

Then the Queen kissed the book, and to a transcript of the oath set her royal sign manual.

Such were the obligations to which Queen Victoria solemnly pledged herself at her coronation, in 1838, and who shall say that they have not been performed? It is to this sacred performance of her duties that she owes her present firm position on the throne. It would have been far better for the other Sovereigns of Europe had they kept their plighted word as well as she. How great are the perils they have passed through during the five lustres of her reign! Bourbon, Hapsburg, and Brandenburg alike have been forced to yield to the turbulent elements which their own despotic misgovernment has evoked from their oppressed people. Not a few of them have sunk beneath the waves of the raging sea of anarchy around them, while she has rested securely on her shores, dispensing to her people liberty and law, and to perishing kings offering a safe asylum.

While most other countries have been convulsed by civil commotions, England has been entirely undisturbed, and the throne of Victoria is more firmly fixed than ever.—While the very foundations of society have been menaced elsewhere, not even the slightest feeling of disloyalty has been noticed in England and the Queen is as dearly loved as at the first. The confidence of her people has everywhere extended broad and deep, and she is now personally dear to all classes.—The English can point to her with pride and satisfaction, and the more so that her conduct has been in all respects consistent. Her personal character and public conduct have always been above reproach. It is greatly to the credit of Queen Victoria that she has secured so strong a position, from the fact that all her predecessors at least all of the House of Hanover, have been narrow minded Sovereigns. It is the great glory of Queen Victoria that, though not distinguished for great mental capacity, she has done more to strengthen the seat of her family on the throne than all the five Kings who preceded her. Nay, it is rather in spite of all that their folly and incapacity had done to weaken the regard of their subjects and bring royalty into disrepute, that the many virtues of her private character have guided her on to the secure happiness and prosperity of herself and family.

She has restored to loyalty its old prestige. She has once more surrounded it with the reverential affection which makes obedience so easy, patriotism so hearty, and constitutional government so strong and stable. She has revived and given a new lease of life to sentiments which have slumbered since the Stuart days, and which some had mourned over as altogether dead. She has done this by a combination of qualities which is rare in any rank; rarest, perhaps, of all, upon a throne. But most of all has she effected it by setting an example in her household life of private and domestic virtue, which Britons appreciate so much, and by never in a single instance belying the confidence of the nation.

Perhaps, in nothing has that deep and ever present sense of grave responsibility under which she has lived and acted been more significantly displayed than in the sedulous care which she and her consort bestowed upon the education of her children. She thus not only strengthened her own hold upon the affections of her people, and increased the stability of her throne, but laid deep and strong the foundations upon which her successors must rest. Victoria well understood, when her young children were grown up around her, how much of the highest welfare of the country must depend upon the character of those who would hereafter be called upon to sway the sceptre and to form the Court of England. Hence few royal families have had the benefit of so excellent a training. No one in the least degree acquainted with the facts in the case will hesitate to pronounce that everything which the most conscientious effort and vigilance could effect has been done to secure her object. And not only is this true, but in a very remarkable degree this effort and this vigilance have been under the guidance of an unusually sound judgment.—*Boston Watchman and Recorder.*

3. THE ROYAL YACHT OSBORNE.

The royal yacht Osborne is now close upon 20 years in existence, and the changes worked by time in that interval are recalled to mind very forcibly when one sees in the same ship the nursery, with four doors opening off it, which belongs to the rooms occupied by the Princess Royal, the Prince of Wales, Princess Alice, and Prince Alfred, when all four respectively were of tender years, and again upon a different deck the sleeping apartment belonging to the Prince and Princess of Wales, in which they rested on their journey from Sweden the other day. The yacht is still, with the exception of the Victoria and Albert, the best yacht possessed by the royal family, and many persons who have sailed in both declare that as a good sea boat they would still prefer to be on board the Osborne.

4. PRIVATE LIFE OF GEN. ROBERT E. LEE.

Whatever else this war of sections may bring, it will afford the world an example of one great and good man. None can read the personal description which Colonel Freemantle of the Coldstream Guards gives of General Lee, without feeling respect for him; without an impression that he stands as high above his fellows in character as he does in military genius. According to the narrative of Col. Freemantle he is of extremely handsome and commanding presence, and of manners as simple as unaffected, putting all who go before him at perfect ease. A man who dresses in simple gray, with no sign of his rank, save the stars on his collar; yet who is in his person scrupulously clean; and who insists on the most careful grooming of his horse. A man who (holding the Episcopal faith) is religious, without being fanatic; whose simple and unaffected truth and piety always command respect even from men whose daily walk is marked by sneering and levity; a man who neither drinks nor chews nor smokes nor spits. In fine, a man who is almost worshipped by the army—*sans peur et sans reproche*. We are led to make these remarks from the appearance of three letters of Gen. Lee in the newspapers, which we subjoin, the first two are from the *London Times*, and they show the great regret with which he resigned his commission in the United States army and entered into the present struggle. The third is of an older date, illustrative of his character—

“ARLINGTON, Virginia, April 20, 1861.

“General, since my first interview with you on the 18th inst., I have felt that I ought not longer to retain my commission in the army. I, therefore, tender my resignation, which I request you will recommend for acceptance. It would have been presented at once, but for the struggle it has cost me to separate myself from a service to which I have devoted all the best years of my life and all the ability I possessed.

“During the whole of that time, more than a quarter of a century, I have experienced nothing but kindness from my superiors, and the most cordial friendship from my comrades. To no one, general, have I been as much indebted as to yourself for uniform kindness and consideration, and it has always been my ardent desire to merit your approbation. I shall carry to the grave the most grateful recollections of your kind consideration, and your name and fame will always be dear to me.

“Save in defence of my native state I never desire again to draw my sword. Be pleased to accept my most earnest wishes for the continuance of your happiness and prosperity, and believe me most truly yours,

“R. E. LEE.

“Lieut. General Winfield Scott, Commanding United States Army.”

A copy of the preceding letter was enclosed in the following letter to a sister of the general, Mrs. A. M. :

“ARLINGTON, Virginia, April 20, 1861.

“My dear Sister,—I am grieved at my inability to see you. * * * I have been waiting ‘for a more convenient season,’ which has brought to many before me deep and lasting regret. Now we are in a state of war which will yield to nothing. The whole South is in a state of revolution, into which Virginia, after a long struggle has been drawn, and though I recognize no necessity for this state of things, and would have forborne and pleaded to the end for redress of grievances, real or supposed, yet in my own person I had to meet the question whether I should take part against my native state. With all my devotion to the Union, and the feeling of loyalty and duty of an American citizen, I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home. I have therefore resigned my commission in the army, and, save in defence of my native state, with the sincere hope that my poor services may never be called on to draw my sword.

“I know you will blame me, but you must think as kindly of me as you can, and believe that I have endeavoured to do what I thought right. To show you the feeling and struggle it has cost me, I send a copy of my letter to General Scott, which accompanied my letter of resignation. I have no time for more. * * * May God guard and protect you and yours, and shower upon you every blessing, is the prayer of your devoted brother.

“R. E. LEE.”

General Lee’s advice to his son is worthy of attention of every young man. It is as follows:—

Arlington House, April 5, 1862.

“My dear Son:—I am just in the act of leaving home for New Mexico. My fine old regiment has been ordered to that distant region, and I must hasten on to see that they are properly cared for. I have but little to add in reply to your letters of March 26, 27 and 28. Your letters breathe a true spirit of frankness: they have given myself and your mother great pleasure. You must study to be frank with the world; frankness is the child of bravery and