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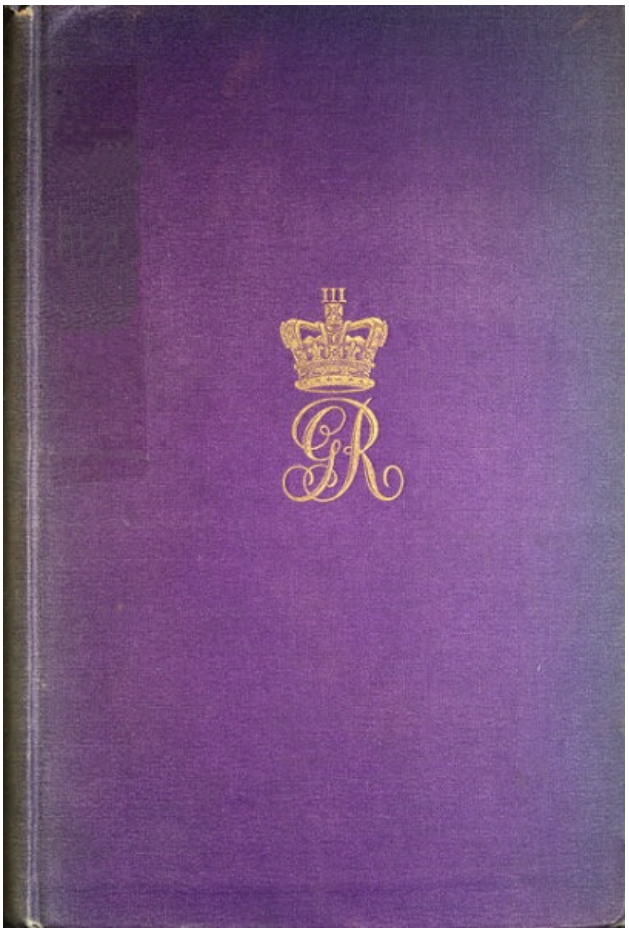

From a caricature (circa 1810) in the British Museum

GEORGE THE THIRD

FARMER GEORGE

BY

LEWIS MELVILLE

Author of "The First Gentleman of Europe,"
"The Life of William Makepeace Thackeray,"
&c., &c.

WITH FIFTY-THREE PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

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ENGLAND AND AMERICA. I. THE STAMP ACT

George Grenville will live in history as the statesman who took the first step seriously to alienate the American colonies from the motherland. He was, indeed, an

unfortunate man, for he is doomed to be remembered only by the magnitude of his mistakes. He attacked Wilkes, and that demagogue at once took a place in the line of heroes who have fought for the liberty of the subject against the oppression of the Crown; he taxed a colony, and not long after England had to deplore the loss of the United States: indeed, the only act that Dr. Hunt can find to the credit of Grenville's judgment was the purchase, for £70,000 from the Duke and Duchess of Athol, of the Isle of Man, which then for the first time came completely under the royal authority. [1]

Of course, the idea to tax the American colonies did not arise with Grenville. It had been suggested by an American governor to Walpole, who, however, was too wary to [Pg 2] entertain the scheme. "No, it is too hazardous a measure for me," he said drily; "I shall leave it to my successors."[2] But those who guided the helm of State immediately after him were also careful not to deal with the question except by ignoring it, and consequently it was left for Grenville to undertake, under pressure, it is said, from the King.[3] "I have heard it doubted whether the measure originated with Mr. George Grenville," John Nicholls has written. "I have heard it intimated the measure originated with the King, that is to say, with the King's secret advisers; and that Mr. Grenville acceded to the plan with considerable reluctance. I have no means of knowing whether the measure originated with Mr. Grenville or with the King. But from the unremitting obstinacy with which the King persevered in the wish to impose taxes on the Colonies by a British Parliament, every man must see that it may fairly be called the favourite measure of his reign."[4]

It is an axiom of the constitution that the King can do no wrong, and therefore, [Pg 3] whoever proposed the scheme, the responsibility falls on the shoulders of the responsible ministers of the Crown, who, on March 10, 1764, laid before Parliament resolutions for further regulating American commerce, for the prevention of smuggling, and for the maintenance of a small standing army of 10,000 men. Certain port dues were to be raised, though they were to be counterbalanced by concessions in other directions; but the increase in revenue from this source would not suffice to maintain the garrison, the cost of which was estimated at £350,000 a year; and it was proposed to raise £100,000 by an Act requiring that all legal documents should have stamps.

This was, indeed, an innovation, for hitherto custom duties had been imposed upon the colonists solely for the purpose of regulating trade: the Stamp Act would raise revenues from them. There was something to be said in defence of the Act, for though the late war had not been undertaken solely as a defence of the colonies, yet a great expense had been incurred by the operations necessary to repress the intrusions of the French Canadians. Was it right, Grenville asked, that the colonies should be defended by England, and should contribute nothing towards the cost of their defence? To Grenville, who never looked ahead, this seemed unreasonable, for, [Pg 4] he contended, since the money raised in America was to be spent there, there could be no justifiable objection to the tax which it was proposed to impose; but, while he pointed out to the colonial agents resident in London that the tax was reasonable and an easy and equitable way to raise the money, he expressed his willingness, if the colonists disliked the scheme, to abandon it if the colonists would raise the money themselves in some other way. In his desire to be conciliatory he decided to defer the introduction of the Stamp Act until America had time to express an opinion.[5]

Early in 1765 the Stamp Act was introduced, and passed the House of Commons with but forty dissentients. The debate, Burke says, was extremely languid. Pitt, suffering from gout, was unable to be present, but Conway[6] and Beckford protested [Pg 5] against the measure, and Barré[7], more far-seeing than most, denounced it in a startling speech, in which he referred to the colonists as "sons of liberty." "Children planted by your care!" he exclaimed. "No! your oppressions planted them in America; they fled from your tyranny to a then uncultivated and inhospitable country! They nourished by your indulgence! They grew by your neglect of them! They protected by your arms! They have nobly taken up arms in your defence." The Bill, which was to come into operation on November 1, passed the House of Lords without a division, and the Royal Assent was given on March 22.

The question, however, was in England "little understood and less attended to";[8] and contemporary memoirs may be ransacked in vain for any reference thereto. Even Walpole, whose letters form so detailed a chronicle of events, dismissed it cavalierly. "There has been nothing of note in Parliament," he wrote to Lord Hertford on February 12, 1765, "but one slight day on the American taxes, which Charles Townshend supporting, received a pretty heavy thump from Barré, who is the present Pitt and the dread of all vociferous Norths and Rigbys, on whose lungs depended so much of Mr. Grenville's power." The fact of the matter was that England [Pg 6] had not realized the importance of colonies, and practically nothing was known in the motherland of her possession. "I suppose you are violent for your American friends," Lady Sarah Bunbury, so late as July 6, 1775, wrote to Lady Susan O'Brien. "I hope they are good sort of people, but I don't love Presbyterians and I love the English soldiers, so that I at present have a horror of those who use them ill beyond the laws of war, which *scalping* certainly is, and I don't believe a word of the soldiers doing

more than they ought; you know one is always unreasonable when one's prejudiced." [9]

Now the colonists were, of course, no more addicted to scalping and other practices "beyond the laws of war" than the English; and the knowledge that these and similar ideas prevailed at home undoubtedly infused a feeling of bitterness into their love for the country of their descent. Moreover, very naturally, they resented the almost ostentatious display of their unimportance in the eyes of English ministers, which became known to them when, to give one example from many, on the resignation of the Duke of Newcastle, a whole closetful of American despatches was found unopened.[10] They were English, and proud of their descent, a hardy, [Pg 7] frugal, independent folk, determined not to be treated as a subject race; the last people in the world to brook interference, and the first to remember that they were colonies, not conquests, brothers, not slaves. They were simple in their habits and in their ideas, and, in some places, Puritanical to excess—the stool of repentance and the scold's gag were still in use, and they had anticipated the publican's "black list"; but as a nation they were thriving, and the towns of Boston, New York, Charleston, and Philadelphia were so many convincing proofs of their increasing wealth.

The colonists were bound to the motherland by a strong feeling of loyalty, by fear of the French-Canadians, whose aggressions they were not strong (or perhaps, it is more accurate to say did not realize they were strong) enough to repel, and also by [Pg 8] the prevailing jealousy between the different provinces which was so strong that Otis in 1765 declared that, if left to itself, "America would be a mere shambles of blood and confusion." England's treatment of the colonies was not harsh, but the tactless treatment aroused even more discontent than an illiberal policy. The Americans were continually being irritated by the attitude of the governors sent out by the committee of the Privy Council responsible for colonial government, but paid by the provinces over which they ruled, who did not understand them, made no attempt to learn their habits, and showed little or no regard for the Assemblies in their districts. "Such wrong-headed people," said one of these officers, "I thank God I never had to do with before." The Americans, on the other hand, complained of many of the people who were sent from England to occupy official positions. "For many years past most of the places in the gift of the Crown have been filled with broken Members of Parliament, of bad, if any, principles, pimps, *valets-de-chambre*, electioneering scoundrels, and even livery servants." General Huske wrote about 1758: "In one word, America has been for many years made the hospital of Great Britain for her decayed courtiers and abandoned, worn-out dependants. I can point you out a chief justice of a province [Pg 9] appointed from home for no other reason than publicly prostituting his honour and conscience at an election; a livery servant that is secretary of a province, appointed from hence; a pimp, collector of a whole province, who got this place of the man in power for prostituting his handsome wife to his embraces and procuring him other means of gratifying his lust. Innumerable are instances of this sort in places of great trust."[11]

These annoyances were but pin-pricks, compared with many restrictions placed upon their trade. There were laws ordaining that all trade between the colonies should be carried in ships built in England or the colonies, and forbidding the exportation of tobacco, sugar, cotton, wool, and other articles except to England and her other colonies, as well as a host of minor regulations, such as that in the woods of Maine no tree with a diameter greater than two feet at a foot above ground should be cut down, except to make a mast for a ship of the royal navy. It is true that on the other hand no Englishman might buy tobacco that was not grown in America or Bermuda, that the export trade to the motherland was encouraged by bounties, and that owing to a system by which duties were remitted on exportation to America they [Pg 10] could purchase continental goods more cheaply than they could be obtained in England[12]; but these compensations did not make amends, in the colonists' eyes, for the regulations that cramped their trade.

These restrictions were much resented, and, as the volume of their commerce increased, might well have goaded the colonists into rebellion, had they not chosen the path of least resistance, and evaded them through the simple device of smuggling. The Sugar Act of 1733, designed in the interests of British merchants, forbidding the importation of sugar and molasses from the French West Indies except on payment of a prohibitive duty, aroused the ire of the Americans, who, realizing the uselessness of petitions,[13] only plunged still deeper into the contraband trade. This, in turn, angered those who had expected to benefit by the Act, and many protests to enforce the law were made to the home government, who turned a deaf ear to such representations until after the Peace of Paris, when Bute sent revenue cutters to cruise off the American coast. The officers of these ships [Pg 11] were sworn to act as revenue officers and smuggling was somewhat checked at the cost of a vast deal of irritation at the summary methods of the sailors.

The easy passage of the Stamp Act showed that Parliament did not anticipate any considerable opposition from America, and even the agents of the colonies, including Benjamin Franklin, who represented Pennsylvania, thought that a small standing army was desirable, and believed the colonies had no choice but to submit. The

colonists themselves, however, were not slow to express a very decided opposition to the Act, and perhaps their objection was not the less vehement because Grenville had prefaced the introduction of the resolutions by stating that they were an "experiment towards further aid." That, though, was but a trifle beside the main issue. Hitherto all taxes in the colonies had been voted by the several Provincial Assemblies: now was asserted the right of England to tax her colonies. Not to protest was tacitly to admit the theory of the absolute dominion of the motherland, and at once a stand was made against the infringement of the doctrine that in free nations taxation and representation go hand in hand. Some attempt was made in England to show that America was virtually represented in Parliament, but this fallacy was [Pg 12] exposed by Pitt: "There is an idea in some minds that the colonies are virtually represented in the House. I would fain know by whom an American is represented here. Is he represented by any knight of the shire in this kingdom? Would to God that respectable representation were augmented to a greater number! Or, will you tell him that he is represented by any representative of a borough? a borough which perhaps its own representatives never saw. This is what is called *the rotten part of the constitution*. It cannot continue a century. If it does not drop it must be amputated. The idea of a virtual representation in this House is the most contemptible that ever entered into the head of man; it does not deserve a serious refutation."[14]

It was not denied by the colonists that the money raised in their country would be spent in their country, but this was only a further aggravation, for they resented the idea of a standing army, perhaps remembering the abuses which in earlier days it had been called upon to support in England. They contended that in time of war they had shown themselves willing and able to raise a force at the request of the governors, for which act they had been thanked by Parliament; and they asserted [Pg 13] that in times of peace their militia was sufficient to protect them. The fact that the Stamp Act relaxed certain restrictions on their trades weighed as nothing against a subsequent measure obliging them to provide the British troops stationed amongst them with quarters and also with fire, candles, beds, vinegar and salt. This was an invasion of the privacy of their homes that, in time of peace, they would not endure.

> "Sad news in the papers—G——d knows who's to blame!
> The Colonies seem to be all in a flame,
> This Stamp Act, no doubt, might be good for the Crown,
> But I fear 'tis a pill that will never go down."[15]

No sooner did the colonists learn of the passing of the Stamp Act than a cry of protest rang out from all over the country. James Otis, the King's Advocate, resigned his official position in order to be at liberty to denounce the action of the home Government, a task in which he was ably seconded by John Adams; while Patrick Henry, whom Byron described as

> "the forest-born Demosthenes,
> Whose thunder shook the Philip of the seas,"

introduced into the Virginian House of Burgesses a set of resolutions, that the first settlers in that province had brought with them, and transmitted to their posterity, all the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the people of England, that they enjoyed [Pg 14] the right of being governed by their own assembly in the article of taxes and internal police, and that the Stamp Act was illegal, unconstitutional and unjust.[16] "Cæsar had his Brutus," Henry concluded a violent speech. "Charles the First his Cromwell, George the Third"—here he was interrupted by cries of "Treason" which disconcerted him for a moment when he recovered himself and continued—"may profit by their example. If this be treason make the most of it." It showed the temper of the nation that Virginia, hitherto regarded as the most loyal state, approved the resolutions by a large majority. The Governor immediately dissolved the assembly, but, like all the acts of the English in America at this time, this move was too late to be effective, for the resolutions were regarded by other provinces as a precedent, and were adopted by numerous other legislative bodies.

Boston, which had had experience of the utter futility of petitions to the King and to Parliament, flamed at once into violence. The Assembly there voted thanks to General Conway and Colonel Barré for their opposition in the House of Commons to the Stamp Act, and ordered their portraits to be placed in the Town Hall. On August [Pg 15] 26 a mob destroyed the Stamp Office, the Admiralty records, and the houses of public officials who had given offence by accepting the objectionable Act. Hutchinson, the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief-Justice of Massachusetts, was maltreated; while Oliver, the Secretary of the province, who had accepted the post of Stamp-Distributor, was hung in effigy on a tree in the main street of the town, his house destroyed and himself compelled by the threatening crowd to resign his new appointment, and to swear—beneath the tree where his effigy swung in the breeze—that under no circumstances would he ever resume it. The rioters were supported by the overt sympathy of their countrymen. Mayhew, a popular preacher, chose for the text of a sermon, "I would that they were even cut off which trouble you"; the Governor, who had arrested a prominent merchant, one of the ring-leaders of the

disturbances, was compelled to release him, under threat from the civic guard that otherwise they would disband themselves; while some other imprisoned citizens were set free by the mob, which forced the gaolers to surrender the keys.

November 1, when the Stamp Act came into operation, was kept as a day of mourning. The bells were muffled and tolled and mock funerals passed through the [Pg 16] streets; copies of the Act were hawked through the towns with the title of "England's Folly and the Ruin of America"; while the newspapers appeared with a death's-head in place of the stamp which by the new measure they had to bear. Boston was content to hoist half-mast the colours of the shipping in its harbour, but Philadelphia spiked the government guns in the town and in the barracks, and other towns displayed their resentment in similar practical ways.[17]

It was found impossible, however, to distribute the stamps; nay, more, it was impossible even to keep them, for the rioters kept strict watch and as each box was landed, wrested it from the authorities, and consigned it to the flames. The Governor of New Jersey had to request that the stamps should be kept on a man-of-war, while on November 7, Francis Bernard, the Governor of Massachusetts, informed Admiral Lord Colville that such was the "increasing licentiousness" of the people that he feared that he would be obliged to quit his post. The position indeed was untenable. Every legal document to be valid required a stamp, but there was no stamped paper to be had. The law courts could proceed only with criminal cases, for which no [Pg 17] stamps were required; and business was at a standstill, until the Governors, realizing the danger of allowing this state of affairs to continue, on the ground that it was impossible to secure stamps, issued certificates to the merchants permitting them to send their ships on voyages without complying with the Act. Not content with this licence, however, the Council of Massachusetts went so far as to enter a resolution in their journals that it was lawful to transact business without stamps.[18] A more fatal blow to the mother-country was delivered by the principal colonial merchants, who agreed in solemn conclave to order no more goods from England, to cancel all orders already given, and to send no more remittances to England in payment of debts until the Stamp Act was repealed—which last resolution could be excused only on the ground that all is fair in war.

Opposition in the colonies had been fanned by the change of government at home. The news of Grenville's fall in July had been received with delight, and the joy was intense when it became known that in the succeeding Rockingham administration, Conway, who had opposed the Stamp Act, had accepted the office of Secretary of [Pg 18] State for the southern department. The occurrences in America were, however, still viewed with indifference in England, and the King in a letter to Conway, dated December 5, was one of the first to sound the note of alarm. "I am more and more grieved at the accounts of America. Where this spirit will end is not to be said. It is undoubtedly the most serious matter that ever came before Parliament; it requires more deliberation, candour, and temper than I fear it will meet with."[19] The trouble was alluded to in the King's Speech at the opening of Parliament on December 17. "Matters of importance," it was said, "had lately occurred in some of the colonies in America, which demand serious attention"; but such a reference was resented by George Grenville and his supporters, who attacked ministers for attempting to gloss over the recent events in America as "matters of importance," when, as a matter of fact, they contended, the colonies were in a state of rebellion.

In spite of the conviction in America that General Conway would remove the obnoxious tax, ministers were undecided what course to pursue, and when at last they realized the seriousness of the position, they found themselves face to face with [Pg 19] only a choice between the disconcerting tasks of repealing the Stamp Act or enforcing it at the point of the sword. They were not given long to decide, for pressure was brought to bear upon them by the great body of English merchants who were suffering from the suspension of the American trade. Petitions were presented from London, Liverpool, Glasgow and other manufacturing towns, pointing out that the debts that America refused to discharge amounted to four millions sterling—an eighth of the entire amount was owed to Glasgow shippers by the states of Maryland and Virginia alone—that further orders were withheld, and that consequently, artisans were thrown out of work, and many merchants would shortly be reduced to bankruptcy. The only remedy for this disastrous state of affairs, the petitioners represented, was a speedy repeal of the Stamp Act.

It remained, however, for Pitt to force the hands of the new administration. "My resolution is taken," he wrote to Nuthall[20] on January 9, 1766; "and if I can crawl or be carried, I will deliver my mind and heart upon the state of America." Pitt stated his opinion very openly in the debate on the Address, when he declared that England [Pg 20] had no right to lay a tax on the colonies, although the authority of England over them was sovereign and supreme in every case of legislation.

"The colonists are subjects of this kingdom equally entitled with yourselves to all the national rights of mankind and the peculiar privileges of Englishmen; equally bound by its laws and equally participating in the constitution of this free country. The Americans are the sons, not the bastards, of England. Taxation is no part of the governing or legislative power. Taxes are the voluntary gift and grant of the

Commons alone. In legislation, the three estates of the realm are alike concerned; but the concurrence of the peers and the Crown to a tax, is only necessary to clothe it with the form of a law; the gift and grant is of the Commons alone. In ancient days, the Crown, the barons, and the clergy possessed the lands. In those days the barons and the clergy granted to the Crown, they gave and granted what was their own. At present, since the discovery of America, and other circumstances permitting, the Commons are become the proprietors of the land; the Church has but a pittance; the property of the Lords, compared with that of the Commons is as a drop of water in the ocean; and this House represents those Commons, the proprietors of the lands; [Pg 21] and those proprietors virtually represent the rest of the inhabitants. When, therefore, in this House we give a grant, we give and grant what is our own. But in an American tax, what do we do? We, your Majesty's Commons for Great Britain, give a grant to your Majesty, what? Our own property? No; we give a grant to your Majesty the property of your Majesty's Commons of America. It is an absurdity in terms. The distinction between legislation and taxation is essentially necessary to liberty. The Crown, the peers, are equally legislative powers with the Commons. If taxation be a part of simple legislation, the Crown, the peers, have rights in taxation as well as yourselves; rights which they will claim, which they will exercise when the principle can be supported by power.... The commoners of America, represented in their several assemblies, have ever been in possession, in the exercise of this, their constitutional right, of giving and granting their own money. They would have been slaves if they had not enjoyed it. At the same time this kingdom, as the supreme governing and legislative power, has always bound the colonies by her laws, by her regulations and restrictions, in trade, in navigation, in manufactures; in everything, except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent. [Pg 22] Here I would draw the line, '*quam ulira citraque requit consistere rectum*.'"

George Grenville at once spoke to oppose this view, only to bring down upon him a scathing attack from Pitt. "The gentleman tells us that America is obstinate; that America is almost in open rebellion. Sir, I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people so dead to all feelings of liberty as voluntarily to submit to be slaves, would have been fit instruments to have made slaves of all the rest." The Great Commoner's uncompromising declaration of the inability of the English Parliament legally to tax the colonies, however, was not allowed to escape criticism. Burke[21] opposed the theory, "Junius" attacked it, and in the House of Lords Lord Mansfield denied it; while, later, Macaulay denounced it. "The Stamp Act," he said, "was indefensible, not because it was beyond the unconstitutional competence of [Pg 23] Parliament, but because it was unjust and impolitic, sterile of revenue, and fertile of discontent."[22]

Whether Pitt was right or wrong, his influence was such that Lord Rockingham realised the importance of conciliating him.[23]

At the same time, however, the Prime Minister desired to steer a middle course, and eventually resolved to repeal the Stamp Act, but to preface the measure by a Declaratory Act, enunciating the undoubted right of Parliament to make laws binding the British in all cases. Benjamin Franklin, examined before a Committee of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into the American question, while denouncing the Stamp duty as impolitic and injurious to the colonies and expressing his belief that his countrymen would never submit to it in any form, unless compelled by arms, expressed his opinion that, while nothing would induce the Assemblies to revoke their resolutions, they would not object to an act asserting the abstract rights of Parliament to impose taxes as long as the Stamp Act was repealed. [Pg 24] Rockingham, thus encouraged, thereupon introduced the Declaratory Act, not because he had any liking for it, but because in his opinion many people of high principles would never have been brought to repeal the Stamp Act without it.[24] "It was not the inclination of Lord Rockingham," said Charles James Fox some years later, "but the necessity of his situation, which was the cause of the Declaratory Act. The Act passed the House of Commons without a division, and, in the House of Lords, when Lord Camden insisted on a division, there were only four peers who voted with him 'non-content.'" [25]

The House of Commons had on January 21 given leave to Conway to bring in a bill to repeal the Stamp duty, and had rejected by 275 to 167 Grenville's amendment to [Pg 25] substitute "explain and amend" for "repeal." The Bill was read for the first time on February 21 and in the long and fierce debates that ensued Grenville took an active part in defence of his measure. "It was," said Horace Walpole, "too much to give up his favourite Bill and his favourite occupation, talking, both at once." Though vigorously contested to the end, the Bill passed the lower chamber, and was on March 4 carried to the House of Lords, where, says George Onslow, it met "with not quite so civil a reception as such a bill, so carried in our House, and so conveyed as it was, by a hundred and fifty members to the other House, did, in my opinion, deserve." After two divisions, each of which resulted in a majority for ministers, the Bill passed the House of Lords and on March 18 received the Royal Assent, "an event that caused more universal joy," Burke said, "throughout the British dominions" than perhaps any other that can be remembered, and left Grenville to lament that "it was clear that both England and America were now governed by the mob."

CHAPTER XIV

[Pg 26]

THE KING *versus* ROCKINGHAM AND THE REPEAL OF THE STAMP ACT

Though in his farewell interview with Grenville, in answer to a question of the departing minister as to how he had incurred his Majesty's displeasure, the King stated that his late ministers had put too much "constraint" upon him, and instead of asking or tendering advice, had expected obedience, Grenville insisted in attributing his fall to the machinations of Lord Bute—and this in spite of the fact that George assured him that Lord Bute "had no hand in advising the present change."[26]

Photo by Emery Walker. *From a portrait after Sir Joshua Reynolds*

CHARLES WATSON WENTWORTH, SECOND MARQUESS OF ROCKINGHAM

There is scarcely any doubt that the King spoke the truth, for his dislike of Grenville was alone sufficient to explain his desire for a change of ministers. "I had rather see the devil in my closet than George Grenville", he said emphatically; and though in later years he spoke with some appreciation of Grenville's talents, he could never bring himself to forgive the minister's conduct in the last weeks of his administration. Grenville, however, was by no means alone in his belief that Bute was [Pg 27] even so late as July, 1766, a member of the King's private junto.[27] The Rockingham Whigs believed it, and made it a condition of their taking office that Lord Bute neither directly nor indirectly should interfere in affairs of state. Walpole declared that the Lord Strange episode early in 1776[28] "proved that notwithstanding all his Majesty's and Lord Bute's own solemn professions, the latter was really Minister still; and that no favour could be obtained but by paying court to him. In such circumstances is it wonderful that the nation fell into disgrace and confusion, or that the Crown itself suffered such humiliations? A King to humour a timid yet overbearing Favourite, encouraging opposition to his own Ministers? What a picture of weakness!"[29]

The Duke of Richmond, too, was a firm believer in the Bute bogey. "I was told that Lord Bute went this day about noon to his own house at Kew. He did not go to the [Pg 28] common road over the bridge, but came by riverside in his coach; from his own garden he crossed alone to that of the Princess of Wales's at Kew. The King also about the same time went to the Princess of Wales's at Kew, and stayed there two hours. 'Tis remarkable, that 'tis said that the Princess was not herself at Kew, so that this was not accidental, but evidently a meeting of the King's with Lord Bute settled so beforehand." So runs an extract on July 7, 1766, in the Duke of Richmond's *Journal*; and five days later appears a corroborative entry: "The King at about eleven went to the Princess at Kew, although she was not there. At about one, Lord Bute was seen coming from Ealing by a by-road, so that 'tis probable he had again been to meet his Majesty at Kew. Lord Bute had been at Luton between the Monday and the Saturday; and Martin, who came to London from thence on Thursday or Friday, knew

nothing of Mr. Pitt's being sent for; but that proves clearly only that Lord Bute did not tell it him; it seems clear, though, that he knew it by these two meetings with the King, and doubtless he advised it." The weak point of these statements is that the Duke of Richmond does not state his authority, who, it seems probable, was merely a hired spy, not unlikely to so report what he thought would best please his employers. [30]

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Even so late as 1782, about the time of the formation of the second Rockingham administration, Walpole states that, "It was thought the King saw Lord Bute on that occasion."[31] The truth probably is that Bute never saw the King in private after Lord Rockingham accepted office, and in confirmation of this may be quoted a letter of Lord Bute and a statement addressed by his eldest son, Lord Mountstuart, to the newspapers in October, 1778. "I know as little, save from newspapers, of the present busy scene, as I do of transactions in Persia," Bute wrote to Lord Hardwicke on July 26, 1766, when Lord Chatham became Prime Minister, "and yet am destined for ever to be a double uneasiness, that of incapacity to serve those I love, and yet to be continually censured for every public transaction, though totally retired from courts and public business." "He, Lord Bute, does authorize me to say," so ran the circular letter of Lord Mountstuart, "that he declares upon his solemn word of honour that he has not had the honour of waiting upon his Majesty but at his *levée* or Drawing-room; nor has he presumed to offer an advice or opinion concerning the disposition of offices, or the conduct of measures either directly or indirectly, by himself or any other from the time when the late Duke of Cumberland was consulted in the arrangement of a ministry, 1765, to the present hour."

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This is supported by Brougham, who states explicitly that the King, after the period specified, never had any connexion with Lord Bute directly or indirectly. "Nor did he ever see him but once; and this history of that occurrence suddenly puts the greater part of the stories to flight which are current upon this subject. His aunt, the Princess Amelia, had some plan of again bringing the two parties together; and on a day when George III was to pay her a visit at her villa at Gunnersbury, near Brentford, she invited Lord Bute, whom she probably had never informed of her foolish intentions. He was walking in the garden when she took her nephew downstairs to view it, saying there was no one there but an old friend of his, whom he had not seen for some years. He had not time to ask who it might be, when on entering the garden he saw his former minister walking up an alley. The King instantly turned back to avoid him, reproved the silly old woman sharply, and declared that, if ever she repeated such experiments, she had seen him for the last time in her house."[32]

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It is further related by Galt, how the Princess Dowager and Lord Bute laid a plan to take the King by surprise, "so that Lord Bute should, as if by chance, obtain permission to see the first dispatches received by the King while at Carlton House; it being frequently the custom for the Secretary of State to transmit them at those periods. When the green box was brought to the King, he, as usual, was about to retire to read the papers contained therein, when 'The Favourite' took up two candles, and made as if to precede the King to his closet, in the hope that, when there, he would be invited to remain and acquaint himself with the contents of the documents, by which means he might informally return to political business. But the young monarch was on his guard," says the chronicler, "and stopping at the door of his apartment, took the candles himself, bowed dismissal to the candidate, and shut the door: a hint fully understood, and considered as a final rejection." This episode presumably took place in the latter part of 1765, after which year we are assured, when his Majesty was announced at Carlton House, Bute always retired by the private staircase.[33]

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The offer made to Lord Rockingham to form a government took most people by surprise, for that peer had not been marked out as a Prime Minister, being, indeed, in the public eye associated less with politics than with the turf, and distinguished chiefly by his singular wager with Lord Orford on a race between two geese at Newmarket. Devoid of ambition, he had no craving for power, and was reluctant to accept office when that course was proposed to him by the Duke of Cumberland, who detected in him sterling ability, which, however, was not visible to the King. "I thought that I had not two men in my Bedchamber of less parts than Lord Rockingham,"[34] said the sovereign, who later twitted the Prime Minister with his silence in Parliament: "I am much pleased the Opposition has forced you to hear your own voice, which I hope will encourage you to stand forth in other debates."[35]

The Rockingham administration was undeniably weak—"a lutestring ministry, fit only for summer wear," Charles Townshend called it. The Duke of Grafton, one of the Secretaries of State, was unreliable, and Conway, the other, whose courage on the field was imperturbable,[36] on the Treasury Bench was infirm of purpose; while the Duke of Newcastle, who had reluctantly yielded his claim to the Treasury and accepted the post of Lord Privy Seal (to which, as a propitiatory gift, was for the

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nonce attached the patronage of the Church), and Lord Winchelsea, President of the Council, were old men. Every effort was made to secure the support, or at least the neutrality, of Pitt, and, with this object in view, places were found for his friends—the Duke of Grafton and General Conway, as already mentioned, were made Secretaries of State, his brother-in-law, James Grenville, was appointed Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and his confidential legal adviser, Nuthall, one of the Secretaries of the Treasury, while Lord Lyttelton was offered the post of Cofferer of the Household, and Chief Justice Pratt was raised to the peerage as Baron Camden. Pitt, however, had no kindly feeling for an administration that divided the Whigs, and, though not actually hostile, he let it be clearly known that he had no confidence in it. "The openings from Lord Rockingham to your Lordship and Colonel Barré, you will easily believe do not [Pg 34] surprise me," he wrote in reply to Lord Shelburne in December, 1765; "nothing being so natural as for ministers, under the double pressure of affairs all in confusion, and doubtful internal situation to recur to distinguished abilities for assistance."

It was not long after this letter was written that Lord Rockingham, in the desire to counteract the dislike of the Court and to convert a part of the strong opposition into supporters, obtained the reluctant consent of the King to make overtures to Pitt to join the ministry. "I have resolved, most coolly and attentively, the business now before me," George wrote to Lord Rockingham on January 9, "and am of opinion that so loose a conversation as that of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Townshend is not sufficient to risk either my dignity or the continuance of my administration, by a fresh treaty with that gentleman, for if it should miscarry, all public opinion of this ministry would be destroyed by such an attempt." Rockingham, however, was firm, and pointed out that, "Your Majesty's administration will be shook to the greatest degree, if no further attempt is made to get Mr. Pitt to take a cordial part, is much too apparent to be disguised."[37] The King's objection however, was amply justified, for, as he had [Pg 35] anticipated, Pitt refused to introduce his opinion, unless in the royal presence and by the royal command, an offer which was declined by the Prime Minister, who sought an ally and not a successor.[38] Not content with the rejection of Lord Rockingham's overtures, Pitt dealt a blow at the ministry when he publicly stated he had no confidence in it. "Pardon me, gentlemen, confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom; youth is the season of credulity," he said in his speech in the debate on the Address, January 14. "By comparing events with each other, reasoning from effects to causes, methinks I plainly discover the traces of an over-ruling influence. [39] There is a clause in the Act of Settlement obliging every minister to sign his name to the advice which he gives to his sovereign. Would it were observed! I have had the honour to serve the Crown, and if I could have submitted to influence, I might still have continued to serve; but I would not be responsible to others."

In the endeavour to secure the repeal of the Stamp Act Lord Rockingham had more to contend against than a refractory House of Commons, for the King threw the [Pg 36] weight of his influence against the measure, and though this was not openly avowed, yet it militated none the less effectually against the administration. That George interfered in this matter has been denied by some writers, but the best authorities, almost without exception, agree that this was the case, and, indeed, a perusal of the memoirs of those who were concerned in the American question confirms this view. Nicholls remarks: "Lord Rockingham repealed the Stamp Act, and from that hour the King determined to remove him";[40] but as a matter of fact George's efforts to displace the Prime Minister dated from the day he became acquainted with the latter's determination to carry the repeal; and, as will be seen, he left no stone unturned to achieve his object. "From a *personal inclination* of the King, and influenced by Lord Bute and the Princess Dowager, the followers of Court favour went the other way, and half the Court at least voted in opposition to administration." [41]

Yet all the time he was intriguing against the ministers, George hid his duplicity under a more or less encouraging manner.[42] "I just take up my pen to thank you for [Pg 37] your attention in sending me a few particulars of this day's debate in the House of Commons, which, by the great majority, must be reckoned a very favourable appearance for the repeal of the Stamp Act in that House," he wrote to Lord Rockingham on January 21, 1766,[43] and on the same day he stated to General Conway: "Nothing can in my eyes be more advantageous than the debate in the House of Commons this day;"[44] but in reference to this same division Sir Lawrence Dundas told the Duke of Bedford that a person ("whom" wrote his Grace, "he did not name, but I suppose to be Colonel Graeme) had informed him he never saw the King so affected as he was at the result of the last great majority in the House of Commons."[45] Indeed, while the official correspondence of the King expressed nothing but cordiality towards the ministers and satisfaction at their various [Pg 38] successes, and while Lord Talbot and some of the "King's friends" were making an overt show of support, Lord Rockingham became aware that Lord Chancellor Northington was organising opposition against the measure within the ministerial ranks. "The Crown itself seemed inclined to consign its members to turn against its own measures," says Walpole. "Lest mankind should mistake the part 'The Favourite' intended to take on the Stamp Act, Lord Denbigh,[46] his standard-bearer, and Augustus Hervey, asked leave to resign their places, as they proposed to vote against

the repeal. The farce was carried on by the King; and to prevent any panic in the minds of those who might have a mind to act the same part, his Majesty told them that they *were at liberty to vote against him and keep their places*."[47]

No self-respecting minister could tolerate this situation, and at the beginning of February Lord Rockingham intimated to the King that "a ministry undermined by the Household could not much longer drag on a precarious existence;"[48] but his representation availed nothing, for a day or two after, on some point in connexion with a Scotch petition, ministers secured a victory only by 148 to 139 votes, on which [Pg 39] occasion in the minority were Lord Mountstuart, Jeremiah Dyson, a Lord of Trade, Lord George Sackville, lately appointed by Lord Rockingham Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, Lord Strange, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and several Grooms of the Bedchamber. Even more humiliating was the defeat of the Government on February 3 in the House of Lords, when the opposition carried the question "to enforce the execution of the Stamp Act *vi et armis*," by 63 to 60 votes.

It seemed to all lookers-on that the days of the ministry were numbered. "The situation of ministers became every day more irksome and precarious," said Walpole; "the talk is of a new administration," Lord Hardwicke informed his brother; and Lord Chesterfield wrote on February 10: "Most people think, and I among the rest, that the date of the present ministers is pretty nearly out." The immediate result of these manœuvres was to damage the prestige of the ministry abroad, and, in support of this statement, Lord Rockingham showed the King "an intercepted letter of the Russian Minister to his Court, in which he advised his mistress not to hasten to conclude the new treaty of commerce between England and Russia with the present ministers, for they could not maintain their ground. Lord Rockingham pointed out the [Pg 40] damage the King brought on his own affairs by having a ministry who did not enjoy his confidence. This the King denied, and said they had his confidence."[49]

The difficulties of the ministry elated the Court, but its joy was premature, for the American question was too important to be settled by royal bribes. On February 7, when, after General Conway had called the attention of the House of Commons to "the calamitous condition of America," Grenville moved an address to the King to enforce the laws, the motion being rejected by 274 to 134 votes. The joy of the ministers at their victory was tempered with disgust at the treachery of the Court, for the minority had included, besides all Lord Bute's friends—the private junto—nearly a dozen of the King's household.

Again, on the following day, the Prime Minister remonstrated with the King. "I humbly presume to trouble your Majesty on the event of last night in the Commons. The appearances there fully justify what I have presumed to mention to your Majesty in some late conversations, and make it necessary for me, both as a faithful and in truth most affectionate servant, to hope that your Majesty will be graciously pleased [Pg 41] to allow me to attend your Majesty at any time in the course of this day, that I may open to your Majesty the sentiments and opinions of a heart, which I will assert has no motive but its affection and duty to your Majesty, and its anxiety for the welfare of this country in the present critical situation."[50] The King's reply consisted of evasions and professions, which were shown by subsequent events to be merely misleading.[51]

Lord Rockingham was a patient man, but when, three days after his interview with the King, one of the supporters of the ministry, John Offley, Member of Parliament for Oxford, wrote to inform him of a report that was being spread in political circles "that Lord Strange had yesterday an interview with the King, who assured him he did not wish for the repeal of the Stamp Act, only wished that it might be altered," the Prime Minister felt that the time had come when a conciliatory attitude would be the veriest folly. Having obtained the assurance of Lord Strange that he had given publicity to the statement attributed to him, Rockingham waited on the sovereign, not once, but, Lord Albemarle thinks, three times, on each occasion obtaining some slight satisfaction. "It would seem", Lord Albemarle remarks, "as if the minister had [Pg 42] determined not to quit the royal presence until he had secured 'the word of a King.'" [52] In vain the King endeavoured to evade a direct answer, in vain he contrived to confuse the issue: Lord Rockingham was determined that, unless the King gave him authority to contradict the report, he would forthwith resign. George at last realised it was advisable to suffer the humiliation of withdrawing from an untenable position as there was no other course open to him that was not infinitely more disagreeable. Indeed, he saw that if Lord Rockingham resigned, it would be necessary to undergo the greater ignominy of begging him to remain, for at the moment there was no one to take his place. The objections to Bute were insuperable, and even the King's courage was not great enough to attempt again to impose him on the nation; of Grenville, George had declared he "would sooner meet him at the end of his sword than let him into his closet"; while Pitt's attitude towards the repeal of the Stamp Act made him less acceptable than the present Prime Minister. In the end, therefore, he gave the desired contradiction in writing. "I desire you would tell Lord Strange that I am now, and have been hitherto, for modification; but that when many were for [Pg 43] enforcing, I was then for a repeal of the Stamp Act."[53]

Thus reinforced, Lord Rockingham remained at the head of affairs, though he was

so disgusted that he would have welcomed an opportunity that would have enabled him to escape from an unenviable position. He realised, however, it was his duty to do all in his power to repeal the Stamp Act, and, in spite of all difficulties, he persevered until the Bill received the Royal Assent on March 18. The King had frequently assured Lord Rockingham that members of the Household who voted against the repeal were actuated by conscientious scruples and that when once that question was settled they would return to their allegiance; but ministers soon discovered there was no truth in this, for the opposition of the King's friends continued.[54]

The end was now not far off. "The ministry is dead and only lying in state, and Charles Townshend who never spoke for them is one of the mutes," said a keen observer. The Duke of Grafton, after a visit early in May to Pitt at Hayes, said in the [Pg 44] House of Lords that the Government wanted "authority, dignity, and extension," adding that "if Mr. Pitt would give his assistance, he should with pleasure take up the spade and dig in the trenches;" and he followed up this disloyal speech by resigning on May 14 the seals of his office. These were offered in the first instance to Lord Hardwicke, who declined them but accepted an office without emolument, and afterwards to the Duke of Richmond, who accepted them. Intrigues were then set on foot by Lord Northington, and these were so successful that on July 7, to quote Horace Walpole, "His Majesty with the most frank indifference, and without even thanking them [the ministers] for their services, and for having undertaken the administration at his own earnest solicitation, acquainted them severally that he had sent for Mr. Pitt."[55]

The Rockingham ministry, in spite of the King's attitude, had done well during its year of office, for, besides the repeal of the Stamp Act and the conclusions of an advantageous commercial treaty with Russia, it had rescinded the unpopular Cyder Tax and had passed the important resolution that, except in cases provided for by Act of Parliament, general warrants were illegal. It was, indeed, an enlightened [Pg 45] administration, and deserved the encomium delivered by Burke. "They treated their sovereign with decency; with reverence. They discountenanced, and, it is hoped, for ever abolished, the dangerous and unconstitutional practice of removing military officers for their votes in Parliament. They firmly adhered to those friends of liberty who had run all hazards in its cause, and provided for them in preference to every other claim. With the Earl of Bute they had no personal connexion, no correspondence of councils. They neither courted him nor persecuted him. They practised no corruption, nor were they even suspected of it. They sold no offices. They obtained no reversions of pensions, either coming in or going out, for themselves, their families, or their dependents. In the prosecution of their measures they were traversed by an opposition of a new and singular character; an opposition of placemen and pensioners. They were supported by the confidence of the nation. And having held their offices under many difficulties and discouragements, they left them at the express command, as they had accepted them at the earnest request, of their royal master."[56]

CHAPTER XV

[Pg 46]

"THE KING'S FRIENDS"

"Mr. Pitt," wrote the King on July 7, 1766, "your very dutiful and handsome conduct the last summer makes me desirous of having your thoughts how an able and dignified ministry may be formed. I desire, therefore, you will come for this salutary purpose, to town." "Penetrated with the deepest sense of your Majesty's goodness to me, and with a heart overflowing with duty and zeal for the honour and happiness of the most gracious and benign sovereign," Pitt replied, "I shall hasten to London as fast as I possibly can; wishing that I could change infirmity into wings of expedition, the sooner to be permitted the high honour to lay at your Majesty's feet the poor but sincere offering of my little services."

Photo by Emery Walker. *From a portrait by Richard Brompton*

WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM

Close on the heels of his letter, Pitt came to London, arriving on July 11, and seeing the King at Richmond on the following day, when he undertook to form a cabinet. The relations between Pitt and Lord Temple were not so friendly as before, for Pitt was angry with his brother-in-law for having opposed the repeal of the Stamp Act, and the Earl was displeased that Pitt had not thrown in his lot with the family league [Pg 47] formed at Stowe. Notwithstanding, Pitt offered the Treasury to Temple, who was not satisfied by this proposal, which he regarded as inadequate, and suggested an equal division of power and the right to nominate half the cabinet, on which terms he was willing to abandon his brother, George Grenville. Pitt, of course, declined to consider such a proposal, and thereupon Temple declined, as he wrote to Lady Chatham, "to be stuck into a ministry as a great cypher at the head of the Treasury, surrounded with other cyphers by Mr. Pitt."[57] This refusal was the end of the political career of Earl Temple, who did not realise that it was only as an adherent of William Pitt he was of importance in the State.

Pitt found it was no easy task at this time to form a ministry, for, as Lord Northington said, "There are four parties, Butes, Bedfords, Rockinghams, Chathams, and we (the last) are the weakest of the four."[58] In these circumstances, Pitt was desirous to retain as many of the members of the last administration as could be induced to shift their allegiance; and in this matter he was assisted by Lord Rockingham, who behaved very well under great provocation. [Pg 48] "Indignant as Lord Rockingham naturally felt at the treatment he has received at Lord Chatham's hands ... as Lord Chatham professed to be actuated by the same political principles as the late Government, Lord Rockingham desired such of his followers as the new Premier did not remove to remain at their posts."[59] Accordingly, the Duke of Portland continued Lord Chamberlain, and Sir Charles Saunders remained at the Board of Admiralty. Conway, who retained his Secretaryship of State, had, however, anticipated the pronouncement of his late chief, for when the King told him he had sent for Pitt, "Sir," said he, "I am glad of it. I always thought it the best thing your Majesty could do. I wish it may answer." No wonder the Duke of Richmond wrote bitterly to Lord Rockingham: "If Mr. Conway's sentiments get among our friends, it will be a race among them who shall go first to Mr. Pitt."[60] Lord Camden succeeded Lord Northington as Lord Chancellor, and the latter was solaced with the office of President of the Council, and the reversion for two lives of a lucrative sinecure situation. The Duke of Grafton became First Lord of the Treasury, the Earl of Shelbourne a Secretary of State, Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer; while Pitt, whose ill-health prevented him from undertaking departmental duties, [Pg 49] contented himself with the easy post of Lord Privy Seal, and went to the Upper House. Such was the "Mosaic Ministry," which Burke, in a speech on American taxation, described as "a chequered and speckled administration; a piece of joinery, so crossly indented and whimsically dove-tailed; a cabinet so variously inlaid; here a bit of black stone, and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers; King's friends and republicans; Whigs and Tories; treacherous friends and open enemies;—that it was indeed a very curious show, but utterly unsafe to touch and unsure to stand on."

As soon as it became known that the King had sent for Pitt there was immense

enthusiasm, and when it was announced that the Great Commoner had consented to undertake the government there was great joy, especially in the City, where Pitt's popularity was boundless. The Corporation at once arranged to present him with an Address and to invite him as the guest of honour to a banquet at the Guildhall, and orders were given for a general illumination. The lamps were actually affixed to the Monument, when the news came that the Great Commoner had, on July 30, accepted an earldom, and the orders for the Address, banquet, and illumination were hastily countermanded. There was, of course, no reason why Pitt should not go to the House [Pg 50] of Lords if he desired, for he had earned a peerage, if ever a man had; but it was rumoured—and, such is the fickleness of the people, everywhere believed—that the Court had bought him with this honour, and, as Walpole said, "that fatal title blasted all the affection which his country had borne to him, and which he had deserved so well."[61] "The City have brought in their verdict of *felo de se* against William, Earl of Chatham," wrote Sir Robert Wilmot;[62] and certainly, while the name of Pitt had been one to conjure with, the name of Chatham was found to have no charm.

It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and the decline in public favour of Chatham, the weakness of the "Mosaic Ministry" and the failure of all attempts to strengthen it,[63] was the King's opportunity. "I know the Earl of Chatham will [Pg 51] zealously give his aid towards destroying all party distinctions, and restoring that subordination to government which alone can preserve that inestimable blessing, Liberty, from degenerating into licentiousness," so George III wrote to the new Prime Minister. It is clear that the King was pursuing his plan to be himself the real ruler of the country, and he had certainly succeeded already to a considerable degree. By his machinations, he had taken the government out of the hands of the great Whig family, and had divided that party into several hostile sections. This made more practicable his desire to extinguish party, but he was confronted with the difficulty that, even in an age that was not distinguished for public honesty, public men did not transfer their allegiance from one leader to another as readily as the sovereign desired.

A king, however, has no difficulty in securing adherents, and George collected such as could be induced to rally round his standard into a body that called itself the [Pg 52] King's Friends. "Ministers are no longer the public servants of the state, but the private domestics of the sovereign," Junius thundered. "One particular class of men are permitted to call themselves *the King's Friends*, as if the body of the people were the King's enemies: or as if his Majesty looked for a resource or consolation in the attachment of a few favourites against the general contempt and detestation of his subjects. Edward and Richard the Second made the same distinction between the collective body of the people and a contemptible party who surrounded the throne." Unfortunately for George, all reputable parliamentarians belonged to some party already existing, and, as Sir George Trevelyan has put it admirably, "The only recruiting ground that was left open to his Majesty's operations lay among the waifs and strays of politics; among the disappointed, the discontented and the discredited; among those whom Chatham would not stoop to notice, and Newcastle had not cared to buy; and out of such material as this was gradually organized a band of camp-followers promoted in the ranks, at the head of which no decent leader would have been seen marching through the lobby."[64]

The immediate *entourage* of the Court was, as we have seen, composed of quiet, [Pg 53] respectable persons; and the King, who realized that the majority of those politicians who placed themselves at his disposal did so entirely for the sake of the emoluments and honours that majesty could bestow, had little or no personal intercourse with his adherents. Indeed, because of this want of personal relation Lord Carlisle declined the post of Lord of the Bedchamber. "I have no reason to expect, however long I may continue, that either by assiduity, attention and respect, I can ever succeed to any kind of confidence with my master," he wrote. "That familiarity which subsists between other princes, and those of their servants whose attachment they are convinced of, being excluded from our Court by the King's living so much in private, damps all views of ambition which might arise from that quarter." Lord Winchelsea, indeed, did accept such a post, but reluctantly and in a manner that irritated the King, who wrote to Lord North. "I cannot say I am quite edified at Lord Winchelsea's not in reality liking his appointment, though out of duty he accepts of it. I remember the time when an ambassador would have thought that honour a reward for ability and diligence during a long foreign mission. However, it will teach me one lesson, [Pg 54] never again to offer it, but to wait for applications."[65]

The majority, however, were content with the loaves and fishes, and probably had no desire to be on intimate terms with the monarch, except for such benefit as might accrue from such friendship. This was particularly fortunate, for while the King was highly respectable and moral, the high officials of his Court included some of the most desperate *roués* of the day and might have furnished examples for a preacher whose text was, "The wicked flourish like a green bay tree." The Earl of March,[66] Wordsworth's "Degenerate Douglas," and an avowed profligate, was a Lord of the Bedchamber for twenty-eight years under eleven successive Prime Ministers; another Lord was, after a time, according to Trevelyan, judged too bad to remain even in the Bedchamber, and was accordingly packed off to Virginia as its Governor;

and the Keeper of the Great Wardrobe was Lord le Despencer, one of the notorious Medmenham monks. More respectable morally, however, were the King's spokesmen in the House of Lords and the House of Commons, Lord Eglington,[67] and "Mungo" Dyson.[68] The latter, however, was a political "Vicar of Bray" and had lost the regard [Pg 55] of all reputable statesmen by the facility with which he changed his opinions whenever it was to his advantage to do so. When he entered Parliament he was supposed to hold anti-monarchical views, but he was at the time in the pay of Bute; later he posed as a supporter of Grenville, but deserted him for the King. It was shortly after this desertion that he assumed a bag-wig instead of a tye-wig, whereupon Lord Gower cleverly remarked that the change was doubtless made "because no tie would hold him."[69] Such was the material with which a King, who prided himself upon his honesty and morality, chose to work.

"'Tis very true, my sov'reign King,
My skill may weel be doubted;
But facts are chiels that winna ding,
And downa be disputed.
Your royal nest, beneath your wing,
Is e'en right reft an' clouted;
And now the third part of the string,
An' less, will gang about it
Than did ae day.

[Pg 56]
Far be't frae me that I aspire
To blame your legislation,
Or say, ye wisdom want, or fire,
To rule this mighty nation!
But, faith! I muckle doubt, my Sire,
Ye've trusted ministration
To chaps, wha, in a barn or byre,
Wad better fill'd their station
Than courts yon day."[70]

For some time before he resumed office Lord Chatham had been far from well, and he was in no condition to conduct the delicate negotiations incidental to the formation of a ministry: the conferences in which he had to take part, he told his wife, heated his blood and accelerated his pulse. Soon after his administration came into power, ill-health drove him into seclusion at Bath. "Lord Chatham is here with more equipage, household and retinue, than most of the old patriarchs used to travel with in ancient days," Gilly Williams wrote to George Selwyn. "He comes nowhere but to the Pump Room. There he makes a short essay and retires." The King was much disturbed at this unexpected defection of his principal supporter, and great was the discomfiture of the ministers at being deprived of their leader. It came as a great relief to sovereign and colleagues alike when, after a considerable interval the [Pg 57] news came that the Earl had fixed a day for his arrival in London.

The joy was premature, however, for though Lord Chatham duly left Bath, when he reached Marlborough he shut himself up in his rooms at the *Castle Inn*, and remained there for some weeks, declining to see even the Duke of Grafton, who had offered to visit him. "It is by no means practicable for me to enter into the discussion of business," he wrote to the Duke on February 22, 1767.[71] When at length he did arrive in the metropolis, matters were in nowise improved, for he still refused to receive any one. It was a curious position: "the nation had for some years beheld, or thought it descried, a real minister behind the curtain, who interposed his credit without holding an office. Here was the reverse—a minister in whose name all business was transacted, but who would exercise no part of his function."[72]

In vain the King offered to visit him at North End, when, he declared, he "would not talk of business, but only wanted to have the world know that he had attended him";[73] and equally fruitless were the Duke of Grafton's renewed appeals for an [Pg 58] interview. The Earl had not even the energy to use a pen, and the replies were written by his wife. "Your duty and affection for my person, your own honour, call on you to make an effort," the King persisted in a letter on May 30. "Five minutes' conversation with you would raise the Duke of Grafton's spirits, for his heart is good. Mine, I thank God, wants no rousing. My love to my country, as well as what I owe to my family, prompt me not to yield to faction. Though none of my ministers stand by me, I cannot truckle."[74] On receipt of this, Lord Chatham yielded, and consented to see the Duke on the following day, and the meeting had the result of averting the threatened resignation of the latter, who, however, found it impossible to discuss business with the Prime Minister, whose nerves and spirits were too affected to permit of a lengthy discussion. "So childish and agitated was his whole frame," Walpole has stated, "that if a word of business was mentioned to him, tears and tremblings immediately succeeded to cheerful, indifferent conversation."[75] He was indeed entirely incapacitated, and his recovery was very slow. "Lord Chatham's state of health (I was told authentically yesterday) is certainly the lowest dejection and [Pg 59] debility that mind or body can be in," Whately wrote on June 30. "He sits all day leaning on his hands, which he supports on the table; does not permit any person to remain in the room; knocks when he wants anything, and, having made his wants

known, gives a signal without speaking to the person who answered his call to return."[76]

Though the Prime Minister was willing to resign, George III implored him to retain at least the semblance of power. "Your name has been sufficient to enable my administration to proceed," he wrote;[77] for he was fearful lest he should be compelled to receive Grenville again. "The King owned," says Walpole, "that he was inclined to keep Lord Chatham, if capable of remaining in place, *having seen how much his government had been weakened by frequent changes*. He wished that things might remain as they were, at least till the end of the session, when he might have time to make any necessary alterations. At his *levée*, his Majesty asked James Grenville aloud, how Lord Chatham did? He replied 'Better.' The King said,'If he has lost his fever, I desire to be his physician, and that he would not admit Dr. Addington any more into his house. He shall go into the country for four months; not so far as Bath, but to Tunbridge.' He repeated the same words publicly to Lord Bristol, everybody understanding that his Majesty's wish was to retain Lord Chatham."[78]

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So long as Lord Chatham was ill, the King enjoyed the support, such as it was, of his name, but soon after his recovery, on October 12, 1768, the Earl tendered his resignation, and although George begged him to withdraw it, he declined to do so. He was, indeed, very angry, for the measures carried by the administration that bore his name were in direct opposition to the principles of which he was the champion. Even so early as January 2, 1768, in a private letter to the Earl, "Junius" had informed him of this. "During your absence from administration, it is well known that not one of the ministers has either adhered to you with firmness, or supported, with any degree of steadiness those principles on which you engaged in the King's service. From being their idol at first, their veneration for you has gradually diminished, until at last they have absolutely set you at defiance." When this arrived Lord Chatham was still too ill to take up the matter; but when, some months later, the Duke of Grafton informed him that the ministry had carried through Parliament a Bill for a tax on American imports, we may well believe with Jesse that the "astonishment of Rip Van Winkle when he awoke from his long sleep in the Katskill mountains, or of Abou Hassan when he found himself in the couch of the Caliph Haroun Abraschid could scarcely have exceeded that of Lord Chatham."[79] Even then he was not well enough to take any action, but as soon as his health was restored he promptly severed all connexion with those who had betrayed him.

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From a portrait by Battoni

AUGUSTUS HENRY, DUKE OF GRAFTON

During the illness of his chief, the leadership had devolved on the Duke of Grafton, who is to-day best remembered by the terrific attacks made upon him by "Junius", who declared "the Duke of Grafton's heart was the blackest in the kingdom." He had abandoned Rockingham, he had abandoned Wilkes, and eventually he had abandoned Chatham, though in relation to the last he made an effort, as strenuous as could be expected from one always infirm of purpose. Nicholls has told us how those who wished to destroy the Chatham administration, realized that they would almost certainly attain their object if they could separate the Duke from the Earl. They won

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over to their views the Duke's secretary, Bradshaw, and endeavoured also to corrupt the Duke's mistress, Nancy Parsons.[80] With the latter, however, they had no success. "She had the sense to see that the Duke's honour required him to remain firm in his connexion with the Earl of Chatham. She had the sense to see this; and she had the integrity to tell him so. Her influence for some time prevented the Duke of Grafton from deserting the Earl of Chatham. When this was seen, those who wished the destruction of that administration changed the direction of their batteries; instead of using their efforts to separate the Duke of Grafton from the Earl of Chatham, they employed them to separate him from his mistress. In this they succeeded, and married him to Miss Wriothesley, the niece of the Duchess of Bedford.[81] To separate him from the Earl of Chatham was then an easy task."[82]

The Duke of Grafton, like Lord Rockingham, was a man of pleasure, happier with his dogs and his books than in political life;[83] and he would rather have abandoned politics than his mistress, to whom his attachment was notorious, although, according to "Junius," she was at this time, "a faded beauty," and according to Walpole, "one of the commonest creatures in London." It seems that she had influence over him, and he was certainly proud of the connexion. "He brings everybody to dine with him," Lady Temple has recorded. "His female friend sits at the upper end of his table; some do like it, and some do not. She is very pious, a constant Church-woman, and reproves his Grace for swearing and being angry, which he owns is very wrong, and, with great submission, begs her pardon for being so ill-bred before her." He appeared with her at Ascot, and even at the Opera when the King and Queen were present, a piece of bad taste that gave "Junius" an opening, of which he was not slow to avail himself. "If vice could be excused, there is yet a certain display of it, a certain outrage to decency, a violation of public decorum which, for the benefit of society, should never be forgiven," wrote the great satirist. "It is not that he kept a mistress at home, but that he constantly attended her abroad. It is not the private indulgence, but the public insult of which I complain. The name of Miss Parsons would scarcely have been known, if the First Lord of the Treasury had not led her in triumph through the Opera House, even in the presence of the Queen. When we see a man act in this manner we may admit the shameless depravity of his heart, but what are we to think of his understanding?"[84]

The Duke undoubtedly intended to pursue the policy of Lord Chatham, but, falling under the influence of the King—who was willing enough to forgive, for his political ends, such a flagrant insult to his consort as that narrated above—it so happened that whenever the ministry moved it was in the opposite direction to that which the Earl would have desired.

CHAPTER XVI

THE KING'S RULE

The Duke of Grafton as a matter of course now became Prime Minister, but there were not wanting signs that the administration would not long endure, and when Lord Chatham reappeared in the political arena it was obvious its days were numbered. The famous statesman's return was most unexpected, for he was still supposed to be in the country, incapable of ever again transacting business.[85] "He himself," wrote Walpole on July 7, 1769, "*in propria personâ*, and not in a straight-waistcoat, walked into the King's *levée* this morning, and was in the closet twenty minutes after the *levée*." At his interview Chatham told George that he disapproved of the policy of the ministry, especially as regarded Wilkes and America—a statement calculated to alarm the King, who approved of the action taken. "For my part," said the Earl, "I am grown old, and unable to fill any office of business; but this I am resolved on, that I will not even sit at Council but to meet Lord Rockingham. He, and he alone, has a knot of spotless friends, such as ought to govern this kingdom." As he emerged from the Royal Closet, Chatham encountered Grafton, and, embittered especially by the remembrance of the dismissal of his personal friend, Sir Jeffrey Amherst, from the post of Governor of Virginia, greeted him with the utmost coldness. It was to be war to the death, and Chatham was too great a man to veil his enmity under the cloak of friendship.

The battle began after the reassembling of Parliament on January 9, 1770, when the King in his speech referred to a distemper which had recently appeared among the horned cattle. This was seized upon by the caricaturists, and denounced by "Junius": "While the whole kingdom was agitated with anxious expectation upon one great point, you meanly evaded the question, and instead of the explicit firmness and decision of a king, gave us nothing but the misery of a ruined grazier and the whining piety of a Methodist." It has not been made clear whether this was inserted by the King, who in his capacity of farmer was much perturbed by the ravages made by the disease, or whether it was an attempt to attract the attention of Parliament to this rather than to more serious issues.

Serious issues enough there were at the end of 1769 to occupy the attention of all thoughtful men. The English were undeniably angry, the Wilkes affair was dividing parties and sowing dissension between statesmen, and America was threateningly restless. The King's treatment of the City's remonstrance[86] had aroused to a fine frenzy habitually calm folk, and discontent was so rife that rebellion itself was in the minds of many Englishmen. "The tumults of London, in March, 1769, which menaced with insult or attack even the palace of the sovereign, bore no feeble resemblance to the riotous disorders that preceded the Civil Wars, under Charles the First," Wraxall wrote. "A Hearse, followed by the mob, was drawn into the Court-yard at St. James's, decorated with insignia of the most humiliating and indecent description. I have always understood that the late Lord Mountmorris, then a very young man, was the person who on that occasion personated the executioner, holding an axe in his hands, and his face covered with a crape. The King's firmness did not, however, desert him, in the midst of these trying ebullitions of democratic rage. He remained calm and [Pg 68] unmoved in the Drawing-room, while the streets surrounding his residence echoed with the shouts of an enraged multitude, who seemed disposed to proceed to the greatest extremities."[87]

Horace Walpole was somewhat perturbed at the situation. "The English may be soothed: I have never heard that they were to be frightened," he wrote. "This is my creed and all our history supports it." The King, however, seemed bent on desperate measures and, according to *The Whisperer* (February 24, 1770), When the Marquis of Granby resigned his employments, the King said to him, "Granby, do you think the army would fight for me?" To which the Marquis nobly replied, "I believe, Sir, some of your officers would, but I will not answer for the men."[88] This state of turmoil gave a great unholy joy to David Hume: "I am delighted to see the daily and hourly [Pg 69] progress of madness, and folly, and wickedness in England," he wrote from Edinburgh. "The consummation of these fine qualities are the ingredients for making a fine narrative in history, especially if followed by some signal and ruinous convulsion, as I hope will soon be the case with that pernicious people. He must be a very bad cook who cannot make a palatable dish from the whole."

The duel between Chatham and Grafton took place during the debate on the Address. The Earl who, owing to his ill-health had never yet done justice to his oratorical powers in the House of Lords, now made a splendid fighting speech, in which after expressing the good-will he bore his fellow-subjects in America, he denounced the proceedings against Wilkes and the American policy of the ministry. This was the signal for the other malcontents to engage. "I accepted the Great Seal without conditions," Lord Camden states in the House of Lords. "I meant not therefore to be trammelled by his Majesty—(I beg pardon) by his ministers; but I have suffered myself to be too long. For some time I have beheld, with silent indignation, the arbitrary measures of the minister; I have often drooped and hung down my head in Council, and disapproved by my looks those steps which I knew my avowed opposition could not prevent; I will do so no longer, but openly and boldly [Pg 70] speak my sentiments." The Duke of Beaufort and the Duke of Manchester, the Earl of Coventry and the Earl of Huntingdon gave up their offices at Court; and the resignation of James Grenville, Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and Dunning, Solicitor-General, followed, together with that of Lord Granby, Commander-in-Chief and Master of the Ordnance, who retained only his colonelcy of the Blues.

Lord Camden was dismissed immediately after his speech, but great difficulty was found in filling his place. The Woolsack was offered to Mansfield, and then to Sir Eardley Wilmot, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, neither of whom would accept it, partly because there was then no retiring pension for a Lord Chancellor, and it was too great a risk to give up a lucrative position for a post the tenure of which was so precarious.[89] The Great Seal was then offered to Charles Yorke, who declined on the ground that he did not wish to desert the Rockingham party. The King sent for him on January 17 and charged him on his loyalty to accept the office, declaring if he did not do so, the Lord Chancellorship would never again under any circumstances [Pg 71] be offered to him. Thus pressed, Yorke accepted very reluctantly, but the annoyance told upon his feeble health, and he died three days later—by his own hand, it was whispered. The patent that raised him to the peerage was made out and awaited only the impress of the Great Seal. When he was dying he was asked to authorise that impression, but he refused, and added with a shudder that he hoped the Great Seal was no longer in his custody.[90] "Nothing was now left for the Duke of Grafton but to get himself out of the way before "Junius" had time to point the moral. It was impossible for him to continue Prime Minister after the most ambitious lawyer at the bar had thought death a less evil than the disgrace of being his Chancellor."[91] "Junius" was not to be baulked of his prey, however, and referred to the episode in a letter to the Duke of Grafton, dated February 14, 1770. "To what an abject condition have you laboured to reduce the best of princes, when the unhappy man who yields at last to such personal instance and solicitation as can never be fairly employed against a subject feels himself degraded by his compliance, and is unable to survive [Pg 72] the disgraceful honours which his gracious sovereign had compelled him to accept."

The Duke resigned on January 28, and Chatham was avenged.

During the absence of Lord Chatham, George III had gained a complete ascendancy over the ministry and, now that Grafton had retired, he was determined not to yield the control of affairs without a struggle. He wanted, not a minister with views of his own, but one who would obey instructions. Such a man was Lord North, [92] who, backed by the weight of the royal influence, was the ostensible Prime Minister for the ensuing twelve years.[93]

Photo by Emery Walker. *From a painting by Nathaniel Dance*

FREDERICK NORTH, SECOND EARL OF GUILFORD

North had gained his official experience as a Junior Lord of the Treasury, and as a joint-Paymaster of the Forces. At first he had not created a favourable impression, but there were discerning persons who saw early he would come to the fore. His appearance was much against him. "Nothing could be more coarse, or clumsy, or ungracious than his outside," Horace Walpole said. "Two large prominent eyes that rolled about to no purpose—for he was utterly short-sighted—a wide mouth, thick lips, and inflated visage, gave him the air of a blind trumpeter."[94] "Here comes blubbering North. I wonder what he is getting by heart, for I am sure it can be nothing of his own," some one said to Grenville, seeing North in the park, apparently rehearsing a speech. "North is a man of great promise and high qualifications," replied Grenville; "and if he does not relax in his political pursuits, he is very likely to be Prime Minister." Lord Rockingham thought well enough of him to invite him to become Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, an offer which, at the King's instigation, he eventually declined. [Pg 73] [Pg 74]

"It cost him, North, many bitter pangs, not to preserve his virtue, but his vicious connexions," wrote Walpole. "He goggled his eyes, and groped in his pocket money, more than half consented; nay, so much more, that when he got home, he wrote an excuse to Lord Rockingham, which made it plain he thought he had accepted." Nor was Charles Townshend in any doubt as to North's abilities. "See that great heavy, booby-looking seeming changeling," said Townshend when Chancellor of the Exchequer; "you may believe me when I assure you as a fact, that if anything should happen to me, he will succeed to my place, and very shortly after come to be First Commissioner of the Treasury."[95] The prediction was fulfilled, for when Townshend died, Lord North became Chancellor of the Exchequer under Chatham, and was retained in that position by Grafton.

North had, indeed, most of the qualifications that make a good leader of the House of Commons. He was witty, good-humoured, undisturbed by personal attacks, and undeniably honest. "He was a man of admirable parts, of general knowledge, of a versatile understanding, fitted for every sort of business, of infinite wit and pleasantry, of a delightful temper, and with a mind most perfectly disinterested," wrote Burke; "but it would be only to degrade myself by a weak adulation, and not to honour the memory of a great man, to deny that he wanted something of the vigilance and spirit of command that the time required."[96] He was an excellent debater, and managed to retain his hold on the House even when the Opposition was led, first by Burke and then by Chatham. [Pg 75]

It had been Chatham's hope that, when the Duke of Grafton resigned, the King

would be compelled to dissolve Parliament; but the King, on his side, was determined not to make an appeal to the country, which he was well aware would return an adverse majority and so compel him to receive the Whig families back into power. "I will have recourse to this," he said, laying his hand on his sword, "sooner than yield to a dissolution." In his hour of difficulty George turned to North, who came to his assistance, and formed a ministry, for which service the King was grateful, until many years later North coalesced with Fox. He bestowed upon him the posts of Ranger of Bushey Park, and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, with a most acceptable stipend, and promised to bestow the Order of the Garter upon him, [Pg 76] "which I shall do with the greater pleasure as I never have had any intimation from you that it is an honour you are in the least ambitious of."[97] He also expressed a desire in September, 1777, to discharge out of his Privy Purse his Prime Minister's debts. "Having paid the last arrears on the Civil List, I must now do the same for you," he wrote. "I have understood, from your hints, that you have been in debt ever since you settled in life. I must therefore insist that you allow me to assist you with £10,000, or £15,000, or £20,000, if that will be sufficient. It will be easy for you to make an arrangement, or at proper times to take up that sum. You know me very ill if you think not that, of all the letters I ever wrote you, this one gives me the greatest pleasure; and I want no other return but your being convinced that I love you as well as a man of worth, as I esteem you as a minister. Your conduct at a critical moment I can never forget."[98]

The King took for his part the management of the House of Commons, and it was work that suited his capabilities. It has already been mentioned that at his accession he began to study public business, and so far as the details were concerned he made great progress. "He knew all about the family histories and genealogies of his gentry, [Pg 77] and pretty histories he must have known. He knew the whole *Army list*; and all the facings and the exact number of buttons, and all the tags and laces, and the cut of all the cocked hats, pigtails and gaiters in his army. He knew the *personnel* of the Universities; what doctors were inclined to Socinianism, and who were sound Churchmen; he knew the etiquette of his own and his grandfather's Courts to a nicety, and the smallest particulars regarding the routine of ministers, secretaries, embassies, audiences; the smallest page in the ante-room or the meanest helper in the kitchen or stables. These parts of the royal business he was capable of learning, and he learned."[99] This, however, by no means exhausts the list of his qualifications. Not the most scrupulous electioneering agent knew more tricks than he, or was better acquainted with the figures of the voting in all the constituencies, or the names and views of likely candidates.

George III reduced bribery to a fine art, and, parsimonious as he was in his own affairs, he had no hesitation in buying the patron of a borough or in paying the debts of a man who was willing to stand as the "King's Friend" at the next election. "If the Duke of Northumberland requires some gold pills for the election, it would be wrong [Pg 78] not to give him some assistance," he wrote to North before the Middlesex election in 1779. North declared that the expenses of election in 1779, 1780 and 1781, paid for by Government amounted to £53,000, and that the preceding general election cost £50,000 in addition to pensions of the annual value of £15,000! Enormous as was the Civil List, it could not support these outlays in addition to its regular expenses with which it was charged; and soon there was presented the strange spectacle of a House of Commons being invited to make good the deficit that had been caused chiefly by the bribes given to or for members of its body. On February 28, 1770, Lord North asked Parliament to discharge the King's debts, which amounted to £513,511, and although this sum was voted, it was only after a heated debate. The King was horrified to learn that Dowdeswell in the House of Commons and Rockingham in the House of Lords had moved that particulars of each expense should be specified, and that the papers might distinguish under which administration each debt had been incurred. Burke and Grenville supported the motion in the Commons, and in the Lords Chatham made a rousing speech that voiced the feelings of the nation. What had been done with the money, he wanted to know, that there should be this great [Pg 79] deficit? The King had built no palaces, he had not lavished great sums on pictures or statuary, he had not rewarded distinguished soldiers and sailors with large pensions; the expenses of his household were, comparatively speaking, small, and the price of commodities was lower than in the preceding reign, and, although his Majesty was not illiberal in his charities, the outlay in this direction had certainly not impoverished him. No, he concluded, the money had been devoted to the support of sinecure posts to be held by minor politicians and in other ways to pervert the honesty of Parliament.

The King, regarding himself as above criticism, was greatly incensed by this speech, and his anger was increased in the following year when Sir Edward Astley moved for a return of pensions granted since the commencement of the Parliament then sitting. "I cannot help expressing some surprise," he wrote to Lord North on April 5, 1770, "at seeing Lieutenant-General Conway's name in support of Sir Edward Astley's motion, which is so antiquated an Opposition's point, but which no candid man could be supposed to adopt."[100] It was, therefore, with great reluctance that in May, 1770, he applied again, through Lord North, for another grant. Further delay [Pg 80]

was impossible, however, for even his household bills were unpaid and his servants' wages were six quarters in arrears. North asked for £600,000 to settle pressing demands and an increase to the Civil List of £100,000 a year. The request again provoked much candid criticism. Fox taunted the Prime Minister with the pledge he had given when he was in office in 1769 that no such demand should be made again; and other members pointed out that in the accounts the pensions amounted to £438,000, that there were items of £171,000 and £114,000 for secret service, and that furthermore the accounts very obviously had been falsified. The grant was eventually made, but when Sir Fletcher Norton, the Speaker of the House of Commons, presented the Civil List Bill to the King, he made a speech. "Your Majesty's faithful Commons have granted a great sum to discharge the debt of the Civil List; and considering that whatever enables your Majesty to support with grandeur, honour and dignity, the crown of Great Britain, in its true lustre, will reflect honour on the nation, they have given most liberally, even in these times of danger and difficulty, taxed almost beyond ability to bear; and they have now granted to your Majesty an income far exceeding your Majesty's highest wants, [Pg 81] *hoping that what they have given cheerfully, your Majesty will spend wisely*." The "King's Friends" voiced their indignation at this address, but Fox moved "that the Speaker did express, with just and proper energy, the zeal of the House for the support of the honour and dignity of the Crown in circumstances of great public charge," and he carried the House with him in a vote of thanks to Sir Fletcher Norton.

After this stern rebuke, even George III had not courage enough to apply again to Parliament, but as the lavish corruption continued, money had to be found, and to provide for his master's necessities, North sacrificed his financial reputation. In 1781 he raised a loan of £12,000,000 upon terms so liberal as to give the bondholders a return of ten per cent., but instead of following the usual course of inviting bankers to become subscribers, he divided the much desired stock among the supporters of the Government in both Houses, who were thus handsomely rewarded for their services. This was so disgraceful a proceeding that even a servile House of Commons could not overlook it, and the transaction was undoubtedly one of the causes that contributed to North's overthrow in the following year.[101]

No scruple as to kingly dignity restrained George III from endeavouring to profit by [Pg 82] the glamour that surrounds the throne. "I am sorry to find the Attorney-General (Thurlow) rather retracts. I feel the propriety of keeping him in his present situation; and if any kindness from me on Wednesday can effect it, you may rest assured he shall be got into thorough good temper," he wrote to North on June 7, 1774; and on another day, "The last division was nearer than some persons will have expected, but not more than I thought. I hope every engine will be employed to get those friends that stayed away last night to come and support on Monday. I wish a list could be prepared of those who went away, and those that deserted to the minority. [Pg 83] *That would be a rule for my conduct in the Drawing-room to-morrow.*"[102] "I am so desirous that every man in my service should take part in the Debate on Tuesday," he wrote again on January 7, 1770, "that I desire you will very strongly press Sir G. Elliot and any others that have not taken a part last session. I have no objection to your adding that I have particularly directed you to speak to them."[103] "I consent," he wrote on April 21, 1775, "to Sir Watkin Williams (Wynn) being Lieutenant of Merioneth, *if he means to be grateful*, otherwise favours granted to persons in opposition is not very political."[104]

George made it quite clear that to attack the Government or vote against it was regarded by him as a personal insult, and he was determined that no man should do so with impunity. "Lord North's attention in correcting the impression I had that Colonel Burgoyne and Lieutenant-Colonel Harcourt were absent yesterday is very handsome to those gentlemen, for I certainly should have thought myself obliged to have named a new Governor in the room of the former, and to have removed the other from my Bedchamber,"[105] he wrote on March 12, 1772, in reference to a [Pg 84] division on the Royal Marriage Act; and when the Prime Minister suggested that Chatham's pension should be settled in reversion on his younger son, William Pitt: "The making Lord Chatham's family suffer for the conduct of their father is not in the least agreeable to me," he replied, on August 9, 1775. "But I should choose to know him to be totally unable to appear again on the public stage before I agree to any offer of that kind, lest it should wrongly be construed into a fear of him; and indeed his political conduct the last winter was so abandoned, that he must, in the eyes of the dispassionate, have totally undone all the merit of his former conduct. As to any gratitude to be expected from him or his family, the whole tenor of their lives has shown them void of that most honourable sentiment. But *when decrepitude or death puts an end to him as a trumpet of sedition*, I shall make no difficulty in placing the second son's name instead of the father's, and making up the pension £3,000."[106]

The truth is that George III was vindictive, though he would have been the last to admit this, for never doubting he was always in the right, he was confident that what [Pg 85] to others seemed revenge, was actually only legitimate punishment meted out to the wrong-doer. "He has a kind of unhappiness in his temper, which, if it be not conquered before it has taken too deep a root, will be the source of frequent

anxiety," Lord Waldegrave had written when he was the royal Governor. "Whenever he is displeased, his anger does not break out with heat and violence, but he becomes sullen and silent, and retires to his closet, not to compose his mind by study and contemplation, but merely to indulge the melancholy enjoyment of his own ill-humour. Even when the fit is ended, unfavourable symptoms too frequently return, which indicate that on certain occasions his Royal Highness has too correct a memory."[107] This serious blemish lasted all the days of his life, and was noticeable particularly in his attitude towards Chatham and, later, towards Fox.

"How many Secretaries of State have you corresponded with?" the King once asked an ex-Governor of Gibraltar. "Five, Sire," was the reply. "You see my situation. The trade of politics is a rascally business. It's a trade for a scoundrel, and not for a gentleman." So George III unconsciously passed judgment on himself, for it is clear [Pg 86] that he had much to do with making politics a trade. Reflect upon the treatment he meted out to Rockingham, as upright a statesman who could be found in the three kingdoms, whose dismissal was chiefly due to the fact that he was too honest. "Rockingham had a way of listening to a questionable proposal that was more alarming to George III even than the eloquence of Pitt or the lengthiness of Grenville."[108]

It is interesting, in the light of this knowledge, to turn to a contemporary portrait of the King as a statesman. "Never was any prince more religiously tenacious of his engagements or promises. Even the temporary privation of his intellect did not affect his regard to the assurances that he had given previous to such alienation of mind; nor, which is still more wonderful, obliterate them from his recollection. I know that on his recovery from the severest visitations under which he has laboured he has said to his minister, in the first moment of his convalescence, 'Previous to my attack of illness I made such and such promises; they must be effectuated,'" wrote Wraxall. "Satisfied with the legitimate power entrusted to him by the British Constitution, and deeply impressed with the sanctity as well as the inviolability of the oath administered to him at his coronation, George the Third did not desire to pass the [Pg 87] limits of his rightful prerogative. But, equally tenacious of his just pretensions and firm in resisting popular violence and innovation, he never receded from any point or abandoned any measure, under the impulse of personal apprehension. His courage was calm, temperate, and steady. It was constitutional and hereditary; but it was always sustained by conviction, sense of public duty, and religion."[109] Yet when politics were concerned, George was not so tenacious of his word as to fulfil it to a member of the Opposition. To give one instance. He had, in 1765, promised the reversion of the colonelcy of the Blues to the Duke of Richmond, but when the holder of the command, Lord Granby, died in October, 1770, he immediately appointed Conway to the vacant post. "The Duke of Richmond, who did not expect that engagement would be kept to him, now in earnest opposition, wrote an artfully handsome letter to the King, to release him from that promise," Walpole has related; "but his Majesty had violated it before he received the Duke's dispensation and made no answer."[110]

However, Wraxall was, perhaps, not wrong in his belief that George III was sustained by "conviction, sense of public duty and religion," as at a first reading [Pg 88] might be supposed. "In all that related to his kingly office he was the slave of deep-rooted selfishness; and no feeling of a kindly nature was ever allowed access to his bosom whenever his power was concerned, either in its maintenance, or in the manner of exercising it," Brougham has written. "The instant that his prerogative was concerned, and his bigotry interfered with, or his will thwarted, the most unbending pride, the most bitter animosity, the most calculating coldness of heart, the most unforgiving resentment, took possession of his whole breast, and swayed it by turns. The habits of friendship, the ties of blood, the dictates of conscience, the rules of honesty were alike forgotten; and the fury of the tyrant with the resources of a cunning which mental alienation is supposed to whet, were ready to circumvent or to destroy all who interposed an obstacle to the fierceness of unbridled desire."[111] Doubtless George did his duty according to his lights, with indomitable spirit, contending with unflinching courage as readily against the greatest as the weakest of his ministers. He certainly believed it was the right of a King to govern, and his narrow understanding coupled with an obstinate disposition made him hold that to [Pg 89] achieve this any methods were justifiable.

The greatest misfortune was that, while George III acquired a thorough acquaintance with the duties of each of the departments of state, there his knowledge ended. He knew how things should be done: never what to do; and the pity of it was that his ambition was not confined within the range of his abilities. He insisted upon being consulted in all matters, which was right and proper. "Not a step was taken in foreign, colonial, or domestic affairs, that he did not form his opinion upon it, and exercise his influence over it. The instructions to ambassadors, the orders to governors, the movements of forces down to marching of a single battalion in the districts of this country, the appointments to all office in church and state, not only the giving away of judgeships, bishoprics, regiments, but the subordinate promotions, lay and clerical."[112] All these are the topics of his letters, only unfortunately on all these matters "his opinion is pronounced decisively; on all his

will is declared peremptorily."[113] When all England was troubled by the reverses of the American war the sovereign was exercising his wits upon the appointment of a Scotch puisne judge and a Dean of Worcester, or was busy drawing up the march of a troop from Buckinghamshire into Yorkshire. If only he had confined himself to such matters! [Pg 90]

"I know he was a constant consort; own
He was a decent sire, and middling lord.
All this is much, and most upon a throne;
As temperance, if at Apicius' board,
Is more than at an anchorite's supper shown.
I grant him all the kindest can accord.
And this was well for him, but not for those
Millions who found him what Oppression chose."[114]

North as a High Tory was prepared on taking office to carry out the King's policy so long as he could approve of it and even so long as he could abstain from active disapproval; but unfortunately for his reputation he remained in office and acted as the King's spokesman long after affairs were directed in a manner contrary to the dictates of his own conscience. "Submission in the Closet and corruption in the Commons" were, according to Sir George Trevelyan, the watchwords of the Prime Minister; and this indictment cannot be contravened. In mitigation of sentence however, it may be urged that it was made very difficult for him to withdraw from office. "I certainly did not come into office by my own desire," he declared in the House of Commons. "Had I my wish, I would have quitted it a hundred times; but as to my resigning now, look at the transactions of this day, and say whether it is possible for a man with a grain of spirit, with a grain of sense, to think of withdrawing from the service of his King and his country at such a moment. Unhappy that I am, that moment finds me in this situation; and there are but two ways in which I can now cease to be minister;—by the will of my sovereign, which I shall be ready to obey; or by the pleasure of the gentlemen now at our doors, when they shall be able to do a little more than they have done this day." [Pg 91]

Again and again the Prime Minister resigned, only to be implored not to desert his master. Many writers have spoken of North's fondness for office as the reason for his remaining at the head of affairs, but his indolence and the King's appeals to his compassion were two powerful reasons for his continuing to hold the post of Prime Minister. His position, indeed, was no bed of roses, for he was the last man in the world to find pleasure in unpopularity. "In all my memory," he said pathetically, "I do not remember a single popular measure I ever voted for;" and the truth of this remark is patent to all who are acquainted with the conduct of the affairs of state at this time, for the minister shared, or at least supported, the mistakes of the King. "To those who can for a moment forget the misfortunes which the perversity of George III entailed upon his country, there is an element of the comical in the roundness and vehemence with which he invariably declared himself upon the wrong side in a controversy," Sir George Trevelyan has put the situation admirably. "Whether he was predicting that the publication of debates would 'annihilate the House of Commons, and thus put an end to the most excellent form of government which has been established in this kingdom;' or denouncing the 'indecency' of a well-meaning senator who had protested against the double impropriety of establishing state lotteries, and then using them as an engine for bribing Members of Parliament; or explaining the reluctance of an assembly of English gentlemen and landowners to plunder the Duke of Portland of his estate by the theory that there was no 'truth, justice, and even honour' among them; he displayed an inability to tolerate, or even to understand, any view but his own, which can only be accounted for by the reflection that he was at the same time a partisan and a monarch. He could never forgive a politician for taking the right course, unless it was taken from a wrong motive." The fact of the matter was that the King was always to be found in arms against liberty. [Pg 92]

"He ever warred with freedom and the free
Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,
So that they uttered the word 'Liberty!'
Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose
History was ever stained as his will be
With national and individual woes?"[115] [Pg 93]

He was against Wilkes, naturally enough against "Junius," he took an active interest in fostering opposition to the "Nullum Tempus" Bill, the object of which was to protect the subjects against dormant claims of the Crown, and he treated America like a wayward child.

"He came to his sceptre young; he leaves it old:
Look to the state in which he found his realm,
And left it; and his annals too behold,
How to a minion first he gave the helm:
How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm
The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but glance
Thine eye along America and France."[116]

Mistake after mistake was made by the King and his government, not the least serious of which was the persecution of Admiral Keppel. When it became known that a treaty had been entered into between America and France, Keppel was sent, in June, 1777, to watch the French coast. He discovered a large French fleet at Brest ready to set sail, and returned to Portsmouth for reinforcements. Both fleets put to [Pg 94] sea on July 9, and sighted each other a fortnight later, when the enemy was unwilling to fight, and Keppel with a force still inferior could not force an engagement until the 27th inst. off Ushant. Much damage was done to both sides, and the fleets drew off for repairs, but when the signal was given to renew, Sir Hugh Palliser was either unable or unwilling to obey, and his delay enabled the French to escape. Keppel screened his second-in-command, but rumour could not be stilled, and letters appeared in the newspapers making serious allegations against Palliser, who demanded from his superior officer a complete vindication, which the latter declined to give. The matter was brought up in the House of Commons at the beginning of December, and there ensued an angry debate in which Palliser charged Keppel with misconduct. Keppel was a member of the Opposition, and though he had been informed in 1776 that his services might be required, no notice was taken of him at Court in the interval. Indeed, as he afterwards remarked, his "forty years' endeavours were not marked by the possession of any one favour from the Crown except that of its confidence in time of danger."[117] Keppel was court-martialled, and [Pg 95] the Court sat from January 7, 1779, for thirty-two days; amidst great public excitement. Though, to a great extent, the affair had been made a party question, Keppel had more than political support, for a memorial signed by twelve admirals was presented to the King by the Duke of Bolton,[118] in which they remarked on the impropriety of the Board of Admiralty sanctioning charges made by "their colleague in office" against his commander, and pointing out that, if such a practice be countenanced, it would not be easy for men attentive to their honour to serve his Majesty, particularly in situations of principal command.[119]

From a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds

ADMIRAL THE HON. AUGUSTUS KEPPEL

The news of Keppel's acquittal arrived in London on February 11 between nine and ten o'clock in the evening, and before an hour had elapsed nearly every house in the metropolis was illuminated. The windows of the mansions of Lord North and Lord George Germaine were broken, the Admiralty was attacked, Palliser was hung in effigy, his house broken into, and his furniture carried into St. James's Square, and there burned by an angry, excited mob. "If you had any doubts about the truth of the accounts of the trial of Admiral Keppel, I suppose you will hardly credit the [Pg 96] enthusiasm that has seized England and Ireland about him," Lady Sarah Bunbury wrote to Lady Susan O'Brien on March 9, 1779, "and yet nothing is more true than the general and wild joy that has animated all ranks of people. What a flattering thing it is to obtain much more than a Roman triumph *merely* for being an honest man, and a just, brave and humane officer, whose conduct has won him the hearts of a whole fleet, of a whole kingdom. How much more glorious is such a triumph than the pomp of war and all its melancholy honours. It is impossible not to envy him."[120]

After this the King regarded Keppel as his personal enemy, and, as we have said, used his influence against the Admiral when he stood as parliamentary candidate for Windsor in 1779. A certain silk-mercer, a stout Keppelite, would subsequently mimic the King's peculiar voice and manner as his Majesty entered his shop and muttered in his hurried way: "The Queen wants a gown—wants a gown. No Keppel!—no Keppel! What, what, what!" Keppel lost the election, but the King paid heavily for his victory. "With all due respect to his Majesty I say it, but in my opinion he has hurt himself a great deal more than he has hurt the admiral in using his influence and [Pg 97] authority to make him lose Windsor," Lady Sarah Bunbury wrote to Lady Susan O'Brien on September 22, 1780. "A seat in *this* Parliament and in *these* times is no such very valuable privilege as to break an honest man's heart if he loses it, particularly when, as at Windsor, the electors come to him with the most affected countenances saying, 'Sir, we honour, we esteem, we love you, we wish you were our member, but our bread depends upon our refusing you our votes; we are ordered to go against you, and you are too good to wish us ruined by his Majesty's anger.' ... There are strange reports about all the underhand and indeed some *open* ways used to force the Windsor people to vote against him."[121]

CHAPTER XVII [Pg 98]

THE ROYAL FAMILY

The troubles of George III were not exclusively the result of his incursions into politics, for he had much worry in connexion with most of his brothers and sisters, sometimes through their fault and sometimes through the circumstances in which they were placed. Exclusive of his heir, Frederick, Prince of Wales, left behind him six children. His youngest son, Frederick William, died in 1765 at the age of fifteen; "an amiable youth and the most promising, it was thought, of the family. The hereditary disorder in his blood had fallen on his lungs and turned to a consumption."[122] A daughter, Louisa Anne, fell a victim to the same disease three years later; but this was a happy release, for, afflicted with bodily disease from her infancy, she was so remarkably small for her age that though she had completed her nineteenth year, she looked like a child of about thirteen.[123] There remained the Dukes of York, [Pg 99] Gloucester, and Cumberland, and the Princesses Augusta and Caroline Matilda.

The Princes probably inherited from their father a love of pleasure, and this had doubtless been quickened by the restrictions imposed upon them when they were in the custody of the Princess Dowager. She kept them in such rigid durance that when Prince Henry, a lively lad, was asked if he had been confined with the epidemic cold, he replied: "Confined, that I am, but without any cold." It was, therefore, only to be expected that as soon as the boys could escape from leading-strings, they would kick over the traces, and plunge gaily and unthinkingly into all the pleasures that await princes in this world.

Edward Augustus, afterwards Duke of York, as the eldest of the brothers, was the first to secure his liberty. "Sir Charles [Hanbury Williams]'s daughter, Lady Essex,[124] has engaged the attention of Prince Edward, who has got his liberty, seems extremely disposed to use it, and has great life and good-humour; she has already made a ball for him," Walpole wrote to Sir Horace Mann in January, 1757, when the Prince was eighteen; and soon William Henry, afterwards Duke of Gloucester, and Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland, made their bow to society, and became much [Pg 100] in evidence. "Every place is like one of Shakespeare's plays: Enter the Dukes of York, Gloucester, and attendants."

The Duke of York was of an amorous disposition and at an early age had love passages with the Duchess of Richmond,[125] with Lady Stanhope,[126] and with the Countess of Tyrconnel, of the last of whom Wraxall has left a description: "my particular acquaintance, feminine and delicate as her figure, very fair, with a profusion of light hair."[127] The Duke was further said to be engaged to that Lady Mary Coke of whom Lady Temple wrote:

> "She sometimes laughs, but never loud,
> She's handsome, too, but sometimes proud.
> At court she bears away the bell,
> She dresses fine and figures well;
> With decency she's gay and airy;
> Who can this be but Lady Mary?"

And Lady Mary was said to have taken his intentions so seriously that now and [Pg 101] then, in the belief that she was married to him, she signed her name like a royal personage.[128] "The Duke of York has £3,000 a year added to his income, which makes it £15,000," said Lady Sarah Lennox in December, 1764. "He is in great spirits and has begun giving balls." He drained the cup of pleasure to the dregs, but found death in the pleasant draught. He went abroad in 1767, caught cold at a ball given by

the Duc de Villars at his country seat, and, refusing to take care of himself, became ill, and died at Monaco on September 17.

"His immoderate pursuit of pleasure and unremitted fatigues in travelling beyond his strength, succeeded without interruption by balls and entertainments, had thrown his blood, naturally distempered and full of humours, into a state that brought on a putrid and irresistible fever," Walpole wrote. "He suffered considerably, but with a heroism becoming a great Prince. Before he died he wrote a penitential letter to the King (though, in truth, he had no faults but what his youth made pardonable), and tenderly recommended his servants to him. The Prince of Monaco, though his favourite child was then under inoculation at Paris, remained with and [Pg 102] waited on him to his last breath, omitting nothing that tenderness could supply or his royal birth demand. The Duke of York had lately passed some time in the French Court, and by the quickness of his replies, by his easy frankness, and (in him) unusual propriety of conduct, had won much on the affection of the King of France, and on the rest of the Court, though his loose and perpetually rolling eyes, his short sight, and the singular whiteness of his hair, which, the French said, resembled feathers, by no means bespoke prejudice in his favour. His temper was good, his generosity royal, and his parts not defective: but his inarticulate loquacity and the levity of his conduct, unsupported by any countenance from the King, his brother, had conspired to place him but low in the estimation of his countrymen. As he could obtain no credit from the King's unfeeling nature, he was in a situation to do little good; as he had been gained by the Opposition, he might have done hurt—at least so much to the King that his death was little lamented. Nor can we judge whether more years and experience would have corrected his understanding or corrupted his heart, nor whether, which is most probable, they would not have done both."[129]

From a portrait by L. F. Liolard

HENRY FREDERICK, DUKE OF CUMBERLAND

From a portrait by H. D. Hamilton

WILLIAM HENRY, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER

The Duke of York was foolish and dissipated, and though Mr. Cole says, "I have [Pg 103] been told that his private conversation was as weak and low as his person was contemptible," he was not without good qualities, and it is difficult to quarrel with Sir George Trevelyan, who, speaking of the sons of Frederick, Prince of Wales, says, "Death gradually thinned the illustrious group, carrying off princes whom the world pronounced hopeful and promising in exact proportion as they died young."[130] Certainly the Duke of York compares favourably with the two brothers who survived him.

"The Duke of Gloucester is following his [the Duke of York's] steps, and has supped at Lady Harrington's and trots about like anything," Lady Sarah Bunbury wrote to Lady Susan O'Brien on December 16, 1764; and, in due course, the Duke of Cumberland, emancipated from maternal control, entered upon his unedifying career as a man about town. There was, however, a marked difference between the brothers. The elder was, according to Walpole, who did not usually present an agreeable picture of a member of the royal family, "reserved, serious, pious, of the [Pg 104] most decent and sober deportment, and possessing a plain understanding, though of no brilliance," and the same authority adds that "an honorable *amour* which totally engrossed him preserved him from the irregularities into which his brothers Edward and Henry fell."[131]

The honourable *amour* to which Walpole alludes was the Duke's attachment to Maria, the widow of James, second Earl of Waldegrave. Lady Waldegrave was a natural daughter of Sir Edward Walpole by Mrs. Clements, a milliner, and so was a niece of the famous letter-writer, who took the greatest interest in her welfare. After

the death of her first husband in 1763, she was still a reigning beauty, and was besieged with offers of marriage including one from "the greatest match of the day," the Duke of Portland. She refused all her suitors, and her name began to be coupled with that of the Duke of Gloucester.[132] "The report of this week is that the King has forbid the Duke of Gloucester to speak to his pretty widow; the truth is that she is gone out of town, but more 'tis difficult to know," Lady Sarah Bunbury wrote on [Pg 105] March 8, 1766. "He has given her five pearl bracelets that cost £500—that's not for nothing surely?"[133]

MARIA, DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER

Perturbed by the scandal that was being circulated, Lady Waldegrave consulted her uncle, who advised her not to see the Duke again, whereupon she wrote to the latter a touching letter, in which she stated that while she was too inconsiderable a person to aspire to his hand, she was of too much consequence to become his mistress, and that therefore the intercourse between them must cease. After the lapse of a fortnight the intimacy was renewed, and Walpole, who knew his niece's character, felt confident that a marriage took place. This, indeed, was the case, for the Duke and Lady Waldegrave were secretly married on September 6, 1766, although it was not publicly announced until June, 1772, and not even Sir Edward Walpole was informed until May 19.

"My dear and ever honoured sir," the Duchess wrote to her father on May 19, 1772, "you cannot easily imagine how much every past affliction has been increased to me by my not being at liberty to make you quite easy. The duty to a husband being superior to that we owe a father, I hope will plead my pardon, and that instead of blaming my past reserve, you will think it commendable. When the Duke of [Pg 106] Gloucester married me (which was in September, 1766), I promised him upon no consideration in the world to own it, *even to you*, without his permission, which I never had till yesterday, when he arrived here in much better health and looks, better than ever I saw him, yet, as you may suppose much hurt at all that passed in his absence; so much so that I had the greatest difficulty to prevail on him to let things as much as possible remain as they are. To secure my character, without injuring his, is the utmost of my wishes, and I daresay that you and all my relations will agree with me that I shall be much happier to be called Lady Waldegrave and respected as Duchess of Gloucester than to feel myself the cause of his leading such a life as his brother, the Duke of Cumberland, does, in order to be called your royal highness. I am prepared for the sort of abuse the newspapers will be full of. Very few people will believe that a woman will refuse to be called princess if it is in her power. *To have the power is my pride*, and not using it in some measure pays the debt I owe the Duke for the honour he has done me. All that I wish of my relations is that they will show the world that they are satisfied with my conduct, yet *seem* to disguise the reason. If ever I am unfortunate enough to be called the Duchess of Gloucester, there [Pg 107] is an end of *almost* all the comforts which I now enjoy, which, if things go on as they are now, are *many*." It was this letter that drew from Horace Walpole the most sincere commendation, perhaps, that he ever bestowed: "I have always thought that feeling bestows the most sublime eloquence, and that women write better letters

than men. I, a writer in some esteem, and all my life a letter-writer, never penned anything like this letter of my niece. How mean did my prudence appear, compared with hers, which was void of all personal considerations but her honour."

While the Duke of Gloucester was engaged in the courtship and marriage of Lady Waldegrave, the Duke of Cumberland was spending the years in riotous living. Scandals clustered thick around his name, and his pursuit and conquest of Henrietta, Lady Grosvenor, resulted in an action by her husband for *crim. con.*, in which he was awarded £10,000 damages. The Duke, unable to pay this sum which with law-costs amounted to £13,000, was obliged to seek aid from his brother, the King, who was horrified at least as much by the attack upon his purse as at the affair itself. He had, however, no choice but to find means to settle the claim.

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RICHMOND LODGE, *November 5, 1770*.

LORD NORTH,—A subject of a most private and delicate kind obliges me to lose no time in acquainting you that my two brothers have this day applied to me on the difficulty that the folly of the younger has drawn him into; the affair is too public for you to doubt but that it regards the lawsuit; the time will expire this day seven-night, when he must pay the damages and the other expenses attending it. He has taken no one step to raise the money, and now has applied to me as the only means by which he can obtain it, promising to repay it in a year and a half; I therefore promised to write to you, though I saw great difficulty in you finding so large a sum as thirteen thousand pounds in so short a time; but their pointing out to me that the prosecutor would certainly force the House, which would at this licentious time occasion disagreeable reflections on the rest of his family as well as on him. I shall speak more fully to you on this subject on Wednesday, but the time is so short that I did not choose to delay opening this affair till then; besides, I am not fond of taking persons on delicate affairs unprepared; whatever can be done ought to be done; and I ought as little as possible to appear in so very improper a business.

GEORGE R.

From an engraving by V. Green

ANNE, DUCHESS OF CUMBERLAND

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"I cannot enough express how much I feel at being in the least concerned in an affair that my way of thinking has ever taught me to behold as highly improper; but I flatter myself the truths I have thought it incumbent to utter may be of some use in his future conduct," George III had written after the Grosvenor episode became known to him; but he placed too much reliance upon his powers of persuasion, for, the Duke's connexion with Lady Grosvenor not enduring, he was soon engaged in other intrigues,[134] the most notable and enduring of which was that with Lady Anne Horton,[135] a woman of great beauty. "This lady, like every member of her family, by no means wanted talents; but they were more specious than solid—better calculated for show than for use, for captivating admiration than for exciting esteem," Wraxall has written. "Her personal charms, allowance being made for the injury they had

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sustained from time—for in 1786 she was no longer young—fully justified the Duke's passion. No woman of her time performed the honours of her drawing-room with more affability, ease, and dignity." Horace Walpole, too, has left a description of her charms. "There was something so bewitching in her languishing eyes, which she could animate to enchantment if she pleased, and her coquetry was so active, so varied, and yet so habitual, that it was difficult not to see through it, and yet as difficult to resist it. She danced divinely, and had a great deal of wit, but of the satiric kind; and as she had haughtiness before her rise, no wonder she claimed all the observances due to her rank, after she became Duchess of Cumberland."[136]

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The Duke of Cumberland did not attempt to conceal his marriage, and according to some accounts, he informed the King in a curt note from abroad during his honeymoon, though another, and more probable, version declares that he went to the King, and walking with him in the garden gave him a letter. "The King took it, saying he supposed he need not read it now. 'Yes, sir,' said the Duke, 'you must read it directly.' On doing so his Majesty broke out into the most violent language, addressing his brother as 'You fool! You blockhead!' and declaring that 'this woman could be nothing and never should be anything to him.' He then told the Duke to go abroad. This led to an open breach."[137]

The King was so angry that he determined forthwith to put a stop to these clandestine marriages, and in February, 1772, sent a message to Parliament, introducing the Royal Marriage Act, the main object of which was to prohibit the marriage of any descendant of George II, unless a foreigner, marrying without the consent of the sovereign. "I am much pleased with the draft of the message, and with that of the Bill for preventing marriages in the royal family without the previous consent of the Crown, except the issue of princesses that have or may be married into foreign families," George wrote to Lord North on February 4, 1772; but just about this time came terrible news from Denmark about the English princess who had married the king of that country.

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"The most hardened men of the world confessed to being shocked when, with such news barely three weeks old, the wretched Caroline's brother invited his Parliament to consider a scheme of legislation, under which British princesses might have to choose between a lifetime of celibacy, and an ill-assorted union like that which just then was dissolving amidst a scene of blood and misery such as could be paralleled only in the imagination of the dramatist."[138] Though the Bill was introduced by the express direction of the King, not one of the ministers wished to identify himself with it. "One thing remarkable is that the King has not a servant in the line of business in either House, except the Chief Justice of the King's Bench [Mansfield] can be called so, who will own the Bill, or who has refrained from every public insinuation against it, as much as can come from those who vote for it, from considerations declared to be of another nature,"[139] wrote the Earl of Shelburne on March 15, 1772, to Chatham, who pronounced the measure "newfangled and impudent." Still the Royal Marriage Act passed the Lords without serious opposition, and it was brought to the Commons on March 4. There it had to contend against a strong feeling.

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"I think it is the wickedest Act in the Statute Book. It was brought forward to gratify the late Queen's pride, to protect her from the mortification of having the Countess Dowager of Waldegrave and Mrs. Horton raised to the rank of her sisters-in-law," Nicholls said. "It was well said of some persons, while this Bill was depending in Parliament, that the title of the Bill should be 'An Act to encourage Fornications and Adultery in the descendants of George II.'"[140]

The original bill stipulated that the sovereign's consent must be obtained whatever the age of the prince or princess, but in the Lower House this clause was altered so as to make the consent of the sovereign necessary until the royal personage desirous to marry should have reached the age of twenty-six, after which the union might take place unless objected to by Parliament, to which one year's notice of the proposed alliance must be given. Even with this modification, there was much opposition, but the King was resolved that the bill should become law. "I do expect every nerve to be strained to carry the bill through both Houses with a becoming firmness, for it is not a question that immediately relates to administration, but personally to myself, and therefore I have a right to expect a hearty support from every one in my service, and shall remember defaulters,"[141] George wrote to Lord North; but in spite of this expression of opinion, while the second reading passed by 268 to 140, the figures on the third reading showed only a majority of eighteen, the exact number of votes that had negatived an amendment to limit the operation of the bill to the reign of George III and three years longer. Burke denounced the measure, and Fox resigned his office so as to be free to oppose it; and their attitude was shared by the public at large.

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"Should wedded beauty Glo'ster's choice approve,
And honour kindle at the call of Love,
Oh! let forgiveness ne'er abuse the throne,
Unmov'd, and sullen, hear a brother groan!
Gomorrah's crime alone shall pardon find,
Or *Blood's* offence, for *blood*.
Should a mad brother in the June of life
Debauch a virgin or seduce a wife,

Risk his good name on *Whistle-jacket's* speed,
Or run the race of Folly, and succeed;
That brother to the royal *bosom take*,
And love the offender for;
But should that brother wisdom's voice obey,
And Hymen's torch to virtue light the way;
That brother from the royal bosom thrust,
Disgrace his honest offspring, and be *just*
Thus shall the genuine German line succeed,
And the same lead run sterling through the breed."[142]

As soon as an intimation of the Royal Marriage Act reached the Duke of Gloucester, he informed the King of his marriage, and further acquainted him with an impending interesting event at which he desired the great officers of state should attend. The news was a great blow to George, who at first took no notice of his brother's communication; but upon receipt of a second letter deigned to state that after the [Pg 116] birth of a child he would send and have "the marriage, as well as the birth enquired into, in order that both may be authenticated." This was most unsatisfactory to the Duke and his wife, and the former, to the general astonishment, rose to the occasion, and sent a dignified reply, in which he demanded an immediate inquiry, otherwise he would state his case in person in the House of Lords. The threat produced the desired result, inquiries were made, and as the marriage was informal, though not actually illegal, it was only after the Duke's avowed intention to go through the ceremony again that the King accepted the marriage. His consent was given on May 27, and two days later a child was born.[143]

Though the King could not refuse to recognize the marriage of his brothers, he could and did decline to receive the parties to them, and for some years the two Dukes and their wives were in disgrace. The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester bore their exile with equanimity, for the Duke was passionately fond of travelling and perhaps never so happy as when roaming over the continent.

He was the King's favourite brother,[144] and was eventually received into favour, [Pg 117] when the King could not well refrain from pardoning the other transgressor. "You have heard, I suppose, of the conduct of the two duchesses about their husbands' reconciliation with the King," Lady Sarah Bunbury wrote to Lady Susan O'Brien, in the summer of 1780. "The Duchess of Cumberland sent her husband to Court, and said that she would be no hindrance to his going, 'that her house was her palace, and her husband her guard, and she wanted no others.' *Voyez un peu comme elle s'y prend bien pour arriver à sa fin.* The Duke of Gloucester goes only in private, but yet the King is so fond of him, he seems to approve of everything he does, so that it's hard to tell who is in the right, but I would bet my money on the head of a Luttrell being in the right road to preferment, and it's no bad sign of it when a Luttrell adopts *les beaux sentiments* and is scrupulous of family duties among relations, for it is not [Pg 118] in that line they have hitherto shone."

The Duke of Gloucester was no more able than his brothers to be faithful to one woman, and he soon devoted himself to Lady Almeria Carpenter, when his wife, a high-spirited woman, for whom he had fought so well, demanded, and in 1787 obtained, an informal separation. The Duke was, indeed, scarcely worth securing except for his title, for he was almost entirely destitute of intelligence, as two anecdotes related by Walpole prove. On one occasion he came into a room where his wife was sitting to Reynolds, of whom he took no notice until the Duchess whispered to him to address the painter. "So," said he, willing to be agreeable, "so you always begin with the head, do you?" This was only to be equalled by his remark to Gibbon: "What, scribble, scribble, scribble?" Feeble in health, the Duke's life was frequently despaired of, but he survived until 1803. "We are in hourly expectation of the news of the poor Duke of Gloucester's death," the Queen wrote to Lady Harcourt on August 29, 1803. "His sufferings must have been dreadfully painful; but his good temper and cheerfulness never left him. I understand that he was not quite open with his physician, and that some complaint he kept a secret for three days, to which the [Pg 119] medicines which they administered were fatal. How unfortunate to deceive oneself, and much more when one wishes to deceive others. This the King is not to know; but the physicians stand justified to the world.... The poor Duke has left a will, and desires to be buried at Windsor; which is granted. He left the Duchess sole executrix; but with a proviso to pay his debts, which the world says are very few."

The reconciliation of the Duke of Cumberland with the King was hollow indeed, for these brothers had nothing in common, and the monarch hated his sister-in-law. "The King held her [the Duchess] in great alienation, because he believed she lent herself to facilitate or to gratify the Prince of Wales's inclinations on some points beyond the limits of propriety—Carlton House and Cumberland House communicating behind by the gardens."[145] The reasons for George III's dislike were well-founded, and, in addition, the Duke committed the unpardonable sin in allying himself with the Opposition, and was further the prime factor in inducing his nephew, the Prince of Wales, to set himself against the Court. During the American troubles in 1775, ministerial Earl told the Duke that his Majesty hoped his brother would support the measures of the Government. "God forbid," said his Royal Highness, "that a prince of [Pg 120]

the House of Hanover should violate those rights in America, which they were raised to the throne of England for asserting," and he voted in favour of Chatham's plan of conciliation. That fine speech stands alone in the records of his libertine career.

The King's eldest sister, Princess Augusta, was, according to Horace Walpole, "not handsome, but tall enough and not ill-made, with the German whiteness of hair and complexion, so remarkable in the royal family, and with their precipitate yet thick Westphalian accent."[146] At an early age she interested herself in politics, and soon showed a desire to meddle in matters of state, which desire was particularly annoying to her mother, for, unlike the Princess Dowager, she was attached to Pitt and with the Duke of York "inveighed openly and boldly against the policy of the Court." Such a firebrand was an active danger in the royal family, and it was feared lest she might infect her brothers and sisters and even the young Queen with her obnoxious opinions. It was, therefore, thought advisable to remove her from England, and this was achieved by marrying her in 1764 to Charles William Ferdinand, Hereditary-Prince of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel.

From a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds

AUGUSTA, DUCHESS OF BRUNSWICK

Portrait by Cotes

CAROLINA MATILDA, QUEEN OF DENMARK

The bridegroom of the Princess Royal was treated by the Court with great [Pg 121] coldness, for it was known that he had been discussing English politics with more freedom than discretion: all the ceremonials not absolutely essential were omitted, the servants were not given the customary new liveries for the marriage, and though Charles was perforce lodged at Somerset House, no sentinel was placed at the door of his apartment. Indeed had he been an uninvited guest his reception could not have been more marked by stinging slights. The Prince, a high-spirited, not overwise young man of nine-and-twenty, was very angry at the treatment accorded him by the family of his bride, and since the Court ignored him so far as possible, he accepted the attentions of the leaders of the Opposition, dined with the Duke of Cumberland and the Duke of Newcastle, and visited Pitt at Hayes.

Very different was the conduct of the public, which was delighted to welcome the gallant young soldier, who had distinguished himself in war under Frederick the Great, and cheered him to the echo whenever he appeared in public. One day, he kissed his hand to a soldier of Elliot's Light Horse, who was at once surrounded by a crowd, and asked if he knew the Prince. "Yes," said the man, "he once led me into a scrape, which nobody but himself could have brought me out of again." [Pg 122] "You may guess," wrote Walpole, "how much this added to the Prince's popularity, which was at high-water mark before." The Prince had arrived in England on January 12, and was married on the 16th. Two days later the whole royal family went to Covent Garden Theatre, and the public took this occasion to show their opinion of the manner in which the visitor had been received. The King and Queen took their seats in a profound silence, and deafening cheers greeted the appearance of the bridal pair. "The shouts, claps, and huzzas were immoderate," Walpole informed Sir Horace Mann. "He sat behind his Princess and her brothers. The galleries called him to come forward. In the middle of the play he went to be elected a member of the Royal Society, and returned to the theatre when the applause was renewed."

The subsequent life of the Prince and Princess of Brunswick was conventional—conventional, that is, according to the standard of royalty in those days. "The Duchess of Brunswick is brought to bed of a brat, and they say she has not been taken care of, and that the Prince is not good to her," Lady Sarah Bunbury wrote to Lady Susan O'Brien on December 16, 1764; "but I don't believe a word of it." Certainly the Duke was not faithful to his wife, and had many intrigues, the most [Pg 123]

enduring of which was with Madame de Herzfeldt. "There were some unlucky things in our Court, which made my position difficult," subsequently said Princess Charlotte of Brunswick, who married the Prince of Wales. "My father was most entirely attached to a lady for thirty years who, in fact, was his mistress. She was the beautifullest creature and the cleverest; but though my father continued to pay my poor mother all possible respect, my poor mother could not suffer this attachment. The consequence was that I did not know what to do between them: when I was civil to the one I was scolded by the other; and I was very tired of being shuttlecock between them."

After the death of the Duke at the battle of Jena, his principality fell into the hands of the French, and the Duchess fled to England, where, owing to the difference between her daughter and the Prince of Wales, she lived in semi-retirement until her death on March 23, 1813.

Far more tragic was the fate of the Princess Caroline Amelia, who was married at the age of fifteen to Christian VII, King of Denmark. "The poor Queen of Denmark is gone out alone into the wide world; not a creature she knows to attend her any further than Altona," Miss Talbot wrote to Mrs. Carter on October 4, 1766. "It is [Pg 124] worse than dying; for die she must to all she has ever seen or known; but then it is only dying out of one bad world into another just like it, and where she is to have cares and fears, and dangers and sorrows, that will all yet be new to her.... They have just been telling me how bitterly she cried in the coach, as far as anybody saw her." The girl's feelings at this time proved only too truly prophetic of the rest of her brief life. Her husband was an abandoned *roué*, and, it was said, ill-treated her. After two years, King Christian, without his wife, came to pay a prolonged visit to England, where he was received by George III with great coldness, although, of course, the necessary ceremonials could not be avoided. "As to-morrow is the day you receive foreign ministers, you will acquaint M. de Dieden that I desire he will assure the King, his master, that I am desirous of making his stay in this country as agreeable as possible," George wrote to Lord Weymouth on June 8, 1768. "That I therefore wish to be thoroughly apprised of the mode in which he chooses to be treated, that I may exactly conform to it. This will throw whatever may displease the King of Denmark, during his stay there, on his shoulders, and consequently free me from that *désagrément*; but you know very well the whole of it is very disagreeable to me." [Pg 125]

After Christian's return the relations between him and his Queen were strained to the uttermost. He was now, as a consequence of his dissipations, a physical wreck; and his wife, taking a leaf from his book, committed all sorts of rash and foolish actions. She carried on an intrigue with Stuensee, the Prime Minister, and made no attempt whatever to hide their intimacy. Owing to the intervention of the Queen Dowager, who desired to secure the throne for her younger son Frederick, it was determined to end the scandal. Stuensee was arrested and executed in 1772, and the Queen was sent to Cronenborg, where she was kept in strict confinement. It was suspected that she would meet the same fate as her lover, but this was averted by the action of the British Government, who sent a fleet into the Baltic, when the Queen was released. She went to Stade in Hanover, and afterwards to Zell, where she died on May 10, 1775. Whether her intrigue with the minister was innocent or guilty need not now be argued. "I am going to appear before God," the unhappy woman said on her deathbed. "I now protest I am innocent of the guilt imputed to me, and that I was never unfaithful to my husband."

CHAPTER XVIII [Pg 126]

ENGLAND AND AMERICA. II: THE KING'S WAR

In America, the repeal of the Stamp Act had been regarded as a great victory: ships displayed their colours, houses were illuminated, joybells were set ringing. The South Carolina Assembly voted a sum of money for the purchase of a marble statue of William Pitt; and at Philadelphia the principal inhabitants gave a great ball to the English officials, at the conclusion of which the hosts passed an informal resolution: "that to demonstrate our zeal to Great Britain, and our gratitude for the repeal of the Stamp Act, each of us will, on June 4 next, on the birthday of our most gracious sovereign George III, dress ourselves in a new suit of the manufactures of England, and give what homespun we have to the poor." Adams, who certainly was in a position to speak with authority, declared that, "The repeal of the Stamp Act has hushed into silence almost every popular clamour, and composed every wave of popular disorder into a smooth and peaceful calm"; and Lord Chatham in a speech some years later, referring to this time, said, "The Americans had almost forgot, in their excess of gratitude for the repeal of the Stamp Act, any interest but that of the [Pg 127] mother-country; there seemed an emulation among the different provinces who should be most dutiful and forward in their expression of loyalty."[147]

This view of the state of affairs in the American colonies was, however, far too

deeply tinged with optimism, for, after the first outburst of enthusiasm, the joy of the inhabitants diminished as they reflected upon the malign possibilities inevitably suggested by the Declaratory Act. The well informed were aware that this was intended by the English ministers only as a salve to the King and Parliament; but to the majority it was a menace, and even those who understood the reason for the measure could not feel sure it would never be invoked. So it happened that "there were not wanting many, who, by pamphlets and newspaper publication, prevented the return of cordial affection, and cautioned the colonies against a too implicit reliance on the moderation of the mother country."[148]

This feeling of insecurity might by judicious handling have been removed, but it was fanned into irritation by that clause in the Mutiny Act which compelled the colonials to furnish supplies for the English troops. "An Act of Parliament [Pg 128] commanding to do a certain thing, if it has any validity," said Dickinson, "is a tax upon us for the expense that accrues in complying with it."[149] Thus it came to pass that while England was still congratulating itself upon the fortunate results of the repeal of the Stamp Act, New York was refusing to provision or to house the British troops, and its merchants were petitioning against this attempted imposition.

Wisdom and tact were required in the English ministers who, as usual when dealing with America, were found wanting in those qualities; and, indeed, there was during the next years ample ground for Nicholls's scathing indictment of the policy of the mother-country. "From the formation of Lord Chatham's cabinet in 1766 to the ultimate determination in 1774, of forcing the Americans into rebellion, the measures adopted seem to have been calculated to provoke and irritate the Americans. Perhaps this was not the intention of those in power, but it was the result of the different measures at different times adopted; sometimes the Earl of Chatham's opinion prevailed, viz., that the British Parliament had no right to tax the American colonies. At other times the opinion of the interior cabinet prevailed, viz., that the [Pg 129] King was humiliated if the right of the British Parliament to tax America was not asserted."[150]

If the irritation of the colonists was only partially allayed by the repeal of the Stamp Act, George III was suffering from what he regarded as the humiliation inflicted by Lord Rockingham's conciliatory policy, and no sooner had he dismissed that minister than he endeavoured to persuade the new government to take steps to re-assert the royal dignity. While Lord Chatham was at the head of affairs, George could do nothing, but when the illness of this Prime Minister prevented his participation in the management of public business, the King brought pressure to bear upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer. "The whole body of courtiers drove him [Townshend] onwards," said Burke. "They always talked as if the King stood in a sort of humiliated state until something of the kind should be done [to neutralize the repeal]."[151] Townshend was an ambitious man and eventually he yielded to these representations, in spite of the known hostility of his absent leader to such measures as were indicated. "I will not use so strong an expression as to say that Townshend was treacherous to this administration," wrote Nicholls, "but he certainly saw that [Pg 130] the Earl of Chatham's greatness was on the decline; and that he should most readily increase his own importance by acquiescing in the wishes of the King. He therefore brought forward measures tending to revive the question of the right of the British Parliament to tax the American colonies; but his premature death protects him from being considered as the author of the American War."[152]

Untaught by experience, George Grenville, on January 26, 1767, moved in the House of Commons that America, like Ireland, should support an establishment of its own, and in the course of the discussion which followed, Townshend declared himself an advocate of the principle of the Stamp Act. "I know the mode by which a revenue may be drawn from the Americans without giving offence," he stated, to the astonishment and dismay of the cabinet, who had not been taken into his confidence. George Grenville at once took the opportunity to pin the Chancellor of the Exchequer to his project; and his colleagues then had only the alternative to demand Townshend's resignation or adopt his scheme. They would gladly have had him removed, for, intoxicated by success and royal flatterers, "his behaviour on the whole," as the Duke of Grafton wrote to Chatham, "is such as no cabinet will, I am [Pg 131] confident, ever submit to."[153] Unfortunately Chatham was too ill to intervene, and so Townshend prepared his Bill. "No one of the Ministry had authority to advise the dismissal of Mr. Charles Townshend, and nothing less could have stopped the measure," Grafton explained, "Lord Chatham's absence being, in this instance as well as others, much to be lamented."[154]

On May 13 Townshend introduced a Bill to impose taxes on glass, paper, pasteboard, white lead, red lead, painters' colours, and tea imported into the American colonies, the proceeds of which would, it was estimated, amount to less than £40,000 a year, and would be devoted to payment of the governors and judges in America. If taxation was permissible without representation, then there was little to be said against the measure. It inflicted no hardship, for, to take one article as an example, even with the threepence a pound tax, the colonists were still able to purchase tea cheaper than it could be obtained in England, where the tax (returnable

on exportation) was a shilling a pound. Further, in regard to the whole measure, it was contended that there was a very distinct difference between a tax on imports and an excise tax. "An excise the Americans think you have no right to levy within [Pg 132] their country," Franklin said, when examined by the House of Commons. "But the sea is yours; you maintain by your fleets the safety of navigation in it, and keep it clear of pirates. You may have, therefore, a natural and equitable right to some toll or duty and merchandise carried through that part of your dominions, towards defraying the expense you are at in the ships to maintain the safety of that carriage."

Parliament had not profited by the lessons of the Stamp Act, and ministers ignored the advice of the colonial Governors that now the colonists had tasted the fruits of their power, it was even more dangerous than before to attempt to impose taxation without representation. The situation was further complicated by the fact that the King was known to have instigated the measure. "The distance of the colonies would make it impossible for them to take an active interest in your affairs if they were as well affected to your government as they once pretended to be to your person. They were ready enough to distinguish between *you* and your ministers. They complained of an act of the legislature, but traced the origin of it no higher than to the servants of the Crown; they pleased themselves with the hope that their sovereign, if not [Pg 133] favourable to their cause, at least was impartial. The decisive, personal part you took against them has effectually banished that first distinction from their minds. They consider you as united with your servants against America."[155]

More clear-sighted than the English was the Duc de Choiseul, who wrote in August, 1867, to Durand, the French Minister in London: "Let England but attempt to establish taxes in her colonies and those countries, greater than England in extent, and perhaps becoming more populous—having fisheries, forests, shipping, corn, iron and the like—will easily and fearlessly separate themselves from the mother-country."[156] The feeling of loyalty in the colonies was still strong, however, and as De Kalb, the secret agent of De Choiseul, wrote to his chief, "There is a hundred times more enthusiasm for the American Revolution in any of our coffee houses of Paris, than in all the thirteen provinces of America united."[157] None the less the subsequent events vindicated the judgment of De Choiseul.

The immediate result of Townshend's Act falsified Franklin s opinion. Instead of the measure being accepted in all good-will, the seizure of John Hancock's sloop *Liberty* [Pg 134] for a breach of the revenue laws resulted in a serious riot in Boston. It is true that the other provinces contented themselves for the moment with indignation meetings; but it became very obvious that everywhere there was a feeling of increased hostility to the motherland. This was sedulously and successfully fanned by De Kalb, who was busily engaged in the endeavour to foment rebellion in the colonies; and it was not long before Massachusetts, as usual, took the lead, and, on February 11, 1768, addressed a circular letter to the other Assemblies denouncing the new laws as unconstitutional and inviting them to take united measures for their repeal. Otis sounded the note of revolt: "Let Britain rescind her measures, or her authority is lost for ever"; and half the colonists banded themselves together as "Sons of Liberty" and "Daughters of Liberty," and pledged themselves not to use British imports. Petitions, worded with great moderation, were presented to the King, but the American newspapers contained articles couched in very different language, and colonial orators did not mince their words. "We will submit to no tax, neither will we become slaves. Before the King and Parliament shall impose upon us, or settle Crown officers independent of the Colonial Legislature, we will take up arms and shed the last drop [Pg 135] of our blood."[158]

England was not at first inclined to be conciliatory. Charles Townshend's death in September, 1767, and the appointment of Lord North as Chancellor of the Exchequer had necessitated various changes in the ministry; and in December, in consequence of the increase of business in connexion with the American colonies, a third Secretary of State with the title of Secretary of State for America was appointed in the person of Lord Hillsborough.[159] The latter, whom Horace Walpole has described as "nothing more than a pompous composition of ignorance and want of judgment," was a most unwise selection for the very difficult office. He seems to have had no opinion of his own, and to have been undismayed by the outbreaks, relying mainly upon the advice of Bernard, Governor of Massachusetts, that a show of force would be sufficient to subdue the malcontents.

"The affairs in North America tend more and more to confusion," Lord Rockingham wrote on August 11, 1768; and about the same time Bernard, stating that his position [Pg 136] was one of "utter and humiliating impotence," asked for troops. Soldiers were sent, in spite of Franklin's warning that "they would not find, but would easily create rebellion." The troops arrived in November, and were kindly received by the colonists, who made it clear to them that the widespread indignation was not against them but against their masters. This show of force on a small scale was without effect. "Of what avail will an army be in so vast a country?" De Chatelet said to De Choiseul. "The Americans have made these reflections, and they will not give way." [160]

For a while, however, the English continued their blundering. Hillsborough

instructed Bernard to order the Massachusetts Assembly to rescind its circular letter, and when the Assembly reaffirmed its resolution by a still larger majority, it was dissolved. When Parliament met in December, the Duke of Bedford moved a petition to the Crown to apply to Massachusetts an act of 35 Henry VIII, by which offenders outside the kingdom were liable to be brought to England for trial, on the ground that owing to the state of public feeling in that province it would be impossible to obtain a conviction in any action brought by the Government. This extraordinary proposal actually passed through Parliament, in spite of the opposition [Pg 137] of Burke and Pownall, an ex-governor of Massachusetts, for, as Burke said, "Repeal began to be in as bad odour in the House of Commons as the Stamp Act had been the session before."[161] There was so great an outcry, both in England and America, against this measure that no attempt was made to enforce it; indeed, it is probable that it was only intended to frighten the colonists, for it was impossible to make the mother-country realize that its American colonies were not a band of naughty children. As Horace Walpole wrote to Conway: "Our conduct has been that of pert children. We have thrown a pebble at a mastiff and are surprised it is not frightened."

America was not frightened, but its attitude was so threatening that the Duke of Grafton, influenced by the complaint of London merchants that between Christmas 1767 and 1769 the value of exports to America had decreased by £700,000, moved at a Cabinet Council held on May 1, 1769, for the Bill for the repeal of the import dues. At first it seemed as if it would be carried, but at a subsequent discussion Lord North, who, in the interval, had yielded to the King's prayers, proposed that the duty on tea should be retained, not for its financial value, but as a sign of the right of [Pg 138] Parliament to impose taxation. As the question at issue was the right to tax, not what to tax, North's amendment practically neutralized the original proposal; but when Grafton divided the Cabinet upon the question, he was left in a minority of one. Soon after he resigned, and Lord North, reigning in his stead, introduced his measure on March 6, 1770. In vain Pownall, who after his return from America in 1760 had published a book on "The Administration of the Colonies," in which he laid especial stress upon the determination of the Americans not to be taxed without their own consent, begged the new ministry to reconsider its measure, assuring them that it would be entirely ineffectual unless all the duties were repealed.

The time had gone by for partial concession, and on the very day before Lord North brought in his Bill, a serious riot broke out at Boston, when the soldiers fired and the first blood was shed. Yet nothing warned the King, whose passion for prerogative it was impossible to quench, and he now strengthened the anti-colonial side of the new Cabinet. "Rigby ... who cursed and swore when the repeal of the Stamp Act was alluded to in his presence, and Sandwich, who never spoke of the Americans except as rebels and cowards, openly proclaimed that three battalions and half-a-dozen [Pg 139] frigates would soon bring New York and Massachusetts to their senses. They became ministers on an express understanding that the British Government, in its dealing with the Provincial Assemblies, should henceforth employ undisguised coercion and insist upon unconditional submission."[162]

In August, 1772, Lord Hillsborough was replaced as Secretary of State for America by the Earl of Dartmouth, who was known to be anxious for conciliation; but the colonies found fresh cause of offence in a measure that provided for the payment of the Massachusetts judges by the Crown instead of the colonies, "a change which was designed to render the judges independent of popular feeling, was resented as an attempt to make him subservient to the Crown, for they held office during the King's pleasure."

Meantime delegates from the various Assemblies met in congress, and presented to the King a petition, at once firm and temperate, assuring him of their desire to restore amicable relations with the mother-country. "As your Majesty enjoys the signal distinction of reigning over freemen, the language of freedom cannot be displeasing. We ask for peace, liberty, and safety. We wish not a diminution of the [Pg 140] prerogative, nor do we solicit the grant of any new right in our favour. In the magnanimity and justice of your Majesty and Parliament, we confide for a redress of our grievances, trusting that when the causes of our apprehensions are removed, our future conduct will prove us not unworthy of the regard we have been accustomed, in our happier days, to enjoy. We implore, therefore, your Majesty, as the loving father of all your people, connected by the same bonds of law, loyalty, faith and blood, not to suffer the transcendent relation, formed by these ties, to be further violated in uncertain expectation of effects which, if attained, never can compensate for the calamities through which they must be gained. So may your Majesty enjoy every temporal felicity, through a long and glorious reign, and your descendants inherit your prosperity and dominions, till time shall be no more." After passing this Address, Congress, which had sat in defiance of the Government, dissolved, but not before it had agreed to a resolution that if the differences at issue were not previously settled, another Congress should meet on May 10, 1775. The petition was, under the circumstances, so reasonable that on November 10 the Duke of Richmond moved in the House of Lords that the petition of the American Congress to the King afforded *ground* of conciliation. The King, however, would only regard the Address as [Pg 141]

an impertinence, and his reply was deliberately void of any conciliatory phrase. "It is with the utmost astonishment that I find any of my subjects capable of encouraging the rebellious disposition which unhappily exists in some of my colonies in North America. Having entire confidence in the wisdom of my Parliament, the great council of the nation, I will steadily pursue those measures which they have recommended, for the support of the constitutional rights of Great Britain and the protection of the commercial interests of my kingdom."

The irritation of the American colonists broke out on December 16, 1773, when the ships laden with tea arrived at the port of Boston. These were boarded by a small army of responsible citizens disguised as Mohawk Indians in full war paint, with tomahawks and scalping knives, too numerous to be opposed, who flung the cargoes into the sea. The news of "the Boston Tea-Party," as the incident was subsequently known, only established George III in his belief that of all weapons firmness only would be effectual; and accordingly he sanctioned and, indeed, welcomed the Boston Port Bill, which ordered the closing of the port of Boston and altered the charter of the province of Massachusetts. It was clear that if this Act could be enforced Boston [Pg 142] would be punished for its sins by nothing less than ruin, and ministers believed that the dispersal of the trade of that flourishing town among its commercial competitors would result in internal quarrels. However, instead of the hoped for disunion, the colonies banded themselves together yet more closely, and when Hutchinson was recalled and General Gage sent out as Governor of Massachusetts and Commander-in-Chief, the latter found himself confronted with the colonies on the very border-line of rebellion.

"Very little that is satisfactory has transpired of America. On Monday Lord North moved for leave to bring in a Bill to remove the Customs and Courts of Justice from Boston to New Salem—a step so detrimental to the former town, as must soon reduce it to your own terms; and yet of so mild an appearance that it was agreed to without a division and almost without a debate," Gibbon wrote on March 16, 1774. The truth is, outside a small body of active politicians, Englishmen had not yet realized that the American question had become so acute, that close at hand was the end of peaceful negotiations. Even when it seemed probable that hostilities must ensue, the landed gentry, the backbone of the House of Commons, were in favour of thrashing their [Pg 143] impenitent brethren across the sea, and a little later, according to Burke, "The merchants began to snuff the cadaverous *haut goût* of lucrative war; the freighting business never was so lively, on account of the prodigious taking up for transport service: great orders for provisions of all kinds, new clothing for the troops, puts life into the woollen manufactures."[163]

Even the general body of the public was deluded, by the specious arguments of the ministers, into the support of the appeal to arms. "I recollect," Nicholls has recorded, "in one debate, Lord North stated that the inhabitants of Great Britain, considered collectively, paid one man with another twenty-five shillings a year in taxes; while the inhabitants of our American colonies, considered collectively, paid each only sixpence a year in taxes; he added, 'Is this equitable?' The country gentlemen were weak enough to believe that, by persevering in the contest, their taxes would be diminished."[164]

The Boston Port Act was the last straw. The Americans realized that they must [Pg 144] either submit unconditionally to the home government or take arms in defence of their liberties. They did not long hesitate. In September the inter-provincial Congress approved the opposition of the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay to the execution of the late Acts of Parliament, and stated that if the same should be attempted to be carried into execution by force, in such cases all Americans ought to support them in their opposition. "I am not sorry that the line of conduct seems now chalked out," wrote the King on hearing the news. "The New England government are in a state of rebellion. Blows must decide whether they are to be subject to this country or independent."[165]

The appeal to the God of Battles was not allowed without protest, and in January, 1775, Chatham, moving for the recall of the troops in Boston, made an impassioned speech. "For solidity of reasoning, and wisdom of conclusion under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the General Congress at Philadelphia. All attempts to impose servitude upon such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental nation must be vain, must be fatal. We shall be forced ultimately to retract. Let us retract while we [Pg 145] can, not when we must." In vain London and other cities petitioned against extreme measures, in vain Lord Effingham and Chatham's eldest son resigned their commissions in the Army lest they should have to serve against the Americans, in vain Grafton resigned the Privy Seal. Lord Dartmouth took the Duke's place; Lord George Germaine, a violent opponent of the colonies, became Secretary of State for America; and Howe took over from Gage the command of the British troops in the colonies; while those who opposed the war were looked upon as traitors by the Court. "The war was considered as the war of the King personally. Those who supported it were called the King's friends; while those who wished the country to pause, and reconsider the propriety of persevering in the contest, were branded as

disloyal."[166]

The first blood was shed at Lexington on the morning of April 19, 1775, when General Gage's troops engaged with a body of the colonial militia. At that time no doubt was felt at home that the rebels would be promptly defeated, and still society at large did not take the American question very seriously. Even Selwyn referred to it as "that little dispute." "You pant after news from America, there are none *pour le moment*," he wrote to Lord Carlisle on October 11, 1775. "But you may depend upon it, if that little dispute interests you, I will let you know, *quand le monde sera rassemble, tout ce que j'apprens, et de bon lieu*. Charles [James Fox] assures us that nothing is so easy as to put an end to all this, but then there must be a change of ministry, *quelconque*, no matter what, as a preliminary assurance to the insurgents." [167] Two months later Selwyn was still optimistic. "Our last news from America are certainly not good, but it does not alter my expectations of what will be the issue of the next campaign." The delay in inflicting a serious defeat upon the colonists filled the latter with hope of ultimate success. "Britain," said Franklin jubilantly, "at expense of three millions, had killed a hundred and fifty Yankees this campaign, which is £20,000 a head; and at Bunker's Hill she gained a mile of ground, part of which she lost again by our taking post on Ploughed Hill. During the same time sixty thousand children have been born in America: from these data may easily be calculated the time and expense necessary to kill us all and conquer our territory." [Pg 146]

Lexington and Bunker's Hill only served to irritate the King, who could not see to what these encounters would lead, and he was the more shocked, being in hourly expectation of the surrender of the rebels, to receive despatches from Sir William Howe, containing an account of the action on Long Island. "Since the future consequences of the American rebellion, if we may judge from this fatal event," he said to Lord George Germaine, after glancing at the lists of killed and wounded at Long Island, "are likely to be still more bloody and tragical, may my deluded subjects on the other side of the Atlantic behold their impending destruction with half the horror that I feel on the occasion; then I think I shall soon hear of their throwing off the yoke of republicanism and, like loyal subjects, returning to that duty they owe to an indulgent sovereign." Doubtless he still cherished the hope that colonists would come to heel, but even his optimism must have been shattered by the publication of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1775. [Pg 147]

The war proceeded with varying fortunes, and the capture of New York by Howe encouraged the mother-country. Burgoyne's success at Philadelphia in June, 1777, delighted the King, who is said to have rushed into the Queen's room as soon as he heard of it, crying, "I have beat them! beat all the Americans!" But his pleasure was soon dashed by the news that on October 16, Burgoyne and his army capitulated at Saratoga, which, however, after the first shock, he pronounced "very serious, but not without remedy." After these distressing tidings became known in England, a friend of Lord North said to him, "My Lord, you must now see that the whole population of America is hostile to your designs." Lord North replied, "I see that as clearly as you do; and the King shall either consent to allow me to assure the House of Commons that some means shall be found to put an end to the war, or I will not continue to be his minister."[168] The King, however, was not to be moved from his purpose, and his appeal to North not to desert him in the hour of his trouble could not be disregarded by his faithful minister. [Pg 148]

The situation was, indeed, distressing. "What a wretched piece of work do we seem to be making of it in America!" Gibbon wrote on April 13, 1777. "The greatest force which any European power ever ventured to transport into that continent is not strong enough ever to attack the enemy: the naval strength of Great Britain is not sufficient to prevent the Americans (they have almost lost the appellation of rebels) from receiving every assistance that they wanted; and in the meantime you are obliged to call out the militia to defend your own coast against their privateers. You possibly may expect from me some account of the designs and policy of the French Court. I shall only say that I am not under any immediate apprehension of a war with France. It is much more pleasant as well as profitable to view in safety the raging of the tempest, occasionally to pick up some pieces of wreck, and to improve their trade, their agriculture and their finances while the two countries are '*lento collisa duella*.' Far from taking any step to put an end to this astonishing dispute, I should not be surprised if next summer they were to lend their cordial assistance to England as the weaker party."[169] [Pg 149]

It is beyond the scope of this work to trace the progress of the war, and it is for the military historian to criticise its conduct; but it was patent that the purchase of Hessian troops was a great diplomatic blunder. To invoke the aid of hired mercenaries was to make the breach irrevocable, as well as to set against the country employing them the sympathy of other nations. Frederick the Great said he "should make all the Hessian troops, marching through his dominions to America, pay the usual cattle tax, because though human beings they had been sold as beasts." The case has been well put by Lord Mahon. "If any men were needed, was there any lack of them in England?" he asked, "was it wise to inform foreign states that we deemed ourselves thus dependent on foreign aid. Was it wise to hold forth to [Pg 150]

America the first example of obtaining assistance from abroad? Above all, if conciliation was the object full as much as conquest, how signal the imprudence thus in the midst of a civil strife, to thrust forward aliens to both parties, in blood, in language, and in manners."[170] Chatham inveighed against "the traffic and barter driven with every pitiful German prince that sells his subjects to the shambles of a foreign country. This mercenary aid on which you rely irritates to an incurable resentment the minds of your enemies. To overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder; devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty! If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while there was a foreign troop in my country, I never would lay down my arms, never! never! never!"

Chatham's popularity, affected somewhat by his acceptance of a pension, had been greatly diminished when he went to the House of Lords, but now, when the country [Pg 151] was in danger, all eyes were turned on him as the only man who could conceivably extract from the situation peace with honour. "If there be a man who has served this nation with honour to himself and glory to his country," said George Grenville the younger in the House of Commons on February 11, 1778, "if there be a man who has carried the arms of Britain triumphant to every quarter of the globe beyond the most sanguine expectations of the people, if there be a man of whom the House of Bourbon stands more particularly in awe; if there be a man in this country who unites the confidence of England and America, is not he the proper person to treat with Americans, and not those who have uniformly deceived and oppressed them? There is not one present who is ignorant of the person to whom I allude. You all know I mean a noble, near relation, Lord Chatham." Many years later an able historian, reviewing the situation, repeated in no uncertain tone the substance of the speech of the promising young statesman. "There was one man to whom, in this hour of panic and consternation, the eyes of all patriotic Englishmen were turned," Lecky has written. "In Chatham England possessed a statesman whose genius in conducting a war was hardly inferior to that of Marlborough in conducting an army. In France his [Pg 152] name produced an almost superstitious terror."[171]

In America it was pronounced with the deepest affection and reverence. He had, in the great French war, secured the Anglo-Saxon preponderance in the colonies; he had defended the colonies in every stage of their controversy about the Stamp Act, and had fascinated them by the splendour of his genius. If any statesman could at the last moment conciliate them, dissolve the new alliance, and kindle into flame the loyalist feeling which undoubtedly existed largely in America, it was Chatham. If, on the other hand, conciliation proved impossible, no statesman could for a moment be compared to him in the management of a war.[172]

The state of affairs at home and abroad called for the strong hand of a great minister. British troops were confined in Philadelphia and New York; the navy had been starved; the commissariat of the troops in America was shamefully mismanaged. America, not slow to follow the example of the mother-country to [Pg 153] employ foreign troops, signed a treaty with France, the ratification of which by Congress took place on May 4, 1778.

"Thy triumphs, George, the western world resounds,
And Europe scarce thy paper *glory* bounds!
Paper that trumps abroad thy martial toils,
And copious harvest of Canadian spoils:
Tyrtæus-like, how Burgoyne fights his men,
Belligerent alike with *sword* and *pen*!
How Gates retires: and, as you rattle louder,
One Arnold sickens at the smell of powder!
How brave thine admirals! and so discreet
They never risk the honour of the fleet;
Nor trust the dangers of the middle-main,
Where Britain bids her thunder roar in vain;
But wisely *coasting*, give some privateer
A broadside; making her both feel and hear.
And sure, if *paper* can so cheaply win,
The harmless war of paper is no sin.

* * * * *

Proceed, great Sir! and, breaking all restraint,
Embrace the *scarlet whore*, and be a *Saint*
Sworn to maintain th' *established church*, advance
The cross of Rome, the miracles of France;
And leave us, though our liberties be lost,
In pious bills the privilege to *roast*.[173]
In breaking oaths be like Alcides strong;
Be weakly right, but obstinately wrong:
Be all the bigot martyr was before— [Pg 154]
A blessing for the nation yet in store!
See other *Hampdens*, other *Cromwells* rise,
And modern *tea-acts* mimic *ship-supplies*:
Hark! the glad sounds revive of *me* and *mine*,[174]
And stale prerogative of *right divine*!

ONE REVOLUTION RAIS'D YOU TO THE CROWN;
ANOTHER REVOLUTION MAY—DETHRONE."[175]

CHAPTER XIX

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ENGLAND AND AMERICA. III: THE LOSS OF AMERICA

On May 17, 1778, Lord North, "with deep dejection in his countenance," had laid before the House of Commons a plan of conciliation, similar to Burke's resolution which two years earlier he had arrogantly rejected, in which a Bill was proposed to enable the King to appoint commissioners with sufficient powers to treat, consult and agree upon the means of quieting the disorders now subsisting in certain of the colonies in America. The three commissioners appointed had been unwisely chosen. Lord Carlisle, though clever enough, had hitherto been known only as a man of pleasure, and William Eden had recently denounced American Independence in the House of Commons; while George Johnstone, who was well acquainted with American affairs, was foolish enough at the outset, through an intermediary, to offer a bribe of £10,000 to Read, a leading member of Congress, "as a condition of bringing about a reunion between Great Britain and her colonies." Read announced this attempt upon his honesty in Congress. "I am not worth purchasing, but, such as I [Pg 156] am," he said indignantly, "the King of Great Britain is not rich enough to do it."

Such a commission was foredoomed to failure. The whole country cried aloud for Chatham, and the public desire was endorsed by North, who again tendered his resignation to the King, who, however, would only consent to receive Chatham as a minister subordinate to North. "I declare in the strongest and most solemn manner," George wrote to his minister, "that though I do not object to your addressing yourself to Lord Chatham, yet that you must acquaint him that I shall never address myself to him but through you, and on a clear explanation that he is to step forth to support an administration wherein you are First Lord of the Treasury.... I will only add, to put before your eyes my most inward thoughts, that no advantage to this country, no present danger to myself, can ever make me address myself to Lord Chatham or any other branch of the Opposition.... Should Lord Chatham wish to see me before he gives his answer, I shall most certainly refuse it."[176] Chatham could not be expected to serve under North, and the negotiations ended forthwith, leaving behind them in many minds, however, the feeling that the final victory of the Americans [Pg 157] would not be an unmixed evil for the mother country, since, apparently, on the issue of the war depended the question, far more vital than the independence or subordination of the colonies, whether the King would be able to establish his system of government by personal influence. "I had as little doubt, but if the conquest of America should be achieved," said Walpole, "the moment of the victorious army's return would be that of the destruction of our liberty."[177]

No responsible statesman believed that England could succeed in enforcing her will upon the colonies, let the struggle end as it might. "As for conquering America, without foreign troops, it is entirely impossible; and I think it pretty near a certainty that the rebels will be in possession of all America by the Spring," Anthony Storer wrote to Lord Carlisle, on December 29, 1775. "By the news of Fort St. John's and Chambley, and the investiture of Quebec, their diligence and activity is wonderful, and it must end in the possession of all North America. They have taken a store-ship, and have several ships at sea. *De peu à peu nous arrivons*; if they go on so another year—*fuit Ilium ingens gloria*—we shall make but a paltry figure in the eyes of [Pg 158] Europe. Come to town, and be witness to the fall, or the re-establishment of our present Empire."

Fox thought that the best use that could be made of the success at Long Island would be to make conciliatory overtures. "It is become still more necessary than ever to produce some manifesto, petition, or public instrument upon the present situation of affairs; either to exhort his Majesty to make the only proper use of his victory, by seizing this opportunity of making advantageous offers of accommodation or to express openly and fairly to him the well-grounded apprehensions that every man must entertain from the power of the Crown in case his Majesty should be able to subdue the American Continent by the force of his army,"[178] Fox wrote on October 13, 1776, to Lord Rockingham; who, in his turn in 1778 said to Chatham, "I conceive that America will never again consent to this country's having actual power within that continent." "As to conquest, my Lords, it is impossible," Chatham, himself said in Parliament on May 30, 1777, speaking on his motion to stop hostilities.

Chatham, of course, had all along been opposed to the war. Speaking in 1775 of General Gage's inactivity, he said it could not be blamed, for it was inevitable. "But what a miserable condition is ours, where disgrace is prudence, and where it is [Pg 159] necessary to be contemptible!" he said. "You must repeal those Acts [the Boston Ports and Massachusetts Bay Bills], and you *will* repeal them. I pledge myself for it, that you will repeal them. I stake my reputation on it. I will consent to be taken for

an idiot if they are not finally repealed. If," he concluded, with a grave warning, "if the ministers persevere in misleading the King, I will not say that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from the Crown; but I will affirm that they will make the crown not worth his wearing. I will not say that the King is betrayed; but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone."[179] No wonder the King heaped upon the statesman, who endeavoured so eloquently to thwart his plans, every objectionable epithet; referred to him as "that perfidious man," and "a trumpet of sedition;" and said of his motion in 1777 to put an end to the war: "Lord Chatham's motion can have no other use but to convey some fresh fuel to the rebels. Like most of the other productions of that extraordinary brain, it contains nothing but specious words and malevolence."[180]

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But while Chatham wished for peace, he had no desire for unconditional surrender on the part of his country, and when on April 7, 1778, the Duke of Richmond moved the Independence of America, Chatham, protesting "against the dismemberment of this ancient and most noble monarchy," made the last of the long series of eloquent speeches that adorn the all-too-barren records of Parliamentary debates. "Before the Duke of Richmond began, Lord Chatham entered the House, leaning on the arms of his son William and his son-in-law, Lord Mahon. He bowed with much courtesy to the peers, who, standing up out of respect, made a lane for him to pass to his seat. He wore a suit of rich black velvet, and very full wig. He was covered up to the knees in flannel. He looked pale and emaciated, but his eyes retained all their native fire. When the Duke sat down, Lord Chatham rose to oppose the motion. He made a rhetorical speech, and declared it was probably the last time he should be able to enter the walls of the House. The Duke of Richmond replied with much tenderness. Chatham stood up again, attempted to speak, and sank down in an apoplectic fit."[181] He was removed to the house of one of the officers of Parliament, was in a few days sufficiently recovered to bear the journey to his seat at Hayes, and there died on May 11. It is characteristic of George III that the only remark he made *à propos* of the sudden illness of the great orator was an appeal to Lord North: "May not the political exit of Lord Chatham incline you to remain at the head of affairs?"[182]

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After Chatham's death, Lord North, Burke, and Fox united to pay tribute to his career, while Parliament undertook to pay his debts, settled £4,000 a year for ever to the title of Chatham, and voted a public funeral. "I was rather surprised the House of Commons have unanimously voted an address for a public funeral and a monument in Westminster Abbey for Lord Chatham," wrote the ungenerous monarch, "but I trust it is voted as a testimony of gratitude for his rousing the nation at the beginning of the last war ... or this compliment, if paid to his general conduct, is rather an offensive measure to me personally."[183] The King's feelings were well known, with the result that the Court was sparsely represented at the funeral, and as Gibbon said indignantly, "Government tried to secure the double odium of suffering the thing to be done, and of not doing it with a good grace."

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"I should have been greatly surprised at the inclination expressed by you to retire," George III had written to Lord North on January 31, 1778, "had I not known that, however you may now and then despond, yet that you have too much personal affection for me, and sense of honour, to allow such a thought to take any hold on your mind."[184] Now that Chatham had gone, North could no longer point with clearness to a successor. "The small party which Chatham had headed could not hope to form a government of themselves since they had lost their chief. The Whigs, under Lord Rockingham, had, in great measure, at least committed themselves to the independence of America, and on that ground Lord North could not but deprecate their return to power. There was henceforth no great statesman to lead to that middle path, that course of conciliation without compromise, which Chatham had pointed out, and perhaps might have trodden."[185] Circumstances alter cases, and the difficulty of naming a successor was so great that North yielded again to the King's commands and entreaties, and was prevailed upon to remain in office.

Slowly the rights which had caused the breach were abandoned. "I assure you, at least so it appears to me, that American politics are very much altered," Anthony Storer wrote to Lord Carlisle, on December 14, 1775. "Taxation and the exercise of it are totally renounced. You never hear the right mentioned, but in order to give it up."[186] The whole power of the Opposition was put forward to force the Government into a pacific path. "We have tried our strength," said Lord Camden; "we find ourselves incapable of conquest; and as we cannot subdue, we are determined to destroy."

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While all England desired peace, the King was still determined to continue the war, unless the victorious colonists would surrender! "No man in my dominions desires solid peace more than I do," he wrote to Lord North on June 11, 1779. "But no inclination to get out of the present difficulties, which certainly keep my mind very far from a state of ease, can incline me to enter into the destruction of the empire. Lord North frequently says that the advantages to be gained by this contest could never repay the expense. I own that any way, be it ever so successful, if a person will sit down and weigh the expense, they will find, as in this last, that it has impoverished the state enriched; but this is only weighing such points in the scale of

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a tradesman behind his counter. It is necessary for those whom Providence has placed in my station to weigh what expenses, though very great, are not sometimes necessary to prevent what would be more ruinous than any loss of money. The present contests with America I cannot help seeing as the most serious in which any country was ever engaged. It contains such a train of consequences that they must be examined to feel its real weight. Whether the laying a tax was deserving all the evils that have arisen from it I should suppose no man could allege without being thought fitter for Bedlam than a seat in the senate; but step by step the demands of America have risen. Independence is their object, which every man, not willing to sacrifice every object to a momentary and inglorious peace, must concur with me in thinking this country can never submit to. Should America succeed in that, the West Indies must follow, not in independence, but for their own interest they must become dependent on America. Ireland would soon follow, and this Island reduced to itself, would be a poor island indeed."[187]

After this definite declaration of the King's intention, the Prime Minister again made an effort to resign, only to have his application treated as his previous ones had been. "Lord North's application to resign within two days of the prorogation I can see [Pg 165] in no other light than as a continuance of his resolution to retire whenever my affairs will permit it," George wrote to him on June 16, 1779, "for I never can think that he, who so handsomely stood forward on the desertion of the Duke of Grafton, would lose all that merit by following so undignified an example." Again North yielded to his royal master's expressed wish, and he was somewhat encouraged by the accession of strength to the King's party in the new Parliament, which was at once shown by the defeat of the proposal to re-elect Sir Fletcher Norton, who had angered George by his speech when presenting the Commons' grant in 1777.

The King, too, took heart again at the increase of his influence in the House of Commons. "I can never suppose this country so far lost to all ideas of self-importance as to be willing to grant American Independence,"[188] he wrote to Lord North in March, 1780; but everybody else realised that peace must be made at any cost. Though Parliament had been bought, the country was aroused; and, although the position of the Government was temporarily strengthened in October by the victory of Cornwallis over Gates in South Carolina, the surrender of the English General at Yorktown on October 19, 1781, sealed the fate of the ministry. The news arrived in [Pg 166] England on November 25, 1781, two days before the meeting of Parliament, but even now the King would not yield: "The getting a peace at the expense of a separation from America is," he still declared, "a step to which no difficulties shall ever get me to be in the smallest degree an instrument."[189] Indeed, the only visible sign of his distress on receiving the news was shown by the omission in a letter to Lord George Germaine of the mention of the hour and minute of his writing, an observance he never omitted. "I have received, with sentiments of the deepest concern, the communication which Lord George Germaine has made me, of the unfortunate result of the operations in Virginia," he wrote. "I particularly lament it, on account of the consequences connected with it, and the difficulties which it may produce in carrying on the public business, or in repairing such a misfortune. But I trust that neither Lord George Germaine, nor any member of the Cabinet, will suppose, that it makes the smallest alteration in those principles of my conduct which have directed me in past time, and which will always continue to animate me under every event, in the prosecution of the present contest."[190]

"The aspect of affairs at the close of 1780 might indeed well have appalled an [Pg 167] English statesman. Perfectly isolated in the world, England was confronted by the united arms of France, Spain, Holland, and America; while the Northern league threatened her, if not with another war, at least with the annihilation of the most powerful weapon of offence. At the same time, in Hindostan Hyder Ali was desolating the Carnatic and menacing Madras; and in Ireland the connexion was strained to its utmost limit, and all real power had passed into the hands of a volunteer force which was perfectly independent of the Government, and firmly resolved to remodel the constitution. At home there was no statesman in whom the country had any real confidence, and the whole ministry was weak, discredited and faint-hearted. Twelve millions had been added this year to the national debt, and the element of disorder was so strong that London itself had been for some days at the mercy of the mob." [191] But while George III insisted upon prosecuting the war—he had by his firmness broken up the Whig phalanx, was it conceivable that he should give way to the colonists?—and North, in spite of his better judgment supported him,[192] the Opposition, was every day gathering fresh adherents. "A sense of past error, and a [Pg 168] conviction that the American war might terminate in further destruction to our armies, began from this time rapidly to insinuate itself into the minds of men. Their discourse was quite changed, though the majorities in Parliament were still quite ready to support the American War, while all the world was representing it to be the height of madness and folly."[193] "To-morrow," Selwyn wrote on June 11, 1781, to Lord Carlisle, "I find a motion is to come from Fox concerning America, to which he may, contrary to his expectation or wishes, find in the friends of Government an assent. People now seem by their discourse to despair more of that cause than ever. There has been wretched management, disgraceful politics, I am sure; where the

principal blame is the Lord only knows; in many places, I am afraid."[194]

[Pg 169] Fox on June 12 moved that the House should resolve itself into a Committee to consider the American War, at the same time moving a further resolution that the Government should take every possible measure to conclude peace with the colonies. "The only objection made to my motion," he declared in the course of debate, "is that it must lead to American independence. But I venture to assert that *within six months of the present day*, ministers themselves will come forward to Parliament with some proposition of a similar nature. I know that such is their intention, I announce it to the House." The resolution was lost by 172 to 99; but the end was near."

"The attention of every one is confined to our situation in America," Anthony Storer wrote to Carlisle on November 26, 1781. "The Speech from the Throne contains the same resolution which appeared in times when we seemed to have a more favourable prospect of success, of continuing the war, and of claiming the aid of Parliament to support the rights of Great Britain." This was absurd and could not be countenanced. An address to the King moved by Conway on February 22, 1782, petitioning the King to stop the war, was only rejected by a single vote, and the Government were obliged to accept a resolution asserting the hopelessness of reducing America; while on [Pg 170] March 20, North anticipated a motion for his dismissal by announcing his resignation.

Under ministers pledged to peace, even the King saw that hostilities could not be continued. Lord Rockingham began negotiations with the United States, and these were brought to a successful conclusion by Lord Shelburne. The treaty was signed in 1783, and the blow was the greatest ever sustained by the King. "I that am born a gentleman," he said to Thurlow, "shall never rest my head on my last pillow in peace and quiet, as long as I remember the loss of my American colonies."

George contrived, however, by his tactful reply to the address of John Adams, on the arrival of the latter as the first Ambassador from the newly recognised United States to the Court of St. James's, to regain his dignity and to impress his old enemy as well as his subjects with the sense of his majesty that he could always introduce on occasions of state. "Sir," said Adams, when presenting his credentials, "the United States have appointed me their minister plenipotentiary to your Majesty, and have directed me to deliver to your Majesty this letter, which contains the evidence of it. It is in obedience to their express commands that I have the honour to assure your Majesty of their unanimous disposition to cultivate the most friendly and liberal [Pg 171] intercourse between your Majesty's subjects and their citizens, and of their best wishes for your Majesty's health and happiness, and for that of your royal family. The appointment of a minister from the United States to your Majesty's Court will form an epoch in the history of England and America. I think myself more fortunate than all my fellow-citizens, in having the distinguished honour to stand in your Majesty's royal presence in a diplomatic character, and I shall esteem myself the happiest of men if I can be instrumental in recommending my country more and more to your Majesty's royal benevolence, and of restoring an entire esteem, confidence, and affection, or, in better words, 'the old good-nature and the good old humour,' between people who, though separated by an ocean, and under different governments, have the same language, a similar religion, a kindred blood. I beg your Majesty's permission to add that, although I have sometimes before been intrusted by my country, it was never in my whole life in a manner so agreeable to myself." To this George replied courteously, though the effort to be conciliatory must have cost him much: "Sir, the circumstances of this audience are so extraordinary, the language you have now held is so extremely proper, and the feelings you have discovered so justly adapted to the occasion, that I must say, that I not only receive [Pg 172] with pleasure the assurance of the friendly disposition of the United States, but that I am very glad the choice has fallen upon you to be their minister. I wish you, sir, to believe, and that it may be understood in America, that I have done nothing in the late contest but what I thought myself indispensably bound to do, by the duty which I owed to my people. I will be very frank with you. I was the last to conform to the separation; but the separation having been made, and having become inevitable, I have always said, as I say now, that I would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an independent power. The moment I see such sentiment and language as yours prevail, and a disposition to give this country the preference, that moment, I shall say, let the circumstances of language, religion and blood, have their natural lawful effect."[195]

CHAPTER XX

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CHARLES JAMES FOX AND WILLIAM PITT

Lord North had sent his resignation by messenger to Windsor on March 19, 1782, and George, who received the communication as he was going out hunting, sent back

a verbal reply, "Tell him I shall be in town to-morrow morning and will then give an answer," after which he turned to the Duke of Dorset and Lord Hinchinbrook[196] and said calmly, "Lord North has sent in his resignation, but I shall not accept it." However, at the interview next day Lord North was firm, and nothing that the sovereign could say moved him from his purpose, for it was not only the adverse majority in the House of Commons which determined him, but the state of affairs in the colonies and abroad. "The nation, he knew well was universally weary of a war, the misfortunes which had attended which, though perhaps justly imputable to many other causes or persons, were attributed principally to his errors of management. He beheld himself now engaged in hostilities, direct or indirect, with half Europe, in addition to America. Ireland, availing itself of our embarrassments, loudly demanded [Pg 174] commercial and political emancipation. On every side, the Empire appeared crumbling into ruin. Minorca, long invested, had already surrendered, after a defence protracted to the last extremity. Gibraltar was closely besieged. In the East Indies, our difficulties, financial as well as military, threatened the total subversion of our wide extended authority in that quarter of the globe; where Hyder Ali, though expelled by Sir Eyre Coote from the vicinity of Madras, still maintained himself in the centre of the Carnatic. If the First Minister looked to the West Indies, the prospect appeared still more big with alarm. St. Christopher's attacked by the Marquis de Bouille, might be hourly expected to surrender; and he had already recaptured St. Eustatius, either by surprise, or by corrupting the officer who commanded the garrison. Of all the chain of Caribee Islands which had belonged to the Crown of Great Britain at the commencement of the war, only Antigua and Barbadoes remained."[197]

George III, however, did not hold that these considerations should weigh with his minister, whom henceforth he regarded as little better than a traitor. It was characteristic of the King that in his anger he at once forgot the services of twelve [Pg 175] years, and sought to avenge himself for the desertion, as he called it, by withholding the pension usually granted to a Prime Minister on retirement. Lord Chancellor Thurlow, who, apparently, had more consideration for George's reputation than the monarch himself, represented that Lord North was not opulent, that his father was still living, and that his sons had spent a great deal of money. "Lord North is no friend of mine," said the ungrateful King. "That may be so," replied Lord Thurlow, "but the world thinks otherwise: and your Majesty's character requires that Lord North should have the usual pension."[198] A pension of £4,000 a year was then reluctantly granted.

The resignation of Lord North was a great blow to his royal master, who saw that with the retirement of this minister would disappear the carefully built superstructure of government by personal influence. "He would cease to 'be King' in his own acceptance of the word, and would have to surrender the power for which he had been struggling for two-and-twenty years into the hands of the party most hateful to him."[199] "At last the fatal day has come," wrote George, who seriously thought of retiring to Hanover in preference to placing himself in the hands of the [Pg 176] hated Opposition. "I would rather lose my crown than submit to the Opposition," he had declared; and on December 18, 1779, he had written to Lord Thurlow, "From the cold disdain with which I am treated, it is evident to me what treatment I am to expect from Opposition, if I was to call them now into my service. To obtain their support I must deliver up my person, my principles, my dominions into their hands."

The King, however, was not of a nature to surrender at discretion, and Thurlow was sent to Lord Rockingham to ascertain what terms of capitulation could be obtained for the sovereign. It is proof of the want of trust in George III that the Duke of Richmond, who had had much experience of the methods of the Court, should, with apologies for "this piece of impertinent advice," write in the following strain to Rockingham. "Let me beseech you not to think that any preliminary is opening, for I have good reason for believing nothing but trick is meant. For God's sake, your own and the country's sake, keep back and be very coy. Nothing but absolute necessity and severe pressure or force will induce the Court to come to you in such a manner as to enable you to do any good. These times are coming, and you must soon see all [Pg 177] at your feet in the manner you would wish and with the full means to do what is right. In the meanwhile they will try all little tricks, and most amply try to flatter your prejudices, if they conceive you have any. If to anything like this you give way, you ruin yourself and them, and the kingdom into the bargain, whereas by firmness all will come right yet, and you will carry the nation with you with such *éclat* as to ensure you the means of doing what you wish."[200]

Lord Rockingham took full advantage of this sage counsel, and to the overture of the King made reply, "that he was very willing to serve his Majesty but requested the honour of being admitted to a private audience before any administration should be arranged." This demand George ignored. "I told you that divisions would be attempted and so it has been," Walpole wrote on March 23. "Lord Rockingham's constitutional demands not proving palatable, on Thursday evening (21st) Lord Shelburne was sent for to a house in the Park, and, after a parley of three hours, declined. Next morning Lord Gower was tried, ditto. At four o'clock to-day, and this is Saturday, no new step has been taken: if the whole flag is not hung out this

evening or to-morrow, I do not know what may happen on Monday." [Pg 178]

Eventually, however, the King arranged the administration with Shelburne, and then sent him to inform Rockingham of the names of the cabinet ministers. This irregularity angered the latter, who seriously thought to decline to serve, for, as Admiral Keppel told Nicholls, he "thought that the King had manifested such personal dislike to him, by refusing him an audience, and arranging the administration with Lord Shelburne, that, in his own opinion, he was not a fit person to be in the King's service."[201] Besides this objection, Rockingham had no faith in Shelburne,[202] but the latter protested as a guarantee of good faith, "I passed my eldest to Lord Rockingham, which I had no occasion to do, for I might have been Prime Minister myself"; and, finally, persuaded by Fox, Burke, and the Duke of Richmond, Rockingham consented to accept office, and kissed hands on March 27. "I was abused for lying Gazettes," said Lord North, "but there are more lies in this one [Pg 179] (containing the official announcement of the Whig Cabinet) than in all mine. Yesterday his Majesty was *pleased* to appoint the Marquis of Rockingham, Mr. Charles Fox, the Duke of Richmond, etc., etc."

Parliament met on April 8, and a strange sight met the eyes of the onlookers. "Never was a more total change of costume beheld than the House of Commons presented to the eye when that assembly met for the despatch of business after the Easter recess. The Treasury Bench, as well as the places behind it, had been for so many years occupied by Lord North and his friends, that it became difficult to recognise them again in their new seats, dispersed over the Opposition benches, in great coats, frocks, and boots. Mr. Ellis himself appeared for the first time in his life in an undress. To contemplate the Ministers, their successors, emerged from their obscure lodgings, or from Brookes's, having thrown off their blue and buff uniforms; now ornamented with the appendages of dress, or returning from Court, decorated with swords, lace and hair-powder, excited still more astonishment."[203]

In the second Rockingham Administration Charles James Fox held the office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and it cost George III much to sanction this [Pg 180] appointment, for he hated Fox more than even he hated Chatham, not only for his attitude in politics but also for the irregularity of his private life. "The King," wrote Wraxall, "who considered Fox as a man ruined in fortune, of relaxed morals, and surrounded with a crowd of followers resembling him in these particulars, deprecated as the severest misfortune to himself and to his subjects, the necessity of taking such a person, however eminent for capacity, into his confidence or councils." [204] It was inevitable, however, that Fox should hold high office, for he was undoubtedly the foremost man in the Rockingham party. Having entered Parliament in 1768, he had distinguished himself in the following year by a speech opposing the claim of Wilkes to take his seat as member for Middlesex. "It was all off-hand, all argumentative, in reply to Mr. Burke and Mr. Wedderburn, and excessively well indeed," said his proud father. "I hear it spoken of as an extraordinary thing, and I am, as you see, not a little pleased with it."

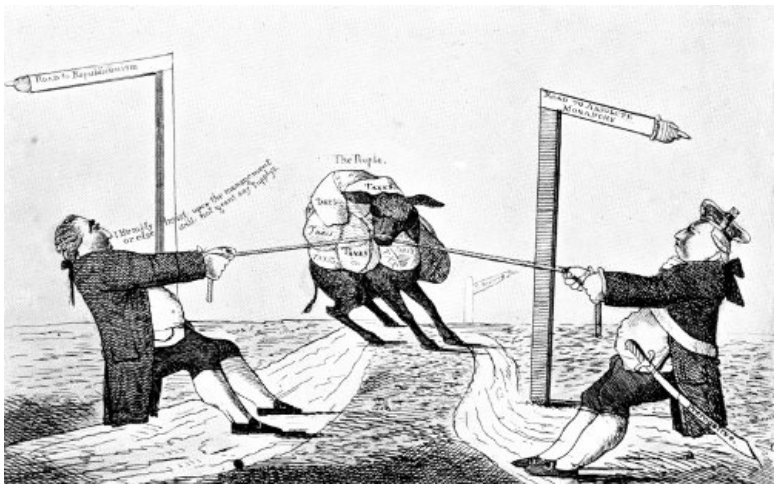
Photo by Emery Walker. *From a bust by J. Nollekens, R.A.*

CHARLES JAMES FOX

Fox was rewarded for his opposition to the popular demagogue with a Lordship of the Admiralty in February, 1770, under Lord North, but, as it has already been stated, he resigned in order to be free to oppose the Royal Marriage Act. He began to [Pg 181] be recognised as a power in the House, and Lord North soon made overtures to his erstwhile colleague to rejoin the ministry as a Lord of the Treasury. This Fox did within a year of his resignation, but his independence soon brought about another rupture: and when, on a question of procedure, he caused the defeat of the ministry by pressing an amendment to a division, the King wrote to Lord North: "Indeed, that young man has so thoroughly cast off every principle of common honour and honesty that he must become as contemptible as he is odious; and I hope you will let him know you are not insensible of his conduct towards you."[205] The Prime Minister took the hint, and dismissed Fox in a delightfully laconic note. "Sir, His Majesty has thought proper to order a new Commission of the Treasury in which I do not see your name."[206] This was thought to be a good thing for Fox; and Horace Walpole wrote on February 24, 1774: "The famous Charles Fox was this morning turned out of his place of Lord of the Treasury for great flippancies in the House towards North. His parts will now have a full opportunity of showing whether they can balance his character, or whether patriotism can whitewash it."

In opposition Fox proved himself a doughty opponent of his late leader's American [Pg 182] policy, and his vigorous speeches on the subject earned him the undying enmity of the King. "The war of the Americans is a war of passion," he declared on November 26, 1778, in an endeavour to force the ministry into a pacific path; "it is of such a nature as to be supported by the most powerful virtues, love of liberty and of country, and at the same time by those passions in the human heart which give courage, strength, and perseverance to man; the spirit of revenge for the injury you have done them, of retaliation for the hardships inflicted on them, and of opposition to the august powers you would have exercised over them; everything combines to animate them to this war, and such a war is without end; for whatever obstinacy enthusiasm ever inspired man with, you will now have to contend with in America, no matter what gives birth to that enthusiasm, whether the name of religion or of liberty, the effects are the same; it inspires a spirit that is unconquerable and solicits us to undergo difficulties and dangers; and as long as there is a man in America, so long will you have him against you in the field." And in the following year he compared George III with Henry VI. "Both owed the crown to revolutions, both were [Pg 183] pious princes, and both lost the acquisitions of their predecessors." George III could not differentiate between doctrine and action, and, because Fox supported the rights of the Americans, looked upon him henceforth as a rebel. Later, when of all the colonies only Boston remained in the hands of the English, and Wedderburn with foolhardy audacity ventured in the House of Commons to compare North as a war minister with Chatham, Fox created a sensation by declaring that "not Lord Chatham, nor Alexander the Great, nor Cæsar ever conquered so much territory in the course of all their wars, as Lord North had lost in one campaign!"

Fox *The King*



From a caricature published March 11th, 1784

THE UNFORTUNATE ASS

Fox's most grievous exhibition in the eyes of the sovereign was, however, his speech on the first day of the autumn session of 1781 in the debate on the Address to the Crown. "Those who are ignorant of the character of the Prince whose Speech we have just heard might be induced to consider him as an unfeeling despot, exulting in the horrid sacrifice of the liberty and lives of his people," he said.[207] The Speech itself, divested of the disguise of royal forms, can only mean, "Our losses in America [Pg 184] have been most calamitous. The blood of my subjects has flowed in copious streams, throughout every part of that continent. The treasures of Great Britain have been wantonly lavished; while the load of taxes imposed on an overburdened country is

becoming intolerable. Yet I will continue to tax you to the last shilling. When, by Lord Cornwallis's surrender they are for ever extinct, and a further continuance of hostilities can only accelerate the ruin of the British Empire, I prohibit you from thinking of peace. My rage for conquest is unquenched and my revenge unsated: nor can anything except the total subjugation of my revolted American subjects, allay my animosity."

This speech, which George III regarded as an open declaration of war against himself, earned golden opinions for the orator. "This session was the glorious campaign of Charles Fox," says Nicholls[208]; and Walpole at this time wrote to Sir Horace Mann, "Mr. Fox is the first figure in all the places I have mentioned, the hero in Parliament, at the gaming table, at Newmarket." The King, however, very clearly showed his opinion of Fox, when at a *levée* early in March, 1782, the latter presented an Address from Westminster. "The King took it out of his hand without deigning to give him a look even, or a word; he took it as you would take your pocket-handkerchief from your *valet-de-chambre* without any mark of displeasure or attention, or expression of countenance whatever, and passed it to his lord-in-waiting, who was the Duke of Queensberry."[209]

[Pg 185]

Indeed, George III had made up his mind that under no circumstances should this particular member of the Opposition hold office. "I was assured last night," George Selwyn wrote to Lord Carlisle on March 13, 1782, "that the King is so determined as to Charles, that he will not hear his name mentioned in any overtures for a negotiation, and declares that the proposal for introducing him into his councils is totally inadmissible.[209] I should not be surprised if this was true in its fullest extent!"[210]

Fox's attitude was certainly not conciliatory, if reliance may be placed on George Selwyn, who was certain to exaggerate unamiable traits in the conduct of the statesman. "He (Fox) spoke of all coming to a final issue now within a very short space of time," Selwyn wrote on March 19, 1782; "he talked of the King under the description of Satan, a comparison which he seems fond of, and has used to others; so he is *sans ménagement de paroles*. It is the *bon vainqueur et despotique*; he has adopted all the supremacy he pretended to dread in his Majesty." And Fox apparently was not the only member of the party excited by the prospect of power. "I stayed at Brookes's this morning till between two and three," wrote the same correspondent two days later, "and then Charles was giving audiences in every corner of the room, and that idiot Lord Derby[211] telling aloud whom he should turn out, how civil he intended to be to the Prince and how rude to the King."[212]

[Pg 186]

Keppel *The King* *Richmond* *Shelburne*

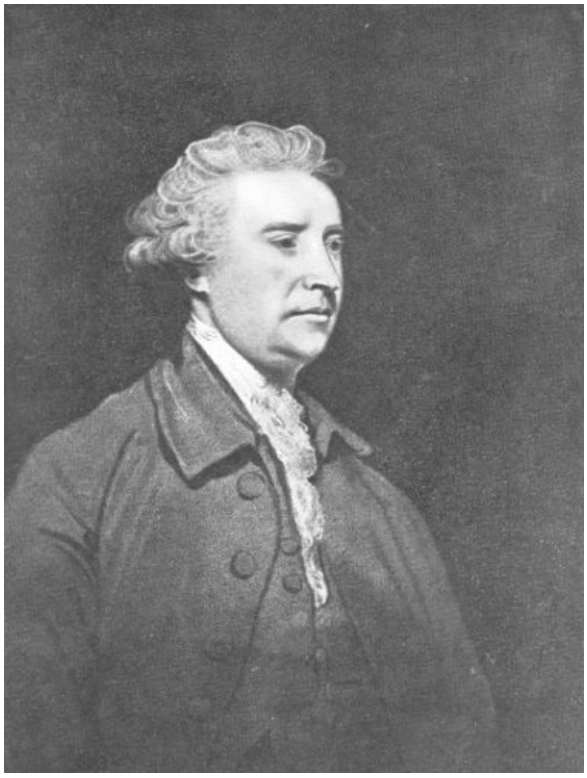
Fox *From a caricature published in 1782*

THE CAPTIVE PRINCE, OR, LIBERTY GONE MAD

The King, faithful to the underhand methods that he had so often employed with success, at once attempted to sow the seeds of dissension in the cabinet; but in truth this was unnecessary, for, with five Rockinghamites, five Shelburnites and Thurlow, the King's nominee, comprising that body, "every man saw that such a cabinet was formed for contention, and that it could not long hold together."[213] George deliberately showed his aversion to the Prime Minister, by withholding from him his confidence; and, indeed, he could not forgive him for passing a measure for "an effectual plan of economy throughout the branches of public expenditure," the avowed object of which was to "circumscribe the unconstitutional power of the Crown"; that is to say, the number of sinecures at the sovereign's disposal was effectively diminished, the amount of secret service money was reduced, and only those could hold patent places in the colonies who would live there. Burke was responsible for this Bill, which deprived King and ministers of many sources of patronage and compelled them to fall back on peerages as rewards for services. "I

[Pg 187]

fear," said Burke, referring to the subsequent lavish bestowal of peerages, "that I am partly accountable for so disproportionate an increase of honours, by having deprived the Crown and the minister of so many other sources of recompense or reward, which were extinguished by my Bill of Reform."[214]



From a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds

EDMUND BURKE

"Fox already shines as greatly in place as he did in opposition, though infinitely more difficult a task," Walpole wrote to Sir Horace Mann on May 5. "He is now as indefatigable as he was idle. He has perfect temper, and not only good humour, but good nature, and, which is the first quality in a Prime Minister of a free country, has more common sense than any man, with amazing parts that are neither ostentatious nor affected." Not all Fox's tact, however, could avert ill-feeling between Shelburne and himself, and this was aggravated by the clashing of the duties of their offices in the matter of the treaty with America, for while the negotiations with the revolted colonies belonged to the department of Home Affairs over which the Earl presided, the arrangement of a peace with the foreign countries with which England was at war came within the province of the Foreign Office! "In addition to the difficulties naturally arising from this division of responsibility, the two Secretaries differed on policy. Fox desired an immediate recognition of American Independence, in the hope of detaching the Americans from the French alliance, and so putting England in a better position for dealing with her enemies; Shelburne agreed with the King that the acknowledgment should be a condition of a joint treaty with France and America, for England would then have a claim to receive some return for it."[215]

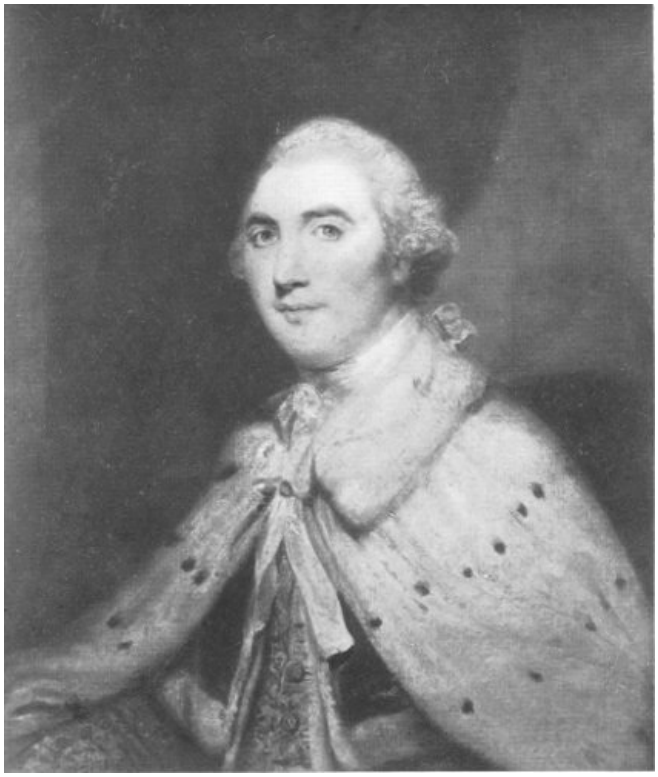


Photo by Emery Walker. *From a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds*

WILLIAM PETTY, EARL OF SHELBURNE
(AFTERWARDS MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE)

Before any definite rupture came, however, Lord Rockingham caught the influenza, and died on July 1, 1782. Nicholls has stated that when Fox was asked who was to succeed Rockingham, he replied, "I think it must be the Earl of Shelburne; he is first oar, and I do not see how we can resist his claim";[216] and according to other reports Fox himself aspired to be the leader of the party. Little credence, however, must be given to these chroniclers, for Fox was overtly opposed to Shelburne; and he must have known that the King would never summon him to the head of affairs. Burke and the rest of the Rockingham party resisted the claims of Shelburne and suggested the Duke of Portland, who himself claimed to have a better right than anyone else to be Prime Minister. Fox actually went to the King to propose that the vacant office should be given to the Duke of Portland. "Mr. Fox reached the royal closet only in time enough to learn that Lord Shelburne had just gone out with the appointment of First Lord of the Treasury. Mr. Fox, expressing great astonishment on hearing this, asked his Majesty, 'If under these circumstances he had any objection to his (Fox's) naming the new Secretary of State.' To this his Majesty replied, 'That, sir, is already done.' On which Mr. Fox rejoined, 'Then, I trust, your [Pg 189] Majesty can dispense with my services.' The King replied hastily. 'That, also, sir, is [Pg 190] done.'"[217] Thereupon the Duke of Portland, Lord John Cavendish, and Burke[218] also retired, as well as many other officials, and after an interval, Keppel, who had remained at the Admiralty, joined them. Their places were filled by Lord Grantham, Earl Temple, and William Pitt.

William Pitt, like his great opponent Fox, had established himself with his first speech, which secured the encomiums of all who were present. "We had a debate on Monday, when Mr. Pitt for the first time made such a speech, that it excited the admiration very justly of every man in the House. Except he had foreseen that particular species of nonsense which Lord Nugent was to utter, his speech could not be prepared; it was delivered without any kind of improper assurance, but with the exact proper self-possession which ought to accompany a speaker. There was not a word or a look which one would have wished to correct. This, I believe, in general [Pg 191] was the universal sense of all those who heard him, and exactly the effect which his speech had on me, at the time I heard it." So wrote Anthony Storer to Lord Carlisle on February 28, 1781; and Wraxall was not less complimentary. "It was in reply to Lord Nugent that Pitt first broke silence, from under the Gallery on the Opposition side of the House. The same composure, self-possession, and imposing dignity of manner, which afterwards so eminently characterized him when seated on the Treasury Bench, distinguished him on this first essay of his powers, though he then wanted three months to have completed his twenty-second year. The same nervous, correct, and political diction, free from any inaccuracy of language, or embarrassment of deportment, which, as First Minister, he subsequently displayed, were equally manifested on this occasion. Formed for a popular assembly, he seemed made to guide its deliberations, from the first moment that he addressed the members composing it."[219] Burke declared that the young man "was not merely a chip of the old block, but the old block itself"; Walpole doubted "whether he will not

prove superior even to Charles Fox"; while Fox, the most generous of men, when some one said to him, "Pitt will be one of the first men in the House of Commons," replied, "He is already." Pitt, although but twenty-three years of age, felt so sure of himself that he declined an offer of office from Rockingham, declaring "he would never accept a subordinate post under Government;" and, although he was a barrister without practice and with an income of less than £300, refused Lord Shelburne's invitation to become Vice-Treasurer of Ireland with a salary of £5,000, and thereupon was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. [Pg 192]

The King, at the opening of Parliament on December 5, stated that he had offered to declare the American colonies free and independent; but what it cost him calmly to make this announcement may be deduced from the fact that afterwards he asked anxiously, "Did I lower my voice when I came to that part of my speech?"[220] According to Nicholls, even now, when conquest was impossible, peace was certainly made against the wishes of George, "who, though he probably had no desire to remove the Earl of Shelburne, determined to make that noble Earl feel his displeasure. The "Household Troops" were therefore ordered to express in Parliament their disapproval of the peace."[221] The King, however, always denied [Pg 193] that he intrigued against this Minister, but it is a regrettable fact that the sovereign's word in such matters cannot be accepted; and Shelburne certainly believed the royal influence was directed against him, at least until the formation of the Coalition, the success of which would place George in the awkward position of having to bestow the seals of office upon the men he regarded as his enemies.

Photo by Emery Walker. *From a bust by T. Nollekens, R.A.*

WILLIAM PITT

"Charles is mad, and ruining himself, I fear to all intents and purposes," Lady Sarah Napier wrote to Lady Susan O'Brien, July 9, 1782. "It *is said* that there is to-night a meeting of thirty-six members and Lords at Lord Fitzwilliam's, all *violent* and vowing opposition; if this is *true* they will have force enough to do double mischief but not to *crush* Lord Shelburne, whose cards they are playing by giving him the fairest opportunity to court popular favour, by opposing good measures and fairness to violence, instead of sticking to him like leeches as they ought to have done and preventing his doing mischief." Fox certainly was desirous to depose Shelburne and upon consideration saw that this could be done if he and his friends coalesced with Lord North and his party. Lord North, who was alarmed lest the House of Commons [Pg 194] should institute an inquiry into his conduct in having carried on the war after its issue was clear, saw that this union of parties would protect him, and, after much negotiation, an arrangement was effected on February 16, 1783, the terms of which were that, in the event of a change of Administration, the Duke of Portland should be First Lord of the Treasury, North and Fox Secretaries of State, and that the other offices should be divided between the two parties.

The day after the Coalition was settled, there was a debate on the Articles of Peace, and the government was left in a minority, the figures being 208-224. Thereupon Shelburne resigned.

The King then pressed Pitt to form a government, when he refused on the 27th

made overtures to Gower, and eventually endeavoured to detach North from the Coalition, by offering him the Treasury if he would desert Fox. The King then sent for the Duke of Portland, and offered to give way on all points except that Thurlow must remain Lord Chancellor. The Duke, who knew Thurlow's intractability and feared his influence over the King, refused to yield to this stipulation, and negotiations were broken off. George's mind threatened to give way under the sense of humiliation from which he was suffering, and William Grenville was impressed by his mental [Pg 195] agitation and the "inconceivable quickness" of his utterances. On March 23 he again invited Pitt to form an administration, declaring that, "after the manner I have been personally treated by both the Duke of Portland and Lord North, it is impossible that I can ever admit either of them into my service." Pitt, however, refused to lead such a forlorn hope, and George again announced his intention to go to Hanover[222] and was with difficulty weaned from his purpose by Thurlow. "There is nothing easier, sir, than to go over to Hanover," said the latter. "It may not, however, prove so easy to return from thence to this country, when your Majesty becomes tired of Germany. Recollect the precedent of James II, who precipitately embraced a similar expedient. Your Majesty must not think for a moment of adopting so imprudent and hazardous a step. Time and patience will open a remedy to the present evils."[223] Only then did [Pg 196] George give way, and on April 2 accept the Coalition Ministry.

The Coalition was, however, foredoomed to a brief existence. It was unpopular in the country, where it was regarded as an unnatural alliance, from which was apprehended, as Wilberforce happily put it, "a progeny stamped with the features of both parents, the violence of the one party, and the corruption of the other."

"Lord North, for twelve years, with his war and contracts,
The people he nearly had laid on their backs;
Yet stoutly he swore he sure was a villain
If e'er he had bettered his fortune a shilling.
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

"Against him Charles Fox was a sure bitter foe,
And cried, that the empire he'd soon overthrow;
Before him all honour and conscience had fled,
And vowed that the axe it should cut off his head.
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

"Edmund Burke, too, was in a mighty great rage,
And declared Lord North the disgrace of his age;
His plans and his conduct he treated with scorn,
And thought it a curse that he'd ever been born.
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

"So hated was he, Fox and Burke they both swore,
They infamous were if they enter'd his door;
But, prithee, good neighbour, now think on the end,
Both Burke and Fox call him their very good friend!
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

"Now Fox, North, and Burke, each is a brother, [Pg 197]
So honest, they swear, there is not such another;
No longer they tell us we're going to ruin,
The people they *serve* in whatever they're doing.
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

* * * * *

"But Chatham, thank heaven! has left us a son;
When *he* takes the helm, we are sure not undone;
The glory his father revived of the land,
And Britannia has taken Pitt by the hand.
Derry down, down, down, derry down!"

The King, as a matter of course, thwarted the new ministers from the outset, and made no secret that he wished that Lord North, whom now he hated as much as Fox, was "eighty or ninety or dead." He quarrelled with the Administration over the amount of an allowance to the Prince of Wales, and saw an opportunity to dismiss it on the question of Fox's India Bill, by which measure powers were sought to transfer the control of the great dominion that Warren Hastings had built up from the East India Company to a Board of seven commissioners, who should hold office for five years and be removable only on an Address to the Crown from either House of Parliament. This was bitterly opposed by the merchant class, who saw in it a precedent for the revocation of other charters; but the clause that aroused the greatest bitterness was that in which it was laid down that the appointment of the [Pg 198] seven commissioners should be vested in Parliament, and afterwards in the Crown. This was, of course, equivalent to vesting the appointments and the enormous patronage attaching thereto in the Ministry, and "it was an attempt," said Lord Thurlow, "to take the diadem from the King's head and put it on that of Mr. Fox." The Bill was fought with every weapon, but it passed the Commons by 208 to 102, and in the Lords there was no division on the first reading. The King, however, was

determined the measure should make no further progress, and he gave Lord Temple a paper written in his own royal hand: "That he should deem those who should vote for it not only not his friends, but his enemies; and that if he (Earl Temple) could put this in stronger words, he had full authority to do so."[224] The result of this was that ministers found themselves in a minority of twelve on a question of adjournment, and the Bill itself was thrown out on December 17, by 95 to 76. [Pg 199]

The same day the King contemptuously dismissed the Ministry, declining to receive in person their seals of office. It is interesting, as showing how history is made, to compare three contemporary accounts of how the principal members of the Administration were notified that their services were dispensed with. Lady Sarah Napier wrote: "On Thursday night, the Duke of Portland, Lord North, and Charles [Fox] were deliberating in Council together what was to be done, when at twelve o'clock comes a messenger to Lord North and Charles to deliver up the seals immediately. The Duke of Portland guessed he had a *billet doux* of the same nature and went home to seek it."[225] The Locker Manuscripts gave another account. "Lord North received his dismissal with characteristic humour. He was in bed when the despatch arrived, and being informed that Sir E. Nepian, the Under-Secretary, desired to see him, he replied that in that case Sir Evan must see Lady North too; and he positively refused to rise. Sir Evan was accordingly admitted to the bedroom, and, on informing Lord North that he came by his Majesty's commands to demand the seals of his office, Lord North gave him the keys of the closet where they were kept, and turned round to sleep."[226] Wraxall gives yet a third story of the incident. "Lord North, having deposited the Seal of his office in the hands of his son Colonel North, one of his Under-Secretaries, who could nowhere be found for a considerable time, the King waited patiently at St. James's till it should be found. Mr. Pollock, first clerk in Lord North's office, who had already retired to rest, being called out of his bed in consequence of the requisition of his Majesty, went in search of Colonel North. After a long delay, he was found, and produced the Seal, which being brought to the King about one o'clock in the morning, he delivered it into Lord Temple's hands, and then returned to the Queen's House."[227] [Pg 200]

The King at once sent for Pitt, who, now in his twenty-fifth year, accepted the position of Prime Minister, and so there was:

> "A sight to make surrounding nations stare,
> A kingdom trusted to a schoolboy's care."[228]

Though the new government was in a minority of about one hundred, Pitt, at the King's express desire, kept his place "in hopes that a sense of true patriotism would finally triumph over the factious spirit of party." After a time, however, it became obvious to George—it had all along been clear to every one else—that the wished-for consummation would not arrive, and when the hostile majority instead of decreasing, increased, Pitt, weary of the struggle, told the King, "Sir, I am mortified to see that my perseverance has been of no avail, and that I must resign at last." "If so," replied the King, "I must resign too."[229] This catastrophe was averted by the prorogation of the existing Parliament on March 24, and its dissolution on the following day.[230] The elections resulted in an overwhelming majority for Pitt, who held office without a break until March 14, 1801. [Pg 201]

CHAPTER XXI [Pg 202]

THE KING'S MALADY

Throughout his life George had persevered in a course of systematic abstinence and regular exercise, and he had endeavoured to strengthen an apparently sound and vigorous body by outdoor pursuits. He rose early both in winter and summer, never remained at any entertainment later than midnight, and usually went to bed before that hour. Corpulence was the bane of his family, and, perturbed at the thought that he might suffer from it, he discussed the question with his uncle, William of Cumberland, whose stoutness was notorious. "It is constitutional," said the latter, "and I am much mistaken if your Majesty will not become as large as myself, before you attain to my age." "Perhaps," suggested George, "it arises from your not using sufficient exercise?" "I use, nevertheless, constant and severe exercise of every kind," his uncle assured him. "But there is another effort requisite, in order to repress this tendency, which is much more difficult to practise; and without which, no exercise, however violent, will suffice. I mean, great renunciation and temperance. Nothing else can prevent your Majesty from growing to my size."[231] Always inclined to moderation in food and drink, after this conversation the temperance of George's life became almost proverbial. "It is a fact," says Wraxall, "that during many years of his life, after coming up from Kew, or from Windsor, often on horseback, and sometimes in heavy rain, to the Queen's House; he has gone in a Chair to St. James's, dressed himself, held a *levée*, passed through all the forms of [Pg 203]

that long and tedious ceremony, for such it was in the way that he performed it; without leaving any individual in the Circle unnoticed: and has afterwards assisted at a Privy Council, or given audience to his Cabinet Ministers and others, till five and even sometimes till six o'clock. After so much fatigue of body and of mind, the only refreshment or sustenance that he usually took consisted in a few slices of bread and butter and a dish of tea, which he sometimes swallowed as he walked up and down, previous to getting into his carriage, in order to return into the country."[232] It is probable, however, that his complaint was increased by his extreme abstemiousness, and his rigid morality, for, as Lord Carlisle has stated, "the family disorder introduced by his mother required high living and strong wines. The French call it, '*les humeurs froids*.'"[233]

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From a caricature by Gear, 1788

GEORGE III

Although wine was recommended to him to assist digestion, he declined to believe in its efficacy;[234] and it is amusing to read that he desired the members of his *suite* to be as abstemious as himself. Miss Burney has narrated a story of that quaint wag, Colonel Goldsworthy, who, after his return from hunting with the King, damp, muddy, and tired, was called by the King. "'Sir,' said I, smiling agreeably, with the rheumatism just creeping all over! but still, expecting something a little comfortable, I wait patiently to know his gracious pleasure, and then, 'Here, Goldsworthy, I say,' he cries, 'will you have a little barley water?' Barley water in such a plight as that! Fine compensation for a wet jacket, truly!—barley water! I never heard of such a thing in my life! barley water after a day's hard hunting." "And did you drink it?" Miss Burney asked. "And did the King drink it himself?" "Yes, God bless his Majesty!" replied the equerry, "but I was too humble a subject to do the same as my King."[235]

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Wraxall and many other contemporaries have stated that the King enjoyed almost perfect health until 1788, but this only shows with what success the truth was hidden, for, as we have seen, he was seriously ill in 1762, and in danger of losing his life and reason three years later; while in 1766 his health temporarily gave way under the mental excitement occasioned by affairs of state,[236] and, a little known chronicler states, in 1782 he was again "extremely indisposed".[237]

The mental derangement of 1788 is usually stated to have been first discerned in the autumn, but as a matter of fact the symptoms were obvious much earlier in the year, although it was then declared the King was suffering only from a bilious disorder. In the spring Sir George Baker attended him, and gave it as his opinion that the bile did not flow properly; but the patient declined to take medicine, and, as Mrs. Papendiek states, "he was up and down in his condition—better or worse, but did not rally." At Easter, Dr. Heberden was called in, and, considering the case alarming, invited Dr. Munro to consult with him. "The great desire," according to Mrs. Papendiek, "was to keep the circumstance secret as much as possible from the public, to hasten the session, and direct their hopes to the ease of summer business, to change of air, and other restorations. The King was aware of the probability of his malady, but was unconscious of its having already having made great strides. Dr. Munro retired and was not again called in."[238]

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"Having had rather a smart bilious attack, which, by the goodness of Divine Providence, is quite removed," the King wrote to the Bishop of Worcester on June 8, "Sir George Baker has strongly recommended me to the going for a month to Cheltenham, as he thinks the water efficacious on such occasions, and that an absence from London will keep me free from certain fatigues that attend long audiences."[239] The departure was postponed until July 12, when the King went with [Pg 207] the Queen and the Princesses to Cheltenham, where he stayed at Bay's Hill Lodge, the seat of the Earl of Fauconberg. From there he made excursions to Tewkesbury, Gloucester, Worcester[240] and some other places; but neither the change nor the waters benefited him, and on August 16, the royal family returned to Windsor.

Miss Burney has told us how the King was very sensible of the great change there was in himself, and how he said to Lady Effingham, when she came to visit him, "You see me, all at once, an old man." Slowly but surely the disorder increased, and it became more and more obvious that his intellect was affected.[241] Then, on October 16, he went out in the dew, and instead of changing his damp shoes and stockings, he rode to town in them, and held a *levée*. It was clear that he had caught cold, and on his return to Kew the Queen begged him to take a cordial, but instead he ate a pear and drank a glass of cold water, after which he felt unwell, and went to bed earlier than usual. "About one in the morning," Sir Gilbert Elliot has recorded, "he [Pg 208] was seized violently with a cramp or some other violent thing in the stomach which rendered him speechless, and was *all but*. The Queen ran out in great alarm in her shift, or with very little clothes, among the pages, who, seeing her in that situation, were at first retiring out of respect, but the Queen stopped them, and sent them instantly for the apothecary at Richmond, during which time the King had continued in the fits and speechless. The apothecary tried to make him swallow something strong, but the King, who appeared not to have lost his senses, still liked a bit of his own way, and rejected by signs everything of that sort. They contrived, however, to cheat him, and got some cordial down in the shape of medicine, and the fit went off."

After this, George was never really well until the attack had run its course. He slept but little, talked unceasingly and only stopped when actually exhausted, and was very weak. "I cannot get on without it," he said, showing a walking stick, "my strength seems diminishing hourly." On October 22, Sir George Baker informed ministers that the King's condition was critical yet "to stop further lies and any fall of the stock,"[242] he held a *levée* on the 24th, when, however, his disordered dress and vacant manner left no doubt as to the nature of his malady. On the following Sunday [Pg 209] at church, in the middle of the sermon he started up and embraced the Queen and the Princesses in a frantic manner, exclaiming, "You know what it is to be nervous." A day or two later, after a private concert, he went up to Dr. Ayrton, and laying his hand on the musician's shoulder, "I fear, Sir," he said, "I shall not long be able to hear music: it seems to affect my head and it is with difficulty I bear it," and then added softly, "Alas! the best of us are but frail mortals."[243] About the same time, after a long ride, he burst into tears, and exclaimed, "I wish to God I may die, for I am going to be mad."

We are indebted to Philip Withers for our knowledge of the King's first attack. "My office places me at the fountain head of information," he has written. "As senior Page of the Presence my apartment is situated between the grand Anti-chamber and the Closet of Private Audience. In each room there is a door of communication with my apartment, and I am constantly prepared to execute commands. The doors of my apartment open near the fireplaces of the Closet and Anti-chamber; and as there is a current of air passing through the doors (for they are opposite to each other) the Fireplaces are defended by lofty, magnificent screens so that either door may be left [Pg 210] a little open without being noticed. In the common course of things I am accustomed to disregard both the company and conversation; and, indeed, it would be highly indecent."[244] That Withers was an unscrupulous fellow is obvious, for he was scoundrel enough to turn a dishonest penny by publishing the secrets he acquired by eavesdropping; but, in spite of the way it was obtained, his testimony is valuable. He was, however, an ingenuous youth, and after stating in his narrative that there was abroad a suspicion that the disease was hereditary, he begs that people "will forbear to credit an opinion in which so many innocent and amiable children are interested." "I do not deny the possible existence of hereditary disease," he continues. "In all ages of the world, and among every complexion of men, the opinion has been corroborated by fact. But what forbids our hoping better things in the case before us? Who will have the temerity to aver on oath that His Majesty's complaint is not the *Gout*, or [Pg 211] some kindred disorder, unhappily driven to the seat of intelligence?" Withers has related how, about this time, the King and Queen, with himself in attendance, were driving one day through Windsor Park, when the King stopped the horses, and, crying, "There he is," alighted. His Majesty then approached an oak, and when within a few yards of it, uncovered and advanced, bowing with the utmost respect, and then, seizing one of the lower branches, shook it heartily, as one shakes the hand of a friend. The Queen turned pale and after a terrified pause told Withers to dismount and tell the King that her Majesty desired his company. From the words that were uttered, the page learnt that George imagined he was discussing European politics with the King of Prussia!

After this distressing episode, there ensued a period of fluctuation, when occasional paroxysms were succeeded by intervals of clear understanding, during which everybody at Windsor went about in fear and trembling, not knowing what would happen next. The Queen was almost overpowered with terror. "I am affected beyond all expression in her presence to see what struggles she makes to support her serenity," Miss Burney wrote on November 3. "To-day she gave up the conflict when I was alone with her, and burst into a violent fit of tears. It was very, very [Pg 212] terrible to see."[245] At this critical moment Sir George Baker was far from well, and, feeling unable to undertake the entire charge of the royal invalid, and perhaps disinclined to take upon himself the entire responsibility, called in Dr. Warren, whom, however, the King declined to receive. "Dr. Warren was then placed where he could hear his voice, and all that passed, and receive intelligence concerning his pulse, etc., from Sir George Baker."[246]

Dr. Warren came to the conclusion that the disorder under which the King laboured was an absolute mania, and wholly unconnected with fever, which statement of the case he had later to announce to the sufferer. On November 5, the King broke out in violent delirium at dinner, flew at the Prince of Wales, clutched him by the throat, and threw him against a wall, crying, he would know how to dare keep the King of England from speaking his mind. That night George was hopelessly mad; his physical as well as his mental health was impaired, and his life despaired of. "The doctors say it is impossible to survive it long, if his situation does not take some extraordinary change in a few hours," Sheridan was informed. "Since this letter was [Pg 213] begun, all articulation even seems to be at an end with the poor King; but, for the two hours preceding, he was in a most determined frenzy."[247] After a time he slept, and when he awoke the fever had somewhat abated, but he had still all the gestures and ravings of the most confirmed maniac, and a new noise in imitation of the howling of a dog. Then he became calmer and talked of religion, and declared himself inspired, but soon relapsed into a turbulent and incoherent state, and tried to jump out of a window.[248] On November 9 a rumour ran through the city that the King was dead, but on the 12th orders were sent to the office of the Secretary of State that it should be notified to foreign courts that no apprehensions were entertained of immediate danger of the King's life. On November 16 a public prayer was offered in all churches for his recovery.

The physicians in attendance had been divided upon the question of the possibility of the King's physical recovery, but they were in agreement as to the unlikelihood of his regaining his reason. The first ray of hope came on November 19 from Sir Lucas Pepys, who declared that there was "nothing desponding in the case," but advised stronger measures, the denial of dangerous indulgences, and greater quiet. In spite [Pg 214] of this pronouncement, on the following day Dr. Warren had the unpleasant task to inform the King he was regarded as incapable of transacting business of any kind. "To-day, I have heard, is fixed upon to speak reason to One who has none," George Selwyn wrote to Lady Carlisle on November 20. "Dr. Warren, in some set of fine phrases, is to tell his Majesty that he is stark mad, and must have a straight waistcoat. I am glad I am not chosen to be that Rat who is to put the bell about the Cat's neck. For if it should please God to forgive our transgressions, and restore his Majesty to his senses, for he can never have them again till we grow better, I suppose, according to the opinion of churchmen, who are perfectly acquainted with all the dispensations of Providence, and the motive of His conduct; I say, if that unexpected period arrives, I should not like to stand in the place of that man who has moved such an Address to the Crown."[249]

The favourable opinion of Sir Lucas Pepys was confirmed by Dr. Addington, who, called in on November 26, was the only physician of all those consulted who had experience of mental cases, and even he was not professedly a practitioner in them. [Pg 215] For some reason Dr. Addington discontinued his attendance after a few days, and then at last it was deemed imperative to add to the medical staff some one skilled in the treatment of insanity. Why this had not been done before is inexplicable except on the hypothesis that secrecy was essential in the public interest;[250] but now a summons was sent to the Rev. Dr. Francis Willis.

It was decided, further, for the sake of greater quiet, to move the King to Kew, but at first this seemed impossible unless violence were used, for he resolutely refused to leave Windsor. Eventually the object was achieved by strategy. "The poor Queen was to get off in private: the plan settled between the princes and physicians was, that her Majesty and the princesses should go away quietly, and then that the King should be told that they were gone, which was the sole method they could devise to prevail with him to follow. He was then to be allured by a promise of seeing them at Kew; [Pg 216] and, as they knew he would doubt their assertion, he was to go through the rooms and examine the house himself."[251] This was done on November 29, and the King established himself at Kew in the ground floor rooms that look towards the garden. The bribe was not paid, however, and the anger it aroused in him produced the worst results. Indeed, his separation from the Queen was in his lucid hours one of his greatest troubles. "She is my best friend; where could I find another?" he asked on one occasion; and at another time complained bitterly, "I am eight-and-twenty years married, and now have no wife at all; is not that hard?"

Dr. Willis was the incumbent of a Lincolnshire living, and, having taken a medical degree at Oxford, he frequently acted as physician to his parishioners. He was especially successful in treating mental cases, and when this became known, so many persons from all parts of England came to him that at last he founded an asylum at Gretford, where, it is said, he never at any time had less than thirty cases under his care.[252] When Willis took up his quarters at Kew on December 6, the King [Pg 217] asked him if he, who was a clergyman, was not ashamed of himself for exercising such a profession, "Sir," said the specialist, "our Saviour Himself went about healing the sick." "Yes," retorted George, "but He had not £700 for it."[253] Willis, who was at this time seventy years of age, seems to have won golden opinions at Court, except from some of his colleagues who inclined to regard his methods as more in place with the quack than with the qualified practitioner. "In the practical knowledge of insanity, and the management of the insane, Willis was unquestionably in advance of his associates," Dr. Ray has written, "but following the bent of his dictatorial habits, he often spoke without meaning his words, and often overstepped the limits of [Pg 218] professional etiquette."[254] Miss Burney thought him "a man in ten thousand, open, honest, dauntless, lighthearted, innocent, and high-minded;" "an upright, worthy man, gentle and humane in his profession, and amiable and pious as a clergyman," said Mrs. Papendiek; while Wraxall thought Willis "seemed to be exempt from all the infirmities of old age, and his countenance, which was very interesting, blended intelligence with an expression of placid self-possession."[255]

Pitt introduced the physician to the King: "We have found a gentleman who has made the illness under which your Majesty is now labouring his study for some years, and we doubt not that he can render comfort, and alleviate many of the inconveniences your Majesty suffers." "Will he let me shave myself, cut my nails, and have a knife at breakfast and dinner?" asked the King who resented the precautions that had been taken; "and will he treat me as his sovereign, and not command me as a subject?" "Sir, I am a plain man, not used to courts, but I honour and respect my King;" and he won George's confidence by letting him forthwith shave himself. Willis watched the King for twenty-four hours, and then expressed his opinion that "the [Pg 219] malady had been too long suffered to remain, but that if the constitution could bear the remedies necessary to work out the disease, he had no fear for a cure."[256]

"In the consultation which settled the respective functions", Dr. Ray has stated, "Willis was to have charge of all the domestic and strictly moral management—in accordance, however, with such general views as had been agreed upon. The medical treatment was arranged in the morning consultations, and it was understood that Willis was to take no decisive measure, either medical or moral, not previously discussed and permitted. Pepys, Gisborne and Reynolds attended, in rotation, from four o'clock in the afternoon until eleven the next morning. Warren or Baker visited in the morning, saw the King, consulted with Willis and the physicians, who had remained over night, and agreed with them upon the bulletin for the day. Willis was soon joined by his son John, whose particular function seems not to have been very definitely settled. Willis professed to regard him as equal to himself in point of dignity and responsibility, but his colleagues considered him merely as an assistant to his father. Two surgeons and two apothecaries were also retained, each one, in [Pg 220] turn, staying twenty-four hours in the palace. The personal service was rendered by three attendants whom Willis had procured from his own establishment, and the King's pages—one attendant and one page being constantly in his room."[257]

It would be out of place in this work to enter into the details of Willis's treatment, but it may be stated that for the mode of restraint used before he came on the scene, he employed one that, while exercising a more firm coercion, was not so teasing to the patient. It has been told how when the King, convalescent, was walking through a corridor at Kew with one of his equerries, he saw a straight-jacket lying in a chair, "You need not be afraid to look at it," he said to his companion, who, somewhat embarrassed, had averted his eyes, "Perhaps it is the best friend I ever had in my life." Willis did not, however, rely entirely upon coercion, as did most of the physicians of that day in cases of insanity; but endeavoured by kindness to establish a hold upon the King. "Willis has, I understand, already acquired a complete ascendency over him," William Grenville wrote a couple of days after the mad-doctor took charge, "which is the point for which he is particularly famous."[258] Sheridan, [Pg 221] too, remarked, in one of his speeches that Willis professed to have the gift of seeing the heart by looking at the countenance, and, with a touch of delicious humour, added, looking at Pitt, that this simple statement seemed to alarm the right honourable gentleman.

CHAPTER XXII [Pg 222]

THE KING'S RECOVERY

When it could no longer be doubted that George was incapable of transacting

business, ministers were confronted with the very difficult problem: how was the King's Government to be carried on? and their trouble was the greater because it could not be said with any certainty whether the disorder was temporary or whether it was likely to be permanent. If there was the chance of a speedy cure, then, of course, nothing need be done; but if, on the other hand, recovery was impossible, or, at best, a matter of many months, then some step must be taken, and that that step must be a regency and that in the first instance the office must be proffered to the Prince of Wales was patent to all. This was very distasteful to Pitt and his colleagues for they saw clearly that the passing of a Regency Bill would in all probability be the signal for their dismissal, since the Prince was an ally of the Whigs and the bosom friend of Fox and Sheridan, and they saw it was their interest to delay as long as possible the introduction of such a measure.

From an engraving by W. Tomkins

GEORGE III

In July, Parliament had been prorogued to November 20, and when it met on that day, Pitt, after explaining the situation, secured an adjournment to December 4, in order that an examination of the physicians might be made by Privy Council. In the interval Dr. Warren told him that "the physicians could now have no hesitation in pronouncing that the actual disorder was that of lunacy; that no man could pretend to say that this was or was not curable, that he saw no immediate symptoms of recovery; that the King might never recover; and, on the other hand, that he might recover at any one moment." After this official pronouncement delay was no longer possible, and when the House reassembled on December 4, Pitt stated he had taken steps to ascertain the exact condition of the King, moved for the report of the examination of the physicians, which had been held before the Privy Council on the previous day, and proposed that it should be taken into consideration on the following Monday. [Pg 223]

To each physician the same questions had been put: Do you think his Majesty's present disorder incapacitates him for public business? Do you think his Majesty's disorder a curable or incurable malady? Can you take upon you to say in what time the malady may be removed? Each physician replied that the King was quite incapable of transacting business, and that, although the malady was curable, it was impossible to say when the disorder might be removed. [Pg 224]

On the Monday when the report was to be taken into consideration, however, the general sense of the House seemed to be that in a matter of such magnitude it was advisable that the House itself should examine the physicians, and this was thought the more desirable because since the examination of the Privy Council Dr. Willis and Dr. Gisborne had been called in. A committee of twenty-one members was appointed on December 8 to hear the doctors' opinions, which were naturally identical with their previous pronouncements, with which Willis agreed, except that he was emphatic in his conviction of the speedy recovery of the King; and two days later the Committee made its report to the House. It is not necessary to go into the details of the struggle between the Government and the Opposition: how Pitt proposed a committee to report on precedents of measures to carry on the government when the

personal exercise of the royal authority had been prevented by infancy, sickness, infirmity, or other causes: and how Fox interrupted the harmony of the proceedings by asserting the *right* of the Prince of Wales to the regency. It may be pointed out that there was something behind this bold assertion, for, since the heir-apparent was [Pg 225] the natural selection for the office, Fox would scarcely otherwise have raised the point. It was indeed a foregone conclusion that the Prince would be regent, but the point at issue was whether the regency should be restricted or unrestricted. Pitt, left to himself, would undoubtedly impose conditions, but if Fox could impress the House with the belief that the Prince had the right to the office, then the regency would doubtless be unfettered. It has usually been assumed when Fox put forward his view he made a blunder—and if we regard it as a blunder, it was a very bad one; but is it not more likely that the *right* was claimed, merely as a tactical move in the parliamentary warfare? It had the great advantage that the party advancing the theory could lose nothing by it, for the Prince must be offered the regency, while if the bluff were successful, the regency would be unrestricted.

However this may have been, Fox's attempt raised a tremendous outcry, and the Prince (among whose qualities loyalty was not included) instructed the Duke of York to say in the House of Lords that, "His Royal Highness understands too well the sacred principles which seated the House of Brunswick on the throne of Great Britain, ever to assume or exercise any power, *be his claim what it may*, not derived [Pg 226] from *the will of the people*, expressed by their representatives and your lordships in Parliament assembled."

Pitt now introduced resolutions for a restricted regency, and these, in spite of violent protests in both chambers,[259] were finally agreed to on December 30, when they were submitted to the Prince of Wales. The Prince had repeatedly stated he would under no circumstances accept the office if the exercise of power was hampered with restrictions. Such conditions, which were only to endure for a limited time, were, however, regarded as essential in the interest of the King should he recover, and ministers would not give way. Indeed, the Prince's threats were regarded, we have been told by a contemporary, "as nothing more than a bully intended to influence votes in the House of Commons. If, however, he should be so desperate, I should hope that there would be every reason to believe the Queen [Pg 227] would be induced to take the regency in order to prevent the King's hands being fettered for the remainder of his life."[260] In the end, as every one expected, the Prince yielded under protest, whereupon Pitt at once introduced a Regency Bill, which, after a most acrimonious struggle, passed the Commons on February 12, and was carried to the House of Lords.

In the meantime the King's condition had been gradually improving. At a further examination of the physicians on January 7, although Dr. Warren and Sir George Baker were far from confident, Willis considered recovery certain. "A little more time is all I ask," said the latter. "Even as days go on I do not despair."[261] Willis stated that whereas a fortnight earlier, his Majesty would take up books but could not read a line of them, now he could peruse several pages and make sensible remarks upon the subject, that he was less excited and less frequently required restraint, and "in the main his Majesty does everything in a more rational way than he did, and some things extremely rational."[262]

George's senses were certainly returning to him. One day he desired to have £400 [Pg 228] from his Privy Purse, and this he divided into different sums, and wrapped them up in separate papers upon which he wrote the names of persons to whom he was accustomed to make monthly payments. He then wrote down the different sums, and the names, added them up, as had been his custom, and ordered the money to be paid immediately as it was then due.[263] Another incident that occurred at this time was subsequently related by the Princess Royal. Dr. Willis had refused to let George read "King Lear," but the patient outwitted the doctor by asking for Colman's works, in which he knew he would find the play as altered by Colman for the stage. When the three elder Princesses went in to the King, he told them what he had been reading. He said, "It is very beautiful, very affecting, and very awful," adding, "I am like poor Lear, but thank God, I have no Regan, no Goneril, but three Cordelias."[264]

The King's recovery was proceeding apace, but when Dr. Willis was inclined to believe the disorder had all but passed, a new obsession arose. George had long been attracted by the stately beauty of Lady Pembroke,[265] and now he fancied himself [Pg 229] divorced from the Queen, whom he called the Queen Dowager, and the other Queen Elizabeth, and said between them he was pulled to pieces, and then what was to become of poor Pill Garlick.[266] "His Majesty could not be prevailed upon, indeed he absolutely refused, to see the Queen!" Mrs. Papendiek noted. "He said that he had always respected her and had paid her every attention, but when she should have screened his malady from the public she had deserted him to the care of those who had used him ill, insomuch as they had forgotten him to be their sovereign; that he had always felt a great partiality for Queen Elizabeth, and with her, upon a proper agreement, he would end his days."[267] However, this delusion began to give way, and soon he consented to receive the Queen daily, "if she has no objection to see me in the abject state in which I must appear before her," he said pathetically; but he

was not yet cured, and still rambled and had a slight return of fever. Gradually, however, his strength returned, and by slow degrees he was led to resume his former habits. On February 14 Miss Burney stated triumphantly, "The King is infinitely [Pg 230] better," and four days later she gave vent to a pæan of joy: "This was a sweet, and will prove a memorable day: the Regency was put off in the House of Lords, by a motion from the Chancellor. Huzza! Huzza! And this evening, for the first time, the King came upstairs, to drink tea with the Queen and Princesses in the drawing-room! My heart was so full of joy and thankfulness, I could hardly breathe! Heaven—Heaven be praised! What a different house is this house become!—sadness and terror, that wholly occupied it so lately, are now flown away, or rather are now driven out; and though anxiety still forcibly prevails, 'tis in so small a proportion to joy and thankfulness, that it is borne as if scarce an ill!"[268]

There was, indeed, no doubt that George was nearly well. On February 14, Henry Addington wrote to his father that "Dr. Warren particularly observes that the appearance of the King's eyes is vastly improved; and his pulse is certainly reduced from 100 to 62 in a minute. The last is the rate of it when in health. It is now generally believed that no change of Government will take place at present;"[269] and three days later Dr. Willis told the Lord Chancellor that the Regency bill ought not to [Pg 231] be proceeded with as the King's disorder was practically removed. This Lord Thurlow declined at first to believe, but when the doctor threatened that if his statement was disregarded, he would publish the news of the King's recovery, Thurlow consented to visit the King and judge for himself. "No politics," said the King, when he consented to receive the minister; "my head is not strong enough for that subject."[270] The interview convinced Lord Thurlow that Willis was right, and two days later he rose in the House of Lords to announce a great improvement in the monarch's condition, and adjourned the debate for a week, when the consideration of the bill was not resumed.

On the 20th Lord Thurlow again visited the King, and this time gave him an outline of events that had transpired during his illness. "I never saw at any period, the King more composed, collected, or distinct," the Chancellor told Pitt, "and there was not the slightest trace or appearance of disorder." Three days later the King received the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, who had repeatedly demanded an interview. "The Queen," Sir Gilbert Elliot has related, "was present, and walking to and fro in the room with a countenance and manner of great dissatisfaction; and the King every [Pg 232] now and then went to her in a submissive manner and spoke in a soothing sort of tone, for she has acquired the same sort of drilling over him that Willis and his men have—and the King's mind is totally subdued and in a state of the greatest weakness and subjection. It is given out even by the King's friends that they observed nothing *wrong* or irrational in this visit, and it is material that they should not be thought to publish the contrary. It is not entirely true, however, as the King made several slips, one of which was that he told them he was the Chancellor. This circumstance is not to be mentioned for the reasons just given."[271] After seeing his sons the King wrote to the Prime Minister for the first time since he had been taken ill.

"It is with infinite satisfaction that I renew my correspondence with Mr. Pitt by acquainting him with my having seen the Prince of Wales and my second son. Care was taken that the conversation should be general and cordial. They seemed perfectly satisfied. I chose the meeting should be in the Queen's apartment, that all parties might have that caution, which, at the present hour could but be judicious.

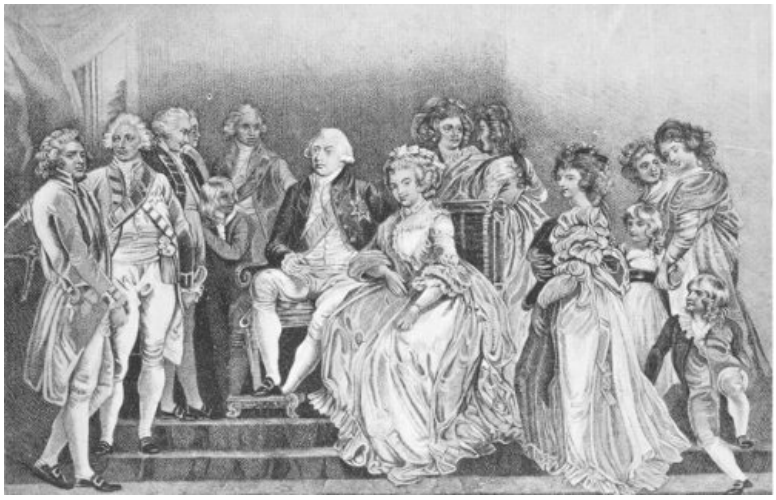
"I desire Mr. Pitt will confer with the Lord Chancellor, that any steps which may be [Pg 233] necessary for raising the annual supplies or any measures that the interests of the nation may require, should not be unnecessarily delayed, for I feel the warmest gratitude for the support and anxiety shown by the nation at large during my tedious illness, which I should ill requite if I did not wish to prevent any further delay in those public measures which it may be necessary to bring forward this year; though I must decline entering into a pressure of business, and, indeed, for the rest of my life, shall expect others to fulfil the duties of their employments, and only keep that superintending eye which can be effected without labour or fatigue."

The last bulletin, signed by Dr. Willis, Sir George Baker, and Sir Lucas Pepys, and announcing "the entire cessation of his Majesty's illness" appeared on February 26; and on March 2 an order was issued by the Privy Council to discontinue the form of prayer for the recovery of his Majesty's health, and substitute a prayer of thanksgiving. On March 7 the Speaker of the House of Commons and several members of the Administration saw the King when "it was observed by all that his Majesty never appeared more healthy, easy, and cheerful, within their recollection[272];" and on the 10th the Speech from the Throne, delivered by [Pg 234] commission, stated that the King had resumed his authority, and that day was given up to rejoicing. "London displayed a blaze of light from one extremity to the other; the illuminations extending, without any metaphor, from Hampstead and Highgate to Clapham, and even as far as Tooting; while the vast distance between Greenwich and Kensington presented the same dazzling appearance. The poorest mechanics contributed their proportion, and instances were exhibited of cobblers' stalls decorated with one or two farthing candles."[273]

"Our prayers are heard, and Providence restores

A Patriot King to bless Britannia's shores!
Nor yet to Britain is this bliss confined,
All Europe hails the friend of human kind.
If, such the general joys, what words can show
The change to transport from the depths of woe
In those permitted to embrace again.
The best of Fathers, Husbands, and of men."[274]

On March 11 George received an Address of the Lords and Commons on his recovery, on the 13th the congratulations of the *corps diplomatique*, and on the next day went to Windsor, when "All Windsor came out to meet the King. It was a joy amounting to ecstasy. I could not keep my eyes dry all day long. A scene so reversed [Pg 235] —sadness so sweetly exchanged for thankfulness and delight!"[275] Everywhere there was rejoicing, Ambassadors and Ministers gave banquets to celebrate the occasion, and there were fêtes at Court and balls at the clubs.[276] The dislike of the populace to the King had disappeared entirely, and their hearts had gone out to him in his time of trouble. Sir Lucas Pepys told Miss Burney that if George died the lives of himself and his colleagues would be in danger, for they received threatening letters daily. Sir George Baker was stopped by the mob, and when in reply to an inquiry he answered, "The case is a bad one," "The more shame for you," came angry cries from all sides. But the greatest outburst of enthusiasm was on St. George's Day (April 23), when the King went in state to St. Paul's "to return thanks to God for His mercy in giving the King his health and reason once more." The physicians and others, fearful of the [Pg 236] possible effects of the excitement, endeavoured to dissuade the King from participating in this public ceremony, but in vain, "My Lord," said George to the Archbishop of Canterbury, "I have twice read over the evidence of the physicians on my case, and if I can stand that, I can stand anything."



From an old print

THE ROYAL FAMILY OF ENGLAND IN 1787

CHAPTER XXIII [Pg 237]

THE KING'S CHILDREN

The trouble that George III experienced through the misdemeanours of his brothers and the misfortunes of his sisters was as nothing compared to the anxiety caused him by his children[277] and notably by his sons. Yet, bad as was the behaviour of the latter, they might well plead extenuating circumstances in the shape of their mother and father. The King could never profit by experience, and he learnt nothing from the evil results that accrued from the harsh methods employed in the nurseries of the Princess dowager, with the result that, bringing up his children on the same lines, he not unnaturally produced similar effects. The Queen, too, having [Pg 238] none of those qualities that promote happiness in a family and tend to unite it in harmony, was not more successful as a mother than her consort as a father. "It is not surprising, therefore, that the younger members of the family longed for the day when they should be emancipated from the sober state and grim decorum of the palace. The princes rushed into the brilliant world of pleasure and excitement which awaited them with headlong impetuosity; but the less fortunate princesses were doomed to repine in their dreary captivity, longing for marriage, as the only event which could release them."[278]

Yet George was fond of his children, especially when they were young. He interested himself in their education and their pursuits; and it has been related how when he was talking with a Scotch lady about Scotland, and suddenly became

absorbed in thought, "Your Majesty, I presume, is thinking about my country," said his companion. "I was entreating God," he replied, "to protect and bless my dear boys."

The daughters gave little trouble, except the Princess Royal, who, according to Mrs. Papendiek, rather set herself against the Queen. "She was incensed at her [Pg 239] mother constantly inviting to Windsor the daughters of such families as were attached to the Government party, saying that they could not amuse the King, but only ran idly about the house, interrupting everybody; and she desired her Lady-in-waiting to say that she never received any one in the morning. Her Royal Highness now averred that she had never liked the Queen, from her excessive severity, that she had doubted her judgment on many points, and went so far as to say that she was a silly woman."[279] The hand of the Princess Charlotte was sought in 1796 by the Crown Prince of Würtemburg; but some delay occurred before a definite acceptance of the offer was made, as there was some mystery concerning the fate of the Crown Prince's first wife. After inquiries, however, George III expressed himself satisfied with the explanations tendered to him, and in the following year the marriage took place. The account of her farewell interview with her father shows that at least the Princess's objection to one parent did not extend to the other. "The last interview between his Majesty and his royal daughter was of the most affecting kind. The Princess hung upon her father's neck, overwhelmed in grief, and it was not until her consort urged her to close the painful scene, that she could be prevailed upon to [Pg 240] leave her father. The affectionate parent followed her to bid her farewell, but he was so overcome by the excess of his parental feelings, that he could not give utterance to his words, and his streaming eyes looked the last blessing, which his lips could not pronounce." With her departure from England in May, 1797, this Princess passes out of English history.

There was little desire expressed by foreign Princes for an alliance with the daughters of George III, and this reluctance to marry members of the English Royal family must be attributed mainly to the knowledge of European sovereigns and their families of the malady from which the King suffered. Prince Ferdinand of Würtemburg, who was in the Austrian army and had distinguished himself in the taking of Belgrade from the Turks, came over in 1791 to propose a marriage with Princess Augusta, then, to quote Mrs. Papendiek, "certainly the most beautiful creature one could wish to see;" but the King refused his suit, partly because he was "two removes from the Dukedom," and partly because he would not let the younger Princesses marry before the elder.[280] Subsequently Louis Phillippe became engaged to Princess Elizabeth, but he jilted her for Marie Amélie, daughter of the [Pg 241] King of Naples; and after this it looked as if all the royal ladies would become old maids. Princess Amelia escaped this fate by contracting a morganatic alliance with General Fitzroy;[281] and at the age of fifty Princess Mary married William Frederick, Duke of Gloucester, who had been held in reserve for Princess Charlotte of Wales in case no other alliance offered.

Princess Augusta and Princess Sophia remained single; but, when she was forty-eight, Princess Elizabeth conceived a passion for matrimony. Not without difficulty a *parti* was found for the mature lady, and on April 8, 1818, she was united to the Landgrave of Hesse-Homburg, who, according to all accounts, had an objectionable appearance and a ridiculous manner. "A monster of a man, a vulgar-looking German corporal, whose breath is a compound between tobacco and garlic; he has about £300 *per annum*," so Fremantle described him; but these defects did not deter the middle-aged spinster. "The Princess of Hesse-Homburg will redeem the character of good behaviour in the conjugal bonds, lost or mislaid by her family," wrote Mrs. Trench. "She is delighted with her *hero*, as she calls him. On his way from the scene of the marriage ceremony to the Regent's Cottage, where, to his great annoyance, [Pg 242] they were destined to pass the first quarter of the honeymoon, he was sick, from being unused to a close carriage, and forced to leave her for the dickey, and put Baron O'Naghten in his place. He said he was not so much *ennuyé* at the Cottage as he expected, having passed all his time in his dressing-gown and slippers smoking in the conservatory."[282] The Landgrave was, indeed, a good man, kind-hearted, fond of books, and with more learning than the majority of minor German princes, and he certainly made his wife very happy. "I have so very many things to be thankful for that I ever feel I cannot do too much to prove my feelings both towards God and my excellent husband," the Landgravine wrote to Lady Harcourt on January 21, 1821. "Though I lived in a degree of magnificence and splendour whilst with my sister, I can with truth say that I was thoroughly happy to see my own dear little Homburg again." This, curiously enough, was the only happy marriage contracted by a child of George III.

"If anything can make a democracy in England, it will be the royal family,"[283] wrote Lord Minto, and no one may quarrel with this statement, nor with the lines of [Pg 243] Shelley, in which the ruling caste in 1819 is described:

> "An old, mad, blind, despised and dying King,
> Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow
> Through public scorn, mud from a muddy spring."

All the sons of George III were more or less wild, and all of them without exception were a source of trouble to their mother and father. Of those seven who grew up the two that caused least anxiety to their parents were Augustus, Duke of Sussex, and Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge; the latter led a quiet life in England until 1816, when he was appointed Governor of Hanover, and while there married Wilhelmina Louisa, daughter of Frederick, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, by whom he had three children. The former differed from all his brothers in so far that he had a taste for literature, and an affection for books. At the age of twenty he married Lady Augusta Murray and though the marriage, being contracted in defiance of the provisions of the Royal Marriage Act, was declared null and void, he did not during her lifetime contract another matrimonial alliance. After her death, however, he married Lady Cecilia Buggins (*née* Underwood), who was subsequently created by Queen Victoria Duchess of Inverness in her own right. The Duke was of a retiring disposition, and, being [Pg 244] happy in the library he had formed in his apartments in Kensington Palace, took no part in the political and very little share in the social life of his day.

The Duke of Clarence did not come into open conflict with the King and Queen, and his life was uneventful, with the exception of his connection with Dora Jordan and his marriage in 1818 with Adelaide, eldest daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen. The Duke of Kent, too, interested himself but little in public affairs, and lived abroad for many years with Madame St. Laurent, by whom he had twelve children. He was devoted to this lady, and was fearful lest, to assure the succession, he should be compelled to marry. Notwithstanding, he expressed his intention to do so if it should be necessary, though, he said, "God only knows the sacrifice it will be to make whenever I shall think it my duty to become a married man." Eventually he married the widow of Charles Louis, Prince of Leiningen, by whom he had issue, one daughter, Victoria.

Though George III was not on friendly terms with any of his sons, and was careful to keep them, so far as possible, out of England, it was his remaining children that caused him the most serious unhappiness. The Prince of Wales, Frederick, Duke of York, and Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, were so many thorns in the flesh. [Pg 245]

The conduct of the Prince of Wales need here only be referred to, *en passant*,[284] his behaviour from first to last was marked by no degree of affection or respect for his parents, or, indeed, by any consideration of decency. From an early age, encouraged by his uncle and aunt, the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland, he plunged into debauchery of every kind. While still in his teens, his *liaisons* were notorious, his losses at the cardtable considerable, and his extravagance gigantic. When he came of age he threw himself into the arms of the Opposition, and soon was at open enmity with his father. What might have happened if George III had been a wise parent, or even possessed of ordinary commonsense, cannot be said, but his methods of strict repression and his want of sympathetic insight alienated his boys one by one. Even into the Journal of Mrs. Papendiek, that undiscriminating eulogiser of the King and Queen, has crept one example of the gracelessness of the monarch, when, after his illness, wine had been recommended to him in very small quantities to assist digestion. "As his Majesty had never taken it he doubted its efficacy. The Prince of [Pg 246] Wales sent a few bottles of the finest Madeira, so he said, that the island had ever produced, and proposed tasting it with the King when the family dined at four o'clock. The King thanked his Royal Highness, but said he hoped for the credit of his gentlemen of the wine cellar, and for the pleasure of those who partook of such indulgences, that the best was always provided. For himself it would be his last treat, as he was sure it did him more harm than good."[285]

For a long time the Prince of Wales was his mother's darling, and Miss Burney has related how in 1786, "the Queen read him that paper from 'The Tatler' which gives an account of a young man of good heart and sweet disposition, who is allured by pleasure into a libertine life, which he pursues by habit, but with constant remorse and ceaseless shame and unhappiness." "It was impossible for me to miss her object," Miss Burney commented; "all the mother was in her voice while she read it, and her glistening eyes told the application made throughout."[286] But the heir-apparent had neither remorse nor shame, and his conduct wore down the love of his mother, as in course of time it dissipated the affection of everyone but Mrs. [Pg 247] Fitzherbert, to whom he behaved as disgracefully as man may behave to woman. The Queen bore with much neglect, but even she could not pardon her dearest son's conduct when his father was suffering from the mental malady that broke out in 1788. Then the Prince, like the graceless heir he was, cared for nothing save to secure the royal power. He took the government of the Castle into his own hands and intrigued openly for an unrestricted Regency; but what affected the Queen, always jealous of her authority, was that he promptly delegated her to a second place. When Dr. Warren made his report, not to the Queen, but to the Prince of Wales, she was much upset. "I think a deeper blow I have never witnessed," Miss Burney remarked. "Already to become but second, even for the King! The tears were not wiped; indignation arose, with pain, the severest pain, of every species."[287] This hit her in her tenderest spot, her dignity was assailed, and henceforth, with brief intervals of peace following on reconciliations, she fought tooth and nail against her eldest son. In the eyes of George III his son's profligate conduct and his extravagance were

terrible, but these were as trifles compared to his publication of the King's letters in 1803 after a dispute as to the heir-apparent's right to a military command. When a nobleman was complaining to the King of his heir's disgraceful conduct, "Yes," said the poor old man, "*but he has never published your letters*!" [Pg 248]

The Duke of York followed in the footsteps of his elder brother, and with as good a will gambled and indulged in dissipation, a course he did not abandon after his marriage with Frederica, the eldest daughter of Frederick William II of Prussia. Sent on active service to the Netherlands, he was unsuccessful in the field, and was recalled by Pitt, much to the anger of the King,[288] who, on his return to England appointed him Commander-in-Chief, in which capacity he proved himself a capable administrator. The scandal occasioned by the sale of commissions by his mistress, Mrs. Mary Ann Clarke,[289] caused him to resign, but, after an interval, he was reinstated, and held the post until his death. He was his father's favourite son, but he found the Court so dull that he seldom stayed under the parental roof; but, though he was not a good son, he was a weak rather than a bad man, and had many amiable qualities that endeared him to a large circle of friends. [Pg 249]

Of the private life of the Duke of Cumberland the less said the better. Scandals accumulated around him like leaves on a tree, and most of them, for example, those connected with Sellis and the birth of Colonel Garth, are too unedifying to be discussed. There was no shameless crime of which he was not believed guilty, and he was so deeply loathed by the people that had he succeeded to the throne there were many who declared his accession would be followed by a general rising. [Pg 250]

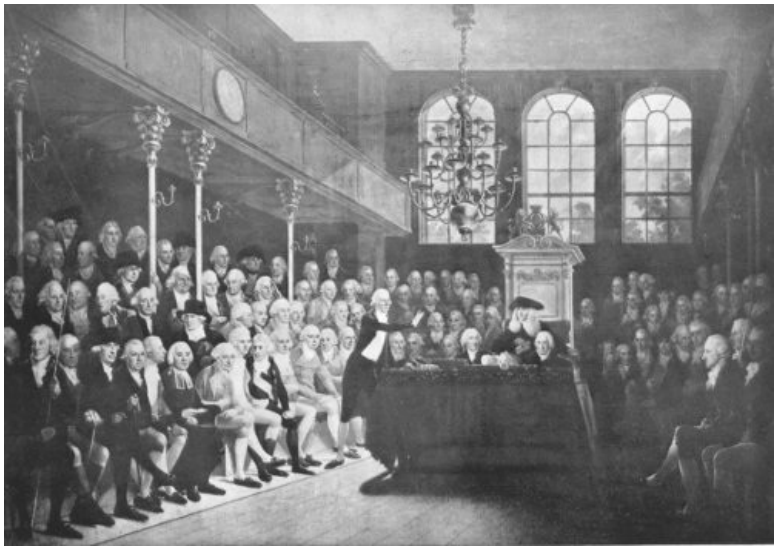


Photo by Emery Walker. From a painting by Karl Anton Hickel

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN 1793

CHAPTER XXIV [Pg 251]

1789-1806

George III, as we have seen, had not been a favourite with his subjects, but in his distress the great heart of his people went out to him. His parsimony, his political intrigues, even his breaches of faith were forgotten by many and forgiven by more, and the sympathy of the whole nation was extended to him. Gillray might caricature, and "Peter Pindar" lampoon; the thought of the mightiest monarch in Christendom at the mercy of a mad-doctor was too touching for laughter and henceforth the title of "Farmer George" was not a sneer but a token of affection. The popularity that came to him on his recovery was very grateful to George, and he told George Hardinge that "his illness had in the end been a perfect bliss to him, as proving how nobly the people would support him when he was confined." This healthy feeling was of great value as it steadied the country at the time when the French Revolution and its effects were devastating Europe, and through the dark days which were to follow before the reign ended in a blaze of glory that at an interval of ten years culminated in Trafalgar and Waterloo. It was this revival of personal loyalty that enabled Englishmen to content themselves with an indulgent smile when their King declared to Colonel Landmann, "I should like to fight Bony single-handed: I'm sure I should; I should give him a good thrashing, I'm sure I should—I'm sure of it"; and brought monarch and people in harmony when in the days of the expected French invasion, "The King in this summer of excitement, was constantly to be seen at Windsor in the cocked-hat and jack-boots of the blues, in which regiment he had a troop of his own. He inspected the volunteers, who were drawn up under the wall of the Round Tower. [Pg 252]

He invited their officers to be present at the Sunday evening performances of sacred music. He walked upon the Terrace—'every inch a King'—and would call, with a stentorian voice, for the band to play, 'Britons, strike home.'"[290]

The first proof of the agreeable alteration in his people's feelings towards him was made clear to the King, when, by his physician's advice, he left Windsor in June 1789 for Weymouth. That seaside resort went mad with loyalty, and so great was the enthusiasm that in the parish church of Lyndhurst "God save the King" was substituted for a psalm. "The preparations of festive loyalty were universal," Miss Burney has written. "Not a child could we meet that had not a *bandeau* round its [Pg 253] head, cap, or hat, of 'God save the King'; all the bargemen wore it in cockades, and even the bathing-women had it in large coarse girdles round their waists. It is printed in golden letters upon most of the bathing-machines, and in various scrolls and devices it adorns every shop and almost every house in the two towns ... Melcombe Regis and Weymouth. The King bathes, and with great success; a machine follows the royal one into the sea, filled with fiddlers, who play 'God save the King,' as his Majesty takes his plunge!"[291]

At Weymouth, George bathed, rode, paid visits to various towns and country seats in the neighbourhood, went to the little theatre, and was everywhere welcomed with a heartiness to which he had been a stranger since the first months of his reign. The life of the Court there was, of course, very quiet. "The King's bathing agreed beyond anything with him," Mrs. Harcourt wrote, "the Princess also looks well, but the Queen looks, I think, very ill, and by all accounts has been so low and languid that nothing but real illness can account for it. She always appears to me to look worse and worse every time I have seen her for the last half-year. Her foot is bad, but she [Pg 254] walks a little. They have no society at all but those you know of. Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville are here, but never asked in. The party has always been the Queen, Princess Royal, Lord Chesterfield and General Harcourt at casino; Princess Elizabeth, Lady Mary, Lady Caroline, Colonel Gwyn at cribbage; the King, Colonel Garth, and Lord Chesterfield at piquet. Lord and Lady Courtoun and Princess Augusta have hitherto played at piquet, but now I make a fourth. On Sunday, at eight, we all went to the rooms, which is, without exception, the oddest ceremony I ever saw. A very large room, two or three hundred people, none of which, except the two Lady Beauclerks and three or four men, one ever heard of. It is a circle like a drawing-room exactly, and there they stand—or walk, if they can—for about half-an-hour; then go into the card room, which opens into it, and where there are two or three tables. The King and Queen or Princesses play, the people all walking by the door, and looking in, but not coming in. The King walked about a little more; and they all went away at ten."[292]

There were one or two amusing incidents to enliven the dull routine, as when an [Pg 255] old man, in the exuberance of his loyalty, kissed the back of the King as the latter came out of the water, and was solemnly assured by the royal attendants that he had committed an act of high treason.[293] Miss Burney witnessed another laughable episode. "When the Mayor and Burgesses came with the Address, they requested leave to kiss hands: this was graciously accorded; but the Mayor advancing, in a common way, to take the Queen's hand, as he might that of any Lady Mayoress, Colonel Gwyn, who stood by, whispered, 'You must kneel, sir!' He found, however, that he took no notice of this hint, but kissed the Queen's hand erect. As he passed him in his way back, the Colonel said, 'You should have knelt, sir.' 'Sir,' answered the poor Mayor, 'I cannot.' 'Everybody does.' 'Sir—I have a wooden leg.' Poor man! 'twas such a surprise! and such an excuse as no one could dispute."[294] It was, however, on a subsequent visit of the royal family to Weymouth that a most ludicrous event happened. Colonel Landmann, a German on the staff of the Duke of Cumberland, then in command of the district, was on the Esplanade when he heard cries of "The Queen! The Queen!" He walked towards the bathing place, looking round, however, to catch a glimpse of her Majesty. "I had not, however, taken two steps in that way, [Pg 256] without looking before me," he told the story, "when I felt that I had come in contact with a female, whom, to save her and myself from falling, I encircled with my arms; and at the same moment, having observed that the person whom I had so embraced was a little old woman, with a small black silk bonnet, exactly similar to those now commonly worn by poor and aged females, and the remainder of her person was covered by a short, plain scarlet cloth cloak, I exclaimed, 'Hallo, old lady, I very nearly had you down.' In an instant I felt her push me from her with energy and indignation, and I was seized by a great number of persons, who grasped me tightly by the arms and shoulders, whilst a tall, stout fellow in a scarlet livery, stood close before my face, sharply striking the pavement with the heavy ferule of a long, golden-headed cane, his eyes flashing fire, and loudly repeating, 'The Queen—the Queen—the Queen, sir!' 'Where?—where?—where?' I loudly retorted, greatly perplexed and even irritated, as I anxiously cast an inquisitive look about me, amongst the twenty or forty persons by whom I was surrounded. 'I am the Queen!' sharply exclaimed the old lady. On this discovery I did not totally lose my presence of mind; for without the delay of a moment I fell on one knee, and seizing the hem of [Pg 257] the Queen's dress, was about to apply it to my lips, after the German fashion, stammering out at the same time the best apology I was able to put together on so

short a notice; when the Queen, although I believe much offended, and certainly not without cause, softened her irritated features, and said, as she held out to me the back of her right hand: 'No, no, no, you may kiss my hant. We forgiff: you must pee more careful; fery rute—fery rute, inteet; we forgiff; there, you may go'."

In September the King, supposed to be completely recovered, and certainly for the moment in good health, returned to Windsor to take up again the reins of government.

It is not proposed to treat further of the politics of the reign, nor of the Administrations entrusted with the conduct of the affairs of the nation. Such matters have been introduced into the pages of this work, which has no pretensions to be a political history of the period with which it deals, merely to show that aspect of the character of the King which became exposed in relation to politics. There has been traced, though only in outline, his attempts to "be King" as he and his mother understood it, his successful struggle with the Whig oligarchy, the decade when to a great extent he was his own minister, his defeat at the hands of Fox, and his [Pg 258] subsequent victory over that statesman, and the appointment as Prime Minister of his favourite, Pitt.

During the seventeen years that the younger Pitt ruled, however, the power fell from George III, who little by little was reluctantly compelled to abandon the system of personal government for which he had fought so long and so strenuously. It was not, perhaps, entirely because he was attached to Pitt that he supported him, but because to have intrigued successfully against him could only result in giving office again to Fox. Thus, though George ventured to express disapproval of certain measures of the Government, such as the plan for parliamentary reform, and the proceedings against Warren Hastings, he had to content himself with ineffectual protests, not daring to take any drastic step that would drive the minister to resign. "There was too much originality in Mr. Pitt's character to allow him to be acceptable to the King," Nicholls has stated. "I believe they had many quarrels. There was one in particular, which became generally known. The King had relied that he could make Mr. William Grenville minister, in case he was compelled to separate himself from Mr. Pitt. Mr. Pitt determined to deprive the King of this great card. He therefore [Pg 259] suggested to his Majesty that it was necessary that Mr. Grenville should be placed in the House of Lords. The King saw Mr. Pitt's object and resisted. It was said that this resistance was carried to such a length that Mr. Pitt had actually resigned, but that the Queen prevailed on the King to yield to Mr. Pitt's demand. Mr. William Grenville was removed to the House of Lords, and thus the King was deprived of the only man whom he could have named as successor to Mr. Pitt in the House of Commons."[295]

After this vain endeavour to secure his emancipation, the King remained quiescent for a long time, and indeed showered favours upon the minister. He offered him the Garter in 1790, and on the death of Lord North two years later appointed him to the (then) lucrative position of Warden of the Cinque Ports, subsequently offering £30,000 from the Privy Purse for the settlement of the minister's debts.[296] He even consented at Pitt's bidding in 1792 to dismiss Thurlow, whose insubordination was becoming a nuisance, if not a danger to the Administration. Thus Pitt was not hampered in his efforts to guide England while the French Revolution was raging, [Pg 260] and, indeed, he might have held office for life but for his desire to complete his Irish policy with a conciliatory measure for Catholic Emancipation. To any such concession George was obdurate, and Pitt's attitude caused him many sleepless nights. He asked General Garth to read aloud the coronation oath, and, when this was done, remarked in tones of great agitation: "Where is that power on earth to absolve me from the due observance of every sentence of that oath, particularly the one requiring me to 'maintain the Protestant Reformed religion'? Was not my family seated on the throne for that express purpose? And shall I be the first to suffer it to be undermined, perhaps overturned? No, I had rather beg my bread from door to door throughout Europe than consent to any such measure." In vain Lord Eldon stated that "his Majesty was not in any degree fettered by his coronation oath in giving assent to a measure which should have the previous approbation of both Houses of Parliament": the King only replied: "I can give up my crown, and retire from power. I can quit my palace, and live in a cottage. I can lay my head on a block and lose my life, but I cannot break my coronation oath."[297]

Against such obstinacy and bigotry the gods contend in vain, and, in consequence [Pg 261] of this difference of opinion, Pitt resigned on March 14, 1801. Addington succeeded him and for a while had his predecessor's support; but several of the measures of the new Administration displeased Pitt, who gradually fell into opposition, and, on Addington's resignation in May, 1804, became again Prime Minister, on condition that he did not offer office to Fox, with whom he had fought against Addington. He had, however, on the King's recovery from another mental attack, volunteered a promise not to introduce a measure for Catholic emancipation during George's lifetime.

Pitt died on January 6, 1806, and then the King had no alternative but to send for Lord Grenville. "When Pitt died, and old Nobbs sent for Grenville to make the Government," Creevey has stated, "the latter would not listen to any prejudice

against Fox, but made the Crown divide the Government between them."[298] To accept Fox was even more unpalatable than ever to George. Fox had triumphantly beaten the Court candidate at the famous Westminster election, he had sided with the Prince of Wales, had expressed himself as in sympathy with the principles, though not the excesses, of the French Revolution, and had given at a Whig club the toast of "The Sovereignty of the People of Great Britain," for which last deed, the [Pg 262] King in Council, having ordered the Council-book to be laid before him, erased the name of the Honourable Charles James Fox from the list of Privy Councillors.[299]

"At the period of Mr. Fox's return to power the King, then in full possession of his faculties, showed for several days considerable uneasiness of mind," Princess Augusta wrote. "A cloud seemed to overhang his spirits. On his return one day from London the cloud was evidently removed, and his Majesty, on entering the room where the Queen and Princess Augusta were, said he had news to tell them. 'I have taken Mr. Fox for my minister, and on the whole am satisfied with the arrangement.'" George behaved unexpectedly well, for when Fox entered the royal closet to kiss hands as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, "Mr. Fox," he said, "I little thought you and I should ever meet again in this place; but I have no desire to look back upon old grievances, and you may rest assured I shall never remind you of them." To which Fox replied dutifully: "My deeds, and not my words, shall commend me to your Majesty;" and until his death lived on amicable terms with his sovereign.

CHAPTER XXV

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LAST YEARS

The King's health was a matter of great anxiety to the royal physicians, even after his recovery in 1789, and during the hot weather of the following year their watchfulness had to be redoubled. "The present object of the doctors was to prevent the King from dozing during the day, and also to try and keep him from brooding over things too closely. The French Revolution was going on, and affairs in that country were becoming very serious. Holland, too, was unsettled, and they were very anxious that his Majesty should be called upon to do as little business as possible. The King could not be on horseback after twelve o'clock, as the heat of the sun on his head was much feared. The Queen, therefore, had three double carriages made with cane bodies, and covered in with silk or oilskin, according to the weather, and thus they were enabled to pay noon visits to the sweet country seats near at hand, and beguile the time until dinner, at four."[300] This trouble passed in due course, and it seemed as if George was in thoroughly good health, and likely to continue so [Pg 264] indefinitely. "It is impossible to describe to you how perfectly well the King is," Lord Auckland wrote to Morton Eden on December 12, 1791. "He is quite an altered man, and not what you knew him even before his illness. His manner is gentle, quiet, and, when he is pleased, quite cordial. He speaks, even of those who are opposed to his government, with complacency, and without sneer or acrimony. As long as he remains so well, the tranquillity of this country is on a rock, for the public property is great and the nation is right-minded, and the commerce and resources are increasing."[301]

Years passed without any mental trouble, but gradually events happened that preyed upon the mind of the King, who, now no longer a young man, was less able to resist them. For a long time he had been perturbed by the unhappy relations between the Prince and Princess of Wales and, when in 1801 Pitt demanded permission to introduce a measure for the emancipation of the Catholics, he brooded over the matter until his mind became again unhinged.[302] On February 15 he took a severe cold, always the first symptom of one of his attacks—but this apparently gave way to treatment. "As for my cold, it is well," he said then to Lord Chatham; "but [Pg 265] what else I have, I owe to your brother." On the 22nd inst., however, his mind wandered, and on the following day he was unconscious until evening when he exclaimed, "I am better now, but I will remain true to the Church—I will remain true to the Church,"[303] and anathematized Pitt and other ministers favourable to the obnoxious measure. He was seriously ill on March 2, but from that day grew slowly better, and on the 6th instructed Dr. Willis to write to the minister. "Tell him I am now quite well—quite recovered from my illness; but what has he not to answer for who is the cause of my having been ill at all?" It was then that Pitt, much perturbed and perplexed, told George he would never re-introduce the subject during his reign, whereupon the King exclaimed joyfully, "Now my mind will be at ease!"[304] He received in person and with much kindliness the resignation of Pitt on March 14, and handed the seals of office to Henry Addington.

The excitement attendant upon these political events caused a relapse, and George remained for some time at Kew under the care of the Willises. "I'm very, very sorry the poor King has been, and continues ill, for it has been and will be a public [Pg 266] calamity from its consequences, but exclusive of *public* ills among which the loss of

Lord Cornwallis here is *irreparable*, the private misfortunes of the royal family goes to one's heart," Lady Sarah Napier wrote from Dublin to Lady Susan O'Brien on April 20, 1801. "Great people suffer sorrow doubly; poor souls, they are not made to it, till it comes with violence, and then it drives to indifference or despair."[305] In May those who were allowed to see George inclined to the belief that he was well, but the Duke of Clarence declared that "he pitied the (royal) family, for he saw something in the King that convinced him he must soon be confined again." Still, in spite of this distressing prognostication, on May 25 Dr. Thomas Willis was able to send an assuring report to Lord Eldon: "This morning I walked with his Majesty, who was in a perfectly composed and quiet state. He told me, with great seeming satisfaction, that he had a most charming night, 'he could sleep from eleven to half after four,' when, alas! he had but three hours sleep in the night, which, upon the whole, was passed in restlessness—in getting out of bed, opening the shutters, in praying violently, and in making such remarks as betray a consciousness of his own situation, but which are evidently made for the purpose of concealing it from the Queen. He frequently called [Pg 267] out, 'I am perfectly well, and my Queen, my Queen has saved me.'"[306] However, the improvement was not sustained, for on June 12 Willis wrote in a different strain: "His Majesty still talks much of his prudence, but shows none. His body, mind, and tongue are all upon the stretch every minute; and the manner in which he is now expending money, which is so unlike him when well, all evince that he is not so right as he should be."[307] A few days later, however, the King pronounced himself well when he, who hated the Willises, father and son, dismissed from attendance Dr. Robert Willis, and, in spite of the Lord Chancellor's remonstrances, declined to reinstate the physician.

"Kew, *June 21, 1801*.

"The King would not do justice to the feelings of his heart, if he an instant delayed expressing his conviction of the attachment the Lord Chancellor bears him, of which the letter now before him is a fresh proof; but at the same time he cannot but in the strongest manner decline having Dr. Robert Willis about him. The line of practice followed with great credit by that gentleman, renders it incompatible with the King's feelings that he should—now by the goodness of Divine Providence restored to [Pg 268] reason—consult a person of that description. His Majesty is perfectly satisfied with the zeal and attention of Dr. Gisborne, in whose absence he will consult Sir Francis Milman, but cannot bear consulting any of the Willis family, though he will ever respect the character and conduct of Dr. Robert Willis. No person that ever had a nervous fever can bear to continue the physician employed on the occasion; and this holds much more so in the calamitous one that has so long confined the King, but of which he is now completely recovered.

"George R."[308]

"The subject of the Princess of Wales is still in the King's mind, to a degree that is distressing, from the unfortunate situation of the family," Princess Elizabeth wrote to Dr. Thomas Willis during the illness of her father, who was no sooner able to go out than he visited his persecuted daughter-in-law. "The first time he rode out after his illness he rode over Westminster Bridge to Blackheath, never telling any one where he was going till he turned up to the Princess's door. She was not up, but jumped out of bed, and went to receive him in her bed-gown and night-cap. He told Lord Uxbridge that the Princess had run in his head during his illness perpetually, and he had made a resolution to go and see her the first time he went out, without telling [Pg 269] anybody."[309] After this visit George went to Weymouth, returning to London on October 29 to open Parliament in person, after which he settled down at Windsor, where at the end of November Lord Malmesbury visited him. "I was with the King nearly two hours. I had not seen him since the end of October, 1800—of course not since his last illness. He appeared rather more of an old man, but not older than men of his age commonly appear. He stoops rather more, and was apparently less firm on his legs; but he did not look thinner, nor were there any marks of sickness or decline in his countenance or manner. These last were much as usual—somewhat less hurried and more conversable; that is to say, allowing the person to whom he addressed himself more time to answer and talk than he used to do when discussing on common subjects, on public or grave ones." [310]

This illness aged him considerably, and though henceforth he lived very quietly and almost entirely secluded at Windsor, "his health, both as regards his bodily ailments, and the state of his mind, became daily more and more unsatisfactory." [310] Indeed, it is a moot point if he was ever for any length of time quite well after this year, and [Pg 270] even during the periods when he was free from a suspicion of his malady, the fear of its recurrence undoubtedly influenced his whole life. It was not until 1804, however, that he was again seriously ill, and then the attack was probably precipitated by his furious indignation at the publication of some of his letters by the Prince of Wales, though this fact was, of course, suppressed in the physician's report.[311] "The fact is I believe, as I have always done, that the regal function will never more be exercised by him," Creevey wrote on April 2: and on May 2 stated, "I feel certain he is devilish bad."[312] A regency was again in sight, but to the general surprise George recovered, and early in May was able to drive through the streets by the side of the

Queen, but after this, as General Harcourt told Lord Malmesbury, he was "in looks, manners, conduct, and conversation, quite different from what he had been before his illness."[313]

"Mrs. Harcourt confirms all that Lady Uxbridge had told me; that the King was apparently quite well when speaking to his ministers, or those who kept him a little in awe; but that towards his family and dependents his language was incoherent and [Pg 271] harsh; quite unlike his usual character. She said that Dr. Symonds did not possess in any degree the talents required to lead the mind from wandering to steadiness; that in the King's two former illnesses, this had been most ably managed by the Willises, who had this faculty in a wonderful degree, and were men of the world, who saw ministers, and knew what the King ought to do; that the not suffering them to be called in was an unpardonable proof of folly (not to say worse) in Addington; and that now it was impossible, since the King's aversion was rooted; that Pitt judged ill in leaving the sole disposal of the Household to the King; that this sort of power in his present weak (and, of course, suspicious) state of mind had been exercised by him most improperly; he had dismissed, and turned away, and made capricious changes everywhere, from the Lord Chamberlain to the groom and footman; he had turned away the Queen's favourite coachman; made footmen grooms, and *vice versâ*, and what was still worse, because more notorious, had removed Lords of the Bedchamber without a shadow of reason; that all this afflicted the royal family without measure; that the Queen was ill and cross; the Princesses low, depressed, and quite sinking under it; and that unless means could be found to place some very strong-minded and temperate persons about the King, he would either commit some extravagance, [Pg 272] or he would, by violent carelessness and exercise, injure his health, and bring on a deadly illness."[314]

Though the King was now suffering from an increasing deafness and a defective sight, he was better towards the end of 1805 than he had been for years. According to Lord Henley he was quite cheerful, and troubled only by his blindness. "He talked to me, indeed, in an affecting manner, of his situation, saying that he had tried this morning, but in vain, to read the docket of one of the despatches, but is convinced that he perceives an amendment, and that even with the left eye he can perceive the light.[315] Lady Henley says that he presented the muffins to the ladies last night in his old jocose and good-humoured manner.[316]

"Our Sovereign's sight is so much improved since last spring, that he can now clearly distinguish objects at an extent of twenty yards. The King, in consequence of [Pg 273] this favourable change, has discontinued the use of the large flapped hat which he usually wore, and likewise the silk shade. His Majesty's mode of living is now not quite so abstemious. He now sleeps on the north side of the Castle, next to the Terrace, in a roomy apartment, not carpeted, on the ground floor. The room is neatly furnished, partly in a modern style, under the tasteful direction of the Princess Elizabeth. The King's private dining-room and the apartments *en suite*, appropriated to his Majesty's use, are all on the same side of the Castle.

"The Queen and the Princesses occupy the eastern wing. When the King rises, which is generally about half-past seven o'clock, he proceeds immediately to the Queen's saloon, where his Majesty is met by one of the Princesses; generally either Augusta, Sophia or Amelia; for each in turn attend their revered parent. From thence the sovereign and his daughter, attended by the lady-in-waiting, proceed to the Chapel in the Castle, wherein Divine service is performed by the Dean or Sub-Dean: the ceremony occupies about an hour. Thus the time passes until nine o'clock, when the King, instead of proceeding to his own apartment, and breakfasting alone, now takes that meal with the Queen and the five Princesses. The table is always set out in the Queen's noble breakfasting-room, which has been recently decorated with very [Pg 274] elegant modern hangings; and, since the late improvements by Mr. Wyatt, commands a most delightful and extensive prospect of the Little Park. The breakfast does not occupy half-an-hour. The King and Queen sit at the head of the table, and the Princesses according to seniority. Etiquette in every other respect is strictly adhered to. On entering the room, the usual forms are observed, agreeably to rank.

"After breakfast, the King generally rides out on horseback, attended by his equerries, three of the Princesses, namely, Augusta, Sophia, Amelia, are usually of the party. Instead of only walking his horse, his Majesty now proceeds at a good round trot. When the weather is unfavourable, the King retires to his favourite sitting-room, and sends for Generals Fitzroy or Manners to play at chess with him. His Majesty, who knows the game well, is highly pleased when he beats the former, that gentleman being an excellent player.

"The King dines regularly at two o'clock; the Queen and Princesses at four. His Majesty visits, or takes a glass of wine and water with them at five. After this period, public business is frequently transacted by the King in his own study, wherein he is attended by his private secretary, Colonel Taylor. The evening is, as usual, passed at [Pg 275] cards in the Queen's drawing-room, where three tables are set out. To these parties many of the principal nobility, etc., residing in the neighbourhood are invited. When the Castle clock strikes ten, the visitors retire. The supper is set out, but that is merely a matter of form, and of which none of the family partake. These illustrious

personages retire at eleven o'clock, to rest for the night. The journal of one day is the history of a whole year."[317]

Slowly but surely his sight gave way, and in the winter of 1806 he was nearly blind. Pitt noted "a great change of handwriting ... it has grown much larger, and the characters are very indistinct and ill-formed;"[318] and in 1810 Lady Jerningham wrote, "John Bedingfield has shewn to me the poor King's signature, and it would be impossible to read in it *George Rex* if the paper did not announce it had that official signature."[319] George bore the affliction bravely. "I am quite resigned," he said, "for what have we in this world to do, but to suffer and perform the will of the Almighty."[320] Soon he could ride only when the horse was led by a servant; while on foot he had to grope his way with a stick. In spite of his determination to bear his ills with fortitude he grew morbid, frequently asked to hear Handel's "Total Eclipse," and one day was overheard by the Queen to quote Milton's lines on his blindness:[321]

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"O! loss of sight, of thee I most complain!

* * * * *

O, dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
Without all hope of day!
O, first created Beam, and thou great Word,
'Let there be light, and light was over all';
Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?"

In 1810 the King was greatly worried by the failure of the Walcheren expedition, and the notorious "Duke and Darling" scandal that brought disgrace upon the Duke of York and resulted in his resignation of the office of Commander-in-Chief. On October 24 he was very unwell, and at the Drawing-room on the next day every one noticed his excited manner. On the 29th the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor visited him at Windsor, where they came to the conclusion that he was not in a fit state to discharge his kingly duties, and orders were given that only physicians and medical attendants should have access to the royal apartments. Then came the crowning blow in the form of the death of his youngest and favourite daughter, Amelia, on November 2. She was deeply attached to him, and placed on his finger a ring, containing a lock of her hair, enclosed under a crystal tablet and inscribed "Remember me." Even that inveterate opponent of royalty, "Peter Pindar," was touched, and commemorated the event in some of the worst lines he ever wrote.

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"With all the virtues blent, and every grace,
To charm the world and dignify her race,
Life's taper losing fail its feeble fire,
The fair Amelia, thus bespoke her sire:
    Faint on the bed of sickness lying,
    My spirit from its mansion flying,
Not long the light these languid eyes will see:
    My friend, my father, and my King,
    O, wear a daughter's mournful ring,
Receive the token, and 'Remember me.'"

On November 7, Sir Henry Halford, Dr. Reynolds and Dr. Baillie were called in, and, with the approval of the Queen, in spite of his Majesty's known wish, Dr. Willis was sent for. Prayers were publicly offered for his recovery, and though once or twice he was a little better, there was little or no hope of permanent improvement and on December 21 Perceval introduced a Regency Bill, which became law on February 4, 1811.

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Hitherto all the attacks had been of short duration, none of them continuing much beyond six months, but when deprived of his reason in 1810, he was never again in a fit state to be entrusted with the cares of sovereignty. He had made his last appearance at a social function at Windsor on the anniversary of his accession in 1810, haggard, infirm, nearly blind and almost deaf, leaning on the arm of the Queen, and speaking in the hurried, almost unintelligible manner that was an invariable sign of a forthcoming illness. On May 20, 1811, he was seen for the last time by any one outside his immediate family and *entourage*. "On Sunday night, May 20, our town was in a fever of excitement at the authorized report that the next day the physicians would allow his Majesty to appear in public," an inhabitant of Windsor wrote. "On that Monday morning it was said that his saddle-horse was to be got ready. This truly was no wild rumour. We crowded to the park and the castle-yard. The favourite horse was there. The venerable man, blind but steady, was soon in the saddle, as I had often seen him, a hobby groom at his side with a leading rein. He rode through the Little Park to the Great Park. The bells rang. The troops fired a *feu de joie*. The King returned to the Castle within an hour. He was never again seen without those walls."[322]

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It was thought that the King could not long survive. "The general opinion is that the King will die before the 22nd inst., (the date to which Parliament was prorogued),"[323] Creevey wrote on July 12; and a fortnight later Lord Grenville expressed the same opinion when writing to Lord Auckland: "It is, I believe, certainly

true that the King has taken for the last three days scarcely any food at all, and that, unless a change takes place very shortly in that respect, he cannot survive many days."[324] Lord Buckinghamshire, however, was able to state on August 13, "The King, I should suppose, is not likely to die soon, but I fear his mental recovery is hardly to be expected."[325]

According to Mrs. Papendiek, who obtained her information from "private sources," the King's malady was caused more by a loss of mental power than an aberration of intellect, and it never assumed a condition of actual insanity.[326] There was some hope in February 1811 that the King would recover, and some members of the Council were actually of opinion that at this time he was in full possession of his [Pg 280] faculties, so calmly and sensibly had he spoken on various topics, and they were prepared to pronounce him restored and able to resume his power, Lord Ellenborough using the words of Pilate, "I find no fault at all in that just person." To this opinion Sir Henry Halford could not subscribe, for, knowing the cunning of mad persons, he was aware that often only the greatest vigilance could detect the existence of the delusions from which the patient suffered.

"One day when the King fancied himself surrounded by servants only, and when a medical attendant was watching unseen, he took a glass of wine and water and drank it to the health *conjugia meæ dilectissimæ Elizabethæ*, meaning Lady Pembroke. Here was a delusion clearly established and noted down immediately: the use of Latin, which was not to be understood by those whom he supposed *only* to hear him, affording a singular proof of the old cunning of insanity. A few days later, Sir Henry was walking with him on the Terrace; he began talking of the Lutheran religion, of its superiority to that of the Church of England, and ended with growing so vehement that he really ranted forth its praises without mentioning that which Sir Henry [Pg 281] believes to have been the real motive of this preference—the left-handed marriages allowed. He was very anxious to see whether traces of this delusion would appear again, and went to the Duke of York to ask for information as to the tenets, practices, etc., etc., of the Lutheran Church. The Duke said, "Watch him in Passion Week; if he fancies himself a Lutheran, you will see an extraordinary degree of mortification and mourning," etc., etc. When Sir Henry returned to the assembled physicians he wrote down the substance of this conversation, and without communicating it to anybody, requested those present to seal the paper and keep it in a chest where their notes and other papers of importance are kept, under locks of which each had a separate key. When the Monday in Passion Week arrived, and Sir Henry had nearly forgotten the conversation, he went into the King's dressing-room while he was at his toilet, and found the attendants in amazement at his having called for and put on black stockings, black waistcoat and breeches, and a grey coat with black buttons. It was curious to hear that his delusions assumed, like those of other madmen, the character of pride, and that a Sovereign ever fancied himself in a station more elevated than his own. He would sometimes fancy himself possessed of a supernatural power, and when angry with any of his keepers, stamp his foot and say [Pg 282] he would send them down into hell."[327]

It was during the lucid interval to which reference has just been made that Sir Henry Halford was deputed to broach an awkward subject to the King. George had known of the death of Princess Amelia, and every day his attendants dreaded lest he should ask questions as to her property and her will. There had been a close intimacy between the Princess and General Fitzroy—there was the rumour of a secret marriage—and the trouble was that she had left everything to him. The Queen was afraid to mention this to the King, and Perceval and the Lord Chancellor successively undertook the disclosure and shrunk from it, imposing it upon Sir Henry. "Never," said the latter subsequently, "could I forget the feelings with which, having requested some private conversation with the King, after the other physicians were gone, I was called into a window with the light falling so full on my countenance that even the poor nearly blind King could see it. I asked whether it would be agreeable to him to hear now how Princess Amelia had disposed of her little property. "Certainly, certainly, I want to know," with great eagerness. I reminded him at the beginning of his illness he had appointed Fitzroy to ride with her at Weymouth; how [Pg 283] it was natural and proper she should leave him some token for these services; that, excepting jewels, she had nothing to leave, and had bequeathed them all to him; that the Prince of Wales, thinking jewels a very inappropriate bequest for a man, had given Fitzroy a pecuniary compensation for them (his family, by the bye, always said it was very inadequate) and had distributed slight tokens to all the attendants and friends of the Princess, giving the bulk of the jewels to Princess Mary, her most constant and kindest of nurses. Upon this the poor King exclaimed, "Quite right, just like the Prince of Wales," and no more was said."[328]

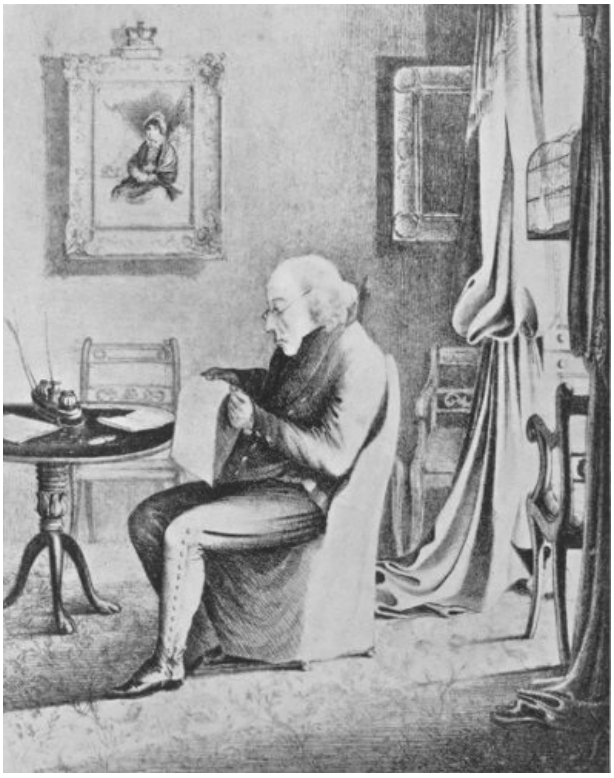
It was in the summer of 1814 that the Queen entered the King's apartment during one of these lucid intervals, and found him singing a hymn and accompanying himself on the harpsichord. When he had concluded, he knelt down and prayed aloud for his consort, for his family, for the nation, and, lastly, for himself, that it might please God to avert his heavy calamity, or, if not, give him resignation under it. Then his emotions overpowered him, he burst into tears, and his reason fled. He was never again sane.[329]

"The public bulletins which have been issued for some months past, have all stated [Pg 284] that his Majesty's disorder remains undiminished; and we understand that it is the opinion of the medical gentlemen attending him that nothing far short of a miracle can bring about a recovery from his afflicting malady, "so runs a contemporary account. "At times, we are happy to learn, he is tolerably composed. The number of persons specially appointed by the doctors is reduced from six to two, and his principal pages are admitted, and have been for some time, to attend upon him, as when he enjoyed good health. His Majesty dines at half past one o'clock, and, in general, orders his dinners: he invariably has roast beef upon the tables on Sundays. He dresses for dinner, wears his orders, etc.

"He occupies a suite of thirteen rooms (at least, he and his attendants) which are situated on the North side of Windsor Castle, under the State rooms. Five of the thirteen rooms are wholly devoted to the personal use of the King. Dr. John Willis sleeps in the sixth room, adjoining, to be in readiness to attend his Majesty. Dr. John attends the Queen every morning after breakfast, and about half-past ten o'clock, and reports to her the state of the afflicted monarch; the Doctor, afterwards, proceeds to the Princesses, and other branches of the Royal family, who may happen [Pg 285] to be at Windsor, and makes a similar report to them. In general the Queen returns with Dr. Willis, through the state rooms, down a private staircase, leading into the King's suite of rooms, appropriated to this special purpose. Sometimes she converses with her Royal husband. The Queen is the only person who is admitted to this peculiar privilege, except the medical gentleman, and his Majesty's personal attendants. In the case of Dr. John Willis's absence, Dr. Robert Willis, his brother, takes his place. The other medical gentlemen take it in rotation to be in close attendance upon the King.

"The suite of rooms which his Majesty and his attendants occupy, have the advantage of very pure and excellent air, being on the North side of the terrace round the Castle; and he used to occasionally walk on the terrace; but, we understand, he now declines, owing to the bad state of his eyes, not being able to enjoy the view. The Lords and Grooms of the King's Bedchamber, his Equerries and other attendants are occasionally in attendance at Windsor Castle, the same as if the King enjoyed good health. Two King's Messengers go from the Secretary of State's offices daily to Windsor, and return to London, as they have been accustomed to do for a number of years past. The messenger who arrives at noon brings a daily [Pg 286] account of the King's health to the Prince Regent, and the Members of the Queen's Council. His Majesty has never been left since his afflicting malady, without one of the Royal Family being in the Castle, and a member of the Queen's council, appointed under the Regency Act."[330]

During his last years George III was subject to harmless and not unpleasing delusions. "The good King's mania consists in pleasant errors of the mind,"[331] said Lady Jerningham; and this statement was confirmed by Princess Elizabeth: "If anything can make us more easy under the calamity which it has pleased God to inflict on us, it is the apparent happiness that my revered father seems to feel."[332] He found much comfort in religion, and on one occasion declared, "Although I am deprived of my sight, and am shut out from the society of my beloved family, yet I can approach my Blessed Lord," and thereupon administered to himself the Sacrament.[333] Indeed, he was unhappy only when he could not have his favourite dinner of cold mutton and salad, plover's eggs, stewed peas, and cherry tart; and fearful—he who in his senses had never known fear—only when it was proposed to [Pg 287] shave his beard. "If it must be," he said, "I will have the battle axes called in."[334]



GEORGE III IN HIS STUDY

The King loved to wander through the corridors, a venerable figure with long silvery beard, attired in a silk morning gown and ermine night cap, holding imaginary conversations with ministers long since dead, "rationally as to the discourse, but the persons supposed present"; and so pleasantly did he while away the time that sometimes his dinner was ready before he expected it. "Can it be so late?" he would ask. "*Quand on s'amuse le temps vole.*"[335] He was fully convinced that Princess Amelia—"my poor Am"—was alive and happy at Hanover, enjoying perennial youth and beauty; and believed that he was prosecuting an amorous intrigue with Lady Pembroke, whom he often believed to be his wife, and whose absence angered him. "Is it not a strange thing, Adolphus," he said to the Duke of Cambridge, "that they still refuse to let me go to Lady Pembroke, although every one knows I am married to her; but what is worse, that infamous scoundrel Halford was at the marriage, and has now the effrontery to deny it to my face."[336] He considers himself no longer an [Pg 288] inhabitant of this world, and often, when he had played one of his favourite tunes, observes that he was very fond of it when he was in the world. He speaks of the Queen and all his family, and hopes they are doing well now, for he loved them very much when he was with them," Princess Elizabeth remarks, and the belief that he was dead was one of his regular delusions. "I must have a new suit of clothes, he said one day, "and I will have them black in memory of George the Third, for he was a good man."[337]

The King lived on, recognizing no one, and knowing nothing of contemporary events. Waterloo was fought and won, and Napoleon overthrown; Princess Charlotte of Wales married and died, his consort went down to her grave, and his sons and daughters contracted matrimonial alliances, yet he lived on. Indeed, his constitution was so sound that, in spite of all infirmities, his physical health continued good. "In 1818, however, he had ceased even to walk, being conveyed in his chair from his bed to another room, and placed near an old harpsichord of Queen Anne's, said not to have been tuned since her time. On this he would play for hours, in the belief that he [Pg 289] was making music."[338]

From a portrait by H. Eldridge

QUEEN CHARLOTTE

Queen Charlotte had been ailing for a long time. "The severe affliction and constant anxiety she was in was probably the cause, and from this time (1789) her Majesty's health was less uniformly good," wrote Mrs. Papendiek. "The dropsy, which had been floating in her constitution since the birth of Prince Alfred, now made its deposit, and caused her at times much suffering." She had been much upset by the King's various outbreaks of violence in 1804, and was, indeed, so alarmed that thereafter she saw little of him. "The Queen lives upon ill terms with the King. They never sleep or dine together; she persists in living entirely separate," wrote Lord Colchester; and Lord Malmesbury recorded: "The Queen will never receive the King without one of the Princesses being present; never says in reply a word. Piques herself on this discreet silence, and when in London, locks the door of her white-room—her boudoir—against him." On April 23, 1817, she was seized with a severe spasmodic attack, but with indomitable endurance she continued to hold Drawing-rooms and was present at the royal weddings that took place during the year. She was anxious to be taken to Windsor, but the step was long delayed, and she never got further than Kew, where she died after a lingering and painful illness, on November 16, 1818.

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In that year Byron wrote, "the poor good King may live to 200; he continues in good bodily health, and is perfectly happy, conversing with the dead, and sometimes relating pleasant things. They say it is a most charming illusion."[339]

Early in January, 1820, it became known that the old King was unwell, and though a reassuring bulletin was issued—"His Majesty's disorder has undergone no sensible alteration. His Majesty's bodily health has partaken some of the infirmities of age, but has been generally good during the last month"—it was still believed that he would not recover. He could not get warm, his food did not nourish him, and his frame grew more and more emaciated; but it was not until January 27, when for the first time he kept his bed, that the physicians pronounced his life in danger. Two days later death claimed him. "A few minutes before this venerable monarch expired, he extended his arms, and bade his attendants raise him up—the doctors signified to his attendants not to do so, in the supposition that the effort would extinguish life,—but upon his repeating the request, they obeyed, and he thanked them. His lips were parched, and occasionally wetted with a sponge. He, with perfect presence of mind, said: 'Do not wet my lips but when I open my mouth.' And when done he added, thank you, it does me good.'"[340]

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So on January 29, 1820, died George III in the sixtieth year of his reign, and at the patriarchal age of eighty-one, unhonoured and unsung, the monarch of the greatest country that the world has yet seen, yet unenvied by the lowest of his subjects. "What preacher need moralize on this story; what words save the simplest are requisite to tell it? It is too terrible for tears." So runs Thackeray's exquisite passage on the downfall of George III, with which this work may fittingly conclude. "The thought of such misery smites me down in submission before the Ruler of kings and men, the Monarch supreme over empires and republics, the inscrutable Dispenser of Life, death, happiness, victory.... Low he lies, to whom the proudest used to kneel once,

and who was cast lower than the poorest: dead, whom millions prayed for in vain. Driven off his throne, buffeted by rude hands; with his children in revolt; the darling of his old age killed before him untimely; our Lear hangs over her breathless lips and cries, 'Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little!'

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'Vex not his ghost—Oh! let him pass—he hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer!'

Hush! Strife and Quarrel, over the solemn grave! Sound, trumpets, a mournful march! Fall, dark curtain, upon his pageant, his pride, his grief, his awful tragedy!"

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INDEX

ERRATA

Vol. I, p. 223, line 8: *for* Quirk *read* Quick.

Vol. II, p. 275, line 17: *for* Bedingsfield *read* Bedingfield.

Vol. II, p. 278, line 1:} " ", p. 282, line 14:} *for* Percival *read* Perceval.

THE END

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FOOTNOTES:

[1] *Political History of England, vol. X, 1760-1801.*

[2] Coxe: *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*.

[3] "The idea to tax the colonies seems to have been the King's, and it is said that Grenville believed that even the attempt must have alarming consequences." Galt: *George III, his Court and Family*.

[4] *Recollections and Reflections.*

[5] The King's Speech at the prorogation of Parliament on April 19, 1764, contained a reference to the measures respecting America. "The wise regulations which have been established to augment the public revenues, to unite the interests of the most distant possessions of my crown, and to encourage and secure their commerce with Great Britain, call for my hearty approbation."

[6] Henry Seymour Conway (1721-1795), lieutenant-general 1759, general 1772, field-marshal 1793.

[7] Colonel Isaac Barré (1726-1802).

[8] Horace Walpole: *Memoirs of George III.*

[9] *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox.*

[10] *Walpoliana.*

"Lord Sussex told Sir Denis le Marchant that one of the Under-Secretaries of that day said to him, 'Mr. Grenville lost America because he read the American despatches, which his predecessors had never done;' and so complete a sinecure was the Board of Trade then considered, that a Colonel Bladen, one of the commissioners, happening to apply himself to the duties of his office, the Colonel went by the name of 'Trade,' while his colleagues were called 'The Board.'"—Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[11] Phillimore: *Life of Lyttelton*.

[12] William Hunt: *Political History of England, 1760-1801*.

[13] Petitions from Provincial Assemblies were ignored by ministers at home, and even memorials from such important states as Massachusetts and New York, ordered by the King in Council to be laid before Parliament, were suppressed.

[14] *Speech during the Debate on the Address, January 14, 1766.*

[15] Anstey: *The New Bath Guide*.

[16] Adolphus: *History of England*.

[17] Almon: *Collection of Papers*.

[18] Stedman: *History of the American War*; Andrews: *History of the American War*.

[19] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[20] Thomas Nuthall, died 1775, appointed by Rockingham Solicitor to the Treasury, 1765.

[21] In this debate Edmund Burke, who was at the time Secretary to the Prime Minister, made his first speech, upon which he was congratulated by Pitt, who said, "It was seasonable, reasonable, and eloquent." Through it he first sprang into fame, but when some one expressed surprise at this sudden elevation, Dr. Johnson, who knew Burke and of course had read "The Vindication of Natural Society" and "On the Sublime and Beautiful," exclaimed, "Sir, there is no wonder at all. We, who know Mr. Burke, know that he will be one of the first men in the country."

[22] *Essay on William Pitt, Earl of Chatham.*

[23] "The events of yesterday in the House of Commons have shown the amazing power and influence which Mr. Pitt has whenever he takes part in debate."—Lord Rockingham to the King.

[24] *Life of Lord Camden.*

[25] *Chatham Correspondence.*

"My position is this. I repeat it. I will maintain it to my latest hour. Taxation and representation are inseparable. This position is founded on the laws of nature. It is more. It is an eternal law of nature; for whatever is a man's own is absolutely his own. No man has a right to take it from him without his consent, either expressed by himself or his representatives. Whoever attempts to do so attempts an injury. Whoever does it commits a robbery. He throws down and destroys the distinction between liberty and slavery."—Lord Camden in the House of Lords, February 24, 1766.

[26] *Grenville Papers.*

[27] "Lord Northumberland's son, Lord Warkworth, having married Lord Bute's daughter, was admitted to the King's private junto, which met daily at this time at Mr. Stow's. It consisted of Lord Bute, Lord Northumberland, Lord Mansfield, Sir Fletcher Norton, Mr. Stow, and Mr. Stow's brother, the Primate of Ireland."—*Rockingham Memoirs, 1765.*

[28] See *supra*, vol. ii, pp. 41-2.

[29] *Memoirs of George III.*

[30] For a full investigation of this question, see Jesse: *Memoirs of George III.* (Second edition, 1867; vol. I, p. 360 *et supra*.)

[31] *Last Journals.*

[32] *Historical Sketches of Statesmen.*

[33] *George III, his Court and Family.*

[34] Walpole: *Memoirs of George III.*

[35] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[36] "I don't pretend to be like Henry Conway, who walks up to the mouth of a cannon with as much coolness and grace as if he was going to dance a minuet."—George Stanhope.

[37] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[38] *Chatham Correspondence.*

[39] Dr. Hunt believes that the "over-ruling influence" Pitt thought he detected was that of the Duke of Newcastle.

[40] *Recollections and Reflections.*

[41] Lord Hardwicke: *Memorial.*

[42] "Lord Rockingham afterwards declared that he had never enjoyed such distinguished marks of the royal kindness as during a period when the influence of Great Britain was paralysed; every foreign capital had the knowledge that the existing Prime Minister would not remain in office ten minutes after a successor could be found for him."—Trevelyan: *Early Life of Fox.*

[43] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] *Bedford Correspondence.*

[46] Basil Fielding, sixth Earl of Denbigh.

[47] Walpole: *Memoirs of George III.*

[48] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[49] Walpole: *Memoirs of George III.*

[50] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[51] Walpole: *Memoirs of George III.*

[52] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[53] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*; Walpole: *Memoirs of George III*; etc. "The King complained that Lord Rockingham had taxed him with breach of his word."—Walpole: *Memoirs of George*

III.

[54] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[55] *Memoirs of George III.*

[56] *A Short Account of a late Short Administration.*

[57] *Chatham Correspondence.*

[58] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[59] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[60] *Ibid.*

[61] *Memoirs of the Reign of George III.*

[62] Thackeray: *Life of Chatham.*

[63] "Lord Chatham found it necessary to gain new friends, and enfeeble his opponents; but his endeavours failed. The harsh manner in which he dismissed Lord Edgcumbe from the appointment of Treasurer of the Household, with a view to gratify the Duke of Newcastle by bestowing it on Sir John Shelley, the Duke's near relation, disgusted many respectable members of Administration. The Duke of Portland, the Earls of Bessborough and Scarborough, and Lord Monson, withdrew their support; and Sir Charles Saunders, Sir William Meredith and Admiral Keppel, resigned their places at the Board of Admiralty."—Adolphus: *History of England, November, 1766.*

Overtures were made to the "Bloomsbury Gang," but without any real effectual result, for, though one or two of the minor members joined the Government, the Duke of Bedford held aloof.

[64] Trevelyan: *The Early Life of C. J. Fox.*

[65] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[66] Afterwards fourth Duke of Queensbury.

[67] Alexander Montgomerie, tenth Earl of Eglington.

[68] In the farce of "Padlock," Don Lorenzo asks his black servant Mungo, "Can you be honest?" to which Mungo replies, "What you give me, Massa?" Barré, who was present, promptly nicknamed Jeremiah Dyson "Mungo," and by this designation he was henceforth known.

[69] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

[70] Burns: *A Dream.*

[71] *Chatham Correspondence.*

[72] Mary Berry: *Journals.*

[73] *Chatham Correspondence.*

[74] *Chatham Correspondence.*

[75] *Memoirs of George III.*

[76] Phillimore: *Life of Lyttelton.*

[77] *Chatham Correspondence.*

[78] "I think I have a right to *insist* on your remaining in my service; for I with pleasure look forward to the time of your recovery, when I may have your assistance in resisting the torrent of factions this country so much labours under."—George III to Lord Chatham.

[79] *Memoirs of George III.*

[80] Nancy Parsons subsequently married Lord Maynard, an event duly chronicled by an anonymous pamphleteer in "A Letter to a Celebrated Young Nobleman on His Late Nuptials," 1777. "I will not on this occasion pay your Lordship so bad a compliment as to enumerate Lady Maynard's charms; all the world knows them as well as yourself; her virtues you alone are acquainted with."

[81] His first wife having divorced him, he married a daughter of the Rev. Richard Wriothesley.

[82] Nicholls: *Recollections, Personal and Political.*

[83] "The account of the Cabinet Council being put off—first for a match at Newmarket, and secondly because the Duke of Grafton had company in his house—exhibits a lively picture of the present administration."—George Grenville to Whately, October 20, 1767.

[84] Letter signed "Philo-Junius," June 22, 1769.

[85] "At length the clouds which had gathered over his mind broke and passed away. His gout returned, and freed him from a more cruel malady. His nerves were newly braced. His spirits became buoyant. He woke as from a sickly dream. It was a strange recovery. Men had been in the habit of talking of him as of one dead, and, when he first showed himself at the King's *levée*, started as if they had seen a ghost. It was more than two years

and a half since he had appeared in public."—Macaulay: *The Earl of Chatham*.

[86] See *ante* vol. I, pp. 266-7.

[87] *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times.*

[88] "We have independent mobs that have nothing to do with Wilkes, and who only take advantage of so favourable a season. The dearness of provisions incites—the hope of increase of wages allures—and drink puts them in motion. The coal-heavers began; and it is well it is not a hard frost, for they have stopped all coals coming to town. The sawyers rose, too, and at last the sailors, who have committed great outrages in merchant-ships and prevented their sailing."—Horace Walpole, May, 1768.

[89] Lord Camden was a poor man, and would have been much inconvenienced by his dismissal, had not Chatham earlier secured to him a pension of £1,500.

[90] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[91] Trevelyan: *Early Life of C. J. Fox*.

[92] Frederick, Lord North (1732-1792), succeeded his father as second Earl of Guilford in 1790. He is, however, better known as Lord North.

[93] "As Lord Bute gradually retired into the shade of private life, and became insensibly forgotten, Mr. Jenkinson proportionately came forward in his own person, and on his own proper merits. Throughout the whole period of Lord North's administration from 1770 down to 1782, his intercourse with the King, and even his influence over the royal mind, were assumed to be constant, progressive, commensurate with, and sometimes paramount to, or subversive of, the measures proposed by the First Minister. However difficult of proof such assertions were, and however contrary, as I believe, they were to truth or fact, they did not operate the less forcibly on the bulk of the nation, and were not less eagerly credited by men of all parties. No denials on the part of persons in power could erase the impression, which newspapers and pamphlets industriously circulated throughout the kingdom."—Wraxall: Historical Memoirs of My Own Times.

[94] *Memoirs of George III.*

[95] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[96] *Letter to a Noble Lord.*

[97] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[98] *Ibid.*

[99] Thackeray: *The Four Georges*.

[100] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[101] On February 15, 1802, Addington delivered a message to the Commons from the King. "His Majesty feels great concern in acquainting the House of Commons that the provision made by Parliament for defraying the expenses of his household, and civil government, has been found inadequate to their support. A considerable debt has, in consequence, been unavoidably incurred, an account of which he has ordered to be laid before this House. His Majesty relies with confidence on the zeal and affection of his faithful Commons, that they will take the same into their early consideration, and adopt such measures as the circumstances may appear to them to require." The amount required was in round figures £1,000,000, and the reasons alleged for the deficit were the dearness of provisions, the expenses caused by the younger princes and princesses who were growing up, the marriage of the Prince of Wales, and the support of Princess Charlotte of Wales.

[102] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[103] *Ibid.*

[104] *Ibid.*

[105] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[106] *Ibid.*

[107] *Memoirs of Lord Waldegrave.*

[108] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[109] *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times.*

[110] *Memoirs of George III.*

[111] *Historical Sketches of Statesmen.*

[112] *Historical Sketches of Statesmen.*

[113] *Ibid.*

[114] Byron: *The Vision of Judgment*.

[115] Byron: *The Vision of Judgment*.

[116] *Ibid.*

[117] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[118] Harry Powlett, sixth Duke of Bolton—the "Captain Whiffle" of *Roderick Random*.

[119] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[120] Lady Sarah Lennox: *Life and Letters*.

[121] Lady Sarah Lennox: *Life and Letters*.

[122] Walpole: *Memoirs of George III*.

[123] *Ibid.*

[124] Charlotte, Countess of Essex.

[125] Wife of Charles, third Duke of Richmond.

[126] Wife of Sir William Stanhope.

[127] *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times*. "Her husband, the Earl of Tyrconnel, might be said to contribute about this time more than any nobleman about the court to the recreation of the reigning family, for, while his wife formed the object of the homage of one prince of the blood, his sister, had long presided in the affections of another. Lady Almeria Carpenter, one of the most beautiful women of her time, but to whom Nature had been sparing of intellectual gifts, was the person that attracted the Duke of Gloucester, who soon forgot all he had gone through for his wife."

[128] *Letters of Lady Jane Coke.*

[129] Walpole: *Memoirs of George III*.

[130] *Early Life of C. J. Fox.*

[131] Walpole: *Memoirs of George III*.

[132] "The Duke of Gloucester has professed a passion for the Dowager Waldegrave. He is never from her elbow. This flatters Harry Walpole not a little, though he pretends to dislike it."—Gilly Williams to George Selwyn, December, 1764.

[133] *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox.*

[134] For years there was a rumour that the Duke of Cumberland had married Olive Wilmot in 1767, and Miss Wilmot's daughter (afterwards Mrs. Serres) called herself Princess Olive of Cumberland. An attempt to prove the authenticity of the alleged marriage was brought before the courts in 1866 by Mrs. Ryves, a daughter of "Princess Olive," but the documents shown in support of the claim were proved to be spurious, and it was dismissed. However, according to Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, the Duke of Kent thought there was "something" in Mrs. Serres's story, "and tried to get some attention paid to her claims. Not having any money of his own, he was said to have asked Robert Owen to make her some advances, whilst he guaranteed." (*The Family of George III.*) A probable solution is that Olive Wilmot was the Duke s mistress.

[135] Lady Anne Luttrell, daughter of Simon, Earl of Carhampton, and wife of Christopher Horton, of Catton Hall, Derby.

An amusing story is told *à propos* of Lord Carhampton and the Prince Regent. The Earl was seriously ill in 1812, and the rumour came to Carlton House that he was dead, whereupon the Prince, without waiting to authenticate the news, immediately gave away the colonelcy of the regiment of carabineers which Lord Carhampton held. The report reached the sick man, who instantly sent a friend to Pall Mall to tell his Royal Highness that he hoped to recover, and therefore begged him to dispose of any other regiment in the service except the carabineers. His Royal Highness might rest assured, the Earl added, that he would give special directions to his attendants not to lose a moment, after it was ascertained that he was *really dead*, in conveying the news to Carlton House.

[136] *Memoirs of George III.*

[137] Percy Fitzgerald: *The Family of George III*.

[138] Trevelyan: *Early Life of Charles James Fox*.

[139] *Chatham Correspondence.*

[140] *Recollections and Reflections.*

[141] *Correspondence between George III and Lord North.*

[142] "Peregrine the Elder": *An Heroic Epistle to an Unfortunate Monarch*. 1778.

Other squibs will be found in the present writer's *The First Gentleman of Europe*, where the text of the Royal Marriage Act is given, *à propos* of the union of the Prince of Wales and Mrs.

Fitzherbert.

[143] William Frederick succeeded his father as Duke of Gloucester, 1805; married Princess Mary, fourth daughter of George III, 1816.

[144] "In their boyhood each had manifested that serious, reserved and pious disposition which happily preserved them from plunging into those youthful irregularities which subsequently disgraced the careers of their brothers, the Dukes of York and Cumberland. Each had suffered from the effects of a faulty education; each, on reaching manhood, had happily had the sagacity to appreciate the grievous disadvantage which it imposed upon them, and each, by diligent study, had endeavoured to make up for the faults and deficiencies of the past."—Jesse: *Memoirs of George III*.

[145] Wraxall: *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times*.

[146] *Memoirs of George III.*

[147] Thackeray: *Life of Chatham*.

[148] Adolphus: *History of England*.

[149] *The Farmer's Letters.*

[150] *Reflections, Personal and Political.*

[151] *Speech on American Taxation*, 1774.

[152] *Recollections and Reflections.*

[153] *Chatham Correspondence.*

[154] *Ibid.*

[155] *Letters of "Junius."*

[156] Bancroft: *History of the American Revolution*.

[157] Grahame: *History of the United States*.

[158] Bancroft: *History of the American Revolution*.

[159] Wills Hill (1718-1793), succeeded as second Viscount Hillsborough 1742, created Irish Earl 1751, and Marquis of Downshire 1789.

[160] Bancroft: *History of the American Revolution*.

[161] *Speech on American Taxation, 1774.*

[162] Trevelyan: *Early Life of Charles James Fox.*

[163] "I am grieved to observe that the landed interest is almost altogether anti-American, though the common people hold the war in abhorrence, and the merchants and tradesmen, for obvious reasons, are likewise against it."—Lord Camden to Lord Chatham, February, 1775.

[164] *Recollections and Reflections.*

[165] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[166] Nicholls: *Recollections and Reflections.*

[167] *George Selwyn: His Life and Letters.*

[168] Nicholls: *Reflections Personal and Political*.

[169] Walpole: *Last Journals*.

[170] Mahon: *History of England*.

[171] "I had the fortune [at Paris] to be treated with the sight of what, next to Mr. Pitt, has occasioned most alarm in France, the Beast of the Gévandon."—Walpole to Lady Mary Coke, 1765.

[172] Lecky: *History of England*.

[173] In 1778 Sir George Saville introduced a Bill to enable Catholics in England who abjured the temporal jurisdiction of the Pope to purchase and inherit land, and to free their priests from liability to imprisonment. The outcome of this was the Gordon Riots.

[174] "My subjects! My army! My dominions! My colonies! the odds, however, even at St. James's are, that we shall hear no more of *my* colonies from the same quarter."—Note by the author of the lampoon.

[175] Peregrine the Elder: *An Heroic Epistle to an Unfortunate Monarch*.

[176] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[177] *Last Journals*, March, 1778.

[178] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[179] *Chatham Correspondence.*

[180] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[181] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[182] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[183] *Ibid.*

[184] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[185] Mahon: *History of England*.

[186] *Selwyn: His Life and Letters.*

[187] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[188] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[189] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[190] Wraxall: *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times*.

[191] Lecky: *History of England*.

[192] In November, 1779, Lord Gower resigned his office on the ground that the war "must end in ruin to his Majesty and the country"; and North, after informing the King that he had endeavoured to dissuade his colleague from leaving the ministry, added: "In the argument Lord North had certainly one disadvantage, which is that he holds in his heart, and has held for three years past, the same opinion with Lord Gower."

[193] Duke of Grafton: *Autobiography*.

[194] *George Selwyn: His Life and Letters.*

[195] Letter of John Adams to John Jay, American Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, June 9, 1783.

[196] Afterwards Earl of Sandwich.

[197] Wraxall: *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times*.

[198] Nicholls: *Recollections and Reflections*.

[199] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[200] Albemarle: *Memoirs of Rockingham*.

[201] Nicholls: *Recollections and Reflections*.

[202] Shelburne was most unpopular and always suspected of insincerity. It was to him that Goldsmith made the singularly *mal-à-propos* remark: "Do you know, I could never conceive the reason why they call you Malagrida, for Malagrida was a very good sort of man."

[203] Wraxall: *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times*.

[204] *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times.*

[205] *Correspondence of George III with Lord North.*

[206] Russell: *Life and Times of C. J. Fox*.

[207] "The autumnal session of Parliament was opened on November 27 by a speech from the Throne, the language of which was not less determinate than it had ever been in maintaining the necessity of continuing the most vigorous exertions for the preservation of the essential rights and permanent interests of the country."—Aikin: *The Annals of the Reign of George III*.

[208] *Recollections and Reflections.*

[209] *George Selwyn: His Life and His Letters.*

[210] *Ibid.*

[211] Edward, twelfth Earl of Derby (1752-1834).

[212] *George Selwyn: His Life and His Letters.*

[213] Prior: *Life of Burke*.

[214] Prior: *Life of Burke*.

[215] Hunt: *Political History of England (1760-1801)*.

[216] Nicholls: *Recollections and Reflections*.

[217] Huish: *Public and Private Life of George III*.

[218] "Burke, who manifested the greatest reluctance to quit the Pay Office, required rather to be impelled in making that sacrifice, than appeared to feel any spontaneous disposition towards resigning so lucrative an appointment, of which he had scarcely tasted the first fruits."—Wraxall: *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times*.

[219] *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times.*

[220] Walpole: *Last Journals*.

[221] *Recollections and Reflections.*

[222] "The present King [George IV]," Lord Holland wrote, "told me a story of his father's plan of retiring to Hanover, and described, with more humour than filial reverence, his arrangement of the details, and especially of the liveries and dresses, about which he was so earnest that it amounted almost to insanity."—*Memorials*

of Fox.

[223] Wraxall: *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times*.

[224] "It is said and believed that Lord Temple used the King's name and got many votes by it; even at the last critical moment, Lord Graham did all he could to bring the old Duke of Montrose to the House against the Bill; but the old soul nobly resisted, and told him he was too old to turn fool or knave, having as yet deserved neither of these epithets during a long life. But poor pitiful changelings who tremble at the King's name were soon found, and as you know they carried it on Wednesday."—Lady Sarah Napier to Lady Susan O'Brien, December 19.

[225] *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox.*

[226] Quoted in Massey's *History of the Reign of George III*.

[227] *Historical Memoirs of My Own Times.*

[228] *The Rolliad.*

[229] Galt: *George III, his Court and Family*.

[230] On March 23, 1784, the Great Seal of England was stolen from the Lord Chancellor's house in Great Ormond Street. It was taken from a drawer of a writing table, in which nothing else was disturbed. Much discussion arose, consequently, and there was a suspicion that the theft might have been inspired by political reasons, since there was a doubt whether Parliament could be dissolved except under the Great Seal.

[231] Wraxall: *Historical Memoirs of His Own Times*.

[232] *Ibid.*

When Mrs. Delany praised George III for his moderation, "No, no, it is no virtue," replied the monarch, "I only prefer eating plain and little, to growing diseased and infirm."—*Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[233] *Reminiscences of the fifth Earl of Carlisle.*

[234] Papendiek: *Court and Private Life*.

[235] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[236] *Grenville Papers.*

[237] "On the day previous to the celebration of the Queen's birthday in 1782 [the Queen's birthday was officially recognized in the middle of January], the King was extremely indisposed, and was twice let blood. At the Drawing-room next day his Majesty was seized with a bleeding at the nose, and was obliged to retire very soon after three o'clock; and his Majesty continued so much indisposed that he did not appear in the ball-room in the evening. In a few days his Majesty was so much recovered as to be deemed entirely out of danger."—Southy: *Authentic Memoirs of George the Third*.

[238] *Court and Private Life.*

[239] Jesse: *Memoirs of George III*.

[240] It was not only at Windsor that George addressed him to the passers-by. "This, I suppose, is Worcester New Bridge," he asked some one in the streets of Worcester. "Yes, please your Majesty." "Then," said the King, "let me have a huzza"; and taking off his hat, he set the example.—*Georgiana.*

[241] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[242] Stanhope: *Life of Pitt*.

[243] *Relics of Royalty.*

[244] *History of the Royal Malady, with Variety of Entertaining Anecdotes, to which are added Strictures of the Declaration of Horne Tooke, Esq., respecting "Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales," commonly called Mrs. Fitzherbert. With Interesting Remarks on a Regency. By a Page of the Presence.* (1789.)

The narrative of the illness of George III is headed, presumedly to evade prosecution, "Curious and Entertaining Anecdotes of Henry IV, King of France."

[245] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[246] *Ibid.*

[247] Moore: *Life of Sheridan*.

[248] Dr. Ray: *The Insanity of King George III*.

[249] *George Selwyn: His Life and Letters.*

[250] "It was found impossible, however, to divert public attention from the lengthy confinement of the King in 1788, and in November the Queen was greatly offended by some anecdote relative to the indisposition which appeared in *The Morning Herald*, and after instructing Miss Burney to burn the paper, she

sought for some one who should represent to the editor that 'he must answer at his peril any further such treasonable paragraphs.'"—*The Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[251] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[252] "Gretford and its vicinity at that time exhibited one of the most peculiar and singular sights I ever witnessed. As the unprepared traveller approached the town he was astonished to find almost all the surrounding ploughmen, gardeners, threshers, thatchers and other labourers attired in black coats, white waistcoats, black silk breeches and stockings, and the head of each '*bien poudre, frise, et arrange*.' These were the Doctor's patients; and dress, neatness of person, and exercise being the principal features of his admirable system, health and cheerfulness conjoined to aid the recovery of every person attached to that most valuable asylum. The Doctor kept an excellent table, and the day I dined with him I found a numerous company. Nothing occurred out of the common way till soon after the cloth was removed, when I saw the Doctor frown at a patient who immediately hastened from the room, taking with him my *tail*, which he had slyly cut off."—*Life and Times of Frederick Reynolds.*

[253] *Diary and Correspondence of the first Earl of Malmesbury.*

[254] *The Insanity of George III.*

[255] *Historical Memoirs of his Own Times.*

[256] Papendiek: *Court and Private Life*.

[257] Dr. Ray: *The Insanity of King George III*.

[258] Duke of Buckingham: *Court and Cabinets of George III*.

[259] "Edmund Burke arose a little after four and is speaking yet. He has been wilder than ever, and laid himself and party open more than ever speaker did. He is folly personified, but shaking his cap and bells under the laurel of genius.... He finished his wild speech in a manner next to madness," so Sir W. Young wrote to Lord Buckingham; and, indeed, throughout the debates Burke, as Pitt put it scathingly, "displayed a warmth that seemed to have arisen from his entertaining wishes different from the rest of the House."

[260] Duke of Buckingham: *Courts and Cabinets of George III*.

[261] Papendiek: *Court and Private Life*.

[262] Ray: *The Insanity of King George III*.

[263] *Georgiana.*

[264] *Diaries of a Lady of Quality.* Edited by Abraham Hayward.

[265] Elizabeth, Countess of Pembroke, daughter of Charles, second Duke of Marlborough.

[266] *Reminiscences of the fifth Earl of Carlisle.*

[267] *Court and Private Life.*

[268] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*.

[269] Pellew: *Life of Lord Sidmouth*.

[270] *Auckland Correspondence.*

[271] Lady Minto: *Life of Sir Gilbert Elliot*.

[272] Pellew: *Life of Lord Sidmouth*.

[273] Wraxall: *Posthumous Memoirs of His Own Times*.

[274] Papendiek: *Court and Private Life*.

[275] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[276] "The ladies at White's Club are to be dressed in white and gold. On the front of their caps they are to have a motto 'God save the King' in gold letters. The Prince and Duke of York were offered tickets, which they refused, but desired to subscribe. This was agreed to, but they are not to come. The Opposition ladies follow the example, but decline coming to the ball, but there will probably be some exceptions."—*Cornwallis Papers.*

[277] George III had fifteen children by his wife: George, Prince of Wales (1762-1830); Frederick, Duke of York (1763-1827); William, Duke of Clarence (1765-1837); Edward, Duke of Kent (1767-1820); Ernest, Duke of Cumberland and King of Hanover (1771-1851); Augustus, Duke of Sussex (1773-1843); Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge (1774-1850); Octavius (1779-1783); Alfred (1780-1782); Charlotte, afterwards Queen of Würtemburg (1766-1828); Augusta (1768-1840); Elizabeth, afterwards Landgravine of Hesse-Homburg (1770-1840); Mary, afterwards Duchess of Gloucester (1776-1857); Sophia (1777-1848); Amelia (1783-1810).

[278] Massey: *History of England*.

[279] *Court and Private Life.*

[280] Mrs. Papendiek: *Court and Private Life*.

[281] *See supra*, vol. ii, p. 282.

[282] Quoted in Fitzgerald's *Family of George III*.

[283] *Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot.*

[284] The present writer has given a detailed sketch of the life of the Prince of Wales in *The First Gentleman of Europe*.

[285] Papendiek: *Court and Private Life*.

[286] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[287] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[288]

"WINDSOR, *November 24, 1794*.

"Mr. Pitt cannot be surprised at my being very much hurt at the contents of his letter. Indeed, he seems to expect it, but I am certain that nothing but the thinking it his duty could have instigated him to give me so severe a blow. I am neither in a situation of mind, nor from inclination, inclined to enter more minutely into every part of his letter; but I am fully ready to answer the material part, namely, that though loving very much my son, and not forgetting how he saved the Republic of Holland in 1793, and that his endeavours to be of service have never abated, and that to the conduct of Austria, the faithlessness of Prussia, and the cowardice of the Dutch, every failure is easily accounted for, without laying blame on him who deserved a better fate, I shall not now think it safe for him to continue in the command on the Continent, where every one seems to conspire to render his situation hazardous, by either propagating unfounded complaints against him, or giving credit to them. No one will believe that I take this step but reluctantly, and the more so since no successor is proposed to take the command. Truly I do not see where any one is to be found that can deserve the name now the Duke of Brunswick has declined; and I am certain he will fully feel the propriety of the resolution he has taken when he finds that even a son of mine cannot withstand the torrent of abuse."—Stanhope: *Life of Pitt*.

[289] See the present writer's *The First Gentleman of Europe*, Vol. I, pp. 309-316.

[290] Charles Knight: *Passages from a Working Life*.

[291] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[292] Quoted in Fitzgerald: *The Good Queen Charlotte*.

[293] Southy: *Authentic Memoirs of George III*.

[294] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

[295] *Recollections and Reflections.*

[296] Rose: *Diaries*.

[297] Twiss: *Life of Lord Eldon*.

[298] *Creevey Papers.*

[299] May 9, 1798.

[300] Papendiek: *Court and Private Life*.

[301] *Auckland Correspondence.*

[302] *See Ante*, vol. II. p. 260.

[303] Stanhope: *Life of Pitt*.

[304] *Ibid.*

[305] *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox.*

[306] Twiss: *Life of Eldon*.

[307] *Ibid.*

[308] Twiss: *Life of Eldon*.

[309] *Life of Sir Gilbert Elliot.*

[310] *Diary and Correspondence of Lord Malmesbury.*

[311] Papendiek: *Court and Private Life*.

[312] *Creevey Papers.*

[313] *Diary and Correspondence of Lord Malmesbury.*

[314] *Diary and Correspondence of Lord Malmesbury, May 27, 1804.*

[315] "I have every reason to flatter myself that my sight is

improving, yet, I fear, this specimen will not prove the assertion, as you, my lord, might expect. The gain can be but gradual; objects growing brighter, though not as yet much clearer."—George III to the Bishop of Worcester, September 5, 1805.

[316] Lord Henley to Lord Auckland, November 1, 1805. —*Auckland Correspondence.*

[317] A contemporary account, quoted in *George III, his Court and Family*.

[318] Stanhope: *Life of Pitt*.

[319] *Jerningham Letters.*

[320] Galt: *George III, his Court and Family*.

[321] *Relics of Royalty.*

[322] Quoted by Fitzgerald Molloy in *Court Life below Stairs*.

[323] *Creevey Papers.*

[324] *Auckland Correspondence.*

[325] Byron: *Letters and Journal*.

[326] *Court and Private Life.*

[327] F. W. Wynn: *Diaries of a Lady of Quality*.

[328] F. W. Wynn: *Diaries of a Lady of Quality*.

[329] *Georgiana.*

[330] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, January 5, 1816.

[331] *Jerningham Letters, February 14, 1817.*

[332] Galt: *George III, His Court and Family*.

[333] *Georgiana.*

[334] *Lord Carlisle's Reminiscences.*

[335] *Ibid.*

[336] *Buckingham Memoirs.*

[337] *Relics of Royalty.*

[338] *Lord Carlisle's Reminiscences.*

[339] Byron: *Letters and Journal*.

[340] *Jerningham Letters.*

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TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE:

Footnotes have been moved to the end of the book.

Illustrations have been moved to the nearest appropriate paragraph break.

Obvious typographical errors and printer errors have been corrected without comment.

In addition to obvious typographical errors, the following changes were made in this text:

1. On page 63 in the original text there was a footnote with no footnote tag on the page. Since the footnote references the Duke of Grafton, the footnote tag has been added to the following sentence: "The Duke of Grafton, like Lord Rockingham, was a man of pleasure, happier with his dogs and his books than in political life;[83]"

2. On page 83 there was no footnote tag in original text for "Footnote 4: Ibid." This footnote has been removed in this e-text, since the note appears to be a duplicate, referencing a quote which continues from page 83 onto page 84, and is footnoted there. (Footnote [105])

3. Two items in the index have been moved into correct alphabetical order: "Paton" and "Pulteney".

4. Errors in the page numbers listed in the index have been left unchanged, and the html links will direct the reader to the page number indicated. However, it is possible that some of these page numbers are incorrect. Probable errors in the index include the following:

"Addington, Henry", reference to Volume 2 page 30 should read, "page 230".

"Carnarvon, Marquis of" reference to a note on page 35 of Volume 1, probably should read "33 note" (footnote number [37]).

"Dalkeith, Lady" "Grenville, Mrs.", "Queensberry, Duchess of" and "Walpole, Horace" all contain reference to a note on page 228 of Volume 1, where there is no footnote. These three references should read "227 note" (footnote number [244]).

"George III, rumor of a Brunswick marriage" reference to Volume 1 page 102 should read page 112.

"George III, popular because English" reference to Volume 1 page 129 should read page 139.

George III, surrender of Yorktown, reference to Volume 2 page 161 should read "165".

"Leiningen, Princess of." refers the reader to "*See* Kent, Duchess of", however, there is no index entry for "Kent, Duchess of".

"Saxe-Gotha, Duke of" refers to a footnote on page 30 of Volume 1, where there is no footnote. This probably should read "33 note" (footnote number [37]).

"Scarborough, Earl of" reference to a footnote on page 30 of Volume 2 should read "50 note" (footnote number [63]).

From the list of errata on page 317, the following changes have been made to this text:

Page 275: "Bedingsfield" was changed to "Bedingfield".

Pages 278 and 282 "Percival" was changed to "Perceval".

On page 133 no change was made to correct an internal inconsistency in the date mentioned in the following sentence: "Duc de Choiseul, who wrote in August, 1867...." From the context, it may be assumed that the date was intended to be "1767".

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