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Reviews.

The Early History of Charles James Fox. By G. O. TREVELYAN, M.P., Author of "The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay." Second edition. Longmans, Green and Co.

THIS volume is written with ability, and is decidedly interesting. It contains but few fresh facts about Fox, the Tory orator who founded a new Whiggism; but the description of the Pitt and Fox period—particularly in regard to its social and religious character—is exceedingly good. The author's strongly Liberal partialities, as might be expected, are by no means concealed; they show themselves, indeed, we must confess, once or twice, to our surprise. To adapt a celebrated phrase, a good deal has happened since Lord Macaulay wrote; and students of history, who use neither Whig nor Tory spectacles, may find in the transition period, 1760-1780, as recent researches present it, much that justifies the attitude of the young King towards the oligarchy. Apart altogether from political partisanship, we are not able to agree entirely with Mr. Trevelyan's remarks on George III.

On the political career of Fox, the "Life of Lord Shelburne," by Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, throws much light. What was the moral character of Fox every reader knows. Mr. Trevelyan, indeed, asserts, "Never was there a more gracious child, more rich in promise, more prone to good;" and there is no doubt that his father led him into extravagance and vice, so that it is a wonder, perhaps, that he was not even worse than he was. In the spring of 1763,¹ we read, "The devil entered into the heart of Lord Holland;" to get rid of care, and for the sake of diversion, he took Charles from his books, and introduced him to the dissipations of the Continent. At Spa, Lord Holland's amusement was to send his son every night to the gaming-table with a pocket full of gold; and (if family tradition may be trusted where it tells against family credit) the parent took not a little pains that the boy should leave France a finished rake. No wonder that when this boyish Chesterfield returned to Eton, his Parisian experiences, aided by cleverness and an unbounded command of cash, produced a visible and durable change for the worse in the morals and habits of the place.

In 1764 Charles Fox left Eton for Oxford, being entered at Hertford College, under Dr. Newcome. According to the first Lord Malmesbury, who was in the same set as Fox, though not in the same college, the lads who ranked as gentleman-commoners, "very pleasant but very idle fellows," were never called upon to attend either lectures, or hall, or chapel. But though not compelled to do anything, Fox seems to have read hard; and it was not according to his own plans that he left Oxford in the spring of 1766. His father directed him to travel for two years on the Continent. In 1768 he waited upon Voltaire at his villa by the lake of Geneva; and in the same year, while amusing himself in Italy, he was elected

¹ Charles James Fox was born in 1749. His father was already tenant of the suburban palace from which he came to derive his title. Walpole, writing in 1747, says, "Mr. Fox gave a great ball in Holland House, where he is making great improvements. It belonged to the gallant Earl of Holland." Mr. Fox, the first Lord Holland, said Lord Shelburne, "educated his children without the least regard to morality, and with such extravagant vulgar indulgence, that the great change which has taken place among our youth has been dated from the time of his son's going to Eton."

member for Midhurst.¹ Before he was twenty years old, he took his seat; and in April, 1769, he made his maiden speech; while in the following month he distinguished himself in replying to Burke and Wedderburn on the Middlesex petition. "Wedderburn and Burke," says Mr. Trevelyan, "were still unanswered when Charles Fox rose; but when he resumed his seat the supporters of the Ministers, and most of their opponents, pronounced that the lawyer and the statesman had both met their match. How commanding must have been the manner of the young speaker, how prompt his ideas, and how apt and forcible the language in which he clothed them, may be estimated by comparing the effect of his rhetoric upon those who were present, and the fame of it among those who heard it second-hand, with the scanty morsels of his argument which have survived the evening on which it was delivered. The two or three sentences which oblivion, so kind to him as long as he needed her services, has permitted to stand in judgment against him have a flavour of boyishness about them for which nothing could have compensated except rare and premature excellence in the outward accomplishments of the orator. He had still enough of the undergraduate in him to imagine that he was speaking like a statesman, when he informed the House that he should adore Colonel Luttrell to the last day of his life for his noble action, and that he would not take the will of the people from a few demagogues, any more than he would take the will of God Almighty from a few priests."

From Horace Walpole, a grudging witness, we learn what an impression was produced on the old stagers of the Commons by the appearance in their midst of one who was born a debater, as Buonaparte was born a general. By one speech, while yet only twenty years old, Charles Fox took a leading position. In February, 1770, having won another victory over Wedderburn, he was appointed a Junior Lord of the Admiralty. He seems at this time to have been a thorough Tory; but in 1774 he left the Ministry, or rather was dismissed. He had been insubordinate, and Lord North informed him that his Majesty having ordered a new Commission of the Treasury to be made out, he did not see in it Mr. Fox's name. Then, and for good, Fox forsook the Ministerialists. He took a line of his own.

What was the state of London Society at that time? Before this question can be discussed it must be borne in mind that Society in the early years of George III.'s reign was what would have been termed exceedingly "small and select." It was intensely aristocratic and exclusive. In "Endymion" the late Lord Beaconsfield has described the great world as it was fifty years ago. But at the time when Fox was young, "good Society" was enclosed within ascertained and narrow boundaries. The extent of these boundaries was familiar to all who were admitted, and to all who were excluded.

When Lord Chesterfield was the oracle of Society, and George Selwyn its father-confessor, its moral character was of the lowest. Thackeray, in his "Virginians," has described it; and the book before us contains a picture of it. "The frivolity of the last century," writes Mr. Trevelyan, "was not confined to the youthful, the foolish, or even to the idle. There never will be a generation which cannot supply a parallel to the lads who, in order that they might the better hear the nonsense which they were talking across a tavern table, had Pall Mall laid down with straw

¹ The right of election rested in a few score of small holdings, on which no human being resided. In 1794 the number of permanent voters for Midhurst was returned as one. By that time Lord Egremont had acquired the burghage-holds at a cost of forty thousand guineas.

at the cost of fifty shillings a head for the party; or to the younger brother who gave half a guinea every morning to the flower-woman who brought him a nosegay of roses for his button-hole."

What was peculiar to the period when Charles Fox took his seat in Parliament, and his place in Society, consisted in the phenomenon (for to our ideas it is nothing else), that men of age and standing, of strong mental powers and refined cultivation, lived openly, shamelessly, and habitually, in the face of all England, as no one who had any care for his reputation would now live during a single fortnight of the year at Monaco. As a sequel to such home-teaching as Lord Holland was qualified to impart, the young fellow, on his entrance into the great world, was called upon to shape his life according to the models that the public opinion of the day held up for his imitation; and the examples which he saw around him would have tempted cooler blood than his, and turned even a more tranquil brain. The Ministers who guided the State—whom the king delighted to honour—who had the charge of public decency and order—who named the fathers of the Church—whose duty it was (to use the words of their monarch) "to prevent any alterations in so essential a part of the constitution as everything that relates to religion"—were conspicuous for impudent vice, for daily dissipation, for pranks which would have been regarded as childish and unbecoming by the cornets of a crack cavalry regiment in the worst days of military licence.

The Duke of Grafton flaunted at Ascot with a woman of no character, and paraded her at the opera when the royal party were in their box. The satire of Junius, scathing as it was, produced little effect; a crowd of smart gentlemen, who wanted commissionerships for themselves and deaneries for their younger brothers, were not ashamed to flatter the Premier's mistress. Rigby, the Paymaster of the Forces, was a hard drinker; the only merit, indeed, he cared to claim was that he drank fair; and at the Pay Office during several successive Administrations, he showed how loose were the limits within which public money could be diverted to the maintenance of private debauchery. As to Lord Weymouth, "it would have been well for him," says Mr. Trevelyan, "if his nights had been consumed merely in drinking; he was a passionate gambler, and by the age of thirty-one he had played away his fortune, his credit, and his honour. Made Secretary of State, he still boozed till daylight and dozed into the afternoon." That melancholy, but witty fribble, Horace Walpole, remarked, "If I paid nobody, and went drunk to bed every morning at six, I might expect to be called up by two in the afternoon to save the nation." Lord Sandwich, perhaps the most disreputable member, as he was the most eminent of the Bedford connection, shocked even his own contemporaries by the immorality of his private life. Corrupt, tyrannical, and brazen-faced as a politician—and destitute, as was seen in his conduct to Wilkes, of fidelity towards the partners of his secret vicious pleasures, an unabashed libertine of the coarsest type, political satire itself tried in vain to exaggerate the turpitude of Sandwich. "Nor did the Bedfords," wrote Junius, "care anything what disgraces England underwent while each of them had their thousand pounds a year, and their thousand bottles of claret and champagne."

To Charles Fox this Society was open. "Few have had the downward path made smoother before them, or strewn with brighter flowers and more deadly berries. He was received with open arms by all that was most select, and least censorious, in London. Those barriers that divide the outer court from the inner sanctum—barriers within which Burke and Sheridan never stepped, and which his own father with difficulty surmounted—did not exist for him. Like Byron, Fox had no occasion to seek admission into what is called the highest circle, but was part of

“it from the first. Instead of being tolerated by fine gentlemen, he was “one of themselves—hand and glove with every noble rake who filled his “pockets from the Exchequer and emptied them over the hazard-table; and “smiled on by all the dowagers and maids of honour as to the state of whose “jointures and complexions our envoy at Florence was kept so regularly “and minutely informed. It would be unchivalrous to revive the personal “history of too many of the fair dames to whom, and about whom, Walpole “indited his letters, even though a century has elapsed since they were laid “elsewhere than in their husbands’ family vault. What were the morals of “the bolder sex among Lord Holland’s friends may be gathered from the “correspondence of the Earl of March in which a man past forty describes “to a man nearly fifty the life which, without affectation or concealment, was “led by persons high in rank, rich in official employments, well seen at “Court, and to whom every door in Mayfair was as freely open as to young “Lord Hardwicke or old Lord Mansfield.”

At the age of sixteen Charles Fox entered Brooks’s, and in this club he found himself surrounded with every facility for ruining himself in the “best of company.” Brooks’s was not political in its origin. In its first list of members, the Duke of Grafton and Lord Weymouth appear side by side with the Dukes of Richmond and Portland. Men who moved in the same social orbit desired to live together more freely than was compatible with the publicity of a coffee-house. The establishment was founded by one Almack, a wine merchant, who was succeeded by Mr. Brooks. The present house was built on the site of the old one in 1778, and not long afterwards Brooks—

Who, nursed in clubs, disdains a vulgar trade,
Exults to trust and blushes to be paid—

retired from the management and died poor. In this club dinner it appears was served at half-past four, and the bill brought in at seven. Supper began at eleven, and ended at half-past twelve. In regard to gambling, the club rules laid, practically, no restraints. Mr. Brooks was always at hand with a few hundred guineas, and players were welcome to go on losing as long as their adversaries were willing to trust them. But members of Brooks’s, though they may have played more comfortably in the club than elsewhere, did not play for higher stakes. In those days Society was one vast casino. Whenever half-a-dozen people of fashion found themselves together, they began to gamble. Assembled together for music or dancing, or politics, or drinking the waters, the box was sure to be rattling, and the cards were being cut and shuffled. To bet freely and lose handsomely was a sure road into the graces of a fine lady. And the ladies—Mr. Trevelyan styles them “elegant harpies”—were eager to lay blackmail on their friends. “The ladies,” wrote Horace Walpole, “game too deep for me.” A lady’s pin-money might be lost three times over in a single evening. During a long and fierce debate on Wilkes, eight or nine Whig ladies who could not find room in the gallery, played in one of the Speaker’s chambers. At Bath there was high play, and no small amount of cheating. The ladies who cheated, however, were less dangerous than the ladies who could not pay. In 1770 Walpole wrote that young men lost five, ten, fifteen thousand pounds in an evening: “Lord Stavordale, not one-and-twenty, lost eleven thousand last Monday, but recovered it by one great hand at hazard.” Selwyn, in his senses, cried out bitterly against gambling; “it consumed,” he said, “four things—time, health, fortune, and thinking;” and, on being told that a waiter at Arthur’s had been arrested for felony, he exclaimed, “What a horrid idea he will give of us to the people in Newgate!”

Of Fox’s gambling, and of his debts, much is recorded; but passing

over this portion of the volume, we may quote from Mr. Trevelyan's description of the betting-book at Brooks's :

There exists at Brooks's Club a curious memorial of the society in which Fox lived, and of the constant and minute attention which that society bestowed on his proceedings. . . . Fifty guineas that Thurlow gets a Tellership of the Exchequer for his son ; fifty guineas that Mademoiselle Heinel does not dance at Opera House next winter ; fifty guineas that two thousand people were at the Pantheon last evening ; fifty guineas that Lord Ilchester gives his first vote in Opposition, and hits eight out of his first ten pheasants ; three hundred to fifty from a nobleman, who appreciated the privileges of a bachelor, that the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Cholmondeley, and two given Commoners are married before him ; five guineas down to receive a hundred if the Duke of Queensberry dies before half an hour after five in the afternoon of the 27th of June, 1773 ; a hundred guineas on the Duke of Queensberry's life against Lord Palmerston's ; a hundred guineas that Lord Derby does not see the next General Election ; and a hundred guineas, between two unusually discreet members of the club, that some one in their eye does not live ten years from the present date. The betting was hottest in war time, and during the period while a notorious criminal remained untried or unhung ; for the disciples of George Selwyn were never tired of calculating the chances of people dying elsewhere than in their beds. The old yellow leaves are scored thick with bets that one of the Perreans would be hanged ; that neither one of them would be hanged ; and that Mrs. Budd would be admitted to bail ; that Dr. Dodd would be executed within two months ; that he would anticipate the gallows by suicide, and that if he killed himself it would be by pistol, and not by poison. Fitzpatrick, flying at higher game, laid five hundred guineas to ten that none of the Cabinet were beheaded by that day three years ; and another gentleman, who believed the melancholy contingency to be not only possible but probable, was free-spoken enough to name his Minister. Still bolder spirits did not shrink from placing their money upon prophecies which the delicacy of a later age has taken effectual care to render illegible.

When Charles Fox first took rank among grown men, the head of the law in England (Chancellor Northington), and the head of the Church in Ireland (Archbishop Stone), were notorious as two among the hardest livers in their respective countries ; and such a pre-eminence was then not lightly earned. Philip Francis, who sipped thimblefuls while his friends were draining bumpers, could not always get through an after-dinner sitting without losing his head. Two of his friends finished between them a gallon and a half of Champagne and Burgundy. The lives of such hard drinkers were short ; at five-and-thirty a fit of the gout was welcomed, and at seven-and-forty old age was talked of. The pious king, however, set a good example ; he would never admit that gout was wholesome : " I prefer eating plain and little," he said, " to growing sickly and infirm." " The habits and morals of the Royal Household," says Mr. Trevelyan, " were those which prevailed rather in the middle than in the upper classes." The first few hundred lines of the " Winter's Evening" show us what was " the aspect of a modest English home, refined by culture, and ennobled " by a religious faith, of which hardly a vestige can be traced in the records " of fashionable and ministerial circles. Cowper has elsewhere left a " reference to the astonishment with which the official world witnessed " the appearance in the midst of such a phenomenon as

" One who wears a coronet and prays

" in the person of Lord Dartmouth. Voltaire, writing in 1766, pronounced " that there was no more religion in Great Britain than the minimum " which was required for party purposes." But then, it is true, as Lord Macaulay pointed out, that Voltaire knew nothing of the grave-part of mankind, or of the middle classes ; living with the wits and people of fashion during his visit to England, the French infidel was not

likely to see traces of Whitefield and Wesley's labours. As Mr. Trevelyan observes: "There is just as much and as little trace of Christianity in Horace Walpole as in Pliny the younger." The letter in which the great letter-writer describes the first sight of Wesley, "it translated into good Latin, might pass muster as an extract from the familiar correspondence of Gallio."¹

Private vices were reflected in the conduct of public affairs. Everybody who had influence in Parliament, or in Court, says our author, used it for the expressed and avowed purpose of making or repairing his fortune. Jobbery, corruption, and bribery were rampant. Horace Walpole, whose gains must have amounted to a quarter of a million, describes how his eldest brother was appointed Auditor of the Exchequer, his second brother Clerk of the Pells, and he himself (while still at Eton) Clerk of the Estreats, and ignoring the fleeced taxpayers, speaks of the tenderness of his father! One nobleman had £8,000 a-year as sinecures, and the colonelcies of three regiments; another, as Auditor of the Exchequer, inside which he never looked, had £8,000 a-year in years of peace, and £20,000 in years of war. The lucrative places which a Minister held in his own name formed but a part of the advantages which he made from his position. All services rendered to him were recompensed by inroads on the Exchequer. Lord Holland's recommendation secured for his son's tutor a pension out of the privy purse of £300 a year. Lord Sandwich rewarded with Crown livings the clergyman who wrote his lampoons. Cowper did not exaggerate when he wrote—

The levée swarms, as if in golden pomp
Were character'd on every statesman's door,
"Battered and bankrupt fortunes mended here."

A pension was the resource when every desirable office was filled too deep; and when nothing could be done in England, the pluralist, or sinecurist, could scent a job across the seas. Ireland was the natural prey of the place-hunter; and America for many years was the hospital of England. Mr. Trevelyan's description of Irish and Colonial jobbery is graphic, and contains many telling facts.

The narrative of the proceedings in connection with the petition of certain clergymen praying to be relieved from the burden of subscribing to the Articles is especially interesting; and we should gladly give a few sentences from the fine speech of Burke, exposing the hollowness of the petition, but our space is exhausted, and we must refrain from further quotation.

The Official Report of the Church Congress held at Leicester. Edited by DAVID J. VAUGHAN, M.A., Honorary Canon of Peterborough, Vicar of St. Martin's, Leicester, and formerly Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. John Hodges. 1881.

THERE are many points in some of the important and interesting subjects brought before us in this volume on which we should gladly touch; but for criticism on the Report of the 1880 Congress the time has passed. We have looked here and there at certain papers and speeches which for

¹ "My health advances faster than my amusement. However, I have been at one opera—Mr. Wesley's. They have boys and girls, with charming voices, that sing hymns to Scotch ballad tunes, but so long that one would think they were already in eternity, and knew how much time they had before them. . . . Except a few from curiosity, and some honourable women, the congregation was very mean."

ourselves in Leicester had an especial interest, and, so far as we are able to judge, the reporting was of the best.

We must content ourselves with a few quotations, without comment, from the Paper on "The Internal Unity of the Church," by Dr. Boulton. Oddly enough, no report of this Paper was last year printed. The explanation of the omission, no doubt, is simply that the Reverend Doctor had only one copy of his Paper, and this entrusted to the Official Reporter, as usual, was somehow mislaid. However this may be, no report of Dr. Boulton's Paper, we believe, appeared in the London newspapers. The *Guardian* gave a summary, which was transferred to THE CHURCHMAN. It is with pleasure that we quote a few passages from the full report of the Paper. The subject was the "Influence of the Three Great Schools of Thought in the Church of England upon each other, and upon the Church."

Dr. Boulton employed the terms "High Church," "Broad Church," and not "Low Church," but *Evangelical*. The term which temptingly completes the trio, *Low Church*, he avoided, "because it leads to a historical fallacy. It is the well-known title of a party of the days of the English Revolution, of which Bishop Burnet is the type. Every one who has read his Exposition of the Eleventh Article knows that he is not an Evangelical."

"The central doctrine of the real Evangelical is the necessity for individual conversion of the heart by a direct operation upon it of the Holy Ghost. That operation is not regarded in necessary connection with the Sacrament of Baptism. Thereupon follows the justification of the sinner, by that faith which the Holy Ghost, and not the act of his own reason, has imparted."

The influence of one body of Churchmen on another Dr. Boulton illustrated by the great struggle, thirty or forty years ago, on the Baptismal question.

"In the famous Gorham case, it was attempted by force of law to fasten on the Regeneration Clauses of the Service for the baptism of infants an absolute, invariable, unconditional meaning. If I have given a correct view of the central principle of the Evangelical school it will be seen at a glance that this would have been fatal by necessary logical consequence to the position which for 300 years they had held in the Church of England.

"I want to illustrate from this the influence of repulsion. Thereupon grew up in men of the Evangelical school a great, I had almost said excessive, caution in their mode of speaking of Baptism. Words which to the former generation, to Charles Simeon, or Edward Bickersteth, for example, would have been natural, were avoided through fear of being misunderstood in the dreaded direction.

"But why need I dwell on this? Reactions, whether political or religious, are sufficiently familiar phenomena of thought and movement. Principles must abide; but more courtesy does not mean less certainty.

"Surely we may all welcome" says Dr. Boulton, "an abatement of harsh extremes. In Elizabeth's days the Puritans had two leading opponents. The vehemence of Whitgift, archbishop though he was, lies hid in mouldering volumes. The calm judicial defence of Hooker, looking forth over the field from the massive entrenchments of solid principles, is studied from generation to generation. Something of this moderated tone may perhaps now be recognized. I, at least, may not ungracefully acknowledge a more fair and honourable estimate of the labours of the earlier Evangelicals, if not of our living selves, than controversy used to allow within our own memory. And if this does not lead to weakness, should it not be welcomed? 'The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.'

“But I must ask more individual questions. Has the influence of the Broad Church school done nothing? They will pardon me if I am not willing to give the palm for exact learning and sound criticism to their school. But if their principles admit a freer play of criticism on the sacred page, they must either by attraction or repulsion have drawn men of other schools to follow or to anticipate them in such studies. They must have stimulated the more exact, as distinguished from the more spiritual, study of the Word of God.

“And, somehow, an unspeakable change has come over the great field of Bible criticism. Look back on the shelves familiar to my youth—the Patrick, Whitby, Hammond, Scott, Bloomfield, Horne. Look at your shelves now, groaning under the weight of the most detailed and elaborate results of vast learning brought to bear on the text, history, and exegesis of Holy Writ. What the Biblical scholar of the next generation will have to encounter I tremble to imagine. The load of sound learning—I say nothing of unsound—becomes too heavy for any shoulders but those of a giant.

“Who of competent learning will hesitate to recognize a sense of security, of strengthened faith, as upon the whole resulting from manifold labours of illustrious scholars of varied schools of thought? They pass away, that motley array of assailants, rapidly fading into dim shadows of vanishing human thought. They pass away, mutually destructive, that Strauss, Renan, Colenso. Their objections fail, their theories die, but ‘The Word of God endureth for ever.’

“Again, doubtless the great High Church school has in our day been prominent in care for varied acts and forms of outward worship and organization. I am not speaking of extreme men and extreme practices. They are out of my subject. I do not regard them as any true portion of the great historical school which looks back with filial regard to Sancroft and Ken and their compeers.

“Doubtless he must be blind who does not freely admit the vast influence in this direction of the High Church school. Yet, were there time, one might discuss how much may be due to them, and how much to the spirit of antiquarianism, to the love of artistic conceptions, to the revived study of music, to the restless power of fashion sweeping away the mere mobile sections of humanity. But I must pass these and many more.

“And has no influence gone forth from Evangelical thought and labour? They look forth over the whole Church, and they think they see it everywhere. Younger men do not know what the Church of England was. Fifty years ago, to stand on the platform of a religious meeting as Evangelicals alone did—to hold cottage meetings—was to incur obloquy and contempt, if not something more. To sing hymns instead of Tate and Brady was next door to heresy. To send missionaries to Africa was blind fanaticism. To encourage the pious laity, men or women, to speak for their Saviour to the lost ones to whom they could obtain access was the most censurable irregularity. Extempore prayer was a mark of virtual dissent. I have lived to see a meeting at Lambeth of some sixty clergy of all the *three great schools*, and to hear the Primate call upon members of *each* to address their Father in Heaven without premeditation, and to hear each in full spiritual harmony calling then upon Him.”