

to unite countries which a jealous policy has long separated. It is the nature of civilization to go forward, without any tendency to decline in the spot that gave it birth. Its progress from east to west, from Asia to Europe, proves nothing against this axiom. A clear light loses none of its brilliancy by being diffused over a wider space. Intellectual cultivation, that fertile source of national wealth, advances by degrees and extends without being displaced. Its movement is not a migration: and though it may seem to be such in the east, it is because barbarous hordes possessed themselves of Egypt, Asia Minor, and of once free Greece, the forsaken cradle of the civilization of our ancestors.

The barbarism of nations is the consequence of oppression exercised by internal despotism or foreign conquest; and it is always accompanied by progressive impoverishment, by a diminution of the public fortune. Free and powerful institutions, adapted to the interests of all, remove these dangers; and the growing civilization of the world, the competition of labour and of trade, are not the ruin of states, whose welfare flows from a natural source. Productive and commercial Europe will profit by the new order of things in Spanish America, as it would profit from events that might put an end to barbarism in Greece, on the northern coast of Africa, and in other countries subject to Ottoman tyranny. What most menaces the prosperity of the ancient continent is the prolongation of those intestine struggles which check production, and diminish at the same time the number and wants of consumers. This struggle, begun in Spanish America six years after my departure, is drawing gradually to an end. We shall soon see both shores of the Atlantic peopled by independent nations, ruled by different forms of Government, but united by the remembrance of a common origin, uniformity of language, and the wants which civilization creates. It may be said, that the immense progress of the art of navigation has contracted the boundaries of the seas. The Atlantic already assumes the form of a narrow channel, which no more removes the New World from the commercial states of Europe, than the Mediterranean, in the infancy of navigation, removed the Greeks of Peloponnesus from those of Ionia, Sicily, and the Cyrenaïc region.