Bradlaugh Charles

The Impeachment of the House of Brunswick

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PREFACE TO FIFTH AND AMERICAN EDITION

The kindly reception given to me personally throughout those portions of the United States it has yet been my good fortune to visit, tempts me to comply with the request of many friends, that I should issue here an edition of my impeachment of the reigning family in England. The matter contained in these pages has been delivered orally throughout Great Britain, and, with one exception, no Digitized by has been offered to it. Abuse has been plentiful, and threats of prosecution not infrequent; but although at least one hundred and fifty thousand persons have listened to the lectures, and four editions of the pamphlet have been exhausted in England, only one attempt was made, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, to advance any kind of reply. And even in this case, when a formal written discussion had been commenced, the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* refused to allow any rejoinder to his second paper.

It is sometimes alleged against me that the pamphlet is a too personal criticism; my answer is that in every case the points dealt with have affected our national honor, or augmented our national taxation.

This pamphlet is not a Republican one; it is only an indictment alleging the incapacity and viciousness of the House of Brunswick, and a statement of the legal right of the British people to dethrone the succession on a vacancy arising.

That I am a Republican is perfectly true; that I believe a Republican form of government to be possible, by peaceful means in England, is well-known to those who have heard my lectures; and, in issuing this essay to American readers, I desire to show that there are no reasons of personal loyalty, there is no plea of gratitude for personal service, which ought to be urged on behalf of George I. and his descendants.

English by birth, by hope and in ambition, I seek to win from the descendants of those who broke loose from the Brunswicks nearly a century ago, sympathy for those who work with me now to a like end. If I fail, the fault is in the weakness of my tongue and pen, and not from any defects in the cause I advocate.

The more than fair hearing given to my voice emboldens me to hope a patient investigation of the case my pen presents; and should a verdict be given on this great continent unfavorable to me, I feel confident the jury of my readers will patiently weigh my statements before delivering their judgment.

Charles Bradlaugh.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTORY

By statutes of the 12 and 13 Will. HE., and 6 Anne c. 11, Article 2, the British Parliament, limiting the monarchy to members of the Church of England, excluded the Stuarts, and from and after the death of King William and the Princess Anne without heirs, contrived that the Crown of this kingdom should devolve upon the Princess Sophia, Duchess Dowager of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants. Heirs failing to Anne, although seventeen times pregnant, and Sophia dying about seven weeks before Anne, her son George succeeded under these Acts as George I. of England and Scotland.

It is said, and perhaps truly, that the German Protestant Guelph was an improvement on the Catholic Stuart, and the Whigs take credit for having effected this change in spite of the Tories. This credit they deserve; but it must not be forgotten that it was scarce half a century before that the entire aristocracy, including the patriotic Whigs, coalesced to restore to the throne the Stuarts, who had been got rid of under Cromwell. If this very aristocracy, of which the Whigs form part, had never assisted in calling back the Stuarts in the person of Charles II., there would have been no need to thank them for again turning that family out.

The object of the present essay is to submit reasons for the repeal of the Acts of Settlement and Union, so far as the succession to the throne is concerned, after the abdication or demise of the present monarch. It is of course assumed, as a point upon which all supporters of the present Royal Family will agree, that the right to deal with the throne is inalienably vested in the English people, to be exercised by them through their representatives in Parliament. The right of the members of the House of Bruns wick to succeed to the throne is a right accruing only from the acts of Settlement and Union, it being clear that, except from this statute, they have no claim to the throne. It is therefore submitted, that should Parliament in its wisdom see fit to enact that after the death or abdication of her present Majesty, the throne shall no longer be filled by a member of the House of Brunswick, such an enactment would be perfectly within the competence of Parliament. It is further submitted that the Parliament has full and uncontrollable authority to make any enactment, and to repeal any enactment heretofore made, even if such new statute, or the repeal of any old statute, should in truth change the constitution of the Empire, or modify the character and powers of either Parliamentary Chamber. The Parliament of the English Commonwealth, which met on April 25th, 1660, gave the Crown to Charles II., and the Parliament of the British Monarchy has the undoubted right to withhold the Crown from Albert Edward, Prince of Wales. The Convention which assembled at Westminster on January 22d, 1688, took away the crown from James II., and passed over his son, the then Prince of Wales, as if he had been non-existent. This Convention was declared to have all the authority of Parliament – ergo. Parliament has admittedly the right to deprive a living King of his Crown, and to treat a Prince of Wales as having no claim to the succession.

In point of fact two of the clauses of the Act of Settlement were repealed in the reign of Queen Anne, and a third clause was repealed early in the reign of George I., showing that this particular statute has never been considered immutable or irrepealable. It is right to add that the clauses repealed were only of consequence to the nation, and that their repeal was no injury to the Crown. The unbounded right of the supreme Legislature to enlarge its own powers was contended for and admitted in 1716, when the duration of Parliament was extended four years, a triennial Parliament declaring itself and all future Parliaments septennial. Furthermore, it has been held to be sedition to deny the complete authority of the Irish Parliament to put an end to its own existence.

It has been admitted to be within the jurisdiction of Parliament to give electoral privileges to citizens theretofore unenfranchised; Parliament claims the unquestioned right to disfranchise persons, hitherto electors, for misconduct in the exercise of electoral rights, and in its pleasure to remove and annul any electoral disability. The right of Parliament to decrease or increase the number of

representatives for any borough has never been disputed, and its authority to decrease the number of Peers sitting and voting in the House of Lords was recognized in passing the Irish Church Disestablishment Bill, by which several Bishops were summarily ejected from amongst the Peers. It is now submitted that Parliament possesses no Legislative right but what it derives from the people, and that the people are under no irrevocable contract or obligation to continue any member of the House of Brunswick on the throne. In order to show that this is not a solitary opinion, the following Parlimentary *dicta* are given: —

The Honorable Temple Luttrell, in a speech made in the House of Commons, on the 7th November, 1775, showed "that of thirty-three sovereigns since William the Conqueror, thirteen only have ascended the throne by divine hereditary right… The will of the people, superseding any hereditary claim to succession, at the commencement of the twelfth century placed Henry I. on the throne, "and this subject to conditions as to laws to be made by Henry. King John was compelled solemnly to register an assurance of the ancient rights of the people in a formal manner;" and this necessary work was accomplished by the Congress at Runnymede, in the year 1115. "Sir, in the reign of Henry III. (about the year 1223), the barons, clergy and freeholders, understanding that the King, as Earl of Poictou, had landed some of his continental troops in the western ports of England, with a design to strengthen a most odious and arbitrary set of ministers, they assembled in a Convention or Congress, from whence they despatched deputies to King Henry, declaring that if he did not immediately send back those Poictouvians, and remove from his person and councils evil advisers, they would place upon the throne a Prince who should better observe the laws of the land. Sir, the King not only hearkened to that Congress, but shortly after complied with every article of their demand, and publicly notified his reformation. Now, Sir, what are we to call that assembly which dethroned Edward II. when the Archbishop of Canterbury preached a sermon on this Text, 'The voice of the people is the voice of God'?" "A Prince of the house of Lancaster was invited over from banishment, and elected by the people to the throne" on the fall of Richard II. "I shall next proceed to the general Convention and Congress, which, in 1461, enthroned the Earl of March by the name of Edward IV., the Primate of all England collecting the suffrages of the people." "In 1659, a Convention or Congress restored legal Monarchy in the person of Charles II."

William Pitt, on the 16th December, 1788, being then Chancellor of the Exchequer, contended that "the right of providing for the deficiency of Royal authority rested with the two remaining branches of the Legislature;" and again, "on the disability of the Sovereign, where was the right to be found? It was to be found in the voice, in the sense of the people; with them it rested." On the 22d December, Mr. Pitt said that Mr. Fox had contended that "the two Houses of Parliament cannot proceed to legislate without a King." His (Mr. Pitt's) answer was: "The conduct of the Revolution had contradicted that assertion; they had acted legislatively, and, no King being present, they must, consequently, have acted without a King."

Mr. Hardinge, a barrister of great repute, and afterwards Solicitor-General and Judge, in the same debate, said: "The virtues of our ancestors and the genius of the Government accurately understood, a century ago, had prompted the Lords and Commons of the realm to pass a law without a King; and a law which, as he had always read it, had put upon living record this principle: 'That whenever the supreme executive hand shall have lost its power to act, the people of the land, fully and freely represented, can alone repair the defect.'"

On the 26th December, in the House of Lords, discussing the power to exclude a sitting Monarch from the throne, the Earl of Abingdon said: "Will a King exclude himself? No! no! my Lords, that exclusion appertains to us and to the other House of Parliament exclusively. It is to us it belongs; it is our duty. It is the business of the Lords and Commons of Great Britain, and of us alone, as the trustees and representatives of the nation." And following up this argument, Lord Abingdon contended that in the contingency he was alluding to, "the right to new model or alter the succession

vests in the Parliament of England without the King, in the Lords and Commons of Great Britain solely and exclusively."

Lord Stormont, in the same debate, pointed out that William III. "possessed no other right to the throne than that which he derived from the votes of the two Houses."

The Marquis of Lansdowne said: "One of the best constitutional writers we had was Mr. Justice Foster, who, in his book on the 'Principles of the Constitution,' denies the right even of hereditary succession, and says it is no right whatever, but merely a political expedient… The Crown, Mr. Justice Foster said, was not merely a descendable property like a laystall, or a pigstye, but was put in trust for millions, and for the happiness of ages yet unborn, which Parliament has it always in its power to mould, to shape, to alter, to fashion, just as it shall think proper. And in speaking of Parliament," his Lordship said, "Mr. Justice Foster repeatedly spoke of the two Houses of Parliament only."

My object being to procure the repeal of the only title under which any member of the House of Brunswick could claim to succeed the present sovereign on the throne, or else to procure a special enactment which shall for the future exclude the Brunswicks, as the Stuarts were excluded in 1688 and 1701, the following grounds are submitted as justifying and requiring such repeal or new enactment: —

1st. That during the one hundred and fifty-seven years the Brunswick family have reigned over the British Empire, the policy and conduct of the majority of the members of that family, and especially of the various reigning members, always saving and excepting her present Majesty, have been hostile to the welfare of the mass of the people. This will be sought to be proved at length by a sketch of the principal events in the reign of each monarch, from August 1st, 1714, to the present date.

2d. That during the same period of one hundred and fifty-seven years, fifteen-sixteenths of the entire National Debt have been created, and that this debt is in great part the result of wars arising from the mischievous and pro-Hanoverian policy of the Brunswick family.

3d. That in consequence of the incompetence or want of desire for governmental duty on the part of the various reigning members of the House of Brunswick, the governing power of the country has been practically limited to a few families, who have used government in the majority of instances as a system of machinery for securing place and pension for themselves and their associates; while it is submitted that government should be the best contrivance of national wisdom for the alleviation of national suffering and promotion of national happiness. Earl Grey even admits that "Our national annals, since the Revolution of 1688, present a sad picture of the selfishness, baseness and corruption of the great majority of the actors on the political stage."

4th. That a huge pension list has been created, the recipients of the largest pensions being in most cases persons who are already members of wealthy families, and who have done nothing whatever to justify their being kept in idleness at the national expense, while so many workers in the agricultural districts are in a state of semi-starvation; so many toilers in large works in Wales, Scotland, and some parts of England, are in constant debt and dependence; and while large numbers of the Irish peasantry – having for many generations been denied life at home – have until lately been driven to seek those means of existence across the sea which their own fertile land should have amply provided for them.

5th. That the monarchs of the Brunswick family have been, except in a few cases of vicious interference, costly puppets, useful only to the governing aristocracy as a cloak to shield the real wrong doers from the just reproaches of the people.

6th. That the Brunswick family have shown themselves utterly incapable of initiating or encouraging wise legislation. That George I. was shut out practically from the government by his utter ignorance of the English language, his want of sympathy with British habits, and his frequent absences from this country. A volume of history, published by Messrs. Longmans in 1831, says that "George I. continued a German princeling on the British throne – surrounded still by his petty Hanoverian satellites, and so ignorant even of the language of his new subjects, that his English minister, who

understood neither French nor German, could communicate with him only by an imperfect jargon of barbarous Latin." He "discarded his wife, and had two mistresses publicly installed in their Court rights and privileges." Earl Grey declares that "the highly beneficial practice of holding Cabinet Councils without the presence of the sovereign arose from George the First's not knowing English." Leslie describes George I. as altogether ignorant of our language, laws, customs and constitution. Madame de Maintenon writes of him as disgusted with his subjects. That George II. was utterly indifferent to English improvement, and was mostly away in Hanover. Lord Hervey's "Memoirs" portray him as caring for nothing but soldiers and women, and declare that his highest ambition was to combine the reputation of a great general with that of a successful libertine. That George III. was repeatedly insane, and that in his officially lucid moments his sanity was more dangerous to England than his madness. Buckle says of him that he was "despotic as well as superstitious… Every liberal sentiment, everything approaching to reform, nay, even the mere mention of inquiry, was an abomination in the eyes of that narrow and ignorant prince." Lord Grenville, his Prime Minister, said of him: "He had perhaps the narrowest mind of any man I ever knew." That George IV. was a dissipated, drunken debauchee, bad husband, unfaithful lover, untrustworthy friend, unnatural father, corrupt regent, and worse king. Buckle speaks of "the incredible baseness of that ignoble voluptuary." That William IV. was obstinate, but fortunately fearful of losing his crown, gave way to progress with a bad grace when chicanery was no longer possible, and continued resistance became dangerous.

7th. That under the Brunswick family, the national expenditure has increased to a frightful extent, while our best possessions in America have been lost, and our home possession, Ireland, rendered chronic in its discontent by the terrible misgovernment under the four Georges.

And 8th. That the ever increasing burden of the national taxation has been shifted from the land on to the shoulders of the middle and lower classes, the landed aristocracy having, until very lately, enjoyed the practical, monopoly of tax-levying power.

CHAPTER II. THE REIGN OF GEORGE I

On August 1st, 1714, George Lewis, Elector of Hanover, and great-grandson of James I., of England, succeeded to the throne; but being apparently rather doubtful as to the reception he would meet in this country, he delayed visiting his new dominions until the month of October. In April, 1714, there was so little disposition in favor of the newly-chosen dynasty, that the Earl of Oxford entreated George not to bring any of his family into this country without Queen Anne's express consent. It seems strange to read in the correspondence of Madame Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orleans, her hesitation "to rejoice at the accession of our Prince George, for she had no confidence in the English;" and her fears "that the inconstancy of the English will in the end produce some scheme which may be injurious to the French monarchy." She adds: "If the English were to be trusted, I should say that it is fortunate the Parliaments are in favor of George, but the more one reads the history of English revolutions, the more one is compelled to remark the eternal hatred which the people of that nation have had towards their kings, as well as their fickleness." To-day it is the English who charge the French with fickleness. Thackeray says of George I. that "he showed an uncommon prudence and coolness of behavior when he came into his kingdom, exhibiting no elation; reasonably doubtful whether he should not be turned out some day; looking upon himself only as a lodger, and making the most of his brief tenure of St. James's and Hampton Court, plundering, it is true, somewhat, and dividing amongst his German followers; but what could be expected of a sovereign who at home could sell his subjects at so many ducats per head, and make no scruple in so disposing of them?" At the accession of George I. the national debt of this country, exclusive of annuities, was about £36,000,000; after five Brunswicks have left us, it is £800,000,000 for Great Britain and Ireland, and much more, than £110,000,000 for India. The average annual national expenditure under the rule of George I. was £5,923,079; to-day it is more than £70,000, -000, of which more than £20,000,000 have been added in the last twenty years. During the reign of George I. land paid very nearly one-fourth the whole of the taxes; to-day it pays less than one-seventieth part; and yet, while its proportion of the burden is so much lighter, its exaction from labor in rent is ten times heavier.

George I. came to England without his wife, the Princess of Zelle. Years before, he had arrested her and placed her in close confinement in Ahlden Castle, on account of her intrigue with Philip, Count Konigsmark, whom some say George I. suspected of being the actual father of the Electoral Prince George, afterwards George II. To use the language of a writer patronized by George, Prince of Wales, in 1808, "The coldness between George I. and his son and successor, George II., may be said to have been *almost coeval with the existence* of the latter." Our King, George I., described by Thackeray as a "cold, selfish libertine," had Konigsmark murdered in the palace of Heranhausen; confined his wife, at twenty-eight years of age, in a dungeon, where she remained until she was sixty; and when George Augustus, Electoral Prince of Hanover, tried to get access to his mother, George Lewis, then Elector of Hanover, arrested Prince George also, and it is said, would have put him to death if the Emperor of Germany had not protected him as a Prince of the German Empire. During the reign of George II., Frederick, Prince of Wales, whom his father denounced as a "changeling," published an account of how George I. had turned Frederick's father out of the palace. These Guelphs have been a loving family. The *Edinburgh Review* declares that "the terms on which the eldest sons of this family have always lived with their fathers have been those of distrust, opposition, and hostility." Even after George Lewis had ascended the throne of England, his hatred to George Augustus was so bitter, that there was some proposition that James, Earl Berkeley and Lord High Admiral, should carry off the Prince to America and keep him there.

Thackeray says: "When George I. made his first visit to Hanover, his son was appointed regent during the Royal absence. But this honor was never again conferred on the Prince of Wales; he and his father fell out presently. On the occasion of the christening of his second son, a Royal row took place,

and the Prince, shaking his fist in the Duke of Newcastle's face, called him a rogue, and provoked his august father. He and his wife were turned out of St. James's, and their princely children taken from them, by order of the Royal head of the family. Father and mother wept piteously at parting from their little ones. The young ones sent some cherries, with their love, to papa and mamma, the parents watered the fruit with their tears. They had no tears thirty-five years afterwards, when Prince Frederick died, their eldest son, their heir, their enemy."

A satirical ballad on the expulsion of Prince George from St. James's Palace, which was followed by the death of the newly-christened baby Prince, is droll enough to here repeat: —

The King then took his gray goose quill,
And dip't it o'er in gall;
And, by Master Vice Chamberlain,
He sent to him this scrawl:

"Take hence yourself, and eke your spouse,
Your maidens and your men;
Your trunks, and all your trumpery,
Except your chil-de-ren."

The Prince secured with nimble haste
The Artillery Commission;
And with him trudged full many a maid,
But not one politician.

Up leapt Lepel, and frisked away,
As though she ran on wheels;
Miss Meadows made a woful face,
Miss Howe took to her heels.

But Belenden I needs must praise,
Who, as down stairs she jumps,
Sang "O'er the hills and far away,"
Despising doleful dumps.

Then up the street they took their way,
And knockt up good Lord Grant-ham;
Higgledy-piggledy they lay,
And all went *rantam scantam*.

Now sire and son had played their part,
What could befall beside?
Why, the poor babe took this to heart,
Kickt up its heels, and died.

Mahon, despite all his desire to make out the best for the Whig revolution and its consequences, occasionally makes some pregnant admissions: "The jealousy which George I. entertained for his son was no new feeling. It had existed even at Hanover, and had since been inflamed by an insidious motion of the Tories that out of the Civil List £100, -000 should be allotted as a separate revenue for the Prince of Wales. This motion was overruled by the Ministerial party, and its rejection offended

the Prince as much as its proposal had the King… In fact it is remarkable… that since that family has reigned, the heirs-apparent have always been on ill terms with the sovereign. There have been four Princes of Wales since the death of Anne, and all four have gone into bitter opposition." "That family," said Lord Carteret one day in full Council, "always has quarrelled, and always will quarrel, from generation to generation."

"Through the whole of the reign of George I., and through nearly half of the reign of George II.," says Lord Macaulay, "a Tory was regarded as the enemy of the reigning house, and was excluded from all the favors of the Crown. Though most of the country gentlemen were Tories, none but Whigs were appointed deans and bishops. In every County, opulent and well-descended Tory squires complained that their names were left out of the Commission of the Peace, while men of small estate and of mean birth, who were for toleration and excise, septennial parliaments and standing armies, presided at Quarter Sessions, and became deputy-lieutenants."

In attacking the Whigs, my object is certainly not to write in favor of the Tories, but some such work is needful while so many persons labor under the delusion that the Whigs have always been friends to liberty and progress.

Although George I. brought with him no wife to England, he was accompanied by at least two of his mistresses, and our peerage roll was enriched by the addition of Madame Kielmansegge as Countess of Darlington, and Mademoiselle Erangard Melosine de Schulenberg as Duchess of Kendal and Munster, Baroness of Glastonbury, and Countess of Feversham. These peeresses were received with high favor by the Whig aristocracy, although the Tories refused to countenance them, and "they were often hooted by the mob as they passed through the streets." The *Edinburgh Review* described them as "two big blowsy German women." Here I have no room to deal fairly with Charlotte Sophia, Baroness of Brentford and Countess of Darlington; her title is extinct, and I can write nothing of any good or useful act to revive her memory. Lord Chesterfield says of George I.: "No woman came amiss to him, if she were only very willing and very fat." John Heneage Jesse, in his "Memoirs of the Court of England" – speaking of the Duchess of Kendal, the Countess Platen (the co-partner in the murder of Konigsmark), afterwards Countess of Darlington, and many others less known to infamy – says that George I. "had the folly and wickedness to encumber himself with a seraglio of hideous German prostitutes." The Duchess of Kendal was for many years the chief mistress of George, and being tall and lean was caricatured as the Maypole or the Giraffe. She had a pension of £7,500 a year, the profits of the place of Master of the Horse, and other plunder. The Countess of Darlington's figure may be judged from the name of Elephant or Camel, popularly awarded to her. Horace Walpole says of her: "I remember as a boy being terrified at her enormous figure. The fierce black eyes, large and rolling, between two lofty-arched eyebrows, two acres of cheeks spread with crimson, an ocean of neck that overflowed, and was not distinguished from the lower part of her body, and no part restrained by stays. No wonder that a child dreaded such an ogress." She died 1724. Mahon says: "She was unwieldy in person, and rapacious in character."

Phillimore declares that "George I. brought with him from Hanover mistresses as rapacious, and satellites as ignoble, as those which drew down such deserved obloquy on Charles H., Bothman, Bernstoff, Robethon, and two Turks – Mustapha and Mahomet, – meddled more with public affairs, and were to the full as venal as Chiffin, Pepys and Smith." Mahon, who calls Robethon "a prying, impertinent, venomous creature," adds that "coming from a poor electorate, a flight of hungry Hanoverians, like so many famished vultures, fell with keen eyes and bended talons on the fruitful soil of England."

One of the earliest acts of the Whig aristocracy, in the reign of George I., was to pass a measure through Parliament, lengthening the existence of that very Parliament to seven years, and giving to the King the power to continue all subsequent Parliaments to a like period. The Triennial Parliaments were thus lengthened by a corrupt majority. For the committal of the Septennial Bill there was a majority of 72 votes, and it is alleged by the *Westminster Review*, "that about 82 members of the

honorable house had either fingered Walpole's gold, or pocketed the bank-notes which, by the purest accident, were left under their plates… In the ten years which preceded the Septennial Act, the sum expended in Secret Service money was £337,960. In the ten years which followed the passing of the Septennial Act, the sum expended for Secret Service was £1,453,400." The same writer says: "The friends and framers of the Triennial Bill were for the most part Tories, and its opponents for the most part Whigs. The framers and friends of the Bill for long Parliaments were all Whigs, and its enemies all Tories." When the measure came before the Lords, we find Baron Bernstoff, on the King's behalf, actually canvassing Peers' wives, with promises of places for their relatives, in order to induce them to get their husbands to vote for the Bill. Another of the early infringements of public liberty by the Whig supporters of George I., was the passing (1 George I., c. 5) the Riot Act, which had not existed from the accession of James I. to the death of Queen Anne. Sir John Hinde Cotton, a few years afterwards, described this Act, which is still the law of England, as "An Act by which a little dirty justice of the peace, the meanest and vilest tool a minister can use, had it in his power to put twenty or thirty of the best subjects of England to immediate death, without any trial or form, but that of reading a proclamation." In order to facilitate the King's desire to spend most of his time in Hanover, the third section of the Act of Settlement was repealed. Thackeray says: "Delightful as London city was, King George I. liked to be out of it as much as ever he could, and when there, passed all his time with his Germans. It was with them as with Blucher one hundred years afterwards, when the bold old Reiter looked down from St. Paul's and sighed out, 'Was fur plunder!' The German women plundered, the German secretaries plundered, the German cooks and intendants plundered; even Mustapha and Mahomet, the German negroes, had a share of the booty. Take what you can get, was the old monarch's maxim."

There was considerable discontent expressed in the early years of George's reign. Hallam says: "Much of this disaffection was owing to the cold reserve of George I., ignorant of the language, alien to the prejudices of his people, and continually absent in his electoral dominions, to which he seemed to sacrifice the nation's interest… The letters in Coxe's Memoirs of Walpole, abundantly show the German nationality, the impolicy and neglect of his duties, the rapacity and petty selfishness of George I. The Whigs were much dissatisfied, but the fear of losing their places made them his slaves." In order to add the duchies of Bremen and Verden to Hanover, in 1716, the King, as Elector, made a treaty with Denmark against Sweden, which treaty proved the source of those Continental wars, and the attendant system of subsidies to European powers, which have, in the main, created our enormous National Debt. Bremen and Verden being actually purchased for George I. as the Elector of Hanover, with English money, Great Britain in addition was pledged by George I. to guarantee Sleswick to Denmark. Sweden and Denmark quarrelling – and George I. as Elector of Hanover having, without the consent of the English Parliament, declared war against Sweden – an English fleet was sent into the Baltic to take up a quarrel with which we had no concern. In addition we were involved in a quarrel with Russia, because that power had interfered to prevent Mecklenburg being added to George's Hanoverian estates. The chief mover in this matter was the notorious Baron Bernstoff, who held some village property in Mecklenburg. In all these complications, Hanover gained, England lost. If Hanover found troops, England paid for them, while the Electorate solely reaped the benefit. Every thoughtful writer admits that English interests were always betrayed to satisfy Hanoverian greed.

The King's fondness for Germany provoked some hostility, and amongst the various squibs issued, one in 1716, from the pen of Samuel Wesley, brother of John Wesley, is not without interest. It represents a conversation between George and the Duchess of Kendal: —

"As soon as the wind it came fairly about, That kept the King in and his enemies out, He determined no longer confinement to bear, And thus to the Duchess his mind did declare:

"Quoth he, 'My dear Kenny, I've been tired along while, With living obscure in this poor little isle, And now Spain and Pretender have no more mines to spring, I'm resolved to go home and live like a King."

The Duchess approves of this, describes and laughs at all the persons nominated for the Council of Regency, and concludes: —

"On the whole, I'll be hanged if all over the realm There are thirteen such fools to be put to the helm; So for this time be easy, nor have jealous thought, They ha'n't sense to sell you, nor are worth being bought."

"'Tis for that (quoth the King, in very bad French), I chose them for my regents, and you for my wench, And neither, I'm sure, will my trust e'er betray, For the devil won't take you if I turn you away."

It was this same Duchess of Kendal who, as the King's mistress, was publicly accused of having received enormous sums of money from the South Sea Company for herself and the King, in order to shield from justice the principal persons connected with those terrible South Sea frauds, by which, in the year 1720, so many families were reduced to misery.

In 1717, Mr. Shippen, a member of the House of Commons, was committed to the Tower, for saying in his place in the House, that it was the "infelicity of his Majesty's reign that he is unacquainted with our language and constitution." Lord Macaulay tells us how Lord Carteret, afterwards Earl Granville, rose into favor. The King could speak no English; Carteret was the only one of the Ministry who could speak German. "All the communication that Walpole had with his master was in very bad Latin." The influence Carteret wielded over the King did not extend to every member of the Royal Family. The Princess of Wales afterwards described the Lords Carteret and Bolingbroke as two she had "long known to be two as worthless men of parts as any in the country, and who I have not only been often told are two of the greatest liars and knaves in any country, but whom my own observation and experience have found so."

Under George I. our standing army was nearly doubled by the Whig Ministry, and this when peace would rather have justified a reduction than an increase. The payments to Hanoverian troops commenced under this king, a payment which William Pitt afterwards earned the enmity of George II. by very sharply denouncing, and which payment was but a step in the system of continental subsidies which have helped to swell our national debt to its present enormous dimensions.

In this reign the enclosure of waste lands was practically commenced, sixteen enclosure Acts being passed, and 17, -660 acres of land enclosed. This example, once furnished, was followed in the next reign with increasing rapidity, 226 enclosure Acts being passed in the reign of George II., and 318,778 acres of land enclosed. As Mr. Fawcett states, up to 1845, more than 7,000,000 acres of land, over which the public possessed invaluable rights, have been gradually absorbed, and individuals wielding legislative influence have been enriched at the expense of the public and the poor.

Within six years from his accession, the King was about £600,000 in debt, and this sum was the first of a long list of debts discharged by the nation for these Brunswicks. When our ministers to-day talk of obligations on the part of the people to endow each additional member of the Royal Family, the memory of these shameful extravagances should have some effect. George I. had a civil list of £700,000 a year; he received £300,000 from the Royal Exchange Assurance Company, and £300,000 from the London Assurance Companies, and had one million voted to him in 1726 towards payment of his debts.

When the "South Sea Bill" was promoted in 1720, wholesale bribery was resorted to. Transfers of stock were proved to have been made to persons high in office. Two members of the Whig Ministry, Lord Sunderland and Mr. Aislabie, were so implicated that they had to resign their offices, and the last-named, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer, was ignominiously expelled the House of Commons. Royalty itself, or at least, the King's sultanas, and several of his German household, shared the spoil. £30,000 were traced to the King's mistresses, and a select committee of the House denounced the whole business as "a train of the deepest villany and fraud with which hell ever contrived to ruin a nation." Near the close of the reign, Lord Macclesfied, Lord Chancellor and favorite and tool of the King, was impeached for extortion and abuse of trust in his office, and, being convicted, was sentenced to pay a fine of £30,000. In 1716, Mademoiselle Schulenberg, then

Duchess of Munster, received £5,000 as a bribe for procuring the title of Viscount for Sir Henry St. John. In 1724, the same mistress, bribed by Lord Bolingbroke, successfully used her influence to pass an act through Parliament restoring him his forfeited estates. Mr. Chetwynd, says my Lady Cowper, in order to secure his position in the Board of Trade, paid to another of George's mistresses £500 down, agreed to allow her £200 a year as long as he held the place, and gave her also the fine, brilliant ear-rings she wore.

In 1724 there appeared in Dublin, the first of the famous "Drapier Letters," written by Jonathan Swift against Wood's coinage patent. A patent had been granted to a man named Wood for coining half-pence in Ireland. This grant was made under the influence of the Duchess of Kendal, the mistress of the King, and on the stipulation that she should receive a large share of the profits. These "Drapier Letters" were prosecuted by the Government, but Swift followed them with others; the grand juries refused to find true bills, and ultimately the patent was cancelled. Wood, or the Duchess, got as compensation a grant of a pension of £3,000 a year for eight years.

George died at Osnabruck, on his journey Hanover-wards, in June, 1727, having made a will by which he disposed of his money in some fashion displeasing to his son George II.; and as the *Edinburgh Review* tells us, the latter "evaded the old king's directions, and got his money by burning his will." In this, George II. only followed his royal father's example. When Sophia Dorothea died, she left a will bequeathing her property in a fashion displeasing to Greorge I., who, without scruple, destroyed the testament and appropriated the estate. George I. had also previously burned the will of his father-in-law, the Duke of Zell. At this time the destruction of a will was a capital felony in England.

In concluding this rough sketch of the reign of George I., it must not be forgotten that his accession meant the triumph of the Protestant caste in Ireland, and that under his rule much was done to render permanent the utter hatred manifested by the Irish people to their English conquerors, who had always preferred the policy of extermination to that of conciliation. Things were so sad in Ireland at the end of this reign, that Dean Swift, in bitter mockery, "wrote and published his 'Modest Proposal' for relieving the miseries of the people, by cooking and eating the children of the poor;" "a piece of the fiercest sarcasm," says Mitchell, "steeped in all the concentrated bitterness of his soul." Poor Ireland, she had, at any rate, nothing to endear to her the memory of George I.

CHAPTER III. THE REIGN OF GEORGE II

When George I. died there was so little interest or affection exhibited by his son and successor, that Sir Robert Walpole, on announcing to George II. that by the demise of his father he had succeeded to regal honors, was saluted with a volley of oaths, and "Dat is one big lie." No pretence even was made of sorrow. Greorge Augustus had hated George Lewis during life, and at the first council, when the will of the late King was produced by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the new monarch simply took it up and walked out of the room with the document, which was never seen again. Thackeray, who pictures George II. as "a dull, little man, of low tastes," says that he "made away with his father's will under the astonished nose of the Archbishop of Canterbury." A duplicate of this will having been deposited with the Duke of Brunswick, a large sum of money was paid to that Prince nominally as a subsidy by the English Government for the maintenance of troops, but really as a bribe for surrendering the document. A legacy having been left by this will to Lady Walsingham, threats were held out in 1733 by her then husband, Lord Chesterfield, and £20,000 was paid in compromise.

The eldest son of George II. was Frederick, born in 1706, and who up to 1728 resided permanently in Hanover. Lord Hervey tells us that the King hated his son Frederick, and that the Queen Caroline, his mother, abhorred him. To Lord Hervey the Queen says: "My dear Lord, I will give it you under my hand, if you are in any fear of my relapsing, that my dear first-born is the greatest ass, and the greatest liar, and the greatest *canaille* and the greatest beast in the whole world; and that I most heartily wish he were out of it." This is a tolerably strong description of the father of George HI. from the lips of his own mother. Along with this description of Frederick by the Queen, take Thackeray's character of George II.'s worthy father of worthy son: "Here was one who had neither dignity, learning, morals, nor wit – who tainted a great society by a bad example; who in youth, manhood, old age, was gross, low, and sensual."

In 1705, when only Electoral Prince of Hanover, George had married Caroline, daughter of the Margrave of Anspach, a woman of more than average ability. Thackeray describes Caroline in high terms of praise, but Lord Chesterfield says that "she valued herself upon her skill in simulation and dissimulation… Cunning and perfidy were the means she made use of in business." The Prince of Anspach is alleged by the *Whimperer* to have raised some difficulties as to the marriage, on account of George I. being disposed to deny the legitimacy of his son, and it is further pretended that George I. had actually to make distinct acknowledgment of his son to King William III. before the arrangements for the Act of Settlement were consented to by that King. It is quite clear from the diary of Lady Cowper, that the old King's feeling towards George II. was always one of the most bitter hatred.

The influence exercised by Queen Caroline over George II. was purely political; and Lord Hervey declares that "wherever the interest of Germany and the honor of the Empire were concerned, her thoughts and reasonings were as German and Imperial as if England had been out of the question."

A strange story is told of Sir Robert Walpole and Caroline. Sir Robert, when intriguing for office under George I., with Townshend, Devonshire, and others, objected to their plans being communicated to the Prince of Wales, saying,

"The fat b – h, his wife, would betray the secret and spoil the project." This courtly speech being made known by some kind friend to the Princess Caroline, considerable hostility was naturally exhibited. Sir Robert Walpole, who held the doctrine that every person was purchasable, the only question being one of price, managed to purchase peace with Caroline when Queen. When the ministry suspended, "Walpole not fairly out, Compton not fairly in," Sir Robert assured the Queen that he would secure her an annuity of £100,000 in the event of the King's death, Sir Spencer Compton, who was then looked to as likely to be in power, having only offered £60,000. The Queen sent back word, "Tell Sir Robert the fat b – h has forgiven him," and thenceforth they were political allies until the Queen's death in 1737.

The domestic relations of George II. were marvellous. We pass with little notice Lady Suffolk, lady-in-waiting to the Queen and mistress to the King, who was sold by her husband for a pension of £12,000 a year, paid by the British tax-payers, and who was coarsely insulted by both their Majesties. It is needless to dwell on the confidential communications, in which "that strutting little sultan George II.," as Thackeray calls him, solicited favors from his wife for his mistress, the Countess of Walmoden; but to use the words of the cultured *Edinburgh Review*, the Queen's "actual intercession to secure for the King the favors of the Duchess of Modena precludes the idea that these sentiments were as revolting to the royal Philaminte as they would nowadays be to a scavenger's daughter. Nor was the Queen the only lady of the Royal Family who talked openly on these matters. When Lady Suffolk was waning at court, the Princess Royal could find nothing better to say than this: 'I wish with all my heart that he (i. e., the King) would take somebody else, that Mamma might be relieved from the *ennui* of seeing him forever in her room.'"

Lady Cowper in her diary tells us that George II., when Prince of Wales, intrigued with Lady Walpole, not only with the knowledge of the Princess Caroline, but also with connivance of the Prime Minister himself. Lord Hervey adds that Caroline used to sneer at Sir Robert Walpole, asking how the poor man – "*avec ce gros corps, ces jambes enflees et ce villain ventre*" – could possibly believe that any woman could love him for himself. And that Sir Robert retaliated, when Caroline afterwards complained to him of the King's cross temper, by telling her very coolly that "it was impossible it could be otherwise, since the King had tasted better things," and ended by advising her to bring pretty Lady Tankerville *en rapport* with the King.

In 1727 an Act was passed, directed against workmen in the woollen trade, rendering combination for the purpose of raising wages unlawful. Some years afterwards, this Act was extended to other trades, and the whole tendency of the Septennial Parliament legislation manifests a most unfortunate desire on the part of the Legislature to coerce and keep in subjection the artisan classes.

In February, 1728, the celebrated "Beggar's Opera," by Gay, was put on the stage at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, and, being supposed to contain some satirical reflections on court-corruption, provoked much displeasure on the part of Royalty. The Duchess of Queensborough, who patronized Gay, being forbidden to attend court, wrote thus: "The Duchess of Queensborough is surprised and well pleased that the King has given her so agreeable a command as forbidding her the court… She hopes that, by so unprecedented an order as this, the King will see as few as she wishes at his court, particularly such as dare speak or think truth."

In 1729, £115,000 was voted by Parliament for the payment of the King's debts. This vote seems to have been obtained under false pretences, to benefit the King, whose "cardinal passion," says Phillimore, "was avarice."

The *Craftsman* during the first decade of the reign, fiercely assailed the Whig ministry for "a wasteful expenditure of money in foreign subsidies and bribes;" and in his place in the House of Commons William Pitt, "the great Commoner," in the strongest language attacked the system of foreign bribery by which home corruption was supplemented.

The rapidly increasing expenditure needed every day increased taxation, and a caricature published in 1732 marks the public feeling. A monster (Excise), in the form of a many-headed dragon, is drawing the minister (Sir Robert Walpole) in his coach, and pouring into his lap, in the shape of gold, what it has eaten up in the forms of mutton, hams, cups, glasses, mugs, pipes, etc.

"See this dragon Excise
Has ten thousand eyes,
And five thousand mouths to devour us;
A sting and sharp claws,
With wide gaping jaws,
And a belly as big as a store-house."

Beginning with wines and liquors, —
"Grant these, and the glutton
Will roar out for mutton,
Your beef, bread, and bacon to boot;
Your goose, pig, and pullet,
He'll thrust down his gullet,
Whilst the laborer munches a root."

In 1730 Mr. Sandys introduced a Bill to disable pensioners from sitting in Parliament. George II. vigorously opposed this measure, which was defeated. In the King's private notes to Lord Townshend, Mr. Sandys' proposed act is termed a "villanous measure," which should be "torn to pieces in every particular."

It was in 1732 that the Earl of Aylesford, a Tory peer, declared that standing armies in time of peace were "against the very words of the *Petition of Rights*," and that "all the confusions and disorders which have been brought upon this kingdom for many years, have been all brought upon it by means of standing armies." In 1733 Earl Strafford affirmed that "a standing army" was "always inconsistent with the liberties of the people;" and urged that "where the people have any regard for their liberties, they ought never to keep up a greater number of regular forces than are absolutely necessary for the security of the Government." Sir John Barnard declared that the army ought not to be used on political questions. He said: "In a free country, if a tumult happens from a just cause of complaint, the people ought to be satisfied; their grievances ought to be redressed; they ought not surely to be immediately knocked on the head because they may happen to complain in an irregular way." Mr. Pulteney urged that a standing army is "a body of men distinct from the body of the people; they are governed by different laws; blind obedience and an entire submission to the orders of their commanding officer is their only principle. The nations around us are already enslaved by those very means; by means of their standing armies they have every one lost their liberties; it is indeed impossible that the liberties of the people can be preserved in a country where a numerous standing army is kept up."

In 1735 sixteen Scottish peers were elected to sit in the House of Lords, and in a petition to Parliament it was alleged, that the whole of this list of sixteen peers was elected by bribery and corruption. The petition positively asserted "that the list of sixteen peers for Scotland had been formed by persons high in trust under the crown, previous to the election itself, The peers were solicited to vote for this list without the liberty of making any alteration, and endeavors were used to engage peers to vote for this list by promise of pensions and offices, civil and military, to themselves and their relations, and by actual promise and offers of sums of money. Several had received money, and releases of debts owing to the crown were granted to those who voted for this list. To render this transaction more infamous, a battalion of troops occupied the Abbey-Court of Edinburgh, and continued there during the whole time of the election, while there was a considerable body lying within a mile of the city ready to advance on the signal." This petition, notwithstanding the gravity of its allegations, was quietly suppressed.

Lady Sundon, Woman of the Bedchamber and Mistress of the Robes to Queen Caroline, received from Lord Pom-fret jewelry of £1,400 value, for obtaining him the appointment of Master of the Horse.

With a Civil List of £800,000 a year, George II. was continually in debt, but an obedient Ministry and a corrupt Parliament never hesitated to discharge his Majesty's obligations out of the pockets of the unrepresented people. Lord Carteret, in 1733, speaking of a Bill before the House for granting the King half a million out of the Sinking Fund, said: "This Fund, my Lords, has been clandestinely defrauded of several small sums at different times, which indeed together amount to a pretty large sum; but by this Bill it is to be openly and avowedly plundered of £500,000 at once."

On the 27th of April, 1736, Prince Frederick was married to the Princess Augusta, of Saxe Gotha, whom King George II. afterwards described as "*cette diablesse Madame la Princesse*." In August of the same year, a sharp open quarrel took place between the Prince of Wales and his parents, which, after some resumptions of pretended friendliness, ended, on September 10, 1737, in the former being ordered by the King to quit St. James's palace, where he was residing. On the 22d of the preceding February, Pulteney had moved for an allowance of £100,000 a year to Prince Frederick. George II. refused to consent, on the ground that the responsibility to provide for the Prince of Wales rested with himself, and that "it would be highly indecorous to interfere between father and son." On the Prince of Wales taking up his residence at Norfolk House, "the King issued an order that no persons who paid their court to the Prince and Princess should be admitted to his presence." An official intimation of this was given to foreign ambassadors.

On the 20th of November, 1737, Queen Caroline died, never having spoken to her son since the quarrel. "She was," says Walpole, "implacable in hatred even to her dying moments. She absolutely refused to pardon, or even to see, her son." The death-bed scene is thus spoken of by Thackeray: "There never was such a ghastly farce;" and as sketched by Lord Hervey, it is a monstrous mixture of religion, disgusting comedy, and brutishness. "We are shocked in the very chamber of death by the intrusion of egotism, vanity, buffoonery, and inhumanity. The King is at one moment dissolved in a mawkish tenderness, at another sunk into brutal apathy. He is at one moment all tears for the loss of one who united the softness and amiability of one sex to the courage and firmness of the other; at another all fury because the object of his regrets cannot swallow, or cannot change her posture, or cannot animate the glassy fixedness of her eyes; at one moment he begins an elaborate panegyric on her virtues, then breaks off into an enumeration of his own, by which he implies that her heart has been enthralled, and her intelligence awed. He then breaks off into a stupid story about a storm, for which his daughter laughs at him, and then while he is weeping over his consort's death-bed, she advises him to marry again; and we are – what the Queen was not – startled by the strange reply, 'Non, faurai des maitresses,' with the faintly moaned out rejoinder, 'Cela, n'empeche pas.'" So does the Edinburgh reviewer, following Lord Hervey, paint the dying scene of the Queen of our second George.

After the death of the Queen, the influence of the King's mistresses became supreme, and Sir R. Walpole, who, in losing Queen Caroline had lost his greatest hold over George, paid court to Lady Walmoden, in order to maintain his weakened influence. In the private letters of the Pelham family, who succeeded to power soon after Walpole's fall, we find frequent mention of the Countess of Yarmouth as a power to be gained, a person to stand well with. "I read," says Thackeray, "that Lady Yarmouth (my most religious and gracious King's favorite) sold a bishopric to a clergyman for £5,000. (He betted her £5,000 that he would not be made a bishop, and he lost, and paid her.) Was he the only prelate of his time led up by such hands for consecration? As I peep into George H.'s St. James's, I see crowds of cassocks rustling up the back-stairs of the ladies of the Court; stealthy clergy slipping purses into their laps; that godless old Bang yawning under his canopy in his Chapel Royal, as the chaplain before him is discoursing."

On the 23d of May, 1738, George William Frederick, son of Frederick, and afterwards George III., was born.

In 1739 Lady Walmoden, who had up to this year remained in Hanover, was brought to England, and formally installed at the English Court. In this year we bound ourselves by treaty to pay 250,000 dollars per annum for three years to the Danish Government. "The secret motive of this treaty," says Mahon, "as of too many others, was not English, but Hanoverian; and regarded the possession of a petty castle and lordship called Steinhorst. This castle had been bought from Holstein by George H. as Elector of Hanover, but the Danes claiming the sovereignty, a skirmish ensued… The well-timed treaty of subsidy calmed their resentment, and obtained the cession of their claim." Many urged, as in truth it was, that Steinhorst was bought with British money, and Bolingbroke expressed his fear

"that we shall throw the small remainder of our wealth where we have thrown so much already, into the German Gulf, which cries Give! Give! and is never satisfied."

On the 19th of May, 1739, in accordance with the wish of the King, war was declared with Spain, nominally on the question of the right of search, but when peace was declared at Aix-la-Chapelle, this subject was never mentioned. According to Dr. Colquhoun, this war cost the country, £46,418,680.

George II. was, despite the provisions of the Act of Settlement, continually in Hanover. From 1729 to 1731, again in 1735 and 1736, and eight times between 1740 and 1755. In 1745 he wished to go, but was not allowed.

On the 2d of October, 1741 (the Pelham family having managed to acquire power by dint, as Lord Macaulay puts it, of more than suspected treason to their leader and colleague), the Duke of Newcastle, then Prime Minister, wrote his brother, Henry Pelham, as follows: "I must freely own to you, that I think the King's unjustifiable partiality for Hanover, to which he makes all other views and considerations subservient, has manifested itself so much that no man can continue in the active part of the administration with honor." The Duke goes on to describe the King's policy as "both dishonorable and fatal;" and Henry Pelham, on the 8th of October, writes him back that "a partiality to Hanover is general, is what all men of business have found great obstructions from, ever since this family have been upon the throne." Yet these are amongst the most prominent of the public defenders of the House of Brunswick, and a family which reaped great place and profit from the connection.

Of the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Macaulay says: "No man was so unmercifully satirized. But in truth he was himself a satire ready made. All that the art of the satirist does for other men, nature had done for him. Whatever was absurd about him stood out with grotesque prominence from the rest of the character. He was a living, moving, talking caricature. His gait was a shuffling trot, his utterance a rapid stutter; he was always in a hurry; he was never in time; he abounded in fulsome caresses and in hysterical tears. His oratory resembled that of Justice Shallow. It was nonsense, effervescent with animal spirits and impertinence. Of his ignorance many anecdotes remain, some well authenticated, some probably invented at coffee-houses, but all exquisitely characteristic. 'Oh, yes, yes, to be sure! Annapolis must be defended; troops must be sent to Annapolis. Pray, where is Annapolis?' 'Cape Breton an island! Wonderful! show it me in the map. So it is, sure enough. My dear sir, you always bring us good news. I must go and tell the King that Cape Breton is an island.' And this man was, during near thirty years, Secretary of State, and during near ten years First Lord of the Treasury! His large fortune, his strong hereditary connection, his great Parliamentary interest, will not alone explain this extraordinary fact. His success is a signal instance of what may be effected by a man who devotes his whole heart and soul without reserve to one object. He was eaten up by ambition. His love of influence and authority resembled the avarice of the old usurer in the 'Fortunes of Nigel.' It was so intense a passion that it supplied the place of talents, that it inspired even fatuity with cunning. 'Have no money dealings with my father,' says Martha to Lord Glenvarloch, 'for, dotard as he is, he will make an ass of you.' It was as dangerous to have any political connection with Newcastle as to buy and sell with old Trapbois. He was greedy after power with a greediness all his own. He was jealous of all colleagues, and even of his own brother. Under the disguise of levity, he was false beyond all example of political falsehood. All the able men of his time ridiculed him as a dunce, a driveller, a child who never knew his own mind for an hour together; and he overreached them all round."

In 1742, under the opposition of Pulteney, the Tories called upon Paxton, the Solicitor to the Treasury, and Scrope, the Secretary to the Treasury, to account for the specific sum of £1,147,211, which it was proved they had received from the minister. No account was ever furnished. George Vaughan, a confidant of Sir Robert Walpole, was examined before the Commons as to a practice charged upon that minister, of obliging the possessor of a place or office to pay a certain sum out of the profits of it to some person or persons recommended by the minister. Vaughan, who does not appear to have ventured any direct denial, managed to avoid giving a categorical reply, and to get

excused from answering on the ground that he might criminate himself. Agitation was commenced for the revival of Triennial Parliaments, for the renewal of the clause of the Act of Settlement, by which pensioners and placemen were excluded from the House of Commons, and for the abolition of standing armies in time of peace. The Whigs, however, successfully crushed out the whole of this agitation. Strong language was heard in the House of Commons, where Sir James Dashwood said that "it was no wonder that the people were then unwilling to support the Government, when a weak, narrow-minded prince occupied the throne."

A very amusing squib appeared in 1742, when Sir Robert Walpole's power was giving way, partly under the bold attacks of the Tories, led by Cotton and Shippen; partly before the malcontent Whigs under the guidance of Carteret and Pulteney; partly before the rising power of the young England party led by William Pitt; and somewhat from the jealousy, if not treachery, of his colleague, the Duke of Newcastle. The squib pictures the King's embarrassment and anger at being forced to dismiss Walpole, and to Carteret, whom he has charged to form a ministry: —

"Quoth the King:
'My good lord, perhaps you've been told
That I used to abuse you a little of old,
But now bring whom you will, and eke turn away,
Let but me and my money at Walmoden stay."

Lord Carteret, explaining to the King whom he shall keep of the old ministry, includes the Duke of Newcastle: —

"Though Newcastle's false, as he's silly I know,
By betraying old Robin to me long ago,
As well as all those who employed him before,
Yet I leave him in place, but I leave him no power.

"For granting his heart is as black as his hat,
With no more truth in this than there's sense beneath that,
Yet, as he's a coward, he'll shake when I frown;
You called him a rascal, I'll use him like one.

"For your foreign affairs, howe'er they turn out,
At least I'll take care you shall make a great rout;
Then cock your great hat, strut, bounce, and look bluff,
For, though kick'd and cuff'd here, you shall there kick and cuff

"That Walpole did nothing they all used to say,
So I'll do enough, but I'll make the dogs pay;
Great-fleets I'll provide, and great armies engage,
Whate'er debts we make, or whate'er wars we wage!

"With cordials like these the monarch's new guest
Reviv'd his sunk spirits, and gladdened his breast;
Till in rapture he cried, 'My dear Lord, you shall do
Whatever you will – give me troops to review.'"

In 1743, King George II. actually tried to engage this country, by a private agreement, to pay £300,000 a year to the Queen of Hungary, "as long as war should continue, or the necessity of her affairs should require." #The King, being in Hanover, sent over the treaty to England, with a warrant directing the Lords Justices to "ratify and confirm it," which, however, they refused to do. On hearing that the Lord Chancellor refused to sanction the arrangement, King George H. threatened, through Earl Granvillie, to affix the Great Seal with his own hand. Ultimately the £300,000 per annum was agreed to be paid so long as the war lasted, but this sum was in more than one instance exceeded.

Although George II. had induced the country to vote such large sums to Maria Therese, the Empress-Queen, he nevertheless abandoned her in a most cowardly manner when he thought his Hanoverian dominions in danger, and actually treated with France without the knowledge or consent of his ministry. A rhyming squib, in which the King is termed the "Balancing Captain," from which we present the following extracts, will serve to show the feeling widely manifested in England at that time: —

"I'll tell you a story as strange as 'tis new,
Which all who're concerned will allow to be true,
Of a Balancing Captain, well known hereabouts,
Returned home (God save him) a mere king of clouts.

"This Captain he takes in a *gold* ballasted ship,
Each summer to *terra damnosa* a trip,
For which he begs, borrows, scrapes all he can get,
And runs his poor *owners* most vilely in debt.

"The last time he set out for this blessed place,
He met them, and told them a most piteous case,
Of a sister of his, who, though bred up at court,
Was ready to perish for want of support.

"This *Hung'ry* sister he then did pretend,
Would be to his owners a notable friend,
If they would at that critical juncture supply her;
They did – but, alas! all the fat's in the fire!"

The ballad then suggests that the King, having got all the money possible, made a peace with the enemies of the Queen of Hungary, described in the ballad as the sister: —

"He then turns his sister adrift, and declares
Her most mortal foes were her father's right heirs:
'G – d z – ds!' cries the world, 'such a step was ne'er taken!'
'Oh, oh!' says Moll Bluff, 'I have saved my own bacon.

"'Let France damn the Germans, and undamn the Dutch,
And Spain on old England pish ever so much;
Let Russia bang Sweden, or Sweden bang that,
I care not, by *Robert, one kick of my hat!*
"'Or should my chous'd owners begin to look sour,
I'll trust to *mate* Bob to exert his old power,
Regit animos dictis, or *numis* with ease

So, spite of your growling, I'll act as I please!'"

The British Nation, described as the owners, are cautioned to look into the accounts of their Captain, who is bringing them to insolvency: —

"This secret, however, must out on the day
When he meets his poor owners to ask for his pay;
And I fear, when they come to adjust the account,
A zero for balance will prove their amount."

The final result of all these subsidy votes was to increase our national debt, up to the signing of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, to £76,000,000; while the seven years' war, which came later, brought the debt to £133,000,000, not including in this the capitalized value of the terminable annuities.

On November 22d, 1743, a caricature was published, which had a wide sale, and which represented the King as a fat Hanoverian white horse riding to death a nearly starved British lion.

In 1744, £200,000 was voted, which King George and Lord Carteret, who was called by William Pitt, his "Hanoverian troop minister," had agreed to give the King of Sardinia. £40,000 was also voted for a payment made by the King to the Duke of Arenberg. This payment was denounced by Mr. Lyttelton as a dangerous misapplication of public money.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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