

hindered by the so-called unity of the church where she has been one, and by the jealousies of the war fragments where she has been divided; hindered by ignorance of the laws of political economy, leaving thousands needlessly to wear away their weary days in striving to live by bread alone, and not able to live by that; hindered by the pedantries of a false learning, and by the subtleties of a barren philosophy; hindered by the fastidiousness and selfish isolation of the higher classes; hindered by the improvidence and sensuality of the lower. In this, as in many other cases, the effect becomes again a cause, and runs on with an ever accumulating force. I do not lose sight of the brighter aspects of European civilization, nor forget the grand old work of science, literature and art. The far-off mountain peaks glitter in the sunlight, but only the more dreary seems the darkness of the valley below. The names of Bacon, Newton and Shakespeare, are enough to show what a wealth of intellect belongs to the Saxon race, but remind us also, how many a Milton "pregnant with celestial fire," born amid the struggling poor, has waited in vain for some favouring breeze to kindle his genius into life, and has carried at last into another world the dormant faculties intended to illumine the darkness of this. Few educated persons feel that they have made the most of their powers. There are many palpable blunders, much waste of opportunity, many slumbering energies, and often a bitter sense of failure. If nations had souls, and could be awakened to an individual consciousness, how sad would be their knowledge of what they are as compared with what they might have been? How like rain would fall their scalding tears over their neglected gifts, their wasted years and their forsaken offspring capable of the highest spiritual life, but doomed to herd "like dumb driven cattle," though with a sense of misery that dumb cattle can never know. Such tears wept Jesus of Nazareth over Jerusalem, but we fail to realize how, through the long centuries, there has been room for similar lamentations over London, Dublin, Paris, nay, all the great cities of the globe. It is a terrible mistake to suppose that the degradation of the common people tells upon them alone. All the parts of a nation are members one of another. The filth of the hovel sends a plague to the palace, and the ignorance of the masses reacts more or less upon the entire life of the people. The neglected classes become also the dangerous classes, and furnish material for the work of the demagogue, the tyrant, and the religious imposter. Let education become universal, and descend as an heirloom from one age to another, and there will ere long grow up an enlightened public opinion, capable of holding in check the mad ambition of kings,