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**The Pan American
Society of the
United States**

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By

HARRY ERWIN BARD

Secretary



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THE PAN AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES *

By DR. HARRY ERWIN BARD, Secretary

The Pan American Society of the United States stands for broad Pan Americanism. Its purpose primarily is to promote closer relations of a social, intellectual, and cultural character between the peoples of the United States and those of the other American republics, and among all the independent nations of America in general.

The American continent from north to south contains some 16,000,000 square miles. Within this vast area 21 independent republics, embracing practically three-fourths of it with a total population of more than 175,000,000 of people, have

* Reprint from the Bulletin of the Pan American Union, November 1915, Number.

been established. Roughly speaking, people whose official language is Spanish occupy one-half of this area, or some 6,000,000 square miles; people whose official language is Portuguese occupy one-fourth; and people whose native tongue is English another one-fourth. The people of the 18 republics whose official tongue is Spanish number more than 50,000,000, those of the republic whose official tongue is Portuguese number more than 20,000,000, and the people whose official tongue is English number nearly 100,000,000. The Republic of Haiti, whose official tongue is French, has a population of more than a million.

Just as the people of the United States inherited their early learning and culture from England so the people of Brazil inherited theirs from Portugal and the peo-

ples of the 18 Spanish-speaking republics theirs from Spain. As subsequent relations of the peoples of the United States were more intimate on the whole with the peoples of Northern Europe so the subsequent relations of the peoples of the other republics have been more intimate with the peoples of southern Europe, a circumstance which has tended to emphasize inherited characteristics and customs with us and with them. For many years these ancestral and inherited influences continued uninterrupted. The influences of cross currents of thought or of action were almost wholly lacking; the peoples of the north and of the south in America, though born to be neighbors, continued to exist practically strangers to one another. It may well be said that elements which contributed effectively to

the establishment of these 21 independent republics served to render mutual intercourse and practical cooperation impossible, and the people of each were left to work out their own problems largely independent of all the rest.

There was no tide of travel and relations from north to south. Means of communication were largely lacking. From very early times the tide of travel and relations has been from east to west; in America its center has varied only gradually, from about 40 degrees north latitude a century ago to about 25 degrees north latitude at present. While a broadening process has accompanied this southward tendency, the bounds of the positive influence of this irresistible movement scarcely extended beyond the limits of North America before the begin-

ning of the present century. Wide-world movements as well as local influences and conditions have intervened to make close international relations in America difficult or impossible: and particularly is this true of relations between the United States and the other republics.

In view of these facts, one may say that Pan Americanism is, after all, merely a fiction; it is only a theory and not a fact. But Pan Americanism exists. The bases upon which it rests are fundamental and enduring. The ancestors of present generations in America leaving the crowded centers of Europe to possess the broad expanse of territory of the New World, whether coming from the north or from the south of Europe, whether settling in the north or in the south of America, were encouraged to new achievements, imbued

with larger hopes and broader views of life, inspired with new ideals and higher conceptions of liberty and of justice, the full realization of which is still the common purpose and desire of their descendants of today. Five centuries ago the seeds of Pan Americanism were first planted ; it is true that development has been slow. But who in the light of present world-wide movements can doubt that it will not be so in the future?

Conditions are now rapidly changing. Means of communication are improving; the railways, the steamships, cables, telegraph, wireless, are beginning to serve well their purposes. A north and south tide of travel and relations is developing with uncommon rapidity ; the people from all parts are beginning to come together, eager to contribute with their experience

and achievements to the common good of all, and Pan Americanism in all of its various phases moves on toward a fuller and more complete realization.

The achievement of political independence of rulers in the Old World by the peoples of America and the establishment of democratic forms of government was an event of vast importance, and it is not strange that the political phase of Pan Americanism should have received first emphasis. By reason of the fundamental importance of international relations of a political character, subsequent and persistent emphasis on this phase may be justified. The commercial phase also received early recognition, although relations of a commercial character developed haltingly. But now they are assuming proportions such as no one could have imagined

only a few years ago. It is unfortunate only that these relations of a political and commercial character should not have been made from the first to contribute more effectively to closer social, intellectual, and cultural relations. These phases of Pan Americanism have been almost wholly neglected. It has been as if political and commercial relations were thought all sufficient, and could achieve satisfactory development independent of and apart from close relations of a social, intellectual, and cultural character.

The organization of the Pan American Society of the United States with headquarters in New York constitutes the first effective recognition of the fundamental importance of the social, intellectual, and cultural phases of Pan Americanism. It was inspired by the Hon. John Barrett, Director

General of the Pan American Union in Washington. Organization was effected February 15, 1912, with a charter membership of 130. Its present membership is almost 500.* New members enrolled during the present year to date number nearly 100. The membership is still made up largely of prominent business and professional men of New York, but many of the other States of the Union are well represented and also many of the other republics of America. Washington is represented now by 22 members.

The first president of the society was the Hon. Henry White, who is also the actual president.†

*The present membership of the Society is 537.

†Mr. Henry White resigned the presidency February 9, 1916, and was elected honorary vice-president. Mr. John Bassett Moore was elected president, Mr. Cabot Ward first vice-president, Mr. John Barrett second vice-president and Mr. Archibald Cary Coolidge third vice-president.

The Hon. Robert Lansing Secretary of State, and his Excellency Domicio da Gama, ambassador of Brazil in Washington, are honorary presidents. The vice-presidents are the Hon. John Bassett Moore, the Hon. Cabot Ward, and the Hon. John Barrett; and the Hon. Elihu Root, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, and Mr. Archer M. Huntington are honorary vice-presidents. Membership is of six kinds, Honorary, Patron, Life, Sustaining, Regular, and associate. Honorary members are especially elected by the executive committee; other members are received on application or special invitation approved by the membership committee. Patron and sustaining memberships were provided for only recently.

Membership in the society is valued for opportunities it offers of identification and

association with those interested in promoting the objects for which the society stands and of participating in its activities, rather than for the specific personal advantages which accrue to members directly from the enjoyment of such membership.

The Pan American Society has for its objects "to promote acquaintance among representative men of the United States and those of the other Republics of America; to show hospitality and attention to representative men of the other Republics of America who visit the United States; and to take such other steps, involving no political policy, as the society may deem wise to develop, and conserve mutual knowledge and understanding and true friendship among the American Republics and peoples." The society's attitude toward commerce and commercial policy is sug-

gested by its attitude toward political policy. It has a broad fundamental interest in both and will not lend its name or support to movements or enterprises involving either.

Although the activities of the society up to the present have been prominently of a social character, through its offices at 15 Broad Street, New York, information of many kinds has been furnished to its members and also to inquirers in different parts of the world who are not members ; each year an attractive yearbook containing the rules and lists of officers and members is published and distributed, as are also on occasions other publications. In various ways hospitality and attention have been shown to a large number of distinguished visitors from the other Republics, both by the society and by members personally. For these purposes the society has cooper-

ated successfully on occasions with the National Government and with important local organizations of New York.

But the objects of the society are more comprehensive. All that make for closer relations of an intellectual and cultural character, as well as social, fall within the field of its interests, and questions as to the best steps to take in order to broaden effectively the scope of its activities and the sphere of its influence and usefulness are under consideration. The rules contemplate an extensive organization with affiliated societies in different parts of the United States and in important centers of the other American Republics. The undertaking is important and deserves to attract the very general and active cooperation necessary to its complete realization in the not too remote future.

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