

This is a great national sorrow ; a national funeral, wide as our Empire, wide as the world ; and tender and sincere with all the tenderness and sincerity of our British race, and our civilized and Christianized humanity. This is a great public and national bereavement, and it is the unmistakable duty of all under the shelter of the half-masted Union Jack, as it is their highest honour, to pay their loyal respects to the memory of the Queen deceased.

This is the people's sorrow ; and the funeral services are the people's services ; not any mere proclamation of a bishop, or any effort at a state ceremonial in this Church or that ; patronized by the most worshipful mayor in this land, where there is absolute equality of all the Churches in imperial, royal, state, civic, public and political functions. We may not have the grandeur of the Imperial procession, the splendour of the royal and civic function, the concourse of emperors, kings and princes of the royal blood, the majesty and glory of military and naval display ; the imposing effect of elaborate and sumptuous ceremonial ; but we may have spirits as deeply touched with an affectionate grief, sympathies as sincere and profound, hearts as truly loyal, and vow and pledge and service as ready and faithful as those of the millions amid the minute guns, the reversed arms and silent march at Osborne, or Portsmouth, or in London, the marvellous metropolis of this world-wide Empire.

Every intelligent, faithful British subject will feel constrained to bow in special sorrow, to join heartily with all true Britons in demonstration of our sense of loss, and gratefully to acknowledge our indebtedness to God who gave us such a sovereign as our noble Queen Victoria, who so well filled up, accord-

ing to her exalted station, the opportunities and demands of her providential career.

And first, I shall speak of our Queen as a providential ruler, a sovereign providentially prepared for her time, place and work. There can be no more reassuring reflection than the truth so evident to broad and intelligent minds, that the Lord God governs the nations, and that He governs them in harmony with the principles of His moral government and the moral freedom and responsibility set on high as the most prominent and important characteristics of the human race. The Lord of the kings of the earth setteth up one and casteth down another, promoteth one race and suffereth another to be overthrown ; ever keeping in view the moral limits of His empire, within which earth's transactions must occur and earth's powers may exercise themselves to the full ; and especially keeping in view that central moral and governmental principle, that every man shall give account of himself to God.

The play of moral, physical, and social forces within this domain bring about certain varying conditions, for which the supreme government of the world must provide. We mean by a providential ruler one who is placed, with certain qualifications given him, face to face with these conditions. Such conditions may be hardened and stiffened by long accumulation, or they may be soft and florid by sudden eruption. The providential man has his chances. He may use his abilities, meet the demands and succeed ; or, he may be unfaithful, and fail, as many have done. Likely it is only the successful ones we recognize as providential, though those that failed may have had easier and better opportunity. We