

CONTRASTS OF ANCIENT AND MODERN HISTORY.

IV. ON THE STABILITY OF CIVILISATION.

TO a reader of history nothing is so painful as the destruction of the works of peace by the violence of war, especially when the destroyer is a ruder and more barbarous power. Most of all is this terrible when the destruction is not confined to one nation, but spreads equably over a great continent, so as to entail an age of new barbarism in which science is forgotten and art is marred. In Europe we look back upon, not a mere century of such degeneracy, but a period which may count as a millennium, interposed between two civilisations. In Asia also it is truly melancholy to one who travels through Turkey or Persia, to find ruins of stately buildings, huge quarried stones, or fragments of beautifully enamelled marble, amid unsightly petty villages; or immense systems of irrigation all destroyed, and, in consequence, drought and desert, or thin inhabitants, and miserable partial cultivation, where once was thriving and abundant population. Egypt and India likewise were formerly in a far higher state of power and opulence than now: there also great works were once executed, attesting and maintaining national well-being, which now are in decay or ruin; so that all the culture attained by man seems to have been, at least once, temporarily wrecked, and in large parts of the East is not yet fully recovered. Naturally then the thought is forced on one, May possibly this happen again? *If not*, this (in continuation of three previous articles) would be a remarkable *contrast* of our modern to the ancient state; namely, if their civilisation was unstable, and ours has won stability. Most melancholy is the thought that the world passes through cycles of prosperity and ruin, ever coming back into its old positions. The fruits of civilisa-

tion—in law and learning, morals, science, and religion—are so precious, that without them life would seem to us insupportable. What we most desire is, continuous progress; if slow, yet sure; so that each age may bequeath to the next 'a better and a bonnier world.' If progress be unbroken by convulsion, safe against barbarism, not to be undermined by tyranny, we shall not much murmur at its slowness, knowing, as we do, that great masses cannot change rapidly, and that custom makes a thousand hardships seem natural and reasonable to the less favoured part of society, which those on whom fortune has smiled regard as a sad marring of life. If no second wreck of arts and organisation be within credibility, this may be deemed the greatest of all contrasts between the new and the old; but scarcely can such a contrast depend on a single cause. In order to examine the question fundamentally, it is requisite both to detail the occasions of the past destructions, as known to us in history; and to analyse more closely what we mean by civilisation.

Civilisation, as popularly understood, demands not only the qualities of *mind* which fit men for the duties of citizens—which are its proper essential meaning—but also various *mechanical arts*, which conduce to save labour and aid interchange of thought, or add to the knowledge which is power. Because fresh and fresh mechanical and chemical inventions are a great boast to the last four centuries, we are apt to think *chiefly* of these things as civilisation, and to count all men barbarians who are without them. Yet our men of science tell us that the applications of science to art now advance with increased rapidity in each generation; according to which, every nation may regard

its own state three centuries before as barbarous, if one esteem this outward machinery to be the test of civilisation. On the opposite side, if we avow that civilisation is to be estimated as a mental state, independent of knowledge and art, those Tartars of Jenghiz Khan, whom we familiarly call barbarians, and perhaps think of as typical barbarians, were far more civilised than the population of many a modern European metropolis. No man among them thought that he existed for himself, but for his people and for his prince: from this sprang their union, so terrible to other nations. 'Among themselves,' as a Papal legate testified, 'the Tartars are very friendly; all are wonderfully enduring of hunger, want, and cold; everyone obeys the order of his superior, though it be to starve or lose his life.' Now, inasmuch as the possession of art and knowledge is matter of degree, it cannot be the essence of civilisation; but mutual cherishing, obedient co-operation, self-devotion to the State, submission to public authority, are positive qualities, and suffice to make a true *citizen*. But those same Tartars were to other nations scornful in the extreme, insolent to foreign ambassadors even from great and wealthy realms, Persia and India; ready for outrage and slaughter unlimited of innocent people, as much as are English seamen of innocent seals, or cockney sportsmen of sparrows and bats. It seems then that the barbarism at which we shudder is not the antithesis of civilisation, but the antithesis of humanity—of human expansive affection: nor perhaps will it ever be subdued by mere civilisation, but only by that universal kindness which is outside of patriotism—which fosters all harmless creatures, and abhors cruelty and injustice to man or brute.

If barbarism mean barbarity, inhumanity, many of the most civilised

nations have been barbarous, though possibly none with so little discrimination as ignorant Scythian and German hordes, who have rather despised than valued cultured accomplishment. The discoveries of the last thirty years give us higher and higher notions of the Assyrian attainments in art and science. No one, until of late, imagined such a thing, as that they had in their Government offices, engraved on stone, elaborate dictionaries (if that be the right word) to explain current ideographs; also trilingual dictionaries to render Persian and Scythian writing into Assyrian, and conversely. Of necessity, for the purposes of administration and taxation of an empire organised under civilians, there must also have been gazetteers in stone, recording the geography of the empire. All these things imply a very complex previous intellectual labour, carried on by consecutive effort. Again, we now know that in beautiful small sculpture for the adornment of furniture, they excelled, before Grecian art had its infancy. Indeed, in Homer, the elaborate ornaments on the breastplates or shields, or other pre-eminent excellence in art, is always either stated to be an importation from Asia, or ascribed to the gift of a god. Minute sculpture cannot become accurate and beautiful, unless it have first attained much perfection on a larger scale. We cannot doubt that alike in sculpture and architecture the Assyrians were eminent, while dealing with the hardest materials. Now this remarkably advanced nation of antiquity was fond of executing representations of events in basso-relievo, and after a victory the enemy's prisoners are often represented as *impaled* or *flayed*! We cannot doubt that this frightful cruelty passed as a common and glorious deed. And what was the offence which provoked it? To have done what the Assyrians regarded as a

duty—to have defended their native land against an invader. No greater barbarity could be, from a North American savage, or from a Tartar; though the massacres by the Tartars were on a scale quite unequalled. The fruit of such cruelty was of course hatred from the oppressed; hence, when the time of revenge came, the Assyrian cities, and Assyrian works of art, were destroyed with a most elaborate and unparalleled completeness. The stone dictionaries above mentioned, which the wonderful diligence and sagacity of the late Edwin Norris and others (worthy coadjutors of Sir Henry Rawlinson) re-established, were found broken up into small fragments so numerous as only to be attributable to hostile effort, anxious to annihilate the material through which the Assyrian organs worked. Nineveh, their chief city, a wonder of the world, so vanished that it never again was habitable, and its site became a disputed problem. Every royal palace was made a heap of ruins, instead of being taken as an ornament and delight of a triumphant rival. What cruelties fell upon the unhappy population when their day of overthrow came, we can but conjecture: but it would seem that from the great Nineveh none of the inhabitants escaped, except into slavery. Neither Babylon nor Ecbatana nor Persepolis, nor any known capital of these parts, ever vanished so suddenly and completely. In the total destruction of the ingenious workshops, the schools of art, the materials of linguistic teaching, together with masters, apprentices, professors and interpreters, who can doubt that a great retrogression took place in civilised accomplishment? The destroyers were not wild Scythians, but Medes and Babylonians. The latter, kinsmen to the Assyrians, speaking their language, and aspiring to become the head over all Mesopotamia, may have aimed to secure that Nineveh should never again be the local

centre; but cannot have wished to destroy material which they could themselves have used, if policy was listened to. But it may be, that blind hatred and fierce resentment held sway in both destroyers: both had been subject to Assyrian rule.

The Gothic invaders of the Roman empire, and other German tribes who came after them, slew men and women mercilessly, and occasionally destroyed works of art. Attila the Hun is execrated in history for his deliberate wide-spread ravage of fields and crops: but probably the most permanent ruin came, not from any direct and intentional mischief, but from the cessation of industry and of public oversight. In Italy, the great river Po, from the neglect of its banks, overflowed the country, and stagnated in vast marshes, as the Euphrates and Tigris have done. New and new irruptions continued for centuries: neglects accumulating in long time undid the labours of civilisation more effectually than any violence of the barbarian. Education also being almost universally suspended, the posterity of the civilised nations degenerated. In the pages of Tacitus, the German mind appears fairly comparable to that of the North American Indians, whom his description of the Germans often recalls to a reader's thought. The brain of an Ostrogoth or Visigoth holding sway in Italy or Spain was perhaps of the same calibre as that of a modern Bedouin chieftain. Six centuries pass after the conquest of the Western Empire, during which the mind even of the learned appears utterly deficient, according to Hallam, in talent and genius. Long time was required, before the German mind displayed any of the high qualities which we now recognise in it. Talent to direct armies, to entrap rivals, to attract followers, to discern when to flatter, and when to strike—were what a king or baron chiefly valued. Mental development and a new birth of civic

arts, came back to Europe first from Italy, where the traditions of higher culture had been best preserved.

The Saracens, who invaded and conquered Persia, may perhaps be thought even less advanced than the Tartars; for Arabia proper was then, as now, a land scarcely made for human habitation, and the Moslem leaders still retained the primitive enthusiasm. Imputing to the Persians fire worship and every moral abomination—abhorring sculpture as idolatry, and assuming impiety to exist in every record of the past—they elaborately destroyed all the literature of Persia, and much of its art; with such success, that the modern Persians, in professing to write history, show profound ignorance that their ancestors had any wars at all with Greece and Rome; ignorance of that, which we know cannot have been forged—the dreadful defeat of the consul Crassus with his army, and the Persian capture of the Roman emperor Valerian. Under the Mussulman invaders there must certainly have been great malicious ruin; but evils have gradually been intensified by long misrule.

But what of the Turkish invaders of the Eastern Roman empire? Seljuk Turks and Ottoman Turks alike were Tartars, with many noble qualities. With those of the house of Seljuk we had little permanent contact, nor do we know the interior of their rule: the Ottomans we know intimately. As individuals they may seem intelligent and sagacious, honest and pious, courteous and humane. As traders they are scrupulous and sensitive, jealous of honour; they never bargain, nor take less than they have asked. In religion they are grave and earnest; yet this very religion is so interpreted as to make their rule a curse, even while their intentions are best; for their religion enforces a despotic sultan and countenances a seraglio of sultanas. Under this

regimen everything goes to ruin. It is proverbial that 'the Turks repair nothing.' Great pieces of ordnance publicly rust into worthlessness. Palaces, city walls, city gates fall down, and are left in rubbish. Canals, tanks, and works of irrigation have perished. Roads there once must have been, but are seldom found in Turkey. Any track through rocks, bushes and stumps of trees, where a mule can pick his way and find breadth for his packages, is called a road. Rivers either stay within their banks or overflow, as pleases them. In the Tartar's 'high road' to Constantinople the bridge over the considerable river which makes the swamps of Nicomedia is covered with loose stems of small trees, which move about under the traveller's foot, and show between them the water below. (Such at least was their state at a recent time.) Standard weights in the market there are none: each dealer has bits of stone for his own use, and a stranger may be cheated to any extent. In taxation an ordinary Turkish governor is rapacious in the extreme, treating rich men as his natural prey. Merchants make no contracts in Turkish coin, but always in terms of foreign money, because of the unspeakable fraudulence in the Government mint. Since the Crimean war they have learned from us the vice of national debt, and the use of bank-notes, which (it is to be feared) cannot be sound. The sultans build palaces and yachts for their sultanas: the sultanas are believed to sell the Pashalics. Somehow, amid it all, roving Arabs plunder, and hinder cultivation: riches are dissembled, hoarding or idleness prevails, national wealth decays, in countries which might be the very garden of the world, and were once in high opulence. The devastation here is real; but gradual and stealthy, like an eating canker.

Some other devastations deserve mention. The persistent inroads of the Independent Tartars into Persia, carrying off men and girls as slaves, and burning the villages, has unpeopled long tracts of country which were once populous. The inroads of Arabs also, though far less cruel, yet forbid cultivation in a large part of Syria. In 1831 the writer was informed at Aleppo by the Pashá's surveyor, a native gentleman of French blood and education, that he had surveyed the whole Pashálic, and found not one-tenth of the fertile land to be cultivated. There is no ostensible reason why Aleppo should suffer more from this cause than other Pashálics which are in contact with Arabs. Mesopotamia was a land celebrated for fertility, so long as it was duly irrigated from the two great rivers, which now do but make noxious marshes in their lower course. Alike in Persia and in Turkey it is uncertain how much of the modern desolation is imputable to roving Tartars or Arabs, how much to the incapacity of the governing powers; who do not seem much elevated above the Tartars from whom both claim descent, though with great admixture of Circassian and Persian blood.

North Africa, alone of all the Roman empire, was raised by Roman possession from a comparative wilderness into a cultivated and settled country. In the districts which our maps attach to Tunis, the Carthaginians had already planted numerous Libyphœnician colonies; but the Romans found in Numidia only a wild country and roving people, with a few considerable towns. This is the modern Algeria. Military Roman roads were constructed and a vigorous check kept upon highway robbery: cultivation became safe, villages sprang up, and towns became numerous. Tunis, Algeria, and Tripoli (where the Greeks had established colonies earlier) became ere

long an opulent and populous region, adding great strength to the Roman empire. Afterwards, whether from the violences of German invasion, or the incursions of African barbarians when anarchy prevailed, or later from inroad and conquest by the Mussulman Saracens, a great devastation was suffered, which never has been repaired. Under the hot sun of that latitude, all the lowlands must be much scorched, unless water be abundant. The rivers in general are short in course, mere torrents, perhaps often scant of water; but from the vast highland connected with Mount Atlas a full supply of rain is insured, which unless wasted in the flood season, or in barren swamps, would suffice to fertilise the country. All this, under Roman rule, was turned to service; and will be so again. In the first twenty-five years of French occupation, at vast expense to the French treasury, marshes were drained and roads made; apparently with no other result than to enhance the price of cattle and enrich the roving Arabs; for still, no sensible progress is made in cultivation; indeed, the French love neither solitude, nor Arabs for neighbours. In this case, as in Turkey and Persia, only a strong and sagacious government can impose peace, curb marauders, and restore fertility: hitherto, success has been attained by the French, only so far as they have ruled, *through* Arab chieftains, incorporating them into the Government. This, it can hardly be doubted, is the true way. They may be fanatical, and, in comparison to us, ignorant; yet they are not a stupid race; and if honourably treated, are sure to improve. What 'Abd el Kâdir was, shows how sagacious and docile all may be, in spite of temporary fanaticism.

In modern Christendom there have been some frightful direct ravages. The devastation of the Palatinate by Louis XIV. is stig-

matized by historians. Quite recently, in the late American civil war, fields were ravaged, stores of food and mills destroyed, rails torn up, in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, by the Northern armies, in order to cut off from the Southern armies the supplies behind them. But in a year or fifteen months the war was over, and every effort was made to repair the damage: then such destruction is soon forgotten. The same thing may be said of the Dutch breaking down their own dykes for protection against the enemy. It is the length of a war, yet more than its severity, which is destructive. The war of the northern nations—Germans, Alans, Huns, and Magyars—against the Western Roman empire, may be said to have lasted for six or seven centuries, during which time nothing was fixed, no institutions could take root: hence the terrible devastation. The worst war of more recent centuries was the Thirty Years' War of Germany, in which, to speak roughly, two-thirds of the human population, and of the cows, sheep, goats, and horses, perished. It was caused by the fanaticism of an Austrian prince, and by the obedience of a part of his subjects: no other religious war known to us has been so permanent in its ruin: though fanatical rule in Spain has been in other ways still more disastrous. But in each case the evil has been local, and has not been able to affect the age.

The question being now presented to us, Is it likely—is it even possible—that events so funereal as those of our Middle Age can ever be renewed? we seem able on several grounds to answer NO. It is not likely: it is not morally possible. The devastations in the past have been occasioned, 1st, through martial nations who are accustomed to submit to a chief, but recognise no duties to the foreigner: 2ndly, through the organisation of standing armies in industrious, opulent,

and intelligent nations—armies which the prince can use as blind tools of his ambition. These two sources of danger are separate, yet by a single discussion it may appear that in the future the ruder nations collectively will never domineer over the more cultivated collectively; and that no one power among the more cultivated will ever be able to domineer over the rest.

There are regions of this earth on which it appears undesirable that men should live, since they cannot live there in settled habitations. Where no crops grow and very few trees, population must be thin on a given area: only by rapidity of movement could Tartars or Arabs gather forces so numerous as to overpower a settled people. Tartary has an abundance of grass, enabling it to feed cattle far beyond the scale of Arabia; and by the use of wheeled waggons it has far greater resources for a campaign. But the more advanced communities by means of the railroad have now prodigiously greater facility for concentrating troops than ever could be attained by a roving people. The agricultural nations must always be the more populous. The whole art of war has assumed a complicated and scientific aspect. In ancient times the roving hordes were as well armed as the agriculturists. They not only made swords of good steel, bucklers, helmets, pikes, arrows, and bows, but in some cases chain-armour to defend their horses—though with doubtful advantage. They did not attain the arts of siege. Neither Tartars, Germans, nor Arabs could make much impression on stone walls; but an enemy who was superior in the open country everywhere could generally reduce cities by starvation. Since the adaptation of gunpowder to war, a rude people is immeasurably inferior, unless, as the Ottomans, it can overpower industrial towns, and constrain their workshops to its service. Every further develop-

ment in the manufacture and use of deadly weapons gives new superiority to those who have knowledge and industry. The vast power of our workshops, by the enormous supply of material, and by the use of huge cranes and pincers, with the steam-engine and steam-hammer, turns out the whole material of war with a speed and in a variety which give us a strength unapproachable by a roving or a rude people. Difficult or useless as it may be to follow wild tribes into their own deserts, they cannot now be a terror, but at worst an annoyance. It becomes the duty and wisdom of the superior power to court, and not to irritate the savage. Brigham Young, the Mormon prophet, discovered that it was cheaper to give free dinners and many small kindnesses to the neighbouring wild tribes, than to incur their enmity. Nay, the Peruvian Incas on a great scale long ago showed, that if the power in which arts and opulence are more advanced will cherish the passion of doing good, the savage is turned from a wolf into a grateful and affectionate dog. Christian states will not always be deaf and blind to so simple a truth. To carry on wars and raids of revenge is conduct as mad as hereditary blood feuds among Arabs.

At the same time our geographical knowledge is now a great protection, and constantly becomes greater. We know the limits, the outlets, the barriers of wildernesses which it is inexpedient to enter. Approximately, we know the utmost numbers which could issue from such regions, and in what lines they must move. If by concentration into a new empire they might attain a new power, overwhelm some settled country and visit it with general devastation, the fact would at once be known to the whole civilised world, and would excite, not panic, but unmeasured indignation. All great powers would come to the rescue, before

the mischief could be other than local. The misery to the Roman empire was, that the whole military force was dependent on one centre, and (when the armies were most obedient) on the wisdom or folly of one man: and when the throne was contested, the armies which were maintained to repel invaders and crush insurgents, were called away by rival emperors to fight their intestine wars. At such intervals the outer barbarians rushed in and found wealthy provinces to be wholly undefended and incapable of resistance. By easy success at calamitous moments, their avarice and their contempt were whetted; nor did after repulse at all terrify them. No circumstances similar to these can be apprehended in the future. *First of all*, the region of the roving people then reached from Kamchatka to the Rhine. From this we now cut off Germany, Poland, Hungary, Russia up to the Ural Mountains, and Siberia, Western and Eastern. High Asia (as modern geographers call it) is and must be a great and terrible wilderness; but it is at a vast distance from Europe; it is separated from India by insurmountable barriers; if, through Russian and Persian neglect, its rude armies could burst out upon Persia, that must be the end of their conquest. China is not much better defended than she was, but the forces of her old enemy are greatly curtailed: moreover, it does not appear that the Tartar conquerors of China ever destroyed her arts and organisation, or wasted her resources. *But next*, there is not the slightest fear that civilised Europe will ever again (according to a market-dame's metaphor) put all her eggs into one basket; stake her prosperity on the wisdom and energy of one frail mortal; which occasioned the overthrow of the Western Empire. On the contrary, the utmost jealousy is traditional and hereditary in Europe against

the encroachments of any one overweening State. This is all that has been meant by the outcry for 'the Balance of Power.'

In ancient times, any great empire, as Persia, Macedonia, Rome, either aggrandised itself without encountering coalitions, or at least met with no intelligent, united and persevering resistance at the critical time. Probably geographical ignorance and the slowness with which news travelled, besides the lack of good military roads and the backwardness of navigation, had much to do with this. With the exception of the petty republics of Greece, where was a system of Europe in miniature, the States of antiquity were not alarmed into coalition until too late; and then were themselves swallowed up by the conqueror, nearly as the successive powers of India by the British. On the contrary, in modern Europe, each State, as soon as it began to tower above its neighbours, has excited the jealousy of all. Of these the earliest was SPAIN, where by a series of royal marriages the young king Charles inherited four kingdoms, Austria, Burgundy and the Netherlands, Naples and Sicily, with Spain; Spain itself being a union of three kingdoms. He also laid claim to the Milanese, and was elected emperor of Germany. By the genius and faith of Columbus, by the service of the mariner's compass, by the avarice and fanatical zeal of Spanish captains, the King of Spain simultaneously received transmarine empires in America and in the eastern archipelago. Gold and silver, in abundance previously unknown, flowed in to his treasury from the New World; and if a policy of ordinary astuteness, of common worldly wise selfishness, had prevailed, it is impossible to estimate how widely Spanish power might have spread. But Charles adopted a policy of religious fanaticism, barely because he resented the disobedience to autho-

rity which conscience inspires. He committed the education of his son Philip to the Jesuits (a new order), and bequeathed to him the counsel of exterminating heretics. This fanaticism pulled down the Spanish empire, not the power of its foes; though first France took the alarm, then Germany resolutely broke away, next Holland fought her single-handed dreadful battle of life or death; England also was driven into bitter enmity; till, by French and English incessant efforts, and by aid of Spanish imbecility, the great empire became more pitiable than terrible. Next, FRANCE under Louis XIV. became the encroaching power which Europe unitedly resisted. Her glory was shorn by the joint exertions of Holland, England, and Germany, Holland being then the great naval state of Europe. But France too, like Spain, sank still deeper by inward decay than by the reverses of war. In the eighteenth century ENGLAND, the only great State which had preserved Protestantism and liberty, had unawares risen to such robustness as surprised both the world and herself. Her victories under the great Lord Chatham, and the extent of her colonial empire, excited her to great arrogance, and caused general disgust. Hence when her colonies boldly resisted her claims, France and Spain gladly seized the opportunity of attacking her; whence her greatest public mortification soon followed, the establishment of North American independence. Hence arose on the ocean a naval power which firmly resisted submission to her tones of dictation. Under the French Republic, which Austria imprudently undertook to suppress, the new energies of FRANCE and her violent successes once more, and with good reason, terrified all Europe; but a long and obstinate war at length disarmed the ambition of Napoleon I. After his overthrow RUSSIA was made too powerful for Europe. The princes of

Germany were dominated by her. By the war of 1829 she imposed very disadvantageous terms of peace on Turkey: in 1831 she subdued Poland for herself, in 1849 she crushed Hungary for Austria, and then believed her time to rule in Turkey was come. The German and Hungarian exiles in London avowed that there could be no freedom for the Eastern half of Europe without a great war to drive Russia back. They little dreamed that Western Europe would fight that war for the East; but it was done: and Russia in her turn was humiliated and repressed. So certain is the law that the European commonwealth will coalesce against any power which is too arrogant and confident of might. Hereafter there may possibly be grand federations of nations, to the end of repressing mutual war. The immensity which Russian and North American power will attain may quicken the stable confederation of other powers: but each nation will retain the control of its own domestic concerns. Neither will the savage from without ever again find a universal imbecility through the neglects of a concentrated despotism, nor will all great States moulder away through misrule prevailing in all simultaneously.

Another contrast has its importance—the interests of *commerce*. Commerce at all times, on the small or the great scale, is a principal agent in human union: the rise of eminently commercial states is the first influence whence the higher culture of mind has been diffused. Such were in very early times special cities on the Euphrates and Tigris; such were the Phœnician cities; such, afterwards, the isles of Greece. In the ancient world the commercial states occupied extremely narrow limits of land: the arts were cultivated in cities only, and the great rural areas were left very rude, from the want of roads and the great expense of land car-

riage. Commerce went on either down the great rivers or by sea, which greatly limited its action. But with the improvement of European roads, and the invention of *coach springs*, the difficulty of traction was lessened, and speed became enduring. Canals, long since used for the internal commerce of the far East, were opened in aid of roads. Last and greatest of all is the railroad, which makes the carriage of heavy goods at once cheap and swift. Prices are almost equalised by it in town and country—a mark that the entire breadth of a kingdom enters the market of the world. Every industrious nation is now a commercial state, and, so far as its sea-coast reaches, is nautical also. Moreover, the mariner's compass and the advances of astronomy immensely aid navigation. Hereby the pecuniary interests of the industrious peoples are entangled as never before. Each has a constant interest to know the interior of other countries for the sake of interchange of products. Mutual intercourse and common interests break down national prejudices and the barriers of language, so that collective mankind more and more coheres into a single community. The intercourse of diplomacy does but facilitate the spontaneous movements of the peoples. Already it is understood that rich customers are the best friends of traders, hence a commercial nation has to desire that all her neighbours be rich and prosperous. This is a valuable theorem of science.

The formation of solid nationalities, divided by national *languages* and in general by national *religions*, was necessary to the developments of the past; or at least, such is the course which human nature has actually pursued. Great good has resulted; but also, through mutual ignorance, great evil. In the future we are not to lose nationality, but we are to cultivate humanity. For all peaceful relations with the

foreigner, it is needful to observe the same law of morals towards other nations which we exact for ourselves. This will be enforced upon each by the pressure of all; until all are conscious of common moral sentiment and of the common human nature which it implies. The attempt of German and French and North American workmen to form an International bond—whatever objections may attach to the form it has taken—is an important indication of the tendency in the majority to estimate human ties and the interests of their class above those of national rivalry; the more so, since the Germans, while still smarting under the miseries of the war which the French rulers forced upon them, have been so forward in sympathy with the French people as to displease and alarm their own Government. It is probable that in the not distant future, the number of languages needed for intercourse will be greatly diminished, and that the ill-developed tongues will be gradually disused. The educated natives of Madras, and (I believe) of Bengal, in talking among themselves use English in preference to their mother tongue, from the greater ease and clearness which they find in English when higher and accurate thought is to be expressed. What Latin was to Europeans three or four centuries back, such is English to Indians now: natives who do not understand one another can communicate in English. For a like reason the Russian tongue will domineer over the vast surface of that empire, English in North America, probably Portuguese in South America. Where a local language is retained, it will be found expedient, and no hardship, to add to it the knowledge of some one of the wider-spread and highly developed tongues. We may also confidently anticipate, that religious hatreds will not divide mankind, after the more active minded can

converse in a tongue mutually understood, and discern that their moral sentiments are one and the same. Yet barbarism still retains a deadly power, as wars between the highly cultivated nations attest.

The Christian nations cannot pretend that their religion or their humanity or their institutions save them from war: nevertheless, two changes may be marked as fixed and important. Wars are shorter by far, and the victor is less able to abuse victory. As above observed, the length of a war is the most afflicting part of it, especially to the country which is the seat of war. The wars of the present day are thought long if they last three or four years: this is a great improvement on the last century, and it depends on abiding causes. Also, wars, even when they are wholly on the Continent, so damage the interest of neutral powers, that all the world of diplomacy is angry with combatants, and watches them keenly. In general also the neutrals are jealous of any change of frontiers; so that the motives for aggressive war are considerably diminished. In short, it is no longer from the direct ambition of governments that our worst dangers now spring. Our worst danger is from the immorality of degenerate civilisation; partly at home, and partly in the colonies of old nations.

There is no worse ruffian in the world than those whom the great Christian cities rear in thousands. Avarice impels traders to press the sale of intoxicating drugs; sympathy with capitalists, routine, political convenience, gains to the exchequer, moreover theories of freedom, induce statesmen to support the evil trade. Out of the intoxication of parents come pauperism, orphanhood, and half-idiotcy of children, and the reign of lust, and the perpetuation of a prostitution which the rulers of Christendom are mistaking for a natural and necessary condition of things.

As in the times of Marius and Sulla, so now in every rank a plentiful crop is produced of selfish profligates, hardened in vice, disbelieving in virtue, and ready for lawless action as soon as they are beyond the reach of law. Did not the collective governments impose restraint on each separate government, and each in turn on its subjects, the ocean would be covered with lawless buccaneers—not least from England and France—uniting all the mechanical knowledge and skill of their native realm with the atrocity of the worst savage. The slave trade still rages in Africa, through the complicity of European traders; and the countless islands of the Pacific afford abundant nests of piracy. England has annexed Fiji, to hinder its being the centre of a slave mart: how many more islands must she annex—putting a governor and an admiral and all their train on ‘every rock of the ocean where a cormorant can perch’—before this policy can be effectual? Our colonists in Australia, if left to themselves, would presently follow the course of South Carolina and Georgia, and glorify slavery. They will, ere long, be too great for England alone to control; and unless all the Great Powers unite to declare the slave trade *piracy*, and honestly suppress it, new dreadful evils may grow up from the dregs of our population and from the avarice of colonists.

But because *corroding vice* from within is now our chief danger, one may almost say of every capital, every large town in Europe: *De-*

lenda est Carthago. There was once a military reason for living very compactly—in order that a defensible wall might contain the largest number of people. But now, this is the way to make a population most vulnerable to an enemy. A Roman army encamped every night with ranks as close as possible. A modern army avoids this, as peculiarly exposing it to danger. For military safety, for health, and for moral reasons, our towns ought to be emptied out into the country. If English legislation ever looked onward, an immensity might have been done (indeed much may still be done) by enactments concerning the building of *future towns*. Every block of houses should spend its refuse on *agricultural land* in close contiguity: this would secure us against living too close, and solve several problems at once. Demoralisation is the terrible foe; and it cannot be grappled with unless society be organised, trained to industry, and kept in social relations. No private claims on the rustic areas must be allowed to forbid a due colonising of them, in order to transplant the towns. A vast civic battle, no doubt, remains to be fought; but unless it be fought bravely and our internal barbarism be conquered, England will not permanently stand high among nations, and possibly she may suffer a very humiliating fall. But the world will move on, without any general retrogression, as we see in the case of Italy and Spain. When old nations degenerate, others take the lead.

FRANCIS W. NEWMAN.

