

gives so clear an example in the history of Israel, that "righteousness exalteth a nation."

III. Once more, we may find proof of our text by *an appeal to history*. We can find examples of the truth here taught us not only in the history of the Jews, which clearly reveals God's dealings with them, but in the history of other nations, ancient or modern. Doubtless, our views of a nation's history may often be moulded by preconceived opinions, and the lessons it seems to teach us may depend on what we wish to learn from it. Some writers have looked on the facts of history with theories ready formed, and if the facts did not agree with the theories, so much the worse for the facts. Yet surely any man, who is willing to admit God's dealings in his own life, can see proofs of God's dealings in the lives of nations. The slightest acquaintance with ancient history may suffice to show us that when the kingdoms of ancient Greece and Rome began to lose the elements of righteousness that were in them, when they failed to prefer right to wrong, and virtue to vice, when intellect yielded, as Gibbon says, "with a smile or a sigh," when wealth brought corruption, and the fibre of moral hardihood was weakened, then their decay was ensured. The same lesson has been taught us by the history of the nations sprung from the Latin race. Italy, Spain, and France have all given evidence that it was when their virtue gave way to self-indulgence, and the national vision was clouded to the difference between right and wrong, that weakness and shame befel them. And, on the other hand, to cite but one example of the contrary, one which is dear to each of us, it is just because of the extent to which she has preserved true righteousness that Scotland has maintained a place of power among the nations. The one great epoch in her history is the Reformation ; before that she had little or no influence among the nations ; but, three centuries ago, there arose one who kindled the nation's life in the noblest of all causes, who roused his country into moral earnestness and into firm adherence to truth and right, and who was, under God, the chief instrument in awakening and securing that which has exalted Scotland among the nations. Knox, as has been well said, is "the one