

MEMOIRS AND MEMORIES

CHAPTER I

MY FATHER'S YOUTH

On ne doit jamais écrire que ce qu'on aime.
 L'oubli et le silence sont la punition qu'on inflige à ce qu'on a trouvé
 laid ou commun dans la promenade à travers la vie.—RENAN.

My father, Edward Ernest Villiers, was born in March 1806. His father, the Hon. George Villiers, was third son of the Hon. Thomas Villiers, who was the son of an Earl of Jersey, and was created Baron Hyde of Hindon in 1756, and Earl of Clarendon in 1776. He married Lady Charlotte Capell, heiress of the Hydes and last descendant of Edward, Earl of Clarendon, Lord Chancellor in the time of the Stuarts. This was probably the reason that he took the title of Clarendon, and Hyde as the second title. Carlyle mentions our great-grandfather once or twice in his *Life of Frederick the Great*.

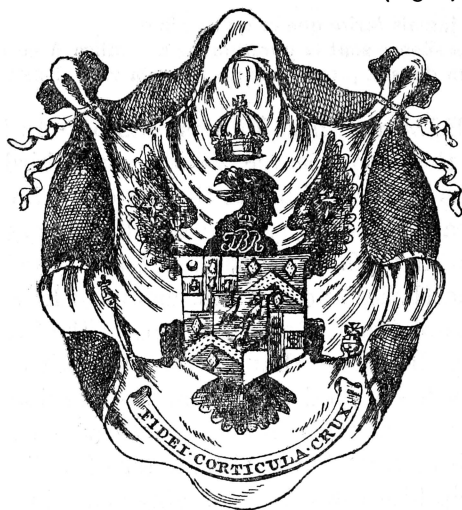
Frederick appreciated the character of Villiers and what he did to help him towards preserving peace in his kingdom, and in 1782 gave him the Prussian Eagle.

COPY OF THE DIPLOMA SIGNED BY FREDERICK II, GRANTING
 THE RIGHT OF BEARING THE PRUSSIAN EAGLE TO THOMAS,
 EARL OF CLARENDON, AND HIS DESCENDANTS

Frédéric, par la grâce de Dieu, Roi de Prusse etc. etc. faisons savoir à qui il appartient ; que comme nous nous souvenons avec plaisir des services agréables et utiles que le Comte de Clarendon ci-devant nommé T. Villiers nous a rendues comme ministre

plénipotentiaire de sa Majesté Britannique auprès de nous par ses soins infatigables en vertu de la médiation du Roi son maître dans la négociation des deux traités de paix conclus à Dresde en 1745 entre nous, sa majesté l'Impératrice Reine d'Hongrie et de Bohême, et sa Majesté le Roi de Pologne Electeur de Saxe, nous avons bien voulu par ces présentes donner au dit Comte de Clarendon un marque public de notre souvenir, reconnaissance extrême et bienveillance Royale. Permettons à lui et à toute sa postérité pour toujours d'ajouter à ses armoiries de famille l'Aigle Noir de Prusse pour perpétuer à jamais dans sa famille et postérité la mémoire de la satisfaction que nous avons eu de son ministère dans une affaire aussi intéressante pour nous et pour notre état. En vertu de quoi nous avons fait expédier ce diplôme signé de notre main et y avons fait apposer notre sceau royal. Donné à Berlin le 13 Août l'an 1782 et de notre règne le 43^{me}.

(Signé) Frédéric.



THE PRUSSIAN COAT OF ARMS.

We were brought up, however, to be much prouder of our descent from Oliver Cromwell through our grandmother, Mrs. George Villiers, than from either Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, or the Chancellor Clarendon. I think some apology is necessary for the genealogical tables on the following pages. Tiresome as they are, the references to the Villiers family which occur through the early chapters

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of this book would be unintelligible without them. This pedigree was given me by my aunt Katherine, Lady Clarendon, the last Christmas I spent at the Grove in 1872.

Oliver Cromwell married Elizabeth Bourchier.

Frances Cromwell, fourth and youngest daughter, married, 1st, Robert Richard, grandson and heir of Robert, Earl of Warwick, by whom she had no children; 2ndly, Sir John Russell, Bart., of Chippenham, by whom she had a numerous family.

Elizabeth Russell married Sir Thomas Frankland, second Bart., of Thirkleby, Yorkshire.

Mary Frankland married Thomas Worsley of Hovingham.

Frances Worsley married Thomas Robinson, first Lord Grantham, who died 1770.

Theresa Robinson married John Parker, first Lord Boringdon, who died 1784.

Maria Theresa Parker married George Villiers, third son of first Earl of Clarendon, who died 1827.

Edward Ernest Villiers (died 1843) married Elizabeth Charlotte Liddell, daughter of first Lord Ravensworth (died 1890).

Maria Theresa Villiers married Charles William Earle.

Our great-grandfather, Sir Thomas Villiers, first Earl of Clarendon, married in 1752 Lady Charlotte Capell, and died in 1786, having issue three sons. Thomas, second Earl of Clarendon, died 1824. John, third Earl, died 1838. George, our grandfather, did not succeed: he was born in 1759 and died in 1827; his eldest son, George William Frederick, became fourth Earl in 1838, on the death of his uncle John.

Our grandmother, Maria Theresa Parker, daughter of the first Lord Boringdon, was born at Saltram in Devonshire, September 1775, and died in 1855; she married our

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grandfather, George Villiers, in April 1798, and had the following family :—

George William Frederick, Earl of Clarendon, was educated at Cambridge and sent in 1820 as attaché to St. Petersburg. He negotiated a Treaty with France in 1831, went to Madrid as Minister in 1833, showed great diplomatic ability during the war of succession of Ferdinand XII, was made a Privy Councillor in 1840, appointed to the Board of Trade 1846, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland 1847, Foreign Office under Lord Palmerston 1853, signed the Treaty of Paris in 1868, and was Minister for Foreign Affairs when he died at 1 Grosvenor Crescent in 1870. He married in 1839 Lady Katharine Grimston, daughter of the first Earl of Verulam, and widow of John Barham, Esq.

Thomas Hyde, who was born 1801, was considered to be (almost) the most promising of this clever family: he was a Member of Parliament quite young, and held some office under Government, and died at the early age of thirty-one.

Charles Pelham was born in 1802 and was educated at Haileybury, for the Indian Civil Service. He was eventually considered too delicate for India; he took to home politics and was for fifty years Member for Wolverhampton. He was long known, with his bent figure and his keen eyes, as the father of the House of Commons. He died in 1895.

The only girl, Maria Theresa, was born in 1803; she married first in 1830 Thomas Lister of Armitage Park, Staffordshire, who died in 1842, and in 1844 she married Sir George Cornewall Lewis; he died in 1863, and she survived him only two years.

Then came my father, Edward Ernest, born 1806 and died 1843.

Henry Montague was born in 1813, and married Amelia, daughter of William Hulton, of Hulton Park, Lancashire. He took holy orders and was Rector of Kenilworth, and afterwards of a large church in Bloomsbury. He was made Bishop of Carlisle, and afterwards Bishop of Durham, where he died in 1861.

Augustus Algernon, born 1817, entered the navy and

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served under Captain, afterwards Sir Edmund, Lyons of Crimean fame ; he died of rapid consumption in 1843.

My father, from all accounts, had a very delicate childhood and youth, and caused great anxiety to his parents both on account of his bodily health and his sensitive disposition and temper, which in those days was considered to be more independent of health than would be the case now. After his death his mother wrote out the following description of his youthful sufferings, thinking, I believe, that they might be some guide and help to his wife in the bringing up of his children. I introduce it here, partly as it may be some little comfort to parents with delicate and difficult children, as after all he lived till he was thirty-seven and died of consumption caught from his brother Algy. This brother he nursed without any precaution as regards infection, as was the custom in those days, for no one then knew of the extreme infectiousness of tuberculosis. The mother's narrative also accounts for so much in his boyhood. His wretched health was no doubt the cause of a great deal of his unhappiness, and his irritable temper was a great trial to his family.

From earliest infancy Edward's parents were conscious of a difference between him and their other children. Shortly after his birth, Mr. Ford, predecessor to Mr. Copeland, had suspicions of a defective intellect, but within a few months was satisfied that such was not the case. Up to two years he evinced no other disorder than an unfailling derangement of stomach on the approach of a thunderstorm ; his appearance as a child was always unhealthy, fat, pale, and heavy. He was so backward in speaking that till near five years old he could not make himself understood out of the nursery. He was so exceedingly drowsy that it was impossible to prevent his frequently falling asleep even whilst standing, was liable to great perspirations, and had at those times an unquenchable thirst, much less animal spirits than the other children of the family, was occasionally rather deaf and till he was eight or nine years old by no means apparently intelligent. This state often gave rise to apprehension of water in the head, but such was not the opinion of Mr. O'Reilly at Windsor, who was then the medical attendant of the family, and who reassured

his parents by asserting that he had no organic disease and would outgrow the peculiarities which alarmed them. This state continued with variations till the age of eleven, when he went to the Charterhouse. His mind then began to develop rapidly. He studied very hard, was by two years younger than any boy in his class, grew thinner, and was no longer affected with the same degree of drowsiness, but much thirst, unhealthy colour, want of animal spirits and an indisposition to active sports continued. About a year after he had been at the Charterhouse a more tangible malady showed itself in the irregular action of the liver. He was treated accordingly with some success, but no cure was ever effected. As he grew up his countenance underwent considerable alteration; he lost the dull heavy look and manner, the thickness of speaking, and occasional deafness. He grew to the height of six feet one, became very muscular, and his power of taking exercise was far above the average. At the age of twenty-one, after many weeks of mental anxiety, which had told much upon his nerves, he caught a bad cold when he was in a very low state of body, and had a very severe attack of ague. From that time every symptom from which he had previously suffered became confirmed; the pain and coldness in the right side, which was so markedly confined to that side as to be perceptible to the touch on the arm, hand, &c., great depression of spirits, dejection of looks, and low pulse, with every variety of nervous sensations both in mind and body. The year following he went abroad, still suffering from his right side, and the first thing from which he appeared to derive benefit was from making more than common exertions in walking over the Alps in Switzerland. His looks and spirits improved greatly, the action of the liver became less torpid, and this, together with the bracing air of the mountains, were of essential service at the time. He passed the winter in Italy, but continued to suffer his usual variations of more or less painful sensations. Early in the following spring he proceeded to Malta, where he drank more wine than was usual with him (his habit being to take little or none). The climate appeared to agree with him, and he was decidedly better: from thence he went to Egypt and then to Constantinople, where he remained above a year. He had occasional attacks of illness during his stay in the East, but they were considered to proceed from the fever of the country. He also suffered much from boils, but those are very common in the East. He returned home in 1831, riding 'en courier' on horseback with despatches night and day from Constantinople to Vienna.

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He was much improved in looks, and continued in a rather better average state of health for the next three or four years, but never without suffering in his right side, having frequent depression of spirits and every variety of nervous susceptibility both in body and mind. He was naturally of a studious and contemplative mind, but at no time was he able to apply without suffering from an increase of coldness in the side; headache or irritation of the spine always followed application to books or business. With the exception of his ride from Constantinople to Vienna he never could from his boyhood ride on horseback without a feeling of being jarred in the spine and head, and this being succeeded by headache. Strong walking exercise always agreed best with him, and no longer than three years ago he could run by the side of a carriage a very considerable distance, could run uphill, and use even violent exercise with the greatest advantage. Whatever promoted increased circulation and perspiration on the skin appeared to relieve his system, to raise his spirits, and improve the hue of his complexion. His power of carrying weights upstairs, walking or running uphill, were greater than that of most men in health and on no occasion did his breathing ever seem oppressed.

Through life it may with truth be said that he never for a day appeared to be in good health, nor from eleven years old did he ever feel to be so. His mind was of far more than ordinary capacity, and in spite of every bodily disadvantage was highly cultivated, but there was a deficiency of memory too remarkable to be passed unnoticed. There was a positive oblivion of his whole childhood; he repeatedly said that whole years of his life were so absolutely effaced from his mind that he could scarcely believe that he had existed, and that he could recall nothing to his mind but dim consciousness of suffering. It would be impossible to enumerate all the medical gentlemen that have at different times attended him ever since he left the Charterhouse, but amongst the number were Doctors Warren, Babington, Ainslie, Barling, Scott (who recommended muriatic baths), Farr, Turner, Vance, Copeland, Hammick, Heath, Quin, and Wolfe (homœopathists), Scott of Bromley, Piddock, Jephson, Pidcock, besides Doctors Latham and Bright, a physician at Paris, Dr. Jenkins at Rome, doctors at Oxford and at Malta and Constantinople, besides naval surgeons in the Mediterranean Sea, &c. These gentlemen have of course often varied in their treatment of the case, but in no one instance was there any difference of opinion that there was great functional derangement

of the liver, that there was an habitual torpor and inactivity in the bowels, a tendency to hypochondriasis, too great excitability of the whole nervous system, but no organic disease; nothing that need shorten life; and no suspicion was ever expressed directly or indirectly that the lungs were affected till the summer of 1843. Leeches, blisters, and other counter-irritants were frequently used through life to correct fulness, torpor and congestion of the liver. Mercury in every form, and all the various other remedies usually resorted to in disorders of the liver, deranged stomach, and irritable nerves were adopted, and generally with success in alleviating the symptoms. The only new symptom that occurred during the two or three last years of his life, in addition to those under which he had laboured for many years, was an occasional sudden loss of sight, which he called a blind vertigo, and which so completely affected his vision as to render him quite incapable of reading or writing so long as it lasted. This increased upon him latterly, both in frequency and duration, to a most inconvenient degree, and most often though not invariably when mentally occupied.

What then was the disorder that affected him through life? Was he born with defective powers, or defective organisation, or were the lungs the seat of disease from infancy?

It may have been partly out of pity for this extreme delicacy of health that his uncle John, third Earl of Clarendon, undertook his education at the Charterhouse.

My father at this time spent most of his holidays at the Grove—the family place of the Clarendons in Hertfordshire. It is described in a history of Hertfordshire as having belonged in 1408 to the Haydons, and passing through several families, was bought in 1753 from Lord Doneraile by Thomas Villiers, afterwards first Earl of Clarendon, second creation.

In after life my father spoke with great gratitude and affection of his old uncle John, but at the time the separation from his family and brothers and sister seems to have made him unhappy and jealous, and to feel that none of his own people cared for him. This was not unnatural, and I think many children would feel the same under similar circumstances. His mother, who was certainly a very remarkable woman, of the severe order of affectionate

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parents, wrote him many letters, which were rather touchingly preserved by this sensitive and delicate boy of fifteen or sixteen. I copy one of them, as it is interesting to see how a mother in those days scolded a schoolboy. I do not think that anyone in my time would have written such letters for what were after all very trivial offences.

From Mrs. George Villiers to her son Edward

November 8, 1820.

My ever dearest Edward,—As you will probably see my letter to the Governor, there is no use in detailing to you the progress of our journey, as I have told him every circumstance. My object in writing to you now is to give you a little good advice. I think sometimes it has a little effect upon you, and if only by little and little I can ultimately arrive at correcting what I think defective and apparently (to say the least) unamiable in you, I shall feel amply rewarded in the end for my trouble, though I often feel now how provoking it is that there should be a necessity for repeating my advice so often. You know how very much I have had it at heart that you should give up the nonsense of assuming a character of affecting an indifference and a want of heart which I am thoroughly persuaded is not real. After all I had said to you and written to you on this subject when you first went to The Grove in the summer, I was naturally much hurt and disappointed at finding when I returned in September that every appearance of it was much more increased than diminished. You know I told you what I thought of it, and after you had returned to the Charterhouse about a fortnight I again thought that you were much improved, that you allowed yourself to express and to demonstrate the affection which I am sure you feel for us all and I was delighted at it. These appearances have I think continued ever since, and you will therefore exclaim to yourself—I see you doing it—‘Well, then, why this fresh lecture?’ I will tell you, my dear Edward, a thing I have been afraid to ask you myself, because I feel sure you would be obliged to answer in the negative, and that then I should be very angry and it would produce a quarrel. I therefore commissioned your sister to ask you some time ago whether you had ever made any acknowledgment to George for his kindness in sending you those slippers. She told me you had begun a letter and would send it, and begged me not to make a rumpus about it, as she knew

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you would finish it. Before I left town I begged her again to ask, and as she could not tell a direct lie she was obliged to say you had not. I determined therefore to write to you, and without any of the irritation which would naturally have arisen in conversation, to lay before you in a quiet way exactly what your unamiable appearance has been on this subject. George sends the Governor a cap and slippers, a pair of boots to both your elder brothers, a chain to your sister and a pair of slippers to you. What followed? that they were all delighted, that by the very next post volumes of letters went forth from every one, Governor and all, expressive of their delight, their thanks, &c., and it was the constant topic of the whole family for two or three days.

What did you do? When you came home I gave you George's letters to read. You never said one word to me or the Governor, or I believe to any of us, about them, for the only tidings I could get after your return to the Charterhouse was from Algy, who it appeared had given you the Governor's instead of your own. You never wrote a line to George or desired any of us to tell him that you were pleased with them and that you would write, nor from that time to this have you said or caused to be said one syllable to George in acknowledgment, though it was the 30th of September when you got them and this is the 8th of November. Now in my heart I am convinced that you were pleased and that you did feel gratified at this little remembrance from George, and I suppose this because I cannot and will not believe so ill of you as to think you so very different from us all; but yet what is the appearance you have given yourself. It is that of more than indifference, of positive contempt for his present, for I give you my honour that I feel as I am sure most other people do the same, that if a stable-boy sent me a present of some horsehair (than which nothing could be less useful or agreeable to me), if I felt he had done it to please me I would at least lose no time in making him the return of showing him I felt the attention. What must George think of it? He must say, 'I am glad my father, my mother, my sister, my two elder brothers are all so pleased with the little attention I have had it in my power to show them, but I suppose Edward thinks I meant to insult him and laugh at him, as he takes no notice of me or my remembrance.' I hope and really believe that you have a great regard and affection for George, but yet to judge from the appearance you give yourself one supposes you hated him. You know it was only by dint of my boring you and bullying you