Anyone traveling southward from the United States is bound to be confused, as confused in fact as Latin Americans traveling northward. Yet acquaintance and a serious attempt to comprehend each other's situations usually produce a basis for common understandings. The confusion is due to the fact that vast differences in natural environment confront the traveler, while details in customs and institutions tend to divert him from his usual patterns of behavior. The mutual understandings arise from the fact that the two regions actually practice varieties of Western civilization that are divergent, to be sure, but with certain similarities. The United States citizen traveling through Mestizo America will see a variety of scenery which both in grandeur and in squalor outranges anything he can find in his own country. He will find (provided his travels are sufficiently extensive) jungles, semiarid wastes, high intermountain plateaus, volcanoes in profusion, spectacular mountain scenery, and deserts which he probably never dreamed were a part of America. He will come in contact with individuals of the highest "culture," educated in Europe and acquainted with the more esoteric refinements of European civilization; he will see Indians costumed in anything from loin cloths to quaint versions of seventeenth century lackey uniforms; and he will meet and rub elbows with a great majority of persons garbed in European dress and familiar with many of the patterns which he himself practices. Yet, despite the similarities in custom and dress, there is a difference.

It is a truism that Latin America is a "land of contrasts." The fact that it is so has been much exploited by the writers of travel folders and popular books. Perhaps less considered is the fact that this area is united in a certain pattern of custom, which we may call the general Latin American culture, and that through the patterns of this culture it is almost ready to assume a full, independent role in
world affairs. Much of the confusion of the visitor rests in the fact that he makes no attempt to understand this organization of life as a culture in its own right, and that he fails to see the mixed-bloods or mestizos who predominate in the area as members of a society ready to play its part on an equal and reciprocal basis with other societies in the modern world. We shall endeavor to show that the Latin American culture is, or is on the point of being, a vigorous expression of the aspirations and way of life of the mestizo race. Our area cannot be subsumed under facile rubrics, but the potential virility of its role, the great potentialities of its human and natural resources all have something in common. If the modern world chooses to ignore Mestizo America and its future, the passage of time will bring regret for such a decision. The mestizo countries are entering the modern world, and let no one ignore this fact.

Latin America is generally considered to comprise all of the politically independent territory of the Western Hemisphere outside of Canada and the United States, that was originally colonized either by Spaniards or Portuguese. It is a land of the past for some, for others a land of the future, and for most a land of mystery. Part of the mystery and difficulty of comprehension lies in the fact that the territory we call Latin America is homogeneous neither in natural nor in cultural characteristics. It is difficult to understand in simple and general terms. Of the twenty nations of Latin America, three are practically 100 percent white in racial type—Argentina, Costa Rica, and Uruguay. One is practically 100 percent Negroid—Haiti. In eighteen countries Spanish is the official language and in one, Haiti, French or a patois. But the largest country, Brazil, which has about half the land area of the whole and over one-third the population, is Portuguese in language and in tradition. Of a total population of 134,021,440,1 no less than 19,608,792, or 14.6 percent, are Negroes or mulattoes, and an additional 17,393,983, or 12.9 percent, are regarded as Indians. Perhaps at least 27 percent of the population, then, is either Negroid or Indian, and of the remaining 73 percent the overwhelming majority outside the one Negro and three white countries is undoubtedly mestizo, that is, a

1 Statistical material on this area is neither plentiful nor of high reliability. Figures given in this chapter are the latest and most reliable known to the author. Even when derived from official sources they are often admittedly estimates.
mixture of Indian and European elements in varying proportions.

We are concerned here with that portion of Latin America which has sometimes been called Mestizo America. It consists of the 13 mainland republics which are predominantly mestizo, either racially or culturally. They are Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, and Paraguay. All of them still have extant Indian minorities; all of them were originally colonized by Spain, and Spanish is the official language. The total area of Mestizo America comprises some $3,118,000$ square miles, slightly larger than the United States. The population, however, is less than half that of the United States, with about $63,000,000$ at latest reports (estimated). The average density is about $20.4$ per square mile. The area comprises about $40.4$ percent of the total reported for all of Latin America, and the population is roughly $47$ percent of the total.

Our concern is the role this group of countries plays, and may play, in the world of today and tomorrow. This is one of the areas of the modern world where change appears to be imminent. After centuries of relative isolation, both physical and cultural, the mestizo peoples of the New World seem now to be on the point of moving into the mainstream of world affairs. Our purpose here is to attempt to assess the possibilities which lie before them and the course which they may take. No attempt will be made to set forth an encyclopedic collection of all the “facts” about these people or their environment. Rather, the point of view will be that of cultural anthropology, with emphasis upon the mode of life, the patterns of custom, their adaptation to the natural environment and to the cultural conditions of the cosmopolitan world.

Here is a new race developing, the mestizo race. And here a new culture is coming into being, a mixed culture derived not only from the Spain of colonial times, but also from the aboriginal cultures of America, from modern North America and western Europe and other cultures of the contemporary world. Not only do the mode

---

2 This is an arbitrary choice dictated by the following considerations: all of the 13 republics form a continuous territorial block, broken only by Costa Rica, and all still contain important groups of Indians and significant aboriginal cultural influences. If these considerations were not applied, Cuba and the Dominican Republic would also rate as mestizo countries from a cultural standpoint. The Dominican Republic is predominantly mulatto in physical type.
MESTIZO AMERICA
of life and point of view appear to be emerging as a fusion of diverse elements from other cultures, but, in the process of synthesis, local adaptations and innovations have been added, so that the total configuration of the culture seems to be developing aspects of uniqueness. The result seems to be a new way of life practiced and manifested by physical types—the mestizos—which, from the point of view of physical anthropology were quite unknown prior to about A.D. 1500.

**The People**

The racial stocks of the 13 republics under review are white, Indian, Negro, and mestizo. The accepted distinction between Indians and whites in most parts of the area is one of cultural symbols rather than biologically inherited characteristics. The official figures for several countries make no distinction between mestizos and whites, and those that do so are shown by outside checks to be quite unreliable. The number of racially pure whites without any admixture of Indian or other “colored” factors is certainly very small throughout the area, and, except in a few restricted circles and families, the possession of pure white ancestry is not regarded as socially significant. For practical purposes, therefore, we may consider the racial composition as divided between Indians, mestizos, and Negroids. A glance at the accompanying table will indicate that about 69 percent of the population is classed as mestizo, 4.3 percent as Negroid, and 26.7 percent as Indian. Significant numbers of Negroids are found only on the Caribbean coasts, with proportionately smaller numbers on the Pacific coasts of Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru. In no country do they constitute an important numerical element of the population and, since they occupy low coastal areas not heavily populated by mestizos or Indians, their relations with other groups have not traditionally created a “racial” problem. Except in Venezuela and Panama no strong prejudice against intermarriage or interbreeding with Negroids exists, and it appears that the Negroid element will eventually be absorbed into the mestizo population.

The Indians, on the other hand, form a much more significant element of the population in several of the countries. We may be sure
Racial Distributions in Mestizo America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Negroid Percent</th>
<th>Indian Percent</th>
<th>Mestizo-White Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,807,820</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>261,870</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>1,926,960</td>
<td>952,320</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>155,275</td>
<td>1,273,255</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,567,885</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>25,394</td>
<td>103,887</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6,134,457</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>69,000</td>
<td>55,844</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>119,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>72,716</td>
<td>3,334,936</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>372,936</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>355,617</td>
<td>395,138</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,753,962</td>
<td>16,262,148</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages are given in round numbers, and when the incidence of a racial group is less than 1 percent it is tabulated as 0.


That the percentages reported are in few cases exaggerated as it has been the policy of many Latin American governments to “play down” the Indian element in official reports and estimates. However, in two countries, Bolivia and Guatemala, the Indians are admitted to be in the majority, and in three other countries, Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico, they are counted as a sizable element, ranging from 29 percent of the population in Mexico to 46 percent in Peru. These five republics are ordinarily regarded as the “Indian countries” of Mestizo America and they occupy the two areas where the highest cultural development and largest populations existed previous to the Spanish conquest. In the other areas, mestizoization has proceeded further. Yet the racial complexion varies from one area to another. Thus Paraguay is rated as practically 100 percent mestizo, but it is generally conceded that the white element in the prevailing intermixture is comparatively small. In Chile, on the other hand,
other hand, the proportion of "white" genes in the mestizo popula-
tion is probably much higher, while the average mestizo of Colom-
bia would probably stand midway between these two extremes.

In the so-called "Indian countries" something resembling what
sociologists call a "race problem" exists, although it is distinct in
many respects from the "race problem" of the United States. Where
the Indian element is numerically important it is socially distin-
guished from the mestizo element, assigned to a lower social status,
denied full participation in social and political activities, and in
other ways accorded the short end of an unequal distribution of
privileges as defined by the dominant culture. Since many of the
mestizos are, however, scarcely distinguishable from Indians in
point of inherited physical traits, how is this social differentiation
maintained? It is in the definition of the relations between the two
groups that the "race" situation in Mestizo America differs from
that in North America.

Although the two groups are often spoken of as races (razas) by
the mestizos, the basic cultural definition does not attach much sig-
nificance to physical features of racial differentiation. Throughout
the area, Indians are distinguished from "whites" or mestizos by
cultural symbols. The most generally recognized of such symbols
for Indians are: living in and identification with a tribally or com-
munally organized native group; habitually going barefoot or wear-
ing sandals; speaking a native language only or in addition to Spanish;
and wearing a "native" costume. (Many of the "native" costumes
of the present day are modifications of Spanish colonial Eu-
ropean patterns, but are distinctive from the modern patterns af-
ected by the mestizos.) Cultural difference is also recognized ver-
bally by referring to the Indians as gentiles (heathen) if they have
not been converted, as salvajes (savages), as indigenes or aborigenes,
as gente inilustrado (unenlightened people), and so on. Since an
Indian's status is defined in cultural and social terms rather than
in terms of physical feature, it follows that in theory at least an
Indian, by discarding his status symbols and acquiring those of

Chile than in most other countries of Mestizo America and that the mestizos them-
selves tend toward the "white" end of the continuum of mixtures. However, it is
believed that the majority of the population contains some mixture of genes. For
this and cultural reasons Chile has been included in Mestizo America in the present
treatment.
mestizo status, may change his position in society. This is often difficult to accomplish in one generation, but children of Indian parents do not experience too much difficulty in making the switch, particularly if allowed the opportunity to acquire a Spanish-language education. Furthermore, interbreeding between mestizos and Indians is fairly common even though formal intermarriage is less frequently practiced; the offspring are often reared as mestizos. Thus there appears to be a continual drainage from the Indian into the mestizo division and all indications are that, barring a change in present attitudes, the Indians will eventually disappear everywhere as a recognized element, just as in several countries they have already been effectively merged into the general mestizo population.

As an illustration of the “race” attitudes of the current culture, there are in the highland region of Peru a few groups of relatively pure Spanish people who, during the troubles preceding Independence, took the revolutionary side, and were forced to flee into the mountains. For a generation or more they were denied schools and contact with Europeanized colonial centers and were forced to take over the costume and many of the customs of their Indian neighbors, although they did not interbreed with them. At present they wear Indian costume and speak Quechua and, although they are much “whiter” in physical appearance than the cholos (mestizos) of the highlands, the latter call them “white Indians” and accord them much the same social treatment as that meted out to other Indians.

In many parts of Mestizo America, Indians and mestizos are not physically segregated in the rigid manner prevalent among the Negroes and whites in the United States. The recognized Indians in many towns live as neighbors of their mestizo fellows and are not restricted in residence. Tabus on eating in the same restaurants, trading at the same shops and markets, or riding in the same public conveyances side by side are in many cases nonexistent. Jim Crow is not a mestizo pattern. Almost everywhere, however, Indians practice cultural patterns distinctive from those of the mestizos. In fact, the Indians usually follow a culture of their own with a different system of values and integration. Such cultures existing parallel with that of the mestizos have been called “Republican Native” or “Recent Indian” cultures. Although they have absorbed
some European elements, such as iron tools, the outer forms of Roman Catholicism, factory-made cloth, and the like, their content and orientation are predominantly indigenous. Thus in contrast to the United States, where Negroes and orientals are physical segregated but practice essentially the same culture as the whites, in Metizo America the physical segregation of Indians and mestizos is much less marked, but what might be called cultural segregation is important. This has three effects worth mentioning:

First, since the Indians pursue goals many of which are distinct from those of mestizo culture, competition between the two groups is somewhat mitigated, and frustration in the Indian group has less basis for development than among the “inferior” groups in North America. Second, because of the frequent interaction and contacts between Indians and mestizos and because of the fair frequency of “passing” into the upper status, the mestizo culture absorbs a good many Indian elements, at least in modified form. The mestizo culture is, therefore, far from being a pure European mode of life and thought.

In the third place, the fact that Indians follow their own cultural patterns means, of course, that they do not participate in many aspects of national life. From the economic point of view, for example, they are regarded in most regions as “dead” because their consumption of the products of modern commerce and industry is relatively insignificant; under the colonial economic system their function was the bearing of burdens and the performance of manual labor on the farms and in the mines, and their rewards as a matter of policy were kept barely above the subsistence level. In a modern economy this of course runs counter to the need for an internal market. So long as this situation persists, anyone contemplating the future economic development of our area must bear in mind that, for the present, except for a few types of articles, the consumption potential of a given region or nation is effectively reduced by the proportion of Indians, however high the over-all population figures may be. In most countries the Indians are not sufficiently educated to be literate and they do not participate in political affairs. In short, one may say that in many social and cultural ways the Indians are no more a part of the national society in which they live than are the flocks of sheep or herds of llamas.
Mexico was the first country of the area to launch an effective program of education and welfare work whereby the Indians may be brought into the circle of the national society and culture without destroying their local cultural values and social organization. Peru has recently started a similar program, and Guatemala has announced one. A common aspect of all these programs is the sending of especially trained teachers, prepared in anthropology and linguistics, who instruct the children during the first two or three years through the use of the native language; once the basic concepts and skills of literacy are established the change-over is made to Spanish in order to fit the children to participate with other citizens of the nation.

Although the "Indian problem" cannot be ignored by students of the area, the effective population, so far as participation in the modern world is concerned, is everywhere predominantly mestizo. Through education and interbreeding it is quite possible that the Indians will disappear as a distinct category in a century or so. From the genetic point of view the mestizo population is still in the process of consolidation, showing a wide variety of physical types, associated with the varying amounts of Indian and European elements in the mixtures and depending upon the different physical types of the ancestral elements. Few studies have been made of this mixed population, but no evidence has been adduced to indicate functional inferiority of any kind. Of much more importance than the details of genetic make-up and mixture seems to be the question of cultural development in the region.

The Culture

If we are to understand the actions of Mestizo Americans in the modern world after the event, and also to come closer to reliable predictions of their course in given situations before the event, we must know something of their culture. We use "culture" in the scientific sense, of course, with a small "c," to denote the over-all content and organization of the patterns of customary life, thought, and tradition.

There are three general types or "levels" of practiced culture in Mestizo American territory at the present time, only one of which
has important relations with the cultures of the rest of the world. First, there are still a few isolated “primitive” tribes whose mode of life has been somewhat influenced by Europeans but who for practical purposes follow a design for living totally outside the Euro-American orbit of culture. As examples we may mention the Jivaro of eastern Ecuador, the Campa of eastern Peru, some isolated groups in the eastern jungles of Panama and certain nomadic Indian tribes in northwestern Mexico. Such groups are at present mainly ethnological curiosities, important from the standpoint of historical and general anthropology, but of no significance in understanding modern Latin American life, except for the historical influence they may have had upon a few of its local phases.

The second general type of life has been designated by the term Republican Native or Recent Indian cultures. These modes of life are acculturated or modified versions of aboriginal cultures which have developed during the last 125 years of independence from Spain. They are the patterns which are followed by the bulk of the persons classified as Indians in the preceding section. Several million Indians practice a Republican Native culture of one kind or other in the Andean countries and in Mexico-Guatemala. Such cultures are in closer contact with world civilization than are the “primitives,” but, as we have already observed, the systems of attitudes and values do not operate in the same universe of discourse, one might say, as those involved in modern civilization, and the social participation of the practitioners of the Native-type cultures is somewhat restricted. Furthermore, the evidence seems to indicate that the Indian groups of this sort are being steadily drained away into the mestizo population. Therefore, although the Republican Native or Recent Indian cultures, despite the fact that they have extensively influenced the modern forms of life of their areas, are likely, with the passage of time, to pass out of existence as distinct organizations of life and artifact.

The dominant culture of Mestizo America and the one which outsiders must understand if they are to have successful dealings with this part of the world is a variety of Western civilization which we may call the Modern Latin American culture. Sometimes it is described as Mestizo Culture; in Peru it often is called criollismo.
(creole culture); in Middle America, it appears under the name of "ladino culture"; and so on.

Unfortunately this configuration of custom and attitude has not yet been comprehensively studied from the technical point of view. Our information must come from a few intensive community studies plus observations of a more impressionistic nature. Therefore the following brief remarks are to be considered as suggestive rather than definitive.

The difficulty which many North Americans and Europeans have in understanding Latin Americans seems to lie in the fact that the Latin American culture of the mestizos exhibits many patterns of life which on first acquaintance appear to be almost exactly like those with which the outsider is already familiar; for example, literacy and printed matter; Roman Catholicism as the dominant religion; monogamic family of apparently conventional European type; money economy; republican form of government; European styles of costume for both sexes; clock measured time reckoning; European types of tools, house furnishings, and many other artifacts; the use of various European foods, beverages, meats, domestic animals, and crops. These and several other features are all but universal in the Latin American culture and in outward form, at least, they often do not look to be greatly different from analogous traits and institutions of North America and western Europe. The fact that so large a part of the content of the Latin American way of life partakes of the general range of Western civilization justifies us in considering it a variety of this great cosmopolitan pattern of living. It also provides the lines along which Mestizo America may play a role in world affairs and interact on a more or less equal basis with other parts of the world within the orbit of Western Civilization. What, then is "different" or "distinctive" in the Latin American culture which should be understood by those who wish to avoid errors in dealing with its followers?

Despite many similarities, the Latin American culture differs from that of North America, let us say, first in the emphases which are given to the traditional forms, and second, with respect to content. In many situations Mestizo Americans have a view of the world somewhat different from our own. Also their institutions con-
tain many patterns of custom and artifact which are almost unknown in the United States and western Europe. This can seemingly be understood if we take into account that the development of the Latin American culture was fed from two types of sources which never figured in the building of United States culture and which had little or nothing directly to do with the formation of modern civilization in England. On the one hand, two large and vigorous native civilizations—the Aztec-Maya in the Mexican-Guatemalan area and the Inca in the Andean region—flourished at the time of the conquest. Although the Spanish conquerors succeeded in wrecking these cultures as going concerns (their remnants are to be seen in various local forms of the Republican Native culture at present), their influence on the mode of life of the conquerors and colonists was more pervading than was the influence of the somewhat less well-developed Indian cultures on the European settlers of the United States and Canada. Also the native contributions to culture in Mestizo America were quite different in detail from those of the tribes of North America, for the natives of North America and of Mestizo America were not in regular contact with each other and shared little of their cultures at the time of the Discovery. Thus it is that Mestizo America has everywhere taken over a considerable number of elements from the cultures of the natives, features quite unfamiliar to North Americans other than anthropologists. These indigenous contributions, of course, vary from one region to another. Guaraní is the second official language of Paraguay and has contributed heavily to the colloquial Spanish of that country; likewise the Spanish of the Andean area is sprinkled with Quechua words and figures of speech, while both Aztec and Maya words in considerable numbers have been taken into the everyday Spanish of Mexico and Guatemala, and, by diffusion, most of Central America. Native foods and drinks and methods of preparation are almost everywhere a part of the standard cuisine of the common people; one needs only to think of the ubiquitous tortilla, tamale, and bean paste of Middle America and the almost universal chicha (maize beer) and potato flour or paste (chuño, made from frozen potatoes) of the Andean region.

Another source of difference between Mestizo modes of life and our own is that much of the European content of Latin American
culture came from Spain. It is a question as to whether or not Spain even today fully participates in the cultural orbit of western Europe. Certainly it did not do so during most of the colonial period. Many of the great movements which transformed the cultures of such peoples as the English, the French, the Germans, and the Scandinavians into "modern" civilization passed by Spain or were excluded as a matter of official policy. The Reformation, the Enlightenment, the emergence of political democracy, the mercantile movement, the Industrial and mechanical revolutions, the rise of modern science and technology, laissez-faire capitalism—none of these ever obtained a firm foothold in Spain. Furthermore, certain innovations and modernisms which did appear in Spain were forbidden export to the colonies as a matter of political or ecclesiastical policy. Thus for a period of some three hundred years the lands of Mestizo America received a narrow and restricted flow of cultural elements from Europe—and from a rather quaint and anachronistic variety of European culture, at that—feudalistic, monarchical, mystical, non-technological materialistically, medievally scholastic in intellectual pattern, monopolistic and restrictive in economic institutions, and conservative of the medieval forms in all patterns pertaining to the sexes, the family, political forms, and economic activity. Much of the "quaintness" which an outsider of Western Culture sees in Mestizo America today is explained by the persistence of some of these elements and institutions in pure or modified form.

Finally, during the 125 years since they won independence from Spain the lands of our area have been increasingly infiltrated by cultural elements, artifacts, attitudes, and influences from Western Europe and North America. This process has been accelerated for the west coast of South America since the opening of the Panama Canal and everywhere by recent technical improvements in transportation and communication, which have brought the people into more frequent and intensive contact with the non-Spanish world.

From these three sources, then—aboriginal, colonial Spanish, and modern Western Civilization—the cultures of Mestizo America (and most of the rest of Latin America, as well) have been blended and molded. And in the process, as always happens, something new has emerged. The result seems to be a new variety of Western Cul-
ture, unique in some respects. As is true to a lesser degree in the culture of the United States, this Latin American culture exhibits regional and local varieties, differing among themselves mainly because of exigencies of environmental adaptation and because of aboriginal historical colorations. It also shows subvarieties associated with the type of social situation in which it is practiced (rural, small community, or urban) and other subvarieties connected with the social category (upper or lower class) in which it is performed. The range of environmental conditions is very great and an almost equally wide range of cultural adjustments is to be found. To the casual visitor or the tourist, it is often difficult to see much similarity between the culture of, say, a mestizo settlement in the jungle and a mestizo town at an altitude of 12,000 feet on the cold intermountain plateau. But residence in the various types of mestizo communities will convince one that a strong common fabric of belief, attitude, and pattern of activity runs through all of them.

We may now attempt to mention briefly certain salient aspects of institutions and customs which one might expect to encounter throughout the mestizo area. Obviously these modes of life deserve a more thorough treatment and a more complete analysis. Perhaps some of the following statements will provoke qualified students to intensify their studies of the pattern of life in this area.

At the start we may say, perhaps, that ideologically the culture is humanistic, rather than puritanical, if such a contrast is permissible. Intellectually it is characterized by logic and dialectics rather than by empiricism and pragmatics. Great value is assigned to the manipulation of words and other symbols, emphasis is laid on form, the symbol is often more appreciated than the thing. Outsiders reared in the empirical and pragmatic phases of Western Civilization are inclined to see these traits as “impracticality,” “touchiness,” “fine talk that means nothing,” and so on. At any rate, the manipulation of symbols (as in argument) is more cultivated than the manipulation of natural forces and objects (as in mechanics). Patterns of mysticism and fantasy are strong among the mestizos, and these patterns show no consistency with those of argumentation, for the worth of the logic or the concepts lies in the manipulation of symbols, not in the empirical investigation of premises. It is partly for this reason, I believe, that ideas from abroad find more ready
acceptance on the whole than artifacts and their associated techniques.

Family organization is everywhere, regardless of class, more important socially than in modern North America. Monogamic, indissoluble marriage is the pattern and the fact (because of Catholic influence). But the extended family is more common and of greater functional importance than in the United States. Not only are immediate families larger, due to the theoretical prohibition of birth control (because of Church influence) but the inclusion of several generations and of collateral immediate families through the patriarchal principle is general. These enlarged or extended families often consist of an old man, his sons and their immediate families, their sons and children, and so on, always with the males acting as the heads or agents of the group. They function as units in political, business and social affairs. For this reason it is commonly held that a man without a family of this sort is almost helpless in Mestizo America. Although there are a few exceptions, the self-made man is a much greater rarity in this social system than among ourselves. If one will look into the background of almost any distinguished or prominent personage in Mestizo America, he will find a group of brothers, cousins, or uncles who form a sort of corporation to promote the success of their outstanding representative and, through that, their own advantages. It should not be supposed that only the wealthy and distinguished follow this pattern, for it is quite as important in the lower classes. An orphan is traditionally one of the most pitiable objects in Mestizo America, and parents usually try to make arrangements that their children will, if occasion arise, be adopted by friends or relatives.

Another feature of importance in Mestizo America, which was never so highly developed in the United States and has now almost disappeared there, is the institution of ceremonial kinship. This is managed through the mechanism of godparenthood or ceremonial sponsorship, as it is sometimes called. Everyone in mestizo circles has, in addition to his blood kinsmen, a group of ceremonial kinsmen to which he is bound by patterns of right and obligation; in most parts of the area these are taken very seriously. Compadres (males) and comadres (females) are persons of roughly the same generation who are bound to each other in a system of this sort,
and their relations are of considerably more functional importance than those between godparents and godchildren. The compadre-comadre tie is a form of ceremonial friendship, in some cases stronger than that of blood. The basic idea of godparenthood was, of course, introduced along with Roman Catholicism, but many of the native cultures had somewhat similar institutions; this may account for the fact that the institution of ceremonial kinship in many parts of Mestizo America has proliferated and ramified to a greater extent than was ever true of Europe.

Marriage under such conditions is typically defined somewhat differently than in the United States. Romantic love is, of course, in the mestizo pattern, but marriage itself is an important matter, not only for the two partners but also for the extended families involved. Thus all of the blood relatives, and especially the head of the house (that is, of the extended family), take an active interest, and approaches to marriage typically involve formal negotiations between the two families. By careful attention to its marriage alliances an extended family may greatly increase its resources and security as well as those of its individual members.

Thus anyone who wishes to do business on more than a superficial basis with a typical mestizo must know something of his kinship affiliations. What family does he belong to? What are his and its marriage connections? Who are his ceremonial kinsmen? The ceremonial kinsmen do not function as organized groups in the society in the same way that the extended families often do, but the network of an individual's ceremonial friends is sometimes very wide indeed.

Generally speaking, women have less individual freedom than men in social relations. The pattern is that of official male dominance, and the place of married or marriageable women has traditionally been confined to the home and the circle of kinswomen and friends of the family. Friendly contact with men before marriage is supposed to take place only under strict chaperonage; after marriage it is supposed to be confined mainly to the husband, male relatives, and members of the clergy. In the larger centers of late years it has become respectable in some circles for girls to work before marriage, to get a useful education, and to go on "dates" and parties with young men without strict supervision, but in the prov-
inces and in conservative families the old pattern still prevails. Lower class women have always enjoyed more personal freedom and more opportunity for contacts outside the home, especially in work. Partly because it has been a class mark for upper-class women not to work outside the home (and seldom in it), conservatives resist the new tendency for young women to take jobs in offices and to enter the professions.

Possibly because of the practical impossibility of divorce and the social importance of marriage as a means of uniting extended families, the double sex standard enjoys in Mestizo America a semi-approved status not accorded it in the United States. Sex in general is not surrounded by a puritanical aura. Except in very polite society it is often discussed more freely in mixed company than among ourselves. A man, even of high social position, does not lose his standing by visiting a brothel or keeping a mistress, provided he does not neglect his obligations to his family. Here the question of form is important: a man never introduces a prostitute or a mistress to his female relatives (wife included), although they may be well aware of his relationship to her. On the lower social levels many men and women live together on a permanent basis without benefit of clergy; all countries permit legal recognition of the offspring of such unions and most countries make statutory provision for inheritance by common-law spouses, although the effective binding force in such alliances is custom. Such common-law unions usually involve the customary arrangements between the respective extended families.

Consistent with the structure and function of these familial institutions, it is not customary to introduce outsiders into the family circle as guests until they are very well known and highly trusted. The pattern of the man bringing a male friend or acquaintance home to dinner in the bosom of the family, so much practiced in the United States, is almost unknown in Mestizo America. Likewise, married couples not united by kinship bonds of some sort do not entertain each other much in the homes. Married women meet each other in female groups; whereas men carry on their social relations in special institutions, such as bars, clubs, and the like. Social intercourse between men does not imply that their wives are brought into the picture at all.
We shall now proceed to consider other features of the culture, first pausing to discuss certain aspects of the natural environment.

**Natural Resources**

From the beginning of the Spanish colonization the area which we call Mestizo America was regarded as a source of quick riches either for the mother country or for a small group in local control with affiliations abroad. The earthly welfare of the native or mixed population as a whole was seldom considered, although some attention was paid to “spiritual” well-being. In short, this part of the New World was regarded as a source of wealth to be enjoyed by the few given the privilege of exploiting the area. The approach was that of a true “colonial” economy whose principal reason for existence was to enrich a controlling group abroad and a small upper class locally. The development of a balanced economy and a higher standard of living among the bulk of the population were not considered to be functions of the system. Unfortunately, a large part of the area has continued essentially in the condition of a colonial economy to this day, although time and political changes have wrought some alteration in details. Enlightened local leaders are, however, almost everywhere aware of the need of change in the prevailing system, and change of one sort or another seems to be ultimately inevitable. Before examining these problems we must first sketch briefly the outstanding features of the natural environment.

There has been a recent tendency, even in responsible circles, to look upon Mestizo America as a fabulous land of opportunity, a last frontier where great riches await only the energy and organizing ability of the pioneer. It is true that the opportunities for creating wealth are considerable in many parts of the area, but it is a mistake to consider the present or future economic opportunities of these lands as essentially similar to those of the United States when settlement of our own country began. A soberer view takes into account that most of Mestizo America was occupied and exploited by natives for many hundreds of years before the arrival of the Spaniards in the first part of the sixteenth century, and that persons of European extraction have now controlled the exploitation of its
resources for more than four centuries. It is a far older land in terms of large-scale application of human energies to natural resources than is most of the United States.

In a general way we must consider, first, the resources and opportunities offered by nature, and second, the patterns of human activity which have been applied to them. Because our eyes are fixed upon the future as well as the present and past, we shall also venture to assess the interplay of these two factors as a basis for discussing possible or probable changes.

Taken as a whole, neither the landscape nor the climates of this area have much in common with those familiar to the majority of residents of the United States. Northern Mexico is, of course, in large part an extension of the semiarid American Southwest. The central and northern portions of the Central Valley of Chile have a “Mediterranean” climate somewhat like that of central California, and south central Chile has something in common with parts of the woodland area of Eastern United States. Otherwise, because of differences in latitude, altitude, mountain masses, and ocean currents there is little of landscape and climate in Mestizo America closely similar to the United States. Geographers recognize no less than 16 different types of climate in the area and practically every national unit in Mestizo America is a mosaic of natural regions, often differing markedly among themselves.

The land surface of a good portion of the area, one might say, is draped across the backbone of the continent. This is true of all the countries except Paraguay, which has no significant mountains. Technically the figure does not apply to Chile, whose eastern boundary does not cross the continental divide. However, everywhere except in Paraguay great, and often abrupt, differences in altitude exist within each national territory, so that most countries have a series of “vertical” climatic zones. With the exception of Bolivia and Paraguay all have seacoasts. Except for Chile all have comparatively large areas of tropical jungle. Paraguay is the only one which has no intermountain plateaus or highlands.

Mountains are almost everywhere a part of the landscape, except in Paraguay, although they are low in Panama. On the whole they are young mountains, little eroded, which rise relatively rapidly from the low country to altitudes which are unknown in the United
States. In Mexico, Central America, and the west coast of South America there are many active volcanoes, and almost everywhere earthquakes are frequent. In general, then, the terrain tends to be rugged, which renders travel and communication difficult. But one cannot travel far in most parts of the area without passing from one type of natural region to another. Hence the advice to foreign visitors: prepare yourselves for what you least expect.

The variety and diversity of natural conditions in Mestizo America have been reflected in a number of ways in the organization of human life. First, the number of local cultural adaptations has been, and to some extent probably always will of necessity be, larger than in the United States. Second, local peculiarities of custom and point of view have tended to persist because of the difficulties of travel and communication. Third, regional economic specialties and interests are often accentuated. Fourth, political unity has been difficult to attain and to maintain, a fact which has made it easy for individuals or small cliques to stage revolutions and to seize power. The traditional rivalries between the sierra and the coast in both Ecuador and Peru, between Bogotá and Antioquia in Colombia, between Yucatán and Mexico City are cases in point.

When one searches this land for resources useful to man, the picture is again complex. Mestizo America is predominantly agricultural, but it is hardly one of the most naturally favored agricultural areas of the world. It is doubtful that more than about 10 percent of the surface could be usefully cultivated by any known methods. Large areas are nonarable for lack of water, for example, most of northern Mexico and the west coast of South America from latitudes 1° to 25° South. Some of this now unused land may be brought under cultivation by irrigation, but if this is done on an appreciable scale a revision of economic motivations and politico-economic organization will be required. Considerable portions of the North Peruvian coast, now barren, were irrigated in antiquity by the Incas and their predecessors. Other significant portions of the area are covered with tropical forest, a type of land which up to now has proven to be productive, even under plantation management, only by a shifting type of cultivation requiring a high percentage of reserve acreage. Other large areas are mountainsides and hillsides, either without soil or considered too steep to cultivate, and high in-
termountain basins too cold to grow anything but coarse pasture. There are no broad stretches of open prairies or other level or rolling farmland, such as occur in Argentina, the United States, and Canada. The result is that the farming areas are “patchy.” Farming is mainly done in river valleys, suitable intermountain basins and irrigated oases. Under modern culture it has been uneconomical to build or maintain terraced mountainside fields of the kind whereby the Incas enlarged their cultivated acres in Peru. Finally, the land which is arable does not, of course, offer uniformly good soil. Within Mestizo America the volcanic soils are generally the most productive and permanent. Where these do not exist, however, leaching, erosion, lack of fertilizer, and natural infertility cut down the yields.

In spite of the fact that the area cannot be regarded as one of the most naturally favored agricultural regions of the world, experts generally agree that the available land is quite capable of providing a respectable standard of subsistence needs for the present population and even for a considerably larger one, if the economic organization and management of agriculture were properly adjusted to the requirements of the population as a whole. As we shall see later, the land hunger of which we hear so much in Latin America does not seem to be a matter of actual physical lack of adequate soil resources, but rather a condition resulting from defects in the traditional system of land tenure, labor, and management.

Forest products constitute a potential natural resource which is by no means negligible in most countries. The forests of Chile offer some lumber of “temperate zone” types. The tropical jungles of other countries, although not to date amenable to clearing for cultivation on a large or permanent scale, offer natural products useful to man. Stimulus to the exploitation of these items was given by the shortages of World War II. Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia offer cinchona bark (for quinine) from their Amazonian territories. Almost all tropical forests of the area produce rubber, both of the Hevea and Castilla varieties, mahogany and other woods, and rotenone-producing plants used in insecticides. Chicle (for chewing gum) is produced in large quantities in Yucatán and the Petén. Paraguay produces quebracho (used for tanning). Tagua nuts, ipecac, Brazil nuts, wild animal skins, and various medicinal plants are also collected in parts of the tropical forest areas. Experiments are now un-
der way in some countries looking toward colonization of the tropical forest regions on a basis of subsistence culture combined with the gathering of forest products. One such experiment is at Tingo Maria, Peru.

All of the countries of this group have coast lines, except Bolivia and Paraguay. According to investigations made during the war the fish supply along most of the coasts is abundant, but on the whole the fishing industry has not been highly developed to date, either for local consumption or for export.

Natural sources of power are not as evenly or conveniently distributed throughout the area as could be desired. The most ubiquitous potential source is water power. It is estimated that about one-eighth of all potential water power on the globe exists within this area. At present only a fraction of one percent is being utilized. Petroleum sufficient to supply all fuel needs for some time to come is already under exploitation in Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, and apparently large untapped reserves of oil lie in the rock structures all along the eastern foot of the Andes. The adequate exploitation of petroleum deposits is, however, a costly business requiring financing either by government or by private capital. Up to the present all countries of the area, with the exception of Mexico and Bolivia, have been content to turn the exploitation of oil resources over to private concerns financed and controlled from abroad. The major part of the petroleum itself has disappeared into foreign markets and the profits into foreign pockets, mostly in the United States and Britain. Coal, the great power resource of the Industrial Revolution, is, generally speaking, of poor quality and inconveniently placed. Before 1940, Latin America as a whole accounted for only one five-hundredth of world coal production. The only countries in the area known to have significant deposits of coal are Chile, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, and Mexico. It is said that only Mexico and Peru have coking coal, although new discoveries in Colombia may prove to be another source. The largest coal deposits in South America exist in Colombia, with estimated reserves of 18 billion tons. Because of difficulties of transportation and lack of market these have been little exploited. At present the coal production of Mestizo America is insufficient for local needs, and almost all countries import this fuel. Partly because of the scarcity of read-
ily available sources of fuel, most of the mountain and upland forests of Mestizo America have been stripped to provide wood and charcoal, with resulting exposure of the soils to erosion. No deposits of uranium have been reported in the area. In summary, despite the lack of plentiful and convenient supplies of coal, sources of energy in petroleum and hydroelectric power appear to be ample for the development of large-scale industrialization, if intelligently used.

The natural resources which have figured most prominently on the world market are minerals. The young mountains of the area are relatively rich in precious metals and those used in modern industry. Among the outstanding mineral resources mined at present are: copper (Chile, Mexico, Peru, Bolivia), tin (about one-fourth of the world's production comes from Bolivia), vanadium (one of the two richest deposits of the world is in Peru, and a smaller deposit in Mexico), lead, silver (Mexico is a large producer), gold, platinum (Colombia is the second largest producer after Russia), sulfur (in all volcanic regions), borax (Chile, Peru), bismuth (one-fifth of the world's supply is produced in Peru), sodium nitrate (Northern Chile), bird manure or guano for fertilizer (coastal islands of Peru), emeralds (Colombia is the primary world source), iron (Chile, Peru, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia), tungsten (Bolivia, Peru), antimony (Andean area), and other minerals of lesser importance. Coal and petroleum have already been mentioned.

During the war, as part of its quest for strategic materials, the United States government stimulated prospecting and development throughout most of the area, with the result that new deposits were in some cases discovered and certain minerals not previously exploited may be commercially mined in the future.

Two points must be considered in connection with the mineral riches of Mestizo America. First, as everyone knows, these sources are irreplaceable, so that excessive or wasteful exploitation may bring to a premature end any economy dependent upon them. Second, unless matters are so organized that a considerable share of the products or proceeds of mining are distributed among the local population, mining activity has no significantly beneficial effect upon the area where it takes place.

In summary it appears that ample mineral resources exist physi-
cally in our area both for a thriving local industrial development and for export, if efficiently managed.

**Land and Agricultural Problems**

First of all must be considered the question of the management of the land. The great majority of persons in Mestizo America depend for their livelihood upon working the soil. In general two types of agriculture prevail with two somewhat opposing objectives: cultivation for subsistence and cultivation for export. There is, of course, no theoretical reason why these two types of agricultural activity could not be carried on simultaneously, provided they were in balance. It is a curious fact, however, that in many parts of the area, predominantly agricultural, foodstuffs are imported and the nutritional level is below minimum standards. One of the principal programs carried on by the United States in cooperation with local governments during the war was the stimulation of local food production. The immediate purpose was to ease burdens on shipping needed for the war effort, but it is hoped that the program will have some permanent effects.

Subsistence agriculture in most regions centers about the aboriginal Indian crops of corn and beans. In higher altitudes such native crops as potatoes, olluca, and oca also figure prominently, while in the lowland tropics native manioc is the staple. Among grains introduced since the conquest, wheat is widely used for bread in some regions, although most of the barley is reported to be converted into beer. Rice is a staple article of diet in many parts of the area, but in “normal” times considerable quantities have to be imported from the Far East.

Although the Indians had developed a wide variety of maizes, as well as other domestic food plants, yields per acre in Mestizo America are reported to be low in comparison with the United States. This seems to be mainly due to the antiquated methods of cultivation and management. A sentimental attachment to the land is a fundamental cultural pattern among the majority of agricultural workers in Mexico, Central America, and the Andean area. In many places a man is lacking in social prestige among his fellows unless he has at least a small plot which he cultivates. Even workers in the
mines and on the plantations strive to retain small farms, owned or rented by them, which they can cultivate in their own interest. Since the best land has usually been preempted by haciendas, these small cultivators are often relegated to hillside or infertile sites.

Most of the raising of subsistence crops is carried on by methods originated by the Indians, somewhat “improved” by Spanish modifications of the time of the conquest, mainly in the form of iron tools. Although the ox and wooden plow were introduced by the Spanish, they are not universally used, even to the present day, in the production of locally consumed subsistence crops. Even on large haciendas devoted to food production, most of the cultivation is performed by tenant farmers or peones using hand methods, and tools like hoes, foot plows, spades, and digging sticks. Modern farm machinery has been confined mostly to export farming. Recently, certain governments (for example, those of Mexico and Peru), have assisted cooperative groups of small farmers to purchase machinery. The comparative scarcity of animals in hand agriculture eliminates the use of barnyard manure, which in turn reduces the productive efficiency of the soil. The standard method of restoring fertility is to allow the land to lie fallow for several years. It has been estimated that from one-half to one-third of the subsistence land is thus out of production continuously. Commercial fertilizers are used to any extent only on haciendas producing for export. Partly because the small farmer has few animals, rotation with nitrogen-restoring crops like clover and alfalfa, has not been widely practiced. Finally, to mention no further factor, the tendency to force much food farming onto less desirable hillsides, together with the neglect of erosion control, results in low average yields and damage to the soil.

The second type of agriculture, and the one which figures in world trade, is export farming, carried on mainly in large haciendas or plantations, each one devoted primarily to a single crop. In terms of dollar value of exports, the most important products are “dessert crops”: coffee, sugar, bananas, cacao. Other important export crops are cotton, sisal, and sheeps' wool. Although production on haciendas is technically more efficient than individual farming, the plantation system has several disadvantages from the point of view of local economy. The tendency to concentrate on a single
crop, as has been mentioned, tends to slight the development of a well-rounded subsistence agriculture. Furthermore, it makes the prosperity of the region dependent upon foreign demand and price, which show fluctuations of an often unpredictable character. Witness the gyrations of the coffee market during the 1930s and their unsettling effects upon Brazil, Colombia, and Guatemala. Furthermore the economy of a region dependent upon a single crop is at the mercy of disease, blight, and exhaustion of the soil. Because of the encroachment of banana diseases many once thriving plantation districts of the Caribbean coasts of Central America have had to be abandoned, leaving the former field workers stranded. A blight which attacked the cacao plants during the 1920s and 1930s seriously upset the economy of Ecuador.

The system of land tenure and the organization of the agricultural working force are, of course, inextricably bound up with the exploitation of the soil. The fundamental feature of the Latin American system which has stood in the way of adjustment between the population and its soil resources is the institution of latifundio, or land monopolization in the hands of a few individuals, families or corporations. The result has been land hunger in the bulk of the population and many of the symptoms of population pressure in a region where the land physically available for the needs of the people is more than sufficient. Land monopolization has removed large areas from general cultivation to the production of export crops, which may prove profitable to the monopolists but contribute little to the economic well-being of the area. Other large areas have been removed from cultivation for the pasturage of grazing animals, which under a more efficient over-all system would be pastured on hill and slope sites. Latifundio also stimulates the buying up of land and withholding it from any economic use in the hope of profiting from a speculative rise in price. Finally, the concentration of ownership of large areas in monopoly enables the owners or managers to dictate the rewards which agricultural laborers may obtain from their work. In most cases these rewards have been confined to a bare subsistence for the worker and his family. His incentive is stifled and he is bound to the land in many regions by a system of peonage or debt slavery.

The historical background of this situation is fairly clear. Spain
at the time of the conquest preserved a feudal system of land tenure. It was within the contemporary tradition that basically the same system with some modification in the form of grants of land and Indians (repartimientos and encomiendas) to faithful servants of the Crown, should be transferred to the New World. It was one of the class marks of a nobleman and a gentleman that he should have landed estates worked by a great mass of agricultural nobodies. A Spaniard of prestige could lend his muscles to the bloody work of war, but not to the menial drudgery of peace. Although many of those who took part in the conquest were menials and even jailbirds in Spain, it is not surprising, when the opportunity presented itself in the colonies, that they should set themselves up as members of a noble class according to the standards of the mother country; which standards, it may be said, have persisted as phases of the mental patterns of the Latin American culture until recent times.

Even today when a man accumulates wealth his first thought, in most cases, is to invest it in land. It is for this reason that it has been so difficult to finance industrial enterprises and government securities from local capital in Latin America, a circumstance of which foreign capital has not been slow to take advantage.

In the valley of Mexico and in the highlands of Peru the lot of the newly landed colonial gentlemen was made the easier by the presence of large populations of disciplined Indian agricultural workers who had been accustomed to labor under supervision on state-controlled communal lands (in Peru) or on estates of native nobles (in Mexico). However, neither of these native systems involved the profit motive, debt bondage, or racial-cultural discrimination, all of which with sundry other unpleasant details the new landlords were not laggard in introducing. As Valcárcel and others have shown, group work in the fields under the Incas was carried on in festive mood and for the tangible welfare of the local group and the national society. The Spanish masters shortly reduced the blithe spirits of their peones to sullen compliance in tedium.

Another Spanish institution which promoted land monopoly and land hunger was the Roman Catholic Church. Not only were large original grants made to ecclesiastical organizations for the support of their missionizing activity, but these holdings steadily increased during colonial and also during modern times through contributions
made by the faithful. Since land was the principal form of wealth, it was—and in many places still is—customary for the well-to-do to donate land to the Church or to one of its subsidiary organizations in their wills, the proceeds to be used for masses for the repose of the donor’s soul. It has been estimated that at one period more than half the total property in each country belonged to ecclesiastical organizations or to the individual clergy. Certainly the Church, its dependencies and officers collectively, became the greatest landowner in Mestizo America. The evidence does not indicate that, except in rare instances, these churchly estates were operated in a manner essentially different from those of private landlords. Since the Church is not an agricultural institution and its representatives were not usually agricultural experts, many large properties were either inefficiently managed or even left undeveloped. The entrance of the Church into a field fundamentally foreign to its function, and its position symbolically, at least, on the side of the land monopolists in the face of abject land hunger among the great masses of the people must be understood by those who profess themselves perplexed by such manifestations of anticlericalism as the “attacks” on the Church emanating from the Mexican revolution of 1911. In most countries of Mestizo America the Church has now been forced to liquidate at least part of its land holdings, a political policy which, it must be said, has been assisted in many areas by a more enlightened attitude on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities themselves.

The Revolution from Spanish political control did not materially mitigate the land problem. In fact, for a century or so after “liberation,” monopolization of the land continued to increase. It must be remembered that the Revolution itself and its aftermath were controlled in the event by the creole upper classes, despite the adherence of many participating elements to the principles of the French Revolution, and despite the promises made to Indians and lower class mestizos. Not only did the old colonial estates on the whole remain intact (although in some cases changing hands), but they continued to grow. About 1880 a new element entered the picture, namely, foreign capitalism. The older pattern of family holdings of large estates was changing to one of foreign corporations, financed and controlled in New York, London, Berlin. Almost everywhere in Mestizo America republican governments were in-
duced to make grants of large areas of land to foreign concerns. The usual stipulation was that the foreign corporation would "colonize" the land or "develop" it, and the excuse was that local enterprise and capital were inadequate to the task. In some cases foreign capital did develop areas which had not previously been exploited to any significant extent agriculturally. This was particularly true of the banana plantations of the low, wet tropical regions of Central America. However, the advent of corporation cultivation had profound effects upon the mode of life of the people affected by it. Fruit, sugar, and cotton, for example, when produced for export are most profitably exploited on large integrated estates. Efficient production involves a heavy outlay for irrigation, fertilization, field machinery, and processing or handling plants. Labor is best managed, from the point of view of profits, by concentrating it in barracks or compact settlements under disciplined supervision. Foodstuffs and other necessities are imported rather than produced on the place; consumer commodities are provided through centrally managed company stores or commissaries. Under this system the traditional local organization of the laborers and their families is broken up, the former villages and towns are consolidated into workers' settlements under control of the company, and individual initiative and chances for individual economic progress are practically eliminated. Political freedom is, of course, almost entirely absent.

One of the best examples of this sort of organization is to be found in the large sugar and cotton estates of the north coast of Peru where the arable land, limited by the extent of irrigated river valleys, is divided between a few large owners. One corporation, originally German, is said to control the lives of 50,000 persons living within the boundaries of its estate, which stretches from the Pacific Ocean across the Andes to the Marañon river in the Amazonian drainage. The monopoly of large areas of land naturally places the hacienda in the position of being able to keep wages low, an essential feature of the system. In Mestizo America few of the plantation corporations producing for export, with the exception of fruit plantations which have no serious competition, can compete with the better soils, shorter distance to market, and greater technical efficiency of other areas, except on the basis of low labor cost. These enterprises thus truly become "factories in the field," and
the workers undergo a form of rural proletarization almost unknown in the United States and western Europe.

A few figures illustrating the inequitable distribution of land may be mentioned. According to 1937 figures for Chile, 74.5 percent of the properties (ranging up to 123.5 acres apiece) comprised only 4.7 percent of the land. But 1.4 percent of all properties (ranging from 2,470 to 12,350 acres and more) included 68.2 percent of the land. Even more striking is the fact that 0.3 percent of the establishments (all of 12,350 acres or more) represented more than one half (52.4 percent) of all farm land. Extreme conditions are illustrated by the municipio of Calle Larga, where 31,500 out of a total of 37,664 hectares (one hectare equals 2.47 acres) were controlled by a single hacienda, and in Los Andes where, out of 70,403 hectares of farm land, 70,000 were controlled by a single latifundio. The large pastoral estates (mainly sheep grazing) in southern Chile are mostly controlled by foreign capital. One of them in Tierra del Fuego owns approximately five million acres of land; another, 1.7 million acres; still another, 1.25 million acres.

A recent study of 44,519 representative rural establishments in Venezuela showed that 56 percent of the land was owned by only one percent of the proprietors, while only 6 percent of the land was divided among 66 percent of the owners. In Mexico at the beginning of the modern revolution (1911) one percent of the people owned 70 percent of the arable land. Three related families owned all of the farm land in the state of Hidalgo and one family owned 12 million acres of the state of Chihuahua. Even today, after the government land reforms, 69 percent of Mexico's agricultural lands are reported to be still concentrated in estates of more than 1,200 acres each. One result of this is that Mexico is not self-sufficient in the bare necessities for food and even today imports large quantities of maize and wheat.

These large concentrations of available farm land in a comparatively few hands are characteristic of other countries of Mestizo America with a few local exceptions. For example, large haciendas are not characteristic of El Salvador (the smallest country in our area), parts of eastern Guatemala, the tropical forest regions of the Pacific coast of Colombia, the Antioquia region of Colombia, and
the more unsettled portions of the Amazon tropical forest areas of Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru.

The problem created by land monopolization is so acute that most of these countries have at one time or another made gestures toward correcting the situation, and several have taken actual, although up to the present inadequate, steps to cope with it. The most spectacular, and in fact only effective, redistribution of *latifundio* lands has taken place in Mexico, where 45 million acres had been redistributed by 1940, both on an individual and an *ejido* (group) basis. Most of this was done under the Cárdenas regime, accompanied by a coordinated program of credit, technical assistance, public works, and rural education—and also, to be sure, by violent opposition and propaganda from the landed interests, including North American representatives. Elsewhere no really effective measures of redistribution have been taken, but a number of countries have set up mechanisms whereby small farmers may improve their position in a world of big operators. In Peru, for example, even before the free elections of 1945, two types of opportunities were offered to small farmers. On the one hand, communities organized on a communal basis (intended mainly for highland Indians) were recognized as "judicial persons" and were given various forms of aid and protection by agencies of the central government, both in land rights and in marketing of products. On the other hand, groups of small farmers were authorized to form cooperatives, both of the purchasing and selling type, under tutelage and protection of the government. In addition to organizational facilities, instruction in agricultural techniques, loans, seeds, and so on, were offered on a limited basis by the government. Something similar has been attempted in most other countries of the area, although viewed as a whole, on a rather limited basis and in a somewhat timid manner.

The so-called agrarian problem remains unsolved in all countries of Mestizo America, and political programs for agrarian reform are fundamental planks in the platforms of all parties appealing to the masses. None of the apparently alternative solutions appears to be easy. Voluntary dissolution of estates by the present monopolistic owners does not seem likely, in view of their class-cultural concepts of the dignity of landowning, their distrust of other forms of in-
vestment, and the profits accruing from the present system, which enables large landowners to maintain a high standard of luxury at home or abroad. Expropriation with compensation by the central government is also universally difficult to carry out, not only because of political opposition from the landed classes, but also because of the practical difficulties either of arriving at agreement on the compensation to the owner or of the central government’s being able to finance the payments. A third possibility would lie in taxing the larger land monopolies out of existence, but up to the present this has been in most places politically inexpedient. In most regions the large land holdings do not even pay their share of the cost of government. In many countries land is for practical purposes not taxed, and the expenses of government are provided either by import and export levies, or by direct consumer taxes, excise taxes, and the like. The fourth most discussed solution of the agrarian problem is through political revolution. Distasteful and undesirable as this may be, it is not to be discounted by those interested in Mestizo America. This is still a predominantly agricultural area. The present land hunger may eventually drive the masses to forcible expropriation and redistribution. Such an uprising is bound to carry in its train excesses of various kinds and, if successful, a profound reorganization of economic patterns of all types.

Mining and Industry

The first interest of the Spanish conquerors was in mines and their products, mainly gold and silver, which were prized for their high cash value rather than for their industrial usefulness. The natives of the Andean area and of Mexico-Guatemala had developed mining and metallurgy in gold, silver, and copper, and the conquerors in the first flush of their victory proceeded to rob the aborigines of their accumulated stores of precious metals, a project which, ironically, was made the easier by virtue of the fact that the native peoples who had made collections of these metals generally had no idea of evaluating them in cash or as media of exchange. Following this, the Spaniards settled down to the exploitation of mines already opened by the Indians and such others as they could discover. In this process the forced labor of the Indians was driven unmercifully,
with the result that large numbers of them died off. The abuse of Indian or mestizo labor has not been entirely stopped to the present day, and constitutes a perennial scandal in certain Bolivian tin mines, for example.

From the sixteenth century to the present, mining has been the principal export industry of Mestizo America. The bulk of the mining enterprises are now owned by foreign capital, technical processes have been improved, and a certain minimum humanitarianism has been generally introduced in treatment of the workers, either by government action or in the interests of maintaining the “stability of the labor force.” Low wages are the rule and most of the product as well as the profits are exported abroad.

It is true that some incidental benefits have accrued to the mestizo countries from the present system of mining, but the fact must be faced that most of the activity has been carried on for the benefit of foreign societies and foreign stockholders. Transportation facilities have been built in Mestizo America by the mining companies, but generally speaking, these have not contributed to an integrated network. Railroads, for example, have usually been built from the mines to the port towns, with little or no attention paid to the needs of the intervening territory or to the country as a whole. Wages have been paid to local labor, to be sure, but the income derived therefrom usually proves to be insignificant to the national or areal economy. Wages are low—averaging less than 40 cents a day in many localities. Furthermore, it is not generally appreciated that, despite its importance in world trade, mining gives employment to only a minor portion of the working force. For example, in Peru, one of the principal mining countries, only some 44,000 persons were employed in mining even in the year 1940 when the industry was artificially stimulated by war demands; this group constituted only 1.81 percent of the “economically active population” of the country, according to the official census publication.

In summary, for four hundred years Mestizo America has figured in world economic affairs mainly as a producer of raw materials. Even today it is one of the principal raw material producers for the industries of North America and Europe. Production is controlled in the main by foreign concerns, subsistence agriculture has suffered, wages have been kept low, and the consuming power of the bulk
of the population has been severely restricted. All of these features are, of course, characteristic of a colonial and dependent type of economy, lacking in balance and unable, so long as the system persists, to provide the basis for an improved standard of welfare and general cultural development.

If one examines the official employment figures in Mestizo America he will find considerable numbers of persons engaged in "industria" (industry). Most of these so-called industries, however, are small-scale local affairs, such as adobe and brick plants, or are handicraft or household enterprises, such as pottery making by hand or foot-loom weaving. Many of the larger establishments designated as industries are processing plants, such as sugar refineries and packing houses, or producers of "semi-manufactures," such as plants for concentration or reduction of metal ores. In keeping with its function as a raw-materials producer Mestizo America has traditionally relied upon imports of manufactured goods.

About the time of the first World War, however, some impetus was given to the establishment of manufacturing, and the shortages of imports during the second World War have stimulated this development again. Cotton textile factories are perhaps the most ubiquitous industrial enterprises in the modern sense. Much of the cheap cotton cloth used for clothing by the lower classes is woven within the area, and the production of woolen textiles in the Andean countries is also considerable. Other light-manufacturing industries are developing. At the present stage these are mainly devoted to the production of basic consumer necessities—metal tools and containers, agricultural implements, canned foods, building materials and plumbing, rubber products (including tires), pharmaceutical products, bottled beverages, and the like. None of the countries of our group is industrialized in the modern sense, but it is likely that the factory system will continue to spread. At the present time the most industrialized regions are those centered on the cities of Monterrey, León, and Mexico City in Mexico; Antioquia in Colombia; Lima-Callao in Peru; and the four industrial cities of Chile: Santiago, Valparaíso, Concepción, and Valdivia.

The manufacture of heavy producers' goods is little developed. Mexico has a small steel industry mostly installed and operated by foreign capital. Under government auspices Peru is building a steel
plant at Chimbote which will have a capacity of about 200,000 tons annually. The successful development of heavy manufactures in Mestizo America would seem to call for intelligent over-all planning involving the entire area, probably the entire Western Hemisphere. A mutually beneficial system of regional specialization in manufacturing and exchange of goods seems to hold much better prospects than attempts at complete national self-sufficiency or autarchy.

In connection with the development of manufacturing another factor in the present situation should be mentioned. This is the rise of a mercantile, commercial, or “business” group in all the countries of our area. The essential interests of this group lie in being able to sell manufactured consumers’ goods not abroad, but to the population of the area itself. Spain of the conquest had nothing of this sort to offer, and during the whole epoch of the coloniaje trade was operated as a semi-state monopoly. Free enterprise and free competition were foreign to the pattern. Actually they are still somewhat foreign elements in an over-all pattern which often decrees that business be done by personal influence, bribery, class or caste position, political “pull,” and the like. But during the present century a small, but expanding, group of traders has been established, at the start mainly by foreign concerns interested in selling their products in Latin America. Gradually a local business class has been built up in all mestizo countries. It is still small, but it has been imbued with the principles of commercial expansion through competition of sales in the internal market. In the course of time this group has expanded its horizon from an exclusive preoccupation with the business of acting as “agents” for foreign firms and has begun to take an interest in local consumer production as well. Obviously the long-term success and prosperity of the group depend upon the expansion of the numbers and purchasing power of local consumers.

In the experience of the writer and others, it seems that the fundamental interests of the burgeoning business class are not yet fully recognized by its members, but in a blind and fumbling sort of way they have tended to oppose the traditional land monopolists, the latifundistas, and also the extractors of minerals. The profits of the latter two groups lie in low wages and low standards of consumer wants. The profits of the business class are to be obtained in
greater mass income and ever-expanding desires for manufactured goods and commercially supplied services. Thus one may discern in Mestizo America not only a developing conflict between the agricultural masses and the land monopolists, but also a clash of interests between the growing group of businessmen engaged in trade, on the one hand, and the traditional aristocrats of the hacienda and the exporters of mineral products, on the other hand. The fact that the hacienda owners have traditionally tended to "look down upon persons in trade" does not make for a friendlier rapprochement.

Whether the business class will be able to force a readjustment from the landed "aristocracy" and the mining interests is at best problematical. In a former era of old-style business competition one would have made an affirmative prediction. But in the present period the interests and obligations of the local businessmen are so apt to be tied up with international industrial cartels and monopolies, whose tentacles in many cases extend to raw material producing enterprises, that the businessmen are themselves subject to confusion or paralysis.

All of these economic developments together with increased contact with the outside world have tended to create a consciousness of their "rights" in the minds of the working people. Two tangible results have been the rise of labor organizations and the development of government programs aimed toward the protection and welfare of the workers. The labor movement is, as might be expected, the strongest in the four countries which have gone farthest along the road to industrialization, namely, Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and Chile. These countries also have taken the farthest strides in governmental action, although most of the countries of our group have enacted labor laws far in advance of those in force in most states in the United States. It is true that in some cases (Peru under Benavides and Prado, for instance), these steps have been taken as a means of offsetting the influence of the labor unions. But the fact remains that programs are actually operating in many countries which conservatives of the United States would regard as "socialistic." Not only is the eight-hour day more or less universal (legally) and the usual restrictions on the labor of women and children, overtime pay, compensation for accidents and unemployment, old-age insurance, and the like written into the law, but the leading industrial countries
of Mestizo America have taken such steps as the establishment of free worker's hospitals and medical services, the building of modern houses by the government, the establishment of cheap restaurants, compulsory and paid vacations. Even so "backward" a country as Guatemala has its large section of model workers' homes (Barrio Obrero) in the capital city. "Liberal" political parties or coalitions pledged to promote the welfare of the workers and "common people" are in control (in 1947) in Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile. Although a Conservative was elected president of Colombia in 1946, the Liberal party controls Congress.

Despite evidences, such as this, of the growing influence of the working people, the standard of living remains very low if judged by the standards of the United States or pre-war western Europe.

Standards of Living

The standard of living offered by a culture or group of cultures anywhere may be judged from two points of view. (1) Does the culture provide for the basic necessities of the people? Among these are the fundamental requirements for general health and nutrition essential to the human species everywhere. (2) Beyond this, the standard of living is in part a matter of cultural definition. In other words, what do the people believe is required for the good life and to what extent do they get such things? For example, whether or not automobiles and radios are regarded as necessary depends upon agreement among the people. In those cultures where such items are regarded as necessary or desirable but are actually obtained by only a small portion of the population we may say that, in this sense, the bulk of the population suffers from a low standard, even though their basic necessities are provided. Let us take a look at these matters in Mestizo America first from the point of view of health and nutrition.

The evidence seems to show that a large portion of the population is undernourished and physically ill, according to any standards. Two general factors are involved: insufficient and unbalanced diet, and inadequate scientific medical care, either of the preventive or remedial type. These facts are reflected in the vital statistics. Whereas
in 1940 male life expectancy at birth in the United States was nearly 63 years, in Chile it was 35 years, in Peru less than 32, and in Mexico less than 40. Nor do the supposed blessings of city life in this area seem to produce favorable results on life preservation. In 1940 the death rate in New York City was 9.8 (per 1,000 population); in Santiago, 24.8; in Lima, 20.5; in Quito, 21.2; in Caracas, 19.4; in La Paz, 22.4; in Mexico, 23.8. The four leading causes of death in the area today are tuberculosis, influenza-pneumonia, malaria, and diarrhea-enteritis, all of them ailments caused by pathogenic organisms with which modern medical science is able to cope. All of them except influenza-pneumonia have been eliminated from among the four leading causes of death in the United States. In 1939 the tuberculosis death rate by countries (per 100,000 population), to cite a few examples, was: United States, 47.2; Colombia (1938), 46.6; Mexico, 55.4; El Salvador, 61; Guatemala, 64.3; Ecuador, 70.2; Paraguay, 102.4; Panama, 210; Venezuela, 243; Chile, 276. As Charles Morrow Wilson says, "The only reason more Latin Americans do not die of tuberculosis is that more of them do not yet live in metropolises." For the tuberculosis death rate in many Mestizo American cities is truly appalling. Whereas the rate in New York was 49 (in 1939) and in Detroit 44.7, the rate in Santiago was 430, in Lima 435, and Guayaquil 693. It is well known that tuberculosis is a disease which spreads among undernourished people living in squalid conditions.

In the United States a proportion of 10 hospital beds per 1,000 population has long been regarded by experts as a minimum goal for safety. In 1940, Massachusetts had 13.2 and South Carolina 4.2. The Latin American average, however, is estimated to be less than 2 beds per 1,000 population, despite the fact that the average stay of the patient is about twice as long as in the United States. Millions of rural dwellers have no hospital facilities whatever. For example, in 1940 Peru had about 12,000 beds, an average of 1.4 per 1,000 of the population. But the majority were concentrated in Lima where the ratio was 9 per 1,000 population. In Colombia less than one-third of the cities and towns have any hospitals. In Chile three-fourths of

4 It should be understood that when we make comparisons with conditions in the United States we do not consider the latter to be perfect by any means. Imperfect as they are, however, they are familiar to our readers and thus may serve as a touchstone for assessing the situation in Mestizo America.
all the so-called hospitals lack surgical wards. During the war years, the United States government through agencies of the Office of Inter-American Affairs and its successors provided money and personnel to assist in the correction of this situation. A number of hospitals were built and staffed in outlying areas of the various countries, and through scholarships a considerable number of young Latin Americans were brought to this country for training in medicine and sanitary engineering. It remains to be seen whether the governments of Mestizo America will be financially able or willing to carry on and to extend this program. Because of the prevailing low income of the masses, adequate health standards will have to be provided through public agencies in greater proportion than in the United States.

At present the cultural pattern followed by a large share of the common people of the area does not include modern customs of hygiene, consultation with scientifically trained physicians, or the use of modern clinics and hospitals. Most of the treatment which the average mestizo receives consists either of home remedies, patent medicines, or the attentions of medicine men and other magical practitioners. These antiquated and inadequate customs of treatment and attitude can, of course, be changed if medically sufficient facilities are provided and the rewards for their use made clear.

An appalling wastage of life and energy is reflected in the high infant mortality rates. In the United States in 1940 about 48 out of every 1,000 children born alive died during the first year. The rate reported for Bolivia in 1937 was 267; for Santiago, Chile in 1939, 204; for Bogotá (1939) 190.9; for Quito (1940), 182.

Malaria and diseases caused by intestinal parasites are third and fourth, respectively, among the leading causes of death. It is true that the likelihood of infection is much higher in most of Mestizo America than in the United States because of differences in climatic conditions. Nevertheless, modern medical science has the means at hand for the prevention and cure of these diseases, provided the means can be made available to the population in general. In justice, it must be said that most of the governments of the area are awake to their responsibilities in this matter and are taking practical steps. It should also be mentioned that several North American corporations have had the enlightened self-interest to set the pace in pre-
ventative and remedial medicine in the concessions which they occupy. This is particularly true of one of the large fruit companies, which has not only brought pathogenic parasites under control on its plantations to a degree comparable to the sanitary regime of the Panama Canal Zone, but has also established a chain of hospitals and a medical service which provide an example for tropical medicine the world over. This policy has not been dictated by charitable considerations but by the realization that it is more profitable to have a healthy and physically efficient working force than to suffer the losses incident upon the wastage of human resources through unnecessary disease and death. The same attitude could profitably be taken by governments in most of Mestizo America.

Unsanitary customs of housing and waste disposal are, of course, responsible for much disease and death. In most of rural Mestizo America, for example, latrines do not exist—human excrement is disposed of in any handy place, the fence corner, the street, the river. Likewise, the fact that polluted drinking water may be a source of deadly infection is very little known, and water is customarily used from whatever source is physically available, with no attempt to purify or protect it. These customs are, of course, partly a matter of tradition. Somewhat similar customs prevailed during colonial and frontier days in North America. In most regions of the United States (with the exception of parts of the rural South, which shows a number of parallels with Mestizo America), such customs and attitudes have been changed through “education.” Education, however, usually involves change of mental patterns, the setting up of new ideals. The establishment of actional patterns, putting such ideals into practice, also requires in modern culture a certain level of economic resources. Even though many mestizos may be brought to realize what *should* be done to protect their lives and their health, many of them under present conditions of poverty will be unable to put the knowledge to effective use.

Let us now turn briefly to a consideration of nutrition, since it is well known that diet has an important bearing on health and physiological efficiency. Although the majority of Mestizo Americans are rural dwellers and although we are accustomed to think of rural people as having at their disposal everything needful in the way of food, whatever else they may lack, the facts in Mestizo
America do not support this complacent point of view. The general opinion of experts assembled at the Third International Conference on Nutrition held in Buenos Aires in 1939 was published as follows:

The American continent is undergoing a veritable tragedy owing to the undernourishment which affects with no exception all of the countries of Latin America. . . . A very important sector of the American world does not manage to eat the minimum food required for the conservation of life and for a normal yield of human labor. . . . Even in the most favorably placed country of Latin America, one fourth of the workers do not earn enough money to buy the necessary food.5

In a League of Nations study of 593 workers' families in 31 urban districts of Chile, only 27.3 percent of the individuals had as much as 3,000 calories per day. Another study of the inquilino (Chilean agricultural laborer) reported that the "diet of the inquilino is characterized by an extreme underconsumption of protective foods." According to the Venezuelan physician Carlos de León, the customary diet of Venezuelan peones in general consists of black beans, corn bread, and sugar alcohol. On the basis of a considerable although inadequate series of studies made by various investigators, it appears that the diet of the average person of the middle and lower classes is in many cases inadequate even in energy foods (carbohydrates). Proteins in the form of meat or fish are rarely consumed, although in Central America, at least, the fairly high consumption of beans and peas may compensate for meat deficiency. Generally speaking the use of milk and dairy products is not customary; likewise eggs, fresh vegetables, and other vitamin-carrying foods figure slightly in the diets of many regions. Maize, beans, bread (in the majority of cases), rice (on the Pacific coast of South America), and cassava (in the tropical and subtropical regions) are the staple articles of diet. The widespread use of fresh peppers may provide a part of the desirable vitamin quota. Another source of vitamins may be found in the almost universal use of fermented beverages—chicha, pulque, and the like. However, it seems to be clear that excessive use of alcohol in most parts of the area repre-

---

5 Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de la República de Argentina, Instituto Nacional de Nutrición, La Tercera Conferencia Internacional de la Alimentación; Síntesis de sus deliberaciones; Conclusiones que se desprenden. Quoted in George Soule, David Efron, and Norman T. Ness, Latin America in the Future World, New York, 1945.
sents not only a reaction to psychological frustration, but also a means whereby the individual stimulates himself temporarily to energy output not provided by his customary diet. In the Andean region coca-chewing serves the same purpose.

We turn now to certain culturally defined indices of the standard of living. In the group of countries under consideration there are, according to late estimates and counts, 422,871 telephones, or a ratio to the total population of 1:148. This compares with a ratio of 1:5 in the United States. The ratio of radios is estimated at 1:51 compared with 1:2.2 in the United States. The ratio of automobiles is 1:192 compared with 1:4 in the United States. (See accompanying table.) It is true, however, that these three items, although

**Telephones, Home Radios, and Automobiles in Mestizo America and the United States**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Telephones</th>
<th>Radios</th>
<th>Automobiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>2,680</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>3,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>90,943</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>45,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>42,233</td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>35,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>6,800</td>
<td>1,497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>2,327</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>4,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>1,943</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>1,569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>138,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>1,509</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>1,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>6,640</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>16,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>3,841</td>
<td>14,500</td>
<td>1,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>36,344</td>
<td>82,656</td>
<td>29,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>4,411</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>3,411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>38,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>422,871</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,220,956</strong></td>
<td><strong>324,876</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio to Total Population</td>
<td>1:148</td>
<td>1:51</td>
<td>1:192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Pan American Yearbook, New York, 1946; World Almanac, 1946; Handbook of Latin American Population Data, Washington, 1945; George Soule, David Efron, and Norman T. Ness, Latin America in the Future World, New York, 1945; also latest census publications, statistical abstracts, and statistical bulletins of the various countries, where available.
desirable, are not considered necessary to a decent standard of living by perhaps the majority of mestizos at the present time. For the average person in Mestizo America a private automobile is regarded somewhat as a private yacht by the average North American.

But these manufactured items, which happen to be among the few for which any sort of statistics are available, indicate something of the desire for and the ability to acquire manufactured goods among the people of Mestizo America. To round out the comparative picture, let us sketch briefly the living conditions characteristic of urban-dwelling, literate mestizos. Such people are "civilized" and they form the economic and political backbone of the area under consideration.

During and following World War II, North American exporters worked themselves into quite a state of ecstasy over the "potential untapped market of 134 million persons" in Latin America which they were going to enjoy once the war had eliminated sundry competitors, such as the Japanese, Germans and British. A cold hard look at average incomes will reveal, however, that under present conditions the proportion of the total population in circumstances which enable them to buy consumers' goods even on the scale of the North American lower classes is very small. In part this is, of course, due to artificial valuation of the currency. Since all of the countries are exporters of raw materials, a general policy has been followed for years of maintaining the local currencies at a low value in terms of dollars or pounds in order to be able to sell cheaply abroad. Postwar inflation of prices without corresponding increase in wages has also effectively cut purchasing power. But even before the war, the real wages of Mestizo American workers in terms of ability to buy even necessities produced in their own countries were far below those of workers in the United States. For example, a study made on the basis of 1939 showed that while an hour's labor in the United States would on the average buy 8.19 kilograms of beans, in Ecuador it would buy only 0.928 kilos; similarly, against the American workman's 2.607 kilos of coffee for an hour's labor, a worker in Colombia, where coffee is produced, could buy only 0.605 kilos.

A more intimate picture of living standards and purchasing power may be obtained by considering conditions in a single country, Peru,
where the writer was able to make personal observations. The following, unless otherwise indicated, deals with prices and money incomes there as of 1944. The pattern of living and expenditures is essentially the same, according to my observations, in mestizo circles of Guatemala, Ecuador, and Colombia, although the statistical details may differ, and the present picture seems to check with other studies made.

Let us visit a few of our mestizo neighbors in Lima, the capital of Peru. Here is the abode of Don Federico Alvarez (a fictitious name, but a real case among many I had an opportunity to learn to know in 1944). Don Federico is a skilled workman in a textile factory, a short, good-looking man of about 35. His features show the mixture of Spanish and Indian traits that characterize the bulk of the population of many Mestizo American countries. He has finished the six years of elementary schooling and reads and writes without difficulty. Outside the factory he wears a European-type suit, shirt, necktie, shoes, and a felt hat. His dwelling is part of a callejón, a common plan in which a block of adobe apartments is arranged around a small yard or alleyway with a dirt or cement surface. We pick our way, through a crowd of children playing in the yard and some women hanging up clothes, toward the door of Don Federico's apartment, which is one of thirty in this callejón. One enters directly into a front bedroom, then goes through a door into a second bedroom and beyond it into the kitchen. The dwelling, in other words, consists of three rooms arranged in "railroad" fashion; it is paved with cement. Don Federico's household consists of twelve persons, himself, his wife, his father, his mother, his four children, and his two brothers and two sisters. They all live together in the three-room apartment. Four are wage-earners (Don Federico, his mother, father, and sister), and among them they make about $45 a month (300 soles)—a relatively high income for a family of this social standing.

The apartment is well kept and fairly clean. As is the case in most Peruvian houses, it has no rugs on the floor. The walls are white-washed. There is a cold-water tap in the kitchen, but toilet and bathing facilities are in the small room in one corner of the communal courtyard of the callejón. Here one water closet and a large cement sink with a cold-water tap serve the needs of the thirty
households of the unit. Let us take an inventory of the furnishings of Don Federico's house. Each room has a single hanging electric bulb; the electric bill is about 75 cents (5 soles) per month. The front bedroom, which during the day is lighted only by the open front door, contains two double beds, two factory-made chairs, a night table, a small wooden table, a shelf of wood against one wall, fourteen colored lithographs in frames, and a small radio. The beds have rope springs covered with coarse woven mats instead of mattresses and the bed clothes are factory-made blankets which are stacked up during the day. The second bedroom, which has a skylight, contains two more double beds, a table, a trunk, two picture frames, two wooden shelves, and a dressing table. Each married couple occupies one bed; Don Federico's two brothers sleep in one of the remaining two beds, and his sisters in the other. The children sleep on the floor, on mats which are rolled out at night and covered with blankets. This arrangement seems to be somewhat crowded, but the Alvarezes figure that they are pretty well situated in comparison with poorer families. They, like everyone else, have been used to crowding all their lives. In the kitchen we find a stove made of adobe; it is raised to about the height of a table, and the charcoal fire is built on its top. The kitchen also has a wooden table, a wooden bench, and a cement sink with a single water tap. The principal cooking pots are of earthenware, made by the Indians of the mountains and bought in the market, but there are also some enamelware pans and plates, some china cups, an incomplete set of cheap metal knives, forks, and spoons, and quite a few tin cans used as containers. An old hand-cranked sewing machine is also present in the kitchen, where the señora makes all of the children's clothes.

This apartment costs the family about $2.25 (15 soles) per month. The only obvious parts of the equipment not produced in the country are the radio, the sewing machine, and some of the tableware. The Alvarezes, however, are steady customers for one other North American "export," namely, the movies, which they attend regularly and on which they spend a total of about one dollar per month.

We could go on from here to visit a large number of homes of the ordinary people of Peru and other parts of Mestizo America, some poorer, others more elegant, than that of Don Federico. But North
Americans find such visits depressing. We prefer to associate with Peruvians who live as we do. In Lima and other capitals we can get to know a congenial group of English-speaking Peruvians who are charming hosts. They have made frequent trips to Europe or North America and have pleasant houses equipped with modern mechanical gadgets of all kinds. They drive American automobiles, and their tastes and interests are much like our own. Many a North American never gets to know any other type of Peruvian, and he therefore comes away with the feeling that Peru is just a Spanish-speaking United States country club. But our social contacts are apt to give us the wrong idea about potential economic development, cultural interchanges, and standards of living which, whether we like it or not, in fact involve the common people as well as the upper class.

It would be very pleasant if all or the majority of Latin Americans lived on a level like that of our “Americanized” Peruvian friends in Lima. However, it is not true. Actually only about 5,000 Peruvian individuals or family units enjoy an annual income of $3,000 per year or more (20,000 soles). Add to this a possible 5,000 permanently resident foreigners in the same bracket, and you have, with their wives and families, a group of perhaps 60,000 people in a total population of about seven million, capable of providing a steady and active market for the ordinary, manufactured goods common in the United States. Some of these persons, to be sure, are millionaires in anyone’s currency, but the total group is less than one percent of the population.

If we look about, we see that in most countries there are two population groups left—the Indians and the mestizos. The Indians, as long as they remain in their present status in Latin America, are relatively uninteresting economically for the very reason that, as long as they remain Indians, their design for living does not include many requirements for manufactured articles. The Indian of today may be the customer of tomorrow, but tomorrow may be some time in arriving.

It is, in short, in the large and increasing mestizo population that the customers for increased consumer goods must be found. Our friend, Don Federico, belongs to this group, which in Peru accounts for 53 percent of the population, and we have noticed that neither his conscious requirements nor his income in their present
state seem very promising. He does have the basic patterns of European civilization, however, and, if he had the chance, he would like to add some more.

In order to get some statistical measure of incomes and budgets, Dr. Leoncio M. Palacios and his students in 1940 made a study of 81 families in Lima. The earning members of these families (which comprised a total of 395 individuals) were employed in 18 occupations ranging from common laborer to white-collar office worker. The average annual income per family was $346.93 (2,261 soles), including the contributions of all the earning members of each household. A fifth of the families, however, took in only $229 or less, while only 3 percent of the families had a yearly income of $612 or more. In American money, the average daily wage for a man was about 61 cents and for a woman, 23 cents. The men's wages ranged from a low of 30 cents per day for farm hands (chaceros) to a high of about one dollar for white collar workers (empleados). Two-thirds of these families lived in dwellings consisting of only one or two rooms, while only one-fifth were as well off as our friend Federico Alvarez, with three rooms. In this particular group of city dwellers, about 51 percent of the total income was spent for food alone, compared to an average of 34 percent for North American workers. Only 13 percent of the Lima workers' income went into housing and furnishings, compared with 28 percent for North Americans. After necessities were paid for, a little more than 3 percent remained for "recreation and social life" and about 3.5 percent for "superfluous" expenditures. The few other reliable studies from different parts of Mestizo America show essentially the same picture.

Political, Religious and Educational Features

We can do little more than mention the fact that Mestizo American society has been traditionally stratified on a class basis; space is lacking to set forth the detailed differences of custom between the various classes. Ownership of more land than a man can exploit by his own efforts has been traditionally the hallmark of upper-class status. With the rise of a business group, some landless but otherwise wealthy families have achieved this rank, but full acceptance
has usually had to be accompanied by marriage into one of the old landed families. Generally speaking a middle class has either been absent or very small in these countries, which may have something to do with the comparative underdevelopment of such so-called bourgeois cultural traits as thrift and cash savings, civic spirit, modern social work, and charitable activities, and the like. Industrialization, greater education, the increasing need for white collar workers in business and government, and the development of the professions may all serve to increase the size of the middle class and to define its position more clearly in mestizo society.

There seems to be a greater tendency for members of the small middle classes to make common cause with the lower classes than is the case in the United States. Most of the leaders of "peoples' movements" of recent times have been men of middle class standing. In part this is because the possibilities for upward mobility in the class structure of Mestizo America are so much less than in the United States. The middle class liberal or radical has few opportunities to "work up" in the class structure and thus to become conservative as he savors the rewards of greater wealth and prestige.

Although a "class struggle" can hardly be said to be in progress in the mestizo countries as yet, the leadership given by middle class intellectuals and organizers to the members of the lower classes has begun to awaken the latter to their stake in society. One of the features of social development which promises to be of most significance for the future is the rising self-consciousness of the dispossessed elements who have traditionally been allowed no voice in affairs and few tangible rewards from society. Ever since Independence these elements have periodically burst forth as violent mobs or "armies" under the leadership of military caudillos; in "successful" uprisings they have been paid off with a bit of loot and temporary surcease from drudgery, while the leader and his coterie have appropriated to themselves the emoluments of office, come to terms with the upper class groups, and have forgotten the promises made to their revolutionary followers. Although somewhat inconvenient, this system never upset the class system and the control of essential economic and social privileges by the aristocrats. There are signs in many countries now, however, that a new pattern of organization of the masses is emerging, under the leadership of better
trained and more socially conscious men who are seriously bent upon permanent reform of the social system.

All countries of Mestizo America are republics in form. The United States constitution has served as a general model: presidents are supposed to be elected at stated intervals for a fixed term, cabinet members, ministers and heads of executive departments are responsible to the president rather than to the legislature, and the administration cannot be voted out of office by the legislature, as in the parliamentary systems of England and France. Bicameral legislatures supposedly elected by the citizens are the most common, and separation of legislative, executive, and judicial branches is theoretically maintained. However, Roman Law is everywhere the basis of the legal system, rather than the English common law. Also, despite certain similarities in form, none of the countries of the area is organized on an effective federal basis like that of the United States, but, on the contrary, all are more centralized. Thus the central administration usually appoints governors of states or provinces and subordinate officials, and takes all responsibility for roads, telegraphs, and schools, even though some countries permit local elections of municipal or other local officials.

As everyone knows, these systems of government have not been notably successful, either in providing stability and tranquility or in promoting the general welfare of their populations. Perhaps it is because they have proved to be republican in form but not democratic in fact. Colombia is the only one of the mestizo countries which has not had a political revolution in this century and it is the only one which since Independence has never been under the rule of a complete military dictatorship. Elsewhere, intrigue, bribery, assassination, and the bloody coup d'état rather than the ballot box have at least occasionally been the means whereby the “Outs” changed places with the “Ins.” To mention two of the more spectacular examples, Ecuador has had 14 constitutions and, between 1931 and 1940, thirteen presidents; at this writing Venezuela has just inaugurated its twenty-second constitution. For years in many countries the only presidents who finished out their terms (if, indeed, they ever went through the forms of being elected) were

Since this paragraph was prepared for publication Colombia has had a violent revolutionary outbreak, in April, 1948.
those who made themselves dictators in fact if not in form. Among recent or present examples are the late Ubico of Guatemala, the late Gómez of Venezuela, Morínigo of Paraguay, Carías of Honduras, and Martínez of El Salvador. Since forcible revolution has been so often the technique for political change, it has been axiomatic in most Latin American countries that whoever controls the army controls the government. For practical purposes, indeed, the army has been of considerably more political importance than the congress in most mestizo countries.

We cannot attempt an analysis of the factors producing the political instability which has characterized so much of Mestizo America's career since Independence. Among probable factors we may mention the following. Political democracy was actually not part of the culture either of Spain or of the Spanish colonies, so that no background of practice or of thought existed when the outward forms of republican government were set up. The extreme natural regionalism existing in each country has made either a unification of point of view or a coordination of effort very difficult; the political instability of Ecuador, for example, is directly tied up with the fact that the mountain capital, Quito, and its region have little in common with the chief commercial and seaport city, Guayaquil and its hinterland. Extremes of class and relative lack of education for the great mass of the people have often prevented anything approaching democratic participation by the bulk of the population: the majority of the people did not know how to take part in political affairs, and the upper classes would not permit them to do so, anyway. Finally, the role of foreign interests has often been far from a passive one. It is convenient for foreign exploiters not to have to deal with strong "liberal" governments if Latin America is to be maintained as a semicolonial dependency of European and North American industry; truly democratic regimes might look less favorably on the monopolies and concessions made almost solely for the benefit of foreign concerns. For the same reason, European and American businessmen (and their governments) have often looked with favor on amenable dictators capable of "keeping order" and maintaining low wage and tax rates.

One of the noteworthy signs of the emergence of Mestizo America into the modern world has been the decline of political turbu-
lence in certain countries and the appearance of something resembling modern democracy and political maturity. As we have seen, Colombia has usually conducted its political affairs without benefit of military strong men and in a relatively serene and democratic manner. The recent free elections in Peru, which resulted in the change of government from a conservative group to a coalition in which the formerly suppressed “radical” APRA party held considerable power; the comparatively peaceful elections of the last three Mexican presidents; the fairly effective if somewhat uneasy coalition of liberal and leftist parties in Chile, which managed to run the country for several years; the present democratic regime in Guatemala—all of these phenomena are exceptions to the old pattern of seemingly endless violence, chicanery, and weakness.

It should be noted that the two strongest political movements in the mestizo area today are both liberal and are both homemade products. I refer to the Party of the Mexican Revolution (which has been in power for 35 years) and the APRA party of Peru founded by Raul Haya de la Torre. Despite their differences, both of these movements are opposed to doctrinaire Marxian socialism, but are oriented toward the achievement of both political and economic democracy. Both are opposed to the slavish adoption by the mestizos of foreign-made political and economic forms and solutions to problems; on the contrary both have attempted to develop political forms and techniques suited to the peculiarities of the history, natural environment, and culture of Mestizo America. The problems of the Indian, of land hunger, of illiteracy, of industrialization, of geographic sectionalism all enter into the political thinking embodied in these movements. Whatever may happen to these two particular organizations, it seems clear that if the Latin American culture of the mestizo area is to reach full function it must develop forms of political expression and controls integrated with the rest of the culture and the needs of the population which it serves.

For practical purposes all but an insignificant portion of the people are nominally Roman Catholics. The influence of the hierarchy and of the Church as an institution has always been strong since the first days of colonization. As a cultural complex, however, the religion of these countries contains some features unfamiliar to many North Americans. (1) Catholicism exhibits a number of traits and
complexes more characteristic of southern Europe than of its manifesta­tions in northern Europe and the United States in modern times. For example, monastic orders are more prominent and members of the "regular" clergy more numerous; more attention is given to cults of saints; frequent public parades, adorations, and fiestas add a note of color seldom seen in North American communities; sodalities or semi-religious clubs of laymen (cofradías, hermandades, mayordomias) are common and conspicuous; the Church is not strictly puritanical regarding the small vices of men, so that religious celebrations usually involve a strong recreational component with a pleasant emotional overtone; dancing, drinking, music, fireworks, gambling and other "worldly" activities are typical features of religious feast days. (2) The intellectual and philosophical position of the Church has been typically conservative, although we must not forget that a monk, Las Casas, led a movement in the early days of the colonization for more humane treatment of Indians and that a Mexican priest, Hidalgo, organized the first important revo­lution for political independence from Spain in 1810. (3) Perhaps more emphasis is given to symbols than is true of North American Catholicism. At least there is a tendency for common people to regard "religion" mainly as the practice of the approved forms. (4) Alongside Catholicism are almost everywhere to be found elements of supernatural belief and practice, in part derived from indigenous systems, in part survivals from medieval times. Witchcraft, both black and white, is extensively practiced and believed in; magical curing is common; evil eye, "bad airs," and throwing of spells are still "real" to many an ordinary person in the mestizo area. Local pagan images and sacred places still receive some veneration and awe.

It is difficult to assess the future of the Church in this area. Cer­tainly it will persist if its officers succeed in integrating religion with the ideals and drives of the emerging mestizo culture. At present skepticism is common among laymen, at least on the verbal level, and laymen on the whole do not participate actively in ordinary Church affairs other than fiestas and sodalities. Regular confession, attendance at mass, and the like, are often left mainly to women. If women are allowed more freedom outside the home and a wider range of participation in the culture, their devotion to the old rituals
may slacken. Despite some skepticism on the part of laymen and considerable neglect of observances, few persons are, however, willing to sever connections with the Church entirely or to forego its intervention for the salvation of their souls. Opposition centers mainly about the Church's place in secular affairs.

Education was for long an exclusive function of the Church, but since Independence all countries have assumed governmental responsibility in this field. Every country provides free, compulsory, public primary education, although such provisions have been somewhat ineffective to date, judging by results. Statistics of literacy are notoriously unreliable in this area, but estimates of illiteracy for the different countries vary from 50 to 85 percent. Strenuous efforts are being made in most regions to overcome this blockage to social and cultural development mainly through the provision of more and better equipped schools, more teacher training, and adult education. One of the most interesting of these efforts is the “anti-illiteracy” (desanalfabetización) campaign launched in most countries with United States aid; it is a method for teaching adults to read and write in a short time.

A frequent criticism of educational policy in Latin America is that it has been dominated by the scholastic ideals of medieval Spain. French nineteenth century Humanism has also had a strong influence. Although universities were established early, they emphasized literature, rhetoric, and philosophy. Theology, law, and medicine were for long the only recognized university courses and the method of teaching was didactic in the extreme. Until 1940 the medical school of one of the leading universities provided its students no laboratory course in dissection and no clinical courses. A student studied anatomy and medicine from lectures and textbooks, and when he went out to “practice his profession” the phrase was a literal description of what happened. Technological training, engineering, and the social sciences were almost entirely unknown in their “practical” phases.

The greatest recent change in education has been a systematic attempt in most countries to emphasize empirical investigations and training in practical techniques. Agricultural and engineering colleges as well as technical training for students on the precollege level are being established on a fairly large scale. The social studies,
however, as empirical sciences are still almost unknown. One of the
great difficulties has been the lack of adequate libraries and of Span-
ish editions of modern works in social science. Most of the transla-
tions have been confined to the humanities and to the work of Eu-
ropeans, mainly French. A Mexican publishing house, the Fondo
de Cultura Económica, has recently undertaken the translation, pub-
lication and circulation of standard English-language works in the
social studies, and its example has been followed on a smaller scale
by others.

In summary there is some possibility that the higher intellectual
culture of Mestizo America will turn out to be a happy blend of
humanism with pragmatic science. Certainly much would be lost
if the traditional interest in literature, in the manipulation of con-
cepts, in the discussion of human and cosmic values should be en-
tirely discarded in favor of crass "practicality." Yet training in
the techniques of science and technology is necessary if the mestizos
are to hold their own in the modern world against encroachment and
domination by peoples of more "practical" culture.

We see that the Mestizo American area has much to work with
and much to overcome. Natural resources are adequate and in some
respects outstanding. Difficulties are presented by diversities of natu-
ral environment and obstacles to easy communication. An addi-
tional burden is the fact that the people of the area have been saddled
with the traditions of colonial Spain, the paralyzing framework of
an antiquated class structure, and the restrictive grip of a monopolis-
tic system of exploitation dependent on foreign markets. Likewise
retarding has been the presence of large numbers of Indians in some
part of the area, Indians who have been culturally and economically
excluded in considerable part from regional affairs.

All of these are problems which can be overcome. A culture is a
system of customs and institutions for solving problems. We have
endeavored to show that a new culture is emerging in Mestizo
America which bids fair to provide a balanced type of life in the
area and furnish the medium for its integration with other active
cultures of the world.
SUGGESTED READINGS


Vaillant, George, and others, eds. The Maya and Their Neighbors. New York, 1940. Contains authoritative summaries of the native cultures of the Maya area and Central America.

Van Toor, Frances. A Treasury of Mexican Folkways. New York, 1947. Analysis of many features of everyday life in Mexico tracing origins to native, Colonial Spanish, and modern sources. Many of these patterns are found in other parts of Mestizo America.