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RIGHTEOUSNESS: THE STRENGTH AND GLORY OF A NATION.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation."—Prov. XIV. : 34.

It would be scarcely possible to suggest a subject, on which the sentiments of men in general are more various than the question: What is it that makes a people truly great, prosperous, and happy? One measures a nation's greatness, by the extent of its territory, the amount of its population, and its agricultural capabilities. Another sees a nation's prosperity, in that which constituted the motto of the first Napoleon: "Ships, Colonies, and Commerce." Another sees the assurance of a nation's career of glory, in the intelligence of its people, the political sagacity of its statesmen, and the heroism of its soldiers and seamen. One sees the germ of national greatness, in the principle of Free Trade, whilst another sees it, in the national policy of Protection. Now, whatever degree of importance may be attached to any of these factors in the creation of a nation's material wealth, there is another element essential to the true "theory of the wealth of nations." There is another ingredient in every true system of national policy, without which, the most splendid material advantages, and the best devised system of political economy, will ever fail to secure the prosperity and happiness of any people. That essential element is *righteousness*. "Righteousness exalteth a nation."

It is of some importance, at the outset of our remarks, to notice the distinction between *righteousness in a nation*, and *national righteousness*. The proper idea of a *nation* is not that of a collection of people, living on the same soil. It is a body of people, organized into *civil society*, united together by the bond of a social compact, and under an acknowledged government. The *righteousness of a nation* is, therefore, properly speaking, not that of the individual inhabitants of a country: it is that of the *nation as such*. It is the *righteousness of "the body politic."* It is very evident, that there may be many righteous persons on the soil—righteous families—righteous institutions of various kinds, and yet the *nation as such* may not be so, in regard either to its constitution, or its administration. In the United States, there are many true Christians, but yet the *nation* is not Christian. In the constitution of the country, which is the bond of the national compact, there is no acknowledgment of God, the source of all authority and power; no acknowledgment of Christ, to whom all judgment has been committed, and no acknowledgment of the Word of God, as the basis and standard of legislation. It is the testimony of one of the greatest men in the United States, that no change would be needed in the constitution of

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