

thing had happened. I verily believe that the majority of us went into the church having a vague, undefined feeling that something would be said there which would in some measure answer our question. But as the service went on and nothing was said to explain the puzzle—because nothing could be said—the tenderness gradually died out of men's eyes, and their faces settled back into hardness again; and they left the church feeling sure, in spite of what had been spoken, that death had stung a whole community to the quick, and the grave had gained another victory. Still, we lost none of our faith in the power of a good name. Great riches would not have brought such a people together. Some of our merely rich men, who dine themselves and wine themselves, and ask other fools to feed and drink along with them at times, and think—if such people ever think of such things—that thus they have discharged their obligations to society, when they die the funeral will only be attended by those bound by family relationship—and those who are bound by the decencies of custom, which say we must see an old acquaintance down to the door of life. Society will not mourn, because it had no love for the man who lived but for his own flesh; and when he is dead society will have lost nothing, for only he is taken—his money is left. "A good name is better than great riches, and loving favour than silver and gold."

Let me say that I do not intend to preach what is generally understood as a funeral sermon. I am not able to do that; and I do not believe in the utility of indiscriminating praise of either the living or the dead. Perfection is not to be found on this earth, search where you may. Nor do I purpose to give an analysis of the character and work of our departed friend, for I am just as incompetent to do that as I am to chronicle the particular events of his life. I want to speak of him in his capacity as a public man, and get from his life what lessons I can which may be helpful to those who hear what I say.

The words of Tennyson occur to me, and will apply to him—with due allowance, of course, for the exaggerations of poetic fancy:—

Dost thou look back on what hath been,
As some divinely gifted man
Whose life in low estate began,
And on a simple village green;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merits known,
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whispers of the throne;

And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope
The pillar of a people's hope,
The centre of a world's desire;

Yet feels as in a pensive dream,
When all his active powers are still,
A distant dearness in the hill,
A sacred sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,
While yet beside its vocal springs
He played at councillors and kings
With one that was his earliest mate;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea
And reaps the labour of his hands,
Or in the furrow musing stands—
"Does my old friend remember me?"

I should not call Mr. Holton a great man—as the world counts and measures greatness; he was not a brilliant genius, not a genius at all, perhaps; that is, he was not great as an orator, nor as a diplomat, nor as a natural leader of men—but then, a man must be always considered in relation to his time and circumstances. A great man is only possible under certain conditions, which call out a man's force to give it scope. Every genius we have known can be accounted for; he has been the product of his time; he has come forth in answer to a call; he was a response, and not a new creation. It was the condition of the Church, the protest which hosts of spirits had been making against darkness and bondage which made a Luther possible. Cromwell would have farmed in Huntingdon to the end of his days, probably, had Charles been a better and a wiser king. A man cannot create a set of circumstances to suit himself, and to afford himself opportunity for becoming conspicuous; he has to take things as they are and work upon them. England to-day is well adapted to the development of great orators, and great statesmen, and great scholars, and great scientists, but not great soldiers. Germany is well adapted to produce great soldiers, and great men of letters, but not men great as orators. When the civil war broke out in the United States there was a dearth of capable leaders and commanders—as the war went on what before had been possible in men became real and manifest. Not yet has America produced

any great statesmen; nor has it been possible, for American relations with the outside world have been comparatively easy of adjustment. There have been few important and delicate questions of international relations, of the balance of power, and of interference to stop a quarrel or beat down an over-ambitious king. By and by, perhaps, the occasion will arise, and then, doubtless, the men will be found. So, taking that statement as correct in the main, I do not see that Canada could produce a man great, as in the old world we measure greatness. There is no shame and no sin in that. A village that has no library, and no well educated teachers, could not produce a man of letters. Canada is small, as to population, and very scattered. Our soil is not yet rich enough to grow a genius; there is but little demand for brilliant oratory; for profound research in the world of sciences; for the genius as painter or poet. We are a people working hard to make a living, and a little more, if we can. We could not produce a great statesman; the scope is too limited; our relations, as a colony, are too confined; our governing power as a confederation of Provinces is too much broken up for that. Clever politicians we can make and do make, and it may very well be that if some of them had a wider field and greater opportunities they would take their place in the front rank of modern statesmen. A man here may, by industry and force of character, "break his birth's invidious bar, and grasp the skirts of happy chance, and breast the blows of circumstance, and grapple with his evil star, and make by force his merits known," but he cannot "clutch the golden keys, to mould a mighty state's decrees, and shape the whisper of the throne." He must stop far short of that, and look on at a good distance from "the centre of the world's desire." Shut in to ourselves, we cannot produce a great merchant, as they are produced in the old world and in the States; nor writers of books: nor orators; nor statesmen. As I have said, there is neither sin nor shame in that, and I do not make the remark in criticism, but only in explanation. Mr. Holton may have had the makings of a great statesman in him—I do not know; judging from what he did with the material at his command, I should say that in a larger sphere he would have been a bigger man. As it was, he was no ordinary man; to that all will give assent. He had ability; he was a very example of industry; he had some failings, of course—who has not?—but they would hardly have been seen had not his many virtues shone with such brightness as to reveal the weakness as well as the strength of the man.

Into the story of his early life I need not enter; there is nothing new or strange about it. He worked hard along the lines of a good policy, and that way—and by a friendly turn of fortune's wheel got to be comparatively rich. I want to speak rather of his public life. He turned to politics; he succeeded there; exercised a most manifest influence upon the party with which he was identified; won the confidence of many, and the respect of all; filled high and important offices in the Government; took place when he thought he might, and refrained from that when he thought he ought; and when he died the whole community moaned in pain, for the affliction, pierced to the heart. The remark I heard made more often than any other was—"he was an honest man." Undoubtedly he was. I have enquired—was ever a charge of corruption made against him? and the unvarying answer has been, no. That, in this Dominion, is a statement most honourable to the memory of the man—as honourable to him as it is condemnatory of the political system under which we live. I need not dwell upon the corruption which prevails in our political circles—the buying and selling—the struggles for place and money—you know it well enough. But perhaps you have not considered so well how hard it is for a man to avoid being drawn into the same practices. Can you keep your boots clean when you walk through muddy streets? Can you clean your own chimney and not get soot on your hands? It is possible, but it rarely occurs in actual experience. One circumstance was helpful to Mr. Holton, let me say in this matter of conducting an honest political life—it was the making of that money I spoke of just now. He could afford to be honest. He only entered upon political life when he was beyond the need for making money by it. A great help to a man in politics, I am sure. When men go into politics to earn their bread; when they give up altogether, or in part, a business or a practice to represent some constituency in Parliament, and they find that the excitement of the session has unfitted them for the dull and prosy work of the other nine months at home; and when the heart forsakes the work the work always fails the hand, and bread fails the mouth, and then, "committed to a political life," as they say—what wonder, seeing that humanity is what it is; that they think more of making money for themselves than of making and administering good laws for the people. A poor man in politics is in the way of tremendous temptations, especially here where the Government builds railroads and canals, and generally adopts the theory that "to the victors belong the spoils." It is natural that the first idea in a new country should be how to make money? We are not yet old enough, and rich enough, and settled enough to begin to think seriously of other substantial things. Perhaps it cannot be avoided, perhaps it is a necessary evil, but evil it is that men should turn to politics as a means of earning a livelihood. It imposes risks which only men of rare strength of will can afford to run, and politicians, as well as others have need to pray the prayer—"lead us not into temptation." Many young men enter upon public life with the very best and purest of intentions, but, caught by temptation soon—seeing, or thinking they