be no objection to a consistent carrying out of the principle. If it can be demonstrated that the principle is not according to scripture warrant, let it be shown. It is believed that it cannot be successfully done.

ARTICLE V.

THE TRIBUNAL OF HISTORY.*

The most elaborate oration of the great Pericles, as recorded by the historian Thucydides, was that pronounced over the soldiers who had fallen in the Peloponnesian war. The delicate sense of Athenian honor did not suffer the slain to lie disgraced upon the field of battle. With this sentiment of national pride was united the deeper instinct of religion, which, among the Greeks, enforced a strict performance of funeral rites, without which the restless shades were doomed to wander upon the banks of the gloomy Styx, forbidden to pass to the Elysium beyond. Even amidst the carnage of battle, the bodies of the slain must be rescued from the foe, and borne with solemn pomp for interment in their native soil; whilst the memorial shaft blazoned their heroic deeds in double testimony of a soldier's prowess and of a nation's gratitude. It was fitting, too, that the pageant of a public funeral should be illustrated by the highest eloquence; and the first orators of Greece, such as Demosthenes and Lysias, did not disdain the opportunity for the display of their loftiest genius.

It was after the disastrous campaign of the summer of 431 B. C., when all Attica had been ravaged by the Spartan legions, and the entire population was compressed within the walls of

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*This article was delivered in a lecture before the Southern Historical Society in New Orleans. It is now published with only such verbal changes as were necessary to convert it from an oral address into an article for the *Review*.

Athens, that Pericles, the consummate statesman, whose name is imperishably linked with Athenian empire and art, ascended the Bema to speak the honors of the Athenian dead. It was, however, no empty panegyric, the filigree and frost-work of mere rhetoric, but statesman-like and grand in the utterance of practical convictions. As described by Mr. Grote,* it was "comprehensive, rational, and full, not less of sense and substance, than of earnest patriotism"—"impersonal and business-like in its character, as it is Athens herself who undertakes to commend and decorate her departed sons, as well as to hearten up and admonish the living." In the most graphic and suggestive style, Pericles sketches "the effect of her democratical constitution, with its diffused and equal citizenship, in calling forth not merely strong attachment but painful self-sacrifice"—"the anxious interest as well as a competence of judgment in public discussion and public action, common to every citizen, rich and poor"—"the combination of reason and courage which encountered danger the more willingly from having discussed and calculated it beforehand"—"the liberty and diversity of individual life" at Athens, as opposed to "the monotonous drill of Sparta, or some other ideal standard impressed upon society with a heavy-handed uniformity." Having presented thus the many-sided social development which prevailed in the city of Minerva, "bringing out the capacities for action and endurance," the great orator points the conclusion of his argument: "Such is the city on behalf of which these warriors have nobly died in battle, vindicating her just title to unimpaired rights, and on behalf of which all of us here left behind must willingly toil; drawing the lesson that the conflict is not for equal motives between us and our enemies who possess nothing of the like excellence."

We have detained the reader with this lengthened preamble, for the purpose of justifying an inference which will be found to underlie all that shall hereafter be submitted to his perusal, viz., that war is not always the mere outburst of human passions;

*Grote's History of Greece, Vol. VI., pp. 142, 143.

but that when projected upon a large scale and protracted through a long period, and especially when occurring between members of the same race, it is usually the logical result of an antecedent conflict of opinions; which, having sought arbitration in vain, appeal finally to the sword, from sheer necessity, to settle the question of ascendancy. With the whole of Grecian history before us, for example, it is abundantly evident that the thirty years' war between Sparta and Attica was but the culmination of the struggle between the Doric and Ionic elements of the Grecian stock, which emerged at the earliest dawn of authentic history. These two became from the outset the exponents of two opposing systems of government and social discipline: Lacedæmon espousing a policy which may be defined as continental and oligarchic; whilst Athens represented the ideas of commerce and democracy. Both strove for empire; but under different banners, and with opposing watchwords: Sparta, seeking to consolidate the continental states under the supremacy of the few—Athens, to weld the maritime states into a democratic confederacy, of which she should be the centre and the soul. The antagonism was fundamental; and two nations struggled together, like Jacob and Esau, even in the womb. So ancient was the feud, that even the armed invasion of Persia scarcely composed it for a time; only to break forth again in the war of the Peloponnesus, so fatal in its issue to the independence of both. All this, however, is not a whit more clear to the eye of our critical philosophy, than it was to the statesman-like discernment of Pericles himself. We, who stand upon the top of so many centuries and survey the whole landscape of the past, understand perfectly that the wildness of individual freedom, so fatal to the permanence of her power, was yet the necessary condition under which Athens fulfilled her mission and became the school-mistress of the world. The largest liberty of human thought, and the freest development of social life, under the stimulus of a popular government which woke every individual into action, were perhaps the only conditions under which those exquisite models of poetry, eloquence, and art, could in the first instance be created, which succeeding ages have been content

simply to reproduce. And beyond the glory even of her sculpture and her song, which throws such a halo around the name of Athens, is the glory of presenting the first demonstration on the page of human history of equal citizenship in a free State. All this, however, is traced with a needle's precision by this sagacious statesman; who, in this splendid relic of forensic eloquence, has adroitly linked the pious sepulture of the heroic warrior with the exposition and defence of the constitution and laws for which he bled. The orator was right. With the instinct that belongs only to genius, he struck the keynote of the solemn dirge which weeping Greece was chanting over the tomb of the slain. It was not a sentiment of natural affection alone, seeking to hallow the remains of brothers, husbands, sons. It was not the impulse of haughty honor only, rescuing the brave from the iron hoofs of an insolent foe: it was the deep, though possibly unpronounced, conviction that the dead were martyrs to a cause for which their own blood might as easily have flowed. This made Greece weep, as she drew her mantle over the slain, and gave their names to lasting marble. And Pericles was eloquent, simply because he interpreted the silent thought in a thousand souls—that death for a great principle was a sacrifice to the gods.

We of the South have been stirred by the power of the same sentiment. In all the melancholy which has shaded the fortunes of nations, there is no more pathetic spectacle than of this stricken land yearning after the bones of its dead bleaching upon a hundred battle-plains from Maryland to Mexico. Breathless and panting in its exhaustion at the close of a long and cruel war, with three-fifths of its property practically confiscated by a single stroke of the pen, with its system of labor unhinged and its industry paralysed, overwhelmed with a degree of taxation rendering the poor the envy of the rich, with a band of harpies fattening upon the public revenue more obscene than those described by Virgil—

> "Like fowls with maiden's face—their paunches
> Wide defiled with garbage great—
> Their hooked paws outspread;' and ever pale
> With hungry looks——"

under all this pressure of outward wrong and inward grief, this modern Niobe yearns in stony sorrow over her still unburied sons, who should only sleep upon the soil watered by their martyr blood. This deep and holy sentiment takes even a mellower form. Alas! if like ancient Greece the children of the slain could only be the children of the State—educated from the public treasury, till old enough to be equipped with shield and spear! But with the loss of legislative control, private beneficence must partially pay the debt of public gratitude; and these orphans of the State must fall into the arms of such as are wiling to be the trustees of the Commonwealth! Helpless alike to alleviate the present or to consecrate the past, our only resource is an appeal to the judgment of posterity. "Our harp hangs upon a blasted branch. The sound of its strings is mournful. Did the wind touch thee, O harp, or was it some passing ghost? Another song shall rise." It shall chaunt "the chiefs of other times departed, who have gone without their fame." "Our fathers shall hear it in their airy hall. Their dim faces shall hang with joy from their clouds." "Fingal shall receive his fame. The voice of Ossian has been heard. The harp has been strung in silence."

We have thus insensibly drifted upon the theme of this discourse, which has for its object to exhibit THE SOLEMN TRIBUNAL OF HISTORY: before which all the generations of men must bring their deeds to be adjudicated; and in whose final verdict, justice and truth are sure to meet a proximate vindication. It looms up through the prospective of coming centuries; when the passions of the past are dead; when historic criticism shall have purged the record of prejudice and calumny; and when impartial truth shall plead before a panel beyond the reach either of seduction or of fear. But is there such a tribunal before the great Assize, when the Ruler of the universe shall pronounce the sentences of eternal destiny? The scepticism of this inquiry, We propose now to meet, by asserting the reality of a judicial process going forward perpetually in the court of time, and reversing the hasty judgments rendered amidst the passions of the passing hour.

I. There is in the human soul a principle of justice, the noblest relic of that image of God in which man was first created. Our nature is majestic even in its wreck. As the broken columns, half-hidden in the sands, reveal the ancient glory of a Baalbec; so amid the ruins of the fall we discover traces of the grandeur of soul with which man was originally endowed. The achievements of science attest the splendor of his intellect, even though it be darkened by sin. The sweet charities that bloom still in the desert he has made, reveal him as once the peer of the angels in love. The very superstition that cowers in fear before its bloody altars, proves his early priesthood amongst the worshippers of God. And so this rugged sense of justice remains, shattered and defaced it may be, warped by passion, obscured by prejudice, blundering through ignorance and mistake into a thousand errors; yet there it is, a permanent attribute of man, answering back, through conscience as its organ, to the justice that is in God.

In fact, it is just this principle that underlies the whole framework of civil government and law. The magistrate would bear the sword in vain, and all the insignia of empire would be a mockery, if the instinct of obedience were not originally planted in the human breast. The entire machinery of justice in our courts would lock, unless driven by this spirit within its wheels. Conscience is the organ of law, simply because it interprets and enforces before its secret tribunal that unpronounced sense of justice lying at the foundation of our moral nature. Hence, in proportion as this is blunted or fails to be duly educated, men become impatient of the artificial restraints of law; and those gigantic despotisms require to be created, which simply overwhelm resistance by the exhibition of brutal force.

Even this view, however, is not profound enough to exhaust the significance of this primary attribute. The whole structure of religion rests equally upon this basis. What mean those deprecatory rites of every system of worship devised by man, but that the Deity is an object of supreme terror to the transgressor? All the religions of earth, except that of grace in the gospel of Christ, are religions of fear; simply because the

instinctive principle of justice in man prejudges the infliction of the curse. This piercing confession of ill-desert rings through all the penances and tortures, the vows and bloody offerings, by which the avenging justice of a violated law may be appeased. The value of Christianity founds precisely upon this, that salvation is acquired for man through a perfect satisfaction to the outraged majesty of the divine law; and the sinner rests peacefully upon a vicarious atonement, because the sense of justice in him recognises the justice in God, which must assert and maintain the eternal supremacy of a perfect and holy law.

The argument is very short to our conclusion. If there be in man this ineradicable principle, at once the corner stone of religion and of law, and which holds the very fabric of society together, then should we look for its operation through the whole domain of history. It is no dormant property of our nature, but one lying at the root of all human activity in every sphere and relation of life. It may be overlaid for a time, so as to be apparently suppressed. It may vacillate in its judgments, through the conflicting evidence upon which it rests. It may oftener still take a false direction, and render verdicts both unsafe and untrue. It may be clouded by the mists of passion that distort the objects presented to its vision. But from these very causes there will spring an unsatisfactoriness in its earlier decisions, begetting suspicion as to the truth of the finding. It will then go back upon its path, sifting its own prejudices, breaking through the rubbish by which malevolence and ignorance block up its way, placing itself in all the cross-lights shooting upon its search; until a verdict is pronounced which shall lay its unquiet spirit to rest, and the final decree is nailed against the walls of its chancery which the universal conscience of mankind shall accept as "true and righteous altogether."

It will be asked, Where are the chambers of this high court of commission before which old issues are to be thus retried? What judges sit, from whose decree there can be no appeal except to the bar of God? Whence the advocate, who flings his broad indictment over the defamations of all the centuries? These are questions not difficult to answer. The forum, where this

high adjudication is held, is the broad world itself. The public conscience is the judge, roused to honesty by the very responsibility of his function. The intelligence and virtue, the truth and candor of the race, constitute the panel before which the cause is heard. And a sublime Providence raises up the advocates who speak—men of a judicial build, and who have a lofty scorn for all the shams and cheats that are the idolatries of the past. Look at Motley, drawing from the archives of the Escurial itself the damning evidence which had slept for three hundred years, and upon which the Second Philip is convicted as the blackest felon that ever disgraced the purple. Upon the same page too stands the silent William in all the relief of contrast: the man who, out of the loss of every battle, wrung even from defeat and massacre the redemption of his country, and who, in matchless endurance and moral sublimity, is the only prototype in all European history, of the American Washington and of our own immortal Lee.

Look again at Carlyle, with his rugged honesty, piercing through the flams and falsehoods circling around the corridors of history; and in his uncouth, inverted style, redeeming Cromwell from the aspersion of "Regicide." Planting his burly form against the breast of the billows, he rolls back the tide of prejudice from the Puritan Protector, which had swelled against his just form these two hundred years. At the touch of his disenchanting wand, the motley fool's garb, in which the wit and satire of England's great novelist had clothed these "pragmatical roundheads," falls aside; and to-day the verdict of history stands recorded, that all of constitutional liberty which England enjoys is due to these men of robust principle, who, beneath the mask of a fantastic fanaticism, were yet loyal to truth, and had the stubborn will to place law and freedom upon the throne of the Stuarts. And then Macaulay: whose gorgeous colors throw upon the canvas the long struggle of 1648–1688, as the mighty conflict between prerogative and privilege—upon whose issue hang all the chartered rights possessed this day on either side of the Atlantic. Who, too, could have dreamed that, under the constraint of pure historic justice, the Socinian Bancroft would come

forth from all the prejudices of his cold philosophy to be the special advocate of the great Calvin; or that, on the 17th of March this last year, the free-thinking Froude would stand before the University of St. Andrew's to pronounce the eulogy of the Genevan hero—in the memorable proposition, that whatever may be said as to the truth of his dogmatic creed, the only men who have ever wrestled successfully in life's great battle and rescued it from defeat, have been the men who, in some form of philosophy or religion, have recognised the ordinations of a Supreme Will ruling over all the contingencies of this earthly sphere? Surely this does not happen by mysterious chance. These are not solitary and accidental revelations, through a wayward fancy stumbling hap-hazard upon the truth. Consider it well, and you shall find illustrations crowding upon you of this historic justice, unravelling the dark deeds of the past, and bringing you face to face with prejudices that are hoary with age. Somehow, the good who have been stabbed by slander will not sleep in peace. Their restless ghosts wander above their historic tombs, flitting in the dim moonlight, until their spell is cast upon some honest champion of their wrongs. Passions, too, that have shaken the earth to its centre, subside at last. The mists of error and mistake roll up and drift away, after hanging their curtains long around the truth. A holy Providence gives the token of its own judicial process by and by in that lower tribunal it has created in the human soul; and eternal justice throws down its great shadow upon the earth in these solemn historic retractions, the last judicial findings in its court of appeal.

II. We are not, however, remanded to purely abstract reasoning in this matter. History is but the working out of principles and theories, the scope of which can only be known in their practical results; and God has so conditioned this probationary life that, whether for good or evil, these results are permitted to accrue with little of intervention or restraint. By consequence, history is throughout the progress of a trial. Human actions are perpetually passing under critical review in the light of the fruits they produce. In the long unfolding of these we are often

perplexed by the contradictions that emerge and make providence a paradox. Hence men of every faith, and men of no faith, stumble over the scandals of the divine government. Good and evil are jumbled together in a strange mixture. The virtuous and the vile move together upon the same plane, beneath the same protection, and apparently in the enjoyment of equal blessings. Nay, often the discrimination seems to be against the good: who, though declared to be in favor with God and the heirs of eternal life, go with "their heads bowed like the bulrush;" while "the wicked prosper in the earth" until "their eyes stand out with fatness." And men, in their partial induction, leap rashly to the Epicurean conception of a Deity in stately repose, wholly unmindful of the affairs of earth. The mistake lies in forgetting the true character of life as a discipline. They measure the arc of their little segment of providence, and think it the diameter of the entire circle; and from this narrow basis, affect to estimate the stupendous administration of the Almighty. His comprehensive plan takes in the breadth of all the ages. Individuals and nations alike are but single factors in the final product. The limits even of time are overstepped; and the threads broken by death are woven into a new fabric beyond the stars. Not until the vast tapestry is unrolled before us in the pavilion of eternity itself, and the constituent figures are seen to be wrought with an exquisite unity of design, shall we be able to frame a judgment of the wisdom of the whole. According to the great author of "The Analogy," "the natural and moral constitution and government of the world are so connected as to make up together but one scheme, and that a scheme or constitution imperfectly comprehended." Not until the issue is traced in the connexions that are beyond time, is the solution given to the vast, complex problem of human life. But though unable to sum up all the equations of this problem, there is nothing to hinder the continuous application of the broad principle at each step of the calculation. If the whole history of providence would be understood when gathered into its final result, we may partially try the separate portions of that history by the proximate fruits they produce. Indeed, we are shut up

to this by a simple necessity; and these fixed conclusions become the stations along the great highway of history, by which we measure our progress, and at which we pause for momentary repose. They constitute new points of departure for successive observations, which are hung up as lanterns in the darkness over the path we are treading.

Accepting, then, the disciplinary character of life, we have the key to the interpretation of history. We no longer wonder at that strange tolerance of evil which has ever been the opprobrium of providence. The divine method, we see, is to give man his opportunity. His true character will work itself out; and the nature and worth of his principles will be determined by the issue. Nothing is wanted but the element of time; and the world will pronounce its irreversible judgment, when the results of his career are fully ascertained. As with the individual, so it is with every corporate society. These, too, run their allotted course, with the full liberty of developing the principles on which they are based. Every false conception of government, like the flaw in cast-iron machinery, reveals itself in some terrific catastrophe, when it has had time to grow warm by friction, and the unusual strain presses against the weak spot. It may lie hidden long, far down amongst the principles untested as yet. But the crisis comes at length, which brings forth its unsuspected power; and with this, the crash that astounds the world.

Here, then, is the second joint in our argument. Misrepresentation and calumny may becloud many an honorable name, and the world lavish its praise upon the traducers for a time; and perhaps so long that the decree may seem fixed forever, which assigns the historic position of both. But when the policy of each shall have run to its conclusion, and the remote effects, as well as the near, have been traced through the lapse of centuries, the vindication is compelled at last. An indignant world rises up in judicial resentment of the fraud so long practised upon its credulity, and takes reprisal for the wrong in the complete reversal of its previous judgment. The decision pronounced is final, because it has been rendered in a court of appeal, and because the evidence is perfect upon which it rests. Indeed, this

is the only species of retribution to which states as such can be exposed. Individuals stand in a definite personal relation to the divine law, and retribution meets them in another world. But corporations are impersonal, and limited in duration to this lower sphere. If, then, the providence of God extend over these at all, it can only be manifested by visiting upon them in their present existence the crimes and follies they commit—very much for the same reason that the vices of men which were against society at large, are overtaken in the immediate consequences that entail; while the deeper sins against the majesty of heaven are reserved for exposure at that solemn bar before which "every secret thing will be brought into judgment." The universal conviction of mankind of this earthly retribution finds expression in their proverbs, which so pithily represent the collective conscience and reason of the race. "The mills of the gods grind very slowly, but they grind very small." "The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make instruments to scourge us;" which is but another rendering of the inspired aphorism, "They shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." And what was that fine conception of the Greek Nemesis putting a check upon the extravagant favors conferred by fortune, and the avenging deity who sooner or later overtakes the reckless in their faults, but an impersonation of this earthly justice which on its lower plane is the type of the divine, and "vindicates the ways of God to man?"

The illustrations of this from the actual facts of history would involve the transcription of almost the entire record. Let a few examples suffice. Every reader knows how the fierce struggle between the patrician and plebeian orders ran through the whole stormy history of the Roman Republic; but it was only after a searching criticism had subjected the whole career of that martial people to reëxamination, that it was found to be the secret, but real, cause of their downfall. It had its origin in the aristocratic sentiment which identified the state with the founders of the imperial city; whilst its population, enlarged by conquest, were admitted to only a qualified citizenship, constituting no healthy middle order, but really the subjects of a governing class. It

was inevitable that they who bore the burdens and did the fighting of the state, should clamor for the legal recognition of their power; and more than once their open mutiny brought the infant republic to the verge of ruin. The catastrophe was delayed for centuries by that political idolatry of the state which was the peculiar feature of all Roman history. Interminable wars resulted in the gradual absorption of the Italian States; and then Rome, stepping from Sicily upon the shores of Africa, entered, through the destruction of Carthage, upon those imperial conquests which made her the mistress of the world. "Her empire spread like a vast arch over the Mediterranean basin, with one foot resting on the Atlas, and the other on the Taurus." But there was not inherent strength to bear the weight of the mighty superstructure. With no grand commonalty possessed of clearly defined rights, there was nothing to which the conquered races could be assimilated; and no bulwark could be raised against the tide of corruption flowing in upon the bosom of such enormous wealth. "The Roman aristocracy became intoxicated, insatiate, irresistible—the middle class was gone—there was nothing but profligate nobles and a diabolical populace." Such is the language of Draper, who tersely adds: "And now it was plain that the contest for supreme power lay between a few leading men. It found an issue in the first triumvirate. . . . Affairs then passed through their inevitable course. The death of Crassus and the battle of Pharsalia left Cæsar the master of the world. The dagger of Brutus merely removed a man, but it left the fact. The battle of Actium reaffirmed the destiny of Rome, and the death of the Republic was illustrated by the annexation of Egypt." Thus after the lapse of two thousand years do we summon ancient Rome before the tribunal of history, to be weighed in the scales of equal justice. Thus do we trace the secret source of that strange metempsychosis by which she slipped from a republic into an empire back to a fatal schism in her original constitution, preventing her people from being welded into a homogeneous state. And thus does history lift at last the deep reproach which had settled upon her Gracchi; who pass from beneath the censure of an offensive

agrarianism into earnest patriots who vainly sought to heal the wounds of "the gored state," and stay the ruin by which it was finally overwhelmed.

Look again at Spain. Early in the sixteenth century, by the annexation of Portugal and a political combination with Austria and with England, as well as by her immense possessions in the new world, overshadowing all Europe with her greatness; beneath which the other powers stood shivering with fear; yet in the bosom of her fierce despotism lay the seeds of her early dissolution. In the language of a writer whom we have already quoted, "it was her evil destiny to ruin two civilisations, oriental and occidental, and to be ruined thereby herself." Her intolerant bigotry lost her the Netherlands just rising to opulence and prosperity, through which she might have controlled the commercial interests of the continent. Her expulsion of the Moors, who had become the children of her soil, enriching it with the learning, industry, and art of the East, robbed her of the opportunity, which England seized, of becoming, through her manufactures, the mart of Europe. The lust of gold through the importations from her mines in America, and the consequent diversion of her people from those pursuits by which alone wealth can be created, sunk her into the condition of a mere broker in the precious metals to the rest of the world. And for centuries she has stood "a hideous skeleton among living nations;" a terrible example of that avenging Nemesis, which follows in the track of guilty nations scourging them with their crimes. At this very moment, her empty throne is farmed out by the will of others to a needy adventurer, who, amidst the scorn of her nobles and the derision of all Europe, grasps the sceptre once wielded by a Charles V.

Shall we point to the Socialists and Communists of modern France? The fatal song of the sirens, luring the unwary mariner upon the rock of Scylla, breathed no more seducing accents than those of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," which roused the passions of the wild enthusiast dancing around the tricolor of the French revolution. Yet the true import of these insane ravings was soon read amidst the horrors of the Bastile and the

guillotine, until the world stood aghast at the frightful spectacle of blood and crime. And the burning Paris of to-day—spared by the conquering Prussia only to smoulder under the torch of her own incendiaries—tells the bitter fruit borne by that Radicalism which sweeps like the whirlwind through America and through England—the direst foe of constitutional freedom wherever it is found, and which, unless checked by the power of God, will yet sack the very world, and lay the earth in ashes at his feet.

III. The last consideration to be urged upon your attention, will be presented in fewer words. It is, that with all the uncertainty hanging about particular facts, there is in every portion of history an amount of generalized truth, as to which scepticism would be simple affectation. A most remarkable effort has been made in our own day to reduce history to the category of a positive science, by attempting to trace the necessary laws under which human actions are produced. In an elaborate work, treasuring the labors of a studious life, but arrested before completion by the hand of death, Mr. Buckle pushes the reign of inexorable law into the sphere of the variable and contingent. Not satisfied with the proposition that the volitions of the human will are determined by a law of their own, altogether inscrutable by the reason and perfectly consistent with freedom and responsibility, he boldly pronounces that the connexions of cause and effect are as traceable here as in all other departments of nature; where from given conditions the consequences may be anticipated by the power of logic. He proceeds, therefore, to analyse the elements of human character, and to enumerate the possible conditions of human conduct; deducing the conclusion, that human history in all its forms is a natural development like the growth of a tree. This at least is the representation of his theory given by his reviewer, Mr. Froude; who, besides being a philosopher, is also an historian, and who, on the other hand, objects that the phenomena of history never repeat themselves; and that we have not that recurrence and periodicity upon which the inductions of natural science rest. He stoutly maintains, therefore, that "it would be just as easy to calculate men's actions by

laws like those of the positive philosophy, as to measure the orbit of Neptune with a foot-rule, or to weigh Sirius in a grocer's scale."

All this is immensely typical. Between these extremes, all along the dotted line, there is every shade of credulity in the facts and deductions of history, and every phase of scepticism as to both. In the gloom which hangs about us there is a prevailing tendency to spurn the testimony of all human records. We are in a condition to see how history is manufactured for a purpose; how an impudent partisanship manipulates the facts; how the truth we personally know is suppressed; how gross fictions are stereotyped by endless repetition; how the brand of injurious epithets is freely used to stamp falsehood with the seal of truth; and how misrepresentation and calumny are stuffed into books which circulate around the globe and preoccupy the minds of men. Is it strange if some should morbidly infer that all history is but a romance at best, if it be not also a libel and a slander? To which we reply, that falsify the record of particular and isolated facts as men may, there is a residuum of truth which cannot be destroyed, and which shall be the basis of a safe appeal to the judgment of an impartial posterity. Throw into the region of fable all the achievements of Semiramis and Sesostris, still Assyrian and Egyptian histories will survive, which in the aggregate we are able to measure, and whose precise values we can determine. History delves amidst the ruins of Nineveh and Persepolis, walks around the hanging gardens of Babylon, surveys the temples and tombs and pyramids of Egypt, calculates the physical force which lay in all those ancient despotisms, and then renders her decree. It is, that this long succession of gigantic empires simply held the world until the light of freedom could break from the west—until, out of the bosom of a better civilisation, philosophy and science should rescue it from the dominion of a superstitious and fantastic imagination. It points the wholesome moral, that of all things on earth nothing is weaker than force; and in its calm judicial tone, pronounces the most withering sarcasm upon the ambitions and achievements of the sword.

Regard the siege of Troy as a myth, and renounce all belief in the existence of Hector and Achilles; nay, discount the more veritable record of Xerxes binding with foolish chains the angry Hellespont; or of Leonidas holding at bay the hosts of Persia in the pass of Thermopylæ; or the sublime story of Themistocles gathering the population within "the wooden walls" of his fleet, and standing upon the prow of his own ship to exclaim "This now is Athens:" yet, when you have winnowed Grecian history of a thousand legends and even many of its veritable facts, there at last it stands before you with its indented coast-line, and you pronounce to-day just how much Greece has been worth to the world. In the vast pantheon of history, she has a niche which no other nation upon the globe can occupy but herself.

Let Niebuhr with his dissecting criticism prune away the legends of ancient Rome; let the stories of Romulus and the she-wolf, or of Numa and the nymph Egeria, dissolve like the mountain mist: still Roman history remains in its rugged grandeur, throwing its awful form against the back-ground of the sky, working out the solemn problem of government and law, and laying the broad foundations upon which rest the systems of jurisprudence and the constitutions of civil polity still obtaining among men. With precisely similar results we pass through all the galleries of modern history, and unlock the chambers in which the dusty archives of European diplomacy are kept—assigning to each country its proper place in the general combination, and the contribution which each has made in the progress of human civilisation.

What we affirm then is this: That the value of these final generalisations is scarcely impaired by the doubt which may be cast around the truth of this or that particular fact. Contemporaneous history, written in the interest of passion or of prejudice, may be largely a libel; and future criticism may be sorely perplexed to distinguish between the truth and its travesty. Still in the aggregate result these, by a strange smelting process, are sifted out as not material to the issue. As we may poison a single fountain, but cannot poison the broad ocean; so we may

corrupt the isolated facts, but cannot transmute the whole broad history of a people into a lie. A thousand hidden hints of the truth will lie embedded in the record, which antiquarian research will disentomb. The long silent voices will repeat their testimony in the court of final adjudication—and in the solemn decisions of that great Tribunal, the good and the brave will find an honest vindication.

The application of this discourse we shall leave, reader, to silence and to you. "That which hath been, is now; and that which is to be, hath already been." Invective and reproach will, in the sacred name of history, continue to be poured upon those who deserve only her applause. The faithful witnesses of truth will go in cloud and sorrow to the tomb, burying their principles only in a protest. But they will do it in the certain faith of a resurrection. As for their own fame, they can afford to wait. Eternity is long, and it is their life-time. Upon the lip, too, of that boundless sea, their prophetic eye can seize that burnished throne which human justice makes its last tribunal, and before which the nations and the centuries are arraigned for trial. Defamation and slander fall as lightly upon their calm spirits, as the salt spray that crystallizes upon the silent rock. If, too, the warnings of the past, like the prophecies of Cassandra, are heard only to be disbelieved, still let modern despots know they are but sowing the dragon's teeth of an armed and fiercer retribution. Constitutional freedom has not come forth from the conflict of ages, to be stifled now when she spreads her broad shield over two continents. She will reappear again and again amid the birth-throes of regenerated states: for regulated liberty is to the Commonwealth, what piety is to the Church—the very law of its life. Both have struggled through corruption and decay towards a complete realisation. But if the day should ever come, when despotism shall so consolidate its power as to crush human freedom forever beneath its iron heel, then will be consummated the second apostasy of man, after the flood, in the usurpation of Nimrod. Human history will have completed its great cycle, and nothing remain but the summons to the Universal Judgment.