

ENGLAND'S DECADENCE IN THE WEST INDIES.

THAT within ten years the world has entered upon a new stage of development seems self-evident ; and it appears equally self-evident that the spot where the old system has broken down lies in the West Indies. But when another step is taken, and the causes are sought which have led to the decay of the archipelago of the Caribbean, we enter upon some of the most absorbing problems of modern civilization.

Before attempting to examine details, it may be simpler to look for a moment at first principles. We may assume, as an axiom, that men, like other animals, must be capable of obtaining their subsistence under the conditions to which they are born ; for, if incapable, they must starve. We must also assume that the individual, to prosper, must have the flexibility to adapt himself to the changes going on about him ; for, if he be rigid, he will be superseded by some one more adaptable. Hence, human customs, laws, and empires probably owe their rise and fall to the exigencies of that competition for food which, from the beginning, has sifted those destined to survive from those doomed to perish. Consequently, society can never reach a permanent equilibrium : nothing can be constant but change.

The deduction from these premises is, that the decline of the West Indies must be due to an inability on the part of the population to keep pace with competition. The causes of this failure may be complex : but in the end, the failure itself must represent a relative loss of energy ; and it is with this loss of energy that we now have to deal.

If it be true that the English who, as well as the Spanish, inhabit the Western tropics are ceasing to be able to hold their own in the struggle for life with other races, the effects cannot fail to be far-reaching. At the outset, for example, one of two results must apparently follow : either this whole region must be absorbed in some more adaptable economic system, or it must sink to the level of Haiti. At present, the drift is toward the United States. But for the United States to assimilate and administer this mass successfully,

implies a simplification and centralization of her own administrative system ; and no forecast as to whither a further consolidation of the Republic would lead is now possible. Nevertheless, that such a consolidation is now actually going on about us is highly probable ; wherefore, the study of the sequence of events which has determined the ruin of some of the fairest gardens of the earth should interest Americans, since their own destiny may be inexorably linked with that of a dependency which they may be constrained to absorb.

Down to the battle of Waterloo, perhaps no landed property had ever proved more profitable than the sugar estates of the Caribbean ; and before the advent of the East Indian nabob the West Indian planter filled, in the popular fancy, the figure of the ideal millionaire. Judged by modern standards, his profits might indeed be called fabulous. Tooke's tables of prices begin with 1782 ; but, as the years from 1783 to 1789 were peaceful, the interval probably represents fairly enough the ordinary trade of the last century. Between 1782 and 1789 Muscovado sugar ranged somewhat above £36 the ton ; during the next ten years the war forced it to about £60 ; and as late as 1815 it brought £63. These values are tolerably reliable ; but it is harder to fix the cost of production. In those lavish days management was loose, and nobody knew precisely what he spent ; but, judging by the expense involved in the old processes,—still in use on many of the islands,—there seems no reason to suppose that Muscovado cost the competent planter, as a rule, much more than £20 a ton to produce. On the other hand, he may have worked more cheaply, since he used slave labor. At this time, also, and down to about 1850, colonial sugar paid less than half the duty levied on foreign products under the British tariff, and therefore held a practical monopoly of the home market.

Reckoning rum and molasses as part of the sugar crop, a good estate, well handled, might yield nearly the equivalent of three tons to the acre ; therefore, the net profit in ordinary seasons approximated £50 the acre, and during war, £120. In other words, one of the small Barbados plantations of two hundred acres of cane represented an income of \$50,000 as a minimum, and \$120,000 as a maximum.

Modern expansion began with the English industrial revolution, dating from about 1760. To both the east and the west the world lay open ; and competition could gain small purchase on prices in a society growing so vigorously that it could absorb far more than

it could produce. That era reached its climax with Waterloo ; and during that era the West Indies enjoyed their highest fortune. As Dr. Morris has rather sadly observed, in his recent report¹ to the British Government :

“Jamaica had nearly attained the meridian of its prosperity in 1787, just one hundred and ten years ago. It would be useful to contrast the quantity and value of its exports [then] with the exports of to-day :

Product.	1787.	1896.
Sugar	42,028 tons.	22,995 tons.
Rum	2,543,025 gallons.	1,881,100 gallons.
Molasses	6,416 gallons.
(Other items are omitted.)		
Total value	£2,283,728	£1,775,016.”

In 1805, nevertheless, when the war had raised prices 50 per cent, Jamaican trade dwarfed even this showing. In that year she actually sold 150,352 hogsheads of sugar, and more than 5,000,000 gallons of rum ; the price of a ton of Muscovado sugar being £53, while 4s. 9d. was paid for a gallon of rum. In 1897, raw sugar brought £9 13s. the ton, and rum 1s. 4d. the gallon. Indeed, from 1790 onward for a quarter of a century, the gains of England on all sides were prodigious ; for she kept Continental Europe under blockade, and exacted what prices she pleased for imports. Many tropical products, for example, such as spices and sugar, which had become almost necessities, could only reach France by water ; and, as England held the sea, she imposed her own terms on all the territory occupied by the French. During those years the tide of commercial exchanges reached its flood in favor of the United Kingdom ; and then she amassed much of those unprecedented accumulations on whose income she has of late relied to balance the growing trade-deficit caused by her purchases of foreign food. Yet, even in the moment of victory, and, perhaps, because of the completeness of her triumph, Great Britain laid the seeds of a competition which has since gnawed her vitals,—a competition which has, moreover, ruined the West Indies, formerly the flower of her empire.

Since the dawn of history two forms of centralization, evolved through different processes of transportation, have contended for supremacy. The one, which may be called the Continental system, based upon the highway, found its amplest expression in Rome : the

¹ Report of the West India Royal Commission, Appendix A, p. 139.

other, which may be described as the Maritime, is the offspring of the sea, and has served as the vehicle for the consolidation of that economic system which has centralized the modern world, and whose heart has been London. Before the discovery of the compass and the quadrant made the ocean navigable, the Continental system usually predominated. From the Crusades to the collapse of France in 1870, the Maritime had the advantage. Recently, the railroad, by bringing the cost of land- and water-carriage nearer an equality, has tended to inflame the conflict, without, as yet, deciding the victory.

The Continental system became incarnate in Napoleon. Generations in advance of his age, with the eye of genius he saw that between movement by land and movement by water there existed a rivalry which could know no other arbiter than battle; and he fought to the end. Feeling the coil of the blockade slowly strangling him, he strove to make his country self-sufficing, while striking at the vitals of his enemy. Rightly regarding the distant dependencies as the members which fed the heart at London, he contemplated a march upon India by land at the same time that he attacked the sugar islands by a policy more insidious and deadly than open war.

From an early period Bonaparte speculated on the possibility of making sugar from the beet; and in 1808 he wrote to scientific men pressing them to investigate the subject. In 1811 he had become certain of success; and early in that year he outlined, for his Minister of the Interior, a policy of state encouragement of the domestic sugar industry which, in substance, has been adopted by the chief Continental nations, and which survives to this day. In one paragraph the Emperor declared, "that, by thus employing a small acreage, France might succeed in escaping the tribute she paid to foreigners."

Yet even Bonaparte failed to grasp the full bearings of the system of retaliation which he invented, and which was destined, before the century closed, to play a chief part in the recentralization of the world. He fell almost immediately; and the progress of competition is slow. In 1828 the French sugar production reached only 6,665 tons; in 1836, 49,000; in 1847, 64,000; nor was it until after 1850, when the Continent had begun to feel the acceleration of movement caused by the railroad, and the English had opened their markets to the bounty-fed product, by establishing uniform duties on foreign and colonial sugar, that the manufacture attained 100,000 tons. Then, however, the advance became rapid; and in 1862 England imported

40,000 tons of her rival's produce, against 193,000 drawn from the colonies of the Caribbean Sea. In 1871, when Germany took the place theretofore held by France, the plantations already lagged behind : in that year England imported 232,000 tons of Continental beet, as against 213,000 of West Indian cane.

This gradual occupation of the French market, and this invasion of the English, caused a regular fall in the price of sugar and its derivatives, in spite of the gold discoveries of 1849, which raised all other values. In discussing the interval between 1850 and 1862, Jevons, in his "Investigations in Currency and Finance," p. 55, has remarked :

"Sugar and spirits stand out as the only two obstinate and real exceptions to a general rise of prices ; but again, as Jamaica rum, quoted for spirits, is made from sugar, they might be said to form only a single exception."

Although in 1870 the vigor of France had long been on the ebb, the French attack proved serious. In 1858 Muscovado sold for 27s. 10d. the hundredweight ; in 1867, when German consolidation began, it had dropped to 22s. 4d. ; and in 1868 the long Cuban convulsion opened which has lasted till to-day.

The migration eastward of the centre of the Continental system, whose focus, under Napoleon, had been at Paris, occasioned the rise of Germany. But, though the capital city might change, the instinct of the centralized mass remained constant ; and the Emperor of Germany, in assuming the position of the Emperor of France, assumed his methods and his attitude toward England. The chief difference between the two civilizations lay in a difference of energy.

The figures which tell of the impact of this new Power upon its maritime rival may well be called dramatic. Within less than a generation from the coronation at Versailles of the German successor of Napoleon, English sugar had been substantially driven from the English market, the West Indies had been ruined, Cuba had been ravaged with fire and sword, Spain had been crushed by the United States, the United States had been thrown upon the coast of Asia, and the world had been sent plunging forward toward a new equilibrium. Meanwhile, sugar had been forced down to £9 a ton.

In 1873 the total export of beet sugar from France and Germany stood thus: France, 221,000 tons; Germany, 24,000 tons. In 1896 the imports into England alone stood thus : From France, 143,000 tons ; from Germany, 755,000 tons. In 1871 England imported 455,962

tons of cane and 232,850 of beet ; in 1896, 382,000 tons of cane and 1,144,000 of beet.

Witnesses testified before a commission in London that, during recent years, the refining trade had undergone a "progressive process of extinction," and that whereas it then produced wealth to the extent of £2,000,000 a year, it would, if healthy, yield £6,000,000.¹

Taken in all its ramifications, this destruction of the sugar interest may, probably, be reckoned the heaviest financial blow that a competitor has ever dealt Great Britain, unless the injury to her domestic agriculture by the fall in the price of wheat be esteemed a loss through competition. Roughly, it may be computed somewhat as follows :

Assuming that, toward 1880, the British West Indies exported, in round numbers, 300,000 tons of sugar, 10,000,000 gallons of molasses, and 5,000,000 gallons of rum, and calculating the profit on the basis of 1787, we reach a total of about £5,000,000 for sugar, and of, perhaps, £2,000,000 more for molasses and rum. This £7,000,000 has been obliterated. To this must be added the shrinkage of purchasing power for new machinery, clothes, and food, which are reckoned under the head of "Cost of Production," the diminution of freights, the decay of the home refining trade, and the blight of the whole archipelago, more especially the complete arrest of the growth of wonderful islands like Dominica and St. Lucia, now almost wildernesses, and of the vast province of Guiana, capable of being turned into one of the most fruitful portions of the earth—"At once the largest and most valuable of the British West Indian colonies, [whose] capabilities of development are practically unlimited."² What such a check has meant to Great Britain is beyond human computation. In the words of a pamphlet of the last century :

"Our sugar colonies are of the utmost consequence and importance to Great Britain. They have been equal to the mines of the Spanish West Indies, and have contributed in a particular manner to the trade, navigation, and wealth of this kingdom."³

Without dispute, whatever might have been done, sugar must have fallen in value ; but these questions are always questions of degree. Had the mother-country protected the interests of her colonies so far as to keep them on an equal footing with their competitors, that is to say, had she counteracted by her tariff the advantage

¹ Report of West India Royal Commission, Appendix C, vol. i, part 1, pp. 153-4.

² Report of Dr. MORRIS, Appendix A, p. 88.

³ "The Importance of the Sugar Colonies to Great Britain" (1781), pp. 35-6.

given by Germany to her exporters by subsidies, the decline in price might not have exceeded economies made possible by improved machinery and concentration of property. According to the witnesses before the West India Royal Commission, the cost of manufacturing a ton of sugar has been reduced, within twenty years, from about £18 to £8 or £10 a ton.

Germany has not ruined the West Indies by legitimate competition, but by an adherence to Napoleon's policy of attack, which was a military measure. For nearly three generations the chief Continental nations have, with hostile intent, artificially stimulated the export of sugar, and have increased the stimulant as prices have fallen, in order to counteract the loss to the manufacturer. In August, 1896, Germany and Austria doubled their bounties : in the following spring France advanced hers. Admitting, therefore, the success of Napoleon's war policy, one of the most interesting problems of our time is the cause which has rendered England vulnerable to this onslaught ; for the course of civilization promises to hinge on the ability of Great Britain to maintain the economic ascendancy she won at Trafalgar and Waterloo.

If space permitted, nothing would be easier than to demonstrate that, although in 1815 London was the heart of the Maritime system, the United Kingdom did not achieve an undisputed economic supremacy until about 1835. Moreover, the supremacy was short ; lasting only a generation, and ending with the rise of Germany in 1870. There is no mistaking this period ; for it bears, in its thought, its literature, its art, and its public policy, the impress of the force which created it. It was the age of the Manchester School, of Cobden, of Bright, and of Mill. But Cobden, Bright, and Manchester doctrines were phenomena which attended the advent of a new ruling class. A social revolution, which had been in progress for nearly a century, was consummated between 1840 and 1850 ; England passed from a rural into an urban community ; and immediately a new era opened. The opening of this era is marked with equal clearness upon the pages of the Census and of the Statute-Book. In 1841 the urban population of England and Wales numbered 7,679,737 souls ; the rural, 8,229,395. In 1851 the urban population had increased to 9,213,942 ; the rural, only to 8,713,667. In 1846 Peel's Administration repealed the Corn Laws : in 1848 Lord John Russell's Administration equalized the sugar duties, by putting colonial and foreign sugar on the same footing.

The power of the ancient rural population fell in 1846, with the repeal of the Corn Laws ; and this event marked the rise of a new social stratum to control, who thenceforward used the machinery of government, as rulers always use it, for their own advantage. Inertia is, however, the bane of every aristocracy, be it an aristocracy of the rich or of the poor. By nature, man is lazy, working only under compulsion ; and when he is strong he will always live, as far as he can, upon the labor or the property of the weak. The Romans fed themselves by taxing the provinces after their conquest, and degenerated ; the Spaniards decayed when they could empty the mines of Mexico and Peru at no further sacrifice of energy than exterminating the natives ; and slaveholders are notoriously indolent. So it has been, in a greater or less degree, with the British industrial class. The industrial population consists of two sections, the wage-earners and the capitalists,—sections hostile to each other, but apt to be united against those whom they can coerce. Certainly, they have always been at one in demanding cheap food,—the capitalists, that wages might not rise ; the hands, that they might live at ease. To attain their end they have consistently sacrificed the farmers, as the Romans sacrificed the provincials ; and the West Indian planters have but shared in the general agricultural ruin.

The human mind is so constituted that whatever benefits an individual seems to that individual to benefit the race ; consequently, institutions like slavery and polygamy, and trades like usury, piracy, and slaving, have never lacked defenders on moral grounds. Analogously, the English have justified the practical confiscation of the sugar estates, on the ground that, though the planters might be ruined, the nation at large enjoyed cheap sugar, thereby reaping a preponderating economic advantage. Nevertheless, eliminating abstract justice, as never having decided public policy, it is not clear that the English, as a community, have reaped any economic advantage from cheap sugar ; while, on the other hand, they have certainly lost by the destruction of the colonies. A few figures will make this proposition plain.

In 1869, before the collapse of France, and when the sugar islands were still relatively prosperous, Englishmen consumed, on the average, 42 pounds of sugar *per capita*, annually. That this is enough for either health or reasonable enjoyment is proved by the fact that few peoples use so much to-day. For example, in 1896 Italy consumed 7.19 lbs. *per capita* ; Spain, 12.67 lbs. ; Austria-Hungary,

16.84 lbs.; Belgium, 22.8 lbs.; Germany, 27.14 lbs.; and France, 28.24 lbs.

In the United States, where the use of sweets is said to be injuriously excessive, only 35 lbs. *per capita* were consumed in 1869, and 61 lbs. *per capita* in 1898. In England during 1895-97 every human being, including babies, invalids, and paupers, disposed, on the average, of nearly 4 ozs. of sugar a day, or 84.77 lbs. a year. In other words, each citizen spent for sugar in those years almost exactly what he spent in 1869, the difference being that he doubled an already ample allowance.

Furthermore, neither from the economic nor the sanitary standpoint do the uses to which this extra sugar ration is put seem satisfactory. One of the chief of these appears to be to encourage drinking. Though the exports of beer from England show a tendency to decline, brewing grows apace. Twenty-seven gallons a year *per capita*, counting women and children, is surely enough. In America, though the amount of spirits drunk is the same, 15½ gallons of beer suffice; and American beer is light. Twenty-seven and one-quarter gallons was the measure for England in 1883; yet in 1897 it had swelled to 31½ gallons, an expansion at the rate of about 1 per cent a year. But, fast as brewing grows, the weight of sugar used in the beer grows faster. In 1883 the public put up with something less than 4¾ lbs. of sugar to the barrel: in 1897 it demanded between 8 and 9 lbs.

The same tendency toward extravagance appears throughout the list of imported articles of food. The ordinary citizen buys 63 per cent more foreign bacon and ham, 58 per cent more butter, 162 per cent more beef, and 1 lb. more tea annually than he did fourteen years ago. Yet, in 1883, Britons had not the reputation of being underfed.

This spread of self-indulgence would be without significance were it accompanied by a corresponding accretion of energy; but the industrial class of England has never learned that a larger cost of living must find its compensation in additional economy in production. On the one hand, trade unions have enforced shorter hours and withstood labor-saving machines: on the other, capitalists have failed to consolidate entire trades under a single management, and thereby to reduce salaries and rent to a minimum.

Perhaps no better gauge can exist of the energy of a great industrial and exporting nation—especially a nation like England,

which has practically attained its full internal development—than the amount of its *per capita* exports taken through a series of years. The subjoined table shows that, while Germany has remained stationary, and America has bounded forward, England, during the last generation, has retrograded.

TABLE SHOWING PROPORTION *Per Capita* OF THE EXPORTS OF MERCHANDISE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE UNITED STATES, AND GERMANY, DURING THE PERIOD 1869-1897.

Year.	United Kingdom.			United States.	Germany.		
	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
1869.....	6	2	7	7.29	Data 8 in-	for years com-	these are plete.
1870.....	6	7	11	9.27			
1871.....	7	1	7	10.83			
1872.....	8	1	0	10.55			
1873.....	7	18	10	12.12			
1874.....	7	7	9	13.13			
1875.....	6	16	6	11.36			
1876.....	6	1	3	11.64			
1877.....	5	18	11	12.72	3	4	10
1878.....	5	14	1	14.30	3	7	9
1879.....	5	12	2	14.29	3	4	11
1880.....	6	9	5	16.43	3	4	10
1881.....	6	14	0	17.23	3	5	9
1882.....	6	16	10	13.97	3	10	0
1883.....	6	14	8	14.98	3	12	3
1884.....	6	10	6	13.20	3	10	0
1885.....	5	18	4	12.94	3	1	5
1886.....	5	17	2	11.60	3	3	8
1887.....	6	1	3	11.98	3	6	8
1888.....	6	7	2	11.40	3	8	5
1889.....	6	13	11	11.92	3	3	3
1890.....	7	0	7	13.50	3	7	4
1891.....	6	10	10	13.63	3	4	2
1892.....	5	19	3	15.53	2	19	9
1893.....	5	13	7	12.44	3	2	7
1894.....	5	11	5	12.73	2	19	6
1895.....	5	15	8	11.37	3	3	6
1896.....	6	1	8	12.11	3	7	5
1897.....	5	17	7	14.17

As often happens in war, Napoleon, when striking at his enemy, wounded his friend. For centuries Spain drew most of her resources from her colonies; and, as these dwindled in number, the pressure increased on those which remained. When the insurrection broke out in 1868, Cuba produced about one-half of the cane of the world; but for several years previously prices had ranged so low that produc-

tion on the old basis ceased to be profitable. Accordingly, the concentration of property had already begun, and

"numerous American and English fortune-hunters, who had purchased large estates from impoverished Cubans, . . . had started sugar and tobacco growing on an improved system in various parts of the island."¹

The planters thus evicted gradually came to form a class of broken men ripe for brigandage ; and though, at the outbreak of the insurrection, certain of the leaders were persons of property and position who revolted against the maladministration of Spain, the discontent was always fomented by what amounted to a slow confiscation of the land.

The truth of these inferences may be demonstrated by the character of the war, which was always rural. The rebel armies, if such these marauders can be called, were composed partly of adventurers, who acted as officers, and partly of Negroes whose employment had gone with the devastation of the sugar estates. The towns never participated in the movement ; and the vagrant bands who infested the hills and ravaged the plantations consisted

"of a horde of civilized and uncivilized adventurers, recruited from all parts of the island, and indeed from the four quarters of the globe ; . . . the riffraff turned out of the neighboring islands, Americans, Mexicans, Germans, Italians, and even a few Englishmen."²

This convulsion lasted through nearly a generation ; flickering out when business mended, and flaring up when it failed, until the death-blow came with the panic of 1893. Between 1893 and 1895 sugar sank about 30 per cent, and the death-agony began. The American public knows the rest.

But if the Spanish civilization in the West Indies has fallen amid blood and fire, the English shows every sign of decrepitude. Great Britain is a strong Power, and her police is irresistible ; but the decay of her islands is admitted. Had England retained the energy of 1805, when her conferences with her enemies were conducted at spots like Trafalgar, she might not perhaps have bartered her heritage for a sugar-plum ; but the society of 1870 saw life with different eyes from those of the men who fought the Napoleonic wars. Instead of being stimulated to ferocity by the Continental attack, the English took the bribe, and withdrew from the contest. Instead of accelerating their movement, they relaxed it.

¹ "Cuba Past and Present" (DAVEY), p. 80.

² *Ibid.*, p. 102.

The tendency of modern trade is toward consolidation, because the administration of the largest mass is the cheapest. This is pre-eminently true of sugar manufacture ; for, above all forms of agriculture, sugar lends itself to centralization. The chief expense of the plantation is the mill to crush the cane ; and the more cane that can be crushed by a single machine, the more economical is the process. Accordingly, the only limit to the size of the modern factory is the distance it pays to carry a bulky raw material ; and this depends on the perfection of the transportation. Therefore, an energetic population, pressed by competition, would normally have concentrated property on a vast scale, and the Government would have addressed itself to providing universal cheap transportation,—presumably a state system, like that of Germany or Russia. The islands are well adapted to electric tramways running down the valleys to the ports, which could draw their electricity from central power-houses built on water-courses. At the ports the produce can be collected by coasters ; and such is substantially the method of the Boston Fruit Company in Jamaica, which has been crowned with brilliant success. These phenomena are conspicuously lacking among the British. The only railroad of Jamaica has been built at vast expense over the mountains where nobody goes ; and it charges prohibitive rates because, being bankrupt, it lacks rolling-stock to do its business. Thus, the farmers are forced to haul their crops along the roads, and are expected to compete with German bounty-fed beet, carried at a fixed minimum charge on state lines. The British Government has even gone further, and has discouraged quick transportation to America. Plant made a proposition to extend his service from Florida to Jamaica ; but the offer was declined. Lastly, Great Britain, while abandoning the colonists to the Germans, has used them to support an exceedingly costly system of government, whose chief object has been to provide a long pay-roll and pension-list. This system has broken down. It has proved only less disastrous than that of Spain.

On the other hand, the native population has shown little recuperative energy. Instead of being consolidated, the estates have been abandoned when they ceased to pay, although throughout the islands well-handled and well-situated sugar lands have never yet proved unprofitable, and although both Government and people are aware that nothing can ever replace the sugar industry, both on account of its magnitude and of the employment it gives to labor.

Yet, when allowance has been made for West Indian inertia, the

stubborn fact remains that the influx of fresh capital and fresh blood has been arrested by the fear of progressively increasing sugar bounties and correspondingly decreasing values. Men do not venture their fortunes in speculation when they know that the Power, which should protect them, has accepted a bribe to abandon them to an adversary bent on destroying the industry in which they are engaged.

The inference from these considerations is, that the British Empire in the Western tropics is disintegrating, and that it is disintegrating because a governing class has arisen in the Kingdom which, from greed, has compounded with its natural and hereditary enemy. The advent of this class has wrought great changes in the past, and is full of meaning for the future. Already it has precipitated revolt in Cuba, defeat for Spain, expansion for America, and corresponding decline for England. Should the future resemble the past, and the conditions of competition remain unchanged, the Caribbean archipelago must, probably, either be absorbed by the economic system of the United States or lapse into barbarism. Now the current sets toward America; and the absorption of any considerable islands will probably lead to the assimilation of the rest; for the preference of the products of any portion of the archipelago by the United States would so depress the trade of the remainder as to render civilized life therein precarious. Should the foregoing deductions be correct, it is evident that the expansion of the United States is automatic and inevitable, and that, in expanding, she only obeys the impulsion of nature, like any other substance. If the Republic moves toward further concentration, it is because the world about it moves; and if it changes its institutions, it is because the conditions of modern competition demand it.

A century ago, when communication was costly and slow, the capital cities of the two competing economic systems might lie side by side on the Seine and on the Thames, and they might approach each other thus closely because the spheres of which they were the centres were relatively small. Since then, as movement has quickened, these spheres have enlarged until the Continental, having stretched eastward overland until it has reached Manchuria, now seeks to consolidate all Northern and Eastern China. Meanwhile, the Maritime, leaving the North American continent in its rear, is drawing to itself the islands of the Pacific, is fortifying the approaches thereto, and is preparing to ascend the Yang-tse and the Ho-hang-ho.

But, in proportion as the bulk of the masses of which they were

once the core has dilated, the position of London and Paris has become eccentric. Therefore, the foci of energy of modern society tend to separate, the one drawing toward the confines of Russia, the other gravitating toward America ; and, as they separate, competition adjusts itself to the new equilibrium. The burden of the struggle between the two systems is passing from the shoulders of Englishmen and Frenchmen, who have borne it in the past, to those of Americans and Germans, who must bear it in the future. Already, the heat generated by contact at the circumference of these rival masses presages possible war.

Furthermore, if America is destined to win in this battle for life, she must win because she is the fittest to survive under the conditions of the twentieth century. From the dawn of history, nature has always preferred those organisms which worked most economically at the time her choice was made. Men may be able to live most cheaply because they can conquer, confiscate, and enslave, like the Romans, or because they can toil longest on the least nutriment, like the Chinese ; but, among Western races, who vary little in tenacity of life, those have proved the most economical who have attained the highest centralization combined with the greatest rapidity of movement. Hence, if Americans are to outstrip their opponents, they must do so by having a compacter and more flexible organization and shorter and cheaper communications. On their side, Russia and Germany are exerting their whole strength. They hope to economize in their administration by reducing their armaments, just as we increase ours ; and they are completing a railroad to Peking, by which they propose to centralize the greatest mass of cheap labor in the world, on the spot where mineral resources are richest.

Nothing under the sun is stationary : not to advance is to recede ; and to recede before your competitor is ruin. Unless the Maritime system can absorb and consolidate mankind as energetically as the Continental, the relation which the two have borne to each other since Waterloo must be reversed.

The West Indies are gravitating toward the United States ; therefore, the West Indies must be consolidated, and the lines of communication with them be shortened and cheapened. Therefore, a canal to the Pacific must be built ; and Central America must become an integral part of the economic mass, much as Egypt has become a part of England in order to guarantee her communications with India. Lastly, adequate outlets for the products of this huge centre of energy

must be insured; for, should production be thrown back on our hands by the closing of Asiatic markets to us, or should our industries be crippled by attacks such as those which have ruined the West Indies, we shall suffer from having been the weaker, and our civilization will wither like the civilizations which have preceded it.

If expansion and concentration are necessary, because the administration of the largest mass is the least costly, then America must expand and concentrate until the limit of the possible is attained; for Governments are simply huge corporations in competition, in which the most economical, in proportion to its energy, survives, and in which the wasteful and the slow are undersold and eliminated.

BROOKS ADAMS.

SOME LIGHT ON THE CANADIAN ENIGMA.

OUT of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee two years ago came the knowledge that Canada was, in all things but name, an independent nation ; that Great Britain not only was not desirous to hold her children across the sea in tutelage, but encouraged them to assert their manhood and their independence and to manage their own affairs. This attitude of the British Government was as startling to the Administration in Washington as it was important. The relations between the United States and the Dominion of Canada had for years been unsatisfactory ; they had been a constant source of friction between the Washington and London cabinets ; and more than once they had nearly led to ruptures. Washington, having only a superficial knowledge of Canadian affairs, regarded Canada as an overgrown boy whose youth is a protection from a man's just vengeance, but who is too old to be summarily punished. As a self-governing colony, Canada had the power to make laws to suit herself, no matter how objectionable they might be to the United States : as an integral part of the British Empire, the protests of the United States had to be addressed not to the Canadian Premier at Ottawa, but to the British Premier in London. In other words, Canada enjoyed all the advantages of independence and none of its responsibilities.

This was a constant thorn in the side of Washington. It came to be believed by Presidents and Secretaries of State and Members of Congress that Great Britain, while compelled to defend her spoiled child publicly, yet secretly longed to use the rod ; and this belief inflamed the feeling existing against Canada. When, therefore, two years ago, Sir Wilfrid Laurier went to London, to bear Canada's tribute to her Queen, and, as a result of his visit, it was seen that Canada was ruled in Ottawa and not in Downing Street ; when Sir Wilfrid offered preferential trade to Great Britain ; and when, at his request, the Marquis of Salisbury denounced the commercial treaties with Germany and Belgium, it was notice to the world that Canada was no longer a ward, but had come into full possession of her heritage.