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AN INTROSPECTION.



ISTORY declares, emphatically, and without cavil, that national security and permanence depend upon the purity of national virtue. Force and fraud may for a time triumph, and intrigue raise its head, decked with seeming success, but power, thus ac-

quired, is illusionary and fleeting. National morality is the only pledge of national existence. This must be so, else legislation would not have been uninterruptedly directed with the above truth in view.

The laws of ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome were enacted with the aim of inspiring a love for probity and disinterestedness, to the complete exclusion of sensualism, with the result that these nations, pagan as they were, unassisted by any christianizing influence, approached perfection in as much, almost, as human effort could. But natural virtue was unsteady, was unable to hold in check the passions of men, and thus the power acquired by long unselfish toil, was quickly snatched from them. Cannæ, rather than Scipio, was the conqueror of Hannibal.

Thus it has ever been, and thus, it will ever be. Kingdoms, in every age and under every sun, have had the same end—national prosperity; and, for the attain-

ment of this end, the same means, substantially at least, must be employed. We moderns, therefore, should study carefully the histories of these ancient peoples, and con, unremittingly, the lessons that they teach. Up from the dead past their warning voices rise, telling us to fly the dangers that hastened their ruin.

To the people of the United States, are these warnings especially directed. Those who view from afar the condition of things in that country, who are removed from actual participation in the struggle for the public weal; who are unaffected by the prevailing enthusiasm, are better able to judge dispassionately of the strength and weakness of that great country. For the American Republic we have the highest regard. Its splendid combat for national independence has ever awakened in our bosoms feelings of strong and lasting sympathy. We esteem the children of Uncle Sam for that spirit of dare and do of which they are the possessors. We bear willing testimony to the fact that their enterprise has been powerful in advancing the material interests of the human race, and that their labors in the physical and scientific sphere have revolutionized the old order of things, and given facilities to man which, up to a few decades ago, were undreamed of. All this, however, does not render reproof unnecessary, since their movement, in the moral line, has not been equally progressive. Friendship is