

as I have pondered over it. Its history is, to a great extent, the history of India; and, therefore, it is hardly fair to isolate the city from the country, and to pass judgment on it alone. Speaking, then of this great city as representative of an immense empire, one is bound to say, that, while its career has been of long duration, it has not been of a character to awaken much of enthusiasm or admiration. It cannot be said that either the moral, or the social or even the intellectual condition of the people residing here is a whit better than it was upwards of two thousand years ago. One fails to trace, throughout this vast period, any advance in those higher principles of human action, the practice of which alone makes a nation truly illustrious and great. On the contrary, the revelations of the past, brief and scattered though they be, are found to establish the fact beyond all dispute, that at least in one distinct epoch of Hindu History, more respect was paid to truth, honesty, and virtue, than is generally shown by the present inhabitants of India. Now just as we do not admire a man who happens to be a hundred years old, unless we know that he has lived a life of integrity and uprightness, and has increased in his wisdom and probity with his years, so we must withhold our admiration from a city or nation which, from a combination of certain peculiar circumstances, has drawn out an existence of wondrous length, but, in respect of its virtues and moral excellences, in respect of those higher qualities which mainly distinguish man from the brute, and by the possession of which he becomes, in a measure, assimilated to his Creator, has, for many ages, been in an unprogressive and stagnant condition. Such a nation or city may possess fine buildings, fine temples, fine ghats, and fine tanks, as Benares has done for thousands of years; but its material splendour will augment the prevailing gloom, just as the stars of heaven give intensity to the darkness of night. These remarks are intimately connected with the object of this

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