CHAPTER XXIV.

New Parliament of 1735.—Peace of Vienna.—The Gin-Act.—The Porteous Riots.—Parliamentary proceedings on these Riots.—Unpopularity of the king.—Marriage of the prince of Wales.—Royal animosities.—Birth of a princess.—Illness of queen Caroline.—Death of queen Caroline.

THE first Session of the new Parliament, which met in January, 1735, was prolonged only till May. The king announced his determination to visit his dominions in Germany, and the queen was appointed regent. George was sorely tempted to engage in the war by an offer of the command of the imperial army on the Rhine. Walpole had foreseen such a possible flattery of the king's military ambition; and had prepared him to say, that he could not appear at the head of an army as king of England, and not have an Englishman to fight under him.* The summer passed without any important military operations. On the 22nd of October the king returned from Hanover—according to lord Hervey in very bad temper, and dissatisfied with everything English. His majesty had left a lady in Hanover, Madame Walmoden, to whom he wrote by every post. Soon after his return the preliminaries of a general peace were signed at Vienna. Europe would be at rest again for four years. "The happy turn which the affairs of Europe had taken" was announced at the opening of Parliament in January, 1736. The tranquillity of England and Scotland was seriously disturbed in this season of foreign pacification.

On the 20th of February a Petition against the excessive use of spiritous liquors was presented to the House of Commons from the Justices of Peace for Middlesex. The drinking of Geneva, it was alleged, had excessively increased amongst the people of inferior rank; the constant and excessive use of distilled spirituous liquors had already destroyed thousands, and rendered great numbers of others unfit for labour, debauching their morals, and driving them into every vice. Upon the motion of sir Joseph Jekyll, it was proposed to lay a tax of twenty shillings a gallon upon gin, and to require that every retailer should take out an annual licence costing £50. Walpole gave no distinct support to this measure, nor

* Lord Hervey, vol. ii. p. 7.

did he oppose it. He saw that a greatly reduced consumption of spiritous liquors would affect the revenue; that a high duty would produce less than a low duty; and he therefore proposed that £70,000 which had been appropriated to the Civil List from the smaller duties on spirits should be guaranteed, if the prohibitory rate were adopted. Pulteney opposed the Bill altogether, upon the principle that he had heard of sumptuary laws by which certain sorts of apparel had been forbidden to persons of inferior rank; but that he had never before heard of a sumptuary law by which any sort of victuals or drink were forbidden to be made use of by persons of a low degree. Yet the magnitude of the evil certainly warranted some strong legislative measure. It was stated that within the bills of mortality there were twenty thousand houses for retailing spirituous liquors. Sudden deaths from excessive gin-drinking were continually reported in the newspapers. The extent of this vice was too obvious, to allow the arguments against the impossibility of preventing evasion of the duties to have much weight. Compliance with the Statute was to be enforced by the machinery of the Common Informer. So the Bill was passed, and was to come into operation after the 29th of September. On that day the signs of the liquor-shops were put in mourning. Hooting mobs assembled round the dens where they could no longer get "drunk for a penny and dead-drunk for twopence." The last rag was pawned to carry off a cheap quart or gallon of the beloved liquor. As was foreseen, the Act was evaded. Hawkers sold a coloured mixture in the streets, and pretended chemists opened shops for the sale of "Cholic-water." Fond playful names, such as "Tom Row," "Make Shift," "The Ladies' Delight," "The Baulk," attracted customers to the old haunts. Informers were rolled in the mud, or pumped upon, or thrown into the Thames. Gin riots were constantly taking place, for several years. "The Fall of Bob" was the theme of a ballad and broadside, which connected the minister with "Desolation, or the Fall of Gin."* The impossibility of preventing by prohibitory duties the sale of a commodity in large request, was strikingly exemplified in this gin-struggle. It became necessary in 1743, when the consumption of gin had positively increased, to reduce the excessive duty. A ludicrous example of one of the abortive attempts at minute legislation is exhibited in a rejected clause of the Act of 1736. In the wish to protect the sugar-colonies by encouraging the consumption of rum, it was proposed to exempt punch-houses from the operation of the Gin-Act, provided the agreeable liquor so retailed was

* See Wright's "England under the House of Hanover," vol. i. p. 159 to p. 163.

made of one-third spirit and two-thirds water, at the least, so mixed in the presence of the buyer. If the liquor were stronger than what sailors call "two-water grog," the tippler might pay for his bowl by laying an information.

The Porteous tragedy of Edinburgh in 1736 has become the property of romance. One writer appears to think that the function of the historian has been superseded by that of the novelist. "The tale of the Porteous riot scarcely needs telling, for it has been told by Sir Walter Scott in one of the best and most read of the exquisite Waverley novels."* The judicious historian of "England from the Peace of Utrecht" approaches the subject apologetically. "Some years back, the real events might have excited interest; but the wand of an Enchanter is now waved over us. * * * How dull and lifeless will not the true facts appear when no longer embellished by the touching sorrows of Effie or the heroic virtue of Jeanie Deans!"† Possibly. But "the real events," "the true facts," have a significance which the writer of fiction does not always care to dwell upon. They strikingly illustrate the condition of society. They are essentially connected with the history of public events which preceded them, and of public events which came after. They illustrate the policy of the government and the temper of the governor. We cannot pass them over or deal with them slightingly. They form the subject of very important parliamentary proceedings in 1737, which are necessary to the proper understanding of the relations between England and Scotland. An impartial review in this, as in most other cases, is as much to be aimed at as a picturesque narrative.

Smuggling in England, as we have seen, had been long carried on to an enormous extent. The seafaring population were accustomed to look upon many gainful adventures as lawful and innocent which we now regard as criminal. The slave-trade, with all its odious cruelties, was a regular mercantile undertaking. Buccaneering in the South Seas was a just assertion of the rights of the British flag. The contraband trade in brandy, tea, and tobacco, was a laudable endeavour to sell their countrymen goods at a cheap rate bought in a fair market. But the principle of smuggling was not recognized as a national benefit. The merchant was opposed to it. The wealthy consumer had conscientious scruples against encouraging it. In Scotland the nation, with the exception of a few flourishing trading communities, abetted smuggling, and regarded smugglers as useful members of society. In a report attributed to Duncan Forbes, it is said, "The smuggler was a favour-

* "Cabinet History of England," vol. xvi. p. 32. † Lord Mahon, vol. ii. p. 285.

ite. His prohibited or high-duty goods were run ashore by the boats of whatever part of the coast he came near. When ashore, they were guarded by the country from the custom-house officer. If seized, they were rescued; and if any seizure was returned, and tried, the juries seldom failed to find for the defendant.*" Mr. Burton points out the difference in the circumstances of England and Scotland which made the principle of equality of taxation odious; and emphatically says, "For more than half a century after the Union, English fiscal burdens were as unbearable to the Scots as they would be to the Norwegians at the present day." Mr. Patrick Lyndsay, the member for Edinburgh, in a remarkable speech in the House of Commons on the subject of the Porteous riot, said, "I must beg leave to explain the source of these late disorders that have given so much trouble to the legislature. The pernicious practice of smuggling, prejudicial to the fair trader, and so hurtful to the common and general good of the nation, has prevailed but too much in that country, as well as in this. Whoever may be the importers and proprietors of run goods, it is most certain that the lowest class of men, the dregs of the people, those persons who compose mobs, are the persons employed in the running of these goods; and they get so much more by their illicit trade than they can by honest labour, that they neglect their labour for the sake of this vile and destructive trade."† Mr. Lyndsay did not hesitate to say—for which boldness he was called to account by a portion of his constituents—that some high-church Presbyterians, "who assert and maintain an absolute independency on the civil power," and taught that any statute "is iniquity established by law," indirectly encouraged the outrages of "men of weak understanding and strong passions."

The small sea-ports on the coast of Fife were more remarkable than any other districts of the wide and ill-defended sea-board of Scotland, as the haunts of the most daring bands of systematic smugglers. Two such persons, named Wilson and Robertson, having had some goods seized by the officers of revenue, entered with two associates the custom-house of Pittenween, and, when the collector fled, carried off a large sum of money. Wilson and Robertson were apprehended, were tried, and were sentenced to death. Mr. Lyndsay related that Wilson maintained, to the last moment, that he was unjustly condemned. "He admitted," to one of the reverend ministers of Edinburgh, "that he had taken money from a collector of the revenue by violence; that he did it because he

* Quoted in Burton's "History of Scotland," vol. ii. p. 267.
† "Parliamentary History," vol. x. col. 253.

knew no other way of coming at it; that the officers of the revenue had by their practice taught him this was lawful, for they had often seized and carried off his goods by violence; and so long as they had goods of greater value in their hands than all the money he took from them, they were still in his debt, and he had done no wrong.'* There can be no doubt that the mob of Edinburgh, and many above the mob, took the same view of Wilson's offence; and held the same opinion about revenue laws.

The attempt of Wilson and Robertson to escape from the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, when Wilson, a bulky man, stuck fast in the iron bars of his cell, is as well known as any of the adventures of Jack Sheppard. His generous effort to save his comrade after the condemned sermon in the Tolbooth church, has redeemed his memory from the ignominy of the common malefactor. Surrounded by four keepers, Wilson held two with his hands and a third with his teeth, whilst Robertson knocked down the fourth and escaped. This heroism made Wilson's own fate certain. He was executed on the 14th of April; whilst the populace looked on with stern compassion. No attempt at rescue was made, for the place of execution was not only surrounded by the city-guard, but by a detachment of the Welsh Fusiliers. After the body was taken down, a rush was made to seize it from the hangman. The populace then attacked the city-guard, who were under the command of John Porteous, their captain. Porteous was a man of strong passions, very often brought into conflict with the blackguards of the city, and now in peculiarly ill-temper from his dignity being interfered with by the unusual presence of a military force, called to assist in keeping the peace. He is said to have fired himself; he certainly ordered his gendarmerie to fire upon the people. Several persons were killed or wounded. The Fusiliers also fired; but in firing above the heads of the mob, they hit several who were lookers-on from the adjacent windows. Porteous was brought to trial in July, before the High Court of Justiciary, on a charge of murder, for having caused the death of citizens without authority from the civil magistrate. He was convicted, and sentenced to capital punishment; but his conduct being considered by the Council of Regency in London as an act of self-defence, he was reprieved by the English Secretary of the State. His execution had been fixed by the authorities of Edinburgh for the 8th of September. The news of the reprieve produced a sensation that foreboded mischief.

The 8th of September fell on a Wednesday. A report had gone forth that some tumult would take place on that day, when the populace, being disappointed of a legal sacrifice to their revenge,

* "Parliamentary History," vol. x. col. 254.

would attempt some daring act against Porteous. This was deemed a foolish story; but the Lord Provost of Edinburgh took some precautions to resist any outrage on that Wednesday.* Porteous himself had no fears. A Scottish clergyman, Mr. Yates, had preached in the Tolbooth church, Porteous being present, on Sunday the 5th; and he afterwards saw Porteous, and told him of the report, and advised him to be cautious about admitting persons to his room. Porteous slighted his information; and said, "were he once at liberty, he was so little apprehensive of the people, that he would not fear to walk at the Cross of Edinburgh with only his cane in his hand as usual." † The Tolbooth of the Scottish capital, like most other places of confinement, had its feasts for those who could pay, and its starvation for those who were destitute. On the evening of Tuesday, the 7th of September, Porteous was surrounded by a jolly party, draining the punch-bowl in toasting the speedy liberation of their friend. There was another remarkable festal assembly in Edinburgh that night. Mr. Lind, captain of the city-guard; deposed that, "being informed that the mob was gathering, he went to Clark's tavern, where the Provost was drinking with Mr. Bur, and other officers of his majesty's ship the Dreadnought, then stationed in the road of Leith; and upon acquainting him with the danger, the Provost desired him to go immediately back, and draw out his men, and that he would instantly follow him, and put himself at the head of the guard to face the mob." ‡ The mob was quicker than the Provost or his captain. They had disarmed the guard had taken possession of the guard-house; and were arming themselves with muskets, halberds, and Lochaber axes, which they there found. Edinburgh had suddenly fallen into the complete possession of a lawless multitude. The city-walls on the east and south sides had gates, which, after sunset, were shut and guarded. The mob had secured the West-port, the Cowgate, and the Netherbow-port, nailing them up, and barricading them, to prevent military aid coming from the suburbs. A loch closed the city on the north. On the west was the Castle, from which the garrison might have descended upon the High street. In the Canongate was a regiment under the command of major-general Moyle. It was given in evidence that the Provost, when he sallied forth from his tavern, requested Mr. Lyndsay to carry a verbal order to major-general Moyle to send a force to his aid. The member for Edinburgh executed his commission, but the general, seeing how a jury of Edinburgh had convicted a military

* Evidence before Parliament—"Parliamentary History," vol. x. col. 267.
† *Ibid.*, col. 268. ‡ *Ibid.*, col. 269.

officer of murder, when he acted without explicit orders from the civil magistrate, refused to move upon receiving only a verbal message. The governor of the Castle did not choose to act on his own responsibility. Thus secure, the multitude went about their work with a calm resolution which was long attributed to an organization proceeding from leaders much above the ordinary directors of mobs. No point was neglected. Magistrates rushed out to ring the alarm-bell; the tower in which the bell hung was in the possession of the insurgents. Onward they marched, in numbers rapidly increasing, to the Tolbooth. Here they make a solemn demand that captain John Porteous should be delivered up to them. Being refused, as they expected, they proceeded to batter the outer gate. Crowbars and sledge-hammers were employed in vain. Fire accomplished what bodily strength could not effect. The rioters rushed to the apartment of the unhappy man. He was concealed in the chimney; but they dragged him down, and bade him prepare for death. Struggling ineffectually, he was carried to the Grass-market, the usual place of execution. He was carried on men's hands, as two boys carry a third, by grasping each other's wrists. This stern multitude went on in silence, the glare of torches lighting up their lowering brows and the pallid features of their victim. Near the spot where the gallows had stood on which Wilson was hanged, a pole projected from a dyer's shop. A rope was fastened round the neck of Porteous; and then the subordination of the rioters to some recognized authority was manifest. "Walker, the town-officer, whom the mob had so pelted that he was obliged to throw off his livery-coat, declared he was by when they murdered Porteous; and that one more forward than the rest was checked by the others, and desired to wait for orders: that he thereupon quitted the end of the rope, which by this time being about Porteous's neck, he was ready to have hoisted him up, and went about to another, who very composedly gave him orders; and that he returned and drew the rope up, and hanged Porteous." * He was not hanged quickly. There was a terrible scene of butchery. Mr. Lyndsay gave in evidence, that he returned [from major-general Moyle's house] about five in the morning; and, with several who had been with the Provost all night, went to the Grass-market, where the body of Porteous yet hung, and a number of people standing about it. But he further declared, that, as he returned from his fruitless mission, "the mob was pouring in vast shoals out of the town into the country; and that he did not remember any one face of the many hundreds he met with, though he had

* "Parliamentary History," vol. x. col. 271.

lived and borne the highest offices in the city for many years." * The organizers of this daring act were never discovered, after the most rigid investigation. Duncan Forbes, who had conducted an inquiry, as Lord Advocate, into the circumstances of the case, could fix upon no leader of the rioters, and he ascribed the deed to the impulse of one of "the headstrong mobs" with which Scotland was formerly too well acquainted. General Wade, who had been sent down to assist Forbes in the inquiry, stated in his place in Parliament, that the servant of an artisan in Edinburgh had been told, three or four days before the murder, that Tuesday night was appointed for revenging innocent blood, and he was to attend when he heard "the ruff of a drum." General Wade maintained that there was nothing in the whole proceeding that looked like the precipitate measures of a giddy mob; and that he never saw, or ever heard of, any military disposition better laid down, or more resolutely executed, than the murderous plan of these rioters. It would appear that the Porteous mob were not without precedents for their guidance. Major-general Moyle, in relating the circumstances to the duke of Newcastle, thus wrote: "I cannot but mention to your grace that this is the third prisoner, within the memory of man, that has been taken out of a Tolbooth here, and barbarously murdered by the mob." Mr. Patrick Lyndsay combated the notion that any above the lowest class of the people were concerned in the Porteous murder, or looked with approbation upon it. He drew a distinction between an English and a Scotch mob. The English did not "do mischief with their eyes open." The lowest class of people in Scotland, he said, "have generally speaking a turn to enthusiasm; and so strong is the influence, such is the force of delusion, that they can work themselves up to a firm persuasion and thorough belief that any mischief they are to do is not only lawful but laudable; that it is their duty to do it; and, from a religious principle, to do it at any risk, even at the risk of their lives." † The earl of Isla reported to Walpole, that "all the lower ranks of the people who had distinguished themselves by pretences to a superior sanctity, talk of the murder as the hand of God doing justice."

The Porteous outrage took place whilst queen Caroline was regent in the absence of the king. She felt it as an insult to her authority, and the ministry were inclined to visit the apparent neglect of the magistracy of Edinburgh with serious humiliation. A Bill was brought in for disabling the Lord Provost from ever holding office, and for imprisoning him; for abolishing the town-guard

* "Parliamentary History," vol. x. col. 272. † *Ibid.*, col. 252.

of Edinburgh; for taking away the gates of the Netherbow-port. The Scottish peers, and the Scottish members of the Commons, fired up at this supposed assault upon the national honour. In the course of the parliamentary inquiry, the Scottish judges were summoned to give evidence upon some legal points. It was contended by the duke of Argyle and other peers that these judges ought to sit on the Woolsack as do the English judges, when their presence is wanted in the House of Peers. There was no precedence for such a course, and the Scottish judges were required to stand at the bar. Scotland was outraged by this distinction. The debate in both Houses upon the proposed measure of pains and penalties assumed the character of a national controversy. "Unequal dealing," "partial procedure," "oppression to be resisted," and an independent nation "forced back into a state of enmity," were expressions which showed the danger to which this affair was tending. Walpole hinted that when the Bill was committed he should not object to amendments founded on reason and equity. When it finally went to the Lords, it merely disqualified the Lord Provost from holding office, and imposed a fine upon the city of Edinburgh of £2000, for the benefit of the widow of Porteous. The impartial author of the modern History of Scotland has remarked, that "no one can read these debates without seeing reasons why the conduct of Scotland was so different from that of England in the insurrection which broke out eight years afterwards." * Although the modified Statute upon the Porteous riot could scarcely be a reasonable cause for national irritation, a supplementary measure produced a violent opposition from the Presbyterian Clergy. It was enacted that they should read from their pulpits, once a month, a proclamation for discovering the murderers of captain Porteous. This was held to be an Erastian measure, interfering with the spiritual authority of the Kirk. That proclamation also contained the offensive words, "the Lords Spiritual in Parliament assembled." This was held to be a recognition of that church-government which Scotland had rejected. At this period there was a schism amongst the Scottish clergy, and this measure had not a healing tendency. Some read the proclamation; some refused to do so. Compliance with the order of the Government was held to be faithlessness to the Church.

The state of popular feeling in regard to the highest personages in the realm was, in 1736, seriously alarming. The king during the whole summer and autumn had remained in Germany. The queen was little seen as the winter advanced, for she lived a re-

* Burton, vol. ii. p. 328.

tired life at Kensington; and, strange as it may seem, we find in a letter from lord Hervey to his mother, written in November, that the road between London and Kensington "is grown so infamously bad that we live here in the same solitude as we should do if cast on a rock in the middle of the ocean." * The roads to Kensington through the park were equally impassable. People of all ranks were indignant at the king's long stay in Germany. The national ill-humour was expressed in pasquinades. On the gate of St. James's Palace this notice was stuck up: "Lost or strayed out of this house, a man who has left a wife and six children on the parish Whoever will give any tidings of him to the churchwardens of St. James's parish, so as he may be got again, shall receive four shillings and sixpence reward. N.B. This reward will not be increased, nobody judging him to deserve a Crown." † The prince of Wales was a favourite of the people. It was well known that he was disliked by the king and queen, and that was enough to make him popular. He had been disappointed in the Prussian match; and at the beginning of 1736, being impatient to marry, he had been told that a bride would be found for him in the person of the princess of Saxe Gotha. The lady arrived in England on the 25th of April, and was married two days after. She was only seventeen years of age; could speak no English, and little French; but she had good sense; and in the difficult circumstances of her subsequent life had to exercise much prudence and sagacity. On the prince's marriage, the Houses of Parliament addressed the king. On this occasion an orator, who is mentioned by lord Hervey as "Cornet Pitt," contrived, in his first speech, to throw so much covert sarcasm into his praise of the king for consenting to the prince's demand that a wife should be found for him, that "Cornet Pitt" was broke at the end of the Session. The prince became "parliamentary fireship to his majesty's opposition." ‡ He was beloved in the city and hated at St. James's. His good deeds won no favour from his family. There was a fire in the Temple, and he worked all night in helping to put it out. The court said he was of no use there; and that he only pretended to have been struck on the head by a falling beam. He was liberal to public charities. This it was held was not benevolence but popularity-hunting. He was certainly a weak young man; he had been notoriously dissolute. But he advantageously contrasted with his father, whose irregularities of life were not controlled by his advancing years. In December the king came home, after the public

* Hervey, vol. ii. p. 190. † *Ibid.*, p. 191.
‡ Carlyle. Friedrich, vol. ii. p. 577.

hopes rather than fears had been excited by the belief that he was at sea, during a terrible storm in which many ships were wrecked. The differences between the prince of Wales and his father soon became notorious. The allowance which the king made to the prince was £50,000 per annum. Private advisers of the prince called this allowance mean, and recommended him to apply boldly to Parliament for an annual grant of £100,000 out of the king's Civil List, and be no longer dependent on his father. Some wiser persons earnestly counselled forbearance. But the prince was obstinate; and he had the indelicacy to make promises to peers and commoners of what he would do for them when he came to the throne, if they would support him now. One of the most intriguing of politicians has left a minute account of his own share in this affair.* He took great credit for having laboured to dissuade the prince from persevering in his rash course; and really seems to have honestly set forth the danger of a family quarrel, and the alternative to which Frederick was driving both Houses of Parliament,—that of supporting the prince who wore the Crown, or of siding with the heir-apparent. The prince of Wales was obstinate. Contrary to expectation the ministry had a majority of thirty in the Commons. The question was subsequently tried in the Lords, and there also the prince failed.

Such a rupture between a passionate father and a flighty son could not pass off without some lasting effects. The king wanted to turn the prince and his household out of St. James's; but Walpole dissuaded his majesty from that step. At last, one of the most extraordinary events in the private annals of royal houses separated the king and his son for years. The prince and princess of Wales were residing with the king and queen at Hampton Court, the princess being far advanced in pregnancy. The royal family had dined together in public on Sunday, the 31st of July. In the evening the princess was taken ill. The prince, against all remonstrance, insisted that his wife should not be confined at Hampton Court. She was forced into a coach, with the prince and three ladies; was driven at full gallop to St. James's; and there gave birth to a girl within an hour of her arrival. Only two of the great officers of state were present. The king and queen at Hampton Court went to bed, in entire ignorance of the piece of insanity which their son had perpetrated. They were awakened by a messenger from London about two o'clock; and by four o'clock the queen was at St. James's. No apology was then made by the prince—no explanation given. Horace Walpole very sen-

* Appendix to Diary of George Bubb Doddington, afterwards Lord Melcombe.

sibly asks, "Had he no way of affronting his parents but by venturing to kill his wife and the heir to the crown?" A correspondence ensued between George II. and his rash son; of which the issue was, that although the prince confessed that he had been in the wrong, the harsh father issued this peremptory command to him—"It is my pleasure that you leave St. James's with all your family." Frederick quitted the palace, and took up his residence at Norfolk House, in St. James's Square. The people rejoiced in the birth of a princess; for they said, "if ever she came to the Crown, what had been so much wished ever since the Hanover family came to the throne, by every one who understood and wished the interest of England, must happen,—which was the disjoining the Electorate of Hanover from the Crown of England." *

In his quarrel with the king and queen, the prince of Wales managed to add to his own popularity. The general dislike towards the father made the son who opposed him a public favourite. The prince, however, contrived to make it appear, that not to the sovereign, but to the chief minister, what he considered as injustice was to be imputed. When the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London addressed their congratulations to him on the birth of a princess, Frederick said he knew the value of their friendship, and should never look upon them as "beggars." The "sturdy beggars" of Walpole's rash speech in the Excise year was never to be forgotten. The prince went to the performance of Cato. At the lines

"When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honour is a private station,"

the audience huzzaed, and the prince joined in the applause in a very marked manner. In the midst of these unseemly exhibitions queen Caroline was taken dangerously ill, on the 9th of November. She had long been afflicted with a serious complaint, which she bore with heroic fortitude, concealing from every one, even from her physicians, the real nature of her malady. The prince of Wales expressed great anxiety to see his mother. He was forbidden by the king to come to St. James's. The queen herself said to the king, according to lord Hervey, "I am so far from desiring to see him, that nothing but your absolute commands should ever make me consent to it." This was on the second day of her serious illness. On the third day the king, who for fourteen years had been aware of her dangerous affliction, but who had promised never to mention it, thought it his duty to send for a surgeon and disclose what was so repugnant to the queen's false delicacy. It was soon found that the disease had gone too far to allow of hope.

* Lord Hervey's "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 413.

On the 14th, sir Robert Walpole arrived from Houghton. He was conducted by the king to her majesty's bedside. "The interview was short, but what the queen said was material, for these were her words: "My good sir Robert, you see me in a very indifferent situation. I have nothing to say to you, but to recommend the king, my children, and the kingdom, to your care." * Horace Walpole says, "As the king and sir Robert were alone, standing by her bedside, she pathetically recommended, not the minister to the sovereign, but the master to the servant. Sir Robert was alarmed, and feared the recommendation must have left a fatal impression; but, a short time after, the king, reading with sir Robert some intercepted letters from Germany, which said, that now the queen was gone sir Robert would have no protection,—'On the contrary,' said the king, 'you know she recommended me to you.'" † Lord Hervey relates a curious conversation between the great minister and himself, one night as they were hovering round this death-bed: "Oh, my lord," said sir Robert, "if this woman should die, what a scene of confusion will here be! Who can tell into what hands the king will fall? or who will have the management of him? I defy the ablest person in this kingdom to foresee what will be the consequence of this great event." "For my own part," replied lord Hervey, "I have not the least doubt how it will be. He will cry for her for a fortnight, forget her in a month, have two or three women that he will pass his time with; but whilst they have most of his time, a little of his money, less of his confidence, and no power, you will have all the credit, more power than ever you had, and govern him more absolutely than ever you did. Your credit before was through the medium of the queen, and all power through a medium must be weaker than when it operates directly. Besides, sir, all princes must now and then be deceived by their ministers, and as the king is much easier deceived than the queen, so your task, whenever that task is deceiving, will be much less difficult than it was before. In the first place, because the king is naturally much less suspicious than the queen; in the next, because he is less penetrating; and lastly, because he cares much less to converse with different people, and will hear nobody talk to him of business but yourself." "Oh! my lord," interrupted sir Robert, "though he will hear nobody but me, you do not know how often he refuses to hear me when it is on a subject he does not like: but by the queen I can with time fetch him round to those subjects again; she can make him do the same thing in another shape, and when I give her her lesson, can make him propose the very

* Lord Hervey, vol. ii. p. 516. † "Reminiscences."

thing as his own opinion which a week before he had rejected as mine." *

On Sunday night, the 20th of November, Caroline lay expecting a speedy relief to her sufferings. The king was asleep at the bed-foot; the princess Emily was also sleeping on a couch. Suddenly an attendant exclaimed that the queen was dying. All started up. "Open the window!" the queen exclaimed—and then said —"Pray." The princess Emily began to read a prayer, but before she repeated ten words all was over. The king, with all his silliness about mistresses—a silliness which he avowed even to his dying wife in well-known words, indicative of the loose morality of the period—loved and respected Caroline. "The grief he felt for the queen, as it was universally known, and showed a tenderness of which the world thought him before utterly incapable, made him for some time more popular and better spoken of than he had ever been before this incident." † Truly does Mr. Carlyle say, "There is something stoically tragic in the history of Caroline with her flighty vapouring little king: seldom had foolish husband so wise a wife." The one dark shade upon her character was her persevering dislike of her eldest son—a dislike almost approaching to hatred, and so opposed to the calm sense which was the usual guide of her actions. Her contemporaries saw this blot. The irony of Pope expressed it:

> "Hang the sad verse on Carolina's urn,
> And hail her passage to the realms of rest,
> All parts performed, and all her children blest."

In this aversion of the queen, as well as of the king, there was possibly some stronger motive than posterity will now ever know. The Memoirs of lord Hervey would probably have revealed, as was hinted in 1778, the origin of the antipathy of his parents to prince Frederick. But under the will of lord Hervey's son, the earl of Bristol, those Memoirs were not to be published till after the death of George III. The mystery was not solved when the Memoirs were published in 1848; for the nephew of the earl of Bristol caused many mutilations to be made in the manuscript which came into his possession. "It is evident," says a Reviewer of these Memoirs, "that the alienation between prince Frederick and, not only his father, but his mother, was strong and decided while he was yet in his early youth—years before he ever saw England." ‡

* "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 523. † Lord Hervey, vol. ii. p. 540.
‡ "Quarterly Review," vol. lxxxii. p. 502.