

merce agriculture so applied as to develop the richest resources of the soil, such a prevalence of the comforts and necessities of life that the lowliest may know the content which never complains, institutions of benevolence and justice for the relief of unavoidable sorrow and the maintenance of order, a literature lofty in tone, broad in its range, and stamped with the impress of truth and beauty; and, also, such moderately-appointed defences as may serve to render our borders safe from the intrusion of the mischievous and the vile. Let there be all these material and secular blessings, and many more; add to them by every possible contrivance consistent with uprightness of spirit and reverence for the Eternal, and yet the question comes with incisive and resistless force—What of our children? Nations are not made up of deep-set mountains, fertile vales, and rolling rivers that carry your commerce down to the sea; nor of the means of rapid locomotion and swift transit of intelligence from one end of the land to the other; nor even of men and women who toil and rest, weep and rejoice. Prosperity does not lie in lands, and banks, and commerce; nor does it live and die with those whose hands and brains have accumulated wealth and scattered plenty. Our children are more to us than all our holdings; they are more enduring than the hills; more precious in the freight they bear than all our fleets; they are the inheritors of our folly or wisdom, our moral debasement or our piety. Their mental culture, their well-acquired knowledge, and their holiness of life, are of greater moment than all besides. Take a home—any home you please; it may be well furnished, amply provided with comforts and luxuries,—the very perfection of artistic taste and wise utility,—an enviable and legitimate object even of Christian desire and labour to passers-by. But what of the children who dwell there? Are they its brightest and most lovely ornaments? Is the music of their free tongues the sweetest that falls on parents' ears? Are they cultured, refined, chivalrous, loving, and pious? Is the natural and acquired finish of their character in accord with the exquisite material surroundings amidst which they live? Are they by virtue of their pure and noble character the brightest gems and most precious treasures in that home? You who have attained to years of maturity, and especially you whose heads are white with