

MEMORANDUM

BETWEEN THE 9TH JUNE 1826, AND
5TH JANUARY 1827.

[Continued.]

When I returned to the Duke of York, he appeared more affected, and he assured me that he felt a 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 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 forbore 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 and 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 administer 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 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 3d 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 declared 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 Highness was perfectly sensible of it, nor indeed, did I disguise it for him, when he questioned me.

Between the 12th and the 13th 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 22d of 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 reflections, 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 had passed on this day, to show that his feelings had undergone no change. On the 16th of October, Mr. Macgregor desired that I should 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 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 Hallford, 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 situation and situation, might embarrass the Government, and possibly influence the public funds. It could not effect 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 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 22d; 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 Hallford 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 disclosure; 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 to 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 Hallford, 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 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 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 Hallford, 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. Hallford 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 25th December, he appeared better, and in good spirits, though incapable of much exertion.

On the 28th, 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 10 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 him 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.

(To be concluded next week.)

The N. B. ROYAL GAZETTE, is published every TUESDAY, by GEO. K. LUGRIN, Printer to the KING's Most Excellent Majesty, at his Office in Queen Street, over Mr. SLOOT'S Store, Fredericton, where Blanks, Handbills, &c. can be struck off at the shortest notice.

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The price of this Paper is Sixteen Shillings per annum (exclusive of Postage)—the whole to be paid in advance.

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