

# THE CANADIAN MAGAZINE.

VOL. X.

FEBRUARY, 1898.

No. 4.

## ANGLO-SAXON SUPERIORITY.

BY THE EDITOR OF "THE CITIZEN," OTTAWA.

A BOOK appeared in Paris in the month of April last dealing with the above subject—"A Quoi Tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons"—which immediately attracted widespread attention and became the theme of a prolonged and animated discussion. The writer, M. Edmond Demolins, is professor of social science, and director of a monthly review called "La Science Sociale." The title of the book was itself sufficient to compel notice. Anglo-Saxon superiority! What idea could be more novel or more unwelcome? Is not France the fine consummate flower of civilization? So at least her poets, orators, statesmen and journalists proclaim her. M. Demolins must have anticipated that the first impulse of his countrymen would be to exclaim in angry dissent against the assumption made in his theme, so he placed upon the title page an outline map of the world with those portions held or occupied by Anglo-Saxon peoples marked in red. A glance makes apparent the spread of that race over the globe, and when the figures of population and commerce are supplied the impression of growing power and greatness is deepened. From their island home on the west coast of Europe the English-speaking people have gone westward to take possession of North America, and eastward to

Australia. They are found at the Cape of Good Hope; they control Egypt; they have possessions in East Africa; they rule India; their influence is growing in South America, while among the islands of the sea the flag of England is found floating everywhere. "In presence of this spectacle," says M. Demolins, "you must admit that the Anglo-Saxons are invading the world, and consequently that they are superior in those qualities, at least, which bring national power and aggrandisement."

The reception of the book was generally favourable. No serious attempt was made to controvert its arguments. M. Jules Lemaitre, in a brilliant article in the *Figaro*, could only suggest that the private excellencies of the Anglo-Saxon people are by a strange paradox associated with an abominable hypocrisy and odious national selfishness. "Could we by a miracle become possessed of the private virtues of our northern neighbours," he asks, "would we desire to adopt at the same time the role of a people of prey, which England now fills in the world? Though we be no longer the wandering knights of justice and humanity, though there are some things that we cannot accomplish, we can, at least, lift up our voice in their favour." No one would wish to deny to those who are willing to concede their inferiority in individual virtue