

educated, having been selected by the family whilst yet a youth as the husband of the Queen. Although in after years when the people came to know him better the Prince Consort became popular, still for a long time he was considered proud, stiff, and cold.

In the June following the marriage an attack was made on the Queen's life by an insane pot-boy named Oxford, who was soon after placed in a lunatic asylum. On the 21st of November, 1840, was born the Queen's first child, Princess Victoria, and on the 9th of November of the following year was born the Prince of Wales, now King Edward VII.

In the summer of 1852 two attempts were made on her Majesty's life—in the first instance by a man named Francis, and in the latter by a hunchback named Bean.

Since the Queen's accession the Empire had enjoyed a time of comparative peace, and consequently it was a great shock to the nation when, early in 1842, tidings were brought from India of the utter destruction of a British force in the Khyber Pass, in the mountains of Afghanistan. This was very soon followed by the Sikh war, which resulted in the Punjab being placed under British protection.

In the summer of 1845 were noticed the first symptoms of the potato blight, and although it affected the crop in the whole of the United Kingdom, still it was only in Ireland its effects were most severely felt, the tuber being the chief article of food with the bulk of the people. Our readers are only too well aware of the fearful results of the failure of the potato crop in Ireland: whole districts were depopulated by hunger, disease, and emigration.

In 1851 was opened the first of those great international exhibitions which help to bring together the people of various countries in friendly rivalry. For the housing of the produce of the art and industry of the civilised world the Crystal Palace, a huge building constructed of glass and iron, was erected. The opening ceremony was witnessed by over 700,000 persons. In the following year the Duke of Wellington passed away, to the keen grief of the Queen. Scarcely had the grave closed over the great soldier before there were signs of a European war. In 1852 Louis Napoleon was elected Emperor of France, and soon after allied himself with England for the protection of Turkey against Russia, the outcome of which was the Crimean war. A few years later was instituted the Victoria Cross as a badge of honor for deeds of valor and self-sacrifice in face of the enemy. The first distribution was made by the Queen's own hands in Hyde Park in June, 1857. Shortly after word reached England of the beginning of the mutiny in India, which looked at one time as if it would result in the overthrow of British rule in that land. It is not necessary to go into the dreadful details of those times, suffice to say that order was eventually restored during the following year, and the East India Company severed its connection with the country.

WIDOWHOOD.

In December, 1861, the Prince Consort died, to the indescribable grief of her Majesty and the nation. On the 10th of March, 1863, the Prince of Wales, now King Edward VII., was married to the Princess Alexandra of Denmark. The years that followed were uneventful. In 1868 the Liberals came into power and one of the first acts was the disestablishment and disendowment of the Protestant Church in Ireland. On the 1st of January, 1876, the Queen was proclaimed Empress of India, and about the same time the Transvaal—which was destined to cause so much anxiety to her Majesty in the closing days of her reign—was annexed. During those days the Queen was not without her domestic troubles, for illness and death visit royal households in as unceremonious a manner as they do those of the meanest subjects.

In June, 1887, her Majesty celebrated the jubilee of her accession, and the event was taken advantage of by her subjects in all parts of the world to show their loyalty and love for one who had been a model as a ruler and a woman.

VARIA.

The late Queen occupied the throne for 64 years, reigning longer than any previous English sovereign, and only exceeded in length of life by George III.

The Victorian era will be remembered as a period of great progress in the arts and sciences. As an illustration it might be mentioned that the news of the death of George III. took four months to reach Sydney, whilst the demise of the Queen was known in the New South Wales capital in as many hours after the sad event took place.

The Parliament which assembled in December at Westminster was the fifteenth of Queen Victoria's reign. This established a great record in the annals of Parliamentary history, for since the time of Henry VIII., when Parliaments of more than one session first began to be usual, the greatest number ever summoned by one sovereign was 12, by George III., in his reign of nearly 60 years. The only two other reigns of any long duration during the same period are Queen Elizabeth's and George II.'s. During the former 10 were called and dissolved, and during the latter only five.

During her Majesty's lifetime, it might be said that she had seen the entire world transformed. In 1838, the year after she came to the throne, the first steamboat which ever crossed the Atlantic or any other ocean started from Savannah to Liverpool, making the voyage in 26 days. The same distance is now made in less than six. She was six years of age when the first railway train in the world started to carry passengers. She was eighteen years of age, and had just ascended the throne, when the Morse system of telegraphy was first patented. Thirty-nine years of her life had passed when the first cable was laid under the Atlantic. Fifty-six years of it expired before the first telephone went into practical operation. At the time of her birth the tramp of Bonaparte's armies had just ceased to shake the world, and Bonaparte himself was a prisoner on a British island in the South Atlantic. She has seen nearly every

throne in Europe vacated many times. She has seen her own country transformed politically from an oligarchy, in which only one out of 50 of the population was permitted to vote, into a democracy in which the voters numbered one out of six of the inhabitants.

As illustrating her wonderful long reign her Majesty had seen 11 Lord Chancellors, 10 Prime Ministers, six Speakers of the House of Commons, at least three Bishops of every See, and five or six of many Sees, five Archbishops of Canterbury and six Archbishops of York, and five Commanders-in-Chief. She had seen five Dukes of Norfolk succeed each other as Earl Marshal, and had outlived every duke and duchess and every marquis and marchioness who bore that rank in 1837. She outlived every member of the Jockey Club and every Master of the Hounds who flourished in 1837. She had seen 17 Presidents of the United States, 10 Viceroy of Canada, 15 Viceroy of India, and France successively ruled by one King, one Emperor, and seven Presidents of a Republic.

It is strange to note how the dynasties which have reigned over England have gradually improved in length of life. The average age of the Norman Kings was 57. That of the Plantagenets was only 46, not one King of the Houses of Lancaster or York attaining the age of 50. The Tudor Sovereigns averaged 48 years, Queen Elizabeth being the first ruler of England to live into her seventieth year, and having no equal in this respect for a century and a half, when George II. surpassed her. The Stuarts averaged 52 years, in spite of the premature taking-off of Charles I. The five predecessors of her Majesty of the Hanoverian line lived to the vastly increased average of 73 years.

An appreciation of her late Majesty's personal character and worth appears in our leading columns this week.

THE CUMBERLAND PLOT.*

THE GREAT ORANGE ARMED CONSPIRACY TO DEPRIVE QUEEN VICTORIA OF THE THRONE OF ENGLAND.

THE death of the Empress-Queen Victoria recalls to mind the singular story of an infamous, but happily unsuccessful, conspiracy that was hatched by the leaders of the Orange Society in the heyday of that oath-bound association—1828-1836. It occupies as well-known a place in history as the Cato Street Conspiracy, and is known by the title of 'The Cumberland Plot.' It is so called because the principal actor in it, and the chief intended beneficiary by it, was Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, Imperial Grand Master of the Orange Association. The object of the plot was to alter the succession of the throne of Great Britain: to set aside the just and legalised claims of the Princess (late Queen) Victoria, and to place the crown upon the head of Ernest, Duke of Cumberland.

The period covered by the underground workings of this great conspiracy embraced the years 1828-35. These were the golden years of the Orange institution, the time of its greatest power and most dangerous activity. Rev. Dr. Killen, the Irish Presbyterian historian, tells us in the second volume of his *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland* (p. 463) that towards the close of this period (1828-1835) 'the Orange institute suddenly collapsed. Notwithstanding their loud protestations of loyalty,' he continues, 'its adherents had been recently involved in treasonable designs. The passing of the Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill in 1829 had driven them almost to madness, and ever since their movements had been marked by recklessness and folly.' The alarm created in the public and official mind by the threatening aspect of Orangeism led to the appointment, in 1835, of two Parliamentary Committees of Inquiry. Their investigations, says Dr. Killen (ii, 464), 'revealed the existence of a conspiracy to exclude the Princess Victoria from the succession, and place the Duke of Cumberland on the throne.' Miss Martineau, a contemporary Protestant historian, refers as follows to the Cumberland Plot in the second volume of her *Thirty Years' Peace* (p. 266): 'The revolutionary movement referred to as occurring at the other end of society was one which it would be scarcely possible to credit now, but for the body of documentary evidence which leaves no shadow of doubt on any of the principal features of the conspiracy. The whole affair seems so unsuited to our time and the conditions of our monarchy—so like a plunge back into a former century—that all the superiority of documentary evidence of which we have the advantage is needed to make the story credible to quiet people who do not dream of treason, plots, and civil war in England in our day.'

THE PLOTTERS.

The 'body of documentary evidence' referred to by Miss Martineau shows that the conspiracy to alter the succession to the throne in favor of the Duke of Cumberland was conducted by the members of the Imperial Grand Lodge (London), which exercised complete and absolute control over the votes, policy, and destinies of all the scattered units of Orangeism throughout the world. Among those who seem to have been most deeply implicated were Lords Kenyon, Wynford, Longford, and Roden, the Duke of Gordon (Deputy Grand Master for Scotland), and the Marquis of Londonderry. The leading rôles in the plot are, however, assigned by general consent to the Duke of Cumberland and to his intimate friend and familiar, Lieutenant-Colonel Blennerhasset Fairman, who was Deputy Grand Secretary of the Orange Society.

THE ARCH-PLOTTERS.

Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, was brother of the reigning King, William IV.—the immediate predecessor of the late Queen on the throne of Great Britain. He is described by Spencer Walpole,

* For fuller details of this remarkable conspiracy see *The Orange Society* by Rev. H. W. Cleary pp. 362-385. (TABLET Office, 1s 3d, posted 1s 6d); also 12th edition, C.T.S., London (cloth 2s 6d), of all catholic booksellers.