

of heroic ancestors, maintain a nation's dignity ; otherwise the ruling kingdoms of the world would be those that ruled of yore, which fell simply because of the decay of the righteousness which had raised them into power. However staple may seem the foundations laid by a nation's material wealth ; however brilliant may be her appearance among the kingdoms caused by the charms of intellectual culture, of eminence in literature, science and art ; however pleasing it may be for a people on turning the page of history to find that their land has been renowned for centuries, yet, as with the man or the family, so with the nation, righteousness alone can give honor or security. She may enhance the charms of the material treasures, the intellectual culture, or the honorable history of a nation ; she will in many cases develop these, for the truth admits of universal application, to nations as to individuals, that "length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor ;" and the nations that seek above all things the glory which she confers, will find that she will exalt them, that "her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace."

II. Again ; *God will exalt the righteous nation.* He reigns among the nations of the earth, and the people who seek to know and to do His will, shall enjoy His favor and be upheld by Him. There is no false tendency of the present age more common than the attempt to exclude God, as it were, from all active control of His universe. Some think of the material world as simply under a realm of law, constructed by its Creator like a machine that is wound up and set for a certain time, and now utterly independent of His care. They think of their own lives, either as the result of blind accident, or of their own exertions, or of both combined, as if no Higher Power was ever dealing directly with them. In like manner they think of the rise and fall of nations as the result of certain tendencies, the operation of certain laws, without acknowledging that there is a Hand holding the helm of the world's history, a just and loving Being overruling it all for His own wise ends, dealing with the nations as with each individual man, in perfect justice and in perfect love. But while God has appointed His laws in the material universe, they only express the way in which He acts.