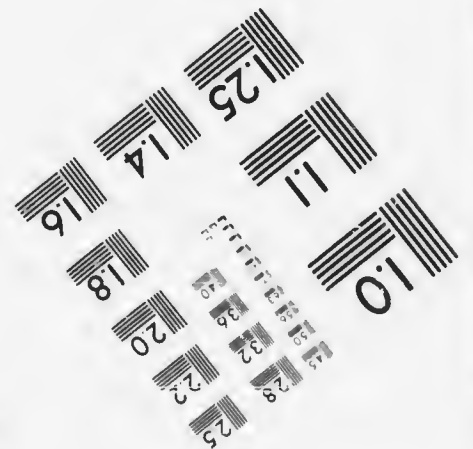
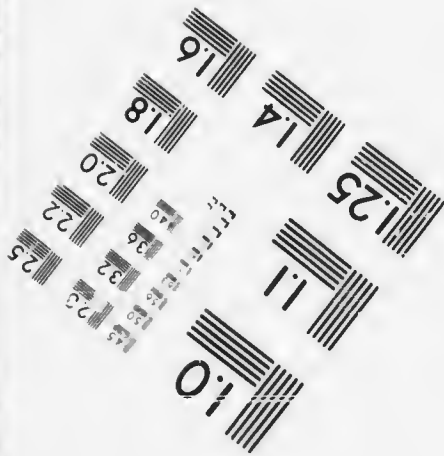
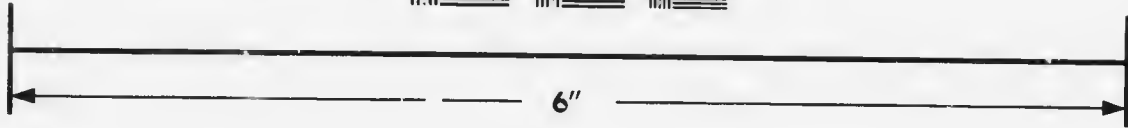
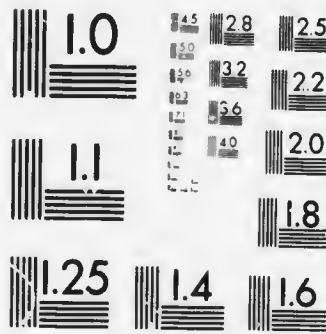


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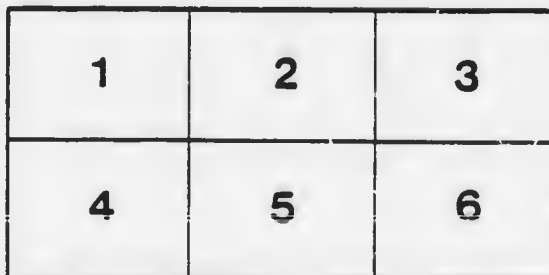
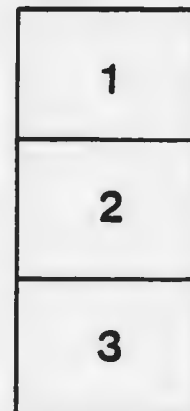
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A SERMON:

PREACHED BY THE

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Chaplain of St. George's Society,

MONTREAL,

IN ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH,

OR

ST. GEORGE'S DAY,

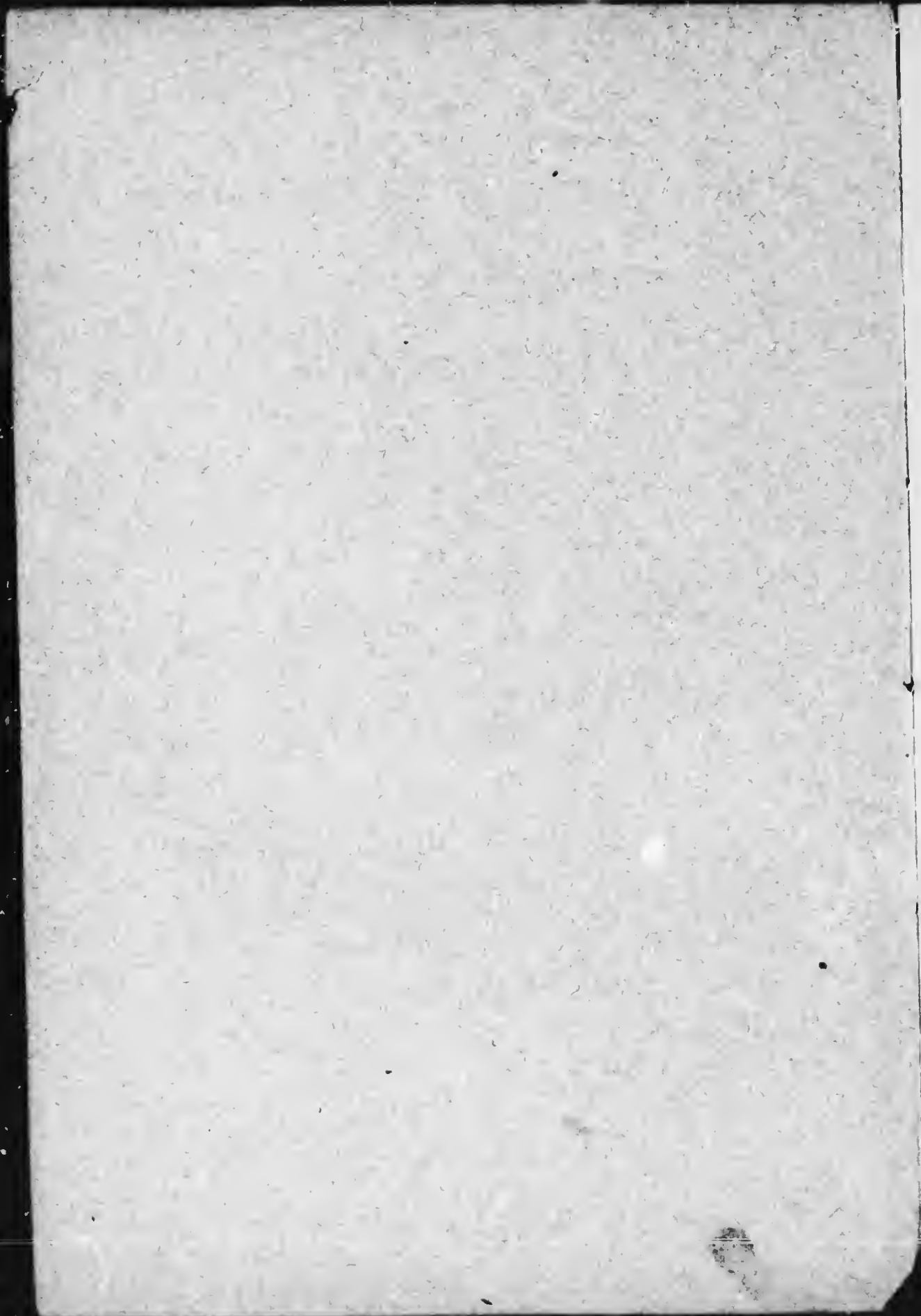
*Before the ST. GEORGE'S SOCIETY.*

1878.

—*decorative flourish*—  
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—*decorative flourish*—  
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1878.



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# A SERMON :

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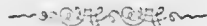
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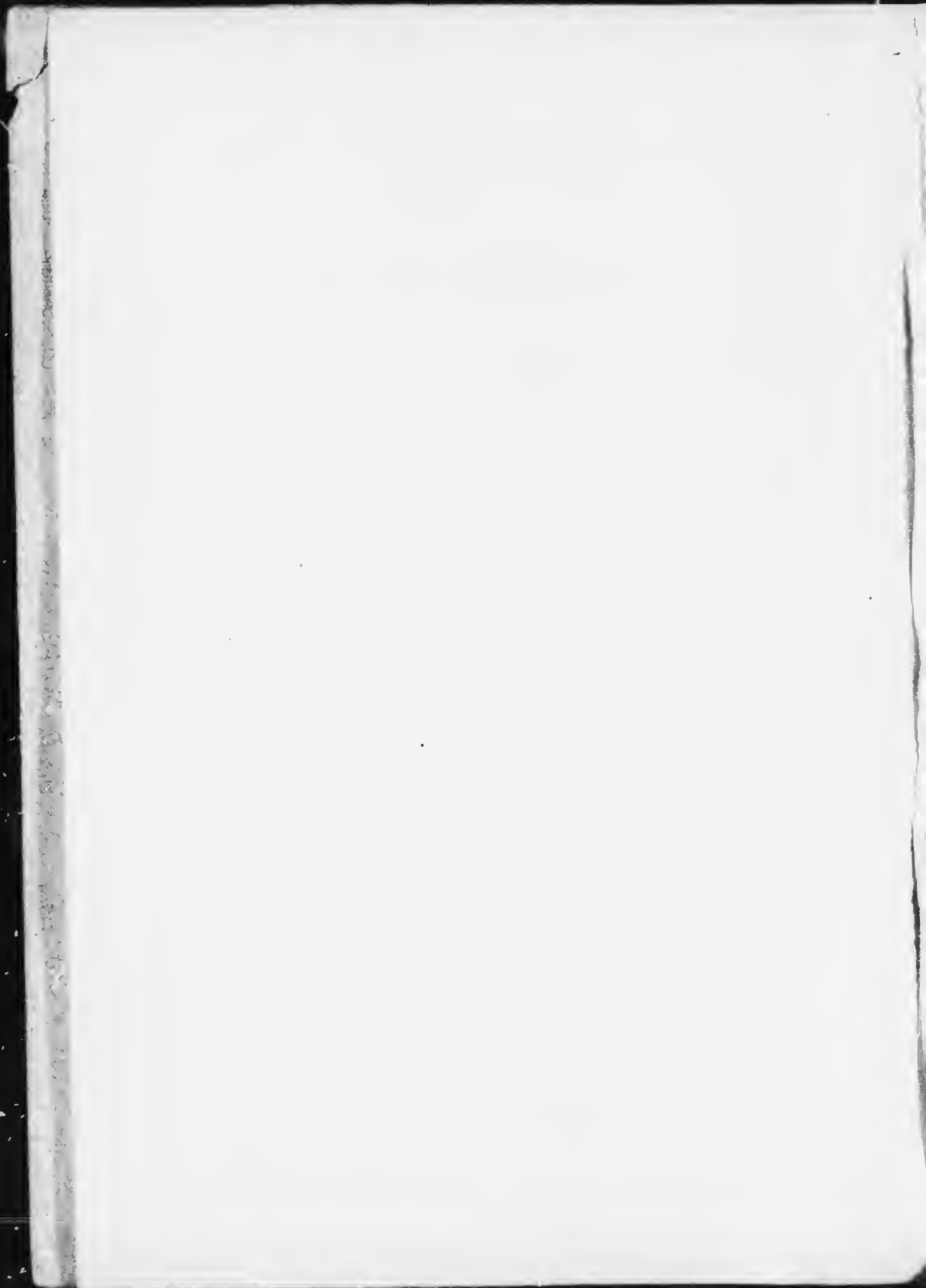
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## SERMON.

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ISAIAH xliii. 21.

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“This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.”

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Englishmen, do you claim that promise as your heritage? It is a glorious creation, “formed by God for Himself.” And the object of that creation is equally glorious, “They shall shew forth My praise.” There is no grander object in human life than this—“to shew forth the praise of God.”

But these words were written primarily of Israel, how then can you claim them as your possession? Do you identify our nation with Israel? There was a time when this question would have been dismissed with a good-natured laugh. That time has passed, and the controversy has now reached a point where the identity of the British people with Israel has to be met with serious and sound argument. The ridicule with which the theory was first received has been discarded, and the singular light thrown by the theory on much of Scripture is now used for further quiet and thoughtful examination. When thoughtful men discover that a people speaking one tongue—by being scattered amongst a nation of another speech—may lose their own language and adopt that of the people with whom they sojourn, these thoughtful men perceive that the change of language is no insuperable difficulty in receiving the theory. They feel that if (as the Prophet Hosea foretells) Israel had lost their religion and become Paganized, they would eventually speak the tongue of their Pagan masters.

And, in like manner, when these thoughtful men learned that a change of climate and of habit of life had produced an entire change in the feature and form of an entire people, they saw that

the physical difference between the inhabitants of the British Isles and the ten tribes of the captivity was no sufficient argument for rejecting the theory.

And again, when these same thoughtful men (guided by Scripture) sought for the lost tribes in the countries where the Assyrian had carried them captive, and found that history told of the migrations of these people northward, and of the way marks (here and there) left in the places of their sojourn and formed by the graves of their dead, they perceived that history contributes its aid to remove the obstacles that seemed to exist in the way of identifying lost Israel with mighty England. And then, when these same thoughtful men began to enquire "whence came these people, who replenished the British Isles?" and (guided by history in their enquiry) traced back their origin to the very neighbourhood where Israel had been placed in captivity, they began to see that difficulties were vanishing and probabilities were pointing them onward in their search.

But then when these same thoughtful men came to test all these things by the Word of God, and found that the Word was singularly illustrated by the history; that light was thrown upon many predictions of the Prophets by the possibility that Israel had found his way to England; and that the story of England's greatness, prosperity and peculiar character was in a great measure accounted for by the thought that she had obtained the promises made to the lost tribes; then these thoughtful men felt that the question forced itself upon their attention—for example, the Prophet Hosea speaks at large of Ephraim as apostate; then as put away and cast out of the covenant; then as driven forth (an utterly repudiated people) from the land of the covenant; but at last as waiting for mercy, and as waiting to be brought home out of his captivity, converted and saved. But where are Israel to be found? whence are they to return? from the land wherein they were led captive? that would have been from the north, and that would have been fatal to the theory. No; Hosea says, "They shall walk after the Lord, He shall roar like a lion, when He shall roar then the children shall tremble from the west, they shall tremble . . . and I will place them in their houses, saith the Lord," and then Isaiah, prophesying of these same people, says of them (after the desolation of their land), "They shall lift up their voice, they

shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea: wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the Isles of the sea." So it would seem that they shall come from the Isles of the sea, and those Isles shall be in the west. This (with much more) points, to say the least, with singular significance to the British Isles. And then again, where is the fulfilment of the prophecies which foretold the future of Joseph's two sons? where is the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jacob, which set Ephraim (who became the head of the ten tribes) above Manasseh? where is the "multitude of nations" that his seed should become? where is the seed of Israel numbered as the sand of the sea? where is there any sign of their pushing the people together to the ends of the earth with horns like the horns of unicorns? and where is the "chief of nations," whence there is to be a shout of song and gladness for Jacob? I can see that all this may be fulfilled in England, but where else to look for these ten tribes I do not know.

And where is this prophecy fulfilled, "They shall increase as I have increased them; I will sow them among the people, and they shall remember me in far countries." I can see it in the spread of our people over the globe and their faithfulness to their religious principles in their new homes, but I cannot see it anywhere else. This seems, at all events, generally admitted—that Israel (as distinct from Judah) have been lost to human view as completely as if they had been in their graves—and yet it is scarcely controverted that Israel shall return to their own land, and Judah shall meet them there, and they shall be re-united under one King and one Shepherd.

And then I do not wonder that the idea that Israel shall be found among the Anglo-Saxons has taken such hold on the minds of thoughtful men, for (passing by at this time the other branches of the Teutonic race) consider the position that the British nation occupies before the world, can there be a question that the world has been in the attitude of expectancy, waiting to learn what England would do in the "Eastern Question?" (I give this only as an example.) I do not pretend to decide as to the right or wrong of England's neutrality when the conflict between Russia and Turkey was impending; men have thought that she should have stepped in between the contending powers as they stood face to face in angry controversy, and forced them back

from the conflict; men have said that if England had only held up her finger the combatants would have retired into sulky peace. However that might have been I do not know. Equally wise men have since maintained that England's policy was eminently calculated to promote the well being of the world. This I know, that by their respectful attitude the great men of the earth point to England as the "chief among the nations."

And so it has been since the cessation of the struggle—Russia, flushed with victory, is only held back by the hand of England from destroying her prostrate foe. Other nations are either like fierce beasts watching to spring at each others throats or like timid sheep shrinking from the fray. Other nations are waiting with observant eye the action of England, while England grandly stretches forth her mailed hand and says, "let righteousness and truth and justice prevail," and, whatever be the issue, the world admits that England is right, and again accords to her the place of "chief among the nations." Is it then strange that thoughtful men have identified England with that Israel of whom these glorious things have been spoken by the Prophets?

And consider the position the British nation occupies in the world; our beloved Queen, "Queen of the British, Empress of India." "Great Britain," a "company of nations," stretching round the world. Great Britain with Colonies—growing daily into nations—firmly welded together and manifesting by intensest sympathy their oneness with the mother land. It is not the first time that (as now) the threat of war at home has made British hearts throb in response wherever true hearts are found. It is not the first time that war has made these hearts beat in sympathy as though knit together by living nerves; has made her enthusiastic sons sing:—

God save our gracious Queen,  
 Long live our noble Queen,  
 God save our Queen;  
 Send her victorious,  
 Happy and glorious,  
 Long to reign over us,  
 God save our Queen.

May she our Queen long reign  
 O'er England's wide domain  
 With power and might;

Cause her alone to Thee  
 For aid and strength to flee  
 Still this her motto be,  
 "God and my right."

May her Imperial fame  
 Through India spread Thy name  
 Both far and wide,  
 And midst that teeming throng  
 May we both loud and long  
 Proclaim true Israel's song,  
 "Heaven's light our guide."

Empress of heathen States,  
 Mistress of hostile "gates,"  
 Her flag is seen—  
 England and Colonies  
 Unite and rend the skies,  
 Let this one shout arise,  
 "God save our Queen."

And then consider the work of the British Church. The spread of the English tongue—piercing all lands—has made comparatively easy the toil of the missionary. And the toil of the English missionary has been made a hundred-fold fruitful by England (which, above all others, honors the Word of God) sending that Word (translated into their own tongue) to almost all the nations under heaven. It seems to me that there is scarcely a people on the face of the earth into which the British Church has not pierced, and where she has planted her foot, there—with her characteristic tenacity—she has remained, and, like a tree planted by the water side, the bud and the blossom and the fruit have been put forth and filled the land. Time would fail me to tell on the one hand of Wilson, on the other of Carey; on the one hand of Livingstone, on the other of Patteson; on the one hand of Henry Martyn, on the other of Judson; on the one hand of Lawrence, on the other of Havelock (before them and after them), not only as missionaries, but also as men who have carried the grand principles of the Gospel wherever they have gone, and made the Church a light of the nations, and a means to shew forth the praise of God.

And then, Englishmen, there are two or three things personal to yourselves individually which I must say. Your being an

Englishman (or an Israelite) after the flesh will not save your soul. There must be a new creation by the Holy Spirit. You may glory in being an Englishman, and (like St. Paul) you will have whereof to glory, but that will not avail you in eternity. You must be born again of the Spirit. You may believe that God has yet great things for your race and country to perform. You may believe (as I believe) that the sons of Old England will be faithful and true to the call of duty and to the voice of God, but the only faith that will save you in dealing with Divine Justice is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You may even yet live to share in those covenanted blessings which, I believe, are still more richly to be poured out on our nation, but that will only enhance your guilt and increase your condemnation if you remain a stranger to God's converting grace. Then, beloved, see ye to it that your interest in Jesus is personal and your relation to Jesus that of closeness by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

And again, love of country and love of kinsmen was a passion with the Israelite, wherever he might be, he never forgot (until God cast him out) the land of his inheritance, and never failed to help a brother in distress. Englishmen, let it be the same with you. You never will forget Old England. Your heart turns with love and admiration to her history and her noble bearing in all the crises of the world, and you are confident that in the strength of God she will fulfil (in the working out of God's purposes) her splendid destiny.

You cannot doubt that she is a means in the hands of our God for accomplishing mighty purposes on the earth. Her home in the Isles of the Sea is kept sacred from the foot of the invader, and that home has ever been the refuge alike from every nation of the down-trodden, the persecuted and the foreign refugee. And from that home her sons have gone forth throughout the world to form colonies until they have become a "company of nations;" to take possession of prominent points, until, as we trace her strongholds over the globe, we see her in possession of the gates of her enemies; to push her rule in India, until they could place on the head of their Queen the diadem of a magnificent heathen empire; and above all (notwithstanding degenerate children) to carry the Gospel (with reverence for the Lord's Day and obedience to the ten commandments) into every new home which they

have formed. Surely God is in the midst of such a nation as this. Surely God is by her working out His everlasting covenant. And then, beloved, never forget your kinsmen according to the flesh. Make your countrymen and countrywomen feel as they land on these shores, that there is an English hand and an English heart to welcome them. It is a hard thing to land in a strange place and there meet nought but cold looks and strange faces, and that would often be the case were it not for the officers of St. George's Society. Think of a mother with little children stepping into our city, almost penniless, hoping to find the father ready to receive them, but the father far away trying to make for them a home. Think of a sick brother, ready to die, longing to get back to the hamlet and and hedge-rows of Old England. Who would not sacrifice something that he might have to give to him or her who needeth? Who would not remember St. Paul's injunction, "While we have time, let us do good unto all men, specially unto them that are of the household of faith?" Who would not heed this command of God, "Thou shalt surely give unto thy poor brother and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him, because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto?" Therefore "open thine hand wide this day to thy poor brother."



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