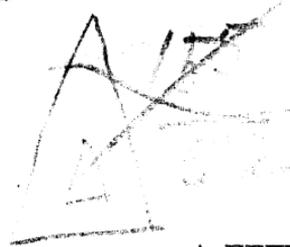


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47. **HAPPY ENGLAND.**



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*Felix prole virum.*  
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A FEW WORDS UPON THE ARTICLE

“GERMANY, FRANCE, AND ENGLAND,”

IN THE ‘EDINBURGH REVIEW.’

BY

SIR EDWARD SULLIVAN, BART.

ВОЕННЫЙ АГЕНТЪ
ВЪ МОСКВѢ, СВЯТ
ПОЛКОВНИКЪ
ЕГО ВЕЛИЧЕСТВ
ГЕНЕРАЛЬ МАЙОРЪ
НОВИЦКІЙ



LONDON:

EDWARD STANFORD, 6 & 7, CHARING CROSS, S.W.

—
1871.

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P R E F A C E .

“ HAPPY England! Happy, not because any Immaculate Conception exempted her from that original sin of nations, the desire to erect Will into Right and the lust of territorial aggrandizement. Happy not only because she is *felix prole virum*, because this United Kingdom is peopled by a race unsurpassed as a whole in its energies and endowments. But happy with a special reference to the present subject, in this, that the wise dispensation of Providence has cut her off, by that streak of silver sea which passengers so often and so justly execrate, though in no way from the duties, absolutely from the temptations which attend upon the local neighbourhood of the continental nations.

“ Our lot would, perhaps, be too much favoured if we possessed, together with such advantages, a full sense of what they are. When the Almighty grants exceptional and peculiar bounties, He sometimes permits, by way of counterpoise, an insensibility to their value.

“ The dominant force of the European system has travelled from one point to another ; the centre of gravity has shifted. We alone from our island home are comparatively beyond the range of attractive and repulsive powers in their new directions.

“ And yet we are not isolated. With every one of them (continental countries), and with vast multitudes of persons in each of them, we have constant relations, both of personal and of commercial intercourse, which grow from year to year ; and as, happily, we have no conflict of interests, real or supposed, no scope for evil passions, afforded by our peaceful rivalry, there is nothing to hinder the self-acting growth of concord. Withdrawn from the temptation of continental neighbourhood, we are withdrawn also from the

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direct action of most of the quarrels of Europe. But, so far is this state of facts from implying either a condition or a policy of isolation, that it marks out England as the appropriate object of the general confidence, as the sole, comparatively, unsuspected Power. In every quarrel, in every difficulty, it is her aid that is most courted; it is by her agency that parties, if they seek a mediator, prefer to come together; it is under her leadership that neutrals most desire to move. And this, not because she is believed to be exempt from infirmity, but because she is known not to be exposed to temptation. All that is wanted is, that she should discharge the functions which are likely more and more to accrue to her, modestly, kindly, and impartially.

“Russia in the Amoor, America at the Feejee or Sandwich Islands, France in New Caledonia or in Cochin China, all these, and the like, were held to be good reasons for a feverish excitement lest other nations should do for themselves but the fiftieth part of what we have done for ourselves.

“As regards the Empire of India, we more and more strive to realize the generous conception according to which we hold a moral trusteeship to be administered for the benefit of those over whom we rule.

“As regards the Three Kingdoms, the policy of Parliament is aimed at making them a perfectly compacted body, and raising them to the highest level of intelligence and civil energy. Ireland can no longer fling her grievances in the face of Great Britain. Ignorance can no longer plead that it is compulsory, because the road is barred to knowledge, &c., &c.

“If we no longer dream of foreign acquisition, we are contented in having treaties of mutual benefit with every nation upon earth; treaties not written on parchment, but based on the permanent merits and interests of man, kept alive and confirmed by the constant play of the motives which govern his daily life, and thus inscribing themselves in gradually deepening characters on the fleshly tablets of the heart.

“Certain it is that a new law of nations is gradually taking hold of the mind, and coming to sway the practice of the world; a law which recognizes independence, which frowns upon aggres-

sion, which favours the pacific, not the bloody settlement of disputes, which aims at permanent, not temporary adjustments; above all, which recognizes as a tribunal of paramount authority the general judgment of civilized mankind.

“The foremost among the nations will be that one which by its conduct shall gradually engender in the minds of the others a fixed belief that it is just. In the competition for this prize the bounty of Providence has given us a place of vantage, and nothing save our own fault or folly can wrest it from our grasp.”

EDINBURGH REVIEW,
Oct. 1870.