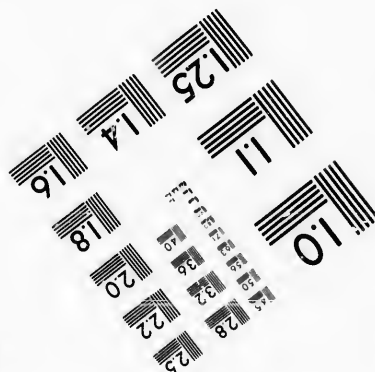
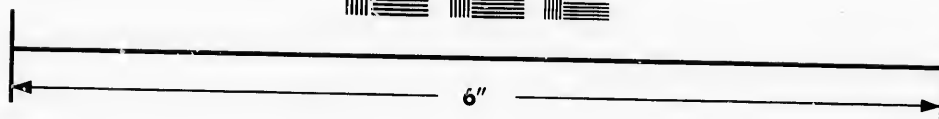
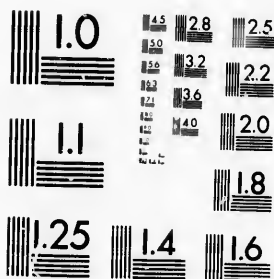


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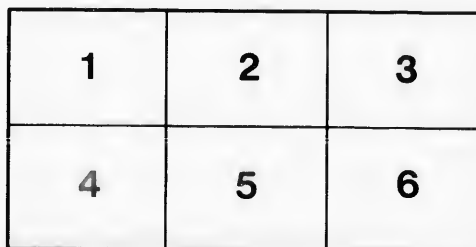
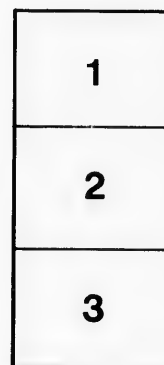
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4

THE
FUTURE RELATIONS
OF THE
ENGLISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES.

AN ESSAY
READ BEFORE THE
ELEVENTH CONVENTION
OF THE
NORTH AMERICA ST. GEORGE'S UNION,
AT
CHICAGO,

AUGUST 20, 1884.

BY
CHARLES F. BENJAMIN,
OF
WASHINGTON, D. C.

WASHINGTON, D. C.
GIBSON BROTHERS, PRINTERS.
1884.



"Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
"A motion toiling in the gloom—
"The Spirit of the years to come
"Yearning to mix himself with Life."

"A slow-develop'd strength awaits
"Completion in a painful school;
"Phantoms of other forms of rule,
"New Majesties of mighty States—"

"The warders of the growing hour,
"But vague in vapour, hard to mark;
"And round them sea and air are dark
"With great contrivances of Power."

--Tennyson.



THE FUTURE RELATIONS OF THE English-Speaking Communities.

By the phrase "English-speaking communities" is meant that group of political societies, having their seats in the British Isles, North America, Australasia, and South Africa, which has for a common inheritance the language, literature, laws, and habitudes popularly described as Anglo-Saxon. Of the whole number of individuals constituting the group more than one-half are embodied in a single community, occupying an extensive and compact territory, exercising sovereignty in its political affairs, consciously restricting its commercial intercourse with the other members of the group according to its view of what is conducive to its industrial development, and having a strong sentimental attachment for what, in default of a better generical term, we may call Anglo-Saxonism, although its characteristics are noticeably modified from the ideal Anglo-Saxon type by extensive admixture with other race elements, as well as by influences due to contact with the vast and originally savage domain wherein it has spent the two centuries and more of its existence. Nearly one-tenth of the members of this community are of negro descent, but these, having been for nearly 200 years domesticated with the most Saxon-like portion of the white inhabitants, exert no diverging influence upon such Anglo-Saxon tendencies as are current among the dominant race.

Bordering upon the United States is another member of the family, similarly possessed of an ample and contiguous territory, exercising political independence without formal sovereignty, pursuing somewhat less rigidly a like commercial policy, having a more active sense of the family unity, less affected by the presence of Teutonic and Celtic elements of population; but, on the other

hand, yoked with a numerous and persistent sub-society of Latin origin and tendencies.

In Australasia we find seven political organisms, strongly Anglo-Saxon in descent and disposition, endowed liberally as to territorial extent, agricultural in their industrial organization and, as to some of them, burdened for the time being with grave problems connected with the native tribes whom they have supplanted.

In South Africa are two adjacent societies, thinly spread over a large area, practically independent (as are all the others) in their political concerns, having a population chiefly Teutonic in descent and characteristics, and weighted by a native question still more perplexing than the similar problem in Australia.

Last in the order of review comes the parent community, small as to its portion of the solid earth: but swarming, rich, industrious, progressive, and enterprising, with a political organization wherein tradition and fact blend with and, at times, cross each other in a multitude of ways which are at once the admiration and the despair of the studious foreigner. This member of the family has a domestic question of the first importance in the guise of a sub-community amongst whose population poverty, ignorance, discontent, resentment, and turbulence largely prevail, and although there is great amelioration in these respects, as compared with earlier days, a variety of new agencies has arisen to aggravate the mischief that remains.

Such is a hurried and broad view of the status, and the relations with regard to each other, of the English-speaking communities. Each organizes, directs, and supports its own administration, except that the parent state exercises suzerainty over all the others but the United States, and charges itself, from first to last, with a large expenditure in the maintenance thereof. This status and these relations are admittedly unsatisfactory, nor have they the elements of permanence. Will Canada, for example, be forever content with the fact of nationality, obscured as it is by the appearance of dependence? True, there is a sentimental satisfaction in the existing connection with the mother country, and that sentiment counts for much in human affairs we know by universal experience and by the pain which Canadians feel at the mere suggestion of a change. But in the days when she shall be populous and rich, she must federate with Great Britain or separate from it.

In those days, every avenue to power and distinction must be open to her sons in a British confederation, or she must endow them with satisfying careers in other directions. It cannot be that her statesmen will forever rest content with those minor honors which in the sovereign state are deemed the appropriate rewards of successful tradesmen, municipal zealots, and the useful but inconspicuous functionaries of a court or a ministry. Nor, on the other hand, will the central government perpetually charge itself with the defence of Canada and her interests without an effective voice in the direction of her affairs and a substantial contribution in aid of imperial expenditure. And the case will be the same, in both aspects, with regard to Australia and South Africa, though probably not so soon.

What, then, are to be the relations of the future? Columbia (using for the nonce the popular term of personification for the United States) will assuredly continue her independent career, largely occupying herself in the reformation of her generally inefficient and too often corrupt municipalities, exchanging wastefulness for economy in her modes of cultivation, gradually adapting her social structure to the needs of a population ever growing in density and culture, and in time emancipating herself from that servile devotion to the almighty dollar which lies at the root of the anomalous and reproachful discontent so widely spread amongst masses that are really free, intelligent and prosperous. Manifest destiny will be accomplished by the extension of her boundaries to the isthmus of Darien, (a movement foreshadowed by the peaceful invasion of Mexico progressing before our eyes,) and this will result from the inevitable logic of events, without violence, cunning, or premeditation. Nor will this great expansion seriously or permanently affect the fundamental institutions of the country; for, in lieu of standing armies and arbitrary governments, the pioneers and adventurers of the movement will carry with them those political habits out of which local government, directed by law and devoted to order, spontaneously arises whenever and wheresoever but a handful of English-speaking and English-thinking men find themselves projected beyond the frontier of their accustomed civilization.

Canada, grown too large for present bonds and yet clinging to a tie that is all the stronger for holding by the heart rather than

the head, will doubtless dally for awhile with impossible schemes of confederation centreing in the device of an imperial parliament and cabinet at London, and then take her place in the family of nations in the habit of a constitutional monarchy, presided over by a dynasty deriving descent from the present beloved Queen. But the social fibre of the new kingdom will be found incapable of sustaining a throne and court, and the monarchy, so useful in bridging a chasm on the journey, will peacefully disappear, to be as quietly succeeded by a republic constituted according to the lights of those later and, it may be, better days. Long before then, the barriers to true fraternal intercourse which resentment and over-reaching selfishness have erected along the boundary will have disappeared, and in the end will not Canadians be found asking themselves why they should not take the last step needed to crown their political edifice and thus give another and perhaps the strongest possible pledge of perpetual peace and friendship amongst all who speak the mother tongue? Even now, they may be able to remember, without bitterness, that those desultory whisperings of annexation which awoke their indignation years ago, while they were still weak and dissevered, came from men who wished only to make the air of America as deadly to human bondage as that of England, and who longed to find, in the robust atmosphere and yeomanry of Ontario, a counterpoise to schemes of southerly extension in the interest of the institution of African slavery. They can bear witness that since the devotion of the whole area of the United States to freedom the American press and people have had no other desire than that their brethren over the border should work out their political destiny in their own time and manner. It would be a proud and happy day for the Union when Canada should be heard saying: "Lo! I stand knocking;" but the message, howsoever long delayed, will come spontaneously, if ever it come, upon full, internal conviction of those who speak it, and be equally welcome whether uttered in a decade or a century hence.

The Australian colonies will, to all appearances, soon unite in a confederation modeled upon that of Canada, and we may reasonably expect their after career to resemble her own, save that, as the transition from colonial dependence to a republic will doubtless come later in point of time, it is likely to be made by a direct,

single step, and with this further exception, that the seat of national government will always remain in Australia, although the republic is destined to spread over the greater part of Oceanica.

Following closely the steps of Australia we may look to see South Africa, when, in due course of the development of her political institutions, her time of sovereignty shall come. She will have room in abundance and resources equal to any rational dreams of extension.

But how will it fare with the dear old Mother at home, after her children, all grown to manhood, shall have started in life for themselves? Will her glory or her fortune be dimmed, or her natural force abated? Confidently may go forth the answer: She will be no whit the less active, or happy, or flourishing. That practical sagacity which has never failed her at a crisis (except in that one, unhappy moment when she lost America) will teach her when and how to win and hold to her side (just as Canada and Australia have in part won and held for her) the masses of that generous but emotional people who have not yet been permitted to learn that Anglo-Saxon energy and shrewdness have their counterparts in Anglo-Saxon justice and generosity. And when law and government in Ireland shall have been established upon the only true foundations, so that equity and reason are satisfied, folly and iniquity may vainly dash their heads against the rocks, and England will have made a conquest at her very door worth to her far more than that boasted Indian empire whose teeming population is, in the mass, as little touched by European habit and thought as when Clive first gave life and impulse to that vast network of bureaucracy and officialism which passes at home for the genuine spread and penetration of civilization.

Next in importance to the work of a real pacification of Ireland (which, for better or worse, is joined politically to England by an inexorable law of nature) is the pursuit and enlargement of the great scheme of universal education so happily begun but a few years ago: for it is in the quality rather than the size of a population that strength and safety lie, and with nations, as with individuals, happiness is more to be desired than acquisition.

Closely connected with the question of education is that of religion; for what would be the gain in exchanging dullards and sots for voluptuaries and sharpers? Religion, then, must be set

free to grow and strengthen by loosing the enervating bond between the State and sectarianism that has long onlasted whatsoever there may have been of merit in its beginning. Official systems of faith and morals have usually borne practical fruit of infidelity and hypocrisy.

In the good time to which we are looking forward, the small and therefore doubly precious heritage of land in Britain will be made to yield its maximum of well-being by emancipating it from those remnants of the feudal system and habit that still obstruct its free use and transfer. Public spirit will be strengthened by the institution of provincial assemblies to legislate upon local concerns and the great parliament thus resened from the paralysis that is undermining it. The national energies, too much captivated at times by the sound of the drum-beat that rolls around the world, will be hereafter increasingly devoted to bettering the condition of every member of the population at home and every foot of the native soil. And why should they not? The seeds of Anglo-Saxonism, grown in the small island garden, have been carried over the earth, planted in kindly soil and have taken strong root, so that neither wind, nor rain, nor frost, nor heat can do them aught but good hereafter, and the husbandmen may well turn for a time to improving the fruitful beds and borders that have so enriched the terrestrial parts of the universe.

Seated upon the ocean and incapable of territorial expansion, both circumstance and necessity will combine to preserve to the Motherland her supremacy in manufactures and navigation, for the rest of the family have too wide a range of place and function to concentrate, for centuries yet, upon those two industries as she can and must and will do. Thus, though her population will more and more fill her bounds, it will continue to find better standing room and a larger field of action, and any who may long for change will always have a broad choice in migration, without the sense or pain of exile.

The historical monuments and memories of England will forever constitute her a shrine to which unceasing pilgrimages from the newer Englands will be made. She will long preserve her throne, her hereditary legislature and her stately ancestral homes, and the influence of ancient names will long survive: but all of these in orderly subordination to whatsoever shall, at any time, be

strongly recognized as the public good or the public wish. No-where else will be found such concentration of numbers, riches, culture, knowledge, leisure, social life, and of whatever else best ministers to the senses and faculties of civilized society. Whether for recreation or instruction, it is to England that the seeker will increasingly turn for his highest gratification. Many and many a day will the New Zealander be found sitting contemplatively upon London Bridge, but vain will be his quest for the broken arch to which the splendid but often inaccurate diction of Macaulay has invited him.

An English sociologist has lately ventured to forecast the census rolls of the English-speaking nations as they will appear a century hence. Taking the present numbers and the ratio of increase during some half a century, and reducing to approximate calculations every accelerating and retarding influence suggested by reason or experience, he assigns to the American Union of the future a population of eight hundred millions; to Canada sixty millions; to Australia forty-five millions; to the Cape Colonies fifteen millions, and to the British Isles seventy millions—in all nearly one thousand millions of people speaking a common tongue, possessed of a literature the richest in the world, having the highest training and the broadest experience in political and social concerns, striving not altogether vainly towards a moral standard the most excellent yet proffered to the observance of mankind, and behind and beside all, the prestige of more than a thousand years of unrivalled and unceasing progress. Stupendous as these estimates are, they become only the more convincing as grounds of refutation or modification are sought. It was, perhaps, in the ecstasy of a prophetic vision of such a future that one of England's poets addressed to all who speak the tongue which he so loved and adorned, this invocation—

- “ Oh ye who, in eternal youth,
 “ Speak with a living and creative flood
 “ This universal English, and do stand
 “ Its breathing book; live worthy of that grand
 “ Heroic utterance—parted, yet a whole;
 “ Far, yet unsevered: children, brave and free,
 “ Of the great mother-tongue—and ye shall be
 “ Lords of an empire wide as Shakspeare's soul,
 “ Sublime as Milton's immemorial theme,
 “ And rich as Chaucer's speech, and fair as Spenser's dream.”

