

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

INTRODUCTORY NOTE  
TO CHAPTER XIII

THE new year (1844) opened with signs of improved trade, and a feeling of confidence, partly due to the friendly *entente* with France. In Ireland, soon after the collapse of the Clontarf meeting, O'Connell and some of his associates were indicted for seditious conspiracy, and convicted. The conviction was subsequently quashed on technical grounds, but O'Connell's political influence was at an end. In Parliament, owing chiefly to the exertions of Lord Ashley (afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury), an important Bill was passed restricting factory labour, and limiting its hours. The Bank Charter Act, separating the issue and banking departments, as well as regulating the note issue of the Bank of England in proportion to its securities, also became law. Meanwhile the dissensions in the Conservative party were increasing, and the Ministry were defeated on a motion made by their own supporters to extend the preferential treatment of colonial produce. With great difficulty the vote was rescinded and a crisis averted; but the Young England section of the Tory party were becoming more and more an embarrassment to the Premier. Towards the end of the year the new Royal Exchange was opened amid much ceremony by the Queen.

The services rendered by Sir Charles Napier in India were the subject of votes of thanks in both Houses, but shortly afterwards Lord Ellenborough, the Governor-General, was recalled by the Directors of the East India Company: their action was no doubt due to his overbearing methods and love of display, but it was disapproved by the Ministry, and Lord Ellenborough was accorded an Earldom.

During the year there was a recrudescence of the friction between this country and France, due partly to questions as to the right of search of foreign ships, partly to a *brochure* issued by the Prince de Joinville, a son of Louis Philippe, partly to the assumption of French sovereignty over Tahiti and the seizure of the English consul there by the French authorities. Reparation however was made, and the ill-feeling subsided sufficiently to enable the King of the French to visit Queen Victoria,—the first friendly visit ever paid by a French king to the Sovereign of England. Louis Philippe was cordially received in this country.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

Another historic royal visit also took place in 1844, that of the Emperor Nicholas, who no doubt was so much impressed with his friendly reception, both by the Court and by Aberdeen, the Foreign Secretary, that nine years later he thought he could calculate on the support of England under Aberdeen (then Premier) in a scheme for the partition of Turkey. Lord Malmesbury, who a few years later became Foreign Secretary, states in his memoirs that during this visit, the Czar, Sir Robert Peel, the Duke of Wellington, and Lord Aberdeen “drew up and signed a Memorandum, the spirit and scope of which was to support Russia in her legitimate protectorship of the Greek religion and the Holy Shrines, and to do so without consulting France,” but the Memorandum was in reality only one made by Nicholas of his recollection of the interview, and communicated subsequently to Lord Aberdeen.

No events of special interest took place in other parts of Europe; the condition of affairs in the Peninsula improved, though the announcement of the unfortunate marriage of the Queen Mother with the Duke of Rianzares was not of hopeful augury for the young Queen Isabella’s future; as a matter of fact, the marriage had taken place some time previously.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

## CHAPTER XIII

1844

*Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians.*

WINDSOR CASTLE, 9th January 1844.

MY DEAREST UNCLE,—I had the pleasure of receiving your kind letter of the 4th, which is written from Ardenne, where I grieve to see you are again gone without my beloved Louise.

Charlotte is the admiration of every one, and I wish much I could have seen the three dear children *en représentation*.

Our fat Vic or Pussette learns a verse of *Lamartine* by heart, which ends with “le tableau se déroule à mes pieds”; to show how well she had understood this difficult line which Mdle. Charier had explained to her, I must tell you the following *bon mot*. When she was riding on her pony, and looking at the cows and sheep, she turned to Mdle. Charier and said: “*Voilà le tableau qui se déroule à mes pieds.*” Is not this extraordinary for a little child of three years old? It is more like what a person of twenty would say. You have no notion *what* a knowing, and I am sorry to say *sly*, little rogue she is, and *so obstinate*. She and *le petit Frère* accompany us to dear old Claremont to-day; Alice remains here under Lady Lyttelton’s care. How sorry I am that you should have hurt your leg, and in such a provoking way; Albert says he remembers well your playing often with a pen-knife when you talked, and I remember it also, but it is really dangerous.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

4

THE DUC DE BORDEAUX

[CHAP. XIII

I am happy that the news from Paris are good; the really good understanding between our two Governments provokes the Carlists and Anarchists. Bordeaux<sup>1</sup> is not yet gone; I saw in a letter that it was *debated* in his presence whether he was on any favourable occasion *de se présenter en France!* Do you think that possible? Then again the papers say that there are fortifications being made on the coast of Normandy for fear of an invasion; is this so? These are many questions, but I hope you will kindly answer them, as they interest me. With Albert's love. Believe me, ever, your devoted Niece,

VICTORIA R.

*Queen Victoria to the Earl of Aberdeen.*

CLAREMONT, 10th January 1844.

The Queen understands that there is a negotiation with Sweden and Denmark pending about the cessation of their tribute to Morocco, likewise that Prince Metternich has sent a despatch condemning as unfair the understanding come to between us and France about the Spanish marriage;<sup>2</sup> that there is a notion of exchanging Hong Kong for a more healthy colony.

The Queen, taking a deep interest in all these matters, and feeling it her duty to do so, begs Lord Aberdeen to keep her always well informed of what is on the *tapis* in his Department.

*Queen Victoria to the Earl of Aberdeen.*

CLAREMONT, 13th January 1844.

The Queen has received Lord Aberdeen's letter of the 10th, and returns him the papers which he sent her, with her best thanks. She does not remember to have seen them before.

<sup>1</sup> The Duc de Bordeaux, only son of the Duc de Berri, had by the death of Charles X. and the renunciation of all claims to the French Throne on the part of the Duc d'Angoulême, become the representative of the elder branch of the Bourbons. He had intended his visit to England to have a private character only.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, vol. i. p. 609.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

1844]

## HANOVERIAN ORDERS

5

The Queen takes this opportunity to beg Lord Aberdeen to cause the despatches to be sent a little sooner from the Foreign Office, as drafts in particular have often come to the Queen a week or fortnight after they had actually been sent across the sea.

With respect to the Hanoverian Orders, Lord Aberdeen has not quite understood what the Queen meant. It was Sir C. Thornton and others to whom the Queen had refused permission to accept the favour, on a former occasion, by which the King of Hanover was much affronted. The Queen would not like to have herself additionally fettered by any new regulation, but Lord Aberdeen will certainly concur with the Queen that it would not be expedient to give to the King of Hanover a power which the Queen herself does not possess, viz. that of granting orders as favours, or for personal services; as the number of the different classes of the Guelphic Order bestowed on Englishmen is innumerable, it would actually invest the King with such a power, which, considering how much such things are sought after, might be extremely inconvenient.

The Queen will not give a final decision upon this case until she returns to Windsor, where she has papers explanatory of the reasons which caused her to decline the King of Hanover's application in 1838.

*Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians.*

CLAREMONT, 16th January 1844.

MY DEAREST UNCLE,—Many thanks for your kind letter of the 11th. Louise can give you the details of the little upset I and Lady Douro had, and which I did not think worth while to mention.<sup>1</sup> It was the strangest thing possible to happen, and the most *unlikely*, for we were going quite quietly, not at all in a narrow lane, with very quiet ponies and my usual postillion; the fact was that the boy looked

<sup>1</sup> On the 5th of January the Queen's phaeton was overturned at Horton, near Datchet, while driving to the meet of Prince Albert's Harriers.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

the *wrong* way, and therefore did not perceive the ditch which he so cleverly got us into.

We leave dear Claremont, as usual, with the greatest regret; we are so peaceable here; Windsor is beautiful and comfortable, but it is a *palace*, and God knows *how willingly* I would *always* live with my beloved Albert and our children in the quiet and retirement of private life, and not be the constant object of observation, and of newspaper articles. The children (Pussette and Bertie) have been most remarkably well, and so have we, in spite of the very bad weather we had most days. I am truly and really grieved that good excellent Nemours is again *not* to get his *dotation*.<sup>1</sup> Really we constitutional countries are *too shabby*.

Now, dearest Uncle, I must bid you adieu, begging you to believe me, ever your devoted Niece,

VICTORIA R.

*Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians.*

WINDSOR CASTLE, 30th January 1844.

MY DEAREST UNCLE,—I must begin by thanking you for your kind letter of the 26th, and by wishing you joy that the fête went off so well. I am glad Leo will appear at the next ball; he is nearly nine years old, and it is good to accustom children of his rank early to these things.

Guizot's speech is exceedingly admired, with the exception of his having said more than he was justified to do about the right of search.<sup>2</sup> Our speech has been very difficult to frame; we should like to have mentioned our visits to France and Belgium, but it has been found impossible to do so; *France* is mentioned, and it is the first time since 1834!

To-morrow we go up to Town "pour ce bore," as the good King always said to me; whenever there

<sup>1</sup> On the occasion of the marriage of the Duc and Duchesse de Nemours (1840), the proposal made by the Sout Government for a Parliamentary grant of 500,000 francs had been rejected.

<sup>2</sup> He insisted that French trade must be kept under the exclusive surveillance of the French flag.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

1844] DEATH OF THE DUKE OF COBURG 7

were tiresome people to present he always said: “Je vous demande pardon de ce bore.”

I have had a tiresome though not at all violent cold, which *I was* alarmed might spoil the *sonorousness* of my voice for the speech on Thursday, but it promises well now.

I own I always look with horror to the beginning of a Parliamentary campaign.

With Albert's love. Ever your devoted Niece,  
VICTORIA R.

*Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians.*

WINDSOR CASTLE, 6th February 1844.

MY DEARLY BELOVED UNCLE,—*You* must now be the father to us poor bereaved, heart-broken children.<sup>1</sup> To describe to you *all* that we *have* suffered, all that we *do* suffer, would be difficult; God has heavily afflicted us; we feel crushed, overwhelmed, bowed down by the loss of one who was so deservedly loved, I may say adored, by his children and family; I loved him and looked on him as my own father; his like we shall *not see again*; that youth, *that amiability*, and kindness in his own house which was the centre and rendezvous for the whole family, will never be seen again, and my poor Angel's fondest thought of beholding that *dearly beloved Vaterhaus*—where his thoughts continually were—*again* is for ever gone, and his poor heart bleeds to feel *this* is for ever gone. Our promised visit, our dearest Papa's, and our fondest wish, all is put an end to. The violence of our grief may be over, but the desolate feeling which succeeds it is worse, and tears are a relief. I have never known real *grief* till now, and it has made a lasting impression on me. A father is *such* a *near* relation, you are a *piece* of him in fact,—and all (as my poor *deeply afflicted* Angel says) the earliest pleasures of your life were given you by a dear father; that can *never be replaced* though time may soften the pang.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha died on 29th January.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

And indeed one loves to *cling* to one's grief; I can understand Louise's feeling in her overwhelming sorrows.

Let me now join my humble entreaties to Albert's, relative to the request about dearest Louise, which he has made. It is a sacrifice I ask, but if you *knew* the sacrifice I make in letting and urging Albert *to go*, I am sure, if you *can* you *will* grant it. I have *never* been separated from him even for *one night*, and the *thought* of *such* a separation is quite dreadful; still, I feel I *could* bear it,—I have made my mind up to it, as the very *thought* of going has been a comfort to my poor Angel, and will be of such use at Coburg. Still, if I were to remain *quite* alone I do not think I *could* bear it quietly. Therefore *pray* do send me my dearly beloved Louise; she would be *such* a comfort to me; if you could come too—or afterwards (as you promised us a longer visit), that would be still more delightful. I may be indiscreet, but you must think of *what* the separation from my *all and all*, even only for a *fortnight*, will be to me!

We feel some *years* older since these days of mourning. Mamma is calm, but poor Aunt Julia<sup>1</sup> is indeed much to be pitied. Ever, dearest Uncle, your devoted and unhappy Niece and Child, VICTORIA R.

*Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians.*

WINDSOR CASTLE, 13th February 1844.

MY DEAREST UNCLE,—I received your dear, kind but sad letter of the 8th on Sunday, and thank you much for it. God knows, poor dear Uncle, you have suffered *enough* in your life, but you should think, dearest Uncle, of *that blessed* assurance of *eternity* where we shall *all meet again never* to part: you should think (as we constantly do now) that those whom we have lost are far happier than we are, and *love us* still, and in a far more perfect way than *we can* do in this world! When the first moments and

<sup>1</sup> The Grand-Duchess Constantine of Russia, sister of the Duchess of Kent and of the deceased Duke of Saxe-Coburg.



Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

---



*Baroness Lehzen*  
*From the miniature at Windsor Castle*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07777-4 - The Letters of Queen Victoria: Volume 2: 1844–1853

Edited by A. C. Benson and Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher

Excerpt

[More information](#)

---