

have been much indebted for some of the materials of this lecture, warmth and moisture are the most favourable conditions for the production of an exuberant vegetation. All forms of vegetable life find their highest realization in the New World, whether it be the bright tropic flower and palm groves of the south or the stately forests and goodly corn lands of the north. And it is on account of this prevalence of moisture that we find none of those great sand deserts which are so numerous in the Old World. The only desert in North America is that known as the Great American Desert; and, as we were informed by the able lecturer to whom we had the privilege of listening a few weeks ago, this is not a desert absolutely, but only relatively to the more fertile lands to the eastward of it. And I believe a reason for the comparative barrenness of the soil may be found in the fact that it is, on the one hand, so far removed from the Atlantic that the ocean winds lose all their moisture before they reach it; and, on the other hand, it is shut out from the breezes of the Pacific by the lofty ranges of the Rocky Mountains, which near that point have not so many nor so great passes as they have opposite the far west of our country, as, for instance, the valley of the Peace River.

Thus we see that America is essentially the vegetable producing continent. Lying dormant in its valleys and its plains, there is a productive power which only awaits the skill-directed energies of man to bring forth the richest treasures. And here we see the relation which subsists between the New World and the Old. They are, as it were, the complement the one of the other. To quote again the words of M. Guyot: "As the plant is made for the animal, as the vegetable world is made for the animal world, so is America made for Europe." Compare the condition of the two continents, Europe and North America (for it is to that portion of the New World that I would now confine my remarks)—Europe, with its overcrowded towns and cities; with its soil impoverished and exhausted by long tillage; full to overflowing of an energy and a life which can find no outlet; which is powerless to prevent millions of its inhabitants from dragging out a miserable existence in the most abject poverty—such is the state of Europe. On the other hand we have America, with its millions of acres of fertile land as yet

untilled, with its great streams affording easy communication, with its cotton fields in the south giving to England the source of her greatest wealth. On the one hand, Man, possessed of energy, skill, and perseverance; on the other, Nature, with a boundless store of undeveloped wealth lying hid beneath her soil. And the very structure of the country seems to favour this relation between America and Europe. Suppose the first settlers had met, close to the shores on which they landed, an impassable mountain wall, hindering them from entering farther into the new and unknown land, would they not very probably have been driven back again to the Old World, leaving the new continent in all its primeval loneliness? Such would most likely have been the case had the Rocky Mountains run down the eastern instead of the western side of North America. But, as it was, they found themselves in a country which, by its gently undulating character, invited them farther and farther into its depths. Again, what an assistance to speedy colonization were those great rivers flowing down and across the whole extent of the continent, affording a safe and easy highway from the sea coast to the very heart of the country. Up the Mississippi, the Missouri, the St. Lawrence and the Hudson, those old settlers travelled on and on, ever planting new colonies along their banks.

Thus we see it was no chance impulse that led the nations of the Old World ever to follow the setting sun, from those old days when they left their first homes in the far-off East, down to the present time, when wave after wave of the great human tide is rolling from the shores of Europe across the wide ocean to our own, advancing with resistless might, never stopping till it shall break at last against the great barriers of the West. It was no chance, I say, that led them thus, but the all-wise care of a Being who shapes and fashions all events to His own great purposes, and who so directs the lives, not only of individuals, but of nations and of races, as that they may work out fully and perfectly their parts in the great universal plan.

And now, let me ask, what is *our* part—I speak as a Canadian to Canadians—what is our part, I say, in this great destiny that lies before America—a destiny upon which, in part, she has already entered?