

holds which stepped forth from the cabin of the Mayflower, or which set up the family altar of the Hollander and the Huguenot on Manhattan Island or in the sunny south." The best characters, the best legislation, the best institutions were cradled in such hope. Immediately in connection with the home, are other social influences that operate continuously as teachers. There are groups of children in the alleys and on the commons, the natural product of the saloons, a vicious and neglected element, being educated rapidly for evil. In a few years they will control the elections and re-enact the shameful scenes so recently perpetrated in Cincinnati.

The religious and secular press are agencies for great power, wielding a mightier influence on the public conscience and the character than the schools. The poet Browning says :

On which the arm of progress leans,  
Man's noblest mission to advance,  
His woes assuage, his weal enhance,  
His rights enforce, his wrongs redress,  
Mightiest of mighty is the press."

How shall we speak of this enginery for good or evil, this resistless force that day and night moves on with ever increasing power, enlarging its sphere and intensifying its importance as an educator? Through the press religion, liberty and law are made effective in fitting men for noble deeds. But by the same agency, plagues worse than those that destroyed the land of the Pharaohs are diffused over society, poisoning the pure fountain of public and private virtue. Cowper says :

"Thou fountain at which drink the good and wise,

Thou ever bubbling spring of endless lies,  
Like Eden's dread probation tree,  
Knowledge of good and evil comes from thee."

War and commerce are educating forces, and although intimately related, each has its distinctive features. The varied lessons of war cannot be analyzed, the subtle influence cannot be measured; it is beyond the reach of all chemical solvents known to the world; it breaks up all existing forms of thought and compels society to take on new ideas and clothe itself in new attire. War does not always educate aright. When its power is sought for perpetuating despotism, for oppressing the toiling millions of earth it awakens no holy aspirations; it develops the lowest and darkest passion of the soul; it puts out the sight of home, and settles like the shadows of death upon the crushed and blighted sons of men. But when war is necessary for the purpose of guarding freedom's holy altars and defending the honor of home and preserving beneficent institutions for those who shall live in coming years, it takes on a brighter hue and its educational powers are exerted along other lines; if it inaugurates political convulsions, these, like geological upheavals, usher in new epochs in the world's history that indicate its rapid growth, for the public mind that is indifferent to the arguments of a statesman is educated quickly and thoroughly by the events that are the sequences of a defensive war.