

## **The last illness and decease of ... the Duke of York / [Sir Herbert Taylor].**

### **Contributors**

Taylor, Herbert, Sir, 1775-1839.

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Eng<sup>d</sup> by I. Cochran.

*Field Marshal*  
**THE DUKE**  
*Commander in Chief of His*

*His Royal Highness*  
**OF YORK**  
*Britannic Majesty's Forces*



Dedicated by Permission to His Most Gracious Majesty George 4<sup>th</sup>

*by his Loyal & most devoted Servant.* *William Lums.*

Born Aug<sup>r</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> 1763. Died Jan<sup>r</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 1827. Aged 64.



THE  
Last Illness and Decrease  
OF  
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS  
THE DUKE OF YORK:  
BEING A JOURNAL OF  
OCCURRENCES WHICH TOOK PLACE  
BETWEEN THE  
9TH OF JUNE, 1826, AND THE 5TH  
OF JANUARY, 1827.

BY  
LIEUT.-GEN. SIR HERBERT TAYLOR, G.C.H.

*SIXTH EDITION.*

LONDON:  
WILLIAM SAMS, 1, ST. JAMES'S STREET,  
BOOKSELLER TO HIS LATE ROYAL HIGHNESS  
*And to the Royal Family.*

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MDCCCXXVII.



THE DUKE OF YORK

LONDON:

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,  
Stamford-Street.

HAVING received an authentic Copy of the Memorandum of the latest days and illness of His Royal Highness the DUKE of YORK, and having at the same time been permitted to employ that manuscript according to my own discretion, I feel that I can in no manner more properly avail myself of such an opportunity, than by giving publicity to the incidents which are comprehended in that affecting and authentic narrative.

W. SAMS.



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THE  
LAST ILLNESS,  
&c.

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THE interest excited by the situation of the late DUKE of YORK, and by every circumstance connected with his long, painful, and lingering illness, from its commencement until the fatal hour which closed his valuable existence, has been so great, and the general feeling which it produced has caused so many particulars to be circulated and received by the public as authentic, for which there either was no foundation, or at least very imperfect foundation, that I have, upon due consideration, been induced to draw up, from minutes taken



during this distressing and trying period of my attendance upon His Royal Highness, a statement, not of the progress of the disease, or of the treatment pursued, but of such circumstances and facts as will show the condition of His Royal Highness's mind under this awful visitation of Providence ; will do justice to the exemplary resolution and pious resignation with which he met and submitted to it, and will satisfy his attached friends that His Royal Highness was, in *every point of view*, deserving of the respect and the affection which have so strongly marked their sentiments towards him, and of the deep grief and regret which his death has occasioned in their minds and in those of the respectable and well-thinking individuals of every class in this country.

The state of His Royal Highness's health had, for some time, appeared far from satisfactory, and had occasioned more or less uneasiness to those about him; but the first indications of serious indisposition, such as to produce alarm, were upon His Royal Highness's return from Ascot to his residence in Audley-square, on the 9th of June, 1826, and Mr. Macgregor, who then saw him, urged him immediately to send for Sir Henry Hallford.

From that period His Royal Highness continued more or less an invalid, and was occasionally confined to his house.

Upon the 24th of June, His Royal Highness removed for change of air to Brompton Park, the residence of Mr. Greenwood, who kindly lent it to him; and upon that day he sent for me, and told me that he



had been unwell for some weeks, and that he did not think that he gained ground. That he did not feel alarmed, and that he had perfect confidence in the attention given to his case, and the skill of his medical advisers: but that he knew that they might entertain apprehensions which they would consider it their professional duty not to communicate to their patients, and he might therefore remain ignorant of that which ought not to be concealed from him, and which he trusted he should learn without apprehension, although he did not deny that he should learn it with regret. That there were duties to be performed, and arrangements to be made, which ought not to be deferred to the last moment; and he felt that it was due to his character and station, to his comfort, and even to his feel-

ings on this subject, that he should not be taken by surprise upon so serious an occasion. He considered it probable that the physicians would be less reserved with me than with him, and he charged me if I should learn from them directly, or should have reason to draw such inference from any expression that might drop from them, that his situation had become one of danger, not to withhold such knowledge from him. He appealed to me upon this occasion for an act of friendship, he would add, for the discharge of a duty, which he claimed from the person who had been with him and enjoyed his confidence during so many years. He called upon me to promise that I would perform it whenever the period should arrive to which he alluded, and he desired that I would bear in mind that he



wished me to deal by him as he was certain I should desire, under similar circumstances, to be dealt with.

I made the promise without hesitation, and it was received with a warm expression of thanks, and an affectionate pressure of the hand.

This was repeated, in allusion to what had passed at a later period of the day, when he got into his carriage to go to Brompton; and he then said that he felt relieved from great uneasiness by the promise I had given him.

His Royal Highness removed to Brighton on the 14th of August, for the benefit of further change of air, and I learnt from Mr. Macgregor on the 17th of that month, that a change had taken place in his general state, and that symptoms had appeared

which rendered his situation one of danger.

This distressing information was confirmed to me from other quarters, and I determined immediately to go to Brighton and to discharge my duty, but to be guided in the character and extent of the disclosure by such further communication as might be made to me by His Royal Highness's medical attendants, of the nature and pressure of the danger. I pleaded business rendering personal communication necessary for my visit to His Royal Highness, and I went to Brighton on the 19th of August. Upon my arrival, I learnt from Mr. Macgregor that a favourable change had taken place; that His Royal Highness had gained strength, and that the most alarming symptoms had in



great measure subsided; that His Royal Highness's situation might therefore be considered far more encouraging than when he wrote to me, but that it was impossible to consider it free from danger, although that danger had ceased to be immediate, and although there was reason to hope that the cause of alarm might be removed. He added that, from observations which His Royal Highness had made to himself, he was convinced I would find him prepared for any communication I might feel it my duty to make to him, and that, under all circumstances, I must exercise my discretion.

I then saw the Duke of York, who entered fully into his situation, and told me that, although much better then, and, he believed, going on well, he had reason to

think, from the manner and looks of his medical attendants, that they had been alarmed, and felt much greater uneasiness than they had expressed, or might feel at liberty to express, and he wished to know what I had learnt.

I did not disguise from him that, bearing in mind the engagement I had contracted, I had determined to go to Brighton, in consequence of the accounts I had received on the 17th, which had alarmed me ; but that I was happy to find on my arrival, that His Royal Highness's state had since been improving, and that much of the uneasiness which then prevailed had been removed ; at the same time it was my duty to confirm the impression which he appeared himself to have received, that his complaint had assumed a more serious character, al-



though great confidence appeared to be felt that the extraordinary resources of his constitution, and the strength he had gained since his removal to Brighton, would enable him to struggle successfully with the disorder. "Then," said he, "I was not mistaken in my suspicions, and my case is not wholly free from danger; but I depend upon your honour, and you tell me there is more to hope than to fear."

I assured him that such was decidedly the impression I had received from what Mr. Macgregor had said to me. He thanked me, and proceeded to look over and give directions upon some official papers with his usual attention and accuracy.

He saw Mr. Macgregor the same evening, and questioned him; and he told me on the following day, that Mr. Macgregor

had answered him very fairly, and had confirmed what I had said to him, as did Sir Matthew Tierney later in the day.

On that same day he told me that he felt stronger ; that his mind was relieved by what had passed, as he knew he should not be deceived, or left to form his own conjectures and draw his own conclusions from the looks and manner of his medical attendants and others about him ; and that he had not for months slept so well as the preceding night.

I repeated to him, that I had come to Brighton under considerable alarm, and that I should leave it very much relieved. His Royal Highness was cheerful ; and I heard from Mr. Macgregor, and others, that he continued so during the following days. Indeed, he wrote to me himself in



very good spirits, and assured me of the comfort and relief he had derived from the proof afforded to him that he would be fairly dealt with.

His Royal Highness returned from Brighton on the afternoon of the 26th of August, to the Duke of Rutland's house in Arlington-street, having come in five hours and a half. He did not seem much fatigued ; looked well in the countenance ; and conversed cheerfully with Sir Henry Torrens and me, who were in waiting to receive him.

He afterwards told me that his strength, sleep, and appetite, had improved, but that the medicines he had taken had ceased to have the desired effect in checking the progress of the main disorder ; and that he had, therefore, returned to town earlier

than had been intended, in order, as he understood, to try some change of treatment, which he apprehended might be tapping. This was an unpleasant hearing, though it did not alarm him: he was determined to keep up his spirits; he knew his situation was a serious one, but he had no doubt, please God, he should recover, though he feared his recovery would be a work of time.

In the course of the conversation, I told him that I had understood Sir H. Halford would be in town on the following day, and did not mean to return to the country. He observed it was very kind of him, but immediately added, "By the by, not a very good sign, either."

He then proceeded very quietly to official business; but Mr. Macgregor coming



in, he, in the most calm and collected manner, questioned him, *before* me, very closely as to his state, beginning by these words, "Tell me, honestly, do you consider me in danger?" Not in *immediate* danger, was the answer. "But," said His Royal Highness, "you do consider my situation to be one not free from danger." Mr. Macgregor admitted it to be by no means free from danger, but proceeded to state the grounds which justified his medical attendants in indulging hopes that His Royal Highness might look forward to a favourable issue.

Mr. Macgregor's answer produced further questions, all put with a view to obtain positive and accurate information as to the extent of danger, and he concluded by thanking Mr. Macgregor for the fair

manner in which he had met them, and by saying, "I know now, what I wished to know, and I shall be able to govern myself by that knowledge." During the whole of this conversation, which was of some length, his manner was firm and collected, though very serious ; his voice free from agitation : his questions were put quietly at intervals, as if well considered, by a man who was determined to ascertain his own situation ; and his words were measured.

He afterwards desired me to repeat what Mr. Macgregor had said, as I understood it, that he might be satisfied he had not mistaken him. I did so, and he observed that he also had so understood him, but that he did not augur from it that his case was hopeless, which impression I confirmed. He expressed an earnest hope



that the symptoms of his disorder were not generally known or talked of.

I have been thus particular in the statement of what passed upon these three occasions, to show how anxious His Royal Highness was not to be kept in the dark, how fearlessly he met the communication of the existence of danger, and, above all, to show that he was early apprized of his critical state, from the contemplation of which he at no time shrunk, although he was at all times anxious to conceal from the generality of those who approached him, that he did not look forward with undiminished confidence to a favourable issue.

On the following day, Sunday 27th August, His Royal Highness again spoke to me very quietly in regard to his situation ; and told me that, although not alarmed,

and although he had heard nothing that should shake his hopes of ultimate recovery, he could not conceal from himself that his situation called for serious contemplation. Whatever might be the result, there would be time for certain arrangements, and the settlement of his affairs, but there was one duty he did not wish to defer; he felt, indeed, that it ought not to be deferred until it should seem to be imposed by a conviction of immediate danger, and resorted to when hope had ceased to exist. He had, therefore, determined to take the Sacrament upon an early day, and to request his friend the Bishop of London to administer it to him; but he was anxious that this should not be known, as the alarm would be sounded, and various interpretations would be put upon an



act which was one of duty, resorted to on principle, and not from apprehension or affectation ; he therefore directed me to see the Bishop of London, and to request him to come to him on the following Tuesday at twelve. He desired that I would explain to him his desire that the attendance should be quiet, and should not excite observation ; that he wished the service to be simply that of the Communion, as he did not *now* apply to him for his attendance as upon a sick person. He also desired me to be present, and to take the Sacrament with him.

He told me that he had well considered of this act. He was sure that, under any circumstances, it would tend to his satisfaction, comfort and relief, and that he ought not to postpone it.

I went to the Bishop of London (at Fulham), who received the communication with great emotion, and spoke in the highest terms of the exemplary feeling which had dictated His Royal Highness's wish, and said that he would come quietly to Arlington Street on Tuesday at twelve, without robes (as upon ordinary occasions) and without notice to any one, and I engaged to have all prepared.

I returned to Arlington Street to inform His Royal Highness; and it was agreed that his servant, Batchelor, should alone be apprised of the intention, and that I should take care to keep others out of the way. His Royal Highness again said that he should derive great comfort from thus early discharging his duty. He also gave me instructions to clear his drawers in



Audley Square of papers, and to bring them away, and seal up those of a private nature. He said he should, by degrees, look them over and attend to other matters, but repeatedly assured me that all this was done and thought of without any apprehension of a fatal issue of his disorder, and that he was confident he should recover.

The Princess Sophia (who usually came every day about two o'clock) had been with him, and I asked him whether she was aware of his situation. He said he believed not, at least he had said nothing to alarm her ; possibly, however, she might be to a certain extent, and he had, therefore, said nothing to undeceive her.

When I saw Batchelor, I learnt from him, (what I had never previously known,) that His Royal Highness, when he did not go

to church, never missed devoting some time to his prayers, which he read to himself, in general early, that he might not be disturbed, but if disturbed in the morning, in the afternoon or evening, and that when travelling on Sunday, he always took a Bible and Prayer-book in the carriage, and was very particular as to their being placed within his immediate reach ; and that although he did not object to a travelling companion on other days, nothing annoyed him more than any one proposing to be his companion on a Sunday.

His Royal Highness saw Sir Henry Halford on that day, and questioned him very closely as to his situation. Sir Henry told me that he had answered his questions fairly, and that he had found His Royal Highness in an excellent state of mind ;



and that he could not sufficiently admire the resolution and composure with which he sought for information, and dwelt upon the question of danger. He observed that there was no difficulty in dealing with such a patient.

His Royal Highness told me afterwards that Sir Henry Halford's communication had confirmed the impression he had received from what Mr. Macgregor had said, and he expressed himself perfectly satisfied with it.

His Royal Highness continued in good spirits, and in the same composed state of mind, on the 28th and 29th.

On the latter day the Bishop of London came at a little before twelve, and His Royal Highness was alone with him for a short time; after which I was called in,

and his Lordship administered the Sacrament to us.

The Duke's deportment was serious, as became the occasion ; but firm, and quite free from agitation. He did not appear nervous or affected, although he must have perceived that neither the Bishop nor I were free from either feeling.

The Bishop of London told me afterwards that nothing could be more correct or satisfactory than all His Royal Highness had said to him when they were alone ; and that his state of mind was that in which he could wish, under such circumstances, to find that of any person in whose welfare he felt interested.

When I returned to the Duke of York, he appeared more affected, and he assured me that he felt that comfort and relief



which he could not describe ; and that, whatever might be the issue of his illness, he had done what he ought to do. That he could now attend to other matters with increased composure.

In the afternoon, when I saw him again, he expressed to me how much he had been pleased with the Bishop of London's mild and encouraging discourse.

That he had stated to his Lordship unreservedly, that he knew his situation to be a very serious, though he trusted not a hopeless, one ; but that he did not choose to postpone a duty which he conceived ought to be performed while he was in the full possession of his faculties, which might yield to disease sooner than he was aware of. That he had in the course of his life faced death in various shapes, and

was now doomed to view its approach in a slow and lingering form. That he did not deny that he should resign his existence with regret, though he felt no alarm. He admitted that his life had not been pure ; that there had been much in his course he wished had been otherwise. He had not thought so seriously on some subjects as he might have done ; still he had endeavoured to discharge his public duties correctly. He had forborne from injuring or deceiving any one, and he felt in peace and charity with all.

Under these circumstances he hoped he might look with confidence to mercy, through the merits of his Redeemer ; and he had appealed to him (the Bishop) on this occasion, not only to receive the confession of his unworthiness, but to admi-



nister that comfort which his situation required. That his reliance and his faith in the Christian religion were firm and decided, and that his adherence to the pure doctrine professed and established in this country, was unshaken as it had ever been. That, as he had declared these sentiments in a political discussion of the question, he was anxious that it should be understood, and that the Bishop of London should be enabled to state hereafter, if the occasion should call for it, that those sentiments were not professed in a political sense, and from prejudice and party-feelings, but that they were firmly fixed in his mind, and were the result of due consideration and conviction, and produced by an earnest solicitude for the continued welfare of his country.

After saying this, His Royal Highness told me that he felt very comfortable, and that, if it should please God to restore him to health, he was sure he should be a better man ever after. He considered this trial as a mercy, for which he ought to feel grateful ; it afforded him time for serious reflection, and he trusted that the time would not be ill applied. He then entered into some questions of military business with great composure.

His Royal Highness underwent the operation of tapping on the afternoon of the 3rd September. It was performed by Mr. Macgregor, and it was borne by His Royal Highness with the same resolution and quiet composure which had marked his conduct under every stage of his illness. Colonel Stephenson and I saw him



soon after. We found him a little exhausted, but cheerful, and quite free from nervous agitation.

About this period he received the communication of the death of Sir Harry Calvert, by which he was much affected, and he observed that he had deeply to deplore the loss of an old and attached friend, and a religious and good man.

For some days after the operation, he was very weak, and his left leg was in a state which occasioned serious uneasiness, nor was the appearance of the other leg satisfactory. On the 10th he examined the contents of some private boxes, and desired that they might be left in his room, but considered as consigned to my charge. His situation gave his medical attendants serious uneasiness ; and His Royal High-

ness was perfectly sensible of it, nor indeed did I disguise it from him, when he questioned me.

Between the 12th and the 18th, His Royal Highness gained strength, and his appetite and sleep improved, but the state of his legs continued unsatisfactory. On the 19th he began again to take his airings, but the improvement had not been such as to induce his medical attendants to consider his state otherwise than very critical. He continued to take daily airings until the 16th October. During this interval, he rallied occasionally, and his general health appeared at times to be improving, notwithstanding the state of the legs, which became gradually more unsatisfactory, and often occasioned excruciating pain throughout great part of the day.



His Royal Highness frequently spoke to me of his own situation and feelings, more especially on the 22nd September, when he told me he did his best to submit with patience and resignation ; that he tried to keep up his spirits ; he met his friends cheerfully, endeavoured to go correctly through what he had to do, and to occupy himself at other times with reading : but when left to his own thoughts, when he went to bed and lay awake, the situation was not agreeable : the contemplation of one's end, not to be met at once, nor within a short given period, but protracted possibly for months, required a struggle, and tried one's resolution. But after all, he did not know that he regretted it, or that he regretted that time was given to him which had turned his mind to serious re-

flection, and which he was certain had been very beneficial to him. If it should please God that he should recover, he would become a better man; if he did not recover, he would have to thank God for the time afforded for reflection.

I have noticed what passed on this day, to show that his feelings had undergone no change.

On the 16th October, Mr. Macgregor desired that I would convey to His Royal Highness his wish that he would allow him to call in Sir Astley Cooper; that I would state that he had no reason to doubt His Royal Highness's confidence, but that a heavy responsibility was thrown upon him, and that it might be satisfactory to His Royal Highness, it doubtless would be to himself, to resort to further aid and advice,



as the state of the legs had, unfortunately, formed so prominent a feature of the case : at the same time, he was persuaded that Sir Astley Cooper would concur in all that he had done. When I mentioned it to His Royal Highness, he objected, and assured me that he was perfectly satisfied with Mr. Macgregor's skill, and his attention ; and that he would not, upon any account, appear to show a doubt which he had never felt, nor hurt Mr. Macgregor's feelings. I assured him that Mr. Macgregor was perfectly sensible of this, but that he owed it to his own feelings, and to his character as a professional man, to make this request. His Royal Highness then objected to the effect it might produce upon the public, to its getting into the newspapers, &c. I observed that

measures might be taken to prevent this, and he finally agreed to Mr. Macgregor speaking to Sir Henry Halford, and settling it with him.

Sir Astley Cooper attended, accordingly, on the 17th, and continued to do so during the remainder of His Royal Highness's illness. Notwithstanding every precaution, it was impossible to prevent it being soon noticed in the papers; and when His Royal Highness learnt this, he observed, that his chief motive for wishing it concealed, was the apprehension that it might excite unnecessary alarm, which, as connected with his station and situation, might embarrass the government, and possibly influence the public funds. It could not affect him personally.

His Royal Highness's state fluctuated



again between this period and the 6th of November, when there was a marked improvement in the condition of the legs, which continued until the 20th, when they again assumed an unfavourable appearance ; which was the more to be lamented, as His Royal Highness's strength and constitutional powers had been giving way, his appetite and sleep began to fail, and the increasing evil was therefore to be met by impaired resources.

Towards the beginning of December, His Royal Highness again rallied, so far as the legs were concerned, but his frame and his constitution had evidently become weaker ; and His Royal Highness himself expressed his apprehensions that his strength would not carry him through the protracted struggle.

Between the 8th and 17th of December there was again a sensible improvement in the legs, which might have raised the hopes of His Royal Highness's attendants, if the return of strength had kept pace with it; but he was visibly losing strength and substance, and on the 20th the legs resumed the appearance of mortification to an alarming extent, and the medical attendants agreed that his situation had become very critical.

Their apprehensions were still further excited on the 22nd. His appetite had totally failed him, and other symptoms were equally unfavourable. Still he kept up his spirits; and although my language was anything but encouraging, he *appeared* to feel sanguine of recovery. This impression was not justified by the opinion of the



medical attendants, and I became very anxious that His Royal Highness should be made aware of the increased danger of his situation. I urged this point with Sir Henry Halford and Sir Astley Cooper ; assured them that they mistook His Royal Highness's character, if they apprehended any ill effect from the disclosure ; and represented that it was due to his character, and to his wish to discharge the duties which he still had to perform. In the course of the day they yielded to my representations, and authorized me to avail myself of any opening which His Royal Highness might give me, to make him sensible of the increased anxiety and alarm which I had observed in his physicians. I was to use my discretion as to the mode, the nature, and the extent of the disclo-

sure ; it would probably produce reference to them, and they would then confirm the impression conveyed by me.

I saw His Royal Highness at five o'clock, when I took my official papers to him. He gave me the desired opportunity at once, by asking what the doctors said of him. His servant being in the room, I gave no immediate answer, and he waited quietly until he had left the room, and then repeated the question.

I spoke to him, as had been agreed with Sir Henry Halford, adding, that my own anxiety, and the uneasiness I had already expressed to him, had led me to watch the physicians, and to endeavour to extract from them what their real opinion was ; but that they were cautious, and were evidently unwilling to authorize me to *express*



their alarm. I could not, however, forget His Royal Highness's appeal to me in Audley-square, nor the pledge I had given him ; that I knew His Royal Highness did not wish to be taken by surprise ; that I felt he ought not to be taken by surprise ; and therefore I had considered it my duty to disclose to him the uneasiness I felt. He listened with composure, and without betraying any agitation ; but asked me, whether the danger was immediate—whether it was a question of *days*.

I repeated that I was not authorized to say so, and I trusted it was not. He said, “ God's will be done ! I am not afraid of dying ; I trust I have done my duty ; I have endeavoured to do so. I know that my faults have been many, but God is merciful ; His ways are inscrutable ; I bow

with submission to His will. I have at least not to reproach myself with not having done all I could to avert this crisis. But I own it has come upon me by surprise. I knew that my case had not ceased to be free from danger ; I have always been told so, but I did not suspect *immediate* danger ; and had I been a timid or a nervous man the effect might have been trying. I trust I have received this communication with becoming resolution." I observed, that I had not for many days seen His Royal Highness more free from nervous agitation ; and that I had not been disappointed in my expectation that he would bear this communication as he did that which I had been called upon to make to him at Brighton. He desired me to feel his pulse, which was low, but even and steady.



He then put various questions to me, with a view to ascertain the causes of what he considered so sudden a change in his state. I accounted for it by what I had learnt from the physicians, and ended by repeating that I had felt it my duty, however painful, to speak out. He thanked me, gave me his hand, and said I had acted as I ought, and as he expected; but he pressed me again to state “what was the extent of the danger, and whether *immediate*.” I repeated, that I had been assured it was not immediate. “Whether his case was without hope of recovery?”—I gave no decided answer, but said that I could not extract from the physicians any positive opinion; but that their language was not encouraging. He said, “I understand you: I may go on for a short time,

but I may end rapidly. God's will be done; I am resigned!" He then called for his official papers, and transacted his business with composure and his usual attention. He afterwards resumed the previous painful subject. I spoke to him about his private papers, and he confirmed some of the directions previously given to me upon that subject. He then spoke most kindly, took me again by the hand, and said, "Thank you; God bless you!" I had hitherto succeeded in controlling my feelings; but I could do so no longer, and I left the room.

I learnt from his servant, Batchelor, that after I left His Royal Highness, he had desired him to collect and pay some small bills; that he began to write some memoranda, and appeared very serious, but quite free



from agitation. His Royal Highness afterwards had some serious conversation with Sir Henry Halford, who did not disguise from him the uneasiness he felt, but did not admit that his case had become hopeless. He had found him perfectly calm and composed.

His Royal Highness sent for me again, and repeated to me very correctly what Sir H. Halford had said to him. He afterwards saw Colonel Stephenson, who told me that he had conversed with him very quietly upon indifferent subjects, and that, from his manner, he could not have suspected that any thing could have occurred to disturb him.

He passed a good night, and appeared better on the following day. He saw the Adjutant-General and Quarter-Master-

General early, and gave his directions to them with his usual accuracy. I saw him soon after, and he told me that he had passed a good night, had rather more appetite, and was more free from pain; that this was satisfactory for the moment, but whether of any ultimate avail a higher Power would decide.

The physicians told me there was no improvement in his situation.

In the course of the day I submitted to him the official papers, and took his pleasure upon some general military arrangements, into which he entered with interest; but in the afternoon he became very languid and nervous, though he rallied again towards the evening.

On the following day, 24th December, he appeared better and in good spirits, though incapable of much exertion.



On the 25th he was weaker, having had a very indifferent night. He saw the Duke of Wellington early in the day. The physicians told me that His Royal Highness's state was becoming daily more critical, and that it was desirable that I should avail myself of any opportunity which might offer of drawing His Royal Highness's attention to the necessity of settling his affairs. I embraced it that very day, and proposed to him to send for his solicitor, Mr. Parkinson, to which he agreed, and I appointed him at ten o'clock on the following day. He afterwards went through his official business very quietly.

His Royal Highness saw Mr. Parkinson on the 26th, and signed his will, after which he shook hands with him, as if taking final leave of him. He afterwards saw the Bishop of London, who had, at all times,

free admission to His Royal Highness, and had had frequent conversations with him in the course of his illness ; and the result of *this* interview was, that His Royal Highness should take the sacrament, on the 28th, which His Royal Highness mentioned to me afterwards, adding that he meant to ask the Princess Sophia to take it with him. I saw him again in the evening, and he appeared very cheerful. On the 27th he appeared better early in the day, but became more weak and languid afterwards. He saw Mr. Peel, who told me he had been much shocked by His Royal Highness's altered appearance. The Duke, however, spoke to me of himself in a more sanguine tone than usual.

His Majesty came to His Royal Highness in the afternoon, and found him very



weak and languid, but he rallied in the evening, and looked over his official papers.

On the morning of the 28th, His Royal Highness appeared very weak, and had some attacks of nervous faintness ; which, together with other unfavourable symptoms, satisfied the physicians that the danger was becoming more imminent. The Bishop of London came at twelve, and desired that three persons should assist at the holy ceremony ; and proposed that Sir Henry Halford and I should be added to the Princess Sophia, which was mentioned to His Royal Highness, who readily agreed. Upon this occasion he came publicly, and put on his robes. His Royal Highness was quite composed ; and nothing could exceed his pious attention and calm devo-

tion throughout the solemn ceremony. He repeated the prayers, and made the responses, in a firm voice. Part of the prayers for the sick were read; but the service was, at the suggestion of Sir H. Halford, the short service. The Bishop was very much affected, particularly when pronouncing the concluding blessing. The Princess Sophia supported herself wonderfully throughout the trying scene; and the Duke was quite free from agitation. After the service was over, he kissed his sister, and shook hands most affectionately with the Bishop, Sir H. Halford, and me, thanking us, and as if taking leave of all. His Royal Highness sent for me again in the afternoon, and went through some official business, to which he appeared quite equal. He expressed great satisfac-



tion at having taken the Sacrament ; and told me that the Princess Sophia had staid with him, and borne up to the last moment. He then asked me whether his physicians thought much worse of him ; he really felt better. I replied they considered his situation as having become more doubtful than it had been ; but that they had not, at any time, authorized me to say his case was hopeless. He observed, that he thought it was wrong to abandon hope, or to despair ; but, setting aside that feeling, he was resigned to God's will. He asked whether I had any more papers requiring consideration, as he felt quite as equal to business as he had been for two or three months past ; and he wished none to be interrupted or suspended.

He afterwards saw Mr. Greville, who found him very cheerful.

He sent for me again between eight and nine, and I staid with him until ten. He appeared weak and uncomfortable, though not positively in pain. At ten, he said he should like to go to bed, but the usual hour had not arrived, and he would wait for Sir H. Halford. I persuaded him to go to bed at once. This was the first night that he had anticipated the usual hour; and the medical attendants ascribed it to increasing weakness, against which he had hitherto contended:—all agreed that he might linger on a few days, unless an attack of nervous faintness should carry him off suddenly.

On the following day, the 29th, His Royal Highness, after passing a tolerable night, appeared better. He had taken some nourishment, and his pulse was steady.



He sent for me soon after ten, and spoke very seriously of his situation, but without alarm or agitation. He appeared very desirous of extracting very direct and unreserved answers; often fixed his eyes upon me, as if to search my thoughts, and made me change my position that he might see me better. I appeared not to notice this, but kept up the conversation, for an hour and a half, on various subjects of business, &c. This succeeded, and he gradually became more at his ease. He was quite equal to any exertion of mind. When Sir H. Halford came, he announced to His Royal Highness the King's intention to pay him a visit on that day, and His Royal Highness dressed and shaved himself, which he had not been able to do on the preceding day.

The physicians told me that the state of the legs had become more unfavourable. His Royal Highness saw the Adjutant-General, and Quarter-Master-General, and transacted business with them, as usual.

His Majesty came at two, and staid an hour with His Royal Highness. His Majesty thought him looking better and stronger than on the 27th; but this was the last time he saw him, His Majesty's own indisposition having disappointed his anxious wish to have come again to him.

His Royal Highness sent for me at five, and went through his usual official business with me, after which he appeared tired and exhausted, and, indeed, he had previously retired to his bed-room.

He afterwards saw Colonel Stephenson,



who found him in the same weak and exhausted state.

Towards nine he sent for me again, and I found him much oppressed, and breathing short, and, in general, unable to rouse himself. He dismissed me after a short time, wishing me good night, but between ten and eleven, he sent for me again ; I found him dosing, and when he roused himself, he complained of inward pain, asked me how late I should stay in the house, (he was not aware that I had slept in it for several nights,) and again wished me good night.

He had called for Sir H. Halford, Mr. Macgregor, and Mr. Simpson, repeatedly, in the same manner, and after wishing them good night. Some time after, he again sent for Mr. Macgregor, who found

him in one of his attacks of nervous faintness. Mr. Macgregor gave him some laudanum, and after some time he became more composed, and fell asleep.

I learnt early in the morning of the 30th, from Mr. Macgregor, that His Royal Highness had had some sleep at intervals ; but that he appeared much weaker, and that there were other indications of increasing danger.—His Royal Highness had determined not to quit his bed-room.

He sent for me at half-past ten, and I remained with him for more than an hour, until Sir H. Halford came.—I was extremely shocked at the extraordinary change which had taken place in one night, or rather since the preceding morning, at the same hour. He appeared extremely feeble, and under great uneasiness from



pain, but otherwise composed; and although suffering so much, he uttered no complaint. He asked me when I had come, and I told him I had slept in the house. He did not seem surprised or displeased, but said, he concluded he was considered much worse, for Mr. Macgregor had been three times to see him in the night; but that he felt quite equal to business. I therefore brought forward a few subjects, and received his very clear instructions, though his voice had become so feeble that I could with difficulty hear him.

His Royal Highness saw the Dukes of Clarence and Sussex, and Sir William Knighton, who was going to Windsor, and through whom he sent an affectionate message to the King. To the Dukes of

Clarence and Sussex he spoke cheerfully on the state of Portugal and other matters of public interest. The Princess Sophia was also with him for a considerable time.

Between nine and ten, he expressed a wish to see Colonel Stephenson and me, and we went to him, but he said little, and wished us good night.

He passed a restless night, and appeared much weaker on the following morning (the 31st December), but continued perfectly sensible; took nourishment when offered to him, but showed no inclination to speak unless spoken to. His medical attendants apprehended, from the increased weakness, the rapid approach of dissolution. I went to him by desire of the physicians, between one and two. He took my hand, and received me most kindly. He said, "Here I am—I feel weaker, but



not worse, and I do not suffer pain." He moved his lips occasionally, but I could not distinguish what he said. He appeared quite sensible, very composed, and twice looked at me, the first time seriously, the second time with a placid, almost a cheerful smile, and I came away perfectly satisfied that his mind was free from anxiety and uneasiness. The Princess Sophia came in, and the manner in which he roused himself when she was announced was very striking. Her Royal Highness staid with him about twenty minutes. He continued very quiet throughout the rest of the day; and at half-past seven, desired Sir Astley Cooper, who was going to Windsor, to give his affectionate duty to the King, and to tell him he was very comfortable.

On the 1st of January, I learned that His

Royal Highness had passed a very quiet night, with four hours' good sleep, and that no material change had taken place in his state. That he continued perfectly sensible, took sufficient nourishment, and spoke whenever roused, nor were the legs in a worse state ; on the contrary, their appearance had become more favourable.

Upon the whole, the physicians thought he might linger on longer than they had expected, such was the extraordinary resistance which his constitution opposed to the progress of the disease. The Dukes of Clarence and Sussex again saw him, and he received them affectionately, but did not speak, and they left him immediately. The Princess Sophia then went to him ; he kissed her, and said, " God bless you, my dear love—to-morrow, to-morrow," and she



left him. He continued in the same quiet and composed state throughout the day, and occasionally told his medical attendants that he felt no pain, and was very comfortable. I did not see him.

The report on the following morning, (the 2d January), was, that the night had been quiet, and that he continued free from pain, and perfectly sensible, though he seldom spoke. Soon after nine, he had a shivering attack which was very alarming, and his pulse was hardly perceptible, but he rallied. He had been moved nearer to the window, was quite himself, and asked whether the day was not a frost,—which was the case. He became slightly delirious at twenty minutes past one, and other symptoms had become more alarming. Still he was quite sensible at intervals. The Prin-

cess Sophia was with him for a short time, and he knew her.

The Dukes of Clarence and Sussex, who came in the afternoon, did not see him. His Royal Highness continued nearly in the same state, except that his pulse had been gradually lowering, and his breathing becoming very short ; and his situation appeared so critical, that I and other attendants in the house, determined not to take off our clothes. The street was crowded with people throughout the day, not apparently assembled from curiosity, but from anxiety ; extremely quiet and hardly speaking, except to inquire, in a subdued voice, what was the state of His Royal Highness.

I learnt at six in the following morning (the 3rd) from Mr. Macgregor, that, notwithstanding a restless and uncomfortable



night, His Royal Highness had rallied, and appeared then stronger, more inclined to talk, and to take nourishment, than he had been on the preceding day, and that it was impossible to calculate when the crisis would arrive. His pulse also had become more steady. The other medical attendants confirmed this at a later hour; and observed, that His Royal Highness's extraordinary powers of constitution and tenacity of life defied all calculation. The Princess Sophia, being unwell, could not come this day: the Dukes of Clarence and Sussex came at twelve and staid until six, but did not see their brother.

Sir William Knighton having come from Windsor, and been named to His Royal Highness, he desired to see him, that he might inquire after the King, and re-

quested him to assure His Majesty of his affectionate duty.

Towards the evening, His Royal Highness showed symptoms of returning strength, and the physicians reported to His Majesty that he continued in the same state, without appearance of immediate dissolution, but without hope. Between eleven and twelve he was very quiet, and inclined to sleep.

The assemblage of people in Arlington-street was the same as on the preceding day; there was the same propriety of conduct, the same manifestation of affectionate interest, free from curiosity.

His Royal Highness passed a very restless night, with occasional attacks of faintness and spasm. His breathing had become more difficult; his pulse more feeble and irregular; but yet there were no symptoms



of rapidly-approaching dissolution. Sir Astley Cooper had sat up with him to relieve Mr. Macgregor, and when the latter went to His Royal Highness, he desired him to thank him, and say he was very kind.

Shortly after he saw some one near him, and Mr. Macgregor told him it was Mr. Simpson, and His Royal Highness said Mr. Simpson is a good man. He took some slight nourishment occasionally, and towards ten o'clock he had a serious attack of faintness, during which his pulse was hardly perceptible; but he rallied again. Sir William Knighton saw His Royal Highness, but he did not speak to him.

Between one and two, Mr. Macgregor came to tell me that His Royal Highness

had named me frequently, and at last made them understand that he wished to see me. I immediately went to him. I found him dreadfully changed, very feeble, very much oppressed, and evidently unable to distinguish objects clearly. Batchelor named me to him, and I sat down close by his right side. He looked at me with a kind smile, took me by the hand, and I told him I had not left the house since I had last seen him. He asked me with difficulty, and in a faint though steady voice, whether Colonel Stephenson was in the house. I said he was, and asked whether he wished to see him; he nodded assent, and I immediately sent for him. Colonel Stephenson went to his left side; but as His Royal Highness could not see him, I beckoned to him to come to the right side, and I



moved back so as to enable him to come close up, while I supported His Royal Highness, by placing my hand against the pillow behind his back. He then gave his hand to Colonel Stephenson. After some interval, during which His Royal Highness breathed with great difficulty and was very faint, and during which Bachelor bathed his temples with Cologne water, he collected his strength, and said, in a steady, firm tone of voice, but so low as to be hardly audible, to Colonel Stephenson, whose head was further removed than mine, "I am now dying." After this he dropped his head, and his lips moved for about a minute, as if in prayer. He then looked at us again, and appeared to wish to speak; but an attack of faintness came on, and his respiration was so difficult,

and he seemed so weak and exhausted, that I thought he was dying, and expressed that apprehension to Colonel Stephenson, who partook of it. Batchelor bathed his temples again, and he rallied; after which, he again took Colonel Stephenson's hand, and nodded to Batchelor, who told us he meant we should leave him.

The scene was most affecting and trying, but yet in some respects satisfactory, as it showed that he was perfectly aware of his situation, and we concluded that he had seen us together, as being his executors, and meant to take leave of us. I heard afterwards, that he had appeared much exhausted by the effort, but subsequently took some chicken broth, and became composed, without having any return



of faintness. Towards the evening he rallied again, and had some sound and comfortable sleep; and his attendants separated under the impression that His Royal Highness's life would be prolonged at least another night.

In the course of the night he had so serious an attack of faintness, that Mr. Macgregor thought he would not have recovered from it; but he rallied again towards the morning of the 5th, and had taken some nourishment. The breathing had, however, become extremely difficult. About 11, Mr. Simpson came to me to say, that the symptoms of approaching death had come on, and that the medical attendants wished me to be in the room adjoining to that in which His Royal Highness lay. I brought in the Dukes of Clarence and

Sussex, and Colonel Stephenson ; and we continued in the room expecting every moment to be called in by the medical attendants (who were all with His Royal Highness) to witness his death.

Sir H. Halford came to us occasionally, and stated that His Royal Highness's pulse was hardly perceptible ; his extremities were cold, he was speechless, and had with difficulty swallowed a little milk and rum ; but nevertheless appeared to retain his senses. Of this, indeed, he gave proof at twelve, for Mr. Macgregor came in to say, that His Royal Highness had insisted on having his legs dressed (which they naturally wished to avoid at such a period), for he had looked at him several times, had pointed at the clock, then at his legs, and had pushed off the covering ; thus



showing his determination to go through all that was required, to the last moment. When he found that he was understood, and that Mr. Macgregor was preparing for the dressing, he signified his thanks to him with a kind smile, threw back his head, and hardly noticed anything afterwards.

The pulse became more feeble, the attacks of faintness more frequent ; but His Royal Highness struggled on, and between eight and nine, this state appeared so likely to last for some hours, that the Duke of Clarence was persuaded to go home, and I returned to my room to answer some enquiries. At twenty minutes past nine, Colonel Stephenson called me out, and told me that he was in the last agonies. I hastened down ; but my dear master had expired before I could reach his room, and I had the comfort of learning that he had

expired without any struggle or apparent pain. His countenance, indeed, confirmed this : it was as calm as possible, and quite free from any distortion ; indeed, it almost looked as if he had died with a smile upon it.

The medical attendants, the Duke of Sussex, Batchelor, and another servant, were in the room, looking at him in silence and with countenances strongly expressive of their feelings.

Such was the end of this amiable, kind, and excellent man, after a long and painful struggle, borne with exemplary resolution and resignation ; and I am confident that the details into which I have entered, of the last circumstances of that struggle, will not prove uninteresting to those who were sincerely attached to him.



I FEEL that I owe it to His Royal Highness's character, to add some general observations which may serve to place it in its true light, and to confirm the opinion of those who view his loss as a national calamity.

It may be necessary to premise that, from the moment that I had received the alarming report from Brighton, I ceased to entertain any sanguine hopes of His Royal Highness's recovery, and that my expectations of it became gradually more faint, although they varied occasionally, as the symptoms of the disorder fluctuated. This impression led to my keeping the minutes from which I have extracted the foregoing statement. My object in so doing being, that I might be better able, from

such accurate source, to do justice to His Royal Highness's character and sentiments.

The 30th December was the last day on which I submitted any papers, and he was then quite equal to any business ; for although his state varied in the course of the day, yet there were hours when physical causes, or the effect of medicine, did not interfere with the clear application of the powers of the mind.

It has been already shown by the details I have produced, that almost to the latest hour, His Royal Highness was anxious to discharge his official duties ; and the interest he took in them was at no time weakened by the pressure of bodily disease or pain. In further proof of this, I may state, that on Saturday the 9th December, I re-



ceived from Lord Bathurst, at his office, secret instructions respecting the force to be prepared for embarkation for Portugal, and that I communicated them on the same evening to His Royal Highness. He was then in great pain, but he became indifferent to bodily suffering, and immediately drew up the heads of the military arrangement (which paper, in his own writing, I now possess), from which were framed the detailed instructions approved by him, on the following day, and issued on Monday the 11th December.

This measure naturally produced the necessity of other arrangements connected with home service, and the Adjutant-General and Quarter-Master-General will bear me out in the assertion, that these were entered into and directed by him with

the same intelligence and attention which he had manifested on previous occasions ; when, we are bound to state, that every arrangement was made by him, and that the execution of the detail, was alone left to us.

It may not be irrelevant here to observe, that this had *at all times* been the case. His Royal Highness had been at the head of the army more than thirty-two years ; during that period various officers were successfully employed by him in the situations of Military Secretary, and at the heads of departments at the Horse Guards, and they possessed his confidence, and exerted themselves zealously. But the merit of rescuing the army from its impaired condition, of improving, establishing, and maintaining its system ; of



introducing that administration of it in principle and in every detail, which has raised the character of the British service, and promoted its efficiency, belongs exclusively to His late Royal Highness. The work was progressive, but his attention to it, his able superintendence of it, were constant. He guided and directed the labours of those subordinate to him : their task was executive. He gave the impulse to the whole machinery, and kept the wheels in motion, and to him, I repeat it, the credit was due.

An arrangement for the promotion of the old subalterns of the army had long been the object of his solicitude ; but it was one of difficult accomplishment, as it was understood that no measure entailing extraordinary charge on the public would be

admitted. Hence the delay in bringing it forward ; but His Royal Highness entered into every detail of it on the 26th of December, and the King having paid him a visit on the 27th, he ordered me to submit it to His Majesty on that day, when it obtained the royal signature ; and the communication of His Majesty's gracious approbation of this arrangement was received by His Royal Highness with a warm expression of satisfaction.

Of the resolution and resignation with which His Royal Highness submitted to protracted confinement, and a painful disorder, my statement offers ample proof ; but I have not stated, that during all this period—during this serious trial, his excellent temper, and kind disposition, to all who approached him, continued unim-



paired. I appeal to his medical attendants—I appeal to his servants—to those who transacted business with him, official or personal, whether, at any time, he betrayed a symptom of irritability ;—whether a sharp word escaped him,—whether a murmur or complaint was uttered. Every attention, from whatever quarter, was kindly received and gratefully acknowledged ; great anxiety was shown by him to avoid giving trouble ; and, at the later periods of his illness, that which seemed to distress him most was his being reduced to the necessity of requesting others to do for him that which he had ceased to be able to do for himself.

Of the kind attention of his medical attendants, and their anxiety to afford to him the utmost benefit of their skill, he ex-

pressed himself most sensible ; and it is due to them to say, that if he had been their nearest and dearest relative, they could not have devoted their time, care, and attention to him, with more affectionate zeal than they did. Nor did he ever betray any want of confidence in their skill, or the least desire to resort to other advice.

I must add, that I can positively state, having been admitted freely to their consultations, that no difference of opinion prevailed among them ; they acted together cordially, and their only object seemed to be the welfare of their illustrious patient.

During the progress of his illness, His Royal Highness received the most endearing and affectionate attention from the King, and from his brothers and sis-



ters ; and they never failed to be acknowledged with satisfaction and with gratitude. The Princess Sophia especially, whose near residence admitted of more frequent intercourse, never missed coming to him in the course of the day, unless prevented by indisposition ; and I have already stated, that Her Royal Highness, by his desire, took the Sacrament with him on the 28th December.

The visits of His Royal Highness's numerous and attached friends were frequent, and they were invariably received with satisfaction, and with an expression of his sense of their attention. Upon these occasions, he exerted himself to meet them cheerfully, and to suppress the expression of pain or bodily uneasiness ; and they often left him with the belief that he was

free from both, although this had by no means been the case.

Nor did His Royal Highness's bodily suffering, or the contemplation of his critical state, diminish in any degree the interest which he had taken in the state of public affairs, and in the welfare and prosperity of his country. These were at all times uppermost in his mind, and I am convinced that they engaged it in a much greater degree, than did his own situation.

H. TAYLOR.



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