

Some additional characteristics are developed in America. Physically, the American constitution is the European, toned down and refined. European features appear in each generation less distinctly. The lines of the face are finer and the structure of the body is less robust. We wish that we could be certain that in the course of time there has not been a considerable deterioration. With the blending of races local peculiarities disappear. This change reveals itself in the language, which discards all dialects and becomes a *common speech*, analagous to that of the Greek colonies of Asia Minor. So that while a man's speech betrays him in the mother country, it ceases to mark his origin on these western shores. An independent condition, and the periodical interruption of labour by a long winter, render the people readers and purchasers of books. Many British authors probably obtain more readers in America than in Britain. America is truly a great field for authorship. While no social and political obstruction to the admission of literature, round an immense sea border, indented with harbors and visited by ships of all nations, exist, the only remaining hindrance—inability to read—is being everywhere removed by common schools. A large population, cultivating thousands of miles of generous soil, in a peaceful seclusion where virtue has few seductions, diminishes those vices which most seriously interfere with habits of reflection. Viewed in this light America has been called “a magnificent spectacle of human happiness.” If it be not so, it ought to be. It ought to be a field where intellect might search calmly into the mysteries of life, where fancy might perform some excursions, and where affection might seek a congenial home.

Close and long-existing bonds between this colony and Great Britain render us accessible to all influences at work on the other side. Every discussion there is repeated here. The echoes of every burning question are heard at once. Every change in opinion wings its flight here, where such fluctuations spread over a wide area of readers. The settlement in almost unbroken masses of Scotch, Irish and French, is a peculiarity, by which national prejudices, antiquated fashions and long-exploded errors receive