the humbler citizens of the town, and about as useful as so many puppets to oppose to the daring and the ferocity of the clans. Edinburgh opinion had changed very rapidly with regard to that same daring and ferocity. When the first rumors of the prince's advance were bruited abroad, the adherents of the House of Hanover in Edinburgh made very merry over the gang of ragged rascals, hen-roost robbers, and drunken rogues upon whom the Pretender relied in his effort to "enjoy his ain again." But as the clans came nearer and nearer, as the air grew thicker with flying rumors of the successes that attended upon the prince's progress, as the capacity of the town seemed weaker for holding out, and as the prospect of reinforcements seemed to grow fainter and fainter, the opinion of Hanoverian Edinburgh concerning the clans changed mightily. Had the Highlanders been a race of giants, endowed with more than mortal prowess, and invulnerable as Achilles, they could hardly have struck more terror into the hearts of loyal and respectable Edinburgh citizens.

Still there were some stout hearts in Edinburgh who did their best to keep up the courage of the rest and to keep out the enemy. Andrew Fletcher and Duncan Forbes were of the number. M'Laurin, the mathematician, turned his genius to the bettering of the fortifications. Old {212} Dr. Stevenson, bedridden but heroic, kept guard in his armchair for many days at the Netherbow Gate. The great question was would Cope come in time? Cope was at Aberdeen. Cope had put his army upon transports. Cope might be here to-morrow, the day after to-morrow, to-day, who knows? But in the mean time the King's Dragoons, whom Cope had left behind him when he first started out to meet the Pretender, had steadily and persistently retreated before the Highland advance. They had now halted—they can hardly be said to have made a stand—at Corstorphine, some three miles from Edinburgh, and here it was resolved to do something to stay the tide of invasion. Hamilton's Dragoons were at Leith. These were ordered to join the King's Dragoons at Corstorphine, and to collect as many Edinburgh volunteers as they could on their way. Inside the walls of Edinburgh it was easy enough to collect volunteers, and quite a little army of them marched out with drums beating and colors flying at the heels of Hamilton's Dragoons. But on the way to the town gates the temper of the volunteers changed, and by the time that the town gates were reached and passed the volunteers had dwindled to so pitiable a handful that they were dismissed, and Hamilton's Dragoons proceeded alone to join Cope's King's Dragoons at Corstorphine.

But the united force of dragoons did not stay long at Corstorphine. The fame of the fierce Highlanders had unhinged their valor, and it only needed a few of the prince's supporters to ride within pistol-shot and discharge their pieces at the Royal troops to set them into as disgraceful a panic as ever animated frightened men. The dragoons, ludicrously unmanned, turned tail and rode for their lives, rode without drawing bridle and without staying spur till they came to Leith, paused there for a little, and then, on some vague hint that the Highlanders were on their track, they were in the saddle again and riding for their lives once more. Dismayed Edinburgh citizens saw them sweep along what now is Prince's Street, a pitiable sight; saw them, bloody with spurring, fiery hot with {213} haste, ride on—on into the darkness. On and on the desperate cowards scampered, sheep-like in their shameful fear, till they reached Dunbar and behind its gates allowed themselves to breathe more freely, and to congratulate themselves upon the dangers they had escaped. Such is the story of the famous, or infamous, "Cantor of Coltbrigg," one of the most disgraceful records of the abject collapse of regular troops before the terror of an almost unseen foe that are to found in history. Well might loyal Edinburgh despair if such were its best defenders. The town was all tumult, the Loyalists were in utter gloom, the secretly exulting Jacobites were urging the impossibility of resistance, and the necessity for yielding while yielding was still an open question.

[Sidenote: 1745—Edinburgh parleys]

On the top of all this came a summons from the prince demanding the immediate surrender of the city. A deputation was at once despatched to Gray's Mill, where the prince had halted, to confer with him. Scarcely had the deputation gone when rumor spread abroad in the town that Cope, Cope the long expected, the almost given up, was actually close at hand, and the weathercock emotions of the town veered to a new quarter. Perhaps they might be able to hold out after all. The great thing was to gain time. The deputation came back to say that Prince Charles must have a distinct answer to his summons before two o'clock in the morning, and it was now ten at night. Still spurred by the hope of gaining time, and allowing Cope to arrive, if, indeed, he were arriving, the deputation was sent back again. But the prince refused to see them, and the deputation returned to the city, and all unconsciously decided the fate of Edinburgh. Lochiel and Murray, with some five hundred Camerons, had crept close to the walls under the cover of the darkness of the night, in the hope of finding some means of surprising the city. Hidden close by the Netherbow Port, they saw the coach which had carried the deputation home drive up and demand admittance. The admittance, which was readily granted to the coach, could not

well be refused to the {214}

Highlanders, who leaped up the moment the doors were opened, overpowered the guard, and entered the town. Edinburgh awoke in the morning to find its doubts at an end. It was in the hands of the Highlanders.

Jacobite Edinburgh went wild with delight over its hero prince. He entered Holyrood with the white rose in his bonnet and the star of Saint Andrew on his breast, through enthusiastic crowds that fought eagerly for a nearer sight of his face or the privilege of touching his hand. The young prince looked his best; the hereditary melancholy which cast its shadow over the faces of all the Stuarts was for the moment dissipated. Flushed with easy triumph, popular applause, and growing hope, the young prince entered the palace of his ancestors like a king returning to his own. James Hepburn of Keith, with drawn sword, led the way; beautiful women distributed white cockades to enraptured Jacobites; the stateliest chivalry of Scotland made obeisance to its rightful prince. The intoxicating day ended with a great ball at the palace, at which the youthful grace of Charles Stuart confirmed the charm that already belonged to the adventurous and victorious Prince of Wales. September 17, 1745, was one of the brightest days in the Stuart calendar.

The conquest of Edinburgh was but the prelude to greater glories. Cope was rallying his forces at Dunbar—was marching to the relief of Edinburgh. Charles, acting on the advice of his generals, marched out to meet him. Cope's capacity for blundering was by no means exhausted. He affected a contemptuous disregard for his foes, delayed attack in defiance of the advice of his wisest generals, was taken unawares in the gray morning of the 21st at Prestonpans, and routed completely and ignominiously in five minutes.

[Sidenote: 1745—Bore the news of his own defeat]

Seldom has it been the misfortune of an English general to experience so thorough, so humiliating a defeat. The wild charges of the Highland men broke up the ordered ranks of the English troops in hopeless confusion; almost all the infantry was cut to pieces, and the cavalry {215} escaped only by desperate flight. Cope's dragoons were accustomed to flight by this time; the clatter of their horses' hoofs as they cantered from Coltbrigg was still in their cars, and as they once again tore in shameless flight up the Edinburgh High Street they might well have reflected upon the rapidity with which such experiences repeated themselves. General Preston of the Castle refused to admit the cowards within his gate, so there was nothing for them but to turn their horses' heads again and spur off into the west country. As for Cope, he managed to collect some ragged remnant of his ruined army about him, and to make off with all speed to Berwick, where he was received by Lord Mark Ker with the scornful assurance that he was the first commander-in-chief in Europe who had brought with him the news of his own defeat.

The victorious army were unable, if they had wished, to follow up the flight, owing to their lack of cavalry. They remained on the field to ascertain their own losses and to count their spoil. The losses were trifling, the gain was great. Only thirty Highlanders were killed, only seventy wounded, in that astonishing battle. As for the gain, not merely were the honorable trophies of victory, the colors and the standards, left in the Highland hands, but the artillery and the supplies, with some two thousand pounds in money, offered the prince's troops a solid reward for their daring. It is to the credit of Charles that after the fury of attack was over he insisted upon the wounded enemy and the prisoners being treated with all humanity. An incident is told of him which brings into relief the better qualities of his race. One of his officers, pointing to the ghastly field, all strewn with dead bodies, with severed limbs and mutilated trunks, said to the prince, "Sir, behold your enemies at your feet." The prince sighed. "They are my father's subjects," he said, sadly, as he turned away.

The battle of Prestonpans is enshrined in Jacobite memories as the battle of Gladsmuir, for a reason very characteristic of the Stuarts and their followers. Some {216} queer old book of prophecies had foretold, more than a century earlier, that there should be a battle at Gladsmuir. The battle of Prestonpans was not fought really on Gladsmuir at all: Gladsmuir lies a good mile away from the scene of Charles's easy triumph and Cope's inglorious rout; but for enthusiastic Jacobite purposes it was near enough to seem an absolute fulfilment of the venerable prediction. A battle was to be fought at Gladsmuir; go to, then—a battle was fought at Gladsmuir, or near Gladsmuir, which is very much the same thing: anyhow, not very far away from Gladsmuir. And so the Jacobites were contented, and more than ever convinced of the advantages of prophecy in the affairs of practical politics.

Some busy days were passed in Edinburgh in which councils of war alternated with semi-regal entertainments, and in which the prince employed his ready command of language in paying graceful compliments to the pretty women who wore the white cockade, and in issuing proclamations in which the Union was dissolved and religious liberty promised. One thing the young prince could not be induced to do: none of the arguments of his councillors could prevail upon him to threaten severe

measures against the prisoners fallen into his hands. It was urged that unless the Government treated their prisoners as prisoners of war and not as rebels, the prince would be well advised to retaliate by equal harshness to the captives in his power. But on this point the prince was obdurate. He would not take in cold blood the lives that he had saved in the heat of action. Then and all through this meteoric campaign the conduct of Charles was characterized by a sincere humanity, which stands out in startling contrast with the cruelties practised later by his enemy, the "butcher Cumberland." It prevented the prince from gaining an important military advantage by the reduction of Edinburgh Castle. He attempted the reduction of the castle by cutting off its supplies, but when the general in command threatened to open fire upon the town in consequence, Charles immediately rescinded the order, although {217} his officers urged that the destruction of a few houses, and even the loss of a few lives, was in a military sense of scant importance in comparison with the capture of so valuable a stronghold as Edinburgh Castle. The prince held firmly to his resolve, and Edinburgh Castle remained to the end in the hands of the Royal troops. Charles displayed a great objection, too, to any plundering or lawless behavior on the part of his wild Highland army. We learn from the Bland Burges papers that when the house of Lord Somerville, who was opposed to the prince, was molested by a party of Highlanders, the prince, on hearing of it, sent an apology to Lord Somerville, and an officer's guard to protect him from further annoyance.

[Sidenote: 1745—In the heart of England]

But time was running on, and it was necessary to take action again. England was waking up to a sense of its peril. Armies were gathering. The King had come back from Hanover, the troops were almost all recalled from Flanders. It was time to make a fresh stroke. Charles resolved upon the bold course of striking south at once for England, and early in November he marched. He set off on the famous march south. In this undertaking, as before, the same extraordinary good-fortune attended upon the Stuart arms. His little army of less than six thousand men reached Carlisle, reached Manchester, without opposition. On December 4th he was at Derby, only one hundred and twenty-seven miles from London. Once again, by skill or by good-fortune, he had contrived to slip past the English general sent out to bar his way. Cumberland with his forces was at Stafford, nine miles farther from the capital than the young prince, who was now only six days from the city, with all his hopes and his ambitions ahead of him, and behind him the hostile army of the general he had eluded. Never perhaps in the history of warfare did an invader come so near the goal of his success and throw it so wantonly away; for that is what Charles did. With all that he had come for apparently within his reach, he did not reach out to take it; the crown of England was in the hollow of his hand, and he opened his hand {218} and let the prize fall from it. It is difficult to understand now what curious madness prompted the prince's advisers to counsel him as they did, or the prince to act upon their counsels. He was in the heart of England; he was hard by the capital, which he would have to reach if he was ever to mount the throne of his fathers. He had a devoted army with him—it would seem as if he had only to advance and to win—and yet, with a fatuity which makes the student of history gasp, he actually resolved to retreat, and did retreat. It is true, and must not be forgotten, that Charles did not know, and could not know, all his advantages; that many of the most urgent arguments for advance could not present themselves to his mind. He could not know the panic in which Hanoverian London was cast; he could not know that desperate thoughts of joining the Stuart cause were crossing the craven mind of the Duke of Newcastle; he could not know that the frightened bourgeoisie were making a maddened rush upon the Bank of England; he could not know that the King of England had stored all his most precious possessions on board of yachts that waited for him at the Tower stairs, ready at a moment's notice to carry him off again into the decent obscurity of the Electorship of Hanover. He could not know the exultation of the metropolitan Jacobites; he could not know the perturbation of the Hanoverian side; he could not know the curious apathy with which a large proportion of the people regarded the whole proceeding, people who were as willing to accept one king as another, and who would have witnessed with absolute unconcern George the Elector scuttling away from the Tower stairs at one end of the town, while Charles the Prince entered it from another. These factors in his favor he did not know, could not know, could hardly be expected even to guess.

[Sidenote: 1745—How London felt]

That the news of the rising produced very varied emotions in London we may learn from the letters of Horace Walpole. In one of September 6th to Sir Horace Mann, mixed with much important information concerning "My Lady O" and the Walpole promise of marriage "to young {219} Churchill," comes news of the Pretender's march past General Cope, and very gloomy forebodings for the result. Another letter, which talks of the Pretender as "the Boy," and of King George "as the *person* most concerned," presents the Hanoverian Elector as making very little of the invasion, answering all the alarms of his ministers by "Pho, don't talk to me of that stuff." Walpole's spirits has risen within the week, for he is much amused by the story that "every now and then a Scotchman comes and pulls the Boy by the sleeve, 'Preence, here is another mon taken,' then, with all the dignity in the world, the Boy hopes nobody was

killed in the action."

London at large vacillated very much as Horace Walpole vacillated. While on the one side Jacobites began to come out of the corners in which they had long lain concealed, and to air their opinions in the free sunlight, rejoicing over the coming downfall of the House of Hanover, authority, on the other hand, busied itself in ordering all known Papists to leave the capital, in calling out the Train Bands, in frequently and foolishly shutting the gates of Temple Bar, and, which was better and wiser, in making use of Mr. Henry Fielding to write stinging satires upon the Pretender and his party, and hint at the sufferings which were likely to fall upon London when the Highlanders imported their national complaint into the capital. A statesman is reported to have said that this disagreeable jest about the itch was worth two regiments of horse to the cause of the Government.

Yet, if London was excited, there was a tranquil London as well. Mr. George Augustus Sala, in that brilliant novel of his, "The Adventures of Captain Dangerous," draws a vivid picture of this London with the true artist touch. "Although from day to day we people in London knew not whether before the sunset the dreaded pibrochs of the Highland clans might not be heard at Charing Cross—although, for aught men knew, another month, nay, another week, might see King George the Second toppled from his throne—yet to those who lived quiet {220} lives and kept civil tongues in their heads all things went on pretty much as usual. . . . That there was consternation at St. James's, with the King meditating flight, and the royal family in tears and swooning, did not save the little school-boy a whipping if he knew not his lesson after morning call. . . . So, while all the public were talking about the rebellion, all the world went nevertheless to the playhouses, where they played loyal pieces, and sang 'God save great George, our King' every night; as also to balls, ridottos, clubs, masquerades, drums, routs, concerts, and Pharaoh parties. They read novels and flirted their fans, and powdered and patched themselves, and distended their petticoats with hoops, just as though there were no such persons in the world as the Duke of Cumberland and Charles Edward Stuart." Fiction, that most faithful and excellent handmaiden of history, here shows us no doubt very vividly what London as a whole thought and did in face of the rebellion. It is an old story. Were not the Romans in the theatre when the Goths came over the hills? Did not the theatres flourish, never better, during the Reign of Terror?

Nor was London the only place which displayed a well-nigh stoical indifference to the progress of the rebellion. If Oxford had a good deal of Jacobitism hidden decorously away in its ancient colleges, if there were a good many disloyal toasts drunk in the seclusion of scholastic rooms, there was apparently only a feeling of curious indifference at the rival university, for Gray has put it on record that at Cambridge "they had no more sense of danger than if it were the battle of Cannae," and we learn that some grave Dons actually were thinking of driving to Camford to see the Scotch troops march past, "as though they were volunteers out for a sham-fight, or a circus procession."

{221}

CHAPTER XXXVI.

CULLODEN—AND AFTER.

[Sidenote: 1745—Had he but known]

The prince did not know, and could not know, the exact condition of things in the capital; did not know, and could not know, how many elements of that condition told in his favor, and how many against. But what he could know, what he did know, was this: He was at the head of a devoted army, which if it was small had hitherto found its career marked by triumph after triumph. He was in the heart of England, and had already found that the Stuart war-cry was powerful enough to rally many an English gentleman to his standard. Sir Walter Williams Wynn, whom men called the King of Wales, was on his way to join the Prince of Wales. So was Lord Barrymore, the member of Parliament; so was many another gallant gentleman of name, of position, of wealth. Manchester had given him the heroic, the ill-fated James Dawson, and a regiment three hundred strong. Lord James Drummond had landed at Montrose with men, money, and supplies. The young chevalier's troops were eager to advance; they were flushed with victories; their hearts were high; they believed, in the wild Gaelic way, in the sanctity of their cause; they believed that the Lord of Hosts was on their side, and such a belief strengthened their hands. For a prince seeking his principality it would seem that there was one course, and one only, to pursue. He might go on and take it, and win the great game he played for; or, failing that, he might die as became a royal gentleman, sword in hand and fighting for his rights. The might-have-beens are indeed for the most part a vanity, but we can fairly venture to assert now that {222} if Charles had pushed on he would, for the time at least, have restored the throne of England to the House of Stuart. We may doubt, and doubt with reason, whether any fortuitous succession of events

could have confirmed the Stuart hold upon the English crown; but we can scarcely doubt that the hold would have been for the time established, that the Old Pretender would have been King James the Third, and that George the Elector would have been posting, bag and baggage, to the rococo shades of Herrenhausen. But, as we have said, failing that, if Charles had fallen in battle at the head of his defeated army, how much better that end would have been than the miserable career which was yet to lend no tragic dignity to the prolonged, pitiful, pitiable life of the Young Pretender!

However, for good or evil, the insane decision was made. Charles's council of war were persistent in their arguments for retreat. There were thirty thousand men in the field against them. If they were defeated they would be cut to pieces, and the prince, if he escaped slaughter, would escape it only to die as a rebel on Tower Hill, whereas, if they were once back in Scotland, they would find new friends, new adherents, and even if they failed to win the English crown, might at least count, with reasonable security, upon converting Scotland, as of old, into a separate kingdom, with a Stuart king on its throne. By arguments such as these the prince's officers caused him to throw away the one chance he had of gaining all that he had crossed the seas to gain.

It is only fair to remember that the young prince himself was from first to last in favor of the braver course of boldly advancing upon London. When his too prudent counsellors told him that if he advanced he would be in Newgate in a fortnight, he still persisted in pressing his own advice. Perhaps he thought that where the stake was so great, and the chance of success not too forbidding, failure might as well end in Newgate as in the purlieus of petty foreign courts. But, with the exception of his {223} Irish officers, he had nobody on his side. The Duke of Perth and Sir John Gordon had a little plan of their own. They thought that a march into Wales would be a good middle course to adopt, but their suggestion found no backers. All Charles's other counsellors were to a man in favor of retreat, and Charles, after at first threatening to regard as traitors all who urged such a course, at last gave way. Sullenly he issued the disastrous order to retreat, sullenly he rode in the rear of that retreat, assuming the bearing of a man who is no longer responsible for failure. The cheery good-humor, the bright heroism, which had so far characterized him, he had now completely lost, and he rode, a dejected, a despairing, almost a doomed man, among his disheartened followers. It is dreary reading the record of that retreat; yet it is starred by some bright episodes. At Clifton there was an engagement where the retreating Highlanders held their own, and inflicted a distinct defeat upon Cumberland's army. Again, when they were once more upon Scottish soil, they struck a damaging blow at Hawley's army at Falkirk. But the end came at last on the day when the dwindling, discouraged, retreating army tried its strength with Cumberland at Culloden.

[Sidenote: 1746—The Duke of Cumberland]

Men of the Cumberland type are to be found in all ages, and in the history of all nations. Men in whom the beast is barely under the formal restraint of ordered society, men in whom a savage sensuality is accompanied by a savage cruelty, men who take a hideous physical delight in bloodshed, darken the pages of all chronicles. It would be unjust to the memory of Cumberland to say that in his own peculiar line he had many, if any, superiors; that many men are more worthy of the fame which he won. To be remembered with a just loathing as a man by whom brutalities of all kinds were displayed, almost to the point of madness, is not the kind of memory most men desire; it is probably not the kind of memory that even Cumberland himself desired to leave behind him. But, if he had cherished the ambition of handing down his name to other times, "linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes," if {224} he had deliberately proposed to force himself upon the attention of posterity as a mere abominable monster, he could hardly have acted with more persistent determination towards such a purpose. In Scotland, for long years after he was dead and dust, the mention of his name was like a curse; and even in England, where the debt due to his courage counted for much, no one has been found to palliate his conduct or to whitewash his infamy. As Butcher Cumberland he was known while he lived; as Butcher Cumberland he will be remembered so long as men remember the "Forty-five" and the horrors after Culloden fight. Some of those horrors no doubt were due to the wild fury of revenge that always follows a wild fear. The invasion of the young Stuart had struck terror; the revenge for that terror was bloodily taken.

[Sidenote: 1746—Culloden]

Everything contributed to make Culloden fatal to the fortunes of the Pretender. The discouragement of some of the clans, the disaffection of others, the wholesale desertions which had thinned the ranks of the rebel army, the prince's sullen distrust of his advisers, the position of the battle-field, the bitter wintry weather, which drove a blinding hail and snow into the eyes of the Highlanders, all these were so many elements of danger that would have seriously handicapped a better-conditioned army than that which Charles Stuart was able to oppose to Cumberland. But the prince's army was not well-conditioned; it was demoralized by retreat, hungry, ragged, dizzy with lack of sleep. Even the terrors of the desperate Highland attack were no longer so terrible to the English troops. Cumberland had taught

his men, in order to counteract the defence which the target offered to the bodies of the Highlanders, to thrust with their bayonets in a slanting direction—not against the man immediately opposite to its point, but at the unguarded right side of the man attacking their comrade on the right.

After enduring for some time the terrible cannonade of the English, the battle began when the Macintoshes charged with all their old desperate valor upon the English. {225} But the English were better prepared than before, and met the onslaught with such a volley as shattered the Highland attack and literally matted the ground with Highland bodies. Then the Royal troops advanced, and drove the rebels in helpless rout before them. The fortunes of the fight might have gone very differently if all the Highlanders had been as true to their cause as those who formed this attacking right wing. "English gold and Scotch traitors," says an old ballad of another fight, "won . . . , but no Englishman." To no English gold can the defeat of Culloden be attributed, but unhappily Scotch treason played its part in the disaster. The Macdonalds had been placed at the left wing of the battle instead of at the right, which they considered to be their proper place. Furious at what they believed to be an insult, they took no part whatever in the fight after they had discharged a single volley, but stood and looked on in sullen apathy while the left wing and centre of the prince's army were being whirled into space by the Royalist advance. The Duke of Perth appealed desperately and in vain to their hearts, reminded them of their old-time valor, and offered, if they would only follow his cry of Claymore, to change his name and be henceforward called Macdonald. In vain Keppoch rushed forward almost alone, and met his death, moaning that the children of his tribe had deserted him. There are few things in history more tragic than the picture of that inert mass of moody Highlanders, frozen into traitors through an insane pride and savage jealousy, witnessing the ruin of their cause and the slaughter of their comrades unmoved, and listening impassively to the entreaties of the gallant Perth and the death-groans of the heroic Keppoch. In a few minutes the battle was over, the rout was complete; the rebel army was in full retreat, with a third of its number lying on the field of battle; the Duke of Cumberland was master of the field, of all the Highland baggage and artillery, of fourteen stands, and more than two thousand muskets. Culloden was fought and won.

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It is not necessary to believe the stories that have been told of Charles Stuart, attributing to him personal cowardice on the fatal day of Culloden. The evidence in favor of such stories is of the slightest; there is nothing in the prince's earlier conduct to justify the accusation, and there is sufficient evidence in favor of the much more likely version that Charles was with difficulty prevented from casting away his life in one desperate charge when the fortune of the day was decided. It is part of a prince's business to be brave, and if Charles Stuart had been lacking in that essential quality of sovereignty he could scarcely have concealed the want until the day of Culloden, or have inspired the clans with the personal enthusiasm which they so readily evinced for him. Nor is it necessary for us to follow out in full the details of the unhappy young man's miserable flight and final escape. Through all those stormy and terrible days, over which poetry and romance have so often and so fondly lingered, the fugitive found that he had still in the season of his misfortune friends as devoted as he had known in the hours of his triumph. His adventures in woman's dress, his escape from the English ship, the touching devotion of Flora Macdonald, the loyalty of Lochiel, the fidelity of Cluny Macpherson—all these things have been immortalized in a thousand tales and ballads, and will be remembered in the North Country so long as tales and ballads continue to charm. At last, at Lochnanuagh, the prince embarked upon a French ship that had been sent for him, and early in the October of 1746 he landed in Brittany.

[Sidenote: 1746—Cumberland's vengeance]

The horrors that followed Culloden suggest more the blood feuds of some savage tribes than the results of civilized warfare. Cumberland, flushed by a victory that was as unexpected as it was easy, was resolved to kill, and not to scotch, the snake of Jacobite insurrection. The flying rebels were hotly pursued—no quarter was given; the wounded on the field of battle were left cold in their wounds for two days, and then mercilessly butchered. There is a story, which might well be true, and {227} which tells that as Cumberland was going over the field of dead and dying he saw a wounded Highlander staring at him. Cumberland immediately turned to the officer next to him, and ordered him to shoot the wounded man. The officer, with an honorable courage and dignity, answered that he would rather resign his commission than obey. The officer of the story was the heroic Wolfe, who was afterwards to become a famous general and die gloriously before Quebec. It may be true; we may hope that it is, as it adds another ornament to the historic decoration of a brave man—but history does not, so far as we are aware, record the answer that Cumberland made to this unexpected display of audacious humanity.

The cruelties of Culloden field were only the preface to the red reign of terror that Cumberland set up in the Highlands. The savage temper of the Royal general found excellent instruments in the savage tempers of his soldiery. Murder, rape, torture, held high carnival; men were hanged or shot on the slightest suspicion or on no suspicion; women were insulted, outraged, killed; even children were not

safe from the blood-lust of Cumberland's murderers.

The pacification of the Highlands was accomplished on much the same methods as were afterwards employed to bring about the pacification of Poland. Perhaps the most dramatically tragic of all the events after the defeat of Charles Stuart are connected with the fate of those of his adherents who were taken prisoners, and who were of too grave an importance to be put to the sword at once or hanged out of hand. Some, unhappily, of the followers of the young prince proved themselves to be unworthy of any cause of any monarch. Aeneas Macdonald, John Murray of Broughton, Lord Elcho, and Macdonald of Barrisdale have left behind them the infamous memory that always adheres to traitors. The revelations which John Murray made to save his own life were the means of sending many a gallant gentleman to Tower Hill.

In the end of July (of 1746) Westminster Hall was {228} brilliant with scarlet hangings, and crowded with an illustrious company, to witness the trial of the three most important of the captured rebels, Lord Kilmarnock, Lord Cromarty, and Lord Balmerino. Walpole, who went to that ceremony with the same amused interest that he took in the first performance of a new play, has left a very living account of the scene: Lord Kilmarnock, tall, slender, refined, faultlessly dressed, looking less than his years, which were a little over forty, and inspiring a most astonishing passion in the inflammable heart of Lady Townshend; Lord Cromarty, of much the same age, but of less gallant bearing, dejected, sullen, and even tearful; Balmerino, the very type and model of a gallant, careless old soldier.

There was no question of the prisoners' guilt; they were tried, were found guilty, were sentenced to death. Two of the prisoners had, however, many powerful friends—Kilmarnock and Cromarty; and the charm of Kilmarnock's presence had raised up for him many more friends, whose influence was exerted with the King. For Balmerino nobody seems to have taken the trouble to plead, and even King George, whose clemency was not conspicuously displayed in his treatment of his prisoners, appears to have expressed some surprise at this, though he did not allow his regret to carry him so far as to extend his pardon to the stout old soldier. The exertions of Lord Cromarty's friends, and especially of Lady Cromarty, saved that prisoner's life. It is said that when the child which Lady Cromarty bore in her body during the terrible period in which she was pleading for her husband's life came into the world, it carried a mark like the stroke of the executioner's axe upon its neck. Kilmarnock and Balmerino died on Tower Hill on August 18, 1746. Both died, as they had lived, like gentlemen and brave soldiers. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that Kilmarnock should on the scaffold have expressed any regret for the part he had played in supporting the Young Pretender against the House of Hanover. He {229} had gone gallantly into the game of insurrection, and he might as well have played it out to the end. At least he was the only one of all the seven-and-seventy rebels who were executed, from James Dawson to Simon Lovat, who made upon the scaffold any retractation of the acts that he had done. It is impossible not to contrast Balmerino's dying words, and to like them better than the apologies of Kilmarnock. Balmerino was no subject of King George; he was his prince's man. "If I had a thousand lives I would give them all for him" were his dying words, and braver dying words were never spoken. It was the old heroic spirit of absolute loyalty to the annointed king which was of necessity dying out; which was to be repeated again half a century later in the hills and the forests of La Vendee. The Stuarts were as bad, as worthless, as kings could well be, but they did possess the royal prerogative of inspiring men with an extraordinary devotion. There was something to be said for the cause which could send a man like Balmerino so gallantly to his death with such a brave piece of soldierly bluster upon his dying lips.

[Sidenote: 1746—Lord Lovat]

A very different man died for the same cause upon the same scaffold a little later. History hardly recalls a baser figure than that of Simon Fraser (Lord Lovat). He is remembered chiefly as the desperate shuffler and paltry traitor who tried to blow hot and cold, to fawn on Hanover with one hand and to beckon the Stuarts with the other. But his whole career was of a piece with its paltry ending. His youth and manhood were characterized by a kind of savage lawlessness, like that of a Calabrian chieftain brigand or the brave of a Sioux band. He was cruel, he was cunning; he was, in his wild Highland way, a voluptuary and a debauchee; he was treacherous and hideously selfish. In his earlier days he had cast his eyes upon a lady, whom, for motives of worldly advantage as well as for her beauty, he had regarded as suitable to make his wife. Neither the young lady nor the young lady's family would listen to the suit of Captain Fraser, as he then {230} was; whereupon Captain Fraser gathered together a select company of scoundrels, carried the young lady off by force, very much as Rob Roy's wild son did with the girl of whom he was enamoured, married her against her will by force, with the aid of a suborned priest, actually, so the story goes, cutting the clothes off her body with his dirk, while his pipers, in obedience to his orders, drowned the poor creature's cries with their music. Now, in the eightieth year of his age, he had come to his grim end. He had broken most of the laws of earth and of heaven; he had ever tried to be in with both sides and to cheat both; he was always ready to betray and lie and cozen; seldom, perhaps, did a more horrible old man meet a more deserved doom; yet he died with a bravery and a composure which were not to be expected. Nothing in his life became

him like to the leaving it. Thanks to the genius of William Hogarth, we all know exactly how Simon Fraser, the bad Lord Lovat, looked in those last days of his life when he lay in prison, his old body weak with many infirmities, and his old spirit still scheming and hoping for the reprieve that did not come. On April 9th he was executed on Tower Hill. His latest words were grotesquely inappropriate to his evil life. With his lying lips he repeated the famous line from Horace, "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori," and with that lie on his lips he knelt before the block and had his head cut off at one stroke. His body was laid in the company of better men, by the side of Balmerino and Kilmarnock, in the Church of St. Peter on the Green.

[Sidenote: 1745—William Hogarth]

The genius of William Hogarth is inseparably associated with the Forty-five by reason of this famous portrait of Simon Lovat, and for yet another reason. In this year (1745) William Hogarth was already exceedingly popular, although he had as yet failed to bask much in the sunshine of royal favor. Those old, early days of poverty and struggle were far behind. The industrious apprentice had married his master's daughter, fifteen years ago by this time, and Sir James Thornhill had forgotten his {231} wrath and forgiven the young painter who was so immeasurably his superior. "The Harlot's Progress," "The Rake's Progress," "Industry and Idleness," and many another plate in the astonishing panorama of mid last century life, had earned for Hogarth a high position in the favor of the day; and when he posted down to St. Albans, where wicked Simon Lovat lay sick, to receive the old traitor's lathered embrace and to make the famous engraving, William Hogarth was a very distinguished person indeed. The portrait of Simon Fraser had a great success. Never did portrait bear more distinctly the impress of fidelity. The unwieldy trunk, the swollen legs, the horrible, cunning, satyr-like face with its queerly lifted eyebrows, its flattened sensual nose, and its enormous mouth, the odd dogmatic gesture with which the index finger of the left hand touches the thumb of the right: all these things William Hogarth immortalized—making Simon Fraser (Lord Lovat) wellnigh as familiar a personality to us as he was to any of the men be betrayed or the women he wronged in the course of his base life. The plate had a prodigious success. The presses were hard at work for many days, and could not print proofs fast enough. "For several weeks," says Mr. Sala, "Hogarth received money at the rate of twelve pounds a day for prints of his etching." It was reduced in size and printed as a watch-paper—watch-papers were vastly fashionable in those days—and in that Liliputian form it sold also in large quantities. The infamy of the subject and the genius of the artist lent a double attraction to the portrait.

But the portrait of Simon Fraser is not the only, is not perhaps even the chief, connection of Hogarth with the Forty-five. Whether Hogarth did or did not do the sketch for the mezzotint engraving called "Lovat's Ghost on Pilgrimage" matters little. He certainly did do the famous picture and famous plate which is known as the "March to Finchley." Every one knows that marvellous and no doubt vividly accurate picture of the progress of the foot guards to Finchley Common on their way to {232} Scotland; the riot, the debauchery, the confusion, the drunkenness of the scene. Those tipsy heroes, staggering along to the tunes of tipsy drummer and tiny fifer, while Doll Tearsheet and Moll Flanders harass them with enforced embraces, played their part no doubt in the horrible cruelties which succeeded Culloden. But, at the same time, these were among the soldiers who did succeed in preventing England from being given over to the Jacobites, or who at least prevented the Stuart Prince from holding Scotland, and setting up the Stuart throne there. It may, therefore, be perhaps pardoned to his majesty King George the Second if he did not quite appreciate the "burlesque," even though that lack of appreciation made Hogarth in a rage dedicate the plate to his majesty of Prussia.

[Sidenote: 1788—"Bonnie Prince Charlie"]

Misfortune followed most of the followers of Prince Charles. Tullibardine died in the Tower a few days before his trial. Charles Ratcliffe, Lord Derwentwater's brother, was executed. Sheridan died of apoplexy in the November of 1746. The Duke of Perth died on shipboard, on his way to France, soon after Culloden. The less conspicuous rebels suffered as severely as the leaders. The executions that took place at York and Carlisle, at Penrith and Brampton, and on Kennington Common, bloodily avenged the blow that had been struck at the House of Hanover. A great number of prisoners who were not executed were shipped off as slaves to the plantations, a fate scarcely less terrible than death; some were pardoned on consideration of their entering the service of the King as sailors; some were pardoned later on; a few, it is said, escaped. The sternest measures were taken to prevent any possibility of a further rising in Scotland. The disarmament of the clans, which had been carried out so imperfectly after the Fifteen, was now rigorously and effectually enforced. The hereditary jurisdiction of the chiefs of clans, which made those chiefs the petty kings of their districts, was abolished, and in their places the ordinary process of law was established, with its sheriffs {233} and sheriffs' substitutes, and its circuits of judges. The national costume, the kilt, was proscribed under the severest penalties, though in the course of time this proscription was gradually relaxed. Every master of every private school north of the Tweed was called upon to swear allegiance to the House of Hanover, and to register his oath. The turbulent spirit and fine fighting qualities of the clans were turned to good

account by the Government, who raised several Highland regiments, and thus succeeded in diverting to their own service all the restless and warlike energy which had hitherto been so troublesome to law and order. It must be admitted that the modern prosperity of Scotland dates in a great degree from the Forty-five. The old conditions of life in the Highlands were conditions under which it was impossible for a country to thrive; and though it is necessary to condemn the manner in which the Government, at all events in the earlier stages, attempted to effect the pacification of Scotland, it is also necessary to admit that Scotland is probably more fortunate to-day than she would have been if victory had been given to the Stuart at Culloden.

Of that Stuart we may as well take leave now. His subsequent career is a most dispiriting study. He hoped against hope for a while that this foreign power or that foreign power would lend him a helping hand to his throne. Expelled from France, he drifted to Italy, and into that pitiable career of dissipation and drunkenness which ended so ingloriously a once bright career. To the unlucky women whom he loved he was astonishingly brutal; he forced Miss Walkenshaw—the lady of whom he became enamoured in Scotland—to leave him by his cruelty; he forced his unhappy wife, the Countess of Albany, to leave him for the same reason. Her love affair with the poet Alfieri is one of the famous love-stories of the world. It seems pretty certain that Charles Stuart actually visited England once, if not more than once, after the Forty-five, and that George the Third was well aware of his presence in London, and, with a contemptuous good {234} nature, took no steps whatever to lay hands upon the rival who was dangerous no longer. At last, on January 31, 1788, or, as some have it, on January 30, the actual anniversary of the execution of Charles the First, Charles Stuart died in Rome, and with him died the last hope of the Stuart restoration in England. Had Charles lived a little longer, he would have seen in the very following year the beginning of that great storm which was to sweep out of existence a monarchical system as absolute as that of the Stuarts had been, and to behead a monarch far less blamable than Charles the First of England. There is something appropriate in this uncompromising devotee and victim of the principle of divine right dying in exile on the very eve of that revolution which was practically to abolish the principle of the divine right of kings forever. Oddly enough, there are still devotees of the House of Stuart, gentlemen and ladies who work up picturesque enthusiasms about the Rebel Rose and the Red Carnation, and who affect to regard a certain foreign princess as the real sovereign of England. But the English people at large need hardly take this graceful Jacobitism very seriously. Jacobitism came to its end with Cardinal Henry dying as the pensioner of George the Third, and with Prince Charles drowning in Cyprus wine the once gallant spirit which, even at the end, could sometimes shake off its degradation, and blaze into a moment's despairing brilliancy, at the thought of the Clans and the Claymores, and the brave days of Forty-five. And so, in the words of the old Saga men, here he drops out of the tale.

[Sidenote: 1745-1889—The Stuart charm]

But it is the curious characteristic of the ill-fated House of Stuart that, through all their misfortunes, through all their degradations, they have contrived to captivate the imagination and bewitch the hearts of many generations. The Stuart influence upon literature has been astonishing. No cause in the world has rallied to its side so many poets, named or nameless, has so profoundly attracted the writers and the readers of romance, has bitten more deeply {235} into popular fancy. Even in our own day, an English poet, Mr. Swinburne, who has not tuned much to thrones fallen or standing, has been inspired by the old Stuart frenzy to write one of the most valuable of all the wealth of ballads that have grown up around the Stuart name. In his "A Jacobite's Exile, 1746," Mr. Swinburne has summed up in lines of the most poignant and passionate pathos all the feeling of a gentleman of the North Country dwelling in exile for his king's sake. The emotion which finds such living voice in the contemporary poetry, in the ballads that men wrote and men sang, while the House of Stuart was still a reality, while there were still picturesque or semi-picturesque personages living in foreign courts and claiming the crown of England, finds no less living voice in the words written by a poet of to-day, though nearly a century has elapsed, since the hopes of the House of Stuart went out forever.

"We'll see nae mair the sea-banks fair,
And the sweet, gray, gleaming sky,
And the lordly strand of Northumberland,
And the goodly towers thereby:
And none shall know, but the winds that blow,
The graves wherein we lie."

What was there, what is there, we may well ask, in that same House of Stuart, in that same Jacobite cause, which still quickens in this latter day a living passion and pathos, which can still inspire a poet of to-day with some of the finest verses he has ever written? It may be some consolation to the lingering adherents of the name, to those who wear oak-apple on May 29th, and who sigh because there is no "king over the water" who can come to "enjoy his own again"—it may be some consolation to them to think that if their cause can no longer stir the swords in men's hands, it can still guide their pens to as

poetic purpose as it did in the years that followed the fatal Forty-five. It may console them too, perhaps, with a more ironical consolation, to know that the greatest enthusiast about {236} all things connected with the House of Stuart, the most eager collector of all Stuart relics, is the very sovereign who is the direct descendant of the Hanoverian electors against whom the clans were hurled at Sheriffmuir and at Culloden, the lady and queen whom it affords a harmless gratification to certain eccentric contemporary Jacobites to allude to as "the Princess Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha."

[Sidenote: 1745—Swift and Stella]

In the wild October of the wild year of the Forty-five a great spirit passed away under the most tragic conditions. While Scotland and England were raging for and against rebellion, the greatest mind of the age went grimly out in Ireland. On October 19, 1745, Jonathan Swift died. For years he had been but in a living death. Racked with pain, almost wholly bereft of reason, sometimes raging in fits of madness, he was a fearful sight to those who watched over him. When the end came it came quietly. He sank into sleep and did not wake any more. He was in his seventy-eighth year when he died. A dim stone upon the darkened wall of St. Patrick's Church in Dublin sums up, in words at once cruelly bitter and profoundly melancholy, the story of his life. That mouldering inscription, niched in high obscurity, which sometimes stray pilgrims from across the seas strain their sight to decipher in the gloom, is the self-uttered epitaph of Jonathan Swift. We may translate it thus into English: "Here resteth the body of Jonathan Swift, Dean of this Cathedral Church, where fierce indignation can lacerate his heart no longer. Go, traveller, imitate if thou canst a champion, strenuous to his uttermost, of liberty."

A little way apart, shadowed by his name in death no less than in life, lies Stella, the pale, dark-haired child whose wide eyes filled with love as they followed the poor and lonely scholar through stately Shene or the prim rococo epicureanism of Moor Park. She sleeps as she lived, at her master's feet. She dedicated all the days of her life to Swift with a devotion which is wellnigh without a parallel in the history of woman's love for man. Those {237} who stand awe-struck and reverential in the quiet presence of the dead may well feel troubled by a haunting influence in the twilight air of the place. It is the haunting influence of the secret of those two tortured lives, the secret that lies buried between their graves. One forgets for the moment Swift, the fierce fighting statesman, and thinks only of the lonely man who lived to lament for Stella.

There has hardly ever been in the world, or out of it, in the illimitable kingdoms of fancy, a more famous pair of lovers than these two. Leila and Majnun, Romeo and Juliet, Petrarch and Laura—repeat what names we may of famous lovers that the fancies of poets have ever adored by the Tigris, or the Avon, or in the shadows of Vaucluse, the names of Swift and Stella are found to appeal no less keenly to heart and brain, to the imagination and to pity. Happy they were not, and could not be. When we read of Swift and Stella the mind naturally turns to that luckless pair of lovers whom Dante saw in the third circle of hell, blown about forever on the racking wind, and finding comfort through the lapse of eternal twilight in the companionship of their common doom. They, too—Swift and Stella—seem driven by the pitiless wind of fate; they have fallen upon evil days; they are greatly gifted, noble, greatly unhappy; they are sustained by their strange, exquisite friendship, by the community of genius, by a tender affection which was out of tune with the time and with their troubled lives. So long as Stella lived Swift was never alone. When she died he was alone till the end. There is nothing in literature more profoundly melancholy than Swift's own eloquent tribute to the memory of his dead wife, written in a room to which he has removed so that he may not see the light burning in the church windows, where her last rites are being prepared. There is no greater and no sadder life in all the history of the last century. The man himself was described in the very hours when he was most famous, most courted, most flattered, as the most unhappy man on earth. Indeed he seems to have been most wretched; he certainly {238} darkened the lives of the two or three women who were so unfortunate as to love him. But we may forget the sadness of the personal life in the greatness of the public career. Swift was the ardent champion of every cause that touched him; the good friend of Ireland; he was always torn with "fierce indignation" against oppression and injustice. Thackeray, whose reading of the character of Swift is far too generally accepted, finds fault with the phrase, and blames somewhat bitterly the man who uses it, "as if," he says, "the wretch who lay under that stone waiting God's judgment had a right to be angry." But it was natural that Swift, scanning life from his own point of view, should feel a fierce indignation against wrong-doing, injustice, dishonesty. He was an erring man, but he had the right to be angry with crimes of which he could never be guilty. His ways were not always our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts; but he walked his way, such as it was, courageously, and the temper of his thoughts was not unheroic. He was loyal to his leaders in adversity; he was true to friends who were sometimes untrue to him; his voice was always raised against oppression; he had the courage to speak up for Ireland and her liberties in some of the darkest days in our common history. To Thackeray he is only a "lonely guilty wretch," a bravo, and a bully—a man of genius, employing that genius for selfish or vindictive purpose. To soberer and more sympathetic judgment Thackeray's study of Swift is a cruel caricature. He may have been "miserrimus," but Grattan was right when he appealed long after to the

"spirit of Swift" as the spirit of one in true sympathy with the expanding freedom of every people—a champion, strenuous to his uttermost, of liberty.

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

CHESTERFIELD IN DUBLIN CASTLE.

[Sidenote: 1746—Chesterfield in Dublin Castle]

The Jacobite rebellion had compelled the Government to withdraw some of their troops from the continent. France for a while was flattered and fluttered by a series of brisk successes which left almost the whole of the Austrian Netherlands in her possession at the end of the campaign of 1746. The battle of Lauffeld, near Maestricht, in Holland, in the summer of 1747, in which the allied Austrian, Dutch, and English armies were defeated, especially exhilarated the French Jacobites. The French were commanded by Marshal Saxe, the victor of Fontenoy. The English troops were under the command of Cumberland, and Lauffeld was therefore regarded by them as in some sort avenging Culloden. The victory was largely due at Lauffeld, as it had been at Fontenoy, to the desperate courage of the Irish Brigade, who, in the words of one of their enemies, "fought like devils," and actually came very near to capturing Cumberland himself. But the tide of victory soon turned for France on land and sea, and she became as anxious to make a peace as any other of the belligerent powers could be. The French were sick of the war. Henry Pelham was writing to the Duke of Cumberland to tell him that no more troops were to be had by England, and that, if they were to be had, there was no more money wherewith to pay them.

Political life in England had, during all this time, been passing through a very peculiar period of transition. When we speak of political life we are speaking merely of the life that went on in St. James's Palace, in the House of Lords, and in the House of Commons. The great bulk {240} of the middle classes, and the whole of the poorer classes all over Great Britain, may be practically counted out when we are making any estimate of the movement and forces in the political life of that time. The tendency, however, was even then towards a development of the popular principle. The House of Lords had ceased to rule; the Commons had not yet begun actually to govern. But the Commons had become by far the more important assembly of the two; and if the House of Commons did not govern yet, it was certain that the King and the Ministry could only govern in the end through the House of Commons. The sudden shuffle of the cards of fate which had withdrawn both Walpole and Pulteney at one and the same moment from their place of command at either side of the field, brought with it all the confusion of a Parliamentary transformation scene. Nothing could have been more strictly in the nature of the burlesque effects of a Christmas pantomime than Walpole and Pulteney shot up into the House of Lords, and Wilmington and Sandys set to carry on the government of the country.

[Sidenote: 1743—"The drunken Administration"]

Yet a little, and poor, harmless, useless Wilmington was dead. He died in July, 1743. Then came the troubling question, who is to be Prime-minister? The Ministerialists were broken into utter schism. The Pelhams, who had for some time been secretly backed up by Walpole's influence with the King, were struggling hard for power against Carteret, and against such strength as Pulteney, Earl of Bath, still possessed. Carteret had made himself impossible by the way in which he had conducted himself in the administration of foreign affairs. He had gone recklessly in for a thoroughly Hanoverian policy. He had made English interests entirely subservient to the interests of Hanover; or rather, indeed, to the King's personal ideas as to the interests of Hanover. Carteret had the weakness of many highly cultured and highly gifted men; he believed far too much in the supremacy of intellect and culture. The great rising wave of popular opinion was unnoticed by him. He did not see that {241} the transfer of power from the hereditary to the representative assembly must inevitably come to mean the transfer of power from the representatives to the represented. Carteret in his heart despised the people and all popular movements. Fancy being dictated to by persons who did not know Greek, who did not know German, who did not even know Latin and French! He was fully convinced for a while that with his gifts he could govern the people through the House of Commons and the House of Commons through the King. He was not really a man of much personal ambition, unless of such personal ambition as consists in the desire to make the most brilliant use of one's intellectual gifts. The effort to govern the House of Commons through the King interested him, and called all his dearest faculties into play. He scorned the ordinary crafts of party management. If he thought a man stupid he let the man know it. He was rude and overbearing to his colleagues; insulting to people, however well recommended, who came to him to solicit office or pension. All that sort of thing he despised, and he bluntly said as much. "Ego et rex

meus" was his motto, as we may say it was the motto of Wolsey. Not Wolsey himself made a more complete failure. The King fought hard for Carteret; but the stars in their courses were fighting harder against him.

Carteret's term of office was familiarly known as "the drunken Administration." The nickname was doubtless due in part to Carteret's love of wine, which made him remarkable even in that day of wine-drinking statesmen. But the phrase had reference also to the intoxication of intellectual recklessness with which Carteret rushed at and rushed through his work. It was the intoxication of too confident and too self-conscious genius. Carteret was drunk with high spirits, and with the conviction that he could manage foreign affairs as nobody else could manage them. No doubt he knew far more about continental affairs than any of his English contemporaries; but he made the fatal mistake which other brilliant foreign {242} secretaries have made in their foreign policy: he took too little account of the English people and of prosaic public opinion at home. In happy intoxication of this kind he reeled and revelled along his political career like a man delighting in a wild ride after an exciting midnight orgy. He did not note the coming of the cold gray dawn, and of the day when his goings-on would become the wonder of respectable and commonplace observers.

The cold gray dawn came, however, and the day. The public opinion of the country could not be kept from observing and pronouncing on the doings of Carteret. Carteret felt sure that he was safe in the favor and the support of the King. He did not remember that the return of every cold gray dawn was telling more and more against him. The King, who, with all his vagaries and brutalities, had a considerable fund of common-sense, was beginning to see that, much as he liked Carteret personally, the time was fast approaching when Carteret would have to be thrown overboard. The day when the King could rule without the House of Commons was gone. The day when the House of Commons could rule without the Sovereign had not come.

In truth, the Patriots were now put at a sad disadvantage. It is a great triumph to overthrow a great Ministry, but the triumph often carries with it a responsibility which is too much for the victors to bear, and which turns them into the vanquished before long. So it fared with the Patriots. While they were in opposition they had promised, as Sallust says Catiline and his friends did, seas and mountains. Now the time had come to show what they really could do; and, behold, they could do nothing. An opposition has a safe time of it which, being directly adverse on some distinct question, principle, or policy to the party in power, it is able to say, "Let us come into office and we will do the very opposite; we will try to undo all that the present ministers have been doing," and is able to carry out the pledge. But the opposition to Walpole had lived and flourished by finding {243} fault with everything he did merely because it was he who did it, and with his way of doing everything merely because it was his way. Nothing can be easier than for a group of clever and unscrupulous men to make it hot for even the strongest minister if they will only adopt such a plan of action. This was the plan of action of the Patriots, and they carried it out boldly, thoroughly, brilliantly, and successfully. But now that they had come into office they found that they had not come into power. The claim to power had still to be earned for them by the success of their administration; and what was there for them to do? Nothing—positively nothing—but just what their defeated opponents had been trying to do. Hanoverian policy, Hanoverian subsidies, foreign soldiers, standing armies—these were the crimes for which Walpole's administration had been unsparingly assailed. But now came Carteret, and Carteret was on the whole rather more Hanoverian than the King himself. Pulteney? Why, such influence as Pulteney still had left was given to support Newcastle and Pelham, Walpole's own pupils and followers, in carrying out Carteret's Hanoverian policy.

[Sidenote: 1743—An irreparable mistake]

Carteret set up Lord Bath as leader of the Administration. The two Pelhams—the Duke of Newcastle and his brother, Henry Pelham—were tremendously strong in family influence, in money, in retainers, led-captains, and hangers-on of all kinds. Pulteney, who had always held a seat nominally in the Cabinet, although he had hitherto clung to his determination not to take office, now suddenly thought fit to change his mind. Probably he already regretted deeply the fatal mistake which had made him refuse to accept any office on the fall of Walpole. Perhaps he had fancied that the country and the Government never could get on without him, and that he would have been literally forced to withdraw his petulant self-denying ordinance. But the mistake was fatal, irreparable. The country did not insist on having him back at any price; the country did not seem to have been thinking about him at all. Now, when there seemed to be {244} something like a new opportunity opening for him on the death of Lord Wilmington, he had the weakness to consent to be put up as a candidate for the position of Prime-minister. The effort proved a failure. The Pelhams were not only powerful in themselves, but they were powerful also in the support of Walpole. Walpole still had great influence over the King, and he naturally threw all that influence into the scale of the men who represented his own policy, and not into the scale of those who represented the policy of his enemies. Walpole and the Pelhams carried the day; Henry Pelham became Prime-minister, and from that time the power of Carteret was gone. This was in

1743—we are now going back a little to take up threads which had to be dropped in order to deal with the events springing out of the continental war, and especially the rebellion in Scotland—and in November, 1744, Carteret was driven to resign his office. He had just become Earl Granville by the death of his mother, and was exiled to the House of Lords.

The King, however, still kept up his desire to get back Lord Granville and to get rid of the Pelhams. George had sense enough to despise the two brothers, and sense enough also to see when he could not do without them. During the February of 1746, while the Stuart rebellion was still aflame, a ministerial crisis came on. The Pelhams wished to bring Pitt into the Ministry; the King blankly refused. But the King did more than that: he began to negotiate privately with Lord Granville and Lord Bath. The Pelhams knew their strength. They at once threw up their offices; the whole Ministry resigned in a body. The King found that Carteret could not possibly form an administration which would have any support worth a moment's consideration in either House of Parliament. The fortunes of Charles Stuart were still looking bright in the north, and the King found himself without a Ministry. There was no course open to him but one, and that was to recognize the strength of the Pelhams and their followers, and to take back Newcastle and his {245} brother on any terms the conquerors might be pleased to dictate. The Pelhams came back to what might almost be called absolute power. The King was not likely soon again to trouble them with any hostile intervention. Thus these two men, one stupid beyond sounding, the other of only fair abilities, rising a little above mediocrity, had gone into battle with some of the greatest statesmen and orators of the age, and had come out victorious.

[Sidenote: 1743-1746—The "Broad-bottomed Ministry"]

Henry Pelham's administration was known by the slang nickname of the "Broad-bottomed Ministry." It is known by that nickname in history still; will doubtless always keep the title. The great overmastering passion of the Pelhams was the desire to keep office and power in their hands at any price. Of the two brothers Henry Pelham was by far the abler man. His idea was to get around him all the really capable administrators and debaters of every party, and thus make up a Ministry which should be all-powerful, and of which all the power should be in his hands. Like his brother, the Duke of Newcastle, he had a sort of half good-natured cynicism which never allowed him to doubt that if the offices were offered to the men, the men would on any conditions accept the offices. The events that he had lately seen had not induced him in any way to modify his opinion. He had heard Pitt thundering away against Carteret in exactly the same strain as Pitt and Carteret used to thunder against Walpole. He had heard Pitt denounce Carteret as "an execrable, a sole minister, who had ruined the British nation, and seemed to have drunk of the potion described in poetic fiction which made men forget their country." He had seen the policy of Walpole quietly carried out by the very men who had bellowed against Walpole, and had succeeded at last in driving him from office forever. He knew that no one now among those who used to call themselves "the Patriots" cared one straw whether Spain did or did not withdraw her claim to the Right of Search. His idea, therefore, was to get all the capable men of the various parties together, form them {246} into an administration, and leave them to enjoy their dignity and their emoluments while the King and he governed the country. It was in this spirit and with this purpose that he set himself to form the "Broad-bottomed Ministry." He was not, like his royal master, tormented or even embarrassed by personal dislikes; he would take into his Ministry any one who could be of the slightest use to him. He would have kept Lord Carteret if Carteret had not made himself impossible.

[Sidenote: 1745—The Chesterfield of Dublin Castle]

The time had already come when Chesterfield had to be taken into the Administration again. He had made himself so particularly disagreeable to the King when out of office, he had raked the Government, and even the Court, so hotly with satire and invective in the House of Lords, that George reluctantly admitted that it was better to try to live with such a man, seeing that it began to be impossible to live without him. So it was settled that some place should be found for Chesterfield, and at the same time it was very desirable that a place should be found which would not bring him much into personal association with the King. The condition of Continental Europe, the fluctuations of the war, suggested a natural opportunity for making use of Chesterfield's admitted genius for diplomacy, and accordingly he was sent back to his old quarters at the Hague. He rendered some good service there; and then suddenly the office of Viceroy of Ireland became vacant, and Chesterfield was called from the Hague and sent to Dublin Castle in 1745. He had known nothing of Ireland; he had never before been put in any position where his gift of governing could be tried. The gift of governing is of course something entirely different from the gift of managing diplomatic business; and Chesterfield had as yet had no chance of proving any capacity but that of a parliamentary orator and a diplomatist. "Administration," according to Aristotle, "shows the man." Every one remembers the superb and only too often quoted Latin sentence which tells of one who by the consent of all would have been declared capable {247} of ruling if only he had not ruled. Administration was to show the real Chesterfield. He was just the sort of person to whom one would have expected the Latin saying to apply. What a likely man, everybody

might have said, to make a great administrator, if only he had not administered! Chesterfield's record, however, must be read the other way. If he had never had the chance of administering the affairs of Ireland, how should we ever have known that he had a genius for governing men?

For, in the minds of all who understand these times and those, Chesterfield's short season of rule in Ireland was by far the greatest period of his career. The Chesterfield of Dublin Castle was as high above the Chesterfield of the House of Lords as Goldsmith the poet is above Goldsmith the historian, or Blackstone the constitutional lawyer is above Blackstone the poet. Judging of Chesterfield's conduct in the Irish Viceroyalty by Chesterfield's past career, men would have been entitled to assume that his sympathies would go altogether with the governing race in Ireland. With them were the wealth, the rank, the fashion, the elegance, the refinement. With them was the easy-going profession of State religion—just the sort of thing that suited Chesterfield's ways. What sympathy could such a man as he have with the Celtic and Catholic Irishman? Why should he care to be popular with such a population? Even such gifted, and, on the whole, patriotic Protestants as Swift only sympathized with the Catholic Celts as an Englishman living in Virginia, in the old plantation days, might have sympathized with the population of negro slaves. Chesterfield might have entered on his formal task in the temper of graceful levity and high-bred languid indifference. He might have allowed the cultured and respectable gentlemen who were his permanent officials to manage things as they had long been doing before his time, pretty much in their own way. He might have given them politely to understand that so long as they spared him any trouble in his unthankful task he would back them up in anything they did. He {248} might have made it plain to the Protestant gentry and the Castle folk that his sympathies were all with them; that he desired only to mix with them; and that it really did not much matter what the outer population in Ireland thought of him or of them. Thus he would easily have become the darling of Dublin Castle; and to most Irish Viceroys the voice of Dublin Castle was the voice of Ireland; at all events, the only voice in Ireland to which they cared to listen.

[Sidenote: 1745—The state of Ireland]

What did Chesterfield find in Ireland when he came to undertake the task of government in Dublin Castle? He found a people oppressed almost beyond endurance by a cruel and barbarous system of penal laws directed against the profession and the practice of the faith to which they were passionately devoted. No people in the world's history, not even the Scottish Covenanters, were more absolutely absorbed by the zeal of their faith than the Irish Catholic Celts. The Penal Laws were devised and were being worked with the avowed intention of extirpating either the faith or the race—or, better still, the faith and the race. "The Irish," said Dr. Johnson, "bursting forth," as his biographer tells us, "with a generous indignation," "are in a most unnatural state, for we see there the minority prevailing over the majority. There is no instance, even in the ten persecutions, of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics." The Revolution, which had brought liberty of worship to England, had only brought harsher and more cruel repressive legislation against liberty of worship in Ireland. Where Chesterfield got the ideas which he carried out from the first in his government of Ireland it is hard to understand. He must have had that gift of spontaneous sympathy which is the very instinct of genius in the government of a people among whom one has not been born, among whom one has scarcely lived. His mind seems to have taken in at a glance the whole state of things. Talleyrand said of Alexander Hamilton, the great American statesman, that {249} he had "divined Europe." Chesterfield had apparently divined Ireland.

The twin curses of Ireland at the time were the Penal Laws and the corrupt administration of Dublin Castle. Chesterfield determined to strike a heavy blow at each of these evil things. He saw that the baneful class ascendency which was engendered by the Penal Laws was as bad in the end for the oppressors as for the oppressed. He saw that it was poisoning those who were administering it as well as those against whom it was administered. He could not abolish the Penal Laws or get them repealed. No man in his senses could have hoped to get the existing Parliament either of England or of Ireland to do anything then with the Penal Laws, except perhaps to try to make them a little more severe and more tormenting. Chesterfield did not waste a thought on any such device. He simply resolved that he would not put the Penal Laws into action. It has been said of Chesterfield's administration in Ireland that it was a policy which, with certain reservations, Burke himself might have originated and owned. Chesterfield took the government entirely into his own hands. He did his very best to suppress the jobbery which had become a tradition in the officialism of Dublin Castle. He established schools wherever he could. He tried to encourage and foster new branches of manufacture, and to give a free way to trade, and a stimulus to all industrial arts and crafts. He showed himself a strong man, determined to repress crime and outrage, but he showed himself also a just and a merciful man, determined not to create new crimes in the hope of repressing the old offences. The curse of Irish repressive government has always been its tendency to make fresh crimes, crimes unknown to the ordinary law. Chesterfield would have nothing of the kind. More than that, he would not recognize as offences the State-made crimes which so many of his predecessors had shown themselves ruthless in

trying to repress. The confidence of the people began to revive under his rule. The Irish {250} Catholic began to find that although the Penal Laws still existed, in all their blood-thirsty and stupid clauses, he might profess and practise his religion without the slightest fear of the informer, the prison, the transport ship, or the hangman. Chesterfield asked for no additional troops from England. On the contrary, he sent away some of the soldiers in Ireland to help the cause of the empire on the Continent. He was buoyant with a well-grounded confidence; and there was something contagious in his fearless generosity and justice. The Irish people soon came to understand him, and almost to adore him. He was denounced, of course, by the alarmists and the cowards; by the Castle hacks and the furious anti-Catholic bigots. Chesterfield let them denounce as long and as loudly as seemed good to them. He never troubled himself about their wild alarms and their savage clamor.

[Sidenote: 1745-1746—Chesterfield's recall]

Probably no Irishman who ever lived was a more bitter and uncompromising enemy of English rule in Ireland than John Mitchel, the rebel of 1848. His opinion, therefore, is worth having as to the character of Chesterfield's rule in Dublin Castle. In his "History of Ireland," a book which might well be more often read in this country than it is, Mitchel says of Chesterfield: "Having satisfied himself that there was no insurrectionary movement in the country, and none likely to be, he was not to be moved from his tolerant courses by any complaints or remonstrances. Far from yielding to the feigned alarm of those who solicited him to raise new regiments, he sent four battalions of the soldiers then in Ireland to reinforce the Duke of Cumberland. He discouraged jobs, kept down expenses. . . . When some savage Ascendency Protestant would come to him with tales of alarm, he usually turned the conversation into a tone of light badinage which perplexed and baffled the man. One came to seriously put his lordship on his guard by acquainting him with the fact that his own coachman was in the habit of going to mass. 'Is it possible?' cried Chesterfield: 'then I will take care the fellow shall not drive me there.' A {251} courtier burst into his apartment one morning, while he was sipping his chocolate in bed, with the startling intelligence that the Papists were rising in Connaught. 'Ah,' he said, looking at his watch, ''tis nine o'clock—time for them to rise!' There was evidently no dealing with such a viceroy as this, who showed such insensibility to the perils of Protestantism and the evil designs of the dangerous Papists. Indeed he was seen to distinguish by his peculiar admiration a Papist beauty, Miss Ambrose, whom he declared to be the only 'dangerous Papist' he had met in Ireland." Chesterfield himself has left an exposition of his policy which we may well believe to be genuine. "I came determined," he wrote many years after, "to proscribe no set of persons whatever, and determined to be governed by none. Had the Papists made any attempt to put themselves above the law, I should have taken good care to have quelled them again. It was said that my lenity to the Papists had wrought no alteration either in their religious or their political sentiments. I did not expect that it would; but surely that was no reason for cruelty towards them."

[Sidenote: 1745-1746—Chesterfield's recall]

It is true that Lord Chesterfield's conduct in Ireland has been found fault with by no less devoted a friend of Ireland than Burke. In his letter to a peer of Ireland on the Penal Laws against the Irish Catholics, Burke says: "This man, while he was duping the credulity of Papists with fine words in private, and commending their good behavior during a rebellion in Great Britain—as it well deserved to be commended and rewarded—was capable of urging penal laws against them in a speech from the Throne, and of stimulating with provocatives the wearied and half-exhausted bigotry of the then Parliament of Ireland." But Burke was a man whose public virtue was too high and unbending to permit him to make allowance for the political arts and crafts of a Chesterfield. It is quite true that Chesterfield recommended in his speech that the Irish Parliament should inquire into the working of the Penal Laws in order to find out if they needed any {252} improvement. But this was a mere piece of stage-play to amuse and to beguile the stupidity and the bigotry of the Irish Parliament of those days. It was not a stroke of policy which a man like Burke would have condescended to or could have approved; but it must have greatly delighted the cynical humor of such a man as Chesterfield. At all events it is certain that during his administration Chesterfield succeeded in winning the confidence and the admiration of the Catholics of Ireland—that is to say, of five-sixths of the population of the country. He was very soon recalled; perhaps the King did not quite like his growing popularity in Ireland; and when he left Dublin he was escorted to the ship's side by an enthusiastic concourse of people, who pressed around him to the last and prayed of him to return soon to Ireland. Chesterfield did not return to Ireland. He was made one of the Secretaries of State, and the Dublin Castle administration went on its old familiar way. But there is even still among the Irish people a lingering tradition of the rule of Lord Chesterfield, and of the new system which he tried for a while to establish in the government of their island.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

PRIMUS IN INDIS.

[Sidenote: 1743—Nucleus of the Anglo-Indian Empire]

Before the Jacobite rising had been put down, or the Pelhams absolutely set up, England, without knowing it, had sent forth a new conqueror, and might already have hailed the first promises of sway over one of the most magnificent empires of the earth. The name of the new conqueror was Robert Clive; the name of the magnificent empire was India.

At that time the influence of England over India was small to insignificance—a scrap of Bengal, the island and town of Bombay, Madras, and a fort or two. The average Englishman's knowledge of India was small even to non-existence. The few Englishmen who ever looked with eyes of intelligent information upon that great tract of territory, leaf-shaped, and labelled India on the maps, knew that the English possessions therein were few and paltry. Three quite distinct sections, called presidencies, each independent of the two others, and all governed by a supreme authority whose offices were in Leadenhall Street in London, represented the meagre nucleus of what was yet to be the vast Anglo-Indian Empire. The first of these three presidencies was the Bombay presidency, where the Indian Ocean washes the Malabar coast. The second was in the Carnatic, on the eastern side of the leaf, where the waters of the Bay of Bengal wash the Coromandel coast, where the forts of St. George and St. David protected Madras and a smaller settlement. The third presidency was up towards the north, where the sacred Ganges, rushing through its many mouths to the sea, floods the Hoogly. Here the town of Calcutta was growing up around Fort William.

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These three little presidencies, plying their poor trade, and depending for defence upon their ill-disciplined native soldiers, the Sepahis, whom we have come to call Sepoys, were all that had grown out of the nearly two centuries of relations with the leaf-shaped Indian land since first, in 1591, Captain Lancaster sailed the seas; since first the East India Company sprang into existence. It was not an agreeable two centuries for Englishmen who ever thought of India to read about. Two centuries of squabblings and strugglings with Dutch settlers and with Portuguese settlers, of desperate truckling to native princes. In 1664 the English East India Company found a rival more formidable than the Dutch or the Portuguese in the French East India Company, which the astuteness of Colbert set up at Pondicherry, and which throve with a rapidity that quite eclipsed the poor progress of the English traders. Even when, in 1708, the old East India Company united its fortunes with the new Indian Company that had been formed, and thus converted one rival into an ally, the superiority of the French remained uncontested, and daily waxed greater and greater, until it began to seem as if, in the words of Antony to Cleopatra, all the East should call her mistress.

[Sidenote: 1725-1743—The Clives of Market-Drayton]

Such was the condition of affairs in the year 1743, when the apparently insignificant fact that a young gentleman of a ne'er-do-well disposition, who seemed likely to come to a bad end in England, and who was accordingly shipped off to India by his irritated relations, altered and exalted the destinies not merely of a wealthy trading company, but of the British Crown. In the market town of Drayton-in-Hales, better known as Market-Drayton, in Shropshire, there lived, in the reign of George the First, a Mr. Richard Clive—a man whose comparatively meagre abilities were divided between the profession of the law and the cares of a small and not very valuable estate. In the little town on the river Tern, within sight of the old church built by Stephen, whose architectural characteristics were then happily unaltered by the hand of the {255} eighteenth century restorer, the Clives had been born and given in marriage and died, and repeated the round ever since the twelfth century. Mr. Richard Clive, in the reign of George the First, married a Manchester lady named Gaskill, who bore him many children of no note whatever, but who bore him one very noteworthy child indeed, his eldest son Robert, on September 29th, in the year 1725.

There was a time, a long time too, during which the worthy Mr. Richard Clive persisted in regarding the birth of this eldest son as little less than a curse. He could very well have said of Robert what the Queen-mother says of Richard of Gloster, tetchy and wayward was his infancy. Seldom was there born into the world a more stubborn-minded, high-spirited boy. He may remind us a little of the young Mirabeau in his strenuous impassioned youth; in the estimate which those nearest to him, and most ignorant of him, formed of the young lion cub in the domestic litter; in the strange promise which the great career fulfilled. There was a kind of madness in the impish pranks which the boy Clive played in Market-Drayton, scaring the timid and scandalizing the respectable. He climbed to the top of the lofty steeple of that church, which dated from the days of Stephen, and perched himself upon a stone spout

near the dizzy summit with a cool courage which Stephen himself might have envied. He got round him from among the idle lads of the town "a list of lawless resolutes," and, like David, made himself a captain over them for the purpose of levying a kind of guerilla warfare upon the shopkeepers of the little town, and making them pay tribute for the sanctity of their windows. In fact, he behaved as wildly as the wildest school-boy could behave—drifting from school to school, to learn nothing from each new master, and only to leave behind at each the record of an incorrigible reprobate. Nobody seems to have discovered that there was anything of the man of genius in the composition of the incorrigible reprobate, and so it came about that the town of {256} Market-Drayton in general, and the respectable family of the Clives in particular, breathed more freely when it was known that young Robert was "bound to John Company"—that he had accepted a writership in the East India Service, and had actually sailed for Madras.

The career to which the young Clive was thus devoted did not, on the face of it, appear to be especially brilliant. The voyage in itself, to begin with, was a terrible business; a six months' voyage was then regarded as an astonishingly quick passage, and in Clive's case the voyage was longer even than usual. It was more than a year after he left England before he arrived at Madras, as his ship had stayed for some months at the Brazils. Clive arrived at Madras with no money, with many debts, and with some facility in speaking Portuguese, acquired during the delay in the Brazils. He had absolutely no friends in India, and made no friends for many months after his arrival. It would be hard to think of a more desolate position for a proud, shy, high-spirited lad with a strong strain of melancholy in his composition. We find him sighing for Manchester with all the profound and pathetic longing which inspires the noble old English ballad of "Farewell, Manchester." It is not easy for us of to-day, who associate the name of Manchester with one of the greatest manufacturing towns in the world, to appreciate to the full either the spirit of the old ballad or the longing aspiration which Clive had to see again Manchester, "the centre of all my wishes." But if he was homesick, if he was lonely, if he was poor in pocket and weak in health, shadowed by melancholy and saddened by exile, he never for a moment suffered his pride to abate or his courage to sink. He treated his masters of the East India Company with the same scornful spirit which he had of old shown to the shopkeepers of Market-Drayton and the school-masters of Shropshire.

In the wretched mood of mind and body that Clive owned during his early days at Madras the constitutional melancholy asserted itself with conquering force, and he {257} twice attempted his life. On each occasion the pistol which he turned upon his desperate and disordered brain missed fire. Yet Clive had meant most thoroughly and consistently to kill himself. He did not, like Byron, discover, after the attempt was made, that the weapon he had aimed at his life was not loaded. Each time the pistol was properly charged and primed, and each time it was the accident of the old flint-lock merely causing a flash in the pan which saved his life. In a nature that is melancholy a tinge of superstition is appropriate, and it is hardly surprising if Clive saw in the successive chance a proof that he was not meant as yet to perish by self-slaughter. "I must be destined for great things," he thought, and he was right. Between that attempt at suicide and the next lay long years of unexampled glory, lay the pomp of Oriental courts and the glitter of Oriental warfare, lay the foundation and establishment of that empire of India which is to-day one of the greatest glories of the British Crown—an empire mightier, wealthier, statelier than any which Aurungzebe swayed, and whose might and wealth and state were mainly due to the courage and the genius of the lonely, melancholy lad, the humble writer in the service of John Company, who had endeavored in his solitude and his despair to end his young life at the muzzle of his pistol.

[Sidenote: 1707—The fall of the House of Baber]

What was the condition of India at the time when Clive was making unavailing efforts to cut short his career? The country itself was given over to the wildest confusion. With the death of Aurungzebe, in 1707, the majestic empire of the House of Baber came to an end. The empire of Alexander did not crumble more disastrously to pieces after the death of the Macedonian prince than did the empire of the Moguls fall to pieces after the death of Aurungzebe. The pitiable and despicable successors of a great prince, worse than Sardanapalus, worse than the degraded Caesars of the basest days of Byzantium, squandered their unprofitable hours in shameful pleasure while the great empire fell to pieces, trampled by the {258} conquering feet of Persian princes, of Afghan invaders, of wild Mahratta chiefs. Between the fierce invaders from the northern hills who ravaged, and levied tribute, and established dominion of their own, and such still powerful viceroys as held their own, and offered a nominal allegiance to the Mogul line, the glory of the race of Tamerlane was dimmed indeed. It occurred to one man, watching all the welter of the Indian world, where Mussulman and Hindoo struggled for supremacy—it occurred to Dupleix that in this struggle lay the opportunity for some European power—for his European power—for France—to gain for herself, and for the daring adventurer who should shape her Oriental policy, an influence hitherto undreamed of by the statesmen of the West. It was not given to Dupleix to guess that what he dreamed of and nearly accomplished was

to be carried out at last by Robert Clive.

[Sidenote: 1746—La Bourdonnais]

The history of French empire in India contains two specially illustrious names—the name of La Bourdonnais and the name of Dupleix. The first had practically called into existence the two colonies of the Ile de France and of Bourbon; the second had founded the town of Chandernagor, in the bay of Bengal, and, as governor-general of the French East India Company, had established himself at Pondicherry with all the luxury and more than all the luxury of a veritable Oriental prince. It may be that if these two men had been better able to agree together the fortunes of the French nation in the Indies might have been very different. But a blind and uncompromising jealousy divided them. Whatever Dupleix did was wrong in the eyes of La Bourdonnais; whatever La Bourdonnais did was wrong in the eyes of Dupleix; and Dupleix was the stronger man of the two, and he finally triumphed for a time. In the war that was raging La Bourdonnais saw his opportunity. He determined to anticipate Dupleix in beginning hostilities against the English in India. He set sail from the island of Bourbon with a fleet of nine vessels which he had equipped, at his proper cost, and an {259} army of some three thousand men, which included a large proportion of negroes. After a successful engagement with the ships of war under the command of Admiral Burnett, outside Madras, La Bourdonnais disembarked, besieged Madras, and compelled the town to capitulate. So far the star of La Bourdonnais was in the ascendent; but the terms which he exacted from the conquered town were, by their very moderation, the means of his undoing. With the keys of the conquered town in his hand, with the French colors floating bravely from Fort St. George, with all the stored wealth of the company as spoils of war, La Bourdonnais thought that he might be not unlenient in the terms he accorded to his enemies. He allowed the English inhabitants of Madras to remain prisoners of war on parole, and stipulated that the town should remain in his hands until the payment of a ransom of some nine millions of francs.

The triumph of La Bourdonnais aroused, however, not the admiration but the jealousy of Dupleix. Out of La Bourdonnais's very victory the cunning of Dupleix discovered a means to humiliate his rival. The vague schemes which he had formed for the authority of France, and for his influence in India, did not at all jump with the restoration of Madras, once conquered, to the English. He declared that La Bourdonnais had gone beyond his powers; that terms to the vanquished on Indian soil could be made by the Governor of Pondicherry and the Governor of Pondicherry alone. He refused to ratify La Bourdonnais's convention, and, instead, declared that the capitulation was at an end, marched upon Madras, insisted upon the pillage and destruction of a great portion of the town, arrested a large number of the leading Englishmen, including the Governor of Fort St. George, and conveyed them with all circumstances of public ignominy to Pondicherry. As for La Bourdonnais, who had taken so gallant a step to secure French supremacy in India, he was placed under arrest and sent to France, where the Bastille awaited him; he had fallen before his vindictive rival.

The inhabitants of Madras, smarting under what may {260} fairly be called the treachery of Dupleix, considered rightly that they were no longer bound by the convention with the luckless La Bourdonnais. One at least of the inhabitants was a man not likely to be bound by the mere letter of a convention which had already been broken in the spirit. Clive disguised himself as a Mussulman—we may be permitted to wonder how a man who to the end of his days remained eccentrically ignorant of all Eastern languages accomplished this successfully—and, escaping from Madras, made his way to Fort St. David. At Fort St. David his military career began. The desperate courage which had carried him to the top of the tower of Stephen's church, and which had enabled him to overawe the "military bully who was the terror of Fort St. David," now found its best vent in "welcoming the French," like the hero of Burns's ballad, "at the sound of the drum." The peace which was concluded between England and France sent Clive for a season, however, back to the counting-house, and gave back Madras again to the English company.

[Sidenote: 1748—The dream of Dupleix]

But the ambition of Dupleix was not a thing to be bounded by the circumscription of war or peace between England and France. England and France might be at peace, but there was no need that the English East India Company and the French East India Company should be at peace as well. The internal troubles of India afforded Dupleix the opportunity he coveted of pushing his own fortunes, and doing his best to drive the English traders out of the field. Unfortunately for him, however, his opportunity was also the opportunity of the young writer and ensign who had already won the admiration and the esteem of Major Lawrence, then looked upon as the first English officer in India.

While the French still held Madras, before the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle compelled the reluctant Dupleix to restore it to the English, a military episode, which might almost be called an accident, had helped to confirm enormously the influence of France in India. The Nabob of {261} the Carnatic, offended by the action of the English governor of Madras, who had omitted to send him those presents

which are essential to all stages of Oriental diplomacy, had practically winked at the action of the more liberal-handed Dupleix in his movement against Madras. When, too late, the Nabob heard of the fall of Madras, he sent an army to recapture the town, and called upon the French governor to surrender it. The governor was Duval D'Espremesnil, the father of that mad D'Espremesnil who fuliginates through a portion of the French Revolution. He refused to obey the Nabob, opened fire upon his forces, and repulsed them. The repulse was followed a little later by a vigorous attack of the French troops under Paradis, which smashed the armament of the Nabob to pieces at St. Thome on November 4, 1746. This victory gave the French a prestige of which Dupleix was the very man to appreciate the full importance. When, in 1748, Nizam-Al-Mulk, the Viceroy of the Deccan, died, there arose at once pretenders not merely to the Deccan viceroyalty, but also to the government of the Carnatic. The first was claimed by Mirzapha Jung; the second by Chunda Sahib. Mirzapha Jung and Chunda Sahib, profoundly impressed by the triumph of French arms two years earlier, appealed to Dupleix to help them, joined their forces, and invaded the Carnatic.

Dupleix was not unwilling to listen to the appeal of the invaders. He saw that the chance had arisen for him to constitute himself the Warwick, the king-maker, of India. He lent all the force of his European troops, of his native troops trained in the European fashion, and of the prestige of France to the invaders. The old Nabob of the Carnatic, Anaverdi Khan, was defeated and killed. His son fled with his broken army to Trichinopoly, and the invaders nominally, and Dupleix actually, reigned supreme in the Carnatic.

At that moment the sun of Dupleix's fortunes reached its zenith. He was the chosen companion and confidant of the new Nizam of the Deccan; he was made Governor {262} of India from the river Kristna to Cape Comorin; he pomped it with more than Oriental splendor in the pageantries of triumph at Pondicherry; he set up on the scene of his victory a stately column, bearing in four languages inscriptions celebrating his fame; he had treasure, power, and influence even to his ambitious heart's content. When Mirzapha Jung died, shortly after his accession to the government of the Deccan, Dupleix held equal influence over his successor. He might well have believed that his glory was complete, his plans perfected; he might well have believed that he could afford to smile at the feeble efforts which the English made to stay his progress.

[Sidenote: 1751—The defence of Arcot]

He soon ceased to smile. Clive, then five-and-twenty years old, urged upon his superiors that Trichinopoly must soon fall before famine and leaguer, that with the overthrow of the House of Anaverdi Khan the power of the French over India would be established, and the power of the English in India destroyed. The great deed to be done was to raise the siege of Trichinopoly. This Clive coolly proposed to do by effecting a counter-diversion in besieging Arcot, the favored home of the Nabobs. With a little handful of an army—200 Europeans and 300 Sepoys—Clive marched through the wildest weather to Arcot, captured it, and prepared to hold his conquest. We may perhaps here be permitted to say that in using, as we shall continue to do, the old familiar forms of spelling the names of Indian towns and of Indian princes, we do so not in ignorance of the fact that in many, if not most cases, they present but a very poor idea indeed of the actual Oriental sounds and spelling. The modern writers on Indian history adopt a new and more scientific spelling, which makes Arcot Arkat, and Trichinopoly Trichinapalli. But, all things considered, it seems best for the present to adhere to those old forms which have become, as it were, portion and parcel of English history.

Chunda Sahib, who was besieging Trichinopoly, immediately despatched 4000 men against Arcot, which, {263} joining with the defeated garrison and a few French, made up a muster of some 10,000 men under Rajah Sahib, Chunda Sahib's son, against a garrison of little more than 300. The defence of Arcot is one of the most brilliant episodes in history. It reads rather like some of those desperate and heroic adventures in which the fiction of the elder Dumas delighted than the sober chronicle of recorded warfare. For fifty days the siege raged. For fifty days Rajah Sahib did his best to take the town, and for fifty days Clive and his little band of Europeans and Sepoys frustrated all his efforts. The stubborn defence began to create allies. The fighting capacity of the English had come to be regarded with great contempt by the native races, but the contempt was now rapidly changing to admiration. Murari Rao, the great Mahratta leader, who had been hired to assist the cause of Mohammed Ali, but who had hitherto hung in idleness upon the Carnatic frontier, convinced that the English must be defeated, now declared that since he had learned that the "English could fight," he was willing to fight for them, and with them, and prepared to move to the assistance of Clive. Before they could arrive, Rajah Sahib made a desperate last effort to capture Arcot, was completely defeated with great loss, and withdrew from Arcot, leaving Clive and his little army masters of the place.

Great was the glory of Clive in Fort St. George; but Clive was not going to content himself with so much and no more. With an army increased to nearly a thousand men, he assailed the enemy, defeated Rajah Sahib once and again, and in his triumphal progress caused to be razed to the ground the

memorial city which the pride of Dupleix had erected to his victory, and the vaunting monument which set forth in four languages the glory of his deeds. The astonished Nabobs began for the first time to understand that the glory of France was not invincible, that a new star had arisen before which the star of Dupleix must pale, and might vanish. The star of Clive continued to mount. Though the arrival of Major Lawrence from {264} England took away from his hands the chief command, he worked under Lawrence as gallantly as when he was alone responsible for his desperate undertakings, and success, as before, followed all the enterprises in which he was concerned.

Trichinopoly was relieved; Chunda Sahib was captured by the Mahrattas and put to death; Covelong and Chingkeput, two of the most important French forts, were captured by Clive with an army as unpromising as Falstaff's ragged regiment. At this point, and on the full tide of victory, Clive's health broke down, and he was compelled to return to England for change of climate. Before he left Madras he married Miss Maskelyne. Never did a man return to his native land under more auspicious conditions who had gone thence under conditions so inauspicious. The bad boy of Market-Drayton was now the illustrious and opulent soldier whom the gentlemen of the India House delighted to salute as General Clive, and about whom it seemed as if it was impossible for the nation to make too much ado.

[Sidenote: 1755—Back to India]

Clive was now seized with the ambition to play a part in home politics. The general election of 1754 seemed to offer him a tempting opportunity of entering Parliament. He came forward as one of the members for St. Michael's in Cornwall, was opposed by Newcastle, and supported by Sandwich and Fox, was returned, was petitioned against, and was unseated on petition. To fight a parliamentary election in those days meant the spending of a very great deal of money, and Clive, who had squandered his well-earned fortune right and left since his return to his native land, found himself, after he was unseated, in a decidedly disagreeable position. His money was dwindling; his hope of political triumphs had vanished into thin air; naturally enough, his thoughts turned back to the India of his youth. The curious good-luck that always attended upon him stood him in good stead here. If he had need of the India of his youth, the India of his youth had need of him. If France and England were not at {265} war, the rumor of war was busy between them, and there was a desire for good leaders in the advancing English colonies in India. Poor Dupleix was out of the way already. The brilliant spirit whom Clive's genius had over-crowed had vanished forever from the scenes of his triumphs and his humiliations. He had suffered something of the same hard measure that he had himself meted out to his colleague La Bourdonnais; he had been recalled in comparative disgrace to France, with ruined fortunes and ruined hopes, to die, a defeated and degraded man, the shadow of his own great name. But the influence of France was not extinct in India; it might at any moment reassert itself—at any moment come to the push of arms between France and England in the East as well as in the West; and where could the English look for so capable a leader of men as Clive? So it came about that in the year 1755 Clive again sailed the seas for India, under very different conditions from those under which he first adventured for the East. Then he was an unknown, unappreciated rapscallion of a lad, needy, homesick, desperate, and alone; now he was going out as the Governor of Fort St. David, as lieutenant-colonel in the British army, with a record of fame and fortune behind him. New fame, new fortune, awaited him almost on the very moment of his arrival in India. The pirate stronghold of Gheriah fell before him almost as easily as if the place had been a new Jericho and Clive a second Joshua. But there was greater work in store for him than the destruction of pirate strongholds. Bengal became suddenly the theatre of a terrible drama. Up to the year 1756 the tranquillity of the English settlers and traders in Bengal had been undisturbed. Their relations with the Nabob Ali Vardi Khan had been of the friendliest kind, and the very friendliness of those relations had had the effect of making the English residents in Bengal, like the native population, men of a milder mould than those whom hard fortune had fashioned into soldiers and statesmen at Madras. But in the year 1758 the Nabob Ali Vardi Khan died, and was {266} succeeded by his grandson, Siraju'd Daulah, infamous in English history as Surajah Dowlah.

[Sidenote: 1756—The Blackhole]

This creature, who incarnated in his own proper person all the worst vices of the East, without apparently possessing any of the East's redeeming virtues, cherished a very bitter hatred of the English. Surajah Dowlah was unblessed with the faintest glimmerings of statesmanship; it seemed to his enfeebled mind that it would be not only a very good thing to drive the English out of Bengal, but that it would be also an exceedingly easy thing to do. All he wanted, it seemed to him, was a pretext, and to such a mind a pretext was readily forthcoming. Had not the English dogs fortified their settlement without his permission? Had they not afforded shelter to some victim flying from his omnivorous rapacity? These were pretexts good enough to serve the insane brain of Surajah Dowlah. He attacked Fort William with an overwhelming force; the English traders, unwarlike, timorous, and deserted by their leaders, made little or no resistance; the madman had Fort William in his power, and used his power like a madman. The memory of the Blackhole of Calcutta still remains a mark of horror

and of terror upon our annals of Indian empire. When Lord Macaulay, eighty-four years after the event, penned his famous passage in which he declared that nothing in history or in fiction, not even the story which Ugolino told in the sea of everlasting ice, approached the horrors of the Blackhole, he wrote before the worst horrors of Indian history had yet become portion and parcel of our own history. But even those who write to-day, more than a century and a quarter after that time; those in whose minds the memories are fresh of the butcher's well at Cawnpore and the massacre on the river-bank; those to whom the names of Nana Sahib and Azimoolah Khan sound as horridly as the names of fiends—even those can still think of the Blackhole as almost incomparable in horror, and of Surajah Dowlah as among the worst of Oriental murderers. It is true that certain efforts have been made to reduce the {267} measure of Surajah Dowlah's guilt. Colonel Malleson, than whom there is no fairer or abler Indian historian, thinks there can be no doubt that Surajah Dowlah did not desire the death of his English prisoners. Mr. Holwell, one of the few survivors of that awful night, the man whose narrative thrilled and still thrills, horrified and still horrifies, the civilized world, does give testimony that goes towards clearing the character of Surajah Dowlah from direct complicity in that terrible crime. "I had in all three interviews with him," he wrote, "the last in Darbar before seven, when he repeated his assurances to me, on the word of a soldier, that no harm should come to us; and, indeed, I believe his orders were only general that we for that night should be secured, and that what followed was the result of revenge and resentment in the breasts of the lower jemidars to whose custody we were delivered for the number of their order killed during the siege." Yet these words do not go far to cleanse Surajah Dowlah's memory. What had occurred? The English prisoners were brought before the triumphant Nabob, bullied and insulted, and finally left in charge of the Nabob's soldiery, while the Nabob himself retired to slumber. The soldiery, whether prompted by revenge or mere merciless cruelty, forced the prisoners, one hundred and forty-six in number, into the garrison prison—a fearful place, only twenty feet square, known as the Blackhole. The senses sicken in reading what happened after this determination was carried out. The death-struggles of those unhappy English people crowded in that narrow space, without air, in the fearful summer heat, stir the profoundest pity, the profoundest anguish. The Nabob's soldiers all through that fearful night revelled in the sights and sounds that their victims' sufferings offered to them.

When the night did end and the awakened despot did allow the door of the Blackhole to be opened, only twenty-three out of the hundred and forty-six victims were alive. The hundred and twenty-three dead bodies were hurriedly buried in a common pit.

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It is simply impossible to exonerate Surajah Dowlah from the shame and stain of that deed. The savage who passed "the word of a soldier" that the lives of his prisoners should be spared took no precautions to insure the carrying out of his promise. If, as Mr. Holwell says, the lower jemidars were thirsting for revenge, then the Nabob, who gave his prisoners over to the care of those jemidars, was directly responsible for their deeds. Even in Surajah Dowlah's army there must have been men, there must have been officers, to whom the tyrant, if he had wished his prisoners to be well treated, could have intrusted them, in the full confidence and certainty that his commands would be carried out, and his humane wishes humanely interpreted. But even if by the utmost straining we can in any degree acquit the Nabob of direct personal responsibility before the act, his subsequent conduct involves him in direct complicity, and forces upon him all the responsibility and all the infamy. He did not punish the miscreants who forced their victims into the Blackhole, and who gloated over their appalling sufferings. He did not treat the survivors with ordinary humanity. He was evidently convinced that he could deal with the wretched English as he pleased, that their power in India was annihilated, that Surajah Dowlah was among the mightiest princes of the earth.

[Sidenote: 1757—Plot and counterplot]

For six long months, for a fantastical half-year, Surajah Dowlah revelled in the crazy dream of his own omnipotence. Then came retribution, swift, successive, comprehensive. Clive was upon him—Clive the unconquerable, sacking his towns, putting his garrisons to the sword, recapturing those places from which Surajah Dowlah had imagined that he had banished the Englishman forever. The news of the tragedy of the Blackhole, and of the capture of Calcutta and Fort William, had reached Madras in August, and the warlike community had resolved upon prompt and speedy revenge. But it took time to raise the expedition, took time to despatch the expedition. In October the army of two thousand four hundred men, {269} of which nine hundred were European troops, and fifteen hundred Sepoys, sailed for the Hoogly, under Clive as military, and Admiral Watson as naval, commander. Hostile winds delayed the armament until December, but when it did reach its destination it carried all before it. The luck which always attended upon Clive was still faithful to him. The Nabob, at the head of his vast hordes, was soon as eager to come to terms with Clive at the head of his little handful of men as he had before been eager to obliterate the recollection of the Englishmen from the soil of Bengal. He offered to treat with Clive; he was ready to make terms which from a military point of view were satisfactory; he

was evidently convinced that he had underrated the power of England, and he was prepared to pay a heavy penalty for his blunder.

We are now approaching that chapter of Clive's career which has served his enemies with their readiest weapon, and has filled his admirers with the deepest regret. The negotiations between Clive and Surajah Dowlah were conducted on the part of all the Orientals concerned, from Surajah Dowlah to Omichund, the wealthy Bengalee who played the part of go-between, with an amount of treachery that has not been surpassed even in the tortuous records of Oriental treachery. But unhappily the treachery was not confined to the Oriental negotiators; not confined to the wretched despot on the throne; not confined to Meer Jaffier, the principal commander of his troops, who wanted the throne for himself; not confined to the unscrupulous Omichund, who plotted with his left hand against Surajah Dowlah, and with his right hand against the English. Treachery as audacious, treachery more ingenious, treachery more successful, was deliberately practised by Clive. The brilliant and gallant soldier of fortune showed himself to be more than a match for Oriental cunning in all the worst vices of a vicious Oriental diplomacy. If Surajah Dowlah was unable to make up his miserable mind, if he alternately promised and denied, cajoled and threatened, Clive, on his side, while affecting to treat {270} with Surajah Dowlah, was deliberately supporting the powerful conspiracy against Surajah Dowlah, the object of which was to place Meer Jaffier on the throne. If Omichund, with the keys of the conspiracy in his hand, threatened to betray all to Surajah Dowlah unless he was promised the heaviest hush-money, Clive on his side was perfectly ready to promise without the remotest intention of paying. If Omichund, wary and suspicious, was determined to have his bond in writing, Clive was quite ready to meet him with a false and fraudulent bond. Clive professed to be perfectly willing that in the secret treaty which was being drawn up between the English and Meer Jaffier a clause should be inserted promising the fulfilment of all Omichund's claims. But as Clive had not the remotest intention of satisfying those claims, he composedly prepared two treaties. One—the one by which he and Meer Jaffier were to be bound—was written on white paper, and contained no allusion to the avaricious Omichund. [Sidenote: 1757—The Red Treaty] Another, on red paper, which was to be disregarded by the parties to the swindle, contained a paragraph according to Omichund's heart's desire. Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind. Clive, to his great astonishment, found that Admiral Watson entertained different views from his about the honor of an English soldier and gentleman. However convenient it might be to bamboozle Omichund with a sham treaty, Admiral Watson declined to be a party to the trick by signing his name to the fraudulent document. Yet Admiral Watson's name was essential to the success of the Red Treaty, and Clive showed that he was not a man to stick at trifles. He wanted Admiral Watson's signature; he knew that Omichund would want Admiral Watson's signature; he satisfied himself, and he satisfied Omichund, by forging Admiral Watson's signature at the bottom of the Red Treaty.

It is simply impossible to imagine any defence of Clive's conduct in this most disgraceful business. The best that can be said for him is that the whole process of the {271} treason was so infamous, the fabrication of the Red Treaty so revolting a piece of duplicity, that the forging of Admiral Watson's name does not materially add to the darkness of the complete transaction. Nothing can palliate Clive's conduct. It may, indeed, be said that as civilized troops after long engagements in petty wars with savage races lose that morale and discipline which come from contests with their military peers, so minds steeped in the degrading atmosphere of Oriental diplomacy become inevitably corrupted, and lose the fine distinction between right and wrong. But so specious a piece of special pleading cannot serve Clive's turn. English diplomacy at home and abroad has always, with the rarest exceptions, plumed itself on its truthfulness, and has often been successful by reason of that very truthfulness. The practically unanimous condemnation which Clive's countrymen then and since have passed upon his action with regard to the Red Treaty is the best answer to all such pitiful prevarications.

However, Clive did prepare a sham treaty, did forge Admiral Watson's name, did fool Omichund to the top of his bent. Omichund being thus cunningly bought over, Clive prepared for action, flung defiance at Surajah Dowlah, and marched against him. On June 23, 1757, the fate of England in India was decided by the famous battle of Plassey, or, as it should be more correctly called, Palasi.

Plassey was a great victory. Yet, in the words of the conspirator in Ben Jonson's "Catiline," it was but "a cast at dice in Fortune's hand" that it might have been a great defeat, Clive was astonishingly, grotesquely out-numbered. The legendary deeds of chivalrous paladins who at the head of a little body of knights sweep away whole hosts of paynims at Saragossa or Roncesvalles were rivalled by Clive's audacity in opposing his few regiments to the swollen armament of the Nabob. Moreover, Meer Jaffier, whose alliance with the English, whose treason to Surajah Dowlah, was an important part of the scheme, {272} was not to be counted upon. He hesitated, unwilling to fling his fortunes into the English scale before he was convinced that the English were certain of success, although he was himself one of the most important factors in the possibility of that success. But the greatest danger that threatened the English arms was, curiously enough, due to Clive himself. On the eve of Plassey he held a council of war at which it was discussed whether they should fight at once or postpone fighting to

what might seem a more seasonable opportunity. Clive at this council departed from his usual custom. He gave his own vote first, and he voted against taking any immediate action. Naturally enough, the majority of the council of war voted with Clive, in spite of the strenuous opposition of Major Eyre Coote and a small minority. By a majority of thirteen to seven it was resolved not to fight.

It is needless to speculate on what would have been the fortunes of the English in Bengal if that vote had settled the question. Luckily, Clive was a man of genius, and was not either afraid to admit that he had made a mistake, or to change his mind. A short period of solitary reflection convinced him that he and the majority were wrong, and that Eyre Coote and the minority were right. He informed Eyre Coote of his new decision, gave the necessary orders, and the next day the battle of Plassey was fought and won.

It is not necessary here to go into the details of that momentous day. The desperate courage, daring, and skill of the English troops carried all before them; their cannonade scattered death and confusion into the Nabob's ranks. Within an hour an army of sixty thousand men was defeated, with astonishingly slight loss to the victors; Surajah Dowlah, abandoned at the judicious moment by one traitor, Meer Jaffier, was flying for his life in obedience to the insidious counsels of another traitor, Rajah Dulab Ram. From that hour Bengal became part of the English empire.

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The fate of the different actors on the Indian side was soon decided. Meer Jaffier was duly invested with the Nabob's authority over Bengal, Behar, and Orissa; Omichund, on learning the shameful trick of the Red Treaty, went mad and died mad; Surajah Dowlah was soon captured and promptly killed by Meer Jaffier: the Blackhole was avenged.

[Sidenote: 1757—The conqueror returns]

Clive had now reached the pinnacle of his greatness. Victor of Plassey, Governor of Bengal, he remained in India for three more resplendent years; he added to the number of his conquests by defeating the great enterprise of Shah Alum against Meer Jaffier, and shattered the Dutch descent upon the Hoogly—a descent secretly favored by the ever-treacherous Meer Jaffier—both on land and sea. Then, with laurel victory upon his sword, and smooth success strewn before his feet, Clive resolved to return again to England. He sailed from India, full of honors, in 1760, the year in which George the Second died. When he arrived in England George the Third was king. Here for the moment we must leave him, the greatest living soldier of his country, with a career of practically unbroken glory behind him. He had reached his apogee. We shall meet with him again under less happy conditions, when the sun of Plassey had begun to set.

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

CHANGES.

[Sidenote: 1751—"Give us back our eleven days"]

Meanwhile some changes were taking place in political affairs at home which were full of importance to the coming time. William Pitt had taken office; not, indeed, an office important enough for his genius, but still one which gave him an opportunity of making his power felt. The King still detested him; all the more, perhaps, because it was now becoming more and more evident that the King would have to reckon with him as Prime-minister before very long. The stately form of Pitt was, indeed, already throwing a gigantic shadow before it. Henry Fox, too, was beginning to show himself an administrator and a debater, and, it may be added, a political intriguer, of all but consummate ability. Murray was beginning to be recognized as a great advocate, and even a great man. Lyttelton was still making brilliant way in politics, but was even yet hovering somewhat uncertain between politics and literature, destined in the end to become another illustration of the career marred for both fields by the effort to work in both fields. On the other hand, Chesterfield had given up office. He had had a dispute with his colleagues when he was strongly in favor of making a peace, and they would not have it, and he left them to go their own way. He refused the title of duke which the King offered him. He withdrew for the remainder of his years to private life, saying: "I have been behind the scenes both of pleasure and business; I have seen all the coarse pulleys and dirty ropes which exhibit and move all the gaudy machines; and I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which illuminate the whole {275} decoration to the astonishment and admiration of the ignorant multitude." He seldom spoke in Parliament

afterwards; he was growing deaf and weary. In 1751 he broke silence, and with success, when he delivered his celebrated speech on the reform of the calendar. He was "coached," as we should say now, by two able mathematicians, the Earl of Macclesfield and Mr. Bradley. The ignorant portion of the public were greatly excited by what they considered the loss of eleven days, and were strongly opposed to the whole scheme. Years later, when Mr. Bradley was sinking under mortal disease, many people ascribed his sufferings to a judgment from Heaven for having taken part in that "impious undertaking."

The "impious undertaking" was a very needed scientific reform in the calendar, which had long before been adopted in some other countries. Julius Caesar was the first great regulator of the calendar; his work in that way was not the least wonderful of his achievements. The calculations of his astronomers, however, were discovered in much later times to be "out" by eleven minutes in each year. When Pope Gregory the Thirteenth came to the throne of the papacy, in 1572, he found that the eleven minutes had grown by mere process of time to eleven days. He started a new reform of the calendar, which was adopted at once in Italy, Spain, and Portugal. It gradually commended itself to France and Germany, and it was adopted by Denmark and Sweden in 1700. England only came into line with the reform of the calendar in 1751. The Act of Parliament which sanctioned the change brought in the use of the words "new style" and "old style." Only Russia and Greece now of European countries cling to the old style. But the new style, as we have said, was bitterly resented by the mob in England, and every one remembers Hogarth's picture of the patriot drunk in the gutter with his banner near him bearing the inscription, "Give us back our eleven days."

Chesterfield laughed at the success of his speech on the {276} reform of the calendar, and made little of it. Perhaps he helped thus to explain the comparative failure of his whole career. Life was to him too much of a gibe and a sarcasm, and life will not be taken on those terms.

Lord Chesterfield was then out of the running, and Lord Granville's active career had closed. The men of the older school had had their day; the new men had pushed them from their stools. The age of Walpole is closed. The age of Chatham is about to open.

[Sidenote: 1751—Fred's epitaphs]

Early in the year 1751 death removed one of the elements of discord from the family circle of George the Second. The end had come for Frederick, Prince of Wales. The long, unnatural struggle was brought very suddenly to a close. On the 12th of March, 1751, the prince, who had been suffering from pleurisy, went to the House of Lords, and caught a chill which brought on a relapse. "Je sens la mort," he cried out on the 20th of March, and the princess, hearing the cry, ran towards him, and found that he was indeed dead. The general feeling of the country was perhaps not unfairly represented in the famous epigram which became the talk of the town:

"Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather;
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another;
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her;
Had it been the whole generation,
Still better for the nation.
But since it is only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead,
There's no more to be said."

It is curious to contrast this grim suggestion for an epitaph on the dead prince with the stately volume which the University of Oxford issued from the Clarendon Press: "Epicedia Oxoniensia in obitum celsissimi et desideratissimi Frederici Principis Walliae." Here an {277} obsequious vice-chancellor displayed all the splendors of a tinsel Latinity in the affectation of offering a despairing king and father such consolations for his loss as the Oxonian Muses might offer. Here Lord Viscount Stormont, in desperate imitation of Milton, did his best to teach

"The mimic Nymph that haunts the winding Verge
And oozy current of Parisian Seine"

to weep for Frederick.

"For well was Fred'rick loved and well deserv'd,
His voice was ever sweet, and on his lips

Attended ever the alluring grace
Of gentle lowliness and social zeal."

The hind who labored was to weep for him, and the artificer to ply his varied woof in sullen sadness, and the mariner,

"Who many moons
Has counted, beating still the foamy Surge,
And treads at last the wish'd-for beach, shall stand
Appall'd at the sad tale."

Here all the learned languages, and not the learned languages alone, contributed their syllables of simulated despair. Many scholastic gentlemen mourned in Greek; James Stillingfleet found vent in Hebrew; Mr. Betts concealed his tears under the cloak of the Syriac speech; George Costard sorrowed in Arabic that might have amazed Abu l'Atahiyeh; Mr. Swinton's learned sock stirred him to Phoenician and Etruscan; and Mr. Evans, full of national fire and the traditions of the bards, delivered himself, and at great length too, in Welsh. The wail of this "Welsh fairy" is the fine flower of this funeral wreath of pedantic and unconscious irony.

Poor Frederick had played a little with literature in his idle time. He had amused himself with letters as he had amused himself with literary men, and sometimes with rallying a bevy of the maids of honor to the bombardment of a pasteboard citadel and a cannonade of sugar-plums. {278} He had written verses; among the rest, a love tribute to his wife, full of rapture and enriched with the most outspoken description of her various charms of person, which, however, he assures us, were nothing to her charms of mind. Probably he was very fond of his wife; we have already said that it is likely he carried on his amours with other women chiefly because he thought it one of the duties of his princely station. Perhaps we may assume that he must have had some good qualities of his own; he certainly got little teaching or example of goodness from most of those who surrounded him in the days when he could yet have been taught.

The new heir to the throne was George, Frederick's eldest son, who was born in London on June 4, 1738, and was now, therefore, in his thirteenth year. Frederick's wife had already given birth to eight children, and was expected very soon to bring forth another. George was a seven-months' child. His health was so miserably delicate that it was believed he could not live. It was doubted at first whether it would be physically possible to rear him; and it would not have been possible if the ordinary Court customs were to be followed. But the infant George was wisely handed over to the charge of a robust and healthy young peasant woman, a gardener's wife, who took fondest care of him and adored him, and by whose early nursing he lived to be George the Third.

[Sidenote: 1753—The last of Bolingbroke]

The year 1751, which may be said to have opened with the death of poor Frederick, closed with the death of a man greater by far than any prince of the House of Hanover. On December 12th Bolingbroke passed away. He had settled himself quietly down in his old home at Battersea, and there he died. He had outlived his closest friends and his keenest enemies. The wife—the second wife—to whom, with all his faults, he had been much devoted—was long dead. Pope and Gay, and Arbuthnot, and "Matt" Prior and Swift were dead. Walpole, his great opponent, was dead. All chance of a return to public life had faded years before. New conditions and {279} new men had arisen. He was old—was in his seventy-fourth year; there was not much left to him to live for. There had been a good deal of the spirit of the classic philosopher about him—the school of Epictetus, not the school of Aristotle or Plato. He was a Georgian Epictetus with a dash of Gallicized grace about him. He made the most out of everything as it came, and probably got some comfort out of disappointment as well as out of success. Life had been for him one long dramatic performance, and he played it out consistently to the end. He had long believed himself a formidable enemy to Christianity—at least to revealed religion. He made arrangements by his will for the publication, among other writings, of certain essays which were designed to give Christianity its death-blow, and, having satisfactorily settled that business and disposed in advance of the faith of coming ages, he turned his face to the wall and died.

The reign of George the Second was not a great era of reform; but there was accomplished about this time a measure of reform which we cannot omit to mention. This was the Marriage Act, brought in and passed by Lord Hardwicke, the Lord Chancellor, in 1753. The Marriage Act provided that no marriage should be legal in England unless the banns had been put up in the parish church for three successive Sundays previously, or a special license had been obtained from the archbishop, and unless the marriage were celebrated in the parish church. The Bill provided that any clergyman celebrating a marriage without these formalities should be liable to penal servitude for seven years. This piece of legislation put a stop to some of the most shocking and disgraceful abuses in certain classes of English

social life. With other abuses went the infamous Fleet marriages—marriages performed by broken-down and disreputable clergymen whose headquarters were very commonly the Fleet prison—"couple-beggars" who would perform the marriage ceremony between any man and woman without asking questions, sometimes not even asking their names, provided {280} they got a fee for the performance. Men of this class, a scandal to their order, and still more to the system of law which allowed them to flourish, were to be found at almost every pothouse in the populous neighborhoods, ready to ply their trade at any moment. Perhaps a drunken young lad was brought up to be married in a half unconscious state to some elderly prostitute, perhaps some rich young woman was carried off against her will to be married forcibly to some man who wanted her money. The Fleet parson asked no questions, did his work, and pocketed his fee—and the marriage was legal. Lord Hardwicke's Act stopped the business and relegated the Fleet parson to the pages of romance.

[Sidenote: 1759—England's control in North America]

Years went on—years of quiet at home, save for little ministerial wrangles—years of almost uninterrupted war abroad. The peace that was patched up at Aix-la-Chapelle was evidently a peace that could not last—that was not meant to last. If no other European power would have broken it, England herself probably would, for the arrangements were believed at home to be very much to her disadvantage, and were highly unpopular. But there was no need for England to begin. The Family Compact was in full force. The Bourbons of France were determined to gain more than they had got; the Bourbons of Spain were eager to recover what they had lost. The genius and daring of Frederick of Prussia were not likely to remain inactive. As we have seen, the war between England and France raged on in India without regard to treaties and truces on the European continent. There was, in fact, a great trial of strength going on, and it had to be fought out. England and France had yet another stage to struggle on as well as Europe and India. They had the continent of North America. There were always some disputes about boundaries going on there; and a dispute concerning a boundary between two States which are mistrustful of one another is like a flickering flame close to a train of gunpowder. The renewal of war on the Continent gave for the first time its full chance to the {281} genius of William Pitt as a great war minister. The breaking out of war in North America established England as the controlling power there, and settled forever the pretensions of France and of Spain. It is not necessary for us in this history to follow the course of the continental wars. The great results of these to England were worked out on other soil.

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CHAPTER XL.

CANADA.

[Sidenote: 1756—The struggle for Canada]

We have seen that, when the young Duke of Cumberland, after the battle of Culloden, was earning his right to the title of "Butcher," one English officer at least had the courage to protest by his actions against the atrocities of the English general. That soldier was James Wolfe, then a young lieutenant-colonel, who had served his apprenticeship to arms in the Low Countries in the war of the Austrian Succession, and earned by his courage and his abilities an honorable name. He was destined to make that name famous by the part he was to play in the events that were taking place in Canada. The red-haired, unattractive soldier, whose cold and almost repellent manner concealed some of the highest qualities, was fated to do as much for the glory of the English Empire in one part of the world as Clive in another. But there could hardly be two men more different than Clive and Wolfe. The one was always an adventurer—a gentleman adventurer, indeed, and a brilliant specimen of the class, but an adventurer still, and with some of the worst vices of his kind. Wolfe, on the contrary, resembled more the better men among those Puritan soldiers who rallied around the name of Cromwell and battled beneath the standards of Monk. He cherished an austere ideal of public and private virtue. The sweet, simple gravity of the man's nature lives for us very vividly in the portrait Thackeray draws of him in the pages of "The Virginians," where so many of the famous figures of the crowded last century world seem to take bodily shape again and live and move around us.

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From the end of the fifteenth century, when John and Sebastian Cabot discovered Canada, France considered that portion of the New World as her own. Early in the sixteenth century a French expedition under Verazzani formed a settlement named New France, and eleven years later the Breton Jacques Cartier ascended the St. Lawrence as far as the site of Montreal. The first permanent

settlement was made in 1608, when Quebec was founded. From that time Quebec seems like the prize for which English and French arms are to strive. Canada was taken by the English in 1629, only to be restored in 1632; but when more than a century later France and England were newly at war, the serious and final struggle for the possession of Canada took place.

The French settlements in America were called Canada and Louisiana. The one comprehended the basin of the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes, with a vast extent of territory west and north to the Pacific and Arctic oceans. It was, as has been happily said, a convenient maxim in those days of our colonization, that whoever possessed the coast had a right to all the inland territory as far as from sea to sea. While this gave England its boundaries from north to south, it left from east to west open to French fancy and French ambition. Louisiana was a term which covered in English eyes only the Mississippi mouths and a few stations along the Mississippi and Ohio valleys; in French minds the term extended to all the territory bounded to the north by Canada and to the south by Mexico, and stretching from the Alleghanies to the Pacific.

The French settlements in Canada were administered very much upon the same happy-go-lucky system as that which prevailed in France at home under the beneficent influence of the Old Order, and which at home was slowly and surely preparing the way for the French Revolution. The ministers in Paris governed the colonies through governors who were supreme in their own districts, but who possessed no power whatever of initiating any laws for the people they swayed.

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The English colonies were very different from those of the French. Founded in the early days of religious persecution by men too strong-minded to accept tyranny or to make composition with their consciences, the new colonies of Englishmen in America had thriven in accordance with the antique spirit of independence which had called them into existence. The colonists were a hardy, a stubborn, and a high-minded people, well fitted to battle with the elements and the Indians, and to preserve, under new conditions, the austere standard of morality which led them to look for liberty across the sea. The creed which they professed endowed them with a capacity for self-government, and taught them the arts of administration and the polity of free States. The English colonies, as they throve and extended, were not without their faults. The faith which their founders professed was a gloomy faith, and left its mark in gloom upon the characters of the people and the tenor of their laws. The Ironside quality of their creed showed itself in the cruelties with which they visited the Indians; the severity of their tenets was felt by all who could not readily adapt themselves to the adamantine ethics of men of the type of Endicott and Mather. There was not wanting, too, a spirit of lawlessness in the English America, curiously in contrast with the law-abiding character of the Non-conformist colonizations. Along the seaboard wild pirates nestled, skimmers of the seas of the most daring type, worthy brethren of the Kidds, the Blackbeards, and the Teaches, terrors of the merchantman and the well-disposed emigrant. But in spite of the sternness of the law-abiding, and the savageness of the lawless portions of the English settlements, they contrasted favorably in every way with the settlements which were nominally French and the centres of colonization which hoisted the French flag.

[Sidenote: 1754—Young Mr. Washington]

After a long stretch of threatened hostilities, the pinch came at last in 1753, when the two nations met on the banks of the Ohio. The meeting meant one of the greatest and most momentous series of wars in the century. {285} French soldiers invaded all the settlements of the Ohio company and drove the settlers out. The Governor of Virginia sent an ambassador to the French officer commanding on the Ohio, and chose as his ambassador a young Virginian gentleman then absolutely unknown except to the small circle of his personal friends, but destined to become one of the most famous, and most deservedly famous, men in history. Young Mr. George Washington bore Governor Dinwiddie's message over 500 miles through the wilderness at the peril of his life. That expedition, says Irving, "may be considered the foundation of his fortunes. From that moment he was the rising hope of Virginia." The French commander informed the young envoy that he proposed to hold Ohio and drive the English out. Back went George Washington through the wilderness again with this discouraging reply. After that hostilities were inevitable. The next year Washington, then lieutenant-colonel, led a small force to the frontier, and fired the first shot against the enemy. It is curious to think of all the results that followed from that first shot. The fall of the French colonies in America, the establishment of the American Republic, the French Revolution—all may, by the simplest process of causation, be traced back to the first shot fired by Washington's command against a petty officer on the frontier. That shot echoes on the Plains of Abraham, at Lexington and Bunker's Hill, at the taking of the Bastille, and with the "whiff of grape-shot"; we may hear it at Waterloo and in the autumn horrors of the Coup d'État.

France had long been ambitious of extending the domain of her colonial empire in America. Her aim was to secure for herself the Mississippi and Ohio valleys. Securing these meant many things to

France. It meant the connection of her Mexican colonies with Canada, but it meant much more than this; it meant serious annoyance to England, serious limitation to English commerce. It would make the Alleghany mountains the western limits of the English colonies, hamper the English trade with {286} the Indians, and expose to French attack the English on the north, south, and west. In this year 1754, therefore, she deliberately drove the English out of West Pennsylvania, and set up her staff there by building Fort Duquesne to command the Ohio Valley. At that time the chief British commander in America was General Braddock, a joyous, rollicking soldier of the old-fashioned type, rather popular in London as a good companion and good fellow, who loved his glass with a more than merely convivial enthusiasm. But he was not the sort of man who was fitted to fight the French just then and there. In the open field and under ordinary conditions he might have done well enough, but the war with France in the American colonies was not pursued under ordinary conditions. It was fought on the lines of Indian warfare, with murderous Indian allies, against whom the jolly general of the London tables and the St. James's clubs was wholly unfitted to cope. Though he had been warned by Sir P. K. Halkett, who knew the danger, Braddock actually insisted upon advancing with astonishing recklessness against Fort Duquesne as if he were marching at the head of an invincible force to the easiest possible success. The result of his heedlessness is one of the grimmest spots in English colonial history.

[Sidenote: 1759—James Wolfe]

Braddock's forces were cut to pieces: very few of his stout thousand escaped to spread horror through the English colonies by the news of their misfortunes. The banner of the Leopard had gone down indeed before the white coats and the Silver Lilies of France and the painted fantasies of Indian braves and sachems. The fair hair of English soldiers graced the wigwams of the wild and remorseless Red Man, and it seemed for the moment as if the fighting power of England had gone. But, indeed, English fighting power was made of sterner stuff. The fact is, perhaps, never more happily exemplified than in this very story of the dying Braddock himself. As he was carried away, bleeding, to his death, from that fatal ambuscade, something of the hero animated and exalted {287} the spirit of that drink-hardy and foolhardy soldier. "I must do better another time," he is reported to have said; and it would not be easy to say with what gallanter words a stout soldier could go to his account. Against such a spirit as that which animated the dying Braddock the soldiers of France were not destined to triumph. "The last of the Gracchi," said Mirabeau, "when dying, flung dust to heaven, and from that dust sprang Marias." Braddock, promising himself to do better next time, spoke not indeed for himself, but for his nation. The next time came in its due season, but the man who "did better," who carried that "banner of the Leopard" high over the Lilies, was not Braddock, but James Wolfe.

England thirsted for revenge. The years came and the years went, and at last they brought the hour and the men. An elaborate campaign in 1759 had been prepared, by which Amherst, coming by Lake George, Ticonderoga, and Lake Champlain; Prideaux and Johnson coming by Fort Niagara, Lake Ontario, and Montreal; and Wolfe coming by the St. Lawrence River, were to unite in attacking Quebec. But the first two divisions of the whole force were unable to make the connection in the due time, and to Wolfe's command alone was given the honor of assailing Quebec. He advanced up the St. Lawrence with some 7000 men and the fleet under Admiral Saunders, and encamped on the Island of St. Orleans in the St. Lawrence River, some eight miles from Quebec. The whole world, perhaps, hardly holds a scene more picturesque, whether looked at from above or from below, from the rock or from the river, than that which is given by the city of Quebec. At some places the bold mass of rock and clay descends almost sheer to the lower level and the river-shore. One can see that splendid heap of rock and clay from the distant Falls of Montmorency, standing out as the Acropolis of Athens or as Acrocorinth may be seen from some far-off point of view. The newer part of the city and the fortifications are perched high upon the great mound or mass of clay and rock, which looks over the {288} confluence of a mighty river and a great stream. The lower and older town creeps and straggles along the base of the rock and by the edges of the river. Here are the old market-places, the quaint old streets, the ancient wharfs, the crumbling houses, the narrow lanes, the curious inlets, of past generations, and the crude shanties of yesterday and the day before yesterday. From this lower level broad roads now wind up to what would be called the better part of the city—the region of the hotels, and the clubs, and the official buildings, and the fashionable residences. But until lately these roads passed under the ancient gate-ways of the city—gate-ways that reminded one of the Gate of Calais, and brought back suggestions of Hogarth's famous picture. In more recent years, however, the restless spirit of modern improvement has invaded even Quebec, and all, or nearly all, the ancient gate-ways, the gate-ways of the days of Wolfe, have bowed to the fate of Temple Bar. Yet even to-day the traveller in Canada who stands upon that height may vividly recall the scene that lay before the eyes of Wolfe during that memorable campaign.

Wolfe made an attempt to carry a battery above the Montmorency mouth, but failed, and was repulsed with considerable loss. He then cast about him if it were possible to attack the town from the Heights of Abraham on the southern side. It seemed on the face of it an impossibility. How was it

possible for the attacking force to make its way unseen by the French up the precipitous cliffs to the Heights of Abraham? Luckily, there was a young man in Wolfe's army, a Lieutenant McCulloch, who had been held prisoner in Quebec in 1756. With a view to future possibilities, he employed his time in surveying the cliffs, and he thought that he had discovered a particular spot where the steep hills might be successfully scaled by an attacking force. He now communicated this to Wolfe. Indeed, the idea of attack in this way seems to have been suggested by him, and on the memorable September night the attempt was made.

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[Sidenote: 1759—Wolfe's tribute to literature]

Who has not heard—who has not been touched and thrilled by the story of Wolfe, while being rowed across the spreading waters of the St. Lawrence to the cove where the attempt was to be made, repeating in low tones to his officers near him Gray's "Elegy in a Country Church-yard"? Who does not remember Wolfe's famous saying that he would rather have written the Elegy than take Quebec? It is a fine saying, akin to that of Caesar when he swore that he would rather be the first man in an obscure Italian village than the second man in Rome. We may perhaps take the liberty of questioning the absolute accuracy of either saying. In Caesar's case he was, no doubt, sufficiently conscious that he was going to be the first man in Rome. In Wolfe's case we may well believe that his exquisite tribute to literature, and to the most charming work of one of the most charming men of letters then alive, was not meant very seriously. He was a soldier; Quebec was his duty; Quebec was to be his fame. But it is one of those sayings that live forever, and the mere thought of it at once calls up two widely different pictures, pictures of places in two widely different parts of the world. One shows the shining, swelling St. Lawrence River and the dead hour of night, and those slowly moving boats of hushed heroes creeping across the waters to where the mighty Quebec hills gloomed hugely out. The other is of that quiet church-yard in England, at Stoke Pogis, near Slough, where pilgrims from many parts of the world still wander through the pleasant Buckinghamshire fields to stand where Gray conceived his Elegy.

Wolfe carried out his plan to perfection. Day was dawning as the majority of his forces formed upon the Heights of Abraham. It was six in the morning before Montcalm's irregulars were upon the field, and nine o'clock before the French army was in position for action. At ten o'clock the battle began. It did not last very long. Whether the French were utterly disheartened or not by the appearance so unexpectedly of the {290} English on the ground, which they had deemed unassailable, certain is it that they made a poor fight of it. Though the French forces amounted to nearly double the English strength, the whole battle, from the first French advance to their utter rout and flight, did not last a quarter of an hour. It was one of the sharpest and the strangest battles in history. Both sides lost their generals. Montcalm was killed; Wolfe, charging gallantly at the head of his men, fell mortally wounded. The wild cry, "They run!" echoed in his dying ears. He seemed to recover a kind of alertness at the sound, and shaking himself from his deadly stupor, asked, "Who run?" We can imagine the momentary trepidation in that gallant heart: could it be his outnumbered followers? In a moment he was reassured; it was the enemy who fled; with his last breath he gave some strategical orders, and then fell back. "God be praised, I die in peace," he said, and so passed away. The time may, perhaps, come when the great game of war will no longer stir the pulses, and men will no longer feel that they die in peace after the bloody defeat of their enemies. But so long as the pulses of men's hearts do answer to any martial music, so long men will say of Wolfe that he died well as became a soldier, a hero, and a gentleman. He sleeps in Greenwich Church.

[Sidenote: 1759—An old French province]

The pride of England's colonial empire might find new stimulus in the way in which the memory of one of the most brilliant scenes in the story of England's career is kept green in Quebec. The traveller, standing on Dufferin Terrace to-day, may in his mind's eye see Wolfe crossing the stream on his perilous expedition, may in his mind's ear hear him reciting to his officers those lines from Gray's Elegy, and telling them that he would rather have written such verses than be sure of taking Quebec. His monument is near to the promenade on Dufferin Terrace—his monument which, a rare event in war, is the monument also of his rival, the French commander, Montcalm, killed in the hour of defeat, as Wolfe was at the moment of victory. Quebec itself seems to illustrate in {291} its own progress and its own history the moral of that common monument. Quebec is as loyal to the British Crown as Victoria or as the Channel Islands. But it is still in great part an old-fashioned French city. The France that survives there and all through the province is not the France of to-day, but the France of before the great Revolution. The stranger seeking his way through the streets had better, in most cases, question the first crossing-sweeper he meets in French, and not in English. The English residents are all expected to speak French. But the English residents and the French live on terms of the most cordial fraternity. Little quarrels, local quarrels of race and sect, do unquestionably spring up here and there

now and again, but they are only like the disputes of Churchmen and Dissenters in an English city, and they threaten no organic controversy. England has great reason to be proud of Quebec. The English flag has a home on those heights which we have already said may challenge the world for bold picturesqueness and beauty.

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CHAPTER XLI.

THE CLOSE OF THE REIGN.

[Sidenote: 1684-1753—Berkeley]

In the early days of the year 1753 literature and philosophy lost a great man by the death of Bishop Berkeley.

George Berkeley was born on March 12, 1684, by the Nore, in the county Kilkenny. His father was an Irishman of English descent, William Berkeley. In the first year of the eighteenth century George Berkeley went, a lad of fifteen, to the University of Dublin, to Trinity College. In Trinity College he remained for thirteen years, studying, thinking, dreaming, bewildering most of the collegians, his colleagues, who seemed to have been unable to make up their minds whether he was a genius or a blockhead. Within the walls of Trinity he worked, gradually and laboriously piecing together and thoughtfully shaping out his theory of the metaphysical conception of the material world about him; poring over Locke and Plato, breathing an atmosphere saturated with Cartesianism, his active mind eagerly investigating, exploring, inquiring in all directions, and his hand recording day by day the notes and stages of his mental development.

His early philosophical writings rapidly earned him a reputation in the great world of London, to which at that time the eyes of all men—divines, wits, statesmen, philosophers, and poets—turned. It is not necessary here to dwell upon the nature of those philosophical writings, or to enter into any study of the great theory of idealism in which he affirmed that there is no proof of the existence of matter anywhere save in our own perceptions. Byron, in his light-hearted way, more than two generations later, dismissed Bishop Berkeley and his theory in the famous couplet—

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"When Bishop Berkeley said there is no matter,
It clearly was no matter what he said"

—a smart saying which Byron did not intend to put forth, and which nobody would be likely to regard, as a serious summing up of the mental work of Berkeley.

Berkeley came to London in the first winter month of 1713, and made the acquaintance of his great countryman Swift. The Dean was a great patron of Berkeley's in those early London days. Swift took Berkeley to Court, and introduced him or spoke of him to all the great ministers, and pushed his fortunes by all the ways—and they were many—in his power. Berkeley, with the aid of Swift, was soon made free of that wonderful republic of letters which then held sway in London, and which numbered among its members such men as Steele and Addison, Bolingbroke and Harley, Gay and Arbuthnot, and Pope. Berkeley was in Addison's box at the first performance of "Cato," and tasted of the author's champagne and burgundy there, and listened with curious delight to the mingled applause and hisses that greeted Mr. Pope's prologue. A little later Berkeley went to Italy as the travelling tutor, the bear-leader, of the son of Ashe, Bishop of Clogher. In Italy he passed some four enchanted years.

Berkeley came back to England in 1720 to find all England writhing in the welter and chaos of the South Sea crash. The shame and misery of the time appear to have inspired him with a kind of horror of the hollow civilization of the age, and to have given him his first promptings towards that ideal community in the remote Atlantic to which his mind turned so strongly a little later. He left England speedily, and came home again to Ireland after an absence of eight years. It was in Ireland that a strange windfall came to him and amazed him. On that fatal afternoon when Swift, with a legion of wild passions tearing at his heartstrings, rode over to Marley Abbey to fling back at Vanessa's feet the letter she had written to Stella, Hester Vanhomrigh received {294} her death-blow. But she lived long enough to inflict a curious little piece of vengeance, the only vengeance in her power, except the nobler revenge of forgiveness, upon the false Cadenus. She had left by will all the property she possessed to the man she had so madly worshipped. With the hand of Death upon her, with the raging eyes of the Dean still burning upon her brain, she performed the one little pitiful act of retaliation which is the

saddest spot in all her sad history; she altered her will, and disinherited her idol. For the name of Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, she substituted the name of another great Irishman, another great Churchman, another great thinker and teacher, the name of George Berkeley, Dean—only nominally so, indeed—of Dromore. Berkeley's first idea on receiving this unexpected windfall was to employ the money thus almost miraculously placed at his disposal in carrying out a scheme which had long been dear to his heart. This scheme was that he should emigrate to Bermuda, should settle there, and devote the rest of his life to "the reformation of manners among the English in our Western plantations, and the propagation of the Gospel among the American savages." He was nobly convinced of the nobility of his dream, and, which was more remarkable, he succeeded in awaking a latent nobility in unexpected places, and in arousing an enthusiasm for this dream of a Bermudan Utopia even in callous hearts and unsympathetic bosoms.

[Sidenote: 1728—Berkeley's aspirations]

Bermuda became for a while the fashion in the marvellous medley of London society over which the first of the Georges reigned. People talked Bermuda, thought Bermuda, wrote Bermuda. He was indeed a remarkable man whose missionary zeal and eloquence could make Bermuda popular in London with the voice of religion. He was indeed a remarkable man who could impress for a moment the cynical nature of Bolingbroke with something of the fire of his own enthusiasm; who could induce Walpole to swell from his own pocket the subscription-list that was raised to further Berkeley's schemes; {295} who actually succeeded in touching the callous organism which the Elector of Hanover and King of England called a heart; and whose one joy on hearing of the Vanessa legacy was at the aid it afforded to his voyage and his pure, unselfish aspirations. Bermuda ever remained a vision for him; but in 1728 he set sail for Rhode Island in the company of his young wife, Miss Anne Forster, whom, as he quaintly tells us, he chose "for her qualities of mind and her unaffected inclination to books." For more than three years he dwelt in America a simple, happy, earnest life. But the mission was a failure. To Robert Walpole, Berkeley's plans and hopes would naturally seem about as deserving of the attention and aid of practical men as the ambitions of Don Quixote. The grant promised by the Government was never sent out, and in 1731 Berkeley came back to England. How many of those who are familiar with the line, "Westward the course of empire takes its way," which has been accepted as the motto for one of the best and best-known frescos that adorn the Capitol in Washington, know that it comes from the last verse of a poem which Berkeley wrote as he was striving to realize a New Atlantis in Rhode Island?

"Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The first four acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last."

Two years of literary and philosophic life in London succeeded to the Rhode Island idyl. In 1734 he returned to Ireland for the last time, and dwelt for eighteen years in his bishopric of Cloyne in studious seclusion with his family, wandering among the myrtle-hedges his own hand planted, reading Plato and Hooker, teaching his cherished daughter, suffering from domestic losses, and proclaiming to an astounded world that tar-water was a panacea for all human ills. Berkeley's genius and his eloquent prose made tar-water as popular as both had {296} made Bermuda some twenty years earlier. The later years of his life at Cloyne are tinged with melancholy. His mind began to be agitated anew with the dream of an academic retreat by other streams than the Blackwater and the Leo, and in 1752 he journeyed again to England and set up his tent for the last time beneath the shadow of the Oxford spires. It was mellow autumn when he came to the City of Scholars. In the chill January weather of the following year he died suddenly and peacefully in the midst of his family. He was a great and a good man. The serene purity of his life, his lofty purposes, his nobility of nature, cause him to stand out very conspicuously in the strange, cynical, cruel world of English life and English thought during the first half of the eighteenth century. He was in that world, but he was never of it. His friends were either noble of life and mind, or else he saw in them only their nobler qualities, and took no thought of or no harm from the rest. He seems to have been most happy—and the fact is characteristic of the man—in the society of the sweet, simple, and studious woman who made him a loving wife, and of the children whom he loved with an affection for the excess of which he sometimes reproached himself. All his contemporaries, says Sir James Mackintosh, agreed with Pope in ascribing

"To Berkeley every virtue under heaven."

In 1754 Henry Pelham died. The important consequence of his death was the fact that it gave Pitt at last an opportunity of coming to the front. The Duke of Newcastle, Henry Pelham's brother, became leader of the administration, with Henry Fox for Secretary at War, Pitt for Paymaster-general of the Forces, and Murray, afterwards to be famous as Lord Mansfield, for Attorney-general. There was some difficulty about the leadership of the House of Commons. Pitt was still too much disliked by the King to

be available for the position. Fox for a while refused to accept it, and Murray was unwilling {297} to do anything which might be likely to withdraw him from the professional path along which he was to move to such distinction. An attempt was made to get on with a Sir Thomas Robinson, a man of no capacity for such a position, and the attempt was soon an evident failure. Then Fox consented to take the position on Newcastle's own terms, which were those of absolute submission to the dictates of Newcastle. Later still he was content to descend to a subordinate office which did not even give him a place in the Cabinet. Fox never recovered the damage which his reputation and his influence suffered by this amazing act; the only explanation for which was found in the fact that he loved money better than anything in the world, and that the office of Paymaster-general gave almost limitless opportunities to a rapacious and unscrupulous man.

[Sidenote: 1757—Admiral Byng]

The Duke of Newcastle's Ministry soon fell. Newcastle was not a man who had the slightest capacity for controlling or directing a policy of war; and the great struggle known as the Seven Years' War had now broken out. One lamentable event in the war has to be recorded, although it was but of minor importance. This was the capture of Minorca by the French under the romantic, gallant, and profligate Duc de Richelieu. The event is memorable chiefly, or only, because it was followed by the trial and execution of the unfortunate Admiral Byng. Admiral Byng, the son of a famous sailor, was sent in command of a small and a very poorly furnished squadron to the Mediterranean to relieve Minorca. When he readied Gibraltar he found that a French fleet much superior in numbers to his own was blockading the island he was sent to relieve. Byng called a council of war, and the council decided that, as they had no instructions from home how to act in the event of their finding themselves face to face with a superior force, they had better not interfere with the doings of the enemy. Still Byng made for Minorca, and tried unsuccessfully to open communications with the garrison. He had a slight engagement {298} with the French, and then he brought his squadron away. The news created such an outburst of passion in England that the Duke of Newcastle made up his mind at once to sacrifice Byng to the popular fury. Byng was tried at Spithead, found guilty of having failed in his duty, and shot on March 14, 1757. He died like a brave man. It went heavily against Newcastle in later days that he was believed to have promised the sacrifice of Byng before the trial had even begun. No one now believes that Byng was a coward; and nothing but a miracle could have enabled him with such a force to save Minorca. But he failed sadly in his duty, whether from stupidity or irresolution, and probably he would not have cared to outlive his degradation. The punishment was stern and harsh indeed, but it was a time to excuse sternness on the part of a government on whom had fallen the conduct of a great war. Pitt did his best to induce the King to mitigate the penalty in accordance with the unanimous recommendation of the court-martial; but George was inflexible, and reminded Pitt that he had himself taught the Sovereign to seek outside the House of Commons for the judgment of the English people. It was to the execution of Byng that Voltaire applied the famous epigram, "In England it is thought necessary to kill an admiral from time to time to encourage the others"—"*pour encourager les autres*." Voltaire tried hard to save Byng, and even induced the Duc de Richelieu to write a letter bearing his personal testimony to the unfortunate admiral's courage.

The Duke of Newcastle resigned office, and for a short time the Duke of Devonshire was at the head of a coalition Ministry which included Pitt. The King, however, did not stand this long, and one day suddenly turned them all out of office. Then a coalition of another kind was formed, which included Newcastle and Pitt, with Henry Fox in the subordinate position of paymaster. Pitt now for the first time had it all his own way. He ruled everything in the House of Commons. He flung himself with passionate and patriotic energy into the {299} alliance with that great Frederick whose genius and daring were like his own. Pitt was a heaven-born war-minister. His courage and his resources changed the whole fortunes of the war. He seemed a statesman to organize victory. He stirred up the languishing patriotism of the hour, and filled it with new and noble inspiration. It was true what George had said to him—that he had taught, or tried to teach, the Sovereign to seek outside the House of Commons for the voice of the English people. But this was to the honor of Pitt, and not to his discredit. Pitt saw that a legislature returned on such a representation could be no spokesman of the English people. He knew that intelligence and education were beginning to spread with increased wealth through large unrepresented classes, and even communities. While he had the people behind him he cared little for the Sovereign, and still less for the House of Commons. His pride was as great as his patriotism; he might be broken, but he could not bend. At last he had found his true place—at the head of a great nation and during a grand national crisis.

[Sidenote: 1757—Sterne]

The closing years of George's reign were honored by some literary triumphs in which George himself could have taken but little interest. In 1755 appeared, in two volumes folio, the English Dictionary by Samuel Johnson. We shall meet with Samuel Johnson a good deal in the future course of this history, and have now only to mention as a fact the publication of the work on which he himself believed his

fame was to rest. Another work of a very different kind and by a very different sort of man appeared in 1759—the first and second volume of "Tristram Shandy," by Laurence Sterne.

Seldom, perhaps, has an author experienced a stranger bringing up than that which fell to the lot of Sterne. His father, Roger Sterne, was one of those luckless persons who seem to be the especial sport of a malicious destiny, in whose hands nothing prospers, from whose hands thievish Fortune filches all opportunities. Roger Sterne was a gentleman of good family and narrow means, who {300} had adopted arms as his profession and had not prospered therein. He had married a wife who was herself a sutler's widow, and who blessed Ensign Sterne with a swift and steady succession of offspring, of whom Laurence was the second. It was chance, acting through the impulses of the War Office, which caused little Laurence to see the light on Irish soil; but though he was born in the melodiously named Valley of Honey, there was little of honeyed sweetness, and much bitterness as of gall and coloquintida, in his early boyhood. Poverty and the eccentric evolutions of a marching regiment contributed to make his a most unenviable childhood. The record, as we can read it in his own account, is disastrous and dreary enough. The regiment to which Roger Sterne belonged was perpetually on the move; the births and deaths of Mrs. Sterne's children succeeded each other with painful rapidity; again and again was little Laurence in imminent peril of shipwreck on the stormiest seas; he experienced in his earliest years all that was worst and most disagreeable in the life of camp-followers. Some account must necessarily be taken of this by those who review Sterne's writings. A child brought up under such conditions is not likely to have a very keen appreciation of the finer phases of life, and must inevitably have a precocious and most unfortunate familiarity with the seamy side of existence. What is commonly called knowledge of the world, which means knowledge of what is worst in the world, as "seeing life" generally means seeing its dirtiest places, undoubtedly Sterne got in plenty, and the future divine was not improved by the education of the camp.

The misfortunes that had attended so persistently upon the career of Roger Sterne culminated at last most tragically, yet at the same time most ludicrously, as if Destiny had determined to the end to make the luckless ensign her sport. At Gibraltar a quarrel with another officer "about a goose" resulted in a duel. Roger Sterne was run through the body. He never recovered from the wound, and though in this harsh world he drew his breath {301} in pain a little longer, he died in Jamaica of fever, which found his enfeebled frame a ready victim. One of the few pleasing characteristics in Laurence Sterne's nature is his affectionate memory of his father; one of the most pleasing passages of all his writings is that in which he describes him. "My father was a little, smart man, active to the last degree in all exercises, most patient of fatigue and disappointment, of which it had pleased God to give him full measure. He was, in his temper, somewhat rapid and hasty"—hence, no doubt, the speaking of hot words and the spilling of hot blood over that ill-omened goose—"but of a kindly, sweet disposition, void of all design, and so innocent in his intentions that he suspected no one, so that you might have cheated him ten times a day if nine had not been sufficient for your purpose."

[Sidenote: 1713-1768—"Tristram Shandy"]

Through Halifax School and Cambridge sizarship Laurence Sterne passed, by the patronage of his pluralist uncle, Jacques Sterne, into holy orders and the living of Sutton-on-the-Forest, and so into twenty years of almost complete obscurity. We know that he married, that he preached, played the fiddle, fished, hunted, and read, and that is about all we know. Then quite suddenly, in 1759, the lazy, lounging, most eccentric, and ill-chosen clergyman enraptured London by the publication of the first two volumes of "Tristram Shandy."

The author of "Tristram Shandy" came to town, and was received with more than Roman triumph. Wealth, wit, genius, nobility, thronged his door, sought his friendship, proffered favors. Sterne revelled in this new life. London offered him a cup of the most intoxicating quality, and he drank and drank again of its sparkling fountain without ever quenching his thirst for popularity, for flattery, for success. Flattery, popularity, success—all three he had in plenty for eight resplendent years. Volume after volume of "Tristram Shandy" wooed and won public applause. Sterne travelled abroad and found the same adulation in other capitals of Europe that he had enjoyed in London. When the popularity of "Shandy" {302} appeared to be on the wane, and the fame of its author to be dwindling, he whipped it up again with the "Sentimental Journey." We may finish his story by anticipation. He died one of the most tragic deaths recorded in the necrology of genius. He died in London on March 18, 1768, and he died alone. The wish he had expressed of expiring at an inn untroubled by the presence of mourning friends was grimly gratified. In lonely lodgings, beneath the speculative gaze of a memoir-writing footman and the care of hired hands, Sterne gasped out the words, "Now it is come!" and so died. He was buried almost unattended, and his body was stolen from its new-made grave by resurrectionists, and recognized, when half-dissected, on an anatomist's table by a horrified friend. So the story goes—not, indeed, absolutely authentic, but certainly not absolutely without credit—the melancholy conclusion of an ill-spent life and a splendid, ill-used intellect.

For his conduct to his wife his memory has been scourged by Thackeray and by his latest biographer, Mr. H. D. Traill. It cannot be too severely scourged. He took her youth, he took her money, and he tired of her, and was untrue to her, and spoke against her in the dastardly letters he wrote to his friends and in which he has gibbeted himself to all time as a hideous warning, a sort of sentimental scarecrow. "As to the nature of Sterne's love affairs," says Mr. Traill, "I have come, though not without hesitation, to the conclusion that they were most, if not all of them, what is called, somewhat absurdly, platonic. . . . But as I am not one of those who hold that the conventionally 'innocent' is the equivalent of the morally harmless in this matter, I cannot regard the question as worth any very minute investigation. I am not sure that the habitual male flirt, who neglects his wife to sit continually languishing at the feet of some other woman, gives much less pain and scandal to others or does much less mischief to himself and the objects of his adoration than the thorough-going profligate."

One of the greatest of German writers, Jean Paul Richter, {303} declares more than once that he regards Sterne as his master. The statement is amazing. Jean Paul Richter, Jean Paul the Only One, as he was fondly called, was immeasurably sincerer than his master. All that was sham, tinsel, and tawdry in the writings of Yorick was genuine, heart-felt, and soul-inspiring in Jean Paul. Yorick's sentiment was pinchbeck; Jean Paul's was pure gold. All that Richter ever wrote is animated with the deepest religious feeling, the tenderest sympathy, the gentlest and bravest pity. Yorick, in the black and white of his sacred calling's gown and bands, grins and leers like a disguised satyr. His morality is a mummer's mask; his pathos is pretence; the only thing truly Irish about him is his humor, his ceaseless wit, the unfailing sparkle of his fancy.

[Sidenote: 1760—A levée under difficulties]

Quite suddenly the ghastly tragicomedy of the King's life came to an end. There was, we are told, a strange affectation of an incapacity to be sick that ran through the whole royal family, which they carried so far that few of them were more willing to own any other member of the family ill than to acknowledge themselves to be so. "I have known the King," says Hervey, "get out of his bed choking with a sore throat, and in a high fever, only to dress and have a levée, and in five minutes undress and return to his bed till the same ridiculous farce of health was to be presented the next day at the same hour." It must be owned, however, that George made a stout fight against ill-health, and if he shammed being well, he kept up the sham for a good long time. He came into the world more than a dozen years before Lord Hervey was born, and he contrived to keep his place in it for some seventeen years after Lord Hervey had died. Time had nearly come round with George as with Shakespeare's Cassius; his death fell very near to his birthday. George was born on October 30, 1683, and on October 25, 1760, he was on the verge of completing his seventy-seventh year. On October 25, 1760, he woke early, as was his custom, drank his chocolate, inquired as to the quarter whence the wind came, and talked of a walk in the {304} garden. That walk in the garden was never taken. The page who attended on the King had left the room. He heard a groan and the sound of a fall. [Sidenote: 1727-1760—Passed away] He came back, and found the King a helpless heap upon the floor. "Call Amelia," the dying man gasped; but before Amelia could be called he was dead. Amelia, when she came, being a little deaf, did not grasp at once the full extent of what had happened, and bent over her father only to learn in the most startling and shocking manner that her father was dead. The Countess of Walmoden, too, was sent for. It would seem as if the ample charms of the Countess of Walmoden, which had delighted George so much while he lived, might have some power to conjure him back from the common doom of kings. But George the Second was dead beyond the power of all the fat and painted women in the world to help. "Friends," says Thackeray in his Essay, "he was your fathers' king as well as mine; let us drop a respectful tear over his grave." But indeed it is very hard to drop a respectful tear over the grave of George the Second. Seldom has any man been a king with fewer kingly qualities. He had courage, undoubtedly—courage enough to be habitually described by the Jacobites as "the Captain," but his courage was the courage of a captain and not of a king. He was obstinate, he was narrow-minded, he was selfish, he was repulsively and even ridiculously incontinent. The usual quantity of base and servile adulation was poured over the Royal coffin. The same abject creatures—they or their kind—that had rhymed their lying verses over the dead Prince of Wales who had hated his father, now rhymed their lying verses over the dead king who had hated his son. If George the Second had been a more common man, instead of being Elector of Hanover and King of England, one might have said of him frankly enough that he was a person about as little to be admired as a man well could be who was not a coward or in the ordinary sense of the term a criminal. But because he was a crowned king, it was regarded as a patriotic duty then to make much of the {305} departed monarch, and to talk of him in the strain which would have been appropriate if he had been a Marcus Aurelius. The best, perhaps, that can be said of him is that, on the whole, all things considered, he might have been worse. It would be unfair to a George who has, at a long interval, to succeed him, to say that George the Second was actually the worst of his line and name; but he was so little, so very little, worthy, that the fulsome pens must have labored in his praise. If many people rejoiced at his removal, it would be hard to say who grieved with the exception of a few, a select few, of his family and the hangers-on of the Walmoden type, to whom

his existence was the essential figure in their own existence. To the vast bulk of the English people the matter was of no moment whatever. All that they knew was that a second George, who was Elector of Hanover, had passed away from the English throne, and that a third George, who was Elector of Hanover, had mounted into the vacant seat.

Never was a king better served than George the Second; never had so ignoble a sovereign such men to make his kingdom strong and his reign famous. He began his time of royalty under the protection of the sturdy figure of Walpole; he closed it under the protection of the stately form of Pitt.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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