

THE RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES TO THEIR NEW DEPENDENCIES

IN modern times there have been two principal colonizing nations, which not merely have occupied and administered a great transmarine domain, but have impressed upon it their own identity—the totality of their political and racial characteristics—to a degree that is likely to affect permanently the history of the world at large.

These two nations, it is needless to say, are Great Britain and Spain. Russia, their one competitor, differs from them in that her sustained advance over alien regions is as wholly by land as theirs has been by sea. France and Holland have occupied and administered, and continue to occupy and administer, large extents of territory; but it is scarcely necessary to argue that in neither case has the race possessed the land, nor have the national characteristics been transmitted to the dwellers

therein as a whole. They have realized, rather, the idea recently formulated by Mr. Benjamin Kidd for the development of tropical regions, — administration from without.

The unexpected appearance of the United States as in legal control of transmarine territory, which as yet they have not had opportunity either to occupy or to administer, coincides in time with the final downfall of Spain's colonial empire, and with a stage in the upward progress of that of Great Britain, so marked, in the contrast it presents to the ruin of Spain, as to compel attention and comparison, with an ultimate purpose to draw therefrom instruction for the United States in the new career forced upon them. The larger colonies of Great Britain are not indeed reaching their majority, for that they did long ago; but the idea formulated in the phrase "imperial federation" shows that they, and the mother country herself, have passed through and left behind the epoch when the accepted thought in both was that they should in the end separate, as sons leave the father's roof, to set up, each for himself. To that transition phase has succeeded the ideal of partnership,

more complex indeed and difficult of attainment, but trebly strong if realized. The terms of partnership, the share of each member in the burdens and in the profits, present difficulties which will delay, and may prevent, the consummation; time alone can show. The noticeable factor in this change of mind, however, is the affectionate desire manifested by both parent and children to ensure the desired end. Between nations long alien we have high warrant for saying that interest alone determines action; but between communities of the same blood, and when the ties of dependence on the one part are still recent, sentiments — love and mutual pride — are powerful, provided there be good cause for them. And good cause there is. Since she lost what is now the United States, Great Britain has become benevolent and beneficent to her colonies.

It is not in colonies only, however, that Great Britain has been beneficent to weaker communities; nor are benevolence and beneficence the only qualities she has shown. She has been strong also, — strong in her own interior life, whence all true strength issues; strong in the quality of the men she has sent forth to

colonize and to administer; strong to protect by the arm of her power, by land, and, above all, by sea. The advantage of the latter safeguard is common to all her dependencies; but it is among subject and alien races, and not in colonies properly so called, that her terrestrial energy chiefly manifests itself, to control, to protect, and to elevate. Of these functions, admirably discharged in the main, India and Egypt are the conspicuous illustrations. In them she administers from without, and cannot be said to colonize, for the land was already full.

Conspicuous result constitutes example: for imitation, if honorable; for warning, if shameful. Experience is the great teacher, and is at its best when personal; but in the opening of a career such experience is wanting to the individual, and must be sought in the record of other lives, or of other nations. The United States are just about to enter on a task of government — of administration — over regions which, in inhabitants, in climate, and in political tradition, differ essentially from themselves. What are the conditions of success?

We have the two great examples. Great Britain has been, in the main, and increasingly,

beneficent and strong. Spain, from the very first, as the records show, was inhumanly oppressive to the inferior races; and, after her own descendants in the colonies became aliens in habit to the home country, she to them also became tyrannically exacting. But, still more, Spain became weaker and weaker as the years passed, the tyranny of her extortions being partially due to exigencies of her political weakness and to her economical declension. Let us, however, not fail to observe that the beneficence, as well as the strength, of Great Britain has been a matter of growth. She was not always what she now is to the alien subject. There is, therefore, no reason to despair, as some do, that the United States, who share her traditions, can attain her success. The task is novel to us; we may make blunders; but, guided by her experience, we should reach the goal more quickly.

And it is to our interest to do so. Enlightened self-interest demands of us to recognize not merely, and in general, the imminence of the great question of the farther East, which is rising so rapidly before us, but also, specifically, the importance to us of a strong and beneficent

occupation of adjacent territory. In the domain of color, black and white are contradictory; but it is not so with self-interest and beneficence in the realm of ideas. This paradox is now too generally accepted for insistence, although in the practical life of states the proper order of the two is too often inverted. But, where the relations are those of trustee to ward, as are those of any state which rules over a weaker community not admitted to the full privileges of home citizenship, the first test to which measures must be brought is the good of the ward. It is the first interest of the guardian, for it concerns his honor. Whatever the part of the United States in the growing conflict of European interests around China and the East, we deal there with equals, and may battle like men; but our new possessions, with their yet minor races, are the objects only of solicitude.

Ideas underlie action. If the paramount idea of beneficence becomes a national conviction, we may stumble and err, we may at times sin, or be betrayed by unworthy representatives; but we shall advance unflinchingly. I have been asked to contribute to the discussion of this matter something from my own usual point of

view; which is, of course, the bearing of sea power upon the security and the progress of nations. Well, one great element of sea power, which, it will be remembered, is commercial before it is military, is that there be territorial bases of action in the regions important to its commerce. That is self-interest. But the history of Spain's decline, and the history of Great Britain's advance, — in the latter of which the stern lesson given by the revolt of the United States is certainly a conspicuous factor, as also, perhaps, the other revolt known as the Indian Mutiny, in 1857, — alike teach us that territories beyond the sea can be securely held only when the advantage and interests of the inhabitants are the primary object of the administration. The inhabitants may not return love for their benefits, — comprehension or gratitude may fail them; but the sense of duty achieved, and the security of the tenure, are the reward of the ruler.

I have understood also that, through the pages of "The Engineering Magazine," I should speak to the men who stand at the head of the great mechanical industries of the country, — the great inventors and the leaders in home devel-

opment,—and that they would be willing to hear me. But what can I say to them that they do not know? Their own businesses are beyond my scope and comprehension. The opportunities offered by the new acquisitions of the United States to the pursuits with which they are identified they can understand better than I. Neither is it necessary to say that adequate—nay, great—naval development is a condition of success, although such an assertion is more within my competence, as a student of navies and of history. That form of national strength which is called sea power becomes now doubly incumbent. It is needed not merely for national self-assertion, but for beneficence; to ensure to the new subjects of the nation peace and industry, uninterrupted by wars, the great protection against which is preparation—to use that one counsel of Washington's which the anti-imperialist considers to be out of date.

I have, therefore, but one thing which I have not already often said to offer to such men, who affect these great issues through their own aptitudes and through their far-reaching influence upon public opinion, which they touch

through many channels. Sea power, as a national interest, commercial and military, rests not upon fleets only, but also upon local territorial bases in distant commercial regions. It rests upon them most securely when they are extensive, and when they have a numerous population bound to the sovereign country by those ties of interest which rest upon the beneficence of the ruler; of which beneficence power to protect is not the least factor. Mere just dealing and protection, however, do not exhaust the demands of beneficence towards alien subjects, still in race-childhood. The firm but judicious remedying of evils, the opportunities for fuller and happier lives, which local industries and local development afford, these also are a part of the duty of the sovereign power. Above all, there must be constant recognition that self-interest and beneficence alike demand that the local welfare be first taken into account. It is possible, of course, that it may at times have to yield to the necessities of the whole body; but it should be first considered.

The task is great; who is sufficient for it? The writer believes firmly in the ultimate power of ideas. Napoleon is reported to have said:

“Imagination rules the world.” If this be generally so, how much more the true imaginations which are worthy to be called ideas! There is a nobility in man which welcomes the appeal to beneficence. May it find its way quickly now to the heads and hearts of the American people, before less worthy ambitions fill them; and, above all, to the kings of men, in thought and in action, under whose leadership our land makes its giant strides. There is in this no Quixotism. Materially, the interest of the nation is one with its beneficence; but if the ideas get inverted, and the nation sees in its new responsibilities, first of all, markets and profits, with incidental resultant benefit to the natives, it will go wrong. Through such mistakes Great Britain passed. She lost the United States; she suffered bitter anguish in India; but India and Egypt testify to-day to the nobility of her repentance. Spain repented not. The examples are before us. Which shall we follow?

And is there not a stimulus to our imagination, and to high ambition, to read, as we easily may, how the oppressed have been freed, and the degraded lifted, in India and in Egypt, not

only by political sagacity and courage, but by administrative capacity directing the great engineering enterprises, which change the face of a land and increase a hundredfold the opportunities for life and happiness? The profession of the writer, and the subject consequently of most of his writing, stands for organized force, which, if duly developed, is the concrete expression of the nation's strength. But while he has never concealed his opinion that the endurance of civilization, during a future far beyond our present foresight, depends ultimately upon due organization of force, he has ever held, and striven to say, that such force is but the means to an end, which end is durable peace and progress, and therefore beneficence. The triumphs and the sufferings of the past months have drawn men's eyes to the necessity for increase of force, not merely to sustain over-sea dominion, but also to ensure timely use, in action, of the latent military and naval strength which the nation possesses. The speedy and inevitable submission of Spain has demonstrated beyond contradiction the primacy of navies in determining the issue of transmarine wars; for after Cavité and San-

tiago had crippled hopelessly the enemy's navy, the end could not be averted, though it might have been postponed. On the other hand, the numerical inadequacy of the troops sent to Santiago, and their apparently inadequate equipment, have shown the necessity for greater and more skilfully organized land forces. The deficiency of the United States in this respect would have permitted a prolonged resistance by the enemy's army in Cuba,—a course which, though sure ultimately to fail, appealed strongly to military punctilio.

These lessons are so obvious that it is not supposable that the national intelligence, which has determined the American demand for the Philippines, can overlook them; certainly not readers of the character of those to whom this paper is primarily addressed. But when all this has been admitted and provided for, it still remains that force is but the minister, under whose guardianship industry does its work and enjoys peaceably the fruits of its labor. To the mechanical industries of the country, in their multifold forms, our new responsibilities propound the questions, not

merely of naval and military protection, but of material development, which, first beneficent to the inhabitants and to the land, gives also, and thereby, those firm foundations of a numerous and contented population, and of ample local resources, upon which alone military power can securely rest.