

# AMERICA REVISITED IN WAR TIME.

BY HENRY NORMAN.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Mr. Henry Norman is well known as an English traveler, author, and journalist. After courses of study in France and Germany, he chose Harvard for his university, and graduated there in 1881. His special field of work as author and journalist is foreign politics, and he may generally be looked for where any question of international diplomacy grows acute. This brought him to Washington immediately after President Cleveland's Venezuela message, and the abandonment of the "Schomburgk Line" as the special point in the British demand was due in large part to the official documents of half a century previous which Mr. Norman secured in Washington and cabled to the "Daily Chronicle." He was thanked by President Cleveland for his services to the cause of peace. His present visit to Washington is due, of course, to the war and the development of closer relations between the United States and Great Britain. Mr. Norman spent four years in the Far East, visiting among other countries the Philippine Islands, and he has published two well-known books on the Far Eastern peoples and countries. Mrs. Norman is also an author. She was, before her marriage, Miss Mémie Muriel Dowie, and is a grand-daughter of Dr. Robert Chambers of Edinburgh. She has written several books, the earliest being "A Girl in the Karpathians," and the latest, "The Crook of the Bough."

"OF course you fully understand," said Mr. Speaker Reed to me a few days ago, "that we have 'burst our swaddling-clothes'?" Everybody in the room smiled at the characteristic sarcasm. But does the inflated phrase rest upon a substratum of truth, or do the American people and the American idea stand virtually where they did three years ago? That is the most interesting question in the world to-day. It would be presumption to offer a confident answer: it is permissible to express an opinion.

When I graduated from Harvard, I thought I knew something of America. I found out my mistake after a few months spent in the West. During the seventeen years that have, alas! slipped away since then, American affairs have interested me in a degree second only to those of my own country. From time to time I have come back and corrected my impressions. On each occasion, however, a curious thing has happened. I have gone home profoundly impressed with the energy, the intelligence, the courage, the resources, and the prospects of the American people; and bit by bit this impression has oozed away, like water from a leaky tub, until I found myself doubting whether the United States is really on the up grade at all. The triumphs of corruption in politics, the hair-breadth escape from free silver and socialism at the White House, the growth of trusts, the tariff tinkered to fill the pockets of individuals, the capture of New York by Tammany, the capitulation of New England to the Irish, the social condition of the coal and iron districts of Pennsylvania, the dangers lurking in the presence

of the masses of human scum from Central Europe, the outbreaks of savagery which have characterized certain labor troubles, the degeneration of the Senate, the rejection of the Arbitration Treaty; above all, the apparently placid acquiescence of the better American individual in things which he loathed—these were some of the holes through which my optimism ran to waste. In fact, as Emerson said Englishmen do when they speak of America, I forgot my philosophy and remembered my disparaging anecdotes. Distance lent deception to the view. Now I come back, use my eyes and ears for a few weeks, talk intimately with many people, and what is corrupt and dangerous falls into its proper proportion and perspective, pessimism hides itself like a night-prowling animal at sunrise, and when I discuss with Americans the future of their country I am apt to find myself more royalist than the king.

Why is this the effect of America revisited? I begin with little things.

The observant visitor to America must be impressed first with the remarkable development of what may be called applied intelligence. Not only is there an extraordinary fertility of invention, but also, what is perhaps more striking still, there is apparently an instant readiness on everybody's part to make use of the things invented. In Europe, when we have a certain "fitment" in house or office that serves its purpose well, we are satisfied with it and go on with our work. If anybody comes along with something rather better, we look upon him as a nuisance. The thing we have is quite good enough. In America it seems that a man

will try an object one day and throw it away the next for something a trifle more convenient or expeditious. From visit to visit, for example, I have observed a constant improvement in the telephone. The instrument has grown smaller, neater, more graceful, simpler, and easier to use. As it stands on an American desk to-day, it might be a flower-holder. In some of the best and most expensive parts of London to-day you cannot have a telephone put in your house at all. When you do, it is the ugly box arrangement of ten years ago. I call upon a journalist friend in New York. Upon his desk stands an elegant little apparatus through which he converses every afternoon with Washington and Chicago. In a London newspaper office you might as well look for a machine for making liquid air. The street cars are another example. When I was here a short time ago, the system of traction was by underground cable. This is already apparently becoming extinct. The cars themselves, too, are often marvels of comfort and light. In London there is not, so far as I know, a single street car propelled by any mechanical means, and they are the dim and dirty vehicles of a quarter of a century ago. It is impossible to imagine a better system of street transport than prevails, for instance, in Washington. Even the traveling post-office runs by electricity along the tracks. Another striking example is builders' hardware. Locks, hinges, sash-pulleys, window-fasteners, bath-fittings, and the like are years ahead of us. There is not a hotel in Europe—I do not believe there is a private house—in which these things are as graceful and serviceable as they are at the hotel where I stayed in New York. On this visit I noticed a new fitting on the wall of the bathroom. It was an electric heater for curling-irons! To you this perhaps seems a very ordinary kind of thing. I stood before it in amazement. Or take what you call elevators and we call lifts. We are in the dark ages still. There is not a building in London, indeed not in Europe, constructed with the ingenuity, the convenience, the elegance of some of the new big buildings in Broadway. I happen to be interested at this moment in house-building; therefore I am taking home a supply of small objects and a collection of catalogues of every kind. The farm offers another set of examples. Since in England our farms are comparatively small, and the competition of the Western prairie and Russian steppe and Argentine plain is ruining

us, it is obvious that we should follow intensive cultivation and employ every possible appliance to get more and cheaper produce from the land. The facts are the exact opposite. American agricultural machinery has revolutionized farming for you. We stand virtually where we did twenty-five or fifty years ago. Every English farm laborer believes that hedgehogs suck cows. My own man suffocates his bees at the end of each season, because he says they get lazy and are not worth keeping. The most convenient implement I own is an American horse-hoe. Cut green bones form one of the valuable foods for poultry. There is not, to the best of my belief, a green-bone cutter in the United Kingdom. I have just ordered one in Massachusetts.

These are trifling matters, if you will; but they are extremely significant, and the same considerations apply in every direction. The English bicycle-makers tell you that a machine weighing less than thirty pounds is not really safe. I am a fairly heavy man, and I have ridden for three years a Columbia weighing twenty-five pounds, at all seasons and on all kinds of roads, and the first accident or breakage has yet to happen to it. American heavy electrical machinery is going all over the world. American locomotives are beating British ones in foreign markets. American mining machinery has long been without a rival. Naturally, it is not agreeable for me, as an Englishman, to chronicle these facts; and, of course, in other directions and enterprises the British manufacturer still beats the world. But I hold it to be a patriotic duty to warn my fellow-countrymen that they must alter their methods and make new and different efforts if they are to hold their own in the future.

I could fill pages with reflections suggested by "America Revisited." But the addendum "in War Time" suggests matters of vaster interest, so I hurry on. Two other observations, however, I must set down. First, it is obvious that not only in mechanical ingenuity and commercial enterprise are the American people advancing fast, but the growth of taste is also great and striking. In domestic architecture America has made great strides during the last few years, and to-day she is unsurpassed, even by England, the land of the beautiful home. In commercial architecture I think she is already ahead. There is a street-car terminus in Washington more attractive to the eye for sound artistic reasons than most city halls going up in Europe to-day. Better

taste is shown by American publishers in the binding of their books than is generally to be found in Europe. American women are to-day dressed with greater elegance than any women outside Paris. And this leads me to my second reflection. Unless my eye deceives me, the race of American women is growing taller and stronger and handsomer. During the twenty-two years I have visited the United States I have noticed this gradual development. Greatly daring, I express the conviction that in the world no gathering of more beautiful women can be seen than in the halls of the Waldorf Hotel any afternoon between five and six. Columbia is putting on beauty as a garment. When her voice becomes as attractive as her figure and her features, she shall be called Helen, and, like her of Troy, confer immortality with a kiss.

In "America in War Time," however, there are stranger things by far than these. Unless all signs fail, a vital modification has come over the country; a new era has opened; the great Republic has suffered a sea-change. This has not been deliberate. No statesman foresaw and willed it. Possibly a majority of the people do not desire it. The gods do not consult mortals. If the "Maine" had not been blown up, there would have been no war. If the Cuban insurgents had been as strong as was supposed, the war might have stopped with the freedom of Cuba. If Admiral Dewey had not been forced to make a new base for his fleet, he would not have smashed the Spanish squadron. If he had not smashed it, and thus become responsible for the islands, he would not have needed reinforcements. If ten thousand American troops had not been sent to him, there would have been no question of keeping the Philippines. A chain of events, forged by invisible hands, has drawn the American people to ask themselves whether their destiny restricts them forever within the limits of their own continent; why they should not appear among the Powers of the world in the coming struggle for the East, seize new markets for themselves, and set their flag over far-off lands to allure their pioneers and merchants to fresh fields. To such a question men of our race find instinctively but one answer. It is the sap of the tree pushing resistlessly up in spring. To Frenchman and German the founding of colonies is a mechanical, state-fostered, theoretically-justified operation. It is in an Englishman's blood; he cannot see a sea without desiring to cross it, or a mountain without wanting

to climb over it; the "back of beyond" draws him like a magnet.

I cannot help thinking it will be so with America also. Of course I know the objections well. The Constitution makes no provision for the government of alien races in remote lands; there is no class of trained administrators; the governorship of the first colony will go to the man who "fixed the fences" in the last election; colonial rivalry with foreign nations will bring entanglement in their quarrels; army and navy must be kept great; they will cost vast sums, and their existence will be a temptation to use them. These are strong arguments and may prevail. But the answers are as strong. The Constitution is not a law of nature: man made it and man can mend it; the imperative necessity for capable and honest men may be the death-blow to the system which distributes embassies and legations and consulates as political rewards; the war has brought America into sharp-cut relations with foreign Powers, and nothing can alter this; a strong navy is already building, and the American people will insist upon the formation of an army large enough, for instance, to avoid such a humiliation as having to wait all summer to collect and train a force strong enough to fight Spain in Cuba. It is like the antinomies of Kant: the contradictory propositions can both be proved. Some minds will be convinced by the one set of arguments, others by the other. But in the end, from all I have seen and heard, I fancy the subtle temptation of empire, the magic magnetism of the Orient, the *Drang nach Osten*, will prevail. It is like the hypnotism of the East over the traveler; once let its fever touch your blood, and you are enchained as the tide to the moon.

"Whoso has tasted the honey-sweet fruit from the stem of the lotus  
Never once wishes to leave it, and never once seeks to go homeward;  
There would he stay, if he could, content with the eaters of lotus,  
Plucking and eating the lotus, forgetting that he was returning."

An American colonial policy will have some results which have not yet all been considered. "Blood is the price of admiralty," and many a brave life will be spent in the getting. When the war with China broke out, Japan sent 5,000 soldiers to the Pescadores, islands certainly not more trying to health than the Philippines. Thirty of these were killed in fight, and exactly 1,050 were

effective when the war was over. The remainder had either died or been invalidated home. And the Japanese soldier is accustomed to an Eastern summer and Eastern food. Hong Kong was known for many years as the "grave of regiments." Its cemetery, called "Happy Valley," reads to-day like a military directory. British troops there are paraded every morning for "cholera-belt inspection," and any man found without that essential part of costume in the tropics gets "three days C.B." (confinement to barracks). When I was in Manila, an epidemic of cholera was raging; a hundred people were dying a day. The Spaniards, crying "*Colerico!*" stuffed their handkerchiefs into their mouths and turned their faces to the wall as a stricken man was carried to hospital in a hammock slung on a pole, covered with a sheet. One of the Chinese firemen of the "Zafiro" (now an American auxiliary vessel) died just before we sailed. And then the typhoons! Between Manila and Hong Kong is the most typhoon-haunted sea in the world. But it is needless to dwell on horrors. Such things have never deterred Englishmen, nor will they deter Americans. There is yellow fever in Florida; there are blizzards in Dakota; and I have been told that the climate of Arizona leaves something to be desired in summer. Besides, the Philippines are an inexhaustible storehouse of tropical wealth. They are also the home of the most marvelous orchids in the world; and American hothouses will soon blaze with unimagined splendor, while American beauty will lavish the tenderest nursing on the Philippine pioneer who brings her in his pallid and shaking hands a mysterious garment of *jusi*, woven silk and pine-fibre, the most diaphanous and exquisite fabric in creation. And that olive-skinned *mestiza* I saw, half emigrated Spaniard and half native Indian, with her loose jet-black hair eighty inches long, how interesting she would be as a social attraction—or an advertisement!

Another result of annexation has apparently escaped attention. When the Stars and Stripes float over the land which Magellan discovered and the city which Legaspi founded, presumably the native products will enter the United States free of duty. In that case the cheap cigar, and to some extent the more expensive cigar, of Cuba will disappear, and Key West may retire from business. Of Manila cigars, when I was there a few years ago, the yearly output was 140,000,000, besides tobacco. And what will become of the American cigarette, since

one of the score of factories in Manila turns out 38,000,000 a year? The Cigarette Trust must make haste to deploy its skirmishers.

Of all the results, however, big and little, of Philippine annexation, one stands out in sharp relief, dwarfing all the rest—the inevitable change in the relations of the United States and Great Britain. If America annexes the Philippines, a distinct and formal understanding with England is imperative for her, and certain. This certainty is only perceived yet by few people in this country, but in Europe every statesman sees it at a glance. The Far Eastern question has superseded the Near Eastern question—just as Lord Rosebery prophesied that it would—as the greatest international problem and the focus of the keenest coming struggle. I have no space here to set forth its vast complications; but, in a rough phrase, one may say that the fate of China has now taken the place of the fate of Turkey as the great question of the future. France is trying to put a commercial fence round the Southern provinces; Russia has already "jumped" Manchuria and will soon close it to other nations by a prohibitive tariff, if she is not prevented; Germany has demanded and secured "exclusive privileges" in one large province; Japan has ambitions so wide-reaching and world-affecting that she has not ventured yet to hint at them in public; England alone desires to keep China as it is—a country raising its revenue by a moderate tariff, developing as rapidly as may be in commercial enterprise, affording to the whole world, on equal terms, a market of 350,000,000 people. Now, these views are all in conflict among themselves, and, together with the score of smaller but still important issues, they keep the diplomatists busy to avoid a breach of the peace. As soon as the United States becomes possessed of a country in the Far East, situated in the center of traffic, so to speak, of 116,000 square miles and over seven millions of inhabitants, she takes a hand in the game, with a big stake upon the table. When the next diplomatic bout begins, she will be involved. However much she may desire it, she will not be able to remain a spectator. Her policy is settled for her beforehand. It would be fatal to her interests for China to become Russian and French and German. She must try to keep China for the Chinese. But that is British policy also. Therefore America and England will find themselves shoulder to shoulder, and, as soon as the first tug comes, they will mutually define their attitude once for all. That

will be the beginning of the *entente*. It is the first step which costs.

Here is another reflection. The day on which Great Britain and the United States sign a convention specifying their common purpose in the Far East will be the day of the salvation of China. We shall have saved a nation from destruction. England alone will not be able to do this—certainly not under her present government. No force short of the determination of all who speak English would be great enough to stop the impending deluge. Now, to save a nation is a righteous thing.

One understanding will lead to another. The question of open markets will not be limited to China. It may well arise in Africa before long. Peace is "the greatest of British interests," but it is the greatest of American interests also; and our two countries may decide to join hands in making war more difficult and less profitable. The Nicaragua Canal means either a formal agreement or a quarrel. I am somewhat alarmed by the airy tone taken by the serious American press in discussing this matter. The New York "Tribune," for example, reasons as follows concerning the Clayton-Bulwer treaty:

"That treaty has long been more honored in the breach than in the observance. Both governments have repeatedly expressed a wish to be rid of it. And it has long been tacitly agreed that dual building of the canal is impracticable, and that this Nation shall be free to do the job alone just as soon as it can summon up enough enterprise and energy. Use of it in time of war would naturally be granted to Great Britain, just as the use of the Suez Canal is granted to us. Of course we should not leave it open to any Power hostile to us, and, of course, Great Britain will not be hostile to us. And it is by no means inconceivable that our interests and those of Great Britain would be so nearly identical that we should be constrained to close it to any power hostile to her. For a war waged against Great Britain in American waters could scarcely avoid concerning us very deeply, and that in a manner that would lead us to sympathize with Great Britain and to make common cause with her."

I quote this, not because I have any intention or opportunity of discussing the whole matter here, but simply as a proof that the seriousness of this question is not fully appreciated by American writers. Who would imagine, for instance, after reading this passage from the "Tribune," that there exists a treaty of the most solemn and binding character between the United States and Great Britain, dated April 19, 1850, Article I. of which says that "the Governments of the United States and Great Britain hereby declare that neither the one nor the other will

ever obtain or maintain for itself any exclusive control over the said ship-canal"? Or that, in order that this common policy might be reached, Great Britain, in the words of a distinguished American historian, ex-assistant Secretary of State, freely resigned "an important military, naval, and political position on the Isthmus at a time when the relative strength of the two Powers was very different from what it is now"? The repudiation of one treaty would be but a poor basis upon which to base negotiations for another.

The truth is that a foreign alliance has hitherto been so remote from American policy that the whole question of alliance has not yet been fully grasped by many people in this country. When Mr. Chamberlain made his speech the other day, a leading New York newspaper dismissed it with the remark that Mr. Chamberlain's intention was obvious—he desired to conclude an alliance with the United States in order that American men and ships might help England to fight France for West Africa. And the writer appended to this sagacious observation some highly edifying moral comments. Until I saw this I would not have believed that any responsible writer could have been so pyramidally ignorant. The editorial writer in question evidently had not the slightest notion of the principles upon which great nations arrive at common understandings. Apart from the fact that there was quite certainly going to be no war about West Africa, since France would not rush upon destruction by trying to fight England single-handed, no nation dreams of either asking or conceding treaty promises such as this writer imagined. The offensive treaty is obsolete. A complete alliance might be signed, sealed, and delivered between America and England, yet England might fight twenty wars without America being concerned in the least. I was asked the other day whether an Anglo-American treaty would bind the United States to help England if Russia invaded India. You might as well ask if a life-insurance implies a marriage contract. I replied: "In the first place, England is abundantly able to take care of herself if Russia invades India; and if she is not, then she has ceased to be a first-rate Power, and has no right to invite you to make a treaty upon equal terms."

Treaties between great nations are made *ad hoc*—with reference to specific existing interests. Here, for example, would almost certainly be the first article of any Anglo-American treaty: England binds herself under no circumstances to seek or obtain

any extension of territory upon the two American continents or the adjacent islands, except by amicable agreement with the United States; the United States binds itself (I fear to be thought to exhibit political sympathies if I am grammatical and say "themselves") to allow Great Britain the undisturbed possession of all American territory she occupies at the present time. This is the Monroe doctrine, of course; both nations accept it, and would, I presume, sign such an article instantly. Other articles might settle the relations of the two countries regarding the Nicaragua Canal; arrange for the arbitration of all disputes; and lay down a common policy with respect to China, to be enforced, if necessary, by common naval and military action. Even then the great point of all would not have been touched.

All the people who speak English have one vital and predominant interest: that the principles of their own civilization—the civilization which they alone of the nations possess, namely, the principles of the rights of the individual man, freedom of speech, thought, and action; their common heritage of law and government—should not perish from the earth. One little fact will show the trend of events in Continental Europe: the first act of the new German parliament, if the elections go as everybody anticipates, will probably be to disfranchise a considerable proportion of the German voters. In other words, an extension of autocracy. A coalition of Powers to destroy England would be formed if its hopes of success were but a little brighter. And do Americans realize that the foreign ministers of Germany and Austria, speaking officially from their seats in parliament, have both alluded in terms of warning to the possible necessity of a Continental European league against the growing danger of American influence and American commerce? Americans know, of course, that only the action of England prevented a united European demand that the United States should localize the war with Spain. By the ruling classes of Russia and Germany the principles of American and British government are hated and feared, and these two Powers drag the rest of Europe after them. France is a free republic in nothing but name. The "Temps," the most serious French newspaper, sneered the other day at what it called the "acute fit of Anglo-Saxonism." The danger to Anglo-Saxon ideals may be remote, but it exists beyond a shadow of doubt. Common sense, therefore,

and common patriotism alike dictate a common understanding, similarly remote in its application, but equally real. What American or British principle would be modified, what interest endangered, what needless danger incurred, even what legitimate quarrel affected, by an agreement that if either nation were the object of an unprovoked attack by two or more Powers simultaneously, the other should make common cause with her? Such an agreement would definitively bar either Power from the aid of the other for any war of offense, or even from help if attacked without provocation by a single Power. Single enemies have no terrors for either of us. The deepest interests of liberty and civilization demand that each nation shall be able to go about its work in the world, secure that the forces of darkness cannot prevail against it. The Governor of Washington State recently declared that he was against any alliance "except with the omnipotent God." Unless our Anglo-Saxon religious conceptions and convictions are all wrong, such an agreement, for such an end, would be one upon which He would smile. There is not, I am confident, an American—there is not, I am certain, an Englishman, who does not believe that neither nation would allow the other to be crushed by a hostile combination. This being so, why on earth should we not bring to the relations of all nations that stability and that peace which would flow from the announcement of the greatest and most righteous compact that the world has ever known?

The time is not yet ripe, that is clear. Other Powers will exert themselves to the utmost to prevent it, that is certain. England is ready; it is only American opinion which has to mature. And America, if I may say so without offense, should realize that England is to-day the greatest of the world Powers; that there is not a nation in Europe that would not jump at an alliance with her for common ends; that she is hated precisely because she will not enter into any such compact; that her sympathy with America has intensified this hatred; that she will not come suing for anything; that she can offer as much as anybody can give her; and that she does not wish America to take one step that is not dictated, first, by American interests, and second, by a desire to promote the interests of mankind.

These are the thoughts suggested by America revisited in war time.

Washington, June 1, 1898.

## CHANT OF THE NEW UNION.

BY EDMUND RUSSELL.

BLOOD of the North

To the Blood of the South—

Are we the same blood?

Though in strife parted—born of one mother;

Now, as the forge-fires flame o'er the land,

Wake in a new love—brother to brother;

Lift we a loving-cup, hand clasped in hand.

Draining the same draught, though it be red;

Shouting the same cry, wherever led,

Drink to our Union!

Yes—

Now the same blood!

Heart of the North

To the Heart of the South—

Beat we the same heart?

In thirst and hunger, at the same altar,

Knead we the bread, to break with our wine.

Kneel we together, chanting our psalter;

Rise we together, freedom our sign.

All of our heroes look down from heaven,

Where our blood runs their blessing is given.

Sons of the Union!

Yes—

Now the same heart!

Sword of the North

To the Sword of the South—

Lift we the same sword?

Thrust in our hands for the vengeance of God.

Clasp we its hafts in the battles of Right,

Where Murder and Famine and Rapine have trod,

We lift to annihilate—righteous our might.

Wave we on high, heaven kissing the brand

That its gleam may be seen in a faint, stricken land.

Strike for our Union!

Yes—

Now the same sword!