

**ENGLISH
INFLUENCE ON THE
UNITED STATES**

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English influence on the United States by W. Cunningham

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W. CUNNINGHAM

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INFLUENCE ON THE
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By W. Cunningham, D.D.

*Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, Arch-
deacon of Ely*

An Essay on Western Civilization

In Its Economic Aspects

Vol. I. Ancient Times

Vol. II. Mediæval and Modern Times

Sold Separately

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UNITED STATES

BY

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PREFACE

THESE essays are on the subjects of addresses which I delivered during October and November, 1914, in Boston and Cambridge, Mass., in Providence, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. They were primarily intended to show the close connection between English and American life; but they also emphasise the fact that from the first there have been divergences between English institutions, as they were maintained and developed in the Old Country, and the similar social elements as transplanted and moulded by the environment of a New World and the experience it afforded. I have drawn at times on architectural evidence, the importance of which does not seem to me to have been fully appreciated, either as regards the precise character or the long continuance of English influence.

As I had many opportunities of conversation with American friends on these topics, I feel able

to put forward the opinions here expressed as something more than the impressions of a passing visitor; and I venture to hope that these essays may do something to explain the Englishman to the American, and the American to the Englishman, and thus conduce to the mutual understanding which is the basis of a firm friendship.

W. C.

TRINITY COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE.
11 March, 1916.

INTRODUCTION

IN the two volumes of my *Essay on Western Civilisation* I tried to mark the special contributions which have been made by different peoples in the past to the civilised life of modern Europe; I did not endeavour, however, to enter on any discussion of the movement which has been the characteristic feature of recent times, or to analyse the diffusion of European civilisation throughout the world. The essays which are here collected indicate the lines on which we must proceed in order to deal with this problem. I have endeavoured to separate one particular thread, and to show the ties which have connected England with one of the new nations of the world—the United States. Many influences have been at work—French and Spanish, Teutonic¹ and Scandinavian; but England, as the Mother Country, and the source of ideas of law and government in the United States, may be rightly regarded as the main channel by which European civilisation

¹ Roosevelt, *History as Literature and other Essays*, 99.

has reached North America. I have tried to render the discussion more precise, by confining myself to what is specially English rather than British; it is only in the chapter on academic life (Chapter IV) that I have touched on anything that is characteristically Scottish.

The influence of the English stock and of English origin can be traced in every aspect of American life, rural and urban, social and political; but there is need for discrimination as to the degree of influence exercised in different departments. The connection was extraordinarily close at first in regard to rural life and the organisation of the township (Chapter I). While the city life of America shows traces of an English origin, it appears to be almost entirely an independent development (Chapters II and III). It is interesting, too, to notice how much the two countries have shared a common opinion as to the limitation of the functions of government and the free play of private interests on the one hand (Chapter V), and as to the wisdom of holding aloof from foreign complications on the other (Chapter VI); and to see how difference of experience, during the last century and a half, has been reflected in the attitude towards modern social and political problems which the people of each country are inclined to take.

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