

The Order of the Sons of England, saturated with a sense of her goodness, honours the Queen to-day, giving vent, on the eve of her 79th birthday, to its innate loyalty by assembling together in these outer courts of the Great King of Kings and praying for her with thanksgivings. You would fain have the shadow on the sun-dial of her precious life go backward many degrees; but although the Order is thus lost in loving mediation at the Throne of Grace for Her Majesty, we are not to suppose that the loyalty which its Constitution means to maintain to the Sovereign is not primarily allegiance to the Crown of England. Unaffected by the coming and going of kings and queens, however dear, and even of dynasties, it is an abiding allegiance to the Sovereign and Constitution of England. And I may safely assert that the world has not a single Constitution at all comparable to that of Old England, whether for freedom or goodness, prosperity or stability. It enables Sovereign and People to rule together in comfort, each within wise limitations, and consequently all goes on well with them both, and the reign of home-peace is assured. Happily the autocracy of the Sovereign of England is dead and buried; and I can therefore, as an Englishman, join heart and soul in your determination to maintain the British connexion and allegiance to the Monarchy of England. For myself, I could endure nothing else. England's greatness, England's glory and England's wealth are all attributable to the Sovereign and Constitution; and therefore in that principle of your Constitution which binds the entire body to cling tenaciously to her and the Constitution of England, as the ivy to the oak, I perceive the development and permanence of your Order. In the closeness and vigour of such a union—with the pith, I mean, of England in your Constitution—you must succeed as an Order.