

[Writing by Elihu Burritt, [1863?]]

[All capitalization in the original]

For the N. Y. Times

Reunion by Expansion [underline in original]

At the close of each successive year of this great and Terrible Civil War, I have ventured to put forth the suggestion that the easiest, surest and most advantageous solution of the present momentous difficulty, would be Reunion by Expansion. That is, expressing it concisely, "to add one more circle to our federal system, and make it a Union of Nations, as well as of States". As the third year of the war is considerably advanced, I should feel much gratified, if you would admit a short communication, asking your readers to give once more a little thought to this proposition; to look at it in the light of the experience of the last two years, and in [crossed out word] view of that fortune which seems to impend over the country.

For more than a quarter of a century, the idea has been germinating in the American mind, that our great sister-hood of States must gradually expand until it should eventually embrace the whole content of North America; that this expansion would be a blessing to the Old World as well as the New; that, indeed, [crossed out word] Europe would create the necessity herself by sending to us, by home [?], room, labor and sustenance, a population sufficient to make Two States a year, at the political standard of 100,000 inhabitants for each. Thus, even the "manifest destiny doctrine" had an element of reason in it, and also a sentiment of good will towards men of the outside world. There are hundreds of persons now living in the Union who remember the time when it did not number as many inhabitants as the single state of New York contains today. There are thousands now living who will see it number one hundred million if it continues to increase in population at the ratio of the last half century. And Europe will be largely accountable for this stupendous growth. By the time the children of today are in middle manhood, we shall number 60,000,000, or as many as the present empire of Russia. Now, even a century is comparatively a brief space in the life of a nation. If five of them were taken [crossed out word] out of the lives of England or France, we would hardly see the gap they would make in the pathway of their history. It is [crossed out word] no over-strained case of the future, for a nation, in our circumstances, to look forward and make provisions for the inevitable growth of a century. A

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farmer, in setting out an orchard, would calculate and provide the space which one hundred apple trees would require for their growth and expansion in the course of fifty years. It is not yielding to a fruitful or arrogant ambition, or a vague and visionary doctrine of “manifest destiny,” for a nation like ours to set itself soberly at work, to make provisions for that very growth while Europe thrusts upon us. ¶ [in original] Now, it is not the idea of fillibusters, [sic] or of the “Knights of the Golden Circle,” but the surer, second thoughts of candid and intelligent men, entertainment for years before this outbreak, that, at some future doubling of our population, our relations with the Mexican States, and with the British Provinces in America, must assume a new basis, [crossed out words] bringing them into a more intimate connection with us. This idea, unquestionably, has prevailed more extensively, among what may be called conservative men, than the public press has ever indicated. But, I am confident, that both conservatives and radicals, in adopting this idea, have left out of their conclusion one important contingency. They have overlooked the fact, that we cannot enter into any permanent and intimate political connection with the Mexican States or the British Provinces, without adding a new circle to our federal [crossed out words] system, and becoming a Union of Nations. It may be well for all who have thought upon this matter, to [crossed out word] let their minds settle down upon this conclusion, that if Mexico should ever find her advantage in becoming united or permanently associated with us, it must be as a whole, as an entire nation, retaining all the internal function of its sovereignty, with its own federal congress, its Laws, customs, religion and language intact. We may assume it as certain, that no consideration would ever imbue her to disperse the lines between her several states, give up her federal organisation, and come into our Republic by piece-meal, [sic] or as California and Minnesota were admitted. On the other hand, if the British Provinces in America, after having federated themselves in a Union of States, and established a central Parliament, at Ottawa or Montreal, should think it would promote their interests to form a permanent and intimate [crossed out words] connection with us, they would inevitably insist upon treating, and being treated, as a whole, as a national organization, retaining their own Parliament, their local sovereignty, and [text ends in original]