



Queen Victoria.

'Christian Herald.'

The Queen's reign has been called the 'Augustan period of England,' because of the country's unprecedented progress. Let us hope and earnestly pray that the Victorian era of England may not be like the Augustan era of Rome (that of the reign of the Emperor Augustus, from B.C. 27 to A.D. 14)—the pinnacle of its glory, after which commenced the Empire's decline.

Queen Victoria is the only child of Edward, Duke of Kent, the fourth son of King George III., her mother being the Princess Victoria Mary Louisa, daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and widow of the Prince of Leiningen. The numerous children of George III.—fifteen in number—had not, at the time of the Princess Charlotte's death in 1817, a single child who, according to the constitution of England, could in-



HER GRACIOUS MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.



H.R.H. ALBERT EDWARD PRINCE OF WALES.

herit the throne, so that upon the birth—in Kensington Palace, on May 24, 1819—of the Princess Victoria, there was great rejoicing throughout the country, for the people were not prepared for a new dynasty, whose head would be a foreigner. After her birth, there seemed for a time a likelihood of her succession being displaced, since the Duke of Clarence (afterwards William IV.) had a daughter born on December 20, 1820, but as this daughter died on March 4, 1821, the succession reverted to the Princess Victoria.

The winter of 1819 setting in very severely, the Duke and Duchess of Kent decided upon spending the winter with their infant daughter at Sidmouth, whither they arrived on Christmas Eve. After being there a few days the Duke caught a severe cold, inflammation on the chest followed, and fever set in, which, notwithstanding all the doctors could do, carried him off on January

23, 1820. His body, accompanied by the Duchess and her fatherless daughter, was taken to Kensington. On that same day, January 29, the King, George III., expired, and a few days later the two bodies were consigned to the Royal vaults beneath St. George's Chapel, Windsor. It will not be out of place here to remark that a few evenings before the Duke left Kensington Palace for Sidmouth, he desired a clergyman, who was visiting him, to give his daughter his blessing, and added, with emotion, 'Don't pray simply that hers may be a brilliant career, and exempt from those trials and struggles which have pursued her father; but pray that God's blessing may rest on her; that it may overshadow her, and that in all her coming years she may be guided and guarded by God.' That this prayer has

been answered, the past seventy years can testify.

Before the Princess was eleven years old she had three narrow escapes of her life. While at Sidmouth with her parents, a boy was shooting birds, when one discharge went through the window of the nursery and passed close by the head of the infant Princess. In 1822, when just three years old, she was seated in a pony carriage in Kensington Garden, when a large dog came out of the water with a stick in its mouth, and ran under the horse's forelegs, causing it to plunge and overthrow the carriage, the child being thrown out head downwards, and would have been crushed beneath the carriage had not a soldier, who happened to be near, caught hold of her dress and swung her into his arms before she touched the ground. Again, when the Princess was



H.R.H. GEORGE FREDERICK DUKE OF YORK.

about eleven years old, she was making an excursion in the royal yacht, when the vessel collided with another with such a shock that her sail and gaff were falling on the deck where she was standing, when a sailor seeing her peril, sprang forward and caught her in his arms, and so, probably, rescued her from death.

On the death of George IV., in 1830, the Duke of Clarence ascended the throne as William IV.; and as the Duke had no children, the Princess Victoria stood next in direct succession.

In July, 1834, the Princess was confirmed by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the Chapel Royal, and on the Sunday following she received her first Communion in the chapel at Kensington Palace.

On May 24, 1837, the Princess attained her eighteenth year, and her legal majority was celebrated with great rejoicings. It is said that one of the first to congratulate the Prin-



H.R.H. PRINCE EDWARD OF YORK.
'Our Future King.'