

educate and inform the mind which our vast wealth bestows be taken into account, we shall find but little cause of congratulation. Facts speak convincingly. The English people spend on the single item of ardent spirits more money than on all their religious and educational establishments combined; while the American people spend on their gratification in the single item of cigars, a larger sum than is expended on all the Common Schools of the Union.

The inference, then, is inevitable, that literature and art were prized more highly and cultivated more ardently *for their own sake* by the nations of antiquity than by us, when we honestly estimate their difficulties and our facilities; their poverty and our resources. And yet notwithstanding their eager quest after knowledge, in spite of their ardent aspirations after science, they could not preserve or perpetuate in their own countries the same noble feeling. Where is now in the scale of nations that land to which we owe our Geometry, and Algebra, and Arithmetic? Hindoos and Arabs bequeathed these triumphs of genius to us. Yet they are fallen as a people, they are even degraded as nations. What is now the social and political position of Greece and Rome, those nations which once dictated to the world, and which are so associated in the student's mind with the arts of war and peace, that it is difficult to believe in their present poverty of mind and imagination. But why mention other examples of civilization corrupted, of knowledge perverted, of glories departed? The splendor of the Italian Republics is gone. Nothing remains in memory of the departed glory of the empires of the past, save their venerable ruins, and their incomparable public works, which even now bewilder with their vastness. And does the analogy (it is the point which concerns us more immediately) justify us in dreading a like decay in Anglo-Saxon knowledge and power? No! there are certain safeguards, if we but employ them, which render the destruction of our civilization improbable, nay, impossible. The bulwarks against that worst of barbarisms, corrupted civilization, are the diffusion of useful knowledge and our Christianity. Among the ancients knowledge was the possession of a few, with us the multitude seek after learning. With them the student in Philosophy had no security that the efforts of his genius, however successful, would be perpetuated to his descendants, or even imparted to his cotemporaries. Indeed it is almost certain that there