Great Nations of the Future

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The true historian does not offer conjecture, he collects facts. Examining history, we see how time, location and association have given variety to human character, and how the character of some nations has given them precedence over others in history, and made them seem truly great. When we observe the great nations of antiquity struggling to solve the problems of their existence, our views are enlarged and we profit by their experiences, and may form some idea of the future of present nations of the world. We learn much about the high deeds and heroic exploits of the great spirits of the past, and by considering their motives of action and the success with which their endeavors met we can see wherein many nations, as well as individuals, have failed. From these, and many other lessons which history
teaches us, can we not reach definite conclusions in regard to the nations of the future? There is a something about us, a something within us, which tells us that our country belongs to the glorious future. Let us, then, seek out the elements which elevated nations in the past and knowing the characteristics of the nations of the present, we may predict, with almost an absolute certainty, which of them will take the lead in the future. Nations seem to be subject to certain fixed laws which mold their character and determine their condition, and if these laws are obeyed they will hasten their progress in civilization and power. By examining human nature, in general, we may see that those characteristics which are found in man always enter into history. The laws which tend toward the development of man influence the nation. In a country where man's vital wants are easily supplied, where
the climate and vegetation render the necessities of life of easy production, where the aesthetic faculty are gratified, where education is one of the aims of the people, and all classes are allowed to receive equally high advantages of culture; thickly settled communities existing, and where the religion is of a high order, not given to the superstitions of ancient times, but a freedom of thought and belief permitted. Altogether, where the elements of civilization are found to exist, there is every advantage for the development of a great and mighty race of people. There are, however, many peculiarities of race which may have an adverse influence upon the growth of a nation and which deter its advancement in spite of the most favorable existing circumstances. When we remember that a nation is but an assemblage of individuals, we may, to some extent, by studying the characteristics of the individual, learn those of the race. The influence of a nation may be determined by its rank in civilization, by its capacity, its education, and its moral
principles, together with the relations which it sustains toward other nations, the facilities it has of communicating with them. Commerce, arts, and national institutions determine greatness. Virtue, capacity, and understanding are as necessary to a nation as to a man. In estimating nations, we must consider what they are able to perform, their eagerness and manner in pursuing the objects of their policy, and their capacity for conducting offensive and defensive wars. War though destructive is often very useful in this respect, that through a sense of common danger it unites people in closer bonds, and that in the struggles with which it precipitates country heroism, patriotism, and other noble virtues are cultivated and stand boldly forth. In judging nations we should remember that each man has his peculiar bent of mind so each country has its peculiar object of pursuit, and the manners of the people will be affected by this as by other circumstances which have been mentioned. The great nations
of the future will be those which have a large and intelligent population, and for this large territory is required. Besides this they must have a religion for no nation can become great without having as one of its foundation stones a belief which will strengthen it in adversity, and in prosperity urge it on to still further greatness. England and Russia, of the old world, each have a government capable of wide expansion and of molding and controlling vast masses of men, each has a large territory, an intelligent population and an established religion. A remarkable coincidence existing between these countries is that each has an historical church which is teaching to its people the great moral principles of the Decalogue, which opens wide the Bible to every citizen of the land, and which is now engaged in carrying civilization and its advantages to the plummering nations of the East. Germany, through its powerful nation possessing very many of the Elements of
civilization, cannot ever become much greater than she now is. She possesses within her the elements of discord and dissension, elements which arise from religious controversy and the quarrels of the petty states of which she is composed. The character of her government is not one that will cultivate rapid advancement, but off from the sea she is prevented from taking any important part in the commerce of the world, and from taking a conspicuous place in the drama of the future. Her nobles, however, brave, active and intelligent pass to other states and there contribute a great deal to their glory and advancement. In intelligence the Germans as a people have few superiors. There can be but little hope of great progress in the Latin peoples, France, Spain and Italy. The French nation though highly intelligent and eager to adopt innovation, naturally of rapid advancement, one of the nations at present an effort to push curiosities onto greatness, they are easily discouraged and do
not possess the element of perseverance in their nature. They are so disunited
with their form of government & can never work together as one people. They
have always been full of dissension, and divided into parties, which are
as bitter toward one another as against their country's most hated enemies.
With this spirit they can never make any great progress.
Spain and Italy have, to a great extent, the same character as France.
These nations have for their religion Catholicism, which holds all individuals
in perfect subjection to the Church. It allows no freedom of thought or action,
and is constantly at war with the state, striving to place the government in
entire subjection to the Church. As a religion it not only retards advancement
in intelligence among the masses, but it actually puts down all in
dependence of character or thought. It is hardly necessary to consider
the smaller nations of Europe. They have for centuries been struggling
to gain the problems, not of advancement, but simply of existence.
they have simply existed. They have never made any great progress, and probably now will become much greater than they now are. During the past century there has been but little material improvement made in the old nations, in comparison with the new. The nations are all aged, and have by slower growth attained such influence as they now possess. Very many of their new ideas and improvements, which they have been slow to adopt, only to their own disadvantage, have originated with our infant people amongst us. But passing from the nations of the old world, we come to America. Here we find a country in all its physical characteristics, most admirably adapted for the habitation of a highly civilized people, and therefore finds a people elected, as it were, from the rest of the old races, surrounded by all the advantages and resources of wealth, territory, civilization, religion, brought by early hardships into close sympathy and union, with a govern-
and sealed with their blood. How can such a nation be but great? Visiting
nowhere, needing such rapid growth, as has been attained by this nation.
In one short century she has accomplished what it has taken others ages
to do, and now she stands at the head of the nations of our globe in arts,
industries and general intelligence, and, not satisfied with her position
in the world, she keeps pushing onward resolutely. She is already great,
but long to be greater. Americans do not feel that they are too old or too-
highly civilized to copy from other nations what may make them grow.
Here many valuable improvements are made in America upon inventions
of the old world. It is considered a great advantage to a nation to be associated
with relation to others, that the people may have constant intercourse with
the nations, that they may observe their customs, ideas and adopt such as
may seem beneficial. America, though isolated to a great extent, has not
felt the disadvantages of such isolation. She has people capable of

individuals from all the nations of the world, who bring the ideas and customs of their mother countries with them to their new homes. Thus, the nation has within itself that advantage which others may derive only through intercourse with foreign peoples. No one people appears to be more fond of travel than any other nation, so that in spite of the isolation of our territory we succeed in having more frequent intercourse with the countries of the old world than many of the people who are at home there. Our situation with respect to other countries, therefore, instead of being a disadvantage, an inconvenience, becomes a great advantage to us. We have no other nation to fear. There is no powerful people on the other side of any of our rivers or boundaries whom we constantly dread. No few thousands of any grasping monarch, it makes but little difference to us who holds the balance of power in the old world. It cannot affect our peace or happiness. We have a little world of our own at home which could live more or without them.
It can now be very seriously affected by foreign war. In the interests of our
Country are to a great extent quite separate from those of all other nations.
In the old world the nations are in an almost constant state of arms, in
difficulties concerning the balance of power, rights of territory, and other
matters. They are ever in fear that some one nation may suddenly become too
powerful and be urged with a glutinous spirit to devour its territory,
doing this, with word in hand, leagues together to prevent any one nation
arming its enemies from attaining too much influence or power, while
America quietly, peacefully moves on, increasing daily in strength,
wealth, influence, not brouiled by any of these foreign quarrels. And who
of them dare utter a threat or caution to us for our increasing power?
Though powerful we seem to have no desire for war with other nations,
her peaceful disposition is to us a most beneficial point of character, and
lacks us still higher in the ranks among civilized nations. We have
enough territory, and to spare. Hence there is no disposition to grasp for more.

Our arts and industries late the lead. Our government is founded upon the
principle of perfect justice and freedom to all. All men are equal in the sight of
our laws, and may enjoy equal religious as well as civil rights. Perhaps
grown thus in one short century from a small band of hardy pioneers, in the
midst of a vast wilderness into a great and mighty nation of the world. Are
we not rich in energy and never resting spirit, become in a few more

Decades the leading people of the world? The old world accustomed to slow
growth looks with astonishment at us and makes no attempts to rival us.

And with her telegraph wires to carry commands and her grand BEGIN
of government by states, she may stretch over continents and embrace
the islands of the seas.