

FIRST MINTO AS INDIA'S VICEROY.

Recollections of the Service in the East of the Present Earl's Great-Grandfather.

The Earl of Minto's appointment as Viceroy of India has been made almost one hundred years after his ancestor, the first Earl of Minto, began his prosperous reign at Government House, Calcutta, writes Norman Howard, in the London Daily Chronicle.

It was in 1806 that Lord Grenville wished to nominate Lord Minto (then President of the Board of Control for India) as Governor General of that country. At first his request met with a decided refusal, but Lord Grenville again referred to the subject, telling the Earl that "there was nobody else who could thoroughly answer the public wishes and those of the government," and that "he alone could extricate the ministry from a position of considerable embarrassment."

Under this pressure, Lord Minto consented to think the matter over, and to discuss it with his family. It meant no light sacrifice to give the wished-for answer: the idea that Lady Minto and her daughters should accompany him was never entertained for it was felt that the Indian climate would be fatal to them. The Viceroyship, therefore, split separation from home and family for several years, and at a time when letters often took five or six months to reach their destination. But when once the duty was felt to be compelling, Lord Minto wrote: "I will not yield to the feelings which I cannot but experience, but will proceed as manfully and gallantly as I can."

The summer of 1806 was the last which the Earl ever spent in his beautiful Roxburghshire home, Minto, and in the February afterward he started on the long journey eastward.

A FRIEND OF BURKE.

Edmund Burke was the leading influence in Lord Minto's political career. Their friendship was a close and tender one, and afterwards he was able to say: "I believe I was among those whom Burke loved best and most trusted."

Lord Minto was closely engaged in the trial of Warren Hastings, and in 1797 Burke wrote to him while he was busy with his charge against Sir Elijah Impey. "God bless you," Burke said, "and forward your good understanding. Stick to it. You have years before you, and if I were of your age and had your manners and talents, I should not despair of seeing India a happy country in a few years."

Burke died in July of that year. In 1807, just ten years later, Lord Minto landed in Calcutta the Governor-General of the country. The interests had roused some of the most passionate eloquence of the leader he had revered.

Four months was taken by the Modeste for the voyage from England to Madras; the log book which Lord Minto kept during the slow-passing days was full of trifling details of interest to the sons and daughters who were to read it; while for his wife there were sentences showing how all his thoughts centred in her. His third son, John, who became his private secretary, welcomed Lord Minto at Madras, where the first impressions of Indian life were received. From Calcutta, on July 31, 1807, he wrote to his wife: "When I found myself lost from my cobblers' stall in Arlington street, seated in full possession of this magnificent hall, the crowds of servants and attendants bowing around me in all the forms of Eastern prostration, I felt a little like Nell awaking in Lady Lovelace's bed, with the difference, however, that it is not at all like any notions of Paradise."

Political life was quiet at the time of Lord Minto's accession to power in the east, and he had the chance of forming his views carefully and leisurely, although he complained that the "quantity and quick succession of current business" engaged every moment to spare from ceremony and private interviews, allowing no opportunity for "reading back or looking forward, and acquiring general information."

"A declaration of war," he wrote to his son, "and an estimate for an addition to a barracks a thousand miles off, may come next to each other in the secretaries' bundle. . . . The secretary reads, or often only states shortly the substance of each paper and the order is given on the spot."

"Now, our secretaries are all modest men, who scarcely read above their breath; it is a constant strain to hear them; the business is often the heaviest and dullest kind, the voices monotonous, and, as one small concern succeeds another, the punkah vibrates gently over my eyes; and in this warm atmosphere the whole operation has been found in the course of five hours somewhat

composing. It is often a vehement struggle to avoid a delectable oblivion wink."

Lord Minto found the morning and evening drives horribly formal and uncomfortable. The incessant salams wearied him, and he thought of "sticking a wax hand" in his hat. He gradually freed himself from much of what he called this "troublesome nonsense," and "other times, other manners,"—the new Viceroy has not to fear quite such bothersome publicity and formality.

HIS SERVICES TO INDIA.

The wisdom and success of Lord Minto's administration scarcely need recalling. His first tasks were to settle the Vellore Mutiny, to initiate a system of careful finance, and to establish order throughout India. Later on, missions were dispatched to Persia and Lahore, to make peaceful alliances with those States. The Persian Expedition was not a success, unfortunately, but the Lahore business ended in the Treaty of Amritsar—a bond of "perpetual amity" between that State and the British Government. A treaty was also concluded with the Amir of Scinde.

Among the territories which were added to the Empire during Lord Minto's governorship were the Amboynas, Molucca Islands, Bourbon, the Mauritius, and Java, for which services he was thanked by Parliament. The expedition to Java was accompanied by the Governor-General in person. Not long after the return, on March 10, 1812, he wrote, "I am in perfect health, but have been less robust since my legs. They have been so entirely confined to purposes of ornament, having touched nothing harder than a carpet or a mat, and carried their master no further than the length of a verandah, for so many years, that I have often serious doubts and anxieties about the craigs. If I cannot enjoy them, wherefore should I live?"

Through all the letters there is the quick flash of thoughts, from serious matters of State to the slight personal detail which he knew would be worth more than all else to the home-folk. There is, too, a constant sight of the home-longing which English in India today hardly realize, with the rapidly-succeeding mails and the swift service of telegraph. "Jan. 1, 1813, is the day at which my reckonings end. (The day of freedom from office, as he planned.) It cannot probably be the identical day, but it will be as few over or under as we can contrive."

SUPERSEDED.

Lord Liverpool made a "full and handsome acknowledgment of the services which Lord Minto rendered in connection with the conquests in which he shared, 'as well as of the general merit of his administration in India,'" and this is reported to his wife. It was from her that he first heard of the question of Lord Minto's appointment to the post he was then holding. "It is comical enough," he adds, "that my resignation should have arrived just at the moment they were turning me out without leave."

The sudden supersession of Lord Minto assigned to the necessity of finding a place for Lord Minto, who was a personal friend of the Regent. The outcry in Calcutta was strong. Lord Minto had won great popularity by his brilliant services; and it was acknowledged that he had, through all the years of his administration, worked without ceasing for the public good. But the Governor-General himself seems to have had few regrets, if any. "I seldom miss a night without dreaming of being at home," he declares. "The sympathy which his strong love of home excited among his brother exiles of Calcutta was gracefully displayed," writes Lady Minto, "when at the close of 1812, the bachelors of Calcutta gave the Governor-General a ball. As he entered the door, the opposite end of the room disclosed a view of Minto House, 'the burn, the green hills, all to the life, and on so large a scale as to reach from side to side of an immense room.' Mercifully, no prophetic instinct warned him that in the vision created by friendly regard he was alone to see the scene he loved so well."

But the glad home-coming was all too brief and broken, and the well-went quiet of private life was interrupted by death. It was at Stevenage, Hertfordshire, on June 21, 1814, that the ex-Viceroy passed away, while journeying to Minto House. The second and third Earls of Minto were never associated with the Indian Administration will the fourth Lord Minto fulfil the traditions of his house in that honorable place of power?

INFANTS VICTIMS OF HOLOCAUST.

Two Children Burned to Death this Morning in Fire at Boulevard St. Paul.

MOTHER UNABLE TO RESCUE LITTLE ONES FROM BURNING HOME

Two little children were burned almost to cinders in a small fire at Boulevard St. Paul this morning while the rest of their family were

absent. The dead infants, Leo Paul and Calixte Mayer, aged respectively four and seven years, were left sleeping in an upstairs bedroom at their

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home on Boulevard street, while their father Mr. Francis Meyer, had his breakfast and went to work at J. & R. Weir's machine shop. Then the mother went into the garden at the rear, where she occupied herself for some time.

A few minutes after seven o'clock one of the neighbors saw flames coming from the upper storey of the house, which was one of two semi-detached rough-finished frame-dwellings. The alarm was immediately sounded, and the children's mother made frenzied efforts to save her offspring, whose agonized cries could be heard for a few moments, but the flames had already invaded the stairway, and she could do nothing, although she sustained several nasty burns. The children's cries soon died away, as they were overcome by the smoke, and were speedily beyond human aid.

Meantime the village fire brigade, consisting of three men, equipped with a fifty-foot length of hose, an empty Babcock fire extinguisher, and waterworks without pressure, was called out, but could do absolutely nothing except save the household effects. The fire quickly spread to the other residence, occupied by Mr. Napoleon Maheu.

A telephone message was sent to Mayor N. Boyer, of Cote St. Paul, who ordered the town's fire brigade to the rescue, and a ladder truck and hose cart were sent, which latter was useless, as there was no pressure in the pipes, the water service having been only newly installed. The steamer was telephoned for, and soon arrived, but by this time both houses had been completely destroyed, with most of their contents.

The steamer quickly subdued the smoking ruins, and then the search for the bodies of the victims commenced. The two tiny corpses were soon found, covered with wreckage, and burned almost to cinders. They were laid on one side, and later removed to the city morgue, where an inquest will probably be held.

The flames were well under way when discovered, and spread so quickly that nothing is known as to the origin of the fire, but as the stove downstairs was out, and it is known that while the elder brother slept the younger one was playing on the floor it is thought he must have secured some matches, and with the usual result. There are two other brothers, one Alfred fifteen years old, who was at work while another, Albert was at mass at the village church.

Mrs. Mayer was completely prostrated by the terrible catastrophe, and was taken to a hysterical condition to a neighbor's house, where she is still confined to bed. Mr. Mayer was telephoned for, and was speedily on the scene, but could do nothing. Mr. Napoleon Maheu, his neighbor in distress, who works at Le Canada office was also sent for and arrived in time to find his house in smoking ruins, but his wife and family safe. Both men owned their houses and carried small insurances. The loss of property will probably amount to about two thousand and five hundred dollars. Much sympathy is felt in the village for the distressed families, who have found temporary lodgings with their friends.

SAFETY FOR LITTLE ONES.

Every mother who has tried Baby's Own Tablets becomes enthusiastic about them—tells every other mother how safe and how effective they are, how much it relieves the anxiety over baby's health to use these Tablets. Mrs. S. W. Crawford, Thompson, Ont., says: "My baby was ill with constipation and teething troubles and I gave him Baby's Own Tablets, which gave speedy relief. I consider the tablets an excellent medicine for children. These tablets cure constipation, teething troubles, diarrhoea, simple fevers, destroy worms, break up colds and promote natural healthy sleep. And you have a guarantee that there is not a particle of opiate or poisonous soothing stuff in them. Sold by all medicine dealers or sent by mail at 25 cents a box by writing The Dr. Williams Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont. Send for our little book on the care of infants and young children—free to all mothers."

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