

When, however, the swelling tide of emigration reached the arid lands at the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, its course was for a time stayed. This fourth region of mountain and desert, lying between the prairies of the Mississippi affluents and the Pacific Ocean, was, except its coast line, an unknown land till its cession by Mexico in 1846, and the inner and higher parts of it remained unexplored for some twenty years longer. As it was mostly dry and rugged, there was little to tempt settlers into it, for vast tracts of good land remained untouched in the central Mississippi plain. Many years might have passed before it began to fill up, but for the unexpected finding of gold in California. This event at once drew in thousands of settlers; and fresh swarms followed as other mines, principally of silver, began to be discovered in the inland mountain ranges; till at last for the difficult and dangerous wagon track there was substituted a railway, completed in 1869, over mountains and through deserts from the Missouri to the Pacific. Had the Americans of 1850 possessed no more scientific resources than their grandfathers in 1790, the valleys of the Pacific coast, accessible only by sea round Cape Horn, or across the Isthmus of Panama, would have remained isolated from the rest of the country, with a tendency to form a character and habits of their own, and possibly disposed to aim at political independence. This, however, the telegraph and the railways have prevented. Yet the Rocky Mountains have not, like the Alleghanies, disappeared. The better peopled parts of California, Oregon, and Washington still find that range and the deserts a far more effective barrier than are the lower and narrower ridges on the eastern side of the continent. The fourth region remains a distinct section of the United States, both geographically and to some extent in its social and industrial aspects. All this was to be expected. What need not have happened, and might even have been thought unlikely, was the easy acquisition by the Anglo-Americans of California, Oregon, and Washington, regions far removed from the dominions which the Republic already possessed. Had the competition for unappropriated temperate regions been half as keen in 1840 as it is now for tropical Africa (a far less attractive possession) between Germany, France, and Britain, some European power might have pounced upon these territories. They might then have become

and remained a foreign country to the United States, and have had few and comparatively slight relations with the Mississippi Basin. It is not nature, but the historical accident which left them in the hands of a feeble power like Mexico, that has made them now, and, so far as can be foreseen, for a long future, members of the great Federation.

In the south-east as well as in the west of the North American Continent, climate has been a prime factor in determining the industrial and political history of the nation. South of the thirty-fifth parallel of latitude, although the winters are cool enough to be reinvigorative, and to enable a race drawn from Northern Europe to thrive and multiply,¹ the summers, except in the Alleghany highlands, are too hot for such a race to sustain hard open-air work, or to resist the malaria of the marshy coast lands. It was for this reason that soon after the settlement of Virginia, and for nearly two centuries afterwards, natives of the tropics were imported from Africa and set to till the fields. By their labour large crops of tobacco, cotton, rice, and sugar were raised, and large profits made; so that, while in the North-eastern States slavery presently died out, and the negroes themselves declined in numbers, all the wealth and prosperity of the South came to depend upon slave labour, and slavery became intertwined with the pecuniary interests as well as the social habits of the ruling class. Thus a peculiar form of civilization grew up, so dissimilar from that of the northern half of the country, that not even the large measure of State independence secured under the Federal Constitution could enable the two sections to live together under the same government. Civil war followed, and for a time it seemed as if the nation were to be permanently rent in twain. Physical differences—differences of climate, and of all those industrial and social conditions that were due to climate—were at the bottom of the strife. Yet nature herself fought for imperilled unity. Had the seceding States been divided from the Northern States by any natural barrier, such as a mountain range running from east to west across the continent, the operations of the invading armies would have been incomparably more difficult. As it was, the path into the South lay open, and the great south-

¹ New Orleans is in the same latitude as Delhi, whence the children of Europeans have to be sent home in order that they may grow up in health.

flowing rivers of the West helped the invader. Had there not existed, in the Alleghany Mountains, a broad belt of elevated land, thrusting into the revolted territory a wedge of white population which, as it did not own slaves (for in the mountains there were scarce any), did not sympathize with secession, and for the most part actively opposed it, the chances of the Southern Confederates would have been far greater. The Alleghanies interrupted the co-operation of their Eastern and Western armies, and furnished recruits as well as adherents to the North; and it need hardly be added that the climatic conditions of the South made its white population so much smaller, and on the whole so much poorer, than that of the North, that exhaustion came far sooner. He who sees the South even to-day, when it has in many places gained vastly since the war, is surprised not that it succumbed, but that it was able so long to resist.

With the extinction of slavery, the political unity of the country was secured, and the purpose of nature to make it the domain of a single people might seem to have been fulfilled. Before we inquire whether this result will be a permanent one, so far as physical causes are concerned, another set of physical conditions deserves to be considered, those conditions, namely, of earth and sky, which determine the abundance of useful products, that is to say, of wealth, and therethrough, of population also.

The chief natural sources of wealth are fertile soils, mineral deposits, and standing timber.¹ Of these three the last is now practically confined to three districts, — the hills of Maine, the Alleghanies, and the maritime ranges of the Pacific coast, especially in Washington. Elsewhere, though there is a great deal of wooded country, the cutting and exporting of timber, or, as it is called beyond the Atlantic, "lumber," is not (except perhaps in Michigan) an important industry which employs or enriches many persons. It is, moreover, one which constantly declines, for the forests perish daily before fires and the axe far more swiftly than nature can renew them.

As no nation possesses so large an area of land available for

¹ I omit the fisheries, because their commercial importance is confined to three districts, the coasts of Maine and Massachusetts, the rivers of Washington and parts of Alaska, with the seal-bearing Pribyloff Isles. The sea fisheries of the Pacific coast (Washington, Oregon, and California), are still imperfectly developed.

the sustenance of man, so also none of the greatest nations can boast that out of its whole domain, so large a proportion of land is fit for tillage or for stock-rearing. If we except the stony parts of New England and Eastern New York, where the soil is thinly spread over crystalline rocks, and the sandy districts which cover a considerable area in Virginia and North Carolina, nearly the whole of the more level tracts between the Atlantic and the Rocky Mountains is good agricultural land, while in some districts, especially on the upper Mississippi, this land has proved remarkably rich. Which soils will in the long run turn out most fertile, cannot yet be predicted. The prairie lands of the North-west have needed least labour and have given the largest returns to their first cultivators; but it is doubtful whether this superiority will be maintained when protracted tillage has made artificial aids necessary, as has already happened in not a few places. Some of the soils in the Eastern and Southern States are said to improve with cultivation, being rich in mineral constituents. Not less rich than the Mississippi prairies, but far smaller in area, are the arable tracts of the Pacific Slope, where, in Washington especially, the loam formed by the decomposition of the trappean rocks is eminently productive. In the inner parts of the Rocky Mountain region lie many plains and valleys of great natural fertility, but dependent, so deficient is the rainfall, upon an artificial supply of water. Were irrigation works constructed to bring water, or artesian wells successfully sunk, large areas might be cultivated; but land has not yet become scarce enough to make the execution of great works remunerative, and in many regions the sources of water supply are distant or uncertain. The Mormon settlements on the east and to the south of Great Salt Lake are the only considerable tract as yet thus reclaimed; there are, however, others from which an equally patient industry may draw like results.

In estimating mineral resources, it is well to distinguish between mines of gold, silver, copper, and lead on the one hand, and those of coal and iron on the other. The former are numerous, and have given vast wealth to a few lucky speculators. In some parts of the Rockies and the ranges linking them to the Sierra Nevada, the traveller saw, even twelve or fifteen years ago, silver mining claims staked out on every hill. But these mines are uncertain in their yield;

and the value of silver is subject to great fluctuations. Coal and iron present a surer, if less glittering gain, and they are needed for the support of many important industries. Now, while gold, silver, and lead are chiefly found in the Rocky Mountain and Sierra Nevada system, copper mainly in the West and on Lake Superior, the greatest coal and iron districts¹ are in Pennsylvania and Ohio, and along the line of the Alleghanies southwards into Alabama. It is chiefly in the neighbourhood of coal deposits that manufactures develop, yet not exclusively, for the water-power available along the foot of the New England hills led to the establishment of many factories there, which still remain and flourish under changed conditions, receiving their coal, however, largely by sea from Nova Scotia.

What has been the result of these conditions, and what do they promise?

First: An agricultural population in the Mississippi Basin already great, and capable of reaching dimensions from which imagination recoils, for though the number of persons to the square mile will be less than in Bengal or Egypt, where the peasants' standard of comfort is incomparably lower than that of the American farmer, it may be as dense as in the most prosperous agricultural districts of Europe.

Secondly: An industrial population now almost equalling the agricultural,² concentrated chiefly in the North-eastern States and along the skirts of the Alleghanies, and in large cities springing up here and there where (as at Chicago, Cleveland, Minneapolis, and St. Louis) commerce plants its centres of exchange and distribution. This industrial population grows far more swiftly than the agricultural, and the aggregate value of manufactured products increases faster from census to census than does that of the products of the soil.

Thirdly: A similar but very much smaller agricultural and industrial population along the Pacific, five-sixths of it within eighty miles of the coast.

Fourthly: Between the Mississippi Basin and this well-

¹ There are other smaller coal districts, including one in Washington, on the shores of Puget Sound. Nor ought the immensely productive mineral oil districts, especially those of Pennsylvania and Ohio, to pass unnoticed.

² The population inhabiting cities of 8000 people and upwards was in 1890 still only 29.12 per cent of the total population (though in the North Atlantic division it reached 51 per cent). But a large part of those engaged in mining or manufactures may be found in places below that limit of population.

peopled Pacific shore a wide and very thinly inhabited tract, sometimes quite arid, and therefore a wilderness, sometimes showing grass-bearing hills with sheep or cattle, and a few ranchmen upon the hill-slopes, more rarely valleys which irrigation has taught to wave with crops. And here and there through this tract, redeeming it from solitude, there will lie scattered mining towns, many of them quick to rise and almost as quick to vanish, but others destined, if they occupy the centre of a mining district, to maintain a permanent importance.

Thus the enormous preponderance of population will be on the eastern side of the continental watershed. It was so in 1890, — 56,000,000 of people against 6,000,000, — it is likely to remain so, though the disparity may be somewhat less marked. The face of the nation will be turned eastward; and, to borrow a phrase of Lowell's, the front door of their house will open upon the Atlantic, the back door upon the Pacific. Faint and few, so far as we can now predict (though far greater than at this moment), will be the relations maintained with Eastern Asia and Australia across the vast expanse of that ocean compared with those that must exist with Europe, to which not only literature and social interests, but commerce also, will bind America by ties growing always closer and more numerous.

That the inhabitants of this territory will remain one nation is the conclusion to which, as already observed, the geography of the continent points. Considerations of an industrial and commercial kind enforce this forecast. The United States, with nearly all the vegetable staples of the temperate zone, and many that may be called subtropical, has within its borders a greater variety of products, mineral as well as vegetable, than any other country, and therefore a wider basis for internal interchange of commodities. Free Trade with other countries, desirable as it may be, is of less consequence where a vast home trade, stretching across a whole continent, has its freedom secured by the Constitution. The advantages of such freedom to the wheat and maize growers of the North-west, to the cotton and rice and sugar planters of the Gulf States, to the orange growers of Florida and the vine growers of California, to the cattle men of the West and the horse breeders of Kentucky and Idaho, to the lumbermen of Maine and Washington, to the coal and iron men of Pennsylvania and the Alleghany States, to the factories of New England,

both employers and workmen, as well as to the consuming populations of the great cities, are so obvious as to constitute an immense security against separatist tendencies. Such advantages, coupled with the social and political forces discussed in other chapters, are now amply sufficient to hold the Pacific States to the Union, despite the obstacles which nature has interposed. In earlier stages of society these obstacles might well have proved insurmountable. Had communication been as difficult in the middle of the nineteenth century as it was in the sixteenth, the inhabitants of the Pacific coast might have formed a distinct nationality and grown into independent States; while in the inner recesses of the wide mountain land other and probably smaller communities would have sprung up, less advanced in culture, and each developing a type of its own. But the age we live in favours aggregation. The assimilative power of language, institutions, and ideas, as well as of economic and industrial forces, is enormous, especially when this influence proceeds from so vast a body as that of the American people east of the Rocky Mountains, compared to which the dwellers on the western slope are still but few. The failure of the Mormon attempt to found a State is an instance to show how vain is the effort to escape from these influences; for even without an exertion of the military power of the United States, they must soon, by the natural process of colonization, have been absorbed into its mass. There is, accordingly, no such reason to expect detachment now as there might have been had neither railroads nor telegraphs existed, and California been accessible only round Cape Horn or across the Isthmus. Now five great trunk lines cross the continent; and though much of the territory which lies between the populous margin of the Pacific and the cities of Colorado, Nebraska, and Dakota is and must remain wild and barren, many settlements, mining, pastoral, and even agricultural, have begun to spring up in this intervening space, and the unpeopled gaps are narrowing day by day. Especially along the line of the more northerly railroads, population, though it must always be sparse, may become practically continuous. A close observer can, however, detect some differences in character between Californians and the Americans of the Eastern and Mississippi States; and it is possible, though I think far from probable, that when immigration has ceased,

and the Pacific coasts and valleys are peopled by the great-grandchildren of Californians and Oregonians, this difference may become more marked, and a Pacific variety of the American species be discernible.

We have so far been proceeding on the assumption that the inhabitants of the United States will be in the future what they have been during the last three generations. It must, however, be admitted that two agents are at work which may create differences between those who occupy different parts of the country greater than any which now exist. One of these is immigration from Europe, whereof I will only say that there is as yet little sign that it will substantially alter any section of the people, so strong is the assimilative power which the existing population exerts on the newcomers, and that it may probably, within the next few decades, begin to decline.¹ Large as it has been, it has not yet affected the English spoken in any part of the country; and one may indeed note that though there are marked differences of pronunciation there are, as respects the words, few dialectic variations over the vast area of the Union. The other is climate. Now climatic influences seem to work but slowly on a national type already moulded and, so to speak, hammered into a definite shape by many centuries. The English race is, after all, a very recent arrival in America. Few, indeed, of the progenitors of the present dwellers in the South have been settled there for two centuries; that is to say, the present generation is at most only the sixth on which the climate has had time to tell. It is therefore quite possible that, when five or six more centuries have passed, the lowlanders of the Gulf States may, under the enervating heat and malarial fevers of their summers, together with the desistence from physical exertion which that heat compels, have become different from what they now are; though the comparative coolness and consequent reinvigorative powers of the winters, and the infiltration into their population of newcomers from

¹ I had intended to devote at least one chapter to the immigrants, setting forth their numbers, their local distribution, and their influence, both political and social, upon different regions of the country. I have, however, been led to the opinion that the time has not yet arrived when this large and difficult topic can be systematically handled to good purpose. While so large a part of the immigrants are still raw strangers, and while so many more continue to arrive, all conclusions must be provisional.

the hardier North, will be influences working in the contrary direction.¹ The moral and social sentiments predominant in a nation, and the atmosphere of ideas it breathes, tend, as education is more and more diffused, and the movements of travel to and fro become constantly brisker, to be more and more powerful forces in producing similarity of character, and similarity of character tells on the man's whole life and constitution.

A like question has been raised regarding the whole people of the United States as compared with the European stocks whence they sprung. The climate of their new country is one of greater extremes of heat and cold, and its air more generally stimulative, than are the climate and air of the British Isles, or even of Germany and Scandinavia. That this climate should, given sufficient time, modify the physical type of a race, and therewith even its intellectual type, seems only natural. Arctic winters and scanty nutriment have, in nine centuries, markedly reduced the stature of the Norwegians who inhabit Iceland, a country which has received practically no admixture of foreign blood, while the stern conditions of their lonely life have given them mental and moral habits distinguishable from those of the natives of modern Norway. But the problem is an obscure one, for many elements besides climate enter into it; and history supplies so few cases in point, that the length of time required to modify a physical type already settled for centuries is matter for mere conjecture. There have been many instances of races from cold or damp countries settling in warmer or dryer ones; but in all of these there has been also a mixture of blood, which makes it hard to say how much is to be attributed to climatic influences alone. What can be stated positively is, that the English race has not hitherto degenerated physically in its new home; in some districts it may even seem to have improved. The tables of life-insurance companies show that the average of life is as long as in Western Europe. People walk less and climb mountains less than they do in England, but quite as much physical strength and agility are put forth in games, and these are pursued with as much ardour. It was noted in the War of Secession that the percentage of recoveries from

¹ Of the negroes, the race naturally fitted for these Gulf lowlands, I shall speak in a later chapter.

wounds was larger than in European wars, and the soldiers in both armies stood well the test of the long marches through rough and sometimes unhealthy regions to which they were exposed, those, perhaps, faring best who were of the purest American stock, *i.e.* who came from the districts least affected by recent immigration.¹ It has, however, already been remarked that the time during which physical conditions have been able to work on the Anglo-American race is much too short to enable any but provisional conclusions to be formed; and for the same reason it is premature to speculate upon the changes in character and intellectual tastes which either the natural scenery of the American Continent, and in particular its vast central plain, or the occupations and economic environment of the people, with their increasing tendency to prefer urban to rural life, may in the course of ages produce. The science of ethnographic sociology is still only in its infancy, and the working of the causes it examines is so subtle that centuries of experience may be needed before it becomes possible to determine definite laws of national growth.

Let us sum up the points in which physical conditions seem to have influenced the development of the American people, by trying to give a short answer to the question, What kind of a home has Nature given to the nation?

She has furnished it with resources for production, that is, with potential wealth, ampler and more varied than can be found in any other country,—an immense area of fertile soil, sunshine and moisture fit for all the growths of the temperate, and even a few of the torrid, zone, a store of minerals so large as to seem inexhaustible.

She has given it a climate in which the foremost races of mankind can thrive and (save in a few districts) labour, an air in most regions not only salubrious, but more stimulating than that of their ancient European seats.

She has made communication easy by huge natural water-courses, and by the general openness and smoothness of so much of the continent as lies east of the Rocky Mountains.

In laying out a vast central and almost unbroken plain, she has destined the largest and richest region of the country

¹ Some valuable remarks on this subject will be found in Professor N. S. Shaler's interesting book, *Nature and Man in America*, from which I take these facts regarding life insurance and the experience of the Civil War.

to be the home of one nation, and one only. That the lands which lie east of this region between the Alleghanies and the Atlantic, and those which lie west of it between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, are also occupied by that one nation is due to the fact that before the colonization of the central region had gone far, means of communication were invented which made the Alleghanies cease to be a barrier, and that before the Pacific coast had been thickly settled, the rest of the country was already so great in population, wealth, and power that its attraction was as irresistible as the moon finds the attraction of the earth to be.

Severing its home by a wide ocean from the old world of Europe on the east, and by a still wider one from the half old, half new, world of Asia and Australasia on the west, she has made the nation sovereign of its own fortunes. It need fear no attacks nor even any pressure from the military and naval powers of the eastern hemisphere, and it has little temptation to dissipate its strength in contests with them. It has no doubt a strong neighbour on the North, but a friendly one, linked by many ties of interest as well as kindred, and not likely ever to become threatening. It had on the South neighbours who might have been dangerous, but fortune favoured it by making one of them hopelessly weak, and obliging the other, strong as she was, to quit possession at a critical moment. Thus is it left to itself as no great State has ever yet been in the world; thus its citizens enjoy an opportunity never before granted to a nation, of making their country what they will to have it.

These are unequalled advantages. They contain the elements of immense defensive strength, of immense material prosperity. They disclose an unrivalled field for the development of an industrial civilization. Nevertheless, students of history, knowing how unpredictable is the action of what we call moral causes, that is to say, of emotional and intellectual influences as contrasted with those rooted in physical and economic facts, will not venture to base upon the most careful survey of the physical conditions of America any bolder prophecy than this, that not only will the State be powerful and the wealth of its citizens prodigious, but that the Nation will probably remain one in its government, and still more probably one in speech, in character, and in ideas.

CHAPTER XCII

THE SOUTH SINCE THE WAR

THOUGH in the preceding chapters I have sought, so far as possible, to describe the political phenomena of America in general terms, applicable to all parts of the Union, it has often been necessary to remind the reader that the conditions of the Southern States, both political and social, are in some respects exceptional, one may almost say, abnormal. The experience of this section of the country has been different from that of the more populous and prosperous North, for the type of its civilization was till thirty years ago determined by the existence of slavery. It has suffered, and has been regenerated, by a terrible war. It is still confronted by a peculiar and menacing problem in the presence of a mass of negroes much larger than was the whole population of the Union in A. D. 1800, persons who, though they are legally and industrially members of the nation, are still virtually an alien element, unabsorbed and unabsorbable. In the present chapter I propose to sketch in brief outline the fortunes of the Southern States since the war, and their present economic and social condition, reserving for the chapter which follows an equally succinct account of the state of the coloured population, and their relations, present and prospective, to the whites.

The history and the industrial situation of the Southern States cannot be understood without a comprehension of their physical conditions. That part of them which lies east of the Mississippi consists of two regions. There is what may be called the plantation country, a comparatively level, low, and fertile region, lying along the coast of the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico, and stretching up the basin of the Mississippi River. And there is the highland region, a long, broad tongue of elevated land stretching down from the north into this level