THE ROMANES LECTURE 1902; THE RELATIONS OF THE ADVANCED AND THE BACKWARD RACES OF MANKIND

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The Romanes Lecture 1902; The Relations of the Advanced and the Backward Races of Mankind by $James\ Bryce$

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THE ROMANES LECTURE

The Relations of the Advanced and the Backward Races of Mankind

BY

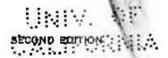
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In the paeans that were chanted when at the opening of a new century the achievements of the century preceding were reviewed, it was chiefly the progress of the physical sciences, the enlargement of knowledge, and the control obtained over the forces of nature that filled our thoughts. But the exploration of the area, with the ascertainment of the character and resources; both actual and potential, of the globe we inhabit, was a scarcely less notable result of the nineteenth century. In one aspect it was even more remarkable, because it represented the all but final closing of one great chapter of history, the completion of one great task which Man had to do. Scientific knowledge will, we may hope, go on increasing steadily and rapidly. But the exploration of this earth is now all but finished. Civilized man knows his home in a sense in which he never knew it before. He knows how high are the mountains and how deep the seas, what are the currents that keep the ocean in salutary unrest, and what the winds which bring rain or heat

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with them, and those movements of the tide w which the ancient poet longed to comprehend

Qua vi maria alta tumescant

Obicibus ruptis rursusque in se ipsa residant.

He knows what soils are fertile, what climates gen and (to a large extent) where mineral wealth is to Moreover he knows the inhabitants of t found. earth, and not only the Races as they are, but the co ditions which have determined the progress of each them in the past and may affect them in the fututheir natural aptitudes, their habits of industry or i dolence, the features of the land wherein each dwel and the influence of those features upon the increaor decay of population, upon the forms which industri effort takes. Much, no doubt, still remains to be asce tained, for further discoveries in the sphere of biolog may render regions healthy which have been herete fore haunted by disease, as further investigation of th forces of nature may plant industries in spots hithert neglected. Still, broadly speaking, a point has been reached at which the conditions likely to affect the relative development of the various branches of man kind have become so far known, that students may begin to deal with them in a positive and practical way. They have passed from the chaos of conjecture into the cosmos of science.

With this incomparably fuller and more exact knowledge of the families of Man there has come a far closer and more widespread contact of those various families with one another, and in particular of the more advanced and civilized races with the more backward,

a contact so much closer and more widespread than ever in the past that it may be deemed to mark a crisis in the history of the world, which will profoundly affect I the destiny of all mankind. It is of the phenomena of that contact and the problems which it raises that I propose to speak to you to-day. Upon some points it is too soon to advance any positive conclusions, for the data are still insufficient. But data are daily accumulating, and though the time has not yet arrived for answering certain momentous questions, the time has arrived for formulating them. As the mists rise, the outlines of the landscape begin to appear, and we may venture to ask in what direction the movement of humanity will tend, and by what paths the obstacles that seem to bar or encumber its advance will be surmounted.

To describe the phenomena of race-contact in our own time as marking a crisis may seem a strong expression, for such contact has been never interrupted since our palaeolithic ancestors roamed hither and thither in search of wild fruits or wild creatures. There have been epochs, such as that of Alexander the Great, or that of Attila, or that which followed the discoveries made by Christopher Columbus, in which there was a great impingement of some peoples upon other peoples which created new relations between them by way of conquest or settlement. But tour own time stands eminent and peculiar in this, that it marks the completion of a process by which all the races of the world have been affected, and all the backward ones placed in a more or less complete dependence upon the more

advanced. India, Northern Asia, almost the who. Africa, Madagascar, the Indian and Polynesian a pelagoes, and the Philippine Islands now own civil masters of European stock, as do all the aborig races of America. Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, Si and in a sense even China, are now overshadowed European Powers, and prevented from passing un the control of some one or more of these only by iealous vigilance of the others. The same forces motives have worked to bring this result about wh induced the conquests of earlier days. But two n factors' have been more active and pervasive than ev before I the desire of civilized producers of goods secure savage or semi-civilized consumers by annexis the regions they inhabit, and the rivalry of the gre civilized States, each of which has been spurred a by the fear that the others would appropriate marke which it might win for itself. The process has bee much swifter than was desirable in the interest of either conqueror or conquered. But we can now se that it became inevitable, so soon as the progress of science had prodigiously increased the cheapness bot of production and of transportation.

The completion of this World-process is a specially great and fateful event, because it closes a page for ever. The conditions that are now vanishing car never recur. The uncivilized and semi-civilized races cannot relapse into their former isolation. In passing under the influences of civilized Powers they have indeed given to the world a new kind of unity. They have become in a new sense economic factors in its