

the full weight of the popular mind, whatever it may be, in our public councils. Now such a population may be in any one of three states. If entirely uneducated and ignorant of public affairs, it remains in a state of stolid quietude, unmoved by the greatest evils, and only stimulated to action when excited by the leaders in whom it confides. If a little farther advanced in intelligence it becomes excitable, quick to action, readily moved by every new turn of public affairs, and broken into many conflicting parties; a state of matters often more difficult to deal with than the more debased condition of total ignorance, though still to be regarded as a stage of progress toward that enlightened public opinion which can proceed alone from the judgment of an educated community. That we in British America have arrived at this last stage it would be rash to affirm, that we shall reach it I believe, but not without strenuous exertions and much self-sacrifice.

In the present imperfect state of society here, as in other countries similarly situated, we may expect public opinion to run into violent extremes, and perhaps its only law to be, that if it sets very strongly in one direction to-day, it will be pretty sure to set in the opposite way to-morrow.— Still, in all this there is mere hope and progress than in mere stagnation. The current of our colonial feeling is like that of one of our great rivers—rushing from side to side of its rocky bed, now in one direction, now in another, now gliding quietly along, now lashing itself into foaming billows. We may not arrest its course, nor is it desirable to do so; but we may lead its waters gently aside, and make beside its most dangerous rapids peaceful highways for our commerce. In other words, no man can in a country like this check or control or repress the will of the people, but any wise man may guide it to useful ends. Every wise man may contribute something in some department to this result.

But to do this effectually, the wise and good man, while sympathising with every popular emotion, must keep himself above the mere driftage of the current. He must not be either repelled or seduced by the varying course of the unstable waters. He may find those who to-day see safety and progress only in union, to-morrow ready to quarrel with their nearest neighbors or get up a strife of races—those who to-day are anti-nationalists, to-morrow clamoring for an American war—those who now would break every link of connection with the mother-country, to-morrow ready to submit to or welcome a despotism. No one who has lived long in this country is without such experiences, and when we think of them and at the same time of the fatal effects of such sudden gusts of public opinion in the case of other countries, we shall be thankful that we have been prevented from yielding to these impulses, and shall be disposed to endeavor to exercise a sound and calm judgment in such matters in the future.

On the precise position of the educated man, with regard to these shifting phases of our political life, I would not dare to venture into details. I may, however, state two results of some thought on this subject. One is, that we should strive to

form as rapidly as possible, a truly enlightened public opinion, as distinguished from merely local, personal, race and class prejudices and interests. Just as the engineer, in every curve which the surface of the country obliges him to take, turns as rapidly as he can back to the straight line leading to the point he has to reach, so should the true lover of his country make the moral and mental progress of the people as a whole, his line of direction. It may often seem the less direct way, but it is the only one that can be truly successful. The second is, that in our present stage we should keep constantly in view the links of connection which bind us to the great British Empire, and strengthen them as far as may be in our power. It is no small thing to be members of an organisation the most stable and powerful in the world, and, at the same time, that which allows the greatest amount of liberty. Independently of all national prejudices, or patriotic feelings, or difference of origin, we cannot be too thankful for the privileges we thus enjoy; and if we can desire anything further in this respect, it seems to me that it should be sought, in endeavouring more completely and closely to unite all the members of the Empire in one great colonial and imperial council, having its seat in the metropolis of the Empire, and binding together all its scattered parts in closer union with one another, and with our common head.

But lastly I would direct your attention to the duties of the educated man in his relation to his God, and to the example that he sets before his fellow-man. The religious life of a people is its only true life. If this is wanting, or if it is vitiated by infidelity, by superstition, or by any of the idolatries which are set up between man and his Maker, nothing will avail to give prosperity and happiness.

On this great matter it is the part of the educated man, if of any man, to exercise an independent judgment. Honestly, solemnly, and as in a matter of more concern than any of the passing things of earth, he must set himself to form fixed and certain opinions, which commend themselves to his own calm judgment and conscience, and which he can vindicate before others, on his own moral relations to the Supreme Judge of all, and on the way which He has fixed for attaining to happiness and heaven. The man, who has not thought of these things, is not an educated man in the highest sense, because he is not concerned for eternity, and because failing thus, he lacks the greatest and noblest motive for good—the love of his God as a recorded Father, and the love of his brother man.

The rude and ignorant unbeliever, or the degraded votary of an habitual superstition, is simply an object of pity. The educated man who pretends to doubt that which he has not honestly and carefully studied, or who is content blindly to follow others, where God has placed the truth before his own mind, scarcely deserves our pity.

I do not speak here of the mere sensualist. If there is any young man so vile, so unworthy of his high calling, as to devote himself to vicious pleasures, to waste the dower of his youth and the prime of his life in sinful indulgences, he is