

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. 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 annexationists, 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 resolve if possible 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