

O Instituto Brasil-Estados Unidos



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NOTES AND COMMENT

MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE ON HISPANIC AMERICAN HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIA- TION, HELD IN PROVIDENCE DECEMBER 29, 1936

The Conference was held at the Biltmore Hotel. Preceding the annual luncheon there was an interesting session on Hispanic American History devoted to Maya research. Professor C. H. Haring acted as chairman.¹

At the close of the luncheon, Professor Joseph B. Lockey, the chairman, called a short business meeting of the Hispanic American Conference. The minutes of the 1935 Conference at Chattanooga were read and approved. A report by the nominating committee for 1937 (Professor Arthur Aiton, chairman, Professor I. J. Cox, and Dr. Frances Scholes) was made. The slate presented by the nominating committee of a committee to prepare for the next conference consisted of Professor Arthur P. Whitaker, chairman, Dr. Lewis Hanke, and Professor Mary W. Williams. By motion, duly seconded, the secretary was authorized to cast a ballot for the nominees.

A meeting of the committee on Latin American Research was announced by the chairman and the Managing Editor of THE HISPANIC AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW announced that a meeting of the Editorial Board would be held immediately after the conference.

There being no further business, the meeting was then adjourned.

LILLIAN E. FISHER,
Secretary of the Hispanic
American Conference of the
American Historical Association.

O INSTITUTO BRASIL-ESTADOS UNIDOS

During the past few decades, and especially since the World War, the leading nations of Western Europe have left no stone unturned in their efforts to consolidate and extend their influence both economic and cultural in South America. An almost unbroken stream of lee-

¹The three papers read at this session are printed in this number of the REVIEW.

tures, missions, emissaries of one kind or another have sought to bring home to such countries as Argentina, Brazil, and Chile the extent to which in the intellectual and artistic domains they are beholden to the Old World. This propaganda takes various forms. Organizations of the type of the "Instituto Teuto-Brasileiro da Alta Cultura" in Rio de Janeiro are growing in number and importance. French lycées are being located at strategic points. Institutions of higher learning find it easy to secure the loan of distinguished professors. Few would question the justice or desirability of quickening the spiritual currents between nations in this distracted world; intellectual coöperation was never more needed than at the present time.

But let one examine the subject a little more narrowly and he will quickly discover that one of the prime though unavowed objects of these campaigns in South America is to counteract or undermine the influence of the United States. The occasional North American instructor in a South American university is quickly made aware that his European colleagues are missionaries as well as teachers. Whatever success has attended our efforts in invading the economic terrain, in the intellectual realm the influence of the United States is distinctly on the defensive.

This situation has given pause to a group of Brazilians and North Americans who are eager to devise some effective means to tighten the cultural bonds between their respective countries. Their efforts began to bear fruit early in the present year. On January 13, the Instituto Brasil-Estados Unidos was formally inaugurated before a large and select audience in the Itamaraty Palace (Brazilian Foreign Office). The gathering, composed of members of the diplomatic corps, leading educators, and other prominent Brazilians and North-Americans, was presided over by Dr. Mario Pimentel Brandão, acting minister of Foreign Affairs. Among those on the platform were Dr. Helio Lobo, the noted writer and diplomat, long consul general in New York; Dr. Hugh C. Tucker, one of the oldest and most prominent members of the United States colony; the Argentine ambassador, Dr. Ramón José Cárcano; and Dr. Guy S. Inman who was returning to the United States after having served as a technical adviser to the United States Delegation at Buenos Aires. Dr. Helio Lobo was elected president. Dr. Oswaldo Aranha, Brazilian ambassador to the United States was the first to sign the statutes of the new organization. Among the founders of the movement were chiefly prominent educators, lawyers,

diplomats, and social workers. The daily press devoted a large amount of space to the subject. The important papers carried long editorials, all of them favorable. The point was repeatedly stressed that for many years the United States had been looked upon by many otherwise intelligent Brazilians as a purely materialistic country without any culture and that this impression had been fostered directly and indirectly by European interests. Dr. Assis Chateaubriand, perhaps the best known and most influential journalist in Brazil, declared in a two column article that South America had committed a serious error in not evincing greater sympathy for and interest in the United States. It was the United States and not Europe, he pointed out, that had always defended South America from aggression; it was the United States and not Europe which had made gifts to the other Americas. The magnificent accomplishments of the Rockefeller Foundation, the university fellowships so freely extended to South American students, these and similar aids were from the generosity of the New World and not from the Old. The recurrent note in all of these editorial utterances was the hope that the new organization would show itself really effective in bringing about a better appreciation of the cultural achievements of the two nations. In view of the long and unbroken traditions of friendship between Brazil and the United States such a hope may well be justified.

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LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH IN ECUADOR

The absence of an adequate organization of the archive materials of Ecuador constitutes a major obstacle in effective historical research in the republic. Efforts have been made to obtain government aid for the creation of a national center of archives in Quito for the preservation of the documentary treasures of the country, but to date nothing has been achieved. The result is that the scholar is faced by the task of visiting and investigating scattered collections which, in view of the difficulties of transportation to some points, is a considerable undertaking. The present survey is a rapid sketch of the existing institutions in Ecuador where valuable historical materials are to be found. One or two private sources are mentioned in view of their extraordinary importance.