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Talcott Williams

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ETHNIC FACTORS IN SOUTH AMERICA

BY TALCOTT WILLIAMS, LL. D.

Philadelphia

South America and North America are of nearly equal area, one 17,813,950 square kilometres and the other 19,810,200 square kilometres.¹ The equator runs not far from midway between them, though it crosses South America nearly a thousand miles south of its northern point. A very general impression in regard to both these divisions is that, while South America has the larger share of tropical lands, they both extend into the temperate zone and both are perpetually balanced against each other, as offering not dissimilar conditions. South America has a Spanish-American population and North America an English-American population for the greater share of its area. One has drawn its immigrant population in the past and during the present century from North Europe, and the other from South Europe. When men contrast the stability of government in North America as compared with its instability in Central and South America, there is in much popular and some technical discussion on the subject from either the historical or political standpoint, a general disposition to assume that the contrast is due to the superior capacity at self-government of the English-speaking as compared with the Spanish-speaking race. This overlooks altogether the definite, fundamental, geographical and ethnical facts in these two continents.

Instead of being similarly situated north and south of the tropics, the great mass of North America falls in a climate which encourages effort; while the great mass of South America falls in a climate which discourages it. One is essentially a temperate and the other a tropical continent. Neither parallels of latitude, near what are loosely called the tropics, definitely decide conditions of climate, either with reference to temperature, to rainfall or atmospheric

¹Wagner und Supan. *Die Bevölkerung der Erde*, viii, 1891, p. xiii. In general, the figures in this article for population and area are drawn from this series.

saturation, which is more important than the aggregate of either of the other factors in its effect on the human type. At the same time, the parallel of 30° north latitude runs close to New Orleans, and of 30° south latitude which runs just north of the upper edge of Uruguay, dividing the Brazilian province of Rio Grande Do Sul, between the parts which have attracted German immigration and those which have not, may freely be said to separate regions in which tropical conditions overbalance temperate and those in which temperate conditions overbalance tropical. In the same way, the parallel of 50° of north latitude, which runs through Winnipeg, has below it everything which is likely soon to sustain a large population, and it is also the parallel which falls just above the end of South America. Large parts of North America above 50° will never be inhabited in Labrador, but large parts of this tract on the Pacific are certain to have a large population in the future and some tracts in Alaska balancing Labrador. The North-American continent has between the fiftieth and the thirtieth parallel of north latitude, one-half or 46.03 per cent of its area, or 9,118,635 square kilometres out of 19,810,200. In South America, on the other hand, out of a total area of 17,813,950 square kilometres, only one-eighth, 13,685 per cent, or 2,437,835 square kilometres, is between the thirtieth and fiftieth parallel. In other words, fully seven-eighths of South America is essentially tropical, while of North America only a little over one-half is either too cold or too hot to develop and maintain a stable civilization. Of South America, 77.115 per cent is north of the Tropic of Capricorn, or over three-quarters. Of North America, only a fourteenth or 6.96 is south of the Tropic of Cancer. South America has less than a fourth out of the tropics and North America thirteen-fourteenths. A large part of the area of North America south of the thirtieth parallel is also at the high average elevation of Mexico, considerably mitigating its geographical position; while South America, of all the world's continents, has the lowest average elevation; and in spite of the great range of mountains which runs along its western coast, has a larger tropical area nearer the surface of the ocean, the bed of a vast cretaceous sea, than any other tract of the earth's lands. North America is a continental region which has been slowly built up from the earliest paleozoic time over a broad determined and differentiated area; while South America represents instead the recent emergence of a great chain of mountains flanked

by the immense plain which stretches from the mouth of the Orinoco to the mouth of the LaPlata. Over all of this very slight changes of level would alter the course of streams. On it, so flat and level is the region, great masses of water stand at periods of flood, and a continuous water communication exists for months together at such a time from the Caribbean Sea to the South Atlantic.²

This geographical contrast is no less than the ethnic difference between the two continents. North America consists of a total population of about 90,000,000, in which at least 75,000,000 are white. South America has a population of some 40,000,000, in which it may be seriously doubted if over 8,000,000 are to-day of pure white blood. If the division be taken between the Spanish and English Americans, the disproportion will remain the same. From the Rio Grande, north over North America, there stretches a population to-day of about 81,000,000, in which the Indian is less than the delinquent and dependent population of three of our large states; while the negro population of about 9,000,000 constitutes the only bar to homogeneous ethnic conditions, and is but one-ninth of the whole. In South America, on the other side, the population is to-day from one-half to three-quarters Indian, with a white population not over one-fifth. What is really taking place in North America is that a white population, drawn from the most developed and prosperous countries of North Europe, is adapting, with more error and blunder than one could wish, familiar institutions to new conditions. What is taking place in South America is that a small white Spanish-speaking population, under odds of five or six to one, is endeavoring, in a region still containing either an aboriginal population or the mixed descendants of this population of negro slaves and of white half-breeds, to maintain and advance the civilization, the institutions and the traditions—many of them of the highest value to humanity—of the Latin races of South Europe.

It is a gross injustice if, in the comparative discussion of institutions, of national progress, and of civic stability in North and South America, these ethnic differences are not perpetually borne in mind and constantly considered.

Approximate statements are the utmost which can be ventured

² This distribution of area is of course only approximate, though the error is small. It has been ascertained by the familiar process of weighing the parts of a map traced on paper of even thickness.

in regard to South America in any ethnic demographic study. Its area, 6,803,570 square miles, is more thinly settled with its population of 40,000,000 than any other part of the earth's surface. It carries, as Dr. Siever's maps⁸ show, the largest unexplored and uncrossed area on the globe outside of Australia and the Antarctic Continent. Outside of Chile, Argentina and Mexico, no census is more than an approximate estimate. In only the first of these countries are returns accurate. Terminology varies in different countries. A common classification and definition of mixed bloods exists between no two. Brazil, there is every reason to believe, has been of late stationary in population. Paraguay has a mere fraction of the inhabitants of half a century ago. Bolivia is probably stationary. Peru's increase is doubtful. In all these countries there is strong temptation to make neither estimates nor enumeration, and the last census in Brazil has been suppressed.

What is true of South America proper is true also of the entire Spanish-American region. Words deceive. In international relations, in current estimates of trade, and in the concepts of the public and of publicists, the Spanish-American region is treated as if it were similar, homogeneous and Spanish, not to say Latin. It is none of these things. These countries vary from Cuba, where two-thirds of the population is white, to Mexico where a fifth is of this character, to lands like Venezuela, Colombia and Bolivia where from 5 to 10 per cent is white. In Brazil, where the term white is loosely applied, some two-fifths, 42 per cent, is claimed as white in the census. In Argentina the proportion is still larger. In Chile there is a homogeneous population created by the full union of Spanish and Indian, the proportion varying in different ranks.

All Spanish-American countries grew through the eighteenth century. Since then they divide themselves into two classes with reference to growth; Mexico and Cuba in the north, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay in the south, have steadily grown. Grave doubt exists whether most of those between are at present or have for half a century increased in population. Paraguay lost a round 1,000,000 of its 1,258,000 during the Lopez wars. In some of these, the uncertain stability of order restricts growth. In others, as Brazil and Peru, causes not clearly apparent are at work. The North-American assumption of steady growth cannot be applied to tropical Spanish

⁸ Petermann's *Mitteilungen*, 1900. Tafel xi.

America. The varying white population bears a close relation to the stability of administration. Cuba, which has the largest white proportion, no Indians, and the largest negro population, has a stable base for order. Mexico, with 19 per cent white, 43 per cent mixed and 38 per cent Indian, has for nearly a quarter of a century had a strong and stable government. This can scarcely be said until we reach Brazil and Peru, and scarcely of them. Argentina and Chile are as stable as Mexico and Cuba, and the proportion of white blood is larger in the former. Costa Rica is the least turbulent of Central-American states, and it has 10 per cent white. Compare this with Nicaragua, where the amount is trivial. If Brazil maintains stability over a wide area, it is because its white population is largest. If Venezuela, Colombia and Central America do not, it is because white population is smallest.

The source of the white population of Spanish America greatly varies. Cuba draws a steady immigration, largely Catalonian. Brazil is the only country to which immigration was constant in the colonial period. It came from Portugal and Galicia, with results apparent in type and temperament; and this immigration, as in the sixteenth century in Portugal, took kindly to both negro and Indian amalgamation. Venezuela early drew from the Basques, and President Castro reproduces a Basque type. Chile had its early immigration from the Biscayan provinces, and reflects their energetic and warlike temperament. Peru, it is said, drew from Andalusia. Pizarro came to Peru from north of Andalusia in Central Spain, from Estremadura. The Moors of Andalusia gave Argentina its double types of character, early taking to the horse and yet organizing rule over wide areas. Few sequences in history are more remarkable than that which brought to Chile the descendants of the Goth of North Spain and to Argentina the descendant of the Moor and Andalusian from South Spain, and pitted them against each other in a long struggle for supremacy in the new continent, a struggle which on both sides has reproduced many of the characteristic qualities of the earlier contest. These hints of origin are at best traditional. Yet it is clear, that Portugal has affected Brazil, Catalonia Cuba, the Basque provinces Venezuela, South Spain Argentina and Peru, and North Spain Chile, a fact which played its part in 1879-1881. Patient inquiry into the Spanish origin of Spanish-American population remains to be made, and Spain, it must be remembered, differs over its area more than other European countries.

The negro, in spite of a general impression to the contrary, is almost absent from the larger part of Spanish America. There are twice, perhaps thrice as many negroes in this country as in all Spanish America. They monopolize the field in Hayti and San Domingo, and are a third the total in Cuba. In Brazil negroes number over 2,000,000, more than in all the rest of Central and South America put together. Peru has 92,000 and Venezuela 50,000. In the latter the same arrest of population has fallen upon the negro as the white. The Indian population has disappeared in North America. He outnumbers the white in Spanish America; in most of its tropical lands five or six to one. In Argentina and Chile a great admixture of blood has come. The Araucanian is on the whole the best of South-American stock, and it has blended with the white to the great benefit of Chile. Argentina has a river Indian Guarani and Calihagui, and a plains Indian from whom comes the Guacho, both a poor stock for its metis, as is apparent in its history. Brazil's river population is of a type which had made no progress, and the same race stretches into Venezuela and Colombia, having probably come from the north or Carib race. In no one of these has the Indian produced substantive results in rule or industry. The docile industrial race, Quicha, which made Inca culture possible, has given Peru the labor with which its great railroad was built and its early rapid mining development secured. In a measure this is true of Ecuador, where the same race exists, less pure. The Maya, the keenest of Indian races since the conquest, has apparently had no part in post Colombian effects. The Aztec has given Juarez half the ancestors of Diaz, and colored and aided Mexican life. The bulk of what is loosely called Spanish-American is really Indian. The warlike Araucanians, the less developed plains Indian of Argentina, the backward river stocks of the Amazon and the Orinoco, of similar type, the industrious Quicha in Peru, with the Aztec, the only Indian except the Iroquois capable of predatory empire, as distinguished from the Inca's industrial slavery, have plainly colored all South American lands. Nor is it without its interest that as Europe has had its long-headed race on the northern plains and a round-headed Alpine race in its mountains, so in South America the plains Indian has been long-headed and the more industrious mechanic race of the Andes is round-headed.

In Chile half its population is in cities, 1,240,353 urban

against 1,471,792 rural; this but reflects the Araucanian capacity for the pueblo. In Argentina, a scattered aboriginal has brought a scattered metis population. In general the half-breed fills the city. In Guatemala, half the Landinos or white half-breeds are in cities. In general organization, Spanish America may be said to consist of a small directing white population in its city centres, an industrial half-breed race and a rural Indian population, with a background of tribes still savage. The independence of these countries began with the American-Spanish families revolting from the tyranny of royal governors, a tyranny which at length wore out Cuban loyalty. This early revolt and revolution for independence was succeeded by half-breed risings and strokes for power. Government to the end remains in Spanish hands, with here and there an exception as in Mexico.

Imperfect as this sketch is, it is presented because I know no place where an attempt has been made to correlate these facts or to collect a general statement of the effect of race in South America.