

# THE FUTURE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

*By Thomas Swift.*

WE reason of the future from the past.

To arrive at any fair conclusion concerning the future of the English language and of English literature, it is necessary to know something of their antecedents and to examine their present condition.

The existing European languages may be classed in five divisions, largely in the order of occupation of the continent by the nations who speak them.

The Celtic, spoken in Ireland, Northern Scotland and Wales; almost or wholly extinct in Cornwall, Isle of Man and Brittany.

The Romance, in Italy, Spain and France chiefly. Modern Greek may also be included in this class.

The Gothic, in Germany, England, Norway, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, Iceland and in parts of Belgium and Austria.

The Slavonic, chiefly in Russia and Poland; also in Eastern Hungary and in petty states north of Turkey.

The Tschudic, of which are the languages of the Finnic and Laponic races.

One prominent exception to this classification are the Basques, or the inhabitants of the coast around the Bay of Biscay, who are supposed to be the representatives of the earliest people of Europe, and their language a remnant of the original language of Spain.

Some people pride themselves on their blood, which seems to take different hues, probably from the color of the spectacles through which it is viewed. But no matter whether the vital current be of rare blue or of plebeian red, it is interesting to many, if not to most people, to know approximately to what race they belong.

As far as purity of race is concerned a standard authority in philology and ethnology says, "Inter-marriages and social and commercial intercourse during many centuries have brought it about that, with the possible exceptions of the Jews and Gipsies, there are no pure races remaining in Europe." These two exceptions have been, and in some countries are still, banned races, having racial or religious objections to inter-marriage with other peoples. This compulsory exclusiveness has, undoubtedly, preserved the purity of their stock.

The inference then is, absolutely, that the purer the race is, the less progressive it is; but only absolutely; for some nations of eminently pure stock have at various times led the van in progress; as for instance, Spain and France and Germany.

To mixed races, however, must the palm for progress be given at the present day; to the people of Great Britain, in what may be termed the immediate past and now, to the people of the United States now and,