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CHAPTER FIVE

BRITISH SERMONS ON NATIONAL EVENTS

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Throughout the 19th century, from the Napoleonic Wars (1804-15) to the South African War (1898-1902), numerous national events tested the full spectrum of human emotions. Some were celebratory, such as coronations, jubilees and thanksgivings for victory in war. Some were bitter-sweet, such as delight at the great naval victory at Trafalgar in 1805 clouded by the news that Lord Nelson had fallen in the battle, or the deaths in ripe old age of pillars of the nation such as George III in 1820, the Duke of Wellington in 1852 and Queen Victoria in 1901. Others were isolated tragedies that moved many but directly affected few, such as the death in childbirth of Princess Charlotte in 1817, or the collapse of the Tay Bridge in 1879 that hurled a trainload of passengers to their doom in the stormy waters below. Others again, such as the Crimean War of 1854-6 and the cholera epidemics of 1832 and 1849, had a direct impact on substantial portions of the population, who had to face up to the possibility of imminent sudden death either for themselves or for loved ones.

Context

This chapter is focused on discrete occurrences that gave rise to sermons on a single day, or within a short, defined period of time.¹ The events under consideration here were not political in themselves, although some had obvious political ramifications, but were either lifecycle events concerning the royal family, the deaths of other national figures, or natural disasters and military conflicts. Clergy of all denominations responded to them in part from a sense of civic and national duty, and in part from a recognition of pastoral need and opportunity. Many such sermons were

preached on prescribed national days, determined either by a central event such as a funeral ceremony or royal proclamation of a fast, in circumstances of insecurity, or of thanksgiving, in cases of celebration.² On such occasions, special local church services, reportedly more numerous than normal Sunday worship, performed something of the function of radio and television in a later age, giving individuals a sense of participation in the “imagined community” of the nation as a whole.³ Sermons assumed a corresponding oracular significance as the closest thing to an official national statement on the event in question that most people were likely to hear. Motives for attendance could be more secular than religious, as characterized disapprovingly by Thomas Chalmers in his sermon on the death of Princess Charlotte in 1817. There was, he said, a

... set of men, whose taste for preaching is very much confined to these great and national occasions--who, habitually absent from church on the Sabbath, are yet observed, and that most prominently, to come together in eager and clustering attendance, on some interesting case of pathos or politics--who in this way obtrude upon the general notice, their loyalty to an earthly sovereign, while in reference to their lord and master, Jesus Christ, they scandalize all that is Christian in the general feeling.⁴

Such sermons, though, were not solely linked to officially-appointed days and special services. Many clergy also took the initiative themselves in delivering similar sermons on the nearest convenient Sunday to a major event. In 1832 Charles Cator, Rector of Carshalton in Surrey, preached on cholera the Sunday after it arrived in the village, responding bluntly when he noticed his congregation was larger than usual, declaring his unaccustomed hearers especially welcome because they could now be warned of their spiritual peril and their need of repentance.⁵ Sermons on Nelson and

Trafalgar were preached in early November 1805 when the news of the battle first arrived, at a general thanksgiving day on 5 December, and on 12 January 1806, the Sunday after Nelson's funeral.⁶ Those on the Duke of Wellington's death were delivered, not only on the day of his funeral, Thursday 18 November 1852, but on the two Sundays following his death, 19 and 26 September, and the Sunday after the funeral, 21 November.⁷ Such differences in timing could lead to subtle differences in emphasis and content, with some reluctant to be diverted from the normal spiritual and theological content of their Sunday sermons. Thus Charles Clarke, preaching at the Old Meeting House, Birmingham, on Wednesday 16 April 1854, the fast day following the outbreak of the Crimean War, began by saying:

I regard it as the duty of Ministers of the gospel to awaken and sustain, as far as they can, just sentiments in the minds of their hearers respecting these public events which involve the freedom and existence of Nations. On my own part, from the pressure of other subjects, it is rare that I discuss on Sundays those having a passing and popular no less than a permanent interest: on this account I am not at all reluctant to do so on this day, which is set apart for prayer and humiliation.⁸

Some clergy expressed diffidence about preaching on such events. This was sometimes because they were reluctant to trespass into "political" territory that they considered inappropriate for the pulpit. George Croly, rector of St Stephen Walbrook in the City of London, preaching in St Paul's Cathedral in 1838, acknowledged the concern, but affirmed that there was a higher kind of politics that richly merited the attention of the preacher:

I disclaim all local politics; they are unfit for the pulpit. But politics on the scale of nations; politics reverentially tracing the courses marked on the

map of Providence; politics, taking the lights of Heaven for the illustration of its ways among men; form a legitimate purpose of the pulpit and one of the noblest contemplations of the philosopher, the theologian and the Christian.⁹

For Henry Barnett, a Nonconformist preaching in Evesham on the death of the Duke of Wellington, there was something disingenuous in the stance of conservatives who were content themselves to preach reverence for the existing order, while castigating more critical voices as “political.” For his own part he believed that political and religious motivations could not be easily separated.¹⁰

For others, diffidence stemmed from a genuine uncertainty as to what they should say. In the absence of central guidance, or sometimes, of recent precedent, there was an anxiety not inadvertently to step outside a perceived clerical consensus or to offend local dignitaries and members of their congregations. One clergyman in north Devon was thrown into a state of near panic by the death of George III in 1820. As no monarch had died for sixty years, he had no idea what he should do. He initially hoped to prepare an appropriate Sunday sermon at relative leisure, but then found he was expected to preach at a special service on the imminent day of the funeral. He had no time to consult other clergy, but sought advice from “some of the principal persons of the parish” who rather unhelpfully expressed surprise that, in view of the late King’s age and state of health, he had not already prepared a sermon for the eventuality, and suggested simply that he should do the same as adjoining parishes.¹¹ Such frankness was unusual, but it illuminates a situation in which clergy were responding often at short notice, as best they knew how, and without much opportunity for consultation. Hence while many sermons shared common features

arising from the events that gave rise to them, they also reflected a rich diversity of personal attitudes, theological convictions, and local circumstances.

The importance of sermons in articulating and shaping public responses was further apparent in their extensive publication, especially during the first two-thirds of the century. Both national and local newspapers carried many column inches of extensive, sometimes verbatim, reports of such pulpit utterances. In common with other sermons, examples from popular preachers were also widely circulated in *The Penny Pulpit*, which appeared from the 1830s to the 1870s.¹² Numerous examples--for instance at least eighty-one on Princess Charlotte's death in 1817 and at least seventy on Prince Albert's in 1861--were also published independently as freestanding pamphlets.¹³ Some of these, at least, were very widely read, as indicated, for example, by Robert Hall's sermon on Princess Charlotte, which had run to nine editions before the end of 1818.¹⁴ Such material is not only evidence of extensive contemporary interest in the medium, but also provides rich and hitherto under-utilized resources for later scholars, albeit inevitably weighted towards those more privileged preachers who drew newspaper reporters to their sermons or who had the means and connections to secure publication. It is moreover necessary to bear in mind that newspaper accounts may well reflect editorial bias in both the selection of preachers for coverage and of the passages in their sermons included in abbreviated reports; while independently published sermons were often likely to have been revised and expanded after delivery.

Clergy thus had an important opportunity to impress the wider readership of subsequent published versions as well as their immediate hearers. The most spectacular experience was that of the recently-appointed Bishop of Gloucester, William Thomson, whose sermon on Prince Albert's death in December 1861 was

greatly appreciated by the Queen and was reputedly a major factor leading to his translation to York a few months later, at the very early age, for an archbishop, of forty-three.¹⁵ An aspiration to climb lower rungs of the patronage ladder was implicit in the inscription on the British Library's copy of T.F. Bowerbank's sermon on the Battle of Waterloo to the Bishop of Lincoln, the powerful George Pretyman-Tomline.¹⁶ A sense of solidarity with local civil authority was frequently expressed, for instance in Clitheroe, Lancashire in the local vicar's sermon on the death of the Duke of York in 1827, and in the Bishop of London's sermon at St Paul's Cathedral on the day of humiliation in 1855 for the Crimean War, both explicitly stating that they were published at the request of the respective corporations.¹⁷ Clergy often avowed initial reluctance to publish, from professed uncertainty as to the quality of their sermons and consciousness of haste in preparation, and claimed they were merely doing so in response to the pressing requests of others.¹⁸ Others, though, published their sermons with a frequency that suggested they were not infected with false modesty.¹⁹

Among published sermons, preachers from the Church of England and the Established Churches of Ireland and Scotland predominated. It was natural that ministers of the state churches should see themselves as having a particular responsibility to preach on such occasions, so although the printed record may well exaggerate the imbalance, the reality was probably broadly similar. Nevertheless examples of sermons by Protestant Nonconformists can readily be found, and some such early 19th-century preachers--notably the Unitarian Robert Aspland, the Baptist Robert Hall, and the Congregationalist Joseph Irons--emulated Anglican clergy by publishing their utterances on several occasions. Recorded sermons by Methodists were rare relative to their rapidly growing numbers, but at least three Wesleyan

ministers published sermons on the death of Princess Charlotte in 1817.²⁰ Roman Catholics too do not seem to have preached on national events until late in the century, although probable under-reporting may well distort the evidence. On the other hand, several published Jewish sermons survive from the early 19th century, and although few appeared in its middle decades, they became quite numerous in the 1890s and 1900s.²¹

Form

For most sermons before the 1870s, the initial selection of a biblical text firmly determined the direction of the discourse. Preachers were both industrious and ingenious in their searching of the Scriptures, and choices ranged extensively from Genesis to Revelation, with most books in between represented on one occasion or another. Nevertheless there were perceptible patterns to their selections. There were a few recurrent choices, notably II Samuel 3:38--“Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?”--an obvious gift to preachers on the deaths of Lord Nelson, the Duke of York, the Duke of Wellington and Prince Albert.²² I Chronicles 29: 20-30 appealed to those who wanted to affirm national solidarity in celebration or commemoration.²³ Preachers who explored divine intervention in contemporary events were drawn to texts such as Isaiah 26:9 and Micah 6:9.²⁴ The choice of texts could be revealing of underlying attitudes: whereas I Chronicles 29:28, “Then he died in a good old age, full of days, riches and honour” was deemed appropriate for sermons on the death of George III, more ambivalent attitudes to his son George IV were indicated by the choice of Daniel 2:2, “he [God] removes kings and sets up kings.”²⁵ Old Testament texts predominated, an indication that preachers more readily found parallels and inspiration for interpreting contemporary events in the history of ancient Israel, and in the Psalms and prophetic books, than in the

specifically Christian teaching of the New Testament. When the New Testament was drawn upon, the specific texts chosen tended to suggest similar themes to that of the Old, with Revelation 3:19 prompting exposition of judgement and repentance and I Timothy 2:1-2 and I Peter 2:17 reverence for kingly and national authority.²⁶ A significant minority of preachers drew on New Testament passages such as I Corinthians 15 to explore themes related to the transience of this life and the expectation of judgement and resurrection hereafter. The evangelical R.W. Dibdin preached a striking sermon on the death in office of the prime minister Lord Palmerston from Luke 16:2, “Turn in the account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.”²⁷ In general, however, selections from the gospels were rare, and sustained engagement with Jesus’s own teaching even more unusual. Indeed when H.F. Gray, a prebendary of Wells, did choose Luke 18:24, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!” as his text for a sermon on the Prince Consort’s death, the whole thrust of his argument was to demonstrate that Albert’s virtues suggested that in his case at least, Jesus’s view of the negative consequences of material comfort was groundless.²⁸

Until around the 1870s the characteristic, albeit not universal, form of the sermons was an initial concentration on exposition of the selected text. Few preachers were as rigorous as Samuel O’Sullivan in his sermon on the death of George III, the first half of which contained “no particular allusion to the melancholy event that gave rise to it.”²⁹ Many, however, kept such allusion limited and largely implicit until the later portions of their discourses, when current applications were eventually drawn out. This structure caused preachers to look at the experience of contemporary Britain primarily through the lens of paradigms constructed from the experience of Old Testament Israel and Judah. Some more or less explicitly believed “that the British

empire ...has been constituted by Providence the heir to the duties, the privileges and the promises of Israel,”³⁰ and nearly all regarded it as axiomatic that biblical history was mirrored in contemporary events. Only in the last quarter of the century was there significant change in the format of the sermons, with a perceptible increase in the popularity of New Testament texts, a noticeable shortening in length, and a blurring of the earlier tight structure of exposition followed by application. Thus Edward Wilkinson, minister of Christ Church, Leamington, in his sermon on the 1887 Golden Jubilee had little to say about the original context of his text, Isaiah 33:17, “Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty,” and indeed initially seemed to apply it somewhat blasphemously by launching into an adulatory overview of Queen Victoria’s own life.³¹ Nevertheless, more conservative preachers still persisted in using the older structure. For example J.C. Ryle, the staunchly evangelical Bishop of Liverpool, devoted the first half of his sermon on the Golden Jubilee to an exposition of his text. Only thereafter did he explicitly mention “the special subject which calls us together this day.”³²

These sermons offer a rich and neglected source of evidence on the views of preachers, and hence of the influences on their congregations, in relation to topics of central concern to historians of 19th-century religion and culture. Sermons on deaths and jubilees described exemplary lives, asserted ideals of public and private conduct, and explored gender roles. Sermons on disasters such as cholera and famine revealed attitudes to poverty and the social order in times of particular stress. Sermons in time of war revealed a wide spectrum of convictions regarding armed conflict, ranging from the confident assertion of divine sanction for the national cause, through a perception of war as a time of national trial and chastisement, to the advocacy of pacifism, or at least peace-making, as a Christian duty. There is, however, no space

here to pursue these themes in detail, and in any case these would be best addressed by utilizing sermons in conjunction with other sources. Accordingly the remainder of this chapter will focus rather on two issues central to the genre itself: first, the place of divine providence in national life, and second, the paradoxical affirmation of temporal loyalty and patriotism alongside vigorous assertion of the spiritual and eternal destiny of the individual.

Providence

A consciousness of God's providential dealings with the British/English nation³³ was not so much the theme as the very fabric of most of the sermons. To a considerable extent, such content was predetermined by the context. On occasions when the preacher's *raison d'être* seemed to lie in elucidating the spiritual significance of a specific national event, only the boldest and most independent-minded of men were prepared to disappoint the expectations of their congregations. Even the Unitarian Robert Aspland began a sermon on the death of Charles James Fox in 1806 with the assertion that "Religion consists, in part, in the observance of the order and course of Divine Providence."³⁴ There were, however, considerable differences in the ways in which the workings of providence were regarded; the emphases of particular sermons were shaped by the particular events to which they were a response, as well as by the doctrinal presuppositions of the preacher, and the changing cultural and theological climate.

Sermons on happier national events could readily become straightforward assertions of the hand of God in British history. Richard Cecil, minister of the fashionable London proprietary chapel of St John's Bedford Row, hailed the naval victory at Trafalgar in 1805 as a great national deliverance that required special acknowledgement to God.³⁵ Four years later, the missionary publicist Claudius

Buchanan delivered a trilogy of sermons on the jubilee of George III.³⁶ While the first and the third, preached on the preceding and succeeding Sundays, focused on biblical themes, the central sermon on the jubilee day itself (25 October 1809), was primarily a triumphalist celebration of British achievements in the last fifty years, viewed as “God’s unbounded mercies to our land.”³⁷ Buchanan began with the bold assertion that since the “great Jubilee” of his text (I Kings 8:66) held on Solomon’s dedication of the temple, “there has not, perhaps, been a more august festival before the Lord than the BRITISH Jubilee, which we celebrate on this day.”³⁸ He went on to enumerate the “temporal blessings” of the reign: an increase in national power, political stability in the face of the turmoil of continental Europe, and the carrying of “the principles of moral civilization and useful knowledge to the remotest nations of the earth.”³⁹ Moreover national wealth was increasing and political liberty was secured through a constitution that he held to be the gift of God. The nation also enjoyed great spiritual blessings, including the preservation of the church, the increase of true religion, the instruction of the poor in Sunday Schools, the diffusion of the Scriptures, and the establishment of other benevolent institutions.⁴⁰ Two key events that “consecrated” the reign had been the abolition of the slave trade and the institution of the Bible Society.⁴¹ Moreover, the King himself was truly the “defender of the faith” and a “bright example” to the nation.⁴² A similar celebratory tone was apparent in William Marsh’s sermon on the coronation of George IV in 1821. Like Buchanan, he chose a text that led him to make explicit parallels between Solomon and the contemporary British monarchy and saw the event as symbolizing Britain’s role “as dispenser of blessings to an impoverished and expecting world.”⁴³

Despite its immediate somber context, the Duke of Wellington’s death in 1852 similarly stirred affirmations of positive providential purpose in British history. To

George Croly, Wellington had been the agent of providence as the supreme protector of England.⁴⁴ George Steward, preaching at St Thomas's Church, Glasgow, similarly perceived Wellington as the human means of the Lord's deliverance for the nation. There should be national gratitude and thanksgiving for his life and ascribing of all greatness to God. Steward believed that every crisis in national history had been "bound up in most singular manner, with the cause of Protestantism, and the purpose of God to bestow on Britain a grand religious and moral ascendancy over the world."⁴⁵ Likewise for John Osmond Dakeyne, preaching to the Mayor and Corporation of Wolverhampton, the occasion was an appropriate one on which to reaffirm his "most intense and inmost conviction ... that our own country has a purposed end to serve, for which He [God] ... has brought it ... to be ... the foremost Empire of the world."⁴⁶

This theme recurred in sermons on Queen Victoria's jubilees in 1887 and 1897. In his sermon in Dundee, W.L. Boase was in no doubt that "the presence and power of God" had been present in the life of the Queen, the nation and the church during the preceding half century. "Nothing" he said "happens by chance" and "it is God alone, who is the builder" who had made Britain great.⁴⁷ Bishop Ryle's sermon surveyed similar ground to that of Claudius Buchanan on George III's jubilee nearly eighty years before, emphasizing the importance of the sovereign's personal character in presiding over a long period of political stability, enormously increased prosperity and "immense advance" in the cause of "religion and morality." Despite his evangelicalism, Ryle was more circumspect than Buchanan had been in explicit reference to providence, but the implicit message of thankfulness to God for divine favor was clear enough.⁴⁸ Ten years later, at the Diamond Jubilee David Jones, preaching at Penmaenmawr in North Wales, affirmed that Britain's current position in

the world was attributable to the favor of God. For him, as for other jubilee preachers, Victoria herself, with her life a focus for “peace, purity and prosperity” was, like George III and Wellington in earlier generations, both symbol and guarantor of divine blessing on the nation.⁴⁹

Even such essentially celebratory preachers, however, also recognized darker shades in the Almighty’s dealings with Britain. In some concluding passages of his 1809 sermon, Buchanan struck a warning more somber note, acknowledging that the jubilee was also a day of reproach for the continuing widespread neglect of God’s word and worship, and that there was need for mourning and humiliation in the face of the ongoing calamities of war and disease.⁵⁰ In a sermon marking the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, T.F. Bowerbank pointed out that although God had brought a great victory, he did not interfere to ward off the natural consequences of human agency, and hence there had been a price to pay in terms of human loss and suffering.⁵¹ In face of the pomp of George IV’s coronation, Marsh recognized that there would be chastisement for national sins; amidst the joy of Victoria’s jubilee, Ryle saw that there were black clouds looming, even as he urged his hearers to focus their eyes rather on the clear blue sky.⁵² Both William Howley, then Bishop of London, preaching on Waterloo, and David Jones, preaching on the Diamond Jubilee, cautioned against vainglorious boasting in human strength, a corollary of their conviction that national success came only by divine favor.⁵³ Spanning the century was a general sense of God’s special provision for the nation and of Britain’s consequent accountability to the Almighty.

Sermons preached on more challenging and negative occasions inevitably obliged preachers to probe the actual workings of providence more deeply. If God was indeed favoring the British nation, why did bad things happen, and what lessons

should be learned from them? Such questions were focused particularly by two untimely royal deaths, those of Princess Charlotte in 1817 and of Prince Albert in 1861; by the cholera epidemics of 1832 and 1849; the Irish Great Famine of 1847; and by war, with France until 1815, in the Crimea from 1854 to 1856, the "Indian Mutiny" of 1857, and the South African War at the turn of the 20th century.

Until around 1860, the predominant response of preachers to such events was to see them as a divine judgment on the sins of the nation, or at least as a chastening and spur to repentance. Although such views were apparent during the Napoleonic Wars, they assumed particular prominence in the response to Princess Charlotte's death. This occurrence was particularly devastating because it disrupted the direct line of succession to the throne, and removed a young woman perceived by the devout as their best hope for the future moral and spiritual regeneration of a royal family and a nation tarnished by the scandals associated with the Prince Regent and his brothers. Thus Thomas Tregenna Biddulph, the leading Bristol evangelical, appears to have spoken for many preachers when he stated that "I am constrained, after mature reflection, to acknowledge, that I consider this bereaving dispensation of Divine Providence, as a manifest token of God's holy displeasure."⁵⁴ While Calvinists such as Biddulph were naturally predisposed to this conclusion, it appeared to be a widespread consensus among preachers in 1817.

Though preachers agreed that God was at work in these occurrences, precise interpretations differed. Three strands of approach can be identified. First, but quite rare, was the claim that the Almighty was passing judgement on specific national acts or omissions that had incurred His displeasure, particularly the countenancing of false religion. Thus John Pye Smith, a Congregationalist with liberal political views, attributed Charlotte's death in part to God's anger at the restoration in 1815 of

absolutist Roman Catholic regimes on the Continent; his co-religionist Joseph Irons saw the cholera epidemic of 1832 as a judgement against national encouragement of “Popery” and “infidelity.”⁵⁵ Preaching on the 1847 Famine, the Liverpool Anglican evangelical Hugh McNeile also held the encouragement of “Romanism” to be a particularly significant national sin. He explained:

Individuals, as such, have another arena than this world, in which to meet with righteous retribution, but national prosperity or adversity are confined to this life. Those, therefore, are peculiarly national sins, whose direct tendency, according to the known and ordinary course of events, is to interfere with national prosperity. Can anything more directly interfere with the best interests of a nation, than a compromise of the high principles of civil and ecclesiastical liberty?⁵⁶

A similar view that the nation was being punished for a compromise with idolatry was also a strong theme in sermons on the “Indian Mutiny,” although this time the perceived false religion was of the Hindu rather than Papal variety.⁵⁷

Secondly, and more commonly, preachers argued that the nation was being judged not so much for sinful collective acts as for the accumulated sinfulness of individuals, which was countenanced by social convention. Indeed, even the minority of preachers who highlighted collective sins, did not neglect such more dispersed and general sinfulness. The catalogues of offenses varied somewhat according to the particular religious and social preoccupations of the preacher, but the one offered by John East in his sermon at Chipping Campden on Princess Charlotte’s death was broadly characteristic: “profligate luxury,” “commercial covetousness,” “gross immorality, daring crime, heaven-defying impiety and blasphemy,” the drunkenness of all social groups, lying, “uncleanness,” fraud, neglect of churchgoing and

indifference to the evangelization of the world.⁵⁸ When sabbatarianism was at its height in the middle of the century, the desecration of Sunday was also a widespread feature of such lists.⁵⁹ Political “sins” could be included: the radical unrest that coincided with the 1832 cholera epidemic led conservative preachers to denounce what James Taylor in Newcastle-upon-Tyne called “the want of contentment with their own condition among the lower orders.”⁶⁰

The attraction for preachers of such wide-ranging denunciation of sin was twofold. On the one hand, emphasizing God’s general abhorrence of sin enabled them to sidestep the very human controversy almost inevitably raised by preachers who focused on specific national actions, such as Catholic Emancipation, that others might well regard as anything but sinful. On the other, it offered a direct challenge to congregations who might reasonably consider themselves unable to do much to change national policy, but could not abrogate responsibility for their own lives. Thus East challenged his hearers, “Let us enquire, what share has Campden in the national guilt? Let each ask himself, what share have I in the national guilt?”⁶¹ Moreover, repentance and amendment of life was presented not merely as a matter of self-interest, with a view to warding off worse judgements to come, but also one of patriotic as well as Christian duty. Taylor explicitly linked the two: “I this day put your patriotism to the test, by inviting you to return unto the Lord.”⁶²

In these sermons God’s actions were presented not so much as merely punitive judgements, but rather as chastenings, designed to puncture national complacency and inspire spiritual revival. Thus William MacDonald, preaching at the Countess of Huntingdon’s Chapel in Brighton on Princess Charlotte’s death, maintained that “Fatherly chastisements and afflictions are ‘the rod’ of God, by which he corrects his people in judgement, tempered with mercy, that they may be brought to a sense of

their sin, and reformation in their conduct.” He believed that as representative figures, first the King through his chronic illness, and now the Princess, through her tragic death, were paying the price for the sin of the nation as a whole. God, he thought, “will continue to smite, until we are brought to a sense of our sin; and an acknowledgement of our iniquity.” Paradoxically, however, such punishments were presented as evidence of special divine concern for Britain, as much was required of those to whom much had been given.⁶³ Moreover, further comfort could be derived from the *Schadenfreude* of observing the greater sufferings of other nations, whether in the ravages of cholera or the turmoil of revolution, an indication that the Almighty was still exercising relative forbearance with the people of Britain.⁶⁴

A third approach was to decline to identify specific reasons for God’s judgement, but nevertheless to affirm that a providential chastening was taking place. This was the strategy adopted by Robert Hall in his widely-read sermon on the death of Princess Charlotte:

That it [the Princess’s death] ought to be considered as a signal rebuke and chastisement, designed to bring our sins to remembrance, there is no doubt; but to attempt to specify the particular crimes and delinquencies which have drawn down this visitation, is inconsistent with the modesty which ought to accompany all inquiries into the mysteries of Providence: and especially repugnant to the spirit which this most solemn and affecting event should inspire. At a time when every creature ought to tremble under the judgments of God, it ill becomes us to indulge in reciprocal recrimination; and when “*the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint,*” it is not for the members to usurp the seat of judgment, by hurling mutual accusations and reproaches against each other.⁶⁵

Hall could not resist proceeding to add his own list of sins, but his essential message was clear enough. Judicious caution of this kind was unusual in 1817, but by the 1840s and 1850s it was gaining ground, notably in the comments of preachers on the Irish famine⁶⁶ and on the Crimean War. In a sermon on the Fast day that marked the outbreak of war, Charles Vaughan, the headmaster of Harrow, denounced any preacher who saw the event as a pretext to criticize the sins of others or aspects of national policy he happened to dislike as “guilty of the most serious possible neglect of a great opportunity God has given him, and makes that which should have been for their [congregation’s] health, in the saddest sense of all an occasion of falling.”⁶⁷ At the subsequent day of humiliation in 1855, Charles Blomfield, the Bishop of London, considered gloating over the sudden death of Tsar Nicholas to be distasteful, considering that while it was “providential” it was not “judicial.” Blomfield continued:

It is impossible to deny, that, upon the whole, it consists with the principles of the Divine government, as developed in the Word of God, that the Judge of all mankind should reward, even under a covenant of spiritual promise, the piety and virtue of a nation, or punish its sins and vices, by temporal blessings or curses; but that is a very different thing from asserting, of any particular event or train of events, that it is the decreed result of national conduct. ⁶⁸

In earthquakes, he pointed out, the good perished with the wicked.

Although the dramatic outbreak of the “Indian Mutiny” in 1857 stimulated a widespread perception that divine retribution was at work, the response to Prince Albert’s death in 1861 indicated that the more cautious providentialism articulated by Blomfield was gaining ground. There were still some preachers who perceived the

event as a chastening for the collective sinfulness of the nation,⁶⁹ but quite as widespread was the approach of preachers who presented it rather as a striking reminder of the transcendent and mysterious purposes and power of God.⁷⁰

Significantly, one of the preachers who argued most robustly that the Prince's death was indeed a judgment of God then went on to echo the approach of secular sanitary reporters by identifying the very specific "sin" of failure to clean up the disease-ridden swamps around Windsor as causing the Prince to contract his fatal attack of typhoid.⁷¹ Divine "judgment" of this kind operated through the natural order of the world rather than through any special providences.

Belief in divine retribution was becoming contentious rather than a consensus. In 1871 Harford Battersby could still believe that in the Franco-Prussian War God had "used Prussia and its confederate powers as His instruments, to humble the pride of France, and carry out His purposes of correction upon that people."⁷² On the other hand in a sermon in 1883 W.A. Presland argued that a colliery explosion that had killed over sixty men arose from the operation of natural laws of combustion which God could not suspend any more than He could suspend the law of gravity to stop a man falling down a precipice.⁷³ The Tay Bridge disaster on Sunday 28 December 1879 focused the debate particularly sharply because more militant sabbatarians, such as the leading Edinburgh Free Church of Scotland preachers James Begg and George Macaulay, interpreted the catastrophe as a divine judgement on Sunday travelling. Other saw it as retributive in a more general sense, a divine response to excessive materialism. Providential views of any kind, however, were now becoming less common. Other preachers characterised the disaster not as divine retribution, but rather as dramatic testimony to the fallibility of human achievements and the overwhelming power of God.⁷⁴ Thomas Knox Talon, an Episcopalian, explicitly

distancing himself from “the utterances of certain preachers, in this city [Edinburgh] and elsewhere” with which he had not “the smallest degree of sympathy,” ridiculed the idea that “the Ruler of the Universe ... was waiting there at the Tay Bridge, ... waiting to destroy the poor remnant of railway travellers that had left Edinburgh and the intermediate stations that afternoon.” Although it had been a Sunday, it was absurd and offensive to see the disaster as a judgment on Sabbath-breakers. Rather, “doubtless” it “was the result of some error in the construction, or in calculating the strength of materials required to resist the combination of forces that might be brought to bear upon them, in such a squall as on that fatal Sunday night.”⁷⁵ Nevertheless older views still persisted in some quarters: as late as 1900, in a sermon at Burgh Castle near Great Yarmouth, George Venables characterised the South African War as “a stinging rod for a sinning nation” and offered a catalogue of sins similar to those in early 19th-century sermons.⁷⁶ By the early 20th century, however, theodicy of this kind was unfashionable.

Earthly and Heavenly Loyalties

For much of the 19th century, patriotism was contested political and religious territory, variously radical and conservative, secular and Christian.⁷⁷ Against this background, preachers not only affirmed the providential purpose of God in national events, but sought to define and assert the legitimacy of Christian patriotism. In Bath, John Gardiner began his sermon on Nelson with a discussion of patriotism, a universal human sentiment, but in his view one particularly powerful in motivating “the virtuous and the good,” and especially strong where states enjoy excellent government and promote the happiness of their people. Hence “on this principle, will not Britons feel in the highest degree its invigorating influence?”⁷⁸ For William Harris, preaching at the Independent Meeting House in Cambridge on the day of

Princess Charlotte's funeral, religion was wholly consistent with the natural ties of social and national life, refining them but not destroying them. Thus "true religion includes the most refined patriotism."⁷⁹ A similar sentiment was voiced by an Anglican preacher on the death of George III, who saw the "spirit of our religion" as requiring "the most zealous endeavours" to promote the welfare of "the community of which we are members."⁸⁰ For Charles Clarke, who in 1854 vigorously affirmed that it was both the "will of Heaven" that Britain should oppose Russia and that her patriotic duty was to assert herself as a great power, patriotism and Christianity joined together to lead the nation to the battlefields of the Crimea.⁸¹

Iconic individuals provided models of Christian patriots. Gardiner went on to present Nelson as an outstanding example, with his qualities as a national hero complemented by an "amiable disposition ... conformable to [the] spirit of Christianity."⁸² Similarly, in 1852 Charles Boutell, preaching at Litcham, Norfolk, portrayed Wellington as both a "Christian Believer" and a model Englishman, "for be it remembered, that the very same qualities and principles which raised him individually to his splendid elevation, are also the vital essence of ... national greatness."⁸³ Long-lived monarchs were seen as personifying a less heroic but still more pervasive ideal of Englishness: according to John William Cunningham, the Vicar of Harrow, George III had a character "minutely and essentially British," and was "the perfect Englishman," especially in his "ardent attachment to the joys of home."⁸⁴ When Victoria died, Alfred Fawkes, preaching in Brighton, reflected that "she was the representative and embodiment ... of the existing order of things" and that "solid rather than brilliant, strong rather than many-sided or versatile, her character was typically English."⁸⁵

Such emphasis on prosaic, domestic virtue was further developed in recurrent characterization of the nation as a family, for example in William Marsh's sermon on the coronation of George IV; in W.M. Falloon's perception in 1861 that sorrow for Prince Albert was both "universally national" but at the same time "deeply and tenderly domestic"; and in F.H. Thicknesse's evocation at Victoria's Golden Jubilee of "the most scattered and the most powerful nation in the world turned back into one family under one mother and one Queen."⁸⁶ Also in 1887, James Fleming, in response to the sudden death of the Conservative statesman the Earl of Iddesleigh, claimed that "the kingdom is one – the national family is one." He believed that Iddesleigh himself had been a "true-hearted patriot," by which Fleming meant he "who seeks not exclusively the interests of some, but who lives and prays, and acts for the good and happiness of all."⁸⁷

Religious minorities took opportunities to make it clear that political loyalty was entirely compatible with religious dissent or separation. Protestant Dissenters were fulsome in their praise of George III because his reign had seen the advance of toleration and the late King "entertained the most heart-felt respect for all conscientious Nonconformists."⁸⁸ A similar view was taken of William IV, extravagantly compared to Moses by one Independent preacher who hailed the reign as "one of the most illustrious which the annals of history ever recorded," because of the measures taken to extend the liberty and happiness of the people, and to do justice to the Dissenters themselves. He advertised his sermon as "an exposition of the cardinal principles upon which the Protestant Dissenters of this country have always shown their patriotism and loyalty to the House of Brunswick."⁸⁹ Unqualified Roman Catholic enthusiasm for the British state was a later development, but it was very much apparent in response to Victoria's Golden Jubilee. Preaching in Manchester

Bernard Vaughan, SJ, recounted the material achievements of the reign and the progress of the Catholic church. Although he urged the outstanding need to restore diplomatic relations with the Holy See, he regarded loyalty to the throne as the “flower” of religion.⁹⁰ Similarly, an anonymous preacher at Stonyhurst acknowledged that much had been done to remove hatred against Catholics and affirmed that “they who fear God also honour the Queen.”⁹¹ Following the untimely death of the Queen’s grandson, the Duke of Clarence, in 1892, the Chief Rabbi, Hermann Nathan Adler, preached a fulsomely sympathetic sermon, noting the interest the deceased had shown when he had attended a Passover service.⁹² In 1900 Adler’s sermon on the South African War was strikingly bellicose, affirming an “absorbing determination to vindicate the honour of England”, and appealing particularly to Jews who, he said, “enjoy perfect freedom and equality in this sceptred isle.”⁹³

Although preachers normally sought to affirm consensus, the pulpit could also be used to condemn opposition to the existing political order and the Established Church. Thus Edward Patteson, preaching at Roehampton Chapel on the coronation of George IV, railed against those “who have drained the very dregs from the poisonous cup of republican disaffection,” although concluding that they were too few in number to spoil the climate of “universal harmony, content and love.”⁹⁴ Charles Cator used his sermon on cholera in 1832 to denounce those who were “murmuring against the ministers of Christ’s Church.”⁹⁵

On the other hand, Dissenters were also able to use the medium of such sermons to present their own politically liberal perspectives. One such opportunity arose in response to the death in 1821 of Queen Caroline, the estranged consort of George IV, who had become a figurehead for critics of the King and opponents of the Tory government. In his sermon in London, the radical Unitarian William Johnson

Fox defended the late Queen from the charges brought against her and affirmed his own understanding of patriotism as “an admiring and ardent love of the people who really constitute that country... Next to the name of Christian do I glory in that of Englishman.”⁹⁶ A more conciliatory note was struck by John Evans, preaching at the Independent Chapel in Malmesbury, who, having eulogized the late Queen, urged the congregation: “as Patriots, pray for your country at this eventful crisis; remembering, that national calamities spring not from religion, but from the want of it.” They should pray for the spreading of the “Tree of Liberty,” but also for the King.⁹⁷ When George IV himself died nine years later, John Ritchie, preaching in Edinburgh, pointedly had little to say about the late monarch and dwelt at length on the vanity of earthly greatness. He then showed his liberal sympathies by reviewing the events of the regency and reign, condemning the war but hailing the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, Catholic Emancipation, and progress towards the abolition of slavery.⁹⁸ In his sermon on the death of William IV, the leading Baptist Edward Steane commended the liberal achievements of the reign, and suggested that residual reactionary forces were standing in God’s way, because the Almighty was working to bring about the “downfal [sic] of every institution inimical to the equal rights of the subjects of this free country.”⁹⁹

The use of such sermons to make explicitly political points was always the exception rather than the norm, an exception that appears to have become more unusual as the century wore on. Nevertheless, when the Crimean War seemed to be going badly, sermons on the 1855 day of humiliation were used to castigate human misdeeds,¹⁰⁰ and as late as 1885, in a sermon at St Stephen’s Westminster, William MacDonald Sinclair denounced the abandonment of General Gordon to his fate at Khartoum. Significantly, though, he suggested that the nation as a whole shared in

responsibility for this “heedless and deplorable” conduct, thus affirming a negative solidarity consistent with the usual concern of preachers to articulate consensus rather than division.¹⁰¹

Indeed the more usual counterpoint to patriotic assertion in sermons was not political dissent, but direction of the thoughts of congregations to spiritual realities beyond temporal national affairs. Thus an anonymous preacher on Nelson’s death saw the recognition of his fatal wound as the moment when his hearers should “observe the Christian supersede the hero.”¹⁰² Claudius Buchanan followed his midweek sermon on the “British Jubilee” with a Sunday sermon on “the Heavenly Jubilee,” the supper of the Lamb prophesied in the Book of Revelation, an inheritance for which he urged professing Christians to prepare.¹⁰³ The whole thrust of the sermon by Joseph Irons, an Independent minister, on the coronation of 1821 was to proclaim Jesus as another king, with higher claims than George IV. In saying this he denied any deficiency in earthly loyalty, but on the contrary,

... the best instances of loyalty to our earthly sovereign will be found among those who will bear him on their hearts before our heavenly King, praying that the sceptre of Jesus may be swayed in his heart, and that rich grace may prepare him to wear a crown of glory.¹⁰⁴

William Marsh, well-known for his millennial convictions, saw the coronation as a reminder to Christians “of that day when the Lord our Saviour shall take upon himself his great power, and reign.”¹⁰⁵

It was natural that clergy should use deaths and the prospect of death to prompt their hearers to prepare for their own demise, and to contemplate the afterlife. James Duke Coleridge, preaching in Exeter on the death of George III, also recalled

the recent deaths of Princess Charlotte and of the Duke of Kent, as a reminder that no age group should think itself immune from the grim reaper:

Be encouraged then--be persuaded--be *alarmed*, if the threats of the Gospel form a more powerful motive--to think seriously of another life--to acknowledge and to profit by the warning given to youth in the death of our young Princess--to the full season of life in the recent one of her Uncle--and to old age in the departure of our beloved King.¹⁰⁶

Charles Vaughan, preaching at Harrow School on the Crimean War, reminded the boys that some of them might well find themselves serving in the army in the near future, and urged spiritual preparedness for sudden death.¹⁰⁷ In 1865 R.W. Dibdin posed the question “The Patriot Palmerston: Was He Saved?,” examined the evidence for the late premier’s spiritual state, and reached a charitable conclusion, but then turned the spotlight on his hearers, urging them to review their own lives. After a graphic account of the wrath awaiting the unregenerate, he instructed the organist to play the Dead March in Saul, and the congregation to “meditate on these two things, DEATH and JUDGMENT.”¹⁰⁸

In general, though, by the end of the century, such stark warnings, like portrayals of retributive providence, were becoming a minority rather than characteristic response. Interest in death and what lay beyond it persisted, but preachers more normally evoked a heavenly consummation for all, without raising the spectre of intervening judgment and possible consignment to Hell. This theme was particularly apparent in sermons on the premature death in 1892 of the Duke of Clarence, Queen Victoria’s grandson and second in line to the throne, a circumstance that invited comparison with Princess Charlotte’s death three-quarters of a century before. However, whereas sermons on Charlotte were replete with reference to divine

judgment, those on Clarence tended to dwell on divine consolation and the unclouded prospect of eternal life.¹⁰⁹ Indeed, such a vision could be set before congregations even when the occasion did not necessarily require it. Thus when preaching on the 1887 Jubilee, Edward Wilkinson directed the major part of his sermon to reflecting on the Queen's future, of her prospects of meeting with the King of Kings, and receiving a "crown of glory that fadeth not away."¹¹⁰

The almost seamless interweaving of earthly and heavenly loyalties in these sermons was a significant source of their rhetorical power. On the one hand, they appealed to a natural human instinct to affirm community and national solidarity in moments of crisis and celebration; on the other they lifted the eyes of their hearers from inevitably imperfect human institutions and communities to the challenge and perfection of the divine order. Faith and patriotism operated in creative symbiosis. Their overall message was, as Thomas Biddulph put it in 1820, that "the most devoted Christian is the best subject and the truest patriot."¹¹¹

Conclusion

A survey such as that undertaken in this chapter is inevitably a selective one, drawing on only a tiny proportion of the sermons recorded, let alone those preached. A more sustained and extensive analysis would add subtler shades to the picture, and give a sharper quantitative sense of changes over time and variations by denomination and locality than has been possible to achieve here. Nevertheless some significant conclusions can be drawn. The sheer numbers of such sermons, the range of the occasions on which they were preached, their widespread dissemination in print as well as to church congregations all made them an important interface between the discourse of patriotism and that of religion. Moreover, despite differences of emphasis and theology, the predominant common messages of the compatibility of Christianity

(and indeed Judaism) and patriotism, and of God's providential care of the British nation were symptomatic of the seamlessness of that relationship. It will come as no surprise to historians of religious thought that these sermons reflected wider theological trends in the later 19th century, in terms of decline of belief in retributive judgement and hell.¹¹² It is pertinent, however, to consider the implications for the history of British nationalism: a weakening sense of accountability to the Almighty and a lessened fear of retribution for national sin may well help to explain the cultural shift to a harsher imperialism and jingoism in the later Victorian years.

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¹ Such material has hitherto attracted only limited attention from scholars, but the following studies should be noted: Olive Anderson, "The Reactions of Church and Dissent towards the Crimean War," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 16 (1985), 209-20; Deryck Lovegrove, "English Evangelical Dissent and the European Conflict, 1789-1815," in *The Church and War*, Studies in Church History 20, ed. W.J. Sheils, (Oxford, 1983), pp. 263-76; Brian Stanley, "Christian Responses to the Indian Mutiny," in *ibid.*, pp. 277-89; John Wolffe, "Responding to National Grief: Memorial Sermons on the Famous in Britain 1800-1914," *Mortality* 1 (1996), 283-96; Stephen C. Behrendt, *Royal Mourning and Regency Culture: Elegies and Memorials of Princess Charlotte* (Basingstoke, 1997), pp. 155-76; John Wolffe, "Judging the Nation: Early Nineteenth-Century British Evangelicals and Divine Retribution," in *Retribution, Repentance and Reconciliation*, Studies in Church History 40, ed. Kate Cooper and Jeremy Gregory (Oxford, 2004), pp. 291-300; Peter Gray, "National Humiliation and the Great Hunger: Fast and Famine in 1847," *Irish Historical Studies*, 32 (2006-7), 193-216.

² Such national days of prayer have hitherto been very insufficiently studied, but are currently the focus for a major AHRC-funded project led by Professor Philip Williamson of the University of Durham. See Philip Williamson, 'State Prayers, Fasts and Thanksgivings: Public Worship in Britain 1830-1897', *Past and Present* 200 (August 2008), 169-218.

³ John Wolffe, *Great Deaths: Grieving, Religion and Nationhood in Victorian and Edwardian Britain* (Oxford, 2000), 56, 81-93. Cf Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983).

⁴ Thomas Chalmers, *A Sermon Delivered in the Tron Church, Glasgow, on Wednesday Nov. 19, 1817, The Day of the Funeral of HRH the Princess Charlotte of Wales* (Glasgow, 1817), p. 6.

⁵ Charles Cator, *The Cholera Morbus A Visitation of Divine Providence* (London, 1832), p. 10.

⁶ For example, respectively, John Styles, *A Tribute to the Memory of Nelson* (Newport, IOW, 1806); John Gardiner, *A Tribute to the Memory of Nelson* (Bath, 1805); John Townsend, *Lord Nelson's Funeral Improved* (London, 1806).

⁷ For example, respectively, John Osmond Dakeyne, *Fortis Fortuna Comes* (Wolverhampton, 1852); Henry N. Barnett, *The Victor Vanquished* (London, 1852); Richard Glover, *Esdraëlon and Waterloo* (Folkestone, 1852); Charles James Blomfield, *The Mourning of Israel* (London, 1852).

⁸ Charles Clarke, *War* (Birmingham, 1854), p. 3.

⁹ George Croly, *The Reformation A Direct Gift of Divine Providence* (London, 1837), p. 27.

¹⁰ Barnett, *Victor Vanquished*, pp. 3-5.

¹¹ R. Frizell, *A Funeral Sermon Occasioned by the Demise of Our Late ... Sovereign Lord George the Third* (Barnstaple, 1820), pp. 1-5.

¹² British Library catalogue; Anderson, "Crimean War," 209.

¹³ These figures are based on the printed British Library [hereafter 'BL'] catalogue, but do not take into account examples surviving in other libraries and not in the BL. A systematic listing and enumeration of such published sermons would be a major research project in its own right.

¹⁴ BL catalogue.

¹⁵ H. Kirk-Smith, *William Thomson Archbishop of York* (London, 1958), pp. 14-15.

¹⁶ T.F. Bowerbank, *A Sermon Preached in the Parish Church of Chiswick Middlesex, on Sunday Morning, July 30 1815* (Chiswick, 1815), title page of British Library copy.

¹⁷ J.T. Allen, *A Sermon Preached in the Parochial Chapel of Clitheroe on Saturday 20th January 1827* (Clitheroe, 1827); Charles James Blomfield, *The Grounds and Objects of National Acts of Humiliation* (London, 1855).

¹⁸ For example W.B. Williams, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Much-Lamented Death of HRH the Princess Charlotte Augusta* (London 1817), advertisement; John Bedford, *Britain's Loss and Lesson* (Stockport, 1852).

¹⁹ Metropolitan preachers, for example Charles Blomfield (Bishop of London 1828-56), John William Cunningham (Vicar of Harrow, 1811-61), and Charles John Vaughan (Headmaster of Harrow 1844-59, Master of the Temple 1869-94), were assured of the largest markets and were particularly prone to prolific publication.

²⁰ James Bromley, William Naylor and William Stones, as listed in the BL catalogue.

²¹ There are Jewish sermons on Princess Charlotte by Raphael Medola in the BL and by Tobias Goodman in Manchester Central Library; and on the 1803 Fast Day and on Trafalgar in the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. I am indebted to Rabbi Professor Marc Saperstein for information on this point.

²² E.g. respectively, Styles, *Nelson*; Allen, *Sermon in Clitheroe*; J.J. Blunt, *A Sermon in Memory of the Late Duke of Wellington* (Cambridge, 1852); W.M. Falloon, *A Prince and a Great Man Fallen* (Liverpool, 1862).

²³ E.g. John Rippon, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Demise of Our Late Venerable Sovereign, King George the Third, and the Accession of His Majesty George the Fourth* (London, 1820); William Marsh, *The Coronation* (Colchester, 1821).

²⁴ E.g. respectively Blomfield, *National Acts of Humiliation*; James Pringle, *The Lord's Voice in the Rod* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1817).

²⁵ John Ritchie, *He Removeth Kings* (Edinburgh, 1830); M. Seaman, *A Scriptural View of the Doctrine of Divine Providence* (published Colchester, 1880).

²⁶ E.g. respectively C.S. Hawtrey, *A Funeral Sermon on ...the Princess Charlotte Augusta* (London, 1817); J.C. Ryle "For Kings" (London, 1887); David Jones, *The Diamond Jubilee* (Bangor, 1897).

²⁷ Daniel Wilson, *Death the Last Enemy of Man* (London, 1827); R.W. Dibdin, *The Patriot Palmerston: Was He Saved* (London, 1865).

²⁸ H.F. Gray, *A Discourse on the Decease of HRH The Prince Consort* (London, 1862).

²⁹ Samuel O'Sullivan, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Death of His Late Majesty George the Third* (Dublin, 1820), advertisement.

³⁰ Croly, *Reformation*, p. 44.

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- ³¹ Edward Wilkinson, *Sermon on the Occasion of the Queen's Jubilee* (London, 1887).
- ³² Ryle, "For Kings."
- ³³ Preachers in this period seldom made any geographical, political or other distinction between "England" and "Britain."
- ³⁴ Robert Aspland, *The Fall of Eminent Men in Critical Periods A National Calamity* (London, 1806), p. 3.
- ³⁵ Richard Cecil, *The Pageant is Over* (published London, 1852), pp. 9-16.
- ³⁶ Claudius Buchanan, *Three Sermons on the Jubilee* (London, 1810).
- ³⁷ Buchanan, *Three Sermons on the Jubilee*, p. 67.
- ³⁸ Buchanan, *Three Sermons on the Jubilee*, p. 33.
- ³⁹ Buchanan, *Three Sermons on the Jubilee*, p. 42.
- ⁴⁰ Buchanan, *Three Sermons on the Jubilee*, pp. 47-61.
- ⁴¹ Buchanan, *Three Sermons on the Jubilee*, p. 66.
- ⁴² Buchanan, *Three Sermons on the Jubilee*, pp. 66, 69.
- ⁴³ Marsh, *Coronation*, p. 21.
- ⁴⁴ George Croly, *A Sermon on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* (London, 1852), p. 6 and passim.
- ⁴⁵ George Steward, *The Duke of Wellington* (Glasgow, 1852), pp. 29, 35, 42.
- ⁴⁶ Dakeyne, *Fortis Fortuna Comes*, p. 11.
- ⁴⁷ W.L. Boase (attributed in BL catalogue), *Sermon Preached in Dundee ... on the Occasion of the Queen's Jubilee* (Dundee, 1887), p.6.
- ⁴⁸ Ryle, "For Kings."
- ⁴⁹ Jones, *Diamond Jubilee*, pp. 11-12.
- ⁵⁰ Buchanan, *Three Sermons*, p. 70.

⁵¹ Bowerbank, *Sermon on July 30 1815*, p. 10.

⁵² Marsh, *Coronation*, p. 20; Ryle, "For Kings," p. 18.

⁵³ William Howley, *A Sermon Preached on Thursday January 18 1816* (London, 1816), p. 6; Jones, *Diamond Jubilee*, p. 11.

⁵⁴ Thomas T. Biddulph, *National Affliction Improved* (Bristol, 1820), p. 13.

⁵⁵ John Pye Smith, *The Sorrows of Britain* (London, 1817), pp. 16-17; Joseph Irons, *Jehovah's Controversy with England* (London, 1832), pp. iii-iv.

⁵⁶ Hugh McNeile, *The Famine a Rod of God* (London, 1847), p. 23.

⁵⁷ Stanley, "Indian Mutiny," 280.

⁵⁸ John East, *The Voice of God to the Nation* (Evesham, 1817), p. 11.

⁵⁹ For example John Scott, *War God's Sore Judgement* (London, 1854), p. 10; J. W. Brooks, *The Rod of the Almighty* (Nottingham, 1861), p. 15.

⁶⁰ James Taylor, *The Cholera: Or God's Voice to Britain* (London, 1832), p. 13.

⁶¹ East, *Voice of God*, p. 19.

⁶² Taylor, *Cholera*, p. 23.

⁶³ William MacDonald, *Jehovah's Voice to Britain* (London, 1818), pp. 8-13, 20.

⁶⁴ For example there could be smug satisfaction that the French were suffering worse from cholera than the British (Cator, *Cholera Morbus*, p. 26) and relief at Britain's avoidance of revolution in 1848 (George Croly, *The Year of Revolutions* [London, 1849], p. 14).

⁶⁵ Robert Hall, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Death of Her Late Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte of Wales* (Leicester, 1817), pp. 56-57.

⁶⁶ Gray, "National humiliation," pp. 205-206.

⁶⁷ Charles John Vaughan, *A Nation Watching for Tidings ... to which is added The Outbreak of War* (London, 1854), pp. 28-29.

⁶⁸ Blomfield, *National Acts of Humiliation*, pp. 13, 15-16.

⁶⁹ E.g. Brooks, *Rod of the Almighty*.

⁷⁰ E.g. W.R. Clark, *A Sermon Preached in St. Mary's Church, Taunton* (Taunton, 1861), pp. 12.; Maurice P. Day, *A Sermon on the Death of the Prince Consort* (Dublin, 1861), p. 16.

⁷¹ Paxton Hood, *Words from the Pall of the Prince* (London 1862), pp. 22-25.

⁷² T.D. Harford Battersby, *God's Voice Heard in the War Between Germany and France* (London, 1871), p. 6.

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⁷⁴ *The Scotsman*, 5 January 1880, pp. 5-6.

⁷⁵ Thomas Knox Talon, *The Tay Bridge Disaster: Was it Accident or Judgement?* (Edinburgh, 1880), pp. 3-4, 12-13.

⁷⁶ George Venables, *A Stinging Rod for a Sinning Nation* (Norwich, 1900).

⁷⁷ For a seminal analysis of the changing secular political contexts of patriotism see Hugh Cunningham, "The Language of Patriotism, 1750-1914," *History Workshop Journal* 12 (1981), 8-33.

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⁸¹ Clarke, *War*, pp. 5, 10-13.

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- ⁸³ Charles Boutell, *The Hero and His Example* (London, 1852), pp. 9, 14-15.
- ⁸⁴ J.W. Cunningham, *A Sermon Preached ...on the Death of ... George the Third* (1820), pp. 7-8, 13.
- ⁸⁵ Alfred Fawkes, *The Passing of the Queen* (London 1901), pp. 4, 11.
- ⁸⁶ Marsh, *Coronation*, p. 20; Falloon, *Prince and Great Man*, pp. 4-5; F.H. Thicknesse, *The Trust of Government* (Northampton, 1887), p. 11.
- ⁸⁷ James Fleming, *The Death of a Patriot* (London, 1887), pp.3, 12-13.
- ⁸⁸ John Morison, *Patriotic Regrets for the Loss of a Good King* (London, 1820), p. 20.
- ⁸⁹ John Everitt Good, *Britannia's Tears at the Deceases of Her Sovereign* (Gosport, 1837), advertisement, p. 21.
- ⁹⁰ Bernard Vaughan, *Her Golden Reign* (London, 1887), pp. 3, 5-11.
- ⁹¹ Anon., *Reverence and Loyalty* (London, 1887), pp. 9, 13.
- ⁹² H.N. Adler, *The Nation's Lament* (London, 1892), pp. 9-10.
- ⁹³ H.N. Adler, *The Queen and the War* (London, 1900), pp. 8, 15.
- ⁹⁴ Edward Patteson, *A Sermon Delivered ... in Reference to the Coronation ... of ... King George IV* (London, 1821), pp. 22-23.
- ⁹⁵ Cator, *Cholera Morbus*, p. 18.
- ⁹⁶ W.J. Fox, *A Funeral Sermon for Caroline Queen of England* (London, 1821), pp. 20, 26.
- ⁹⁷ John Evans, *A Sermon ... Occasioned by the Death of Her Late Majesty Queen Caroline* (London, 1821), pp. 22-3.
- ⁹⁸ Ritchie, "He Removeth Kings," pp. 36, 39, 43-5.
- ⁹⁹ Edward Steane, *The Eternal King* (London, 1837), pp. 31-32. For the political use of sermons on both sides in the Chartist agitation of the late 1830s and

1840s: see Eileen Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle, 1838-1842', *Past and Present* 91 (1981), 109-39.

¹⁰⁰ Anderson, "Crimean War," p. 218.

¹⁰¹ W.M. Sinclair, *Gordon and England* (London, 1885), pp. 19-20.

¹⁰² Anon, *A Sermon Preached on the Sunday After the Funeral of the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Nelson* (Chelsea, 1806), p. 12.

¹⁰³ Buchanan, *Three Sermons*, pp. 33-71, 73-132.

¹⁰⁴ Joseph Irons, *A Sermon Preached at Grove Chapel, Camberwell, July the 22nd 1821* (London, 1821), pp. 3-4.

¹⁰⁵ Marsh, *Coronation*, p. 23.

¹⁰⁶ J.D. Coleridge, *A Sermon Preached in the Parish Church of St Sidwell on Sunday Afternoon the 20th February* (Exeter, 1820), pp. 21-22.

¹⁰⁷ Vaughan, *Nation Watching*, pp. 3-15.

¹⁰⁸ Dibdin, *Patriot Palmerston*, pp. 12-18.

¹⁰⁹ E.g., Anon, "*He that Comforteth*" (London, 1892); Arthur P. Purey-Cust, *God's Ordering, Our Sufficiency* (York, 1892).

¹¹⁰ Wilkinson, *Sermon on the Jubilee*, pp. 7-18.

¹¹¹ Biddulph, *National Affliction Improved*, p. 71.

¹¹² Geoffrey Rowell, *Hell and the Victorians: A Study of the Nineteenth-Century Theological Controversies Concerning Eternal Punishment and the Future Life* (Oxford, 1974); Michael Wheeler, *Death and the Future Life in Victorian Literature and Theology* (Cambridge, 1990).