

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW COUNTRIES— SOME COMPARISONS¹

It would be rank presumption on my part to attempt to speak on any topic in the history of the Northwest after only sixteen months' residence in Minnesota. But perhaps I can avoid wasting your time this evening by trying to put the special local work which is focussed on this building into a wider and larger setting. No one believes more heartily than I do in the value of regional investigations. In my own field of economic history we suffered all too long under those who thought that the material could all be found in the records of national governments, in Congressional documents, blue books, Hansård, and the like. Economic history was the history of national economic politics.

Nowadays we take a wider, perhaps a different view. We realize that governments seldom touch an economic matter until something has gone wrong; governmental records deal largely with economic ailments, just as police court records deal only with criminals. Evidence given before official investigations is often presented by interested parties and is likely to conceal as much as it reveals. If therefore we wish to study the normal and natural forces which are the constructive element in social development, we must turn more and more to local, family, business, and social records. From wills, diaries, letter books, ledgers, and the advertisements in local papers we are reconstructing the economic life of persons, families, and communities as they really were lived, not as they were described to a government committee of inquiry by those who wanted some ancient equivalent of farm relief or barge service. And it is to local historical societies that we must turn for the collection and preservation of such records.

¹ Read on January 21 as the annual address of the eightieth annual meeting of the Minnesota Historical Society. *Ed.*

But this regional concentration — whether it be on a Lancashire muslin-maker, a Yorkshire mill-owner, an English lord of the manor, or a Minnesota fur-trader — may sink into mere antiquarianism unless it is made part of a wider story. So I want to suggest tonight that in our digging into the history of the Northwest we shall benefit both ourselves and historians generally by comparing the development of this region with that of other parts of the United States and also of other continents that have been settled and developed under modern conditions. For ten years I worked on Australian economic history; but after a year back in the Old World and in North America I gained an entirely new view of the forces and factors that had operated in the Antipodes. Which is merely another way of stating the old truism that the comparative method has great value. Let me therefore make a few stray comparisons of the development of new countries during the past hundred and fifty years.

The historian who writes in 2029 will probably tell his readers that the most important European export of the nineteenth century was not coal or cloth, but human beings. He may say that the biggest European achievement happened outside Europe, in the settlement of large parts of America, Africa, Australasia, and perhaps Siberia, by the white-faced folk who, being above all things meek, entered into the inheritance predicted for them two thousand years ago. How great the human exodus was we cannot measure exactly. We know that in the period since Napoleon emigrated to St. Helena about twenty million people have come to this country; and if we make a rough estimate that about another ten million went to other parts of the world, we shall probably not be far wrong in our picture of thirty million folk seeking homes in new continents.

With the emigrant, or quickly following him, went the capital. The Europe from which he came had just learned the art of mass production, thanks to machinery, steam power, science, and saving. Hence it became possible to accumulate

on a scale never before known a surplus of goods that was available for investment wherever a good return was forthcoming. Besides, Europe under the new economic conditions badly wanted things it could not provide for itself. It needed more foodstuffs with which to feed its industrial cities and maintain a slowly rising standard of living; one can buy grapefruit in any British town of twenty thousand inhabitants today. It needed raw materials to feed its factories — first cotton, then wool, metals, and later the more tropical materials, such as rubber and palm oil. It must have more markets if its factory wheels were to be kept constantly turning and its imported raw materials were to be paid for with exported manufactures. Finally, in times of depression, when the streets were full of unemployed, many Europeans held the fond but delusive belief that the bogey of overpopulation could be exorcised and unemployment eliminated by bringing the idle labor of the Old World into contact with the idle land of the New. So the surplus capital of Britain, and later France, Germany, and Belgium, flowed forth. Great Britain alone had about thirteen to fifteen billion dollars invested abroad in 1914 in railroads, banks, land, public utilities, loans to governments, and the like. Germans probably owned over a billion dollars worth of property in the United States at that date; and London was still the reservoir to which Australia, Canada, and South Africa turned when they wanted money for the further development of their resources.

Why did not this exodus of people and capital come in any great volume before the nineteenth century? The political and economic value of colonies was realized long before, and emigrant ships were not unknown in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The answer is a triple one. First, political events of the nineteenth century gave the European masses liberation from most of the survivals of serfdom. In France, Prussia, and then Russia the serf became free — free to go or to stay, to move from country to town, or to emigrate. If his

lot was poverty, tyranny, and persecution, he no longer had to grin and bear it. Second, the railroad and the ever improving steamship services made it possible for the freedman to go where he wished much more quickly, comfortably, and cheaply. Third, the knowledge became more widely spread that "over there" were "lands of promise," El Dorados, countries where there was religious freedom, free land, high wages, a vote, and no conscription. The New World became in the eyes of many a place of escape from religious, political, economic, or social disabilities; and while old notions lingered that distant places were furnished by providence as dumping grounds for undesirables, remittance men, and black sheep of the family, the real appeal reached the enterprising, honest, and willing-to-work sections of Europe's population. The man who had made good overseas wrote to his friends, "Come and do likewise"; the agents of shipping companies and governments painted their pictures in colors of purple and gold; the printed pamphlet spread the truth, but not always all of it; and a potato famine, the aftermath of war, an unsuccessful revolution, an empty larder and coal bin, the love of adventure, or the promptings of enlightened self-interest did the rest. So Europe took up in earnest the task it had begun two centuries earlier, that of helping to build up new settlements, new fields of production, and new nations.

When we look at the nations settled by this emigration we find them very much alike in important respects. Their history has been predominantly economic—it is concerned with exploration of unknown areas; the clearing of land; the development of pastoral and agricultural pursuits; the construction of roads, railways, and canals; the search for minerals; the harnessing of power, the formulation of land policies; the building up of industries; the struggle against pests and weather; and the solution of problems of finance and marketing. Their politics have been concerned with these economic issues chiefly; the few wars they have waged have been economic in cause, and

their political parties have held rival views on economic issues at some stage of their history.

In the second place, their progress has been from the unknown to the known, contrary to an old precept of educational theory. I need only mention the far-reaching influence of the discovery of gold in California, British Columbia, northern Ontario, Australia, and the Rand. Within eight years of the discovery of gold in Australia the population had grown a hundred and fifty per cent, the movement toward self-government had jumped ahead, and a vast sheep ranch had begun to be turned into a nation. Until gold was found in South Africa in 1886, the Transvaal was an insignificant state of boorish Boers on the verge of bankruptcy; until minerals were found in northern Ontario that region was thought to be worthless; the dry heart of central Australia seemed useless until the discovery of artesian waters made it at least damp; Canada's whole future was changed when the Hudson's Bay Company's preserve was invaded and men found the prairies. In the same way the development of new countries has been influenced immensely by the investigators and experimenters, who have discovered new uses for areas or resources that seemed to have little value. For example, the production of wheat that will mature in a shorter period made cultivation possible on the northern belt of the Canadian prairie, while the generation of wheat possessing drought-resisting qualities was vitally necessary if lands near the ten-inch rainfall line in Australia were to be cultivated; or again the discovery that waterfalls could be harnessed to produce electricity and that wood could be made into paper has meant much to Canada.

In the third place, new countries have all been unbalanced, not mentally, but economically, in that land was plentiful, but labor and capital were scarce. The result was prodigal extravagance and waste in the exploitation of land and natural resources and intense economy in the use of labor and capital. The conservation movement, of which we have heard much

since about 1900, was the outcome of a realization of the extent to which the waste had gone in this country. But if the United States sinned, it has many companions on the penance bench. The destruction of timber has gone on, and is still going on, in Canada and Australasia; the "mining" of soil fertility has been carried on alike in Minnesota, Manitoba, Cape Colony, and New South Wales. The sheep kings of Australia have all too often overstocked the vast sheep runs they have leased from the government, so that the natural herbage of those dry areas has all been eaten up, and no one knows how long it will take for a new supply to appear in face of that pitiless sun and scanty rainfall. Of course all countries are taking some steps to check further depredation, but they are locking the garage door after the car has been stolen, and there is no insurance company — except the usual one, posterity — to bear the loss.

In the careful use of labor and capital most new countries have achieved some success. Australia, for instance, began its sheep industry with shepherds who drove their flocks out to pasture and put them into pens at night. But the cost of this plan was too great, so when the industry grew large the practice was adopted of fencing huge paddocks, some of them many square miles in area. Into these the sheep were driven and then left for weeks, tended by a solitary boundary rider, who rode round the fences mending the wire where kangaroos had broken it and preventing wandering men from getting cheap mutton. In the same way the wheat farmer, faced with the task of working fields that might have an area of three hundred acres or more, welcomed a harvesting machine that stripped the head off the stalk, threshed, cleaned, and bagged the grain, all with the aid of very little human labor. New countries have taken as their guide not the European slogan of the greatest possible return per unit of land, but that of the greatest possible return per unit of capital and labor. That is one reason why the family farm tends everywhere to be

the normal unit; hired labor is so expensive that the use of it is kept down to the lowest possible amount or is dispensed with altogether.

With one exception, New Zealand, all the new countries are large. This element of size has influenced their direction in a score of ways. It has given them a range of climate stretching, in every case except Canada, from temperate to semitropical. The people of Europe scoff at the man from the New World as a braggart who "talks big"; they fail to realize that political units nearly as large as Europe have in their climate and wealth of varied resources most of the elements necessary for self-sufficiency. The United States ranges over twenty-four degrees of latitude, while Australia does ten degrees better and so has a climate fit for cotton, sugar, and bananas in the north; grapes, figs, and citrus fruits in the center; and apples or hops in the south. Given minerals, and given willingness to pay the price, such large areas can become self-sufficing.

Bigness, however, creates its own special problems. One is transportation, the other is sectionalism; and the history of the New World is full of instances of the latter. The small countries of the Old World are not free from this ailment, and there are many parts of little England that would agree with your revision of an old dictum, provided you made it read "What Lancashire thinks today, the rest of England thought the day before yesterday." And if you were a Lancashireman you would say a hearty "Amen" to the old beggar's prayer "From Hull, Hell, and Halifax, good Lord deliver us!" But in the New World areas and cities are farther apart — though propinquity may not be the food of love — and it is surprising, for instance, to discover how many eastern Canadians have never been to the prairie provinces, just as many Bostonians have never visited the Middle West. Hence regional interests develop and clash and politics achieves a stalemate in trying to reconcile the rival or hostile claims.

Sectionalism is not yet dead in the United States, though perhaps it is dying by inches. But Canada, South Africa, and Australia have still long distances to go before all their thinking is done nationally. Montreal and Toronto are on speaking terms, except that one speaks English and the other French; the maritime provinces, like all small far-away units in a federation, often voice the opinion that they have been sacrificed on the altar of Ontario; the prairie provinces are equally suspicious that Canada is run in the interest of the East, and their solution is to run it not from Ottawa, but from Winnipeg, in the interests of the prairies.

South Africa's conflict is partly regional and partly racial; the outward and visible sign of it is the fact that the legislature meets in Cape Town, the administration is in Pretoria, and the supreme court is in Bloemfontein; this, in the United States would place Congress in Washington, the White House in Omaha, and the supreme court in Davenport, Iowa, with a train on a three and a half foot track connecting them — a new and startling interpretation of Montesquieu's theory of the separation of powers.

The same sectionalism is to be found in Australia. Population and settlement there grew outward from six state capitals, scattered wide apart on the coast. Only slowly were they linked by rail, and meanwhile the absence of funds and foresight caused each state to build its railways according to its own ideas and abilities so far as the width of the track was concerned. The result was three different widths. Federation came nearly thirty years ago, and the continent showed its capacity to act unitedly when faced with the crisis of a world war. But each state still tends to think of its own interests first and second; the two smallest states have of late years talked of secession from a federation that has taken much and given little in return, though such action would be a counsel of despair and would solve nothing. Sydney and Melbourne, rivals for the commercial and financial supremacy of the con-

continent, dislike each other with a fervor that cannot all be explained by saying that there are many Irish in Sydney and many Scotch-Ulster Presbyterians in Melbourne. The rivalry between these two cities made necessary the building of a new federal capital out in the bush at Canberra; and while this city may some day grow into the size of an elephant, most onlookers are convinced its skin will be white. A London *Punch* writer recently said that while Nero played a fiddle solo when Rome burned, the world would be deafened by the orchestra that would play in Sydney when Melbourne was reported to be on fire.

Now I come to perhaps the most important common attribute of new countries: in course of time they cease to be new; they grow up. At first every colony is a satellite of the parent land, a producer of primary products which it exports to feed the factories, mouths, or tobacco pouches of the Old World. The mother country encourages it in this work, and partly because of this encouragement the population increases, means of communication are provided, local capital slowly accumulates, and certain industries grow up either in the home or in small factories. But the mother country restrains and regulates as well as encourages, and even when that restraint does not prove as irksome as it did between 1763 and 1775 it inevitably provokes a clash of interests between parent and child. No parent land has of its own accord been able to understand the rise of colonial nationalism. Colonists are still thought of as exiled Englishmen or Frenchmen at the very time when the colonists are beginning to think of themselves as Americans, Canadians, Australians.

Two factors play their part in shaping this nationalism. In the first place many who went to the New World took with them little love of the place they were leaving. They were virtually being driven from a country that offered them kicks rather than "ha'pennies." Hence, even though in their sentimental moments they might sing "Die Lorelei," "Killarney,"

or "Loch Lomond," their loyalty was all for the country that had given them hospitality and hope. In the second place, the first and second native-born generations have no divided loyalty; to them Europe is a place the old folks came from and still talk about, but one the young people may never visit or not until they are grown up and have become set in their national outlook. And if they should make that trip, they love the hedgerows, the castles on the Rhine, Stratford, the Oxford quadrangles, and the long summer twilight. But they are shocked at the slums and grime and poverty, at the persistence of aristocratic power and the rigidity of social distinctions; they are disgusted at Europe's ignorance of and indifference to the land from which they come; they search in vain for a decent bathroom, chafe at the rain and fog, sigh for snow and blue skies if they are Canadians, and resent the absence of cheap fruit and the presence of only one green winter vegetable if they are Australians. So they go back home, convinced that America, Canada, or Australia is "good enough for them."

This growing national sentiment eventually produces the same fruits whether the colony gains complete independence or remains inside the family circle. Politically it brings the demand for complete self-government, for freedom from any parental veto, for a locally financed and controlled defense force, for the right to make commercial treaties with other countries, for a voice in the foreign policy of the family, and for the right to be excused from any commitments or obligations shouldered by the parent land unless the self-governing unit formally agrees to shoulder them also. The development of these colonial rights in the British Empire is a long story of struggle between the colonial office in London and the governments of Australia and Canada. Englishmen who study that story get the impression that over the door of the colonial office is carved the words "Ask and ye shall receive." Dominion students of the same story declare that the inscription

really reads "Abandon hope all ye who enter here," but perhaps the words really are *Festina lente* — "Make haste slowly."

At any rate it was possible for the Imperial Conference of 1926 to describe the relation between Great Britain and the dominions in a sentence that has already become a classic: "They are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any respect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." Which means in practice that the dominions have the right to act as independent nations, the right to disagree with Great Britain, the right to appoint ambassadors in foreign capitals, and the right to say to the British foreign secretary: "We approve of the agreement you made at Locarno, and congratulate you on a substantial contribution to European reconstruction. But when you gave a pledge to support France if Germany attacked her, and to support Germany if France was the attacker, you pledged Great Britain alone and not the dominions. You did not consult us; we were not represented at Locarno; our hands therefore are free." So far has colonial nationalism gone in the political field.

In the economic field the chief expression of new-world nationalism has been the determination to become self-supplying, to build up manufactures, shipping services, and the like. The classical free trade economists of a century ago saw the maximum world prosperity coming from a regional specialization in which each district stuck to the production of those goods for which its area, climate, and resources best fitted it. In practice this really meant that England should remain the workshop of the world and the new countries remain permanently primary producers. But the New World soon grew dissatisfied with this dispensation of providence as revealed by Adam Smith and his tribe. New lands had coal, metals, raw materials; why then ship wool, cotton, and other products

three to thirteen thousand miles and get it back in manufactured form? There seemed to be something derogatory to a nation's dignity in depending on others to make goods for it; in the scale of social and personal values the lumberjack, fisherman, farmer, and shepherd ranked as menial sweated servants of the manufacturing nations. Political independence was worthless without some degree of economic independence. As the *Sydney Bulletin*, a leading exponent of Australian nationalism, put it some years ago, "Shall Australia be a sheep-run or a nation? To live on the back of a merino sheep is comparatively easy, but it is not inspiring. If we hope to found a real commonwealth of men, then the sheep must take its place as one of our minor assets, while we build up a larger wealth from the countless material activities that enable men to live as citizens of a civilized state."

To this argument of "all-roundness" as a foundation for a diversified society every war has added the argument of self-sufficiency, while the pride in a higher standard of living enjoyed by new countries has always called forth a cry for protection against the sweated products of low-paid labor in the Old World and the Orient. So every new country has striven hard to foster its manufactures, to attract capitalists to come and plant their factories inside its borders, to keep foreign ships out of its coastal trade, and to protect its workmen as well as its goods from cheap goods and low-paid labor. To think of Canada and Australia today merely as producers of lumber, wheat, fruit, and wool is absurd; increasingly through the last fifty years they have been adding to the variety and volume of their manufactures, and thanks partly to British, American, and local capital they are well on their way to supplying entirely some of their needs.

New-world nationalism has one final aspect. Every new country eventually realizes that it must foster homemade art, letters, and music, as well as cloth, chemicals, and cars. Culturally it wants to escape from its dependence on the Old

World and produce works that will be characteristic of its own life and environment. The task is far from easy; we are naturally diffident in admitting the worth of a native artist until he or she has been approved by the critics of the Old World; the imitation of older standards and technique seems to be the line of least resistance, and distant fields always seem greener and more artistically fertile than our own. Still, though the dominance of Europe is yet powerful, the New World is in increasing volume producing its artists and some of its art; native American musicians trained in America stand in the front rank, though there is not yet enough native American music for them to perform; American poetry and fiction is known the world over; Canada has a vigorous and characteristic school of artists; and Australia has not merely provided some famous singers and instrumentalists, but has done some worth-while canvases and poetry.

Let me point out one final common feature of the New World before I hurry on to note contrasts and differences. The New World has grown up as an increasingly democratic world. History, the outlook of much of the immigrant population, and the conditions of frontier life all played their part. In that outward stream from Europe went Irish home rulers, British Chartists, continental forty-eighters, and Scotch radicals. And though every new country had its wealthy conservative vested interests — the Atlantic coast creditors in the United States, the family compact in Canada, and the big sheep-ranchers in Australia — the democratic demands could not be gainsaid. Almost every advanced democratic idea was given a trial — universal adult suffrage; payment of members; redistribution of seats to fit changes in the distribution of population; the referendum, initiative, and recall; the secret ballot, proportional representation — every device new and old, except perhaps ostracism, found a place somewhere in the political machinery of the New World. And behind it was a sense of equality, a disregard of claims of birth and social

status, and a stress on the importance of popular education. One is amazed to find at what an early stage settlers began to make provision for educational facilities of a far-reaching character. The date of the foundation of our own university is one example; the Loyalists who went from New England to Ontario after the Revolution took with them the New Englander's zeal for education and soon were building schools and talking about a university. In the eighteen-thirties a Tasmanian editor was urging the establishment of a university in Hobart, though at the time the island was little more than "a gaol on a large scale" with a total population, convict and free, of about thirty thousand. And New Zealand, like three of the Australian states, set up its university at a time when the colony had less than a quarter of a million people.

So much for the similarities. Now what of the differences? They are both quantitative and qualitative. The greatest difference lies in the size of the population of the three largest new countries. Australia is as big as the United States, and its natives never weary of telling that it has over one-fifth of all the land in the British Empire, is three-fourths the size of Europe, and twenty-five times as large as Great Britain and Ireland. Canada is seven hundred thousand square miles bigger than the United States; this country could be put into it and still leave room for eleven more states arranged by name alphabetically from Alabama to Illinois. Further, Canadian settlement began as soon as did that of Virginia or New England; at the time the first white settlement was made in Australia the United States had only four million people. Yet when we look at the present population of these three areas we find the United States with about a hundred and seventeen million people, while Canada has only nine million and Australia has not yet reached the seven million mark. In other words Canada has a few more people than New York City and Chicago, while Australia, with two and a fraction people to the square mile, is a little better populated than New York.

Why this amazing disparity? The explanation is partly history and partly geography. Let us take Canada first. That country made a poor start as a European colony. The early companies concentrated on the fur trade and brought out few colonists; the French government officials who ruled the country for a century before the British conquest did little better and often much worse; and the use of the colony as a pawn in the game between France and England meant that stress was put on soldiering rather than settling. Later on the friction between French and British interests injured both parties, while the Hudson's Bay Company kept the West locked and barred till well after the middle of the nineteenth century. Political union did not come, on paper even, till 1867. So there were racial, political, and religious obstacles.

But the geographical barriers were far more important. The westward movement in the United States met with no serious obstacle between the Appalachians and the Rockies; the vast unbroken Mississippi basin is probably the world's largest solid patch of fertile land. Canada had no such patch. Instead it has, covering about half its total area, a Pre-Cambrian geological formation known as the Laurentian Shield. Of that shield only about five per cent is suitable for agriculture and forty per cent is covered with forest. Today that region is being exploited for its mineral wealth and water power; mining, paper-making, and lumber-cutting are invading areas once traversed only by the trapper; but until forty or fifty years ago this region was regarded as useless. Settlement on the shield was impossible and its southern edge was the northern limit to farming. Hence, since this rocky region comes down in the east and links up with the Appalachians, it cut the maritime provinces off from the West; since it comes almost down to the northern shore of the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario, it limited settlement in that area to a narrow river and lake fringe. And since it bounded Lakes Huron and Superior, it imposed between the East and the prairies a barrier a thousand miles wide of rocks, rivers, lakes, and

Christmas trees. Not till the railroad pierced that barrier was there any direct easy contact between the old East and the West, and that railroad did not come till the eighties.

Had the North American continent been one political unit, the geographical division of Canada into four separated areas of settlement would not have had such serious results. The maritimes would have naturally been part of the New England zone; the north and south shores of Ontario and Erie would have been one economic area; the prairies would have been linked up with Minnesota and the Dakotas; and British Columbia would have been part of the Pacific fish, fruit, and forest region. Trade and settlement would have flowed fairly easily north and south. In its attempt to develop trade and political union east and west, the dominion has had one of the hardest tasks ever set a country — that of making history defy geography.

But the really important explanation of Canada's late development is found in the fact that she has a neighbor, a neighbor that was well endowed with natural resources and was in many ways more attractive than Canada both to the immigrant and to many of her own children. There were limits to the volume of European emigration, and the person who was leaving Europe naturally picked from among the claimants for his patronage the country that offered the biggest prizes. Higher wages, cheap or free land, a less stern climate, bigger economic opportunities all pulled him to New York rather than Montreal. Canadian industries struggled with scant success in face of the competition of their southern rivals, and Canadians joined the stream of American immigration in numbers that occasionally frightened Ottawa.

But Canada's growing time came at last. When all the land had been alienated in the United States the homesteader thought more kindly of Canada, and a stream even set in from the United States to the Canadian prairies. As the Sunday editions of the newspapers cut broad swathes through the rap-

idly disappearing American forests, Canadian lumber got its chance; and as the food surplus available for export from United States farms diminished, Canadian wheat, butter, and meat found more buyers in Europe. American manufacturers began to realize the value of the Canadian market and built branch factories in the dominion; and mining interests from the south took their share in developing the mineral resources of the rocky north. When that day came, Canadians shook off the pessimism that had marked their outlook on their national destiny. "The 20th century is Canada's century," said Sir Wilfred Laurier, and the progress since 1900 has been rapid and firmly founded. The development of new breeds of wheat has made possible the northward extension of the prairie wheat belt, while mixed farming has helped the farmer to put his eggs in baskets that are not shaped like grain elevators. But Canada's resources are much smaller in total than those of the United States; much of her recent development has been what Professor Gras once called exploitation history; it has been based on the extraction of minerals, or the cutting down of trees, and the supply of both may be exhausted some day. So the thinking Canadian tries to forget that one new nation has managed to build up a population of over a hundred million; he shoots his arrow at a much more modest target and consoles himself with the thought that human happiness is not measured by census returns.

When we turn to the Antipodes and ask why Australia has only six and a half million inhabitants, the answer is even more geography than history. Her distance from the emigrating countries was a huge handicap. Men even today prefer a week's journey to one of five or six weeks if they are going into exile. The man who came to North America had two strings to his bow, two choices, and if he failed to make good he could hope to be able to get back to Europe somehow. The man who went to Australia "burned his boats," with no place to which he could move on for a second chance and little hope

of saving enough to get him back to Europe. Distance also worked against the producer, for until refrigeration came into use he could not send his perishable produce across the equator to Europe, the only available market. Hence, until the eighties the only goods that could be exported were wool and wheat, and, while there was abundant demand for wool, a sheep ranch calls for little labor, and wheat had to meet the competition of America and Russia.

Physiographically, Australia is the victim of climate. It was once said that if Australia could export sunshine and import rainfall she would be the greatest country in the world; and one might add that she would probably have been settled a thousand years ago by Asiatics. She has no mountain barriers or vast rocky wastes, her soil is mostly amazingly fertile, there is no winter to freeze up production, cattle can be left out of doors the year round, and it is a pardonable exaggeration to declare that if you push a walking stick into the ground it will turn into a fruit tree. Given rainfall, central Australia would be a bigger and better Mississippi basin. Unfortunately the northern half of the continent lies in the zone of the southeast trade winds, which blow from about twenty-five degrees south toward the equator; except on the east coast these winds blow therefore from the land to the sea, instead of from the sea to the land, as all sensible winds should. The result is that the northern half of the continent is a trade wind desert, like the Sahara or parts of the west coasts of South America and South Africa. All told, over one-third of the country gets less than ten inches of rain; less than one-third gets from ten to twenty inches, and the remaining third enjoys twenty inches or more. Taking other factors into account, about one-quarter of the continent is suited for close white settlement and maybe another quarter for sparser dry farming or ranching. Those suitable regions are chiefly in the east and southeast corners of the continent, along a coastal strip one hundred to two hundred miles in width, where the

population is already living today. Unless some release of atomic energy allows us to dispense with or control rainfall and ignore the readings on wet bulb thermometers in the tropical north, we cannot hope that the ten thousand people who occupied the 1,300,000 miles of bad lands in 1921 will be heavily reinforced in the decades ahead.

When we turn from quantitative to qualitative comparisons, we come to facts that perhaps the psychologist could explain better than I can. At first sight all new countries seem to be alike; they all use many automobiles, of American patterns; they all enjoy a higher standard of living than the Old World, though since they are all devoid of domestic servants perhaps their standard of comfort is lower; they all are intensely optimistic and confident concerning the future of their country. But of two important differences I must say a little. The first is the marked contrast in the composition of the population. Perhaps the most characteristic thing in the United States is its telephone directories, for there in every column we see evidence of the varied sources from which the American population was drawn. There was mixture before 1775; there was the big influx from western and northwestern Europe up to 1880, and then the turn to central, southern, and eastern European supplies; and behind it all was Africa. Ellis Island has been the modern Tower of Babel. Canada's population is only a little less mixed in origin. Roughly a quarter is of French descent, half hails from the British Isles, and the remaining quarter represents continental Europe and the Orient. Here is mixture enough to worry those Canadians who wish to keep their country predominantly British so far as external influences are concerned. South Africa is a standing population problem, and he would be a dare-devil who would risk prophesying a solution of it. For there seven hundred thousand British and nine hundred thousand Dutch find it hard to agree except on one thing, namely that they are sitting on a powder magazine in the form of seven million Kaffirs, Indians,

and Malays. South Africa was the one new country in which the native was not exterminated, pushed into the background, or treated with dignity and generosity.

When we turn to Australasia, however, we find a racial purity in marked contrast to what we have seen elsewhere. In Australia about ninety-eight per cent of the population is of British stock, and in New Zealand the percentage is ninety-nine. The stream of migration has run almost entirely from British ports; government campaigns to induce immigration have scarcely done any work on the continent; and the ban on Asiatics or Africans has kept the country's skin as white as hot sunshine will permit. This British homogeneity is thoroughly supported by public opinion, and to the average Australian "White Australia" means British Australia. A few Germans have gone there at various times, but of other peoples there are scarcely any; and a recent attempt to steer those Italians who could not get past the Statue of Liberty out to Australia raised a furious demand that the continent must kill at birth this attempt to Mediterraneanize Australia.

This homogeneity has its virtues and its defects. It prevents such conflicts or outbursts of race bitterness as sometimes mar the record of Canada and South Africa; it simplifies the task of the teacher, and courses in Australianization are unnecessary. The newcomers are from a land where parliamentary government, orderly discussion of public affairs, free speech, freedom of association, and the like exist, so they have no difficulty in fitting into their new surroundings. But they come from an urbanized country and look for jobs in the already over-large cities, rather than on the land. They are not fitted for the semitropical conditions of northern Australia as the southern Europeans would be, and this concentration on Britain as a source of new population therefore does nothing to help in occupying and developing the empty north.

Here then is the setting for one of the most interesting problems this century will consider. Which, in the long run, will

prove the better, the mixed or the homogeneous population? The answer to that question will depend on more than economic success; it will involve considerations of personal and social happiness, political honesty and efficiency, and the level of moral standards. What the answer will be, our great-grandchildren may know.

I wish to make one final comparison. Why have the new nations "down under" been so prone to far-reaching social and economic experimentation while North America has remained wedded (but with occasional judicial separations) to *laissez faire*? Why has the Australian wage-earner organized in trade unions so vigorously that one in eight of the population is on the membership roll of a union, while in Canada and the United States the proportion is about one in thirty? Why did Australian labor's political activity grow so rapidly that labor governments have been in and out of power fairly regularly since about 1900, while in North America the same movement has made very little impression on politics? We all know how Australia, by its experiments in wage regulation, land taxation, state enterprise, motherhood endowment, and other fields has earned a name among economists as a social and economic laboratory. Why the contrast between the white man's conduct on the two sides of the Pacific?

I confess I cannot give you a satisfactory answer, but merely throw out a few suggestions. Racial homogeneity played its part; it is very hard to organize people of different tongues, backgrounds, and religious beliefs. Further, Australian immigrants had probably been in a labor organization in the old land. Again, land was abundant in America, so the disgruntled wage-earner could escape by homesteading, while the country was growing so fast that the ambitious artisan could set up on his own account. In Australia fertile land was not abundant, and when immigrants began to go there in any quantity they found all the good land already occupied by big sheep-ranchers, who had used their political power to

entrench themselves firmly on their holdings. So there was no way of escape by taking up land. Finally, during its formative period Australia drew its population from a Europe that was seething with a sense of social or political injustice and propounding all manner of schemes for reform or revolution. Those men, if they had gone to America, would have found the political and social lines all laid down according to plans and ideals popular fifty years before; in Australia, however, they were in time to take occasion by the hand and mould the newly formed governments into a Chartist or social reform mould. From such men one would not expect the acceptance of the theory that vested interests and private property were sacrosanct even when they acted against the public good; it was natural that such men should believe that to a democratically chosen legislature all things are possible and nothing is forbidden. The safety of the public is the supreme law, and that safety lay not in letting alone but in intervening when the need was urgent. In America discontent found its stronghold among the farmers and was responsible for the various farmers' crusades; in Australia discontent sprang first from the sight of the sheep-ranchers' monopoly over the good land and spread later to the urban artisan. And it was perfectly natural that both the land-hungry and the wage-earners should see in the state the instrument by which their wrongs could be redressed. But I still believe that if that dead heart of the continent had been an expanse of fertile quarter sections, Australia's outlook would have been very different.

There are several other contrasts of which I should like to speak did time permit. I will mention just one. The United States, after a period of spasmodic land selling, finally adopted the practice of giving away the national domain. Australia, after a period of spasmodic giving away, finally adopted the practice of selling the public lands. Neither of these stories has yet been studied in sufficient detail to make any final

verdict possible. Which was the better plan? I put the question and wish some one would answer it.

Let me finish, not with a difference, but with a similarity. I rather suggested a few minutes ago that countries ceased to be new when they began to develop their manufactures and their national consciousness. I might have applied another test and said that newness ended when all the land capable of occupation had been alienated. If that test stands, then the United States ceased to be new about thirty-five years ago, and Canada, New Zealand, and Australia have just about reached that condition or are rapidly approaching it. Between 1900 and 1914 population flowed over the Canadian prairies, and by the end of that period there was little worth-while land left waiting to be homesteaded. The recent production of Garnet wheat, which will mature in a somewhat shorter time than the old Marquis, may make possible the cultivation of land a hundred miles farther north than the present limit, and the optimists report millions of acres tucked away north of Edmonton in the Peace River Valley. But future settlement will be in tens where a quarter of a century ago it was in thousands. Even before the war Australia had reached the limit of safe farm settlement and it was generally realized that any further movement of the frontier would involve large expenditures on water conservation and supply to make semi-dry lands reasonably safe for settlers. The future there lies in the more intensive cultivation of lands that have been extensively farmed or pastured in the past. Heavy land taxation has broken up large sheep estates, and still there is little land available. In short, unless big new regions are opened up in South America, Rhodesia, or Siberia, the frontier will have to abandon its old roving habits and "stay put."

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