

KING GEORGE THE FOURTH.

[FOR THE H. M. M.]

THE death of his late Majesty has induced most public pens to attempt sketches of his life and character. These sketches are as diversified in manner and matter as are the minds of the writers. While some are satisfied with a mere recital of facts, others bring the reprehensible parts of his Majesty's conduct prominently forward, and others waste the realms of hyperbole and bombast to crowd terms of eulogy on their subject. Perhaps nothing shows mankind to be merely full grown children, so strongly, as their delight in licking the dust before every personification of power, and their great aptitude to be caught with glare and pomp, forgetful of what forms real dignity of character. When a prince or a great man is fallen, instead of treating the subject on its own merits, there is generally in preachers and writers, a prostration of independence and integrity, and a kind of mental idolatry, which is foolish as it is nauseous. Happily the subject of the present sketch affords full scope for manly eulogy, and for sincere regret, which, in getting expression need little fear hyperbole. When we say this, it is of the King, not the man, we speak—and perhaps it is as the former, not the latter, his character should be scanned; for it is in that he has been most intimately connected with the nation. Those who argue that his Majesty's entire life is public property, and that in taking an estimate of his character all should be brought under review, as being justice to the dead and benefit to the living—have some grounds for their avowal. If a person, who, from his birth to his death, has been fed luxuriously by the nation every day, should come broadly under the cognizance of public observation, we find many arguments for a general review of the character of George the Fourth.—At the age of twenty one, in the year 1783, we find that he received from the Parliament a sum of £100,000 as an outfit, and a sum of £50,000 a year from the civil list. The sums of money at this period were of considerably more value than similar amounts now. When the Prince was twenty four years of age, we find Mr. Pitt announcing an increase of £10,000 a year to his income, a grant of £161,000 to pay his debts, and £20,000 to finish his house, Carlton Palace. Two years after, on the marriage of the Prince, his income was increased to £132,000 a year, £28,000 was voted for jewelry and plate, £26,000 for furniture—and debts to the amount of £639,890 were settled. In 1812, when he assumed the dignity of Regent, £100,000 were granted to defray his expences. These are the acknowledged and public items which were lavished on a few years of the life of one man. They incontestably prove the immensity of British resources, and the extravagant and reckless hand with which they were dealt by those in