

in Prussia; Admirals Rodney and Boscawen won important naval advantages; while Sir Edward Hawke almost annihilated a French fleet in Quiberon Bay. Amid the glory of these victories George II. suddenly died on October 26th, 1760. As his son Frederick, Prince of Wales, had died in 1751 from the blow of a cricket-ball, he was succeeded by his grandson George, the eldest son of the deceased Prince.

Death of
George II.

21. Among the important events of the reign not already noticed may be mentioned the reform of the calendar, by which England at length adopted the proper mode of reckoning time that we owe to Pope Gregory XIII., who promulgated it as far back as 1582. The Julian year of 365 days, 6 hours, exceeded by a few minutes the actual time taken by the Earth in its annual revolution around the Sun. In consequence, by September 1752, England was *eleven days behind the real time*. By Act of Parliament those eleven days were dropped out, September 3rd being reckoned as September 14th. The rise of *Methodism* also deserves mention in the records of this reign. That remarkable religious movement was originated by the brothers John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitfield, all clergymen of the Church of England. The real founder of Methodism, however, was John Wesley, who was not only a man of piety, but of much organizing ability. His first aim, undoubtedly, was simply to promote a more active religious life within the limits of the Established Church. Whether he himself contemplated complete separation is a matter of dispute. After his death, circumstances formed the Methodists into an independent community, and they are now the largest separate body of Dissenters in England.

Events of
reign.

CHAPTER XLVII.

HOUSE OF HANOVER.—GEORGE III.

1760 to 1820 A.D.

1. George III. succeeded his grandfather at the age of twenty-two years. Unlike the two preceding Kings he was born an Englishman, and he created much enthusiasm by declaring in his first speech to Parliament that he "gloried in the name of Briton." The new King was of handsome appearance, pleasing manners, and irreproachable morals. Whatever may have been his errors of judgment, his subjects always felt that they had a Sovereign who was sincere in his views of duty, and who was truly anxious for their welfare. His mental powers were scarcely up to the average, while his education, which from the death of his father in 1751 had been chiefly directed by his mother the Princess-Dowager of Wales, and her adviser the Earl of

Accession
and char-
acter of
George III.