

The Rockwood Review.

GRANDFATHER'S CORNER.

"GOD SAVE THE QUEEN."

In a few months, the Queen of a vast Dominion, of an enormous Empire, who has already enjoyed a longer reign than that of any other British Sovereign, will, let us hope, have occupied the throne for Sixty Years. At such a time, a few thoughts and reminiscences, suggested by the facts, may not be out of place.

The writer is old enough to remember the rejoicings which celebrated the accession of "King Billy," the Royal Tar, and has a vivid recollection of the illumination of his native city on that "auspicious occasion." The Duke of Clarence was immensely popular, for Great Britain depended upon her wooden walls, and here was a man who could keep his sea-legs even in the Drawing Room, and could rap out an oath, if he deemed it necessary, with the vim and abandon of the cock-pit. Bluff, rough and tough, he was an ideal King in the eyes of the greater King Mob. When death removed the last of the Georges, and the Duke passed from the quarter-deck to the Throne-Room, lofty were the expectations of the people. The Four Georges had reigned, in their several fashions, and been deposited in the tomb with little regret, for Prime Ministers, rather than Kings, had made such additions to British glory as were left to the historian to record. George III. alone of the Quartette had ever found his way to the affections of the populace, and even he had done much to arouse bitter antagonism. His obstinacy had cost his country the possession of a large portion of a continent, and, amiable as he was in private life, and much as he was beloved by those who there came in contact with him, he had not been altogether free from the weaknesses

that rendered the name of Georges abhorrent to large sections of their subjects. George IV. had out-Heroded Herod, and the First Gentleman in Europe was last in the hearts of his countrymen. He had died, hated and despised by an immense majority of his English subjects. There was relief in even a change of name, and the Duke came to take possession of the Crown amid the acclaims of high and low. It was thought that he would not seek to thwart reforms that had gradually worked their way to the front, and that he, a man of the people as he was said to be, would readily lend himself to an extension of popular liberty. There were those who believed that the new King could perform a miracle, and make laws as well as assent to them. A halo surrounded the very name of William. William I. had conquered, even if with rough hand, and cast English society anew: made a new England, in fact, and became a power the posterity of whom Englishmen of to-day are proud. William III. had brought liberty and security, and made a consolidated Great Britain which has since then played so great a part in the civilization of the world. That the enthusiasm with which another William's accession to the throne should be loud and universal was not surprising. His reign was short, it is true, but long enough to permit him to give the royal assent to Parliamentary Reform for England, Ireland and Scotland; to municipal reforms which revolutionized a system dating back, in some of its features, to the days of the Tudors; to a measure enforcing the abolition of Slavery; to new Poor Laws, that, although objectionable in some respects, much improved the condition of the pauper; and to an act for the commutation of Tithes, that removed many of the worst features