

REPORT ON THE SECTION OF HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY, EIGHTH AMERICAN SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS

One of the sections of the Eighth American Scientific Congress, which met in Washington, D. C., from May 10 to May 18, was devoted to history and geography. The committee which organized it was composed of the following persons: C. H. Haring, Professor of Latin American History and Economics, Harvard University, *Chairman*; Preston James, Professor of Geography, University of Michigan, *Vice-Chairman*; Robert C. Smith, Assistant Director, Hispanic Foundation, Library of Congress, *Secretary*. During the sessions the following vice-presidents were elected: Pedro Sánchez, Director, Instituto Pan Americano de Geografía e Historia, Mexico; Jorge Basadre, University of San Marcos, Lima; and Daniel Samper Ortega, Counselor of the Colombian Embassy in Washington. Some fifty distinguished historians and geographers from this country and Latin America attended the meetings. Among the Latin Americans present were: Delgado de Carvalho, Francisco Radler de Aquino, and Nelson de Senna of Brazil; Daniel Samper Ortega of Colombia; Salvador Massip and Fernando Ortiz of Cuba; Rodulfo Brito Foucher, Pedro Sánchez, Silvio Zavala of Mexico; Jorge Basadre of Peru; José Coll-Cuchí and Rafael Picó of Puerto Rico; and Juan Lagomarsino of Uruguay.

In all, six meetings of the section were held; of these four took place in the lecture room of the National Academy of Sciences. One, a joint session with the Section on Statistics, was held at the auditorium of the Department of Commerce, while another joint session, this time with the Section on Anthropology, met at the Elihu Root Auditorium, Carnegie Institution of Washington.

In conjunction with these meetings an important exhibition of maps was held in the library and adjacent rooms of the National Academy of Sciences building. This exhibition, arranged by Col. Lawrence Martin of the Library of Congress, contained recent outstanding cartographic productions of this country and Latin America lent by the American Geographical Society (the One Millionth Map exhibit), the National Geographic Society, the various Latin American missions in Washington and a number of government bureaus.

The first of the section meetings, May 11, at which C. H. Haring, the chairman, presided, was devoted to the *History of Exploration and Cartography*. John K. Wright, Director of the American Geographical Society, read a paper prepared by Raye Platt entitled *Milestones in American Cartography*, in which the author traced the development of mapmaking in Latin America, from colonial times to the present, pointing out in some detail the great undertakings culminating in the One Millionth map project of recent days. In his paper, *The Earliest Spanish Advances Southward from Panama Along the West Coast of South America*, Robert Cushman Murphy, American Museum of Natural History, traced in detail the explorations of the Darien region at the beginning of the sixteenth century, comparing the descriptions of the country furnished by travellers' accounts with photographs of its present appearance. Col. Lawrence Martin, Chief of the Division of Maps, Library of Congress, in his paper entitled, *Early Explorations and Investigations in Southern South America and Adjacent Antarctic Waters by Mariners and Scientists from the United States of America*, spoke of the expeditions made in 1829 down the Chilean coast by Capt. Nathaniel Brown Palmer in the brig *Annawan* and by Capt. Benjamin Pendleton in the *Seraph* and the scientific consequences of these voyages. A final paper, *Mirages Prompted by the So-Called "Del Cano, 1523," and "Mapamundi / Fragmento / MDXX,"* sent to the Congress by Buenaventura Caviglia (Hijo), of Montevideo, was not received in time to be read at the section meeting. All three papers were widely discussed, setting a precedent which was followed in all subsequent meetings.

Proceedings were continued on Monday, May 13, Pedro Sánchez presiding, with a double bill of discussion, *The Changing Economic Rôle of the Americas From Colonial Times to the Present*, and *Land Occupance and the Frontier in the History of America*. In connection with the first of these topics Arthur P. Whitaker, of the University of Pennsylvania, read a paper *Huancavelica and Historical Synthesis*, bearing on the history of the Peruvian mercury mines from colonial times. In relation to the second subject, *Land Occupancy*, Rafael Schiaffino, Chief of the Division of Sanitation of the Ministry of Public Health, Montevideo, spoke on the influence of the Guaraní Race on Uruguay. John L. Rich of the University of Cincinnati discussed the geographical formation of Southern Brazil and Paraguay with slides made from airplane photographs of the country.

The joint session with statistics, held the following day, under the chairmanship of the Secretary of Agriculture, Henry A. Wallace,

was devoted to consideration of *Population Problems in the Western Hemisphere*. The contribution of the Section on History and Geography, a paper on *Economic Resources and Population Shifts, with Special Reference to Brazil*, submitted by Roberto C. Simonsen, Director of the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, São Paulo, was read by a substitute speaker.

Land Occupancy and the Frontier in the History of America was again the subject of discussion at the meeting of Wednesday, May 15, over which Daniel Samper Ortega presided. Paul Wallace Gates of Cornell had as his subject *Land Policy and the Development of the Tenancy in the Prairie States*, detailing the destruction of the Public Domain by absentee landownership in the middle of the last century. C. H. Haring read a protest from Afonso de E. Taunay, of the Museu Paulista, São Paulo, in which he asserted that Jules Duhem of the École Normale de Montpellier in the 1938 edition of Thales had plagiarized his writings on Bartolomeu de Gusmão. This protest was admitted to the record of the proceedings of the Section.

Jorge Basadre of Peru presided at the joint session with Anthropology, *Social Changes in Indian America from Pre-Colonial Times to the Present*. The papers contributed by the Section on History and Geography were: *Pre-Colombian Agriculture as Conditioned by Periods of Alluviation in the Southwest*, by Kirk Bryan of Harvard, and Donald Brand of the University of New Mexico's *Pre-historic and Modern Economy of the Rio Balsas Area, Guerrero and Michoacán*.

The final meeting of the Section, Friday, May 17, C. H. Haring again presiding, was appropriately dedicated to *Basic Needs in Historical and Geographical Research in the Americas and Formulation of Projects for the Next Congress*. The principal address was made by Preston E. James, of the University of Michigan, vice-chairman of the Section. His topic, *Areas of Expanding Settlement in Latin America—A Project for Future Study*, embraced the regions of highland Costa Rica, the Antioquia and Caldas regions in Colombia, middle Chile, and southern Brazil. Solon J. Buck, Director of Publications at the National Archives, explained the services of his institution to historical and geographical research. The proposals sent by Emilio Ravignani and José Torre Revello of the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas of the University of Buenos Aires were incorporated as Nos. 5 and 6 of the Section's resolutions. In conclusion Juan Lagomarsino of Montevideo spoke on the Uruguayan territorial waters of the Río de la Plata. Remarks were then made by Nelson de Senna of Brazil and José Coll-Cuchí of Puerto Rico.

The following were the resolutions passed by the Section on History and Geography:

RESOLUTIONS

Whereas:

In view of the desirability of coördinating historical investigation in the different countries of America in order to contribute toward the preparation of a history of the New World in a spirit of unity and coöperation:

1. It is recommended,

That American institutions of a historical character and especially National Academies of History give preferential attention to the necessity of directing their work in such a way as to make such unity possible, by striving to establish the relations between historical events in different regions and countries of America and by making the results of such efforts widely known.

2. It is recommended,

That in the future maps of America, both general and regional, and whatever may be the country of the publisher and his language, be prepared with names written in the language corresponding to the country represented thereon.

3. It is recommended,

a—That the Geographic Societies of America consider themselves corresponding members of one another.

b—That for the purposes of better mutual understanding, these Societies exchange yearly their reports in accordance with formulas to be adopted.

c—That the Pan American Institute of Geography and History be designated to receive and distribute these reports in accordance with formulas and on the dates which it may fix.

4. Recommended,

The study of the Guaraní language, folklore, and nomenclature as well as other Indian languages of the Americas.

5. It is recommended,

That the government members of the Pan American Union be requested to publish bibliographies relative to the documentary material that may be found in their national and provincial archives. These bibliographies might be brief at the beginning, and develop later into a methodical catalogation of the documents.

6. Recommended,

Publication of a list of documents relative to America, which are published in collections easily accessible to the students. This would avoid the reprints of documents already published, unless the new

editions are annotated by giving the paleographical version of the text and pointing out the errors and misinterpretations contained in previous editions. The Library of the Pan American Union could undertake the publications of the list with the assistance of institutions and persons of intellectual standing. A special fund might be established for the purpose of defraying the expenses of such an undertaking.

ROBERT C. SMITH.

The Hispanic Foundation,
Library of Congress.