

knights for each county, and two citizens for every borough—the first clear acknowledgment of the Commons' element in the State. This parliament met on the 20th of January in that magnificent hall at Westminster which still survives, so interesting a monument of many of the most memorable events of English history.

29.—For ten years previous to his death, George III. laboured under mental eclipse, and took no part in public life. His last days have been touched upon with singular pathos by Thackeray, in his Lectures on the Four Georges. "I have," he says, "seen his picture as it was taken at this time, hanging in the apartment of his daughter, the Landgravine of Hesse Hombourg—amidst books and Windsor furniture, and a hundred fond reminiscences of her English home. The poor old man is represented in a purple gown, his snowy beard falling over his breast—the star of his famous order still idly shining on it. He was not only sightless; he became utterly deaf. All light, all reason, all sound of human voices, all the pleasures of this world of God were taken from him. Some slight lucid moments he had; in one of which, the queen, desiring to see him, found him singing a hymn, and accompanying himself on the harpsichord. When he had finished, he knelt down and prayed alone for her, and then for his family, and then for the nation, concluding with a prayer for himself, that it might please God to avert his heavy calamity from him; but, if not, to give him resignation to submit. He then burst into tears, and his reason again fled.

"What preacher need moralise on this story? what words save the simplest are requisite to tell it? It is too terrible for tears. The thought of such misery strikes me down in submission before the Ruler of kings and men, the Monarch supreme over empires and republics, the inscrutable Dispenser of life, death, happiness, victory."

A VISIT FROM ROYALTY.

"A sovereign's great example forms a people."—MALLET.

PETER I., Czar of Russia, truly deserved the name of Great; he was one of the most extraordinary men that ever appeared on the great stage of the world, in any age or country; a being full of contradictions, yet consistent in all he did; a promoter of literature, art, and science, yet without education himself. "He gave a polish," says Voltaire, "to his people, and was himself a savage. He taught them the art of war, of which he was himself ignorant. From the sight of a small boat on the river Moskwa, he erected a powerful fleet, made himself an expert and active shipwright, sailor, pilot, and commander. He changed the manners, customs, and laws of the Russians, and lives in their memory as the father of his country."

In 1698 he visited England to study the theory of shipbuilding, and stayed there four months. As he did not come in a public character, he was placed under the especial charge of the Marquis of Carmarthen, with whom he became very intimate. It is stated in a private letter that they used to spend their evenings frequently together in drinking hot pepper and brandy. After staying for a month in London, the Czar and his suite removed to John Evelyn's house, Sayes Court, close to Deptford Dockyard. It had been let by Evelyn to Admiral Benbow, whose term had just expired. A doorway was broken through the boundary-wall of the dockyard, to communicate with the dwelling-house. The grounds, which once were beautifully laid out, had been much damaged by the admiral, but the Czar proved a decidedly worse tenant. Evelyn's servant wrote to him:—"There is a houseful of people *right nasty*. The Czar lies next your library, and dines in the parlour next your study. He dines at ten o'clock and six at night; is very often at home a whole day; very often in the king's yard, or by water, dressed in several dresses. The king is expected there this day; the best parlour is pretty clean for him to be entertained in.

The king pays for all he has." The Czar and his retinue remained here only three weeks, but the damage done to the house and gardens was estimated at £150.

Of his stay amongst us some rather amusing incidents are recorded. He was continually annoyed by the crowds in the streets of London. As he was one day walking along the Strand with the Marquis of Carmarthen, a porter with a load on his shoulder rudely pushed against him, and drove him into the road. He was extremely indignant and ready to knock the man down; but the marquis, interfering, saved the offender, only telling him that the gentleman he had so rudely run against was "the Czar." The porter, turning round, replied with a grin, "Czar! we are all Czars here." But Peter's aversion to a crowd was carried sometimes to an extraordinary length. At a birthday ball at St. James's, instead of joining the company, he was put into a small room, whence he could see all that passed, without himself being observed. When he went to see King William in Parliament, he was placed on the roof of the house to peep in at the window, when king and people so laughed at him that he was obliged to retire. During term-time he was taken into Westminster Hall. He inquired who all those busy people in black gowns and flowing wigs were, and what they were about. Being answered, "They are lawyers, sire"—"Lawyers!" said he, much astonished, "why, I have but two in my whole dominions, and I believe I shall hang one of them the moment I get home." At his departure from England, he presented to the king a ruby, valued at £10,000, which he brought in his waistcoat pocket, and placed in William's hand, wrapped in a piece of brown paper!—*Abridged from Chambers' "Book of Days."*



CATHEDRAL AT WORNS.