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THE INFLUENCE OF COMMERCE ON CIVILIZATION:

THE JOSEPH FISHER LECTURE IN COMMERCE

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J. CURRIE ELLES, ESQ.

APRIL 23RD, 1908.



ADELAIDE:

W. K. THOMAS & Co., PRINTERS, GRENFELL STREET

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

The Influence of Commerce on Civilization.

MR. CHANCELLOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

As an unknown man to you, I have been paid a most graceful compliment when I received an invitation from your honourable University to deliver a lecture under its auspices on a subject relating to commerce. I have since ascertained that to one or two kind friends I am indebted for the pleasure I feel in being here to-night at your invitation. That pleasure is not unassociated however from apprehension, for no matter how much I may believe in what I say, others may have different views. I trust, however, that I may at least interest you in a subject which engrosses my entire attention ; which has such romantic surroundings, and which so well repays the student, as the Influence of Commerce on Civilization. I have found it difficult to condense what I have to say in a mere paper. Volumes would not exhaust the subject. I feel proud in being privileged to address an assemblage of University men. Though now a commercial man, may my remarks, as I am a University man also, not now be out of place, as Horace says, “*Nota quae sedes fuerat columbis.*”

I have in my paper endeavoured to give a short history of the Influence of Commerce on Civilization, and, during the course of the paper as I have endeavoured to put it to you. I have quietly tried to portray the varying influence, one over the other, between the conflicting good and bad in commerce and civilization, since history began. There has ever been a conflict between practice and theory ; between common-sense and visionary ideas ; between sound fact and, shall I call it, irresponsible mania, in all our mundane

existence. There has ever been the individual effort, the hope of the family and of the individual in the great object of self-support, self-sacrifice, and self-competence, often to be blasted in the hour of prosperity by the predominant weight of irresponsible, unreasoning barbarism and ignorance. In the language of the great German poet, Schiller :

“Es reden und träumen die Menschen viel
 Von bessern künftigen Tagen,
 Nach einem glücklichen goldenen Ziel
 Sieht man sie rennen und jagen,
 Die Welt wird alt und wird wieder jung,
 Doch der Mensch hofft immer Verbesserung.”

Where I have failed in continuity of theme, I hope I may be judged mercifully, because also, “quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus.”

COMMERCE, CIVILIZATION.

These two words in the English language mean much and their analyses and corresponding equivalents in many other, now unknown tongues, mean more. Since ever the world began, from the earliest records now extant of ancient peoples and buried civilization, these two words are stamped on the records of time. Commerce presupposes and marches hand in hand with civilization, and commerce through all times has developed civilization, while civilization has often failed and retrograded to the detriment and set-back of commerce. During all the turbulent mundane history of this our earth, through all the effacements of empires and the downfall of civilization, commerce has ever emerged supreme from the ashes of her predecessors to initiate and establish a new era even more extensive and far reaching; and civilization, real or supposed, has always followed, brought into birth by the energy of commerce, to again die away by the effeteness of its own luxury and ineptitude. The “Sturm und Drang” of commerce “non habet leges”, and in this science, for science it is, “necessity has no law”, and

necessity is the mother of invention. Many are the theories expounded by civilization, and many the fads begotten of luxury derived from commerce, which have for a time held sway, but the Nemesis of cold fact and practice when brought into contact with the visionary theories of so-called civilization, has shattered them as on an iron-bound coast on the sea of philosophy. Is there any civilization? Is what we have now worthy of the name? This will be my effort to elucidate.

Very much of what is good and honest in this world has been called into being by commerce. The pre-supposition of and the establishment of honourable dealing rendered imperative on the first traders, as their *raison d'être*, their existence and their livelihood, has survived in the high moral tone and character in trade initiated by the pioneers of commerce. In the old policies of insurance in the East, still surviving some forty years ago, the phrase, "In the name of God, Amen", was the first line in a policy of marine insurance. This phrase or declaration was an oath by the signatories to such policy, binding even unto the third and fourth generations through their descendants. This form of insurance, the oldest in the world, was derived from the Arabians, but I am sorry to see the phrase no longer exists. The commercial morality of the Eastern nations, the Arabians, Parsees and Chinese, survives in all its strength, and is a pattern to all Western nations from its integrity. In China a debt is a debt: it descends from father to son, and Chinese law can compel the son to make good his father's debts. Civilization being a growth on commerce has of times raised its baneful arguments against the hereditary law of honesty, established by commerce, and brought about side issues and legal technicalities to evade true indebtedness: in this way so-called civilization has hindered commerce. Commerce always is the honest, practical fact in history: civilization often the theoretical fad. The older the period examined, the more unique the honesty of commerce disclosed.

The great economic study of the wants and requirements of the present day, and the means to satisfy them, is evolved in many ways ; and the varied aspects of the question present an ever-changing front, an ever-varying quantity, sometimes giving rise to much speculation, and always the subject of much controversial argument. The growth of human knowledge and often the preponderating influence of human ignorance, the increased and exacting requirements of civilization : the discoveries of science, and their consequent developments in turning these factors to practical account, have, during the last century especially, all contributed towards a cosmos, complex in its composition, and changeable as the kaleidoscope in its disposition. Old-established laws and customs, in every known branch of trade and profession, give way to new : old sources of supply become dried up, and in turn have become sources of demand. Staple articles of trade and commerce lose ground and become supplanted by others whose existence hitherto had barely maintained a place in economy, from their very uselessness for any known purpose. Science having investigated the various capabilities of the products of the earth, one class is kept in check by the resources of the other. Should the price of one article rise by attempted monopoly to a prohibitive basis, another product is called in to supply its place, which, by intrinsic merits, or by combination with others based on scientific authority, supplants the previous competitor.

This is an iconoclastic age : an age realistic rather than idealistic ; an age of inventions, of perfecting of scientific discoveries ; an age no longer of steam, but of electricity, which not only puts a girdle round the earth in forty minutes, but which grasps the lightning from the clouds to do its bidding. Prometheus stole fire from the sun to illumine the world, and was thrown into Tartarus by Zeus : the present age subdues the cloud compeller, Zeus, and yokes him in bondage to toil for the good of man. The question arouses many and various speculations and theories in the mind of anyone who studies the aims and ends of those whose lot it is, by circumstance or by

adoption, to cater for the requirements of the world. The keen competition which enters into the case is the cause of the still keener efforts to supplant the successful ones, in turn giving way to some power or combination which is able to supply the demand on some newer and cheaper principle ; and thus the world goes on, and the "survival of the fittest" doctrine in every case holds good : the newest acquisition of science and the latest discoveries in art and manufacture, all combining and being turned to account in the struggle for existence.

From the earliest known records of ancient times, as far back as even the records disclosed by the most recent excavations of the sites of ancient cities have proceeded (and, let me say, these researches into the ancient and buried world are only in their infancy) we have still ever-recurring recorded evidences of even more remote systems of commerce and civilization. The most ancient of these discoveries has proved the existence of immense commercial organizations and subsequent highly-graded systems of civilization, which have disappeared for ages, now to be exhumed, as to their remains, by the energy and "sinews of war" provided by commerce. The period when the first man began to barter or to trade, we shall never know. A learned professor, a member of the same school, and of the same University as myself, traces by means of their monuments the migrations of the Megalithic peoples from Mauritania, through Britain, Southern Europe and Asia, and through Northern Asia across Behring Straits to British Columbia, and down to Yucatan, and again separately, through Siberia, Corea, and Japan, down to Tonga and Samoa, and thence to New Zealand, as having been about 150,000 years ago. Whether this theory be right or wrong, I cannot say. Anyhow, the monuments remain, and it is a singular fact that to the present day, the trade and commerce routes, from the East in Asia to the West in Europe, follow very closely the routes of these Megalithic peoples. What their commerce and civilizations were we have no means of knowing, but the remains are still existent that such interchange of peoples took place. The

earliest known records of commerce and civilization are evidenced in late discoveries of the remains of the ancient Accadian race, which race was closely allied in its language with the Chinese, who preserve their ancient language to the present day, and who are among the most ancient commercial peoples known. In days long gone by they traded to Africa and the Arabian Gulf; even in ancient Egypt traces have been found of their commerce. The history of the vast commercial organizations of the Chaldeans and afterwards of the Babylonians, the Hittites, and the Egyptians, all of whom had intercourse with India and China, is vague and uncertain, but we do know that there was vast commerce conducted between these countries, as is shewn in the case of the Hittites, who were great miners and who paid tribute to Egypt, which Empire gradually declined over most of Africa. The Hittites attained an advanced state of civilization, and the commercial importance of their capital, Carchemish, extending from all Western Asia to the Mediterranean, was practically supreme. The Phœnicians controlled the commerce of the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf; their trade was enormous and their civilization of a very high order. The alphabets of Greece, Rome, and all modern nations are derived from Phœnicia. Arabia also contributed largely in ancient times, and also, as we shall see in more modern times, to the commerce and the civilization of the world; and, though derived from India in the first instance, we have the word "cypher" and the Arabic numerals now used. The Phœnician traders penetrated to Great Britain and Spain, and the remains of their enterprise now exist in the tin mines in Cornwall and in the copper mines in Spain, the Rio Tinto, and the Tharsis: the latter called after one of their cities. We thus see that commerce by exploring the earth and accumulating wealth and also great knowledge was founding a vast civilization over 6,000 to 7,000 years ago; and even then these records allude to far earlier huge commercial organizations and advanced systems of civilization. We learn of complete systems of banking, of highly-codified laws, of religions, and high scientific knowledge, which not only

foretold eclipses, which mapped out astronomical calculations, but also had in some of these ancient long forgotten cities a scientifically and perfectly arranged sanitary system of sewerage and drainage. That the ancients understood water is evinced in the present day by the embankments on the Yellow River, in China. These embankments were built 2,500 B.C. They are standing yet, and have ever since controlled the waters of this mighty river in flood. It may well be asked how many centuries did it require to instruct the Chinese engineers to possess the knowledge sufficient to measure the volume of flood waters and to build these embankments? Probably another 2,500 years. The question now comes: what caused all this disruption of commerce and effacement of civilization among these ancient peoples? We shall never truly know, but the probable cause may be learned by the consideration of the downfall of more modern nations. The Phoenicians whose commerce, as I have said, spread from India to the British Isles, embraced all the products of the then known world at Tyre, their capital. They formed colonies on the Mediterranean at Carthage, the modern French naval station Bizerta; and though their commerce was immense, extending to all parts of the then known world, they paid tribute to the Lybians, from whom they acquired a site for a trading centre. Enriched by commerce, they acquired the unrest which comes from prosperity, which has been the overthrow of other nations, and many individuals. They threw off the yoke of the Lybians, sent their fleets abroad to annex territory; and this brought them into conflict with Rome, the power then rising over the horizon, and eventually succumbed after many years of struggle to the Roman General, Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus, at the battle of Zama, 9th October, 202 B.C., which general then and there gained for the Romans a decisive victory over Hannibal, the Punic commander. The tribute of the Phoenicians to civilization has been great. They invented the purple dye made from shellfish, which has only been superseded in later days by the dye from the central American insect the cochineal. The remains in literature of the

Phoenicians are handed down through the Hebrews, in Psalm cvi, 23 to 30 :

“They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters :
 These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.
 For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.
 They mount up to the Heaven, they go down again to the depths : their soul is melted because of
 trouble.
 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end.
 Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.
 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.
 Then are they glad because they be quiet : so he bringeth them into their desired haven.”

Only a sailor could have written this beautiful description of a storm at sea, and no shepherd could ever have even conceived it. Again, we have, through Rome, in the works of Terence, a Phoenician slave, that immortal passage which, on being first spoken in the theatre at Rome, brought the entire audience to their feet in thunders of applause : “ Homo sum : humani nihil a me alienum puto ”. As Max Müller says : “ As far as we can tell, the barbarians seem to have possessed a greater facility for acquiring languages than either Greeks or Romans. Soon after the Macedonian conquest we find Berosus in Babylon, Menander in Tyre, and Manetho in Egypt compiling, from original sources, the annals of their countries. Their works were written in Greek, and for the Greeks. The native language of Berosus was Babylonian ; of Menander, Phoenician : of Manetho, Egyptian. Berosus was able to read the cuneiform documents of Babylonia with the same ease with which Manetho read the papyri of Egypt. The almost contemporaneous appearance of three such men—barbarians by birth and language—who were anxious to save the histories of their countries from total oblivion by entrusting them to the keeping of their conquerors, the Greeks, is highly significant. But what is likewise significant and by no means creditable to the Greek or Macedonian conquerors is the small value which they seem to have set on these works. They have all been lost, and are known to us by fragments only, though there can be little doubt that the work of Berosus would have

been an invaluable guide to the student of the cuneiform inscriptions of Babylonian history; and that Manetho, if preserved complete, would have saved us volumes of controversy on Egyptian chronology.

Through Greece we have the great poet Menander. The sayings of this poet have unfortunately come down to us only in the shape of a very few fragments, but some that have come down to us in the New Testament, quoted by St. Paul, are household words to-day, and are sublime. For instance: "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. xv, 33). And also, though not quoted by St. Paul:

"If thou wouldst know thyself, and what thou art,
 Look on the sepulchres as thou dost pass:
 There lie within the bones and little dust
 Of mighty kings and wisest men of old:
 They who once prided them on birth or wealth
 Or glory of great deeds, or beauteous form,
 Yet nought of these might stay the hand of Time.
 Look, and bethink thee thou art even as they.

Such is one result of the building up of commerce from humble beginnings, the amassing of wealth commercially and intellectually by the long intercourse and interchange of commodities and languages with other nations. Aggressive action on others was the downfall of the Phoenicians. Next in the procession of commercial nations we see the Romans. The history of Rome is the most interesting and entrancing in Europe. Having cleared the Carthaginians from their way, in succession every other opponent was subjected. The Empire of Rome extended from the Indus to the British Isles, and from the Sahara to the North Sea. Every product of every country was to be found in Rome; every subject of every nation resided there either free or as a slave. The wealth from commerce and power in the Roman Empire was enormous, and stimulated and encouraged the highest pursuits of literature and learning. The legacy given by Rome to civilization and literature is incalculable in its value. In all parts of Europe, the British Isles, in Asia and in Africa, even

now immense remains of Roman commerce and civilization are only just being unearthed. The code of Roman law, the Institutes of Justinian, have remained the basis of all present law, and are especially prominent in Scottish law. In proportion as Roman prosperity in commerce became greater by having enterprisingly pushed itself forward among other countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa, so did the zenith of her power gradually approach, her commerce became menaced, and her existence threatened by those whom she had conquered. The barbarian hosts under Alaric, Genseric, and Attila, driven by necessity, arose, invaded Rome, and finally made terms with the Eastern Empire at Byzantium, thus accomplishing the fall of the Western Empire and the degradation of Rome. One of the most potent causes of the fall of Rome and the decrease of her civilization was the rise of Christianity. Having gained ascendancy in Rome, the complete dissolution of Roman society, commerce, and civilization followed. This is what Lecky says on the subject: "Not quite a century after the conversion of Constantine, the Imperial city was captured by Alaric, and a long series of barbarian invasions at last dissolved the whole framework of Roman society, while the barbarians themselves, having adopted the Christian faith and submitted absolutely to the Christian priests, the Church, which remained the guardian of all the treasures of antiquity, was left with a virgin soil to realize her ideal of human excellence. Nor did she fall short of what might be expected. She exercised for many centuries an almost absolute empire over the thoughts and actions of mankind, and created a civilization which was permeated in every part with ecclesiastical influence. And the dark ages, as the period of Catholic ascendancy is justly called, do undoubtedly display many features of great and genuine excellence. In active benevolence, in the spirit of reverence, in loyalty, in co-operative habits, they far transcend the noblest ages of pagan antiquity, while in that humanity which shrinks from the infliction of suffering, they were superior to Roman, and in their respect for chastity, to Greek civilization. On the other hand, they rank immeasurably below the best

pagan civilizations in civic and patriotic virtues, in the love of liberty, in the number and splendour of the great characters they formed. They had their full share of tumult, anarchy, injustice, and war ; and they should probably be placed, in all intellectual virtues, lower than any other period in the history of mankind. A boundless intolerance of all divergence of opinion was united with an equally boundless toleration of all falsehood and deliberate fraud that could favour received opinions. Credulity being taught as a virtue, and all conclusions dictated by authority, a deadly torpor sank upon the human mind, which for many centuries almost suspended its action, and was only effectually broken by the scrutinizing, innovating, and free thinking habits that accompanied the rise of the industrial republics in Italy. Few men, who are not either priests or monks, would not have preferred to live in the best days of the Athenian or of the Roman republics in the age of Augustus or in the age of the Antonines, rather than in any period that elapsed between the triumph of Christianity and the fourteenth century. The time came when the Christian priests shed blood enough. Indeed, the more carefully the Christian legislation of the empire is examined and the more fully it is compared with what had been done under the influence of Stoicism by the pagan legislators, the more evident, I think, it will appear that the golden age of Roman law was not Christian, but pagan. Great works of codification were accomplished under the younger Theodosius and under Justinian, but it was in the reign of the pagan emperors, and especially of Hadrian and Alexander Severus, that nearly all the most important measures were taken : redressing injustice, elevating oppressed classes, and making the doctrine of the natural equality and fraternity of mankind the basis of legal enactments. Receiving the heritage of these laws, the Christians no doubt added something ; but a careful examination will show that it was surprisingly little. In no respect is the greatness of the Stoic philosophers more conspicuous than in contrast between the gigantic steps of legal reform made in a few years under their influence, and the almost insignificant steps taken when Christianity had obtained an

ascendency in the Empire, not to speak of the long period of decrepitude that followed.

About this time the Western Empire was finally overthrown by the Mohammedans hailing from Baghdad, who conquered Egypt and Mauritania and settled in Spain. The history of the Saracen occupation of Spain is one brilliant record of commerce and civilization. Spreading their commerce to every part of the known world, the Saracens encouraged literature, learning and art by every means in their power. The world was ransacked for manuscripts and books of all kinds. The Saracenic cities of Cordova, Granada, and Seville were the depositories of every branch of learning known, which rivalled, as the results of civilization, even the commerce itself which had given them birth. In the bazaars in the cities of Seville, Granada, and Cordova all known commodities, from the silks of China to the tin of Britain, from the products of Sokoto and Timbuctoo to those of the Baltic, were gathered together. Indeed, it was once said that, even "if you wanted bird's milk, by Allah, you will procure it at Seville". All branches of learning, in astronomy, in medicine, in surgery, were practised and studied here during the Saracenic occupation. Brazen and leaden pipes conveyed, by gravitation, the water stored in the reservoirs to the inhabitants of these cities. Gunpowder was known and made in Spain; glass was made; and printing was known, having been acquired from the Chinese, through Arabia. The connection between the plague rat and the dissemination of plague was believed by the Saracens. Indeed, the period of the Saracenic occupation of Spain was one of the most brilliant epochs—if not the most brilliant of all—in civilization and commerce, Europe has ever seen. I say Europe because the Saracens exemplified the highest efficiency in commerce and the highest luxury in civilization that was to be found in the world, they themselves being Asiatics, and knowing all that was best to know and learn in the civilizations of China and India. We have only to read the "Arabian Nights" to understand the intimate relationships between Arabia, India, and China. The contrast between Arab

civilization and the civilization of Northern Europe of that date is sharply accentuated by the fact that, while the literature of the Arabs was such as to remain for our instruction to this day, Charlemagne, the greatest monarch of the West, could not write. One of the principal things in which Cordova was said to surpass all other cities was the "sciences therein cultivated." It was reported to have more books than any city on earth. Andalusia was converted into a great literary market, and the most skilful men in learning of every clime were invited to Cordova and welcomed there for their attainments. The catalogue of the library at Cordova consisted of forty-four volumes. The Saracens left much, and would have left more had their records not been destroyed by fanaticism; but if they left one word, and if only that word were all, it lives in the annals of our British Empire—the word "Admiral". The Arab word for Admiral (Amir-al-Bahr) means "Emir of the Sea". I take it that a British Admiral is Emir of the Sea; that the office, British Admiral, is the highest given to any subject of any nation on earth. Long may he remain so, and long may a British Admiral's flag be feared, respected, and admired! The collapse of the Mohammedan power in Spain, destroying, as it did, the high state of commercial organizations and systems of civilization, is a calamity from which the civilized world has not recovered to this day. Religious fanaticism, to which the world seemed to have been given over, made it a matter of conscience to destroy the literature which centuries of enlightenment had amassed in the libraries of the Mohammedans. The condition of barbarous ignorance and sloth into which Europe was plunged after the downfall of the Roman Empire and the expulsion of the Saracens from Spain were a great set-back to both commerce and civilization: but commerce again rose supreme, and at the hands of the Florentines and the Venetians a new era for trade began. After the fall of the Saracens in Spain the growth of sacerdotalism and fanaticism in all their bald narrow-mindedness culminated in a set-back to commerce and a stagnation of civilization. The darkness of the Middle Ages has often been referred to; and the marvellous

and malignant growth of sacerdotalism, paralysing, as it did, the civilization of Northern Europe, gave birth to the Crusades. Here, again, commerce rose to the occasion. The Florentines and especially the Venetians (who threw their whole energy into the trade of the East) financed the Crusaders during the long era of the eight Crusades, on account of their knowledge and practice of the science of exchanges. In fact, the genesis of the science of foreign exchanges—one of the most important constituents in modern commercial operations—began in Italy. At a time when the Northern nations show signs of infancy of commerce merely, Italy was advanced in the art and practice to a most highly developed commercial and financial state. It is to her that we owe our system of book-keeping and the use of bills of exchange; and it is certain that Italy, by keeping her finger on the monetary pulsations of Europe, reaped her harvest from the bi-metallic fluctuations of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Trading to and having constant intercourse with the East, Venice had sent her great traveller, Marco Polo, to the distant realms of India and China. In China he was received by the Great Khan most hospitably, and the Khan was impressed by his skill in acquiring the language of the people of his dominions. Marco Polo visited many cities in China—amongst others, the great city of Chin-Chew, which city had an immense commerce extending to Arabia and the Persian Gulf. He was even, through his friendship with the Khan, made Governor of a province. On the great science of the foreign exchanges I shall have much, I hope, to say later on. We all know the graphic account in “Ivanhoe” of the payment by Gurth to Isaac the Jew of York, in golden Venetian byzants, for the hire of Ivanhoe’s horse and suit of armour; and how, if the last piece had “rung a little less truly he would have given it to Gurth”. The Jews were also a factor in the Middle Ages as to foreign exchanges—an art, let me say, they have never since forgotten. We also know the plot in Shakespeare’s comedy, “The Merchant of Venice,” beginning “Three thousand ducats and three months: well.” This was on the Rialto, at Venice. The next

step in the variations in commerce and the centre of finance is the shifting of the venue to Antwerp. The drawback to Venice inasmuch as her commerce was restricted by the limited volume of exchanges due to its being undertaken on an overland route from Asia, was the opportunity of the Netherlands and Portugal. These two countries opened up trade and commerce with the coast of Africa and extended it to India, thereby initiating the era of sea-borne commerce to the East round the Cape of Good Hope, which has since assumed such vast and preponderating dimensions under the Union Jack, the flag of our great British Empire. The Dutch ships and the great Portuguese navigators, Vasco da Gama, and others, sailed to the East and founded colonies, which remain to this day. Traces of the navigators of these countries are found in Australia to-day, by the names affixed to parts of our coastland. Though sadly shorn of her former glory, the Portuguese colony of Macao, founded in the sixteenth century, still remains; and here, as a result of commerce, the literature of Portugal survives in the beautiful poem, the "Os Lusíadas", of Camoens, who was born at Macao. The Portuguese here exemplified their Phœnician descent. This trading with India and the East by the Dutch and Portuguese retained the centre of the foreign exchanges in Antwerp, regulated the flow of silver to the East, and retained gold as London does now to-day. This is what Venice could not do from the *raison d'être* of her commerce. But Spain was not idle in the meantime, and with the discovery of America by Columbus, albeit a Genoese, a new era arose over the commerce of Europe. The fabulous wealth of Mexico and Peru in precious metals paralysed Europe, and in Spain especially, promoted an effete luxury, which, aided by a malignant sacerdotalism, gradually overthrew the civilization and finally the commerce of Spain. The stories recorded by Prescott of Pizarro, in Peru, shoeing his horses with silver and releasing the tortured Incas on promises to fill their cells with gold, reached the ears of other nations. In Spain at this time the horrors of the Inquisition raged supreme. No horrors of ancient Rome ever surpassed the tortures of the

Spanish Inquisition. In the words of Lucretius: "Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum", rendered into English verse: "Learn thou then to what damned deeds religion urges men". The enterprise of Spain attracted the notice of the Britons Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, who, though they be called buccaneers, were probably no worse than the Spaniards, whom they bespoiled. This led to the attempted invasion of Britain by the Spanish Armada, the result of which, under Drake's able seamanship, left England mistress of the sea, as far as Spain was concerned. The star of Britain, rising over the horizon as a sea power, now definitely took a place in European maritime commerce. From this on, the defeat of the Dutch, the Napoleonic wars when the British fleet under Admiral Nelson shattered the combined fleets of France and Spain at Trafalgar in 1805, are matters of every-day history; but this event and the subsequent triumph of the British arms at Waterloo left the commerce of the world, won by war, at the feet of Great Britain. To hark back to our story. On 31st December, 1599, Queen Elizabeth signed the charter of the great East India Company. To wrest this prize from the British Empire was the endeavour of Napoleon, but Nelson, sailing into the Bay of Aboukir in 1798, destroyed the French fleet; while shortly after the French army in Egypt was annihilated by Sir Ralph Abercrombie at the Battle of the Pyramids. Then the way to the East was clear. From hence on a new era in commerce rises, and a new epoch in civilization begins. While reflecting on the failure of Napoleon in his attempt to boycott Great Britain's trade with Europe, we must not forget that much of the trade and commerce of Great Britain was derived from France as far back as the massacre of St. Bartholomew. The operatives, mostly Huguenots, who were driven from their homes and country, found a place in Britain; and when Napoleon attempted to boycott British commerce from Europe, and even blotted Great Britain from the map of Europe, declaring British property lawful prize, the British Islands to be held in a state of blockade, the continent of Europe to hold no correspondence with nor to transact any business

with Great Britain; when British manufactures and produce were declared contraband: when letters to and from the shores of Great Britain were to be kept and opened at the post offices, the traditions of France, if not the traditions of human nature, asserted themselves; and notwithstanding these decrees, White, in his history of France, says: "Artillery, horse, and infantry were always defeated when opposed to Napoleon's battalions, but printed gingham were irresistible. There were conspiracies beyond the reach of his spies, in every parlour, where the daughters were dressed in coloured muslins; and cloths, cutlery, and earthenware were smuggled wherever a British vessel could float". The traditions of France responded to the pre-eminent place in commerce that their exiles, the Huguenots, had given Great Britain, their adopted country, and the decrees of Napoleon, being without the pale of economic science, were frustrated by one, whom Max O'Rell calls "Her Royal Highness, Woman". But the success of such commerce with France and Europe was due to the never-sleeping vigilance of the British fleet. Lord Cornwallis, in the blockade of the English Channel, between Brest and Portsmouth, for two years never saw a green leaf or a tree. The sailors of the British Fleet were said to be web-footed, inasmuch as they had never been ashore for years. The great Nelson himself, though he was seasick nearly every day of his life, at one time never landed, and that for only an hour at a time, more than thrice in eighteen months. This indeed was a struggle for supremacy in commerce, if not for very existence, during the Napoleonic wars. Never was a struggle maintained with such determination and with such courage as was the fight for supremacy during the wars of 1789 to 1815.

Often as a boy in Scotland I have asked, when looking at a house with several blind windows, "Why are those windows walled up?" The reply was: "There was in those days even a tax on windows to prosecute the war; and the people in Scotland being too poor to pay a tax on the four windows in that house, two were bricked up, and the tax paid on the two remaining. If the tax on these two had proved too much we should have

remained in darkness". But still the struggle went on. During the Napoleonic wars, when Great Britain was fighting the greater part of Europe, and also at one time America as well, with a population of something under 14,000,000, it may be interesting to know that during that period the enlistments in the 42nd Highlanders (the Black Watch) totalled 70,000 men. I have no records of other regiments, but they must have been similar. This, it may be remarked, is not commerce: but it records the struggles and the determination of the rising and predominating power in commerce, Great Britain, to keep what she had attained. After the Battle of Waterloo all the world was at the feet of Great Britain. The road to the romantic, glorious, and historic East was hers by the prowess of her armies and the vigilance of her naval administration. Before this a few years conflict had, it is true, been in evidence in India with France, under her able general, Dupleix. Here be it recorded the world has much to owe to France in civilization and in commerce, though this power had to give way in the routine of fate to Britain's power, not only in India, but also in America. We have much to thank France for in literature, in science, and also in war; and war has always been a most potent factor in establishing commerce in her true place over a dying and oftentimes a defunct civilization.

Having now arrived at the results of the events culminating in 1815 which placed Great Britain in the proud position of mistress of the seas, it might not be out of place to consider her heritage from past ages in the commerce and civilization of the world. As I have said, a new era arose after 1815 and a new arbiter in commerce wielded the sceptre. The mantle of past empires was cast on Great Britain. As heir to all the ages she inherited all that was to be known from Chaldea, Babylon, Greece, Rome, Egypt, and Arabia. Supreme in war, invincible in conquest by the power of individual effort, in the language of Homer, who described the ancient Egyptian Thebes, "She spread her conquests o'er a thousand States, and poured her heroes through a hundred gates". The great Empire of India

became her vassal ; a British subject is the Governor-General of India, and 300,000,000 of people are now governed by their Emperor, the Kaiser-i-Hindh, our beloved and able King, Edward VII. The great Empire of China, the pearl of all price of the East India Company, who reckoned their trade with India far inferior to their trade with China, became, is now, and may it ever remain so, dominated by majority of influence and commerce by the Union Jack. From the Genoese, the Portuguese, the Venetians, and the Spaniards, all of whose efforts in commerce were turned on the fabulous and glorious East, Great Britain inherited all that these nations had acquired, thrown in her lap by the prowess in war of her fleets and battalions, and by the indomitable energy of her mercantile pioneers. The control of markets, which had rested with the Portuguese, Dutch, and Venetians, reverted to Great Britain. The consequent and subsequent control of the ebb and flow to and from the East of the precious metals was vested in Lombard and Threadneedle Streets. Pliny has called the East "The sink of the precious metals". The same opinion is true to-day. We have now the same state of things as in Pliny's day, and what went on as regards interchange of gold and silver between East and West from the time of the Hittites, the ancient Egyptians and Arabians, and lastly of the Venetians, the Portuguese, and the Dutch, whose mantle has been cast on Great Britain, prevails now ; but instead of Carchemish, Alexandria, Venice, Lisbon, or Antwerp being the centre where the intricacies of exchanges and arbitrages are settled, London is now the "drawing post" for the whole world. But we must not overlook another factor in the foreign exchange history. A new element has arisen as a gold-producer in late years, and the importance of this new factor in the science of foreign exchanges is neither generally recognised nor acknowledged. Juvenal, the great Roman poet, said, "*Rara avis in terris nigroque simillima cygno*", and also "*Felix ille tamen corvo quoque rarior albo*". Now I do not know whether Juvenal ever saw a black swan or a white raven, but this we know, that our black

swan exists, and records are existent that a white, or albino, raven has been known. Anyway, I am inclined to think that black swans were known of in Europe, probably by having been seen in Australia, and I prefer to believe that Australia and her inhabitants were known to Asia and Europe in remote times through commerce. I have seen accounts, for whose authenticity I do not vouch, of kangaroos and cassowaries having been seen in Spain in the middle ages, also of boomerangs in ancient Egypt. However, the "rara avis" I refer to is Australia. The black swan is the crest of at least one of her States, and Australia has entered the commerce of the world in no uncertain manner by her gold resources. To go into the intricacies of the foreign exchanges would be here too long. But I would say this: Australia now holds a very leading position in the science of the foreign exchanges throughout the world. Coupled with the Cape colonies she is also an immense producer of gold; and as the Cape has no mint at present, while Australia has three, and as India is an immense consumer of silver and Australia largely produces this metal, it will readily be understood by an expert what a powerful position Australia holds, properly directed, let me say, by capable men and not by irresponsible politicians, in the immense trade of the 900,000,000 who constitute the population of the East, and who hoard gold in return for their inexhaustible products. The science of the foreign exchanges is one of the most important factors in commercial economy. The proper understanding of this science, or ignorance of it, means the success or the failure of any commercial people. The science of the foreign exchanges is as firmly fixed and governed by laws as are the rise and fall of the tides or the laws of storms. Anyhow, Australia is so far a portion of the British Empire that she cannot afford to remain apart, if not from her very dependence in every way on the Old Land, at least from her being part of the machinery upon which the old world's commerce and finance revolve and have their *raison d'être*. But, with this notice of the large and overwhelming commerce of Great Britain, what must not be overlooked

is the great impetus to research and learning given to the world, and consequently to its civilization, by the security ensured to all countries in research, in the East and Far East, under the Union Jack. The great and hitherto unknown (since the middle ages) classics of India and China were unlocked and again opened to the world by the scholarship of Sir William Jones, Colebrook, Burnouf, Pauthier, Langlois, Max Müller, and others. Also, in China especially, commerce provided the sinews of war necessary to translate the sacred books of Confucius and other Chinese sages, works which even now proclaim the sublime thought and almost divine philosophy of a hoary antiquity. Morrison wrote his "Dictionary of the Chinese Language", and printed it in 1824 at the East India Company's press at Macao. The funds to publish it were provided by that great commercial institution, the East India Company. Legge translated Confucius and was enabled to publish his works and give them to the world through the munificent generosity of the princely house of the Jardines, one of the greatest commercial stars that has arisen over the Eastern horizon. Commerce also produced, in China especially, a race of men who bear the proud position of second to none in the attainments of civilization, and who, by keeping their fingers on the pulse of every event passing in this wondrous land, by being past-masters in knowledge of the people, have kept British commerce in the far forefront above all other nations. How many delicate questions have been settled in consultation by the Home Government with these able scholars and silent workers for Great Britain, in her intricate dealings with China, no one will ever probably know. State secrets are secrets, but the names of Sir Henry Parkes, Sir Robert Hart, Sir Ernest Satow, Sir John Macleavy Brown, and Sir Pelham Warren will ever live in the annals of the Far East as pillars of strength created by commerce and handed down to posterity as monuments of civilization. All these great men I am proud to say I have known. Even later, and quite lately, we have only to look at what has happened in Egypt under the gigantic

intellect of one man, Lord Cromer. The chaos when he took the reins was the antipodes of the glory of ancient Egypt. Her population decimated by insurrection and tyranny, her trade stagnant, her laws conspicuous by their absence, the present state of Egypt is a matter to make one gasp in admiration, a name to conjure with, and a word carved on the Rock of Doom as the result of the united efforts of commerce and civilization. The greatest compliments I have ever seen paid to the British Civil Service were spoken by Americans and Russians. The American compliment was, that when brought into contact with the British Asiatic Civil servants all things paled before their ability. The Russian was, that when Sir Peter Lumsden's expedition to the Pamirs was undertaken to delimit the frontier, the Russians acknowledged themselves outclassed in talent-knowledge of detail and knowledge of language by the British officers. The popular theory is that the Russians are the best linguists in the world. I can only say they self-declared themselves beaten, and that by Sir Peter Lumsden and his staff. But the advance of civilization in Egypt under the able administration of the one man I have mentioned does not stop here. In ancient days the sway of Egypt extended from the Equator to the Mediterranean, and from the Red Sea to the Atlantic. The interior of this great country of Africa, the regions of Darfur and Kordofan, and the districts known as Lybia to the Romans, at one time civilized by them, and developed to such an extent as to warrant their being called the Granary of Rome, are now being, after the strenuous ordeal of war, peacefully opened up by the sway of Britain under the Union Jack, throwing her influence and protection over Egypt. The lost civilizations of the ancient tribes and kingdoms in the Soudan and Nigeria are being revived under the energy of British commerce. In these lost and defunct kingdoms in the region of Nigeria and around Lake Chad evidences of a forward commercial organization and a high state of civilization are now being laid bare to the world. In Nigeria have been found advanced

scientific methods of treating ores, of salt-works and the recovery of salt from the earth and from the waters, and also of languages made intelligent by an alphabet. All these were no doubt derived through Egypt from Arabia, but they survive, are being fostered and exploited by the British Empire under her newly-acquired protectorate, Nigeria. On the British has fallen, even here, the mantle of all previous nations, and what has lain dormant and unproductive for centuries is now being developed by our Empire. Population is being increased owing to the suppression of the slave trade, and what was once called the Granary of Rome may in time to come be called the Granary of Britain. From our Eastern African port, Mombasa, by the Uganda railway, to the sources of the Nile, the country is being opened up to the cultivation of cotton and other tropical products; and as raw cotton is one of Great Britain's greatest importations for manufacturing purposes, for which she is largely dependent upon America, it would be the irony of fate if in the future America should buy her cotton from Africa, where she formerly seized her slaves for the cultivation of the cotton-fields of her Southern States. Such is one result of the domination by war, the subsequent extension of commerce, and the consequent rise of civilization in Africa, hitherto known as the Dark Continent, under the British Flag.

In this the first decade of the twentieth century we have before us, as it were, the concentration of all the previous knowledge of bygone ages, and the vast and searching investigations of science all combine to make the struggle for existence most keen and exhausting. In the daily avocations of the world, whether in commerce, in science, in literature, or in surgery, the demand is exacting, and the new discoveries in all of these branches call forth on all sides fresh incentives and caterers for the supply. The problem in all classes or professions is now how to adjust the supply, already over-abundant, to the demand. The professions are over-crowded, and, though the prizes may be great and few, the blanks are many and the list of failures

is long. In these days anyone engaged in profession or trade has to keep pace with the times in everything bearing on his calling. The successful or rising man has to know everything to keep his place. The struggling unsuccessful majority—it may be superior to the successful minority—is wasted by the contest in endeavouring to fill the demand from an over-abundant supply. Fashions change, new ideas prevail, and the race for existence goes on with unchanged severity. Every nerve is taxed to meet the strain, and, should the human machinery give way, the ingenuity of medicine and the developments of surgery are present to supply the deficiency and repair the broken-down system. The demand for scientific treatment of complaints and disorders has, during the past fifty years, brought out competition for supply which is simply astounding. The advance of surgery and appliances during the Victorian era is marvellous. Strange as it may seem, the very changed habits of every-day life and the daily avocations in this new scientific world evolve complaints previously unknown, whose demand for treatment calls forth in the supply the greatest wonders of human ingenuity and sagacity. The effects of over-education, or high education, promote a species of nervous disorders, which call forth the efforts of science to adjust, on the inhabitants of our day. The present state of Europe is that of a slumbering volcano, which may at any moment break forth into an eruption which will convulse humanity. The entire position is the outcome of long intervals of peace, the cultivation of progress in all its branches of science, colonization, and national development. Distrust and want of confidence have engendered a deplorable issue, and with the growth of education and development an unfortunate element of social unrest has arisen which bids fair to blast the prospects and arrest the progress of civilization. Viewing the events in Europe during the last fifty years, with the growth of anarchy, socialism, and nihilism, we may well wonder whether we have not taken a cast back to the horrors and darkness of the middle ages, and whether all our progress and civilization, as contrasted with that of the middle ages, can have anything to

boast of. There has been no demand for it, but unfortunately there has arisen a supply of promoters of discontent and annihilation which is a satire on the philanthropy and liberal ideas of the twentieth century. With these elements and these ideas prevailing amongst all classes, is it any wonder that there should be a want of confidence and an apprehension throughout the world as to the outcome? There is no demand for fresh enterprise, there is no speculation or energy for new undertakings where the capital of the thrifty is brought into jeopardy by the crude, wrong-minded, impudent, and mischievous doctrines of the levellers who have nothing to lose and who would spoil the possessions of those by whose enterprise and intellect they exist. This is the state of things at the present moment as regards the supply of capital and the demands of labour. The whole world is convulsed and paralysed by the mania from which no country is exempt, and which threatens to end in a revolution, the outcome of which will, if our position in the twentieth century be one of progress, initiate a base and degraded course in the progress of this cycle. It would seem as if in the so-called growth and progress of education and liberal ideas all that is to be revered and traditional in our minds is to be swamped by the irreverent and irresponsible. The worst feature is that the demand for intellect exceeds the supply in the conduct of the world's affairs. The inertia begotten of luxury and life made easy is throwing the control into other and less scrupulous hands. Maine, in his "Ancient Law," says: "In spite of overwhelming evidence it is most difficult for a citizen of Western Europe to bring thoroughly home to himself the truth that the civilization which surrounds him is a rare exception in the history of the world. It is indisputable that much of the greatest part of mankind has never shown a particle of desire that its civil institutions should be improved since the moment when external completeness was first given to them by the embodiment of some permanent record. One set of usages has occasionally been violently overthrown and superseded by another; here and there a primitive code,

pretending to be of supernatural origin, has been greatly extended and distorted into the most surprising forms by the perversity of sacerdotal commentators; but, except in a small section of the world, there has been nothing like the gradual amelioration of a legal system. There has been a material civilization, but, instead of the civilization expanding the law, the law has limited the civilization. It may also be remarked that the stationary condition of the human race is the rule, the progressive the exception." This may or may not be a true estimate, but it is none the less true and sad that the greatest commercial organizations the world has seen have led up to highly cultured systems of civilization, again to fall away through what I must call the era of theories and fads which have been the wreck of so many nations. It was the wealth accumulated through commerce which promoted highly graded civilizations which in their turn promoted socialistic and dangerous theories which brought about the fall of Babylon, Egypt, Rome, Greece, Carthage, Arabia, and in modern times Spain and Portugal, and from within these Empires their own people were those who hastened their downfall. Gibbon says that one of the causes of the downfall of Greece was the hostility of the people of Athens to outside nations. Their social state, or in other words their civilization, had become inert, aggressive, provocative of retaliation. The same must be recorded of all other ancient and some modern nations. Now, in our great British Empire, the greatest the world has ever acknowledged, with her dependencies extending to every part of the globe, her hand directing through her commerce every movement of finance, the writing is on the wall indicating trouble created from within. In time the pre-eminent position of this great Empire will be challenged. It will not be the fleets and armies of other nations that will strike the first blow. It will be by what Maine calls the law stopping civilization. We see daily the accounts published of the treatment of our own and the subjects of other Asiatic nations by sections of our colonial empire. As this was the cause of the downfall of Greece, it may be the beginning of the down-

fall of our empire. Should the pernicious doctrines and theoretical fads of a large and increasing body of members of the British Empire succeed, legislation may be carried by them in the parliament of Great Britain, and the overthrow of our vast empire may follow. As the barbarians from without overthrew Rome, the barbarians from within may do the same for Great Britain. We have only to look at what is going on in India, where our commerce, our science, our able government have controlled for good a mighty Empire. We see the apostles of unrest busy, and I cannot overlook the fact, as I believe it, that these agitators are upheld in their beliefs by the pernicious utterings and the unbridled licence of a section of the press. This is what Count Okuma, a Japanese, says on the subject: "From ancient times onwards, the realm of India was attacked or subjugated (many a time) by a foreign foe, and then, being invaded by Spain, Portugal, France, and Great Britain, the destruction of its immense riches and the degradation of its industry, arts, and literature were completed. And who is answerable for all this? I say it was not any of these aggressors, but India herself, that annihilated the realm".

Count Okuma also goes on to say: "In Japan Buddhism has assumed a very different shape from its prototype in India, having undergone a careful process of purification. When it was first introduced from India through China it was intermingled with great evils, of which we contrived ingeniously to purge it so as to extract its healthiest essence, and as a consequence it is still exercising a great influence on our social life. On the contrary, India, Turkey, Persia, Siam, and most other countries have more or less suffered from religious poisoning. Thanks to our peculiarity of subjecting every exotic thing to a refining process, we Japanese turned to account the Indian and the Chinese Buddhism by applying it to our customs and spiritual culture. Again, fifty years ago we came into contact with the influence of the West, and, when once we became aware of our own inferior points and errors, we promptly appropriated the excellences of others and

assimilated them. Far from being satisfied with the present state of things, the Japanese, every time they turn their eyes to the world, itch to avail themselves of any superior points of other nations, and that is the reason why they have sprung up so suddenly”.

In these references to religion and comparison with Western ideas of their own customs and civilization Count Okuma indicates the spirit of inquiry, or it may be called the apostle of unrest, begotten in the Japanese breast by the contact created by commerce with Western nations and their ideas. It is a singular and interesting thing to witness the return of the cycle of thought from East to West, where the East enquires of the West for whatever is good in her philosophy, whence in earlier times the West derived all that she holds most sacred in learning and knowledge. But we cannot put Japan on a level with China in ancient civilization. Japan acknowledges her tribute to India and China for her Buddhist religion, and some centuries ago Japan adopted the Chinese written language as her own. No such classics survive in Japan, at least to my knowledge, which will compare with those of China. Indeed, many of the arts and sciences of Japan in ancient times were derived from and adopted from China. Japan has during the last fifty years since her latest contact with Western civilization always been of an acquisitive and enquiring mind. Count Okuma has, as I have stated above, referred to the examination by Japanese theologians of Western religious systems. I would just like to record a most interesting incident that occurred to myself in Japan on this very point. In 1878 I was in Kiôto, the ancient capital of Japan, in company with a friend who was an apt Japanese scholar and spoke the language fluently. We were in one of the greatest Buddhist temples in Kiôto; hundreds of Buddhist monks thronged the great area of the temple, dressed in surplices and hoods of various colours, purple, yellow, blue, and lilac, denoting their various ranks. My companion and I paused beside one of the great wooden pillars which supported the large roof of the great Temple of Hongan-ji.

My companion said, "I must go and enquire of one of these priests if any can show us or tell us something about this temple". Judge our surprise when a priest stepped from behind the pillar, and said in the most polished and courteous English, "I think, sir, I heard you remark that you would desire to see someone who could show you over this temple. Allow me to conduct you". He showed us all, even to the Holiest of Holies. My friend then asked him, "You speak English well; may I ask how you acquired it?" The priest replied, "Yes; I am one of those sent by the Emperor to Europe to enquire into western religions and civilization, and to discover a new religion. I speak equally well, as you have heard me speak English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. I have returned from Europe undecided". From this I deduce exactly what Count Okuma has said above: the Japanese priests have adhered to the Buddhist religion, probably, as he has said, in its original form, sifted out.

I come now to consider the effect of commerce on our own land, Australia. Australia has acquired her territory under the ægis of the Union Jack, and that cheaply and without contest. The great motherland flag, fluttering over this great island—or continent, shall I call it?—ensures peace and prosperity to her inhabitants. No other country in the world enjoys such freedom, without preliminary expense in blood and treasure, as does this land of Australia. The great mother country is lenient with her fair daughter in her woman-like perverse moods. She lends her money, she shields her with her sheltering arm, and she allows her such freedom and protection as no other community in history on record has ever enjoyed. Her far-seeing, broad-minded statesmanship has ever been on the side of toleration and aid. The people of Australia in their traditions, at present anyhow, look back to the Old Country as the land that gave them birth. The commerce of the Old Country has initiated the commerce of Australia. The call to arms in Australia has been responded to for the support of the commerce of the Empire; and may I hope that when again the Empire

calls, Australia will not be the last to respond? But there are rifts in the lute. The present legislation of Australia is baneful in its effects on the commerce of the Old Country, which protects Australian commerce. Even by the present Liberal-Radical Parliament of Great Britain statements have been made that, if the British navy protects Australia and Australian commerce, the least British shipping should expect is to be exempt from the harassing effects of the Navigation Act lately passed in Australia. It is too serious to contemplate, but suppose, for instance, the protection of the British fleet were withdrawn from Australia. What would then happen, if left to our own resources, might stagger humanity. Australia at present, as regards a certain class of the community, is suffering from a surfeit of pseudo-prosperity. The condition of the labour classes is, not through oppression, but from its antithesis, in almost a state of revolt against law and order. There seems to be a want of reverence in the Australian character. To quote Lecky: "Reverence is one of those feelings which, in utilitarian systems, would occupy at best a very ambiguous position. Yet there are few persons who are not conscious that no character can attain a supreme degree of excellence in which a reverential spirit is wanting. Of all the forms of moral goodness it is that to which the epithet "beautiful" may be most emphatically applied. Yet the habits of advancing civilization are, if I mistake not, on the whole inimical to its growth. For the reverence grows out of a sense of constant dependence. Every great change, either of belief or of circumstances, brings with it a change of emotions. The self-assertion of liberty, the levelling of democracy, the dissecting knife of criticism, the economical revolutions that reduce the relations of classes to simple contracts, the agglomeration of population, and the facilities of locomotion that sever so many ancient ties are all incompatible with the type of virtue which existed before the power of tradition was broken, and when the chastity of faith was yet unstained. Benevolence, uprightness, enterprise, intellectual honesty, a love of freedom,

and a hatred of superstition are multiplying around us; but we look in vain for that most beautiful character of the past, so distrustful of self and so trustful of others, so rich in self-denial and modesty, so simple, so earnest, and so devout, which, even when, Ixion-like, it bestowed its affections upon a cloud, made its very illusions the source of some of the purest virtues of our nature. Its most beautiful displays are not in nations like the Americans or the modern French, who have thrown themselves most fully into the tendencies of this age, but rather in secluded regions, like Styria or the Tyrol. Its artistic expression is found in no work of modern genius, but in the mediæval cathedral, which, mellowed but not impaired by time, still gazes on us in its deathless beauty through the centuries of the past”.

Now, in the days of our old land, when constant struggles for existence promoted a spirit of individual effort—not dependence, but a character for independence—these qualities seem to be decaying, not only in Australia, but also in the old land. The great prosperity in Great Britain in the last two generations has engendered in the present era an effete-ness and dependence on others. The wealth of the erudite and ably commercial father, acquired by brain-power and daily toil, has, in Great Britain, come down to the sons, who, without the strenuous ordeal of individual effort, have in many cases relapsed into the ease begotten of bequeathed affluence and luxury. The same, to a certain extent, is true in Australia, though I must say that State aid to education is, I believe, having a most baneful effect on this country, through its indiscriminate favours, and especially so on the individual. The great principle of individual effort is being suppressed. There is an old saying, “There shall be hewers of wood and drawers of water”. Such is the present constitution of this world that the hewers of wood and the drawers of water are constantly in conflict with the more suitable and better adapted classes, through a malign system of nepotism. The decay of independence, self-reliance, and individual effort is one of the things which are tending to sap our national greatness. I may say here

that when I was a student at Glasgow University, some forty years ago, I saw and knew men who were my fellow-students who studied during the winter months at Glasgow. To acquire the means to prosecute their studies these men during the summer months in Scotland, or may be in Ireland or England, drove the plough, herded sheep, and worked in coal mines. I have kept some in view, and to their lasting credit and to the glory of the traditional grit of their country some now occupy the highest positions of trust and confidence, not only in their own land but also in other countries. This condition of independence in these matters I would like to see adopted in Australia. There is, to my mind, too much "spoon-fed" education in Australia, where the youth of both sexes are educated—save the word—at the free schools at the expense of the taxpayer. I am sorry to say, but I am afraid it is true—at least it seems to me so from my humble observation—that hundreds of youths are annually let loose on the great towns, such as Sydney, and it may be in other cities, with a certain amount of rudimentary conglomerated knowledge absolutely useless to themselves or to any employer of their services. Such is the condition of their surroundings that they are absolutely without reverence for anything, and are quite unamenable to any kind of discipline. The result is, having no home restraint nor paternal guidance, they are quite unfitted for any employment whatever when they have to abide by prescribed rules and regulations. To meet this state of things in Sydney—and I speak of Sydney as the city I know most about in Australia—the Chamber of Commerce has instituted a course of instruction for youths and invited them to attend lectures and other media of acquiring commercial information. Also, going further than this, the Institute of Bankers of New South Wales, which has silently, steadily, and successfully progressed during the last eighteen years in everything pertaining to the better intelligence of the youth in the banking community, for some years past has organized a system of examinations for youths who wish to enter banks as clerks. I know of one

great bank in Sydney, and I believe there are others also, which declines to receive amongst its ranks any tyro who has not passed the prescribed matriculation examination at the Institute of Bankers of New South Wales. The incidence of this must be manifest to all who know what it means to have even a subordinate who has at least some idea of what he has to do. The promiscuous state aid to education may be all very well, but at the best it only exemplifies what the French call *un embarras des richesses*. Personally, though I may be put down as prejudiced and harsh, I would like to see less dependence on the State in matters of education: I would like to see more love for knowledge for its own sake, more reverence for what has gone before us, more real desire to be acquainted and conversant with our great antecedents, among the youth of the Commonwealth. I should like to see more responsibility laid on the heads of families to educate their youth at their own expense in all the reverence and appreciation of the past, present, and future, following in the footsteps of their great forefathers, from whom they inherit this vast free-given Commonwealth of Australia. These are my own opinions, good or bad. I am in favour of all encouragement being extended and prosecuted, and opportunity given, at a small expense to the individual, towards making the youth of this country capable of grappling with their great future. In time to come, and it may not be in my time, probably not in the time of our children, this great continent of Australia, with its predominant position on the shores of the Pacific, will enter the arena of the Pacific Ocean, along with the countries on its shores, in the battle for existence and self-preservation. On the shores of this great ocean countries numbering in population probably half the inhabitants of the globe exist, have their being and their *raison d'être*. To meet the wants of the case, and to enable the youth, and the ever-recurring youth, who will in future call Australia their mother country, to cope with a situation which will present itself in no uncertain attitude in coming years, I would earnestly advocate the establishment and the endowment in

all our universities of chairs of commerce. The "Joseph Fisher" lectures in your honourable University have already struck the key-note of what I would desire. I would go further and advocate the establishment of chairs and professorships of Oriental languages in the universities of Australia. The study of ancient and modern Oriental languages and literature will fit the youth in this country to be in the running with what will, and must, come from the future expansion of Australia. As Roosevelt has said, "Every country is now our neighbour". This will be true as regards Australia in the remote if not in the near future. Not that I am an advocate of the meaningless phrase "The Yellow Peril": I know Asia better than that. But when our Australian commercial community is educated thoroughly to understand, appreciate, and respect the great civilized nations of Asia, from whom most, if not all, of our civilization has been derived, then may commerce and civilization go hand in hand, and may it be said about Australia that she has derived "Ex Oriente lux". May her desire be to merit a motto engraved on her national history, similar to that on the memorial tablet to Sir Christopher Wren in St. Paul's, "Si monumentum quaeris circumspice".

In conclusion, Mr. Chancellor, ladies and gentlemen, seeing that I have advocated in my paper the establishment of chairs for Oriental languages in Australian universities, may I, as a tribute to the patient hearing you have given me to-night, in the Oriental language I know best, the Chinese, say: "Sun hong sun tsui-tiong siong". The characters for these words are inscribed on the sterns of all Chinese sea-going vessels. Literally translated they mean: "A fair wind and a fair tide, very high and overflowing always". In other words: "May your course be onward and your path

smooth for ever". This wish I respectfully tender to the University of Adelaide.

J. CURRIE ELLES,

Member of the University of Glasgow.

*Honorary Member of the Institute of
Bankers of New South Wales.*

*Correspondent in New South Wales
of the Board of Trade of Great
Britain (Intelligence Department).*

In the course of my paper I have to acknowledge tribute to the following authors:

Max Müller's *Chips from a German workshop*, and *Essays on
language, religion, and thought.*

Lecky's *History of European morals.*

S. Laing's *Human origins: problems of the future.*

Lady Lugard's *On Nigeria.*

Shaw's *History of currency.*

Delmar's *History of monetary systems.*

Maine's *Ancient law.*

Langlois's *Sacred books of the east.* (In French).

Griffiths's *The Mikado's Empire*, and *Korea, the Hermit Nation.*

The Latin, Greek, French, and German authors whom I have quoted, also the Chinese classics, to all of the foregoing, in the original or in translation, I respectfully tender my obligations.—J.C.E.

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