

mote his well-being. At no time perhaps in the history of the world has it been so incumbent upon us to study the laws of society. The reign of caste and privilege is over, happily never to return. The voice of God, speaking in thunder through civil wars and revolutions, or gently in the gradual and peaceful development of industry and commerce, has at last convinced all men who think and feel that the foundation of a permanent state is the Christian law of love. Theoretically at least we admit this truth, however we may violate it in practice. In the earlier ages, and especially in the far East, it seemed to be of divine appointment that one man should enslave a whole people, and use them as instruments of his selfishness and lust of power. Greece and Rome taught our race that some at least must curb the despotic sway of one, and that every citizen has his inalienable rights and privileges. The Teutonic race, accepting our Christian faith, grasped the idea that the state is for the good of all, not of one, or even of some. But very much yet remains to be done in the practical application of this idea. It is only now that the claims of those who toil and spin, spending their strength to supply others with food and raiment, and all the appliances that set them free to devote themselves to other tasks, have begun to receive the attention they deserve. It is to the shame of us all, that we have been so reluctant to listen to their just claims; and even now we think much more of the means by which we or our party are to be kept in power, than of the ends of government. Too often, in recklessness or selfishness we legislate for a few, not for all. We forget that the end of the state is to enable every man—not the "greatest number," but every man—to realize the best that is in him. If it is necessary, for the highest development of our race, that so many men should be devoted to hard, wearing, mechanical occupations, at least our religion demands of us that we who aspire to lead and to teach should spare no pains to understand the structure of society, and to devise more perfect forms of social and political life where the present forms are decaying or effete or inadequate. In securing such knowledge, provided only we hold it, as we ought to hold all things, as a sacred trust to be used in furthering the well-being of all, we shall be preparing ourselves for the crisis when we are called upon to act.

In the same spirit of love let all our studies be carried on. If we come to them in the right way, science, literature, and art will bring us ever nearer to a comprehensive view of the mind of God. For, in tracing the growth of these delicate products of self-conscious energy, we shall find that, taught of God, men have been attaining to ever deeper insight and an ever greater fulness of spiritual utterance. But here, as in all other cases, indolence and vanity and indifference may destroy all the value of the lesson. Let us be rid of the superficial notion, that the only use of literature and art is to give us more agreeable sensations. Dante tells us that the writing of his *Divina Commedia* "made him lean for many years." Every great work of genius is the fruit of immense toil, unwearied patience, and unselfish devotion. How then can we, with our feebler imagination and our immature intellect, expect to learn without effort the lesson which the masters have toiled so hard to acquire?