

Kingdom for calling the Sovereign to account; and only in one solitary and improbable, but perfectly defined case—that of his submitting to the jurisdiction of the Pope—is he deprived by statute of the throne.”

Who can fill a sphere like that, fully and faithfully, without pre-eminent personal abilities and endowments? When a sovereign for over sixty years performs these and kindred functions and duties carefully and conscientiously, why should she not richly enjoy our love, our highest veneration and profoundest regard? Her Majesty well understood her place and well kept it. When Napoleon III. would have her countenance some of his ambitious schemes, she apprized him of her relations and duties thus:

“I am bound by certain rules and usages; I have no uncontrolled power of decision; I must adopt the advice of a council of responsible ministers; and these ministers have to meet and agree on a course of action, after having arrived at a joint conviction of its justice and utility. They have at the same time to take care that the steps which they wish to take are not only in accordance with the best interests of the country, but also such as can be explained to and defended in Parliament, and that their fitness can be brought home to the conviction of the nation.”

Who ever furnished a clearer, more statesmanlike view of British constitutional government? Little wonder that such a monarch was sustained by the loyal allegiance of millions of men!

Then our Sovereign Queen was a strictly conscientious ruler. It was not with her mere officialism, parade, routine and perfunctoriness. The question with her was, What is for the benefit of the nation? What is in the interests of the people? She regarded herself a trustee of their liberties and rights; and while her responsible ministers might be accountable to the people, she herself should render her account to God, by whom kings reign

and princes decree justice. Her conscience rested upon her profound religious conviction and her genuine piety; and these motives and safeguards she held to be obligatory upon herself, as upon her subjects. Such a spirit and life have given us a government to be cherished and venerated to the bounds of the earth and the end of time.

Further, she was a cosmopolitan ruler; regarding not only the interests of her own people, but also of all the tribes and races of men. Her Empire was not to be built up by pulling other safe and beneficent governments down. The British nation was not to be enriched by impoverishing other people. British rule must be made a blessing wherever it extended, carrying liberty, knowledge, civilization, humanity all round the globe.

Moreover, our Queen is a perpetual sovereign, a Queen for ever. Her influence is imperishable. She exalted the home, and her life and character will produce and strengthen good homes for ever. She ennobled the family; and the families of the ages will find joy and peace in that felicitous example. She filled the word “mother” with humble and royal meaning; and mothers to the end of time will be blessed in her example. Wife and daughter will ever draw beauty and excellency from the high and clear fountains of her fidelity and love. Palaces and courts, with their pride, vanity and excess rebuked, and their virtue, purity, dutifulness and generosity encouraged and illustrated, will breathe a new spirit, a new purpose, a new power into government. Thrones and crowns in their lofty fellowship will shine resplendent with higher, grander aims and achievements because our Victoria has lived and reigned.