

## ANGLO-SAXON MIND.

Anglo-Saxon mind is distinguished in nothing so much as an imperial control over its own consciousness. That consciousness is not to be disturbed. It can not be invaded, can not be seduced from its permanent instincts and organic laws. The fact is that this consciousness, apprehending the exact import of its mind, assured of the nature and extent of capacity, and never needing to measure itself by the standards of occasion and opportunity before it can determine its ability, is the precise counterpart of the external senses, and towards its objects is quite as definite as eye, ear, and touch. The more closely we study this peculiarity of Anglo-Saxon mind, the more clearly shall we perceive its vital bearing on its activity and enterprise. A calm, firm, steady consciousness—one proof against the stealthy intrusion of doubts, and foreclosed to enfeebling fears—one able to repose on its decisions, and, while free from blind dogmatism, refuses to treat its deliberate judgments as questions forever open—this stern and adamant consciousness is the substance itself of all great and noble minds. Where it is wanting there is really no groundwork for convictions. The brain is a mere tent in which whims, and caprices, and fluctuating opinions lodge at will, and depart. Such a form never has the fibres of habit intertwined with bone and muscle, never has an organic creed, never delights in institutions, and consolidates itself for future ages. But the Anglo-Saxon is not of this cast. Its temperament is not capricious and vacillating. Not until it gets a firm foot-hold on granite rocks is it ready for action; and all your fine sentiments about glory are musical wind, your speculations are spun out of intellectual silk-worms, unless you strike at the roots of its consciousness. Whatever infirmities Anglo-Saxon mind has (and they are too patent to escape observation), it is certainly truth-loving and truth-seeking, not enslaved to an idolatrous regard for shams, not easily duped by glittering shows, but anxious to knock at the very heart of things, and to learn what amount of real life it can give to its affections and aspirations. One can easily see how this rigid decision of character, this habitual tenacity of purpose, may lead to morbid excesses, or degenerate into a stolid insensibility to needed reforms, and otherwise enter into the generous spirit of advancement. Such humiliating facts are palpable enough in the history of Anglo-Saxon mind. Nevertheless, let it be said that vices which spring from perverted virtues are never radical or ruinous evils. Despite of the variations in the compass-needle, we may depend on the magnetic force to rule our navigation.

Just, then, as we value the soil by the fertilizing rocks lying beneath its superficial crust, and without which its productiveness would be soon exhausted, so too, we estimate the worth of Anglo-Saxon modes of thought by that broad, earnest, self-sustained consciousness which we have noticed as the substratum of its opinions and purposes. Opinions and purposes, founded most generally in temporary reasons, and subjected to the variable dictates of expediency, must undergo modifications. Like the ocean, our life is full of currents, all obeying a common centre of gravitation, but at the same time flowing in different directions. The logic of to-day, so far as it depends on circumstances, may be the sophistry of to-morrow; ay, the facts of one hour may be the fictions of the next. And hence the