

The Queen.

God save our gracious Queen,
 Long live our noble Queen,
 God save the Queen.
 Send her victorious,
 Happy and glorious,
 Long to reign over us,
 God save the Queen.

There is an outburst of genuine loyalty throughout the Queen's dominions, because not only has her valuable life been spared beyond the usual limits of human existence, but she has reigned longer than any other British sovereign. The universality of loyal demonstrations to-day will show that in her age, as in her youth, the greatest Empire the world ever knew throbs from its centre to its outskirts with profound veneration and regard for her person, for her character, and for her throne. Long live the Queen!

Of all her Majesty's relatives who surrounded her at her coronation, in 1838, only her cousins, the Duke of Cambridge, then known as Prince George of Cambridge, and the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg, who was then Princess Augusta of Cambridge, now survive. The Princess Mary of Cambridge, now Duchess of Teck, was a child of a little more than four years; now her grandson, child of the Duke and Duchess of York, is the third heir in direct succession to the throne.

Of the Members of the House of Lords who constituted that assembly in 1837, not one single peer now sits in that House: few, very few, of their sons do, Lord Salisbury being one of the number. Of the Queen's original Privy Council not a single member remains.

The comparison of things as they are now with what they were at the date of her accession, June 20th, 1837, shows changes that are astounding in their scope.

The population of the United Kingdom has increased from about 25,600,000 in 1837 to about 45,000,000. The aggregate property of the people, calculated by Sir R. Giffen on the basis of the income tax figures, has been augmented from about £4,000,000,000 to more than £10,000,000,000.

In 1837 the colonial population was under 4,000,000, but it now stands over 18,000,000, of course excluding India, which has well-nigh double its native census. The total area of the British Empire, previously colossal, has grown to 10,000,000 square miles; and the subjects of her Majesty, all directly looking to her as their sovereign, and ruled by her benignant hand, may be estimated en bloc to-day at more than 320,000,000 of human beings.

The wars that have engaged the British troops during the Victorian era have been almost exclusively in defence of British rights or for the protection of defenceless peoples from oppression. Wars of this kind are always justifiable, and they have always brought to the crown added glory and honor.

At the beginning of the Queen's reign the present Dominion of Canada consisted of several provinces, each with a separate Legislature. From Halifax to Toronto our cities, such as they were, were garrisoned by Imperial troops, as we had no military forces worth mentioning of our own. In Toronto we had one Anglican, one Roman Catholic, one Presbyterian, and two Methodist places of worship, and not sufficient clergy to supply them efficiently.

There is something in the position of Queen Victoria, as she approaches the confines of late old age, which deeply moves the world's imagination. In all history there has been no such reign, so long, so little marked by collisions between Sovereign and subjects, so little broken by public calamity or failure of any description.

There is no corner of earth within her dominion, or one in which the English language is spoken, where the Queen would not be as safe as within the walls of Windsor.

At the root of her greatness has surely been her gentleness. The half-forgotten Court gossip of the past is full of little tales of the tenderness which underlies the well-known force and firmness of her Majesty.

The Queen's high esteem of the sacred scriptures is evinced by an anecdote that many of our readers may be already familiar with. It was a noble and beautiful answer, says the *British Workman*, that our Queen gave

to an African Prince, who sent an embassy with costly presents and asked her to tell him the secret of England's greatness and England's glory; and our beloved Queen told him not of her fleet, of her armies, of her boundless merchandise, or of her inexhaustible wealth. She did not, like Hezekiah in an evil hour, show the ambassador her diamonds and her rich ornaments, but handing him a beautifully-bound copy of the Bible, she said "Tell the Prince this is the secret of England's greatness."

In the Queen's diary are some passages about preachers. In October, 1854, she writes: "We went to kirk as usual at twelve o'clock. The service was performed by the Rev. Norman McLeod, of Glasgow, and anything finer I never heard. The sermon, entirely extempore, was quite admirable; so simple, and yet so eloquent, and so beautifully argued and put. The text was from the account of the coming of Nicodemus to Christ by night (St. John chapter iii). Mr. McLeod showed in the sermon how we all try to please *self*, and to live for *that*, and in so doing found no rest. Christ had come not only to die for us, but to show us how to live. The second prayer was very touching, his allusions to us were so simple, saying after his mention of us, 'Bless her children.' It gave me a lump in my throat, and also when he prayed for 'the dying, the wounded, the widows, and the orphans.'"

In the following year the Queen heard the Rev. J. Caird, who, she says, "electrified all present by a most admirable and beautiful sermon, which lasted nearly an hour, but kept one's attention riveted." The text was Rom. xii. 11, "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." The Queen adds: "He explained in the most beautiful and simple manner what real religion is; how it ought to pervade every action of our lives; not a thing only for Sundays or for our closet; not to drive us from the world; not 'a perpetual moping over good books'; but 'being and doing good,' letting everything be done in a Christian spirit. It was as fine as Mr. McLeod's sermon last year, and sent us home much edified."

There are many passages in the Queen's journal showing her anxiety to be faithful in the government and training of her little ones. She kept them as much as possible under her own care, till the increasing demands upon her time and attention of State duties and loyal hospitality forced her to leave to others much that, as a loving mother, she would have preferred to do herself. Speaking of the Princess Royal when a child, she says: "It is a hard case for me that my occupations prevent me from being with her when she says her prayers."

Her Majesty, however, exercised extreme care in the choice of those to whom she committed the training of her children, as the instructions to the governess of the Princess Royal show:—"I am quite clear that she should have great reverence for God and for religion; but that she should have the feeling of devotion and love which our Heavenly Father encourages His earthly children to have for Him, and not one of fear and trembling; and that thoughts of death and an after life should not be represented in an alarming and forbidding view; and that she should be made to know as yet no difference of creeds, and not think that she can only pray on her knees, or that those who do not kneel are less fervent or devout in their prayers."

Home love and home joys, nay, indeed, home sorrows also—have fed the Queen's heart with the forces and the faith necessary to enable her to bear her majestic load of care and toil for England. In all her words and deeds and thoughts the sacredness of these sentiments and of simple human love shines within the precincts of her sovereignty like a golden lamp in a palace of marble.

How great, experienced, and statesmanlike she has showed herself during her long reign every competent British Minister has testified. She has been in fact the highest living authority upon the practical politics of Europe, and has evinced an understanding of constitutional problems which has never been relaxed. Her Imperial charge has involved for her subjects immense blessings, and to-day prayers will ascend from many lands that she may long be permitted to reign over a united, a free, and a righteous Empire.