

Northern Messenger

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For a bit of Sunday reading commend me to the "Northern Messenger."—W. S. Jamieson, Dalton, Ont.

Song of the Empire.

God bless our Empire vast;
O'er it Thy mercy cast,
Protecting Power;
May every colony—
And each dependency—
Be true to all, and Thee;
Their shield and tower.

Where northern lights do glow
On glacier, berg and snow,
In Arctic zone;
Where the fierce Tropie pains;
Where fall torrential rains;
O'er range and torrid plains—
Reign, Thee alone!

God bless our Motherland;
May she for ever stand,
Home of the free;
Head of all nations' laws;
First in each noble cause
Averter still of wars;
Make her to be.

Bless Thou our Sovereign King;
May his reign ever bring
Honor and peace;
And though the seas divide,
Let every branch abide
Staunch to its source and guide;
And strong in Thee.

—Selected

Love of His Country.

Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,
From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonor'd and unsung.

—Sir Walter Scott.

The Union Jack.

There was a time when there was no Union Jack in any modern sense. Before James the First, who was James the Sixth of Scotland, ascended the throne of England, there were Jacks, doubtless. At any rate, there was the simple English Jack, a plain red cross on a white flag or background. This is the banner of St. George—argent, a cross gules. The red cross of St. George had won a name for itself during the rude, hard fights of many a mediaeval country. Those who are curious as to the past and who would escape the malediction of the patriotic professor may be asking for documentary evidence as to the hero-saint, whose flag pervades the world. How did we come into possession of so holy a relic and by what right do our ships flaunt it over all waters, awing thereby both the civilized and



THE GRAND OLD FLAG.

—The 'Australasian.'

the rude? We know that there have been sceptics as to the saintly champion's claims to veneration: great authorities have differed as to almost every deed that has been ascribed to him. Some have even gone so far as to question the reality of the dragon; though few facts are more substantial than the old Crown piece and its superscription. Who would doubt a victory that found expression in so strong and helpful a form? Tradition assigns the reign of Richard the Lion-hearted as the time in which St. George first manifested an interest in the English and their cause. Richard was at the moment in which he acknowledged the saint's succor engaged in a fighting for Christendom against the usurping infidel. Nor was it in England alone that St. George was held in special veneration. Besides a great part of the Christian orient, Genoa and Venice offered a cult to St. George which had been made more earnest through their frequent intercourses with his eastern votaries, if it did not originate with them. It was not until the reign of Edward III. that

St. George was made the patron saint of England, and it is enough for us to know that nothing in the story of St. George as it has come down to us has checked the ardor of the Englishman's belief in the high destiny of his people and the duty of maintaining the honor of his country's flag.

From the reign of Edward III. until the beginning of the 17th century when the two crowns of England and Scotland were united as the heritage of the same monarch the flag was associated with much carnage, much party patriotism (the wars of the Roses dividing Edward's descendants and his realm into fierce contending factions) and always some share of the highest spirit of loyalty with which St. George's banner is identified. Then was that banner joined in the way with which we are or may be acquainted into the earliest form of the Union Jack. The Scotch flag that James's advent to the southern capital put into the hands of our heralds so that they might make one Jack out of two by a skilful adaptation of crosses and grounds to the new conditions, is well