THACKERAY'S LECTURES ON THE GEORGES.

GEORGE THE THIRD.

[Continued from the last issue of THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.]

There is something to me exceedingly touching in that simple early life of the king's. As long as his mother lived—a dozen years after his marriage with the little spinet-player—he was a great, shy, awkward boy, under the tutelage of that hard parent. She must have been a clever, domineering, cruel woman. She kept her household lonely and in gloom, mistrusting almost all people who came about her children. Seeing the young Duke of Gloucester silent and unhappy once, she sharply asked him the cause of his silence. "I am thinking," said the poor child. "Thinking, sir! and of what?" "I am thinking if ever I have a son I will not make him so unhappy as you make me." The other sons were all wild except George. Dutifully every evening George and Charlotte paid their visit to the king's mother at Carlton House. She had a throat complaint, of which she died; but to the last persisted in driving about the streets to show that she was alive. The night before her death the resolute woman talked with her son and daughter-in-law as usual, went to bed, and was found dead in the morning. "George, be a king!" were the words which she was forever croaking in the ears of her son; and a king the simple, stubborn, affectionate, bigoted man tried to be.

He did his best; he worked according to his lights; what virtue he knew he tried to practise; what knowledge he could master he strove to acquire. He was forever drawing maps, for example, and learned geography with no small care and industry. He knew all about the family histories and genealogies of his gentry, and pretty histories he must have known. He knew the whole *Army List*, and all the facings, and the exact number of the 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 etiquettes of his own and his grandfather's courts to a nicety, and the smallest particulars regarding the routine of ministers, secretaries, embassies, audiences; the humblest page in the anteroom, or the meanest helper in the stables or kitchen. These parts of the royal business he was capable of learning and he learned. But, as one thinks of an office almost divine performed by any mortal man—of any single being pretending to control the thoughts, to direct the faith, to order the implicit obedience of brother millions, to compel them into war at his offense or quarrel; to command, "In this way you shall trade, in this way you shall think; these neighbors shall be your allies whom you shall help, these others your enemies whom you shall slay at my orders; in this way you shall worship God"—who can wonder that when such a man as George took such an office on himself, punishment and humiliation should fall upon people and chief?

Yet there is something grand about his courage. The battle of the king with his aristocracy remains yet to be told by the historian who shall view the reign of George more justly than the trumpery panegyrists who wrote immediately after his decease. It was he, with the people to back him, who made the war with America; it was he and the people who refused justice to the Roman Catholics; and on both questions he beat the patricians. He bribed; he bullied; he darkly dissembled on occasion; he exercised a slippery perseverance and a vindictive resolution, which one almost admires as one thinks his character over. His courage was never to be beat. It trampled North under foot; it beat the stiff neck of the younger Pitt; even his illness never conquered that indomitable spirit. As soon as his brain was clear it resumed the scheme, only laid aside when his reason left him; as soon as his hands were out of the strait-waistcoat, they took up the pen and the plan which had engaged him up to the moment of his malady. I believe it is by persons believing themselves in the right that nine-tenths of the tyranny of this world has been perpetrated. Arguing on that convenient premise, the Dey of Algiers would cut off twenty heads of a morning; Father Dominic would burn a score of Jews in the presence of the most catholic king, and the Archbishops of Toledo and Salamanca sing Amen. Protestants were roasted, Jesuits hung and quartered at Smithfield, and witches burned at Salem, and all by worthy people, who believed they had the best authority for their actions. And so, with respect to old George, even Americans, whom he hated and who conquered him, may give him credit for having quite honest reasons for oppressing them. Appended to Lord Brougham's biographical sketch of Lord North are some autograph notes of the king, which let us most curiously into the state of his mind. "The times certainly require," says he, 'concurrence of all who wish to prevent anarchy. I have no wish but the prosperity of my own dominions, therefore I must look upon all who would not heartily assist me as bad men as well as bad subjects." That is the way he reasoned. "I wish nothing but good, therefore every man who does not agree with me is a traitor and a scoundrel." Remember that he believed himself anointed by a Divine commission; remember that he was a man of slow parts and imperfect education; that the same awful will of Heaven which placed a crown upon his head, whica made him tender to his family, pure in his life, courageous and honest, made him dull of comprehension, obstinate of will, and at many times deprived him of reason. He was the father of his people; his rebellious children must be flogged into obedience. He was the defender of the Protestant faith; he would rather lay that stout head upon the block than that Catholics should have a share in the government of England. And you do not suppose that there are not honest bigots enough in all countries to back kings in this kind of statesmanship? Without doubt the American war was popular in England. In 1775 the address in favor of coercing the colonies was carried by 304 to 105 in the Commons, by 104 to 29 in the House of Lords. Popular? so was the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes popular in France; so was the massacre of St. Bartholomew; so was the Inquisition exceedingly popular in Spain.

Wars and revolutions are, however, the politician's province. The great events of this long reign, the statesmen and orators who illustrated it, I do not pretend to make the subject of an hour's light talk. Let us return to our humbler duty of court gossip. Yonder sits our little queen, surrounded by many stout sons and fair daughters whom she bore to her faithful George. The history of the daughters, as little Miss Burney has painted them to us, is delightful. They were handsome—she calls them beautiful; they were most kind, loving, and lady-like; they were gracious to every person, high or low, who served them. They had many little accomplishments of their own. This one drew; that one played the piano; they all worked most prodigiously, and fitted up whole suits of rooms—pretty, smiling Penelopes—with their busy little needles. As we picture to ourselves the society of eighty years ago, we must imagine hundreds of thousands of groups of women in great high caps, tight bodies, and full skirts, needling away, while one of the number, or perhaps a favored gentleman in a pigtail, reads out a novel to the company. Peep into the cottage at Olney, for example, and see there Mrs. Unwin and Lady Hesketh, those high-bred ladies, those sweet, pious women, and William Cowper, that delicate wit, that trembling pietist, that refined gentleman, absolutely reading out Jonathan Wild to the ladies! What a change in our manners, in our amusements, since then!

King George's household was a model of an English gentleman's household. It was early; it was kindly; it was charitable; it was frugal; it was orderly; it must have been stupid to a degree which I shudder now to contemplate. No wonder all the princes ran away from the lap of that dreary domestic virtue. It always rose, rode, dined at stated intervals. Day after day was the same. At the same hour at night the king kissed his daughters' jolly cheeks; the princesses kissed their mother's hand; and Madame Thielke brought the royal night-cap. At the same hour the equerries and women in waiting had their little dinner, and cackled over their tea. The king had his backgammon or his evening concert; the equerries yawned themselves to death in the anteroom; or the king and his family walked on Windsor slopes, the king holding his darling little Princess Amelia by the hand; and the people crowded round quite good-naturedly; and the Eton boys thrust their chubby cheeks under the crowd's elbows; and the concert over, the king never failed to take his enormous cocked hat off, and salute his band, and say, "Thank you, gentlemen."

A quieter household, a more prosaic life than this of Kew or Windsor, cannot be imagined. Rain or shine, the king rode every day for hours; poked his red face into hundreds of cottages round about, and showed that shovel hat and Windsor uniform to farmers, to pig-boys, to old women making apple-dumplings; to all sorts of people, gentle and simple, about whom countless stories are told. Nothing can be more undignified than these stories. When Haroun Alraschid visits a subject incog., the latter is sure to be very much the better for the caliph's magnificence. Old George showed no such royal splendor. He used to give a guinea sometimes; sometimes feel in his pockets and find he had no money; often ask a man a hundred questions—about the number of his family, about his oats and beans, about the rent he paid for his house, and ride on. On one occasion he played the part of King Alfred, and turned a piece of meat with a string at a cottager's house. When the old woman came home, she found a paper with an inclosure of money, and a note written by the royal pencil, "Five guineas to buy a jack." It was not splendid, but it was kind and worthy of Farmer George. One day, when the king and queen were walking together, they met a little boy—they were always fond of children, the good folks—and patted the little white head. "Whose little boy are you?" asks the Windsor uniform. "I am the king's beef-eater's little boy," replied the child. On which the king said, "Then kneel down and kiss the queen's hand." But the innocent offspring of the beef-eater declined this treat. "No," said he, "I won't kneel, for if I do I shall spoil my new breeches!" The thrifty king ought to have hugged him and knighted him on the spot. George's admirers wrote pages and pages of such stories about him. One morning, before anybody else was up, the king walked about Gloucester town; pushed over Molly the housemaid, who was scrubbing the door-steps with her pail; ran up stairs and woke all the equerries in their bedrooms; and then trotted down to the bridge, where by this time a dozen of louts were assembled. "What! is this Gloucester New Bridge?" asked our gracious monarch; and the people answered him, "Yes, your majesty." "Why then, my boys," said he, "let us have a huzzay!" After giving them which intellectual gratification, he went home to breakfast. Our fathers read these simple tales with fond pleasure; laughed at these very small jokes; liked the old man who poked his nose into every cottage; who lived on plain, wholesome roast and boiled; who despised your French kickshaws; who was a true, hearty old English gentleman. You may have seen Gilray's famous print of him—in the old wig, in the stout old hideous Windsor uniform—as the King Brobdignag, peering at a little Gulliver, whom he holds up in one hand, while in the other he has an opera-glass, through which he surveys the pigmy. Our fathers chose to set up George as the type of a great king, and the little Gulliver was the great Napoleon. We prided ourselves on our prejudices; we blustered and bragged with absurd vainglory; we dealt to our enemy a monstrous injustice of contempt and scorn; we fought him with all weapons, mean as well as heroic. There was no lie we would not believe; no charge of crime which our furious prejudice would not credit. I thought at one time of making a collection of the lies which the French had written against us and we had published against them during the war: it would be a strange memorial of popular falsehood.

Their majesties were very sociable potentates; and the court chronicler tells of numerous visits which they paid to their subjects, gentle and simple; with whom they dined; at whose great country houses they stopped; or at whose poorer lodgings they affably partook of tea and bread and butter. Some of the great folks spent enormous sums in entertaining their sovereigns. As marks of special favor, the king and queen sometimes stood as sponsors for the children of the nobility. We find Lady Salisbury was so honored in the year 1786; and in the year 1802, Lady Chesterfield. The *Court News* relates how her ladyship received their majesties on a state bed, "dressed with white satin and a profusion of lace; the counterpane of white satin embroidered with gold, and the bed of crimson satin lined with white." The child was first brought by the nurse to the Marchioness of Bath, who presided as chief nurse. Then the marchioness handed the baby to the queen. Then the queen handed the little darling to the Bishop of Norwich, the officiating clergyman; and, the ceremony over, a cup of caudle was presented by the earl to his majesty on one knee, on a large gold waiter, placed on a crimson velvet cushion. Misfortunes would occur in these interesting genuflectory ceremonies of royal worship. Bubb Dodington, Lord Melcombe, a very fat, puffy man, in a most gorgeous court suit, had to kneel, Cumberland says, and was so fat and so tight that he could not get up again. "Kneel, sir, kneel!" cried my lord in waiting to a country mayor who had to read an address, but who went on with his compliment standing. "Kneel, sir, kneel!" cries my lord, in dreadful alarm. "I can't," say the mayor, turning round; "don't, you see I have a wooden leg?"

In the capital *Burney Diary and Letters*, the home and court life of good old George and good old Queen Charlotte are presented at portentous length. The king rose every morning at six, and had two hours to himself. He thought it effeminate to have carpet in his bedroom. Shortly before eight the queen and the royal family were always ready for him, and they proceeded to the king's chapel in the castle. There were no fires in the passage; the chapel was scarcely alight; princesses, governesses, equerries grumbled and caught cold; but, cold or hot, it was their duty to go; and, wet or dry, light or dark, the stout old George was always in his place to say Amen to the chaplain.

The queen's character is represented in *Burney* at full length. She was a sensible, most decorous woman; a very grand lady on state occasions, simple enough in ordinary life; well read as times went, and giving shrewd opinions about books; stingy, but not unjust; not generally unkind to her dependants, but invincible in her notions of etiquette, and quite angry if her people suffered ill health in her service. She gave Miss Burney a shabby pittance, and led the poor young woman a life which well-nigh killed her. She never thought but that she was doing Burney the greatest favor in taking her from freedom, fame, and competence, and killing her off with languor in that dreary court. It was not dreary to her. Had she been servant instead of mistress, her spirit would never have broken down; she never would have put a pin out of place, or been a moment from duty. *She* was not weak, and she could not pardon those who were. She was perfectly correct in life, and she hated poor sinners with a rancor such as virtue sometimes has. She must have had awful private trials of her own, not merely with her children, but with her husband, in those long days about which nobody will ever know anything now; when he was not quite insane; when his incessant tongue was babbling folly, rage, persecution, and she had to smile, and be respectful and attentive under this intolerable *ennui*. The queen bore all her duties stoutly, as she expected others to bear them. At a state christening the lady who held the infant was tired and looked unwell, and the Princess of Wales asked permission for her to sit down. "Let her stand," said the queen, flicking the snuff off her sleeve. *She* would have stood, the resolute old woman, if she had had to hold the child till his beard was grown. "I am seventy years of age," the queen said, facing a mob of ruffians who stopped her sedan; "I have been fifty years Queen of England, and I never was insulted before." Fearless, rigid, unforgiving little queen, I don't wonder that her sons revolted from her.

Of all the figures in that large family group which surrounds George and his queen, the prettiest, I think, is the father's darling, the Princess Amelia, pathetic for her beauty, her sweetness, her early death, and for the extreme passionate tenderness with which her father loved her. This was his favorite among all the children; of his sons he loved the Duke of York best. Burney tells a sad story of the poor old man at Weymouth, and how eager he was to have this darling son with him. The king's house was not big enough to hold the prince, and his father had a portable house erected close to his own, and at huge pains, so that his dear Frederick should be near him. He clung on his arm all the time of his visit; talked to no one else; had talked of no one else for some time before. The prince, so long expected, staid but a single night. He had business in London the next day, he said. The dullness of the old king's court stupefied York and the other big sons of George III. They scared equerries and ladies, frightened the modest little circle with their coarse spirits and loud talk. Of little comfort, indeed, were the king's sons to the king.

But the pretty Amelia was his darling; and the little maiden, prattling and smiling in the fond arms of that old father, is a sweet image to look on. There is a family picture in Burney which a man must be very hard hearted not to like. She describes an after-dinner walk of the royal family at Windsor:—"It was really a mighty pretty procession," she says. "The little princess, just turned of three years old, in a robe-coat covered with fine muslin, a dressed close cap, white gloves, and fan, walked all alone and first, highly delighted with the parade, and turning from side to side to see everybody as she passed; for all the terraces stand up against the walls, to make a clear passage for the royal family the moment they come in sight. Then followed the king and queen, no less delighted with the joy of their darling. The princess royal leaning on Lady Elizabeth Waldegrave, the Princess Augusta holding by the Duchess of Ancaster, the princess Elizabeth led by Lady Charlotte Bertie, followed. Office here takes place of rank," says Burney, to explain how it was that Lady E. Waldegrave, as lady of the bedchamber, walked before a duchess; "General Bude, and the Duke of Montague, and Major Price as equerry, brought up the rear of the procession." One sees it; the band playing its old music; the sun shining on the happy, loyal crowd, and lighting the ancient battlements, the rich elms, and purple landscape, and bright green sward; the royal standard drooping from the great tower yonder, as old George passes, followed by his race, preceded by the charming infant, who caresses the crowd with her innocent smiles.

"On sight of Mrs. Delany, the king instantly stopped to speak to her; the queen, of course, and the little princess, and all the rest stood still. They talked a good while with the sweet old lady, during which time the king once or twice addressed himself to me. I caught the queen's eye, and saw in it a little surprise, but by no means any displeasure to see me of the party. The little princess went up to Mrs. Delany, of whom she was very fond, and behaved like a little angel to her. She then, with a look of inquiry and recollection, came behind Mrs. Delany to look at me. 'I am afraid,' said I, in a whisper, and stooping down, 'your royal highness does not remember me.' Her answer was an arch little smile, and a nearer approach, with her lips pouted out to kiss me."

The princess wrote verses herself, and there are some pretty plaintive lines attributed to her, which are more touching than poetry:—

"Unthinking, idle, wild, and young,
I laughed, and danced, and talked, and sung:
And, proud of health, of freedom vain,
Dreamed not of sorrow, care, or pain:
Concluding in those hours of glee,
That all the world was made for me.

"But when the hour of trial came,
When sickness shook this trembling frame,
When folly's gay pursuits were o'er,
And I could sing and dance no more,
It then occurred, how sad 'twould be
Were this world only made for me."

The poor soul quitted it, and ere yet she was dead, the agonized father was in such a state that the officers round about him were obliged to set watchers over him, and from November, 1810, George III ceased to reign. All the world knows the story of his malady; all history presents no sadder figure than that of the old man, blind and deprived of reason, wandering through the rooms of his palace, addressing imaginary parliaments, reviewing fancied troops, holding ghostly courts. I have seen his picture as it was taken at this time, hanging in the apartment of his daughter, the Landgravine of Hesse Hombourg—amid books and Windsor furniture, and a hundred fond reminiscences of her English home. The poor old father is represented in a purple gown, his snowy beard falling over his breast, the star of his famous Order still idly shining on it. He was not only sightless, he was utterly deaf. All light, all reason, all sound of human voices, all the pleasures of this world of God, were taken from him. Some slight lucid moments he had, in one of which, the queen, desiring to see him, entered the room, and found him singing a hymn, and accompanying himself at the harpsichord. When he had finished, he knelt down and prayed aloud for her, and then for his family, and then for the nation, concluding with a prayer for himself, that it might please God to avert his heavy calamity from him, but if not, to give him resignation to submit. He then burst into tears, and his reason again fled.

What preacher need moralize on this story? what words save the simplest are requisite to tell it? It is too terrible for tears. The thought of such a 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. "Oh brothers!" I said to those who heard me first in America—"oh brothers! speaking the same dear mother tongue—oh comrades! enemies no more, let us take a mournful hand together as we stand by this royal corpse, and call a truce to battle! 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!'

"'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!"

[To be continued in our next issue.]

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Captains or Agents, Ship-Carpenters, and Machinists having vessels to repair, are solicited to call.
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LEGAL NOTICES.

ESTATE OF WILLIAM PRICE, DECEASED.—Letters Testamentary to the Estate of WILLIAM PRICE, late of the city of Philadelphia, deceased, having been granted to the undersigned, all persons indebted to said estate are requested to make payment, and those having claims or demands against the same will present them without delay, to
JOSEPH B. NEVINS,
No. 207 MARKET Street,
MARY PRICE,
No. 1520 FRANKLIN Street,
Or to her Attorney, CHARLES H. MASSON,
6 19 w6t* No. 329 N. SIXTH Street.

LOST.

LOST—A CERTIFICATE OF CITY LOAN, No. 16,817, for $400, in the name of A. L. KERR. All persons are cautioned against them same; and any one returning it to T. H. B. WOOD, Manayunk, or at the City Treasurer's Office will be rewarded 6 24 mw12t*

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

LECTURES.—A NEW COURSE OF LECtures is being delivered at the NEW YORK MUSEUM OF ANATOMY, embracing the subjects:—"How to Live and what to Live for.—Youth, Maturity, and Old Age.—Manhood generally Reviewed.—The Causes of Indigestion, Flatulence, and Nervous Diseases accounted for.—Marriage philosophically considered," etc.
Pocket volumes containing these lectures will be forwarded to parties, unable to attend, on receipt of four stamps, by addressing—"SECRETARY, NEW YORK MUSEUM OF ANATOMY AND SCIENCE, No. 618 BROADWAY, NEW YORK." 5 24 1mw 3m*

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