

gence, in thrift, and in habits of steady industry. Other contact than industrial there is none, except so far as philanthropists seek him out to help him, for from social intercourse, and above all from intermarriage, with the whites, he is rigidly debarred. Painful as are the incidents of this social separation, and still more deplorable as are the occasional outbreaks of lawless violence against negroes accused of crimes against women, the relation of the two races is not, on the whole, one of mutual aversion, and does not contain any present elements of political danger. Even if the negro remains practically excluded in some States from the exercise of the suffrage, his condition is not the same as though he had never received that gift, for the fact that he is legally a citizen has raised both the white's view of him and his own view of himself. Thoughtful observers in the South seem to feel little anxiety, and expect that for many years to come the negroes, naturally a good-natured and easy-going race, will be content with the position of an inferior caste, which does the humbler kinds of work and unfortunately contributes a large quota of petty crime, but which will nevertheless become gradually permeated by American habits and ideas, and will send up into the higher walks of life a slowly increasing number of its ablest members. It might be thought that this elevating process would be accelerated by the sympathy of the coloured people at the North, who, as they enjoy greater educational opportunities, might be expected to advance more quickly. But the negro race increases comparatively slowly to the north of latitude 40°, and even there it neither blends with the whites nor makes sufficient progress in wealth and influence to be able to help its Southern members. A very high authority estimates the probable coloured population in 1900 at ten millions out of a total population of eighty millions, and adds the remark that, "considering the limited area of land in which negroes have an advantage over whites by physiological adaptation to climate, and the industrial advantage of the whites where climatic conditions are equal, it is doubtful whether there is room in the South for so large a population."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> General Francis A. Walker in *Ency. Brit.*, article "United States." In 1790 the coloured people were 19.3 per cent of the total population of the United States, and in 1880 only 13.1. In 1890 the percentage had sunk to 11.9.

Two other questions relating to changes in population must be adverted to before we leave this part of the subject. There are Europeans who hold — and in this physiologically-minded age it is natural that men should hold — that the evolution of a distinctively American type of character and manners must be still distant, because the heterogeneous elements of the population (in which the proportion of English blood is smaller now than it was fifty years ago) must take a long time to become mixed and assimilated. This is a plausible view; yet I doubt whether differences of blood have the importance which it assumes. What strikes the traveller, and what the Americans themselves delight to point out to him, is the amazing solvent power which American institutions, habits, and ideas exercise upon newcomers of all races. The children of Irishmen, Germans, and Scandinavians are certainly far more like native Americans than the current views of heredity would have led us to expect; nor is it without interest to observe that Nature has here repeated on the Western continent that process of mixing Celtic with Germanic and Norse blood which she began in Britain more than a thousand years ago. The ratio borne by the Celtic elements in the population of Great Britain (*i.e.* the Picts and Gaels of Northern Britain and those of the Cymry of Middle and Western Britain who survived the onslaught of the Angles and Saxons in the fifth and sixth centuries) to the Teutonic (Low German and Norse) elements in that population as it stood in the seventeenth century, when England began to colonize North America, may probably be a ratio not much smaller than that which the Irish immigrants to America bear to the German immigrants: so that the relative proportions of Celtic and Teutonic blood, as these proportions may be taken to have existed in the Americans of a hundred years ago, have not been greatly altered by the Irish and the German immigration of the last six decades.<sup>1</sup>

This parallel may seem fanciful, yet those who lay stress on

<sup>1</sup> The analogy may be carried one step farther by observing that the Scandinavians who now settle in the North-western States, as they have come to America later than Celts or Germans, so also have come in a proportion to Celts and Germans corresponding to that borne to the previous inhabitants of Britain by the Danes and Norwegians who poured their vigorous blood into the veins of the English race from the ninth century onwards.

race characteristics and expect the American people of the future to be sensibly changed by immigration, may be asked to remember that in that immigration neither the Celtic nor the Teutonic element has so far been able to preponderate. I venture, however, to believe that the intellectual and moral atmosphere into which the settlers from Europe come has more power to assimilate them than their race qualities have power to change it; and that the future of America will be less affected by this influx of new blood than any one who has not studied the American democracy of to-day can realize. The time has not yet arrived for the formation of definite conclusions on this most interesting problem; so I will venture to say no more than this, that the influence of European immigration is so far to be sought, not so much in any tinging of the national character, as economically in the amazingly swift growth of the agricultural West, and politically in the unfortunate results it has had upon the public life of cities, in the outbreaks of savage violence which may be traced to it, particularly in the mining districts, and in the unexpectedly severe strain it has put on universal suffrage. Nor must another source of evil pass unnoticed. The most conspicuous evidence of American prosperity has been hitherto seen in the high standard of living to which the native working classes of the North have risen, in the abundance of their food and the quality of their clothing, in the neatness and comfort of their homes, in the decent orderliness of their lives, and the fondness for reading of their women. The settlers of the last half century, though at first far behind the native Americans in all these respects, have tended to rise to their level and, except in a few of the larger cities, have after fifteen or twenty years practically adopted American standards of comfort. But within the last decade new swarms of European immigrants have invaded America, drawn from their homes in the eastern parts of Central Europe by the constant cheapening of ocean transit and by that more thorough drainage, so to speak, of the inland regions of Europe which is due to the extension of railways.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The largest percentages of increase of foreign population were in the decade 1880-90, the following: Persons born in Hungary 441 per cent, in Russia 411 per cent, in Italy 312 per cent, in Austria 218 per cent, in Poland 203 per cent.

These immigrants, largely of Slavonic race, come from a lower stratum of civilization than the German immigrants of the past, and, since they speak foreign tongues, are less quickly amenable to American influences, and probably altogether less improvable, than are the Irish. There seems to be a danger that if they continue to come in large numbers they may retain their own low standard of decency and comfort, and menace the continuance among the working class generally of that far higher standard which has hitherto prevailed in all but a few spots in the country. Already the United States, which twenty years ago rejoiced in the increase of immigration, has begun to regard it with disquiet; and laws are passed to prevent the entrance not only of labourers brought under contract but of criminals and of persons who seem likely to become a burden upon the community.<sup>1</sup>

The intrusion of these inauspicious elements is not the only change in the population which may cause anxiety. For many years past there has been an indraught of people from the rural districts to the cities. Thirty per cent of the whole sixty-six millions are now, it is estimated, to be found in cities with a population exceeding 8000, and the transfer of people from a rural to an urban life goes on all the faster because it is due not merely to economic causes, such as operate all the world over, and to the spirit of enterprise which is strong in the American youth, but also to the distaste which the average native American, a more sociable and amusement-loving being than the English or German peasant, feels for the isolation of farm life and the monotony of farm labour.<sup>2</sup> Even in 1844 R. W. Emerson wrote: "The cities drain the country of the best part of its population, the flower of the youth of both sexes

<sup>1</sup> Such laws are of course difficult of enforcement, because when the immigrants arrive it is seldom possible to say which ought to be refused ingress as paupers or criminals; and it has accordingly been proposed to throw upon United States Consuls at European ports of departure the duty of sifting those who seek to embark for America, and granting certificates to those who are approved. However, in the year ending June 30th, 1892, 2801 were debarred from entering, the total immigration for 1892 being 547,060.

<sup>2</sup> There is sometimes a scarcity of labour on farms in the Eastern States, while the cities are crowded with men out of work.

The percentage of urbans to total population, which in 1790 was 3.35 was in 1890 29.12. In the North Atlantic States it was 51.58 per cent of the population of those States. The increase is chiefly in a few large cities.

goes into the towns, and the country is cultivated by a much inferior class." Since then the Western forests have been felled and the Western prairies brought under the plough by the stalwart sons of New England and New York. But now again, and in the West hardly less than in the East, the complaint goes up that native American men and women long for a city life, and gladly leave tillage to the newcomers from Germany and Scandinavia. Whether a city-bred population will have the physical vigour which the native rural population has shown—a population which in some of the Western States strikes one as perhaps more vigorous than any Europe can point to—is at least doubtful, for though American cities have sanitary advantages greater than those of most towns in Europe, the stress and strain of their city life is more exhausting. And it need scarcely be added that in the oldest and most highly civilized districts of the country, and among the more refined sections of the people, the natural increase of population is much smaller than it is among the poorer and the ruder.

We have been wont to think of the principle of natural selection as that which makes for the progress of the race in the human, as it has done in the other families of animated creatures. But in the most advanced communities this principle is apt to be reversed, and the section of the population which tends to propagate itself most largely is that very section which is least fitted to raise, or even to sustain, the intellectual and moral level, as well as the level of physical excellence, already attained. Marriages are later and families smaller among the best nurtured and most cultivated class than they are among the uneducated and improvident; more children are born to the physically weak and morally untrained than to those among the rich whose natural gifts would in ages of violence, when men and families survived by physical and mental strength, have enabled them to prevail in the struggle for existence. Thus a force which once worked powerfully for the improvement of a national stock has now been turned the other way, and makes for a decline in the average capacities wherewith each man is born into the world. So in New England and the Eastern States generally, though there are families, historic by the number of eminent names

they have produced, which still flourish and count their cousinhood by hundreds, it is nevertheless true that the original English race, if it grows at all, grows less swiftly than the Irish or the German, and far less swiftly than it did some sixty years ago.<sup>1</sup> Yet here also that assimilative power of which I have spoken comes to the help of the nation. Those who rise from the less cultivated class, who do not belong to what Dr. Holmes calls the Brahmin caste, still surviving in New England and once strong in Virginia, are breathed upon by the spirit of the country; they absorb its culture and carry on its traditions; and they do so all the more readily because the pervading sense of equality makes a man's entrance into a class higher than that wherein he was born depend solely on his personal qualities.

European readers may ask whether the swift growth not only of wealth but of great fortunes in the United States will not end in creating an aristocracy of rich families, and therefore with a new structure of society. I see no ground for expecting this, not merely because the wealthiest class passes down by imperceptible gradations of fortune to a working class far better off than the working classes of Europe, but also because the faith in equality and the love of equality are too deeply implanted in every American breast to be rooted out by any economic changes. They are the strongest beliefs and passions of the people. They make no small part of the people's daily happiness; and I can more easily imagine the United States turned into a monarchy on the one hand or a group of petty republics on the other than the aristocratic ideas and habits of Germany or even of England established on American soil. Social exclusiveness there may be,—signs of it are already discernible,—but visible and overt recognitions of differences of rank, whether in the use of hereditary titles, or in the possession by one class of special privileges, or in the habit of

<sup>1</sup> General F. A. Walker gives the rate of increase of the native whites in the United States at 31.25 per cent in the decade 1870-80, but that of native whites born of native parents at 28 per cent. The average size of the family decreased in the same decade from 5.09 persons to 5.04. In 1890 it had further fallen to 4.93, and in some of the States where the population is most largely native born it was still lower, *e.g.* Maine (4.40), New Hampshire (4.31), Indiana (4.60), whereas in the South it was comparatively high, *e.g.* West Virginia (5.43), Texas (5.44).