

her children to the practice of industry, unselfishness and the fear of God. The homes of Britain, whether humble or illustrious, might well follow the example set by the royal wife and mother. She desired to see pure love crowned everywhere, and her inmost soul abhorred intrigue and licentiousness. There can be no doubt that the high regard for home which, amid many disintegrating tendencies of the age, still remain so strong among the English people, has been fostered, to a greater extent, perhaps, than anyone suspects, by the blameless home life of Queen Victoria.

And yet that home was not without its deep afflictions. Over and over again, Victoria has been the queen of sorrows. But so far from allowing private grief to interfere with public duty, the heart that mourned for loved ones snatched away has been all the more quick to understand and sympathize with the woes of others; and the chequered experience of Britain's ruler has only increased the tactful wisdom which served to guide the ship of state past dangerous rocks into a haven of safety.

When a mere girl, sixty-three years ago, she was called to rule over a great Empire, in her first speech from the Throne, she said: "This awful responsibility is imposed on me so suddenly, and at so early a period of my life, that I should feel myself utterly oppressed by the burden were I not sustained by the hope that Divine Providence, which has called me to this work, will give me strength for the performance of it, and that I shall find in the purity of my intentions, and in my zeal for the public welfare, that support and those resources which usually belong to a more mature age and to long experience. I place my firm reliance on the wisdom of Providence, and the loyalty and affection of my people; . . . and I shall steadily protect the rights, and promote to the utmost of my power the happiness and welfare of all classes of my subjects." It was a noble promise, and no one can deny that she has amply fulfilled it. She has never stood aloof in royal isolation, but has entered into every question which touched the interests of her people at home, and has brought an industrious zeal and a rare insight to bear upon the relations of Britain to the rest of the world. She has been a tranquilizing force in modern history. She has unravelled difficulties which threatened disturbance; she has sought to broaden the intelligence and dignify the manners of every subject of her realm: and most of all, she has illustrated the supreme authority of Christian principles in the actual conduct of life. It is true that her reign has not been free from bloodshed; and it is a pathetic circumstance that her last days were embittered by the horrors of war. But it is not to be doubted that she accepted war only as a stern necessity, and that her personal influence has always been for peace with honour. Is it too much to hope that though she has passed from earthly scenes, her sacred memory will help soon to extinguish the last embers of strife, and gradually build up in Africa a united com