

of people, and that its use is daily spreading in all quarters of the globe. "I hold," says Professor Max Müller, "that language is meant to be an instrument of communication, and that in the struggle for life, the most efficient instrument of communication must certainly carry the day, as long as natural selection or, as we formerly called it, reason rules the world." He then cites a computation, according to which, in the ordinary course of events, at the end of 200 years Italian will be spoken by 53,370,000; French, by 72,571,000; German, by 157,480,000; Spanish, by 505,286,242, and finally English, by 1,837,286,153. This forecast is said to be based on the populations and known rate of increase of those who speak the languages specified. The very nature of things would, of course, make any claim to accuracy on such a point out of the question, but the reckoning may be accepted as indicating, with some approach to probability, the position of the languages mentioned in the race for supremacy at the close of a couple of centuries.* Whatever may happen in the old world, on this continent English and Spanish are probably destined to be the ruling tongues. In the East they have also a foothold, with, in some places, French, Dutch and Portuguese for rivals. But there the opportunities of English for asserting predominance exceed those of the other languages of Europe as much as they do in North America. It has all Australia, it is the language of the Hawaiian kingdom, it has been adopted by many educated Hindoos for literary purposes, and is every day extending its conquests through Hindostan, not to speak of its advance in China, Japan, and many other countries in the eastern hemisphere. That French will become more and more the *lingua franca* of continental Europe and the hither East may be taken for granted, as there is no rival likely to displace it; and that it will retain its influence in North America the experience of the past gives a fair guarantee. German and the other Teutonic tongues will not surrender their heritage in Central and North-Western Europe, but there are no signs at present of any great extension abroad. The destiny of the Slavonic group is an interesting problem, but it is hardly likely to do more than hold its own in the competition with European civilization, though great literary triumphs may yet await it. That it may become the rival of English in Asia is possible, but not probable.

* A forecast which gives to Western Europe and this continent (the present homes of the languages to which it relates) a population of over two billions and a half suggests serious questions for the economist, as well as the philologist.