

thirty-three years ago when—a girl of 18—in the old minster, she “erased the child-smile from her lips,”

“With a solemn vow, a princely vow to rule,
A priestly vow—to rule by grace of God the pitiful,

A very god-like vow—to rule in right and righteousness,

And with the law and for the land,”—

but never has she come before them more revered, beloved than she is to-day, as mid stoled priests and collared knights, her faithful Commons and faithful Peers, she, the centre of all eyes and all thoughts, chases from her brow the deep shadow of her great loss with the light of the thanksgiving with which she pays her vow to the Most High for her son spared, her people loyal and comforting, and God's own love “unseen but felt o'ershadowing her.” Yes, thank God,

“We are a people yet,

Though all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confused by brazen mobs and lawless powers.”

And this day, we too, though far from the capital and centre of national life, feel this and are thankful. We on this side the Atlantic take up the song of praise that has rolled already through the great dome of St. Paul's. And it ends not with us. But up the mighty St. Lawrence the echoes are borne, and across the whole breadth of this Continent to the Western shores of that ocean on the other side of which they were first awakened, and so the whole earth is girdled with the incense of praise even as it was before with the sacrifice of prayer. Accept, O Lord, the gratitude of an united Empire!

What have we to be thankful for? For the sickness of the Prince of Wales, all the truths it reminded the nation of, and the lessons it taught. And for his restoration to health, and all the benefits to him and us that we hope shall be connected therewith.

In his case as in so many others, “the sickness was not unto death but for the glory of God.” In his case we can now see the truth of the words “the Lord loveth him whom he chasteneth.” It is not too much to say that this sickness—whatever effect it has had on the Prince's own character—has entirely changed

the nation's estimate both of him and of the reality of his relationship to the whole people. When death draws near to any one, we are apt to form a truer if a kindlier judgment of him than the hasty and too often censorious judgment we readily passed in the hurry and bustle of life. We are calm and subdued as we enter into the deep shadow. We are in a frame of mind to make the allowances that all of us require for ourselves, but that we make so seldom for others, especially when their circumstances are different from ours; to consider facts that we had formerly overlooked; and to judge charitably if we must judge at all. So has it just been with the British people and their Prince. Before his illness, he had often been spoken against by idle and irreverent and malicious tongues; by people who knew as much of him, his difficulties and temptations, and the real facts of his life, as the Prince knew about them. Impressions had thus gone abroad that he was unworthy of his parents and his high position; and it was industriously circulated that the people were in consequence becoming alienated from the fundamental institutions of the Empire. And there was a danger in those current impressions; a danger to the people who were being nurtured to dangerous disloyalty; who were thinking wholly of a sovereign's duty to them and not at all of their duty to the sovereign; and a danger to the Prince lest he should believe a lie as to the real feelings of his people, and indulge in the poor retaliation that humanity is inclined to in such circumstances, by becoming as unworthy as he was believed to be. And so, God in mercy brought him to the gates of death. Nothing less would have stirred the people to the depths where truth lies hid. But this did stir them. Sympathy came first and then they were in a fitter frame of mind to criticize. For in criticizing a human life or character a different mood is needed from that we ought to bring to the examination of a scientific fact. It was soon seen how little real ground there had ever been for the slanders against him; how much allowance is necessary to be made for—

“That fierce light that beats upon a throne
And blackens every blot;”
and how many kind and manly traits of character he had always quietly exhibited.