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No story of Oriental conquest can surpass in dramatic quality that provided by the adventure of Spain and Portugal in the New World. Its motives and methods, its difficulties and results, provide vivid incidents in a matchless series of boys' stories. Puerile, too, were the unscrupulous exercise of power, the ruthless destruction, the cold cruelty, and the unquestioning certainty on the part of these men that they were the agents of divine will. Why did they come, and why act as they did for three centuries? What forces did they set in operation that play a part even at the present time?

These questions can be answered better with reference to the indigenes already discussed, and by reference to the special character of the new-comers. For Spanish America was unlike Anglo-Saxon America in the whole course of its colonial development. In the latter case, there was a transplantation of persons, mostly out of harmony with their Old World environments, but none the less a direct product of the conditions left behind. The settlements were in large part intended to give scope to a philosophy of life already deeply graven in its outlines. The New World provided opportunity and freedom for ideals that found themselves too restricted in Europe. The danger and hardship incidental to migration were not uncongenial elements in the total purpose of these settlers. Their mission in the New World was primarily to make room for themselves. There
Social Forces in the Growth of Latin America was no motive to mingle with the wild natives, and the character of the latter made fusion impossible. Contacts were either hostile or the equivalent in effect. The Indians in one way or another retreated before the white advance. It all meant that a specialized part of European culture was transplanted to a new soil where it grew larger but maintained its own quality. These were settlements, not expeditions. The men brought their families and established themselves for life. This familiar story of the northern colonies finds its contrary in almost every detail of the Spanish occupation. It is unlikely that the Spaniards would have had the slightest interest in New England. They never struggled with the savages merely to push them back. Their objectives were always the localities of indigenous civilization. Their intent was first to despoil and second to subject. In other words, the sedentary natives, with their accumulations of desirable things, precisely fitted the characters and wishes of conquistadores. It is important to know what this character was, so widely different from its northern counterpart.

The conquest of America and the mode of administering colonies were integral parts of Spanish history. They were not details of expansion with special adaptations due to circumstances, but were consistent expressions of the national character.

The term national character is apt to be an over-simplification. The nature of the Spaniard may be easily definable, but any assumption that its qualities flow from special development of human nature is fallacious. It is a complex of customs, standards, attitudes that are drawn from a particular kind of social order, and the making of this social order is displayed throughout the growth of the Spanish nation.
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The individualism and separatism of the Spaniard become more comprehensible when it is remembered that Spain is topographically incapable of unity. Five sixths of the country is occupied by the meseta, or high table-land. The more populous divisions grew up on the coastal band and in the few river valleys. These centers of population have never been in close contact because of the difficulties of internal communication. Most of them faced outside, toward Africa, toward the Mediterranean or in juxtaposition to the south of France. Unity could never come by growth through commerce and the intermingling of persons and ideas. It had to be imposed by a superior force and maintained by administrative machinery. As with other nations, the only circumstance that could bring about coöperation of parts was external danger, which gave to the superior element its opportunity to enforce authority. The external danger was, of course, provided by the incursion of Islam. While other European nations were establishing themselves in commerce and in internal organization, Spain was, century after century, fighting the Moors. There was no industry; there was little commerce; there was only a life-and-death struggle. This outstanding fact of Spanish history forged the Spanish character so firmly that it has shown little inconsistency to the present day. Concretely, there was perpetuated the feudal order of grandee and peasant. During this period, in England, Holland, France, and Italy, the merchant and manufacturer had made their appearance. They were growing rapidly into that great middle class which has produced and supported modern European civilization. The bitter irony of a Don Quixote could have been found only in Spain.

Into this struggle with the Moors came all the intensity of a crusade for the Faith. Christianity, plastic and de-
veloping in Italy and France, arrived in the south as fixed and inflexible dogma actuated by missionary fanaticism. In this state it confronted and dealt its blows to the enemies of the Faith.

When the Moors were finally expelled, Spain presented a picture of nationhood, simple and rigid in its structure and conception of its destiny. Under the hegemony of León and Castile, the factions, mostly different areas of the coastal band, were held in an administrative unity. In its domestic economy the country possessed a feudal social order to which, to noble and peasant alike, the calling of arms was the highest in life. This exaltation of the military function, developed through the century-old struggle, was accentuated by the conviction that the Spanish nation was called to preserve Christianity and was thus the direct agent of the divine will. Possibly this attitude was a reflex of the Saracenic one—Mohammedan fanatics were fighting it out with Christian fanatics. This certainty of faith was naturally unfavorable to the growth of a rational and critical element within the Church, such as had for a long time characterized French Catholicism. To question any dogma was treason, meriting destruction. Spain was the natural home of Loyola, and, then, of Torquemada.

The Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella did not, therefore, possess any small groups who, for freedom of conscience, would fare forth to the wilderness of the New World. It possessed no citizens with ideals of liberal government operating for the good of those governed and willing to go with their families and find room to try the experiment. Political and religious liberty were, for the Iberian mind, mere absurdities. On the other hand, conquest with exploitation, under the authority of the most majestic of kings and the most majestic of churches, was an understandable
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and congenial procedure. The Spanish center of gravity was never dislocated.

There was provided, therefore, a band of gentlemen adventurers with their soldier-peasant followers, practised in arms and secure in their cutthroat piety. The magnet that drew them was the reputed hoard of gold in Peru, in Mexico, up the La Plata and the Orinoco. After the gold was found, there was search for the mines. Here were populations conquered and ready for labor. After the mines, and for the most part in conjunction with them, came the great feudal plantations, possible again through the enslavement of natives. These simple motives and methods, carried out logically, led to the extermination of the West Indian tribes and to a ruthless reduction of population in Mexico and Peru. There was nowhere any inconsistency. As late as 1781 the revolt of the Inca pretender brought about the massacre of eighty thousand. These adventurers, coming without their families, rapidly mingled their blood with the natives in the production of a new element—the mestizo, or half-breed.

All government followed the simple formula of Imperialism. The rule was military in character and carried on through a hierarchy of deputies headed in the Spanish court. Only those of pure Spanish blood could belong to the ruling caste, and among these only those born in Spain could expect special privileges. Of the one hundred and sixty viceroys only four were of native birth, and of the six hundred and two captains-general only fourteen were born out of Spain. A rigid and well-protected hierarchy of this kind could cover a large area. There were only four main divisions: the vicereiroyalties of Mexico, Peru, New Granada, and La Plata. The chief of these in South America, and the one which constituted the real head of Spanish rule, was that
of Peru. Through its audiencias it controlled the minor administrative divisions.

Only in strictly local or municipal affairs did the subjects, consisting in time of native-born Spaniards, or creoles, mestizos, and Indians, have any voice. Such rights as were thus accorded probably reflected those held from ancient times by the different areas of Spain. It was this localism, jealously guarded by every Spaniard, which gave to the native of the New World his only practice in the functions of government, and even here his wishes and activities could make little headway against the general administrative system.

The trend and effects of Spanish rule, at home in regions thickly populated with natives who had learned to work, are to be read in the rapid decay that followed its cessation. All the wealth obtainable was carried out of the country. These regions were prosperous for the owners by forced labor in mines and on plantations. Then Spanish rule came to an end. The masters went away leaving a degraded, ignorant, poverty-stricken population to admire their palaces and cathedrals and to remember the pomp and grandeur of viceroyal courts. In brief, there was no healthy force in operation that could carry a nation forward.

This is seen by contrast in what was relatively an exception to the general method of settlement. There was for the Spaniard nothing attractive on the plains bordering the Rio de la Plata. He was at first concerned with the location of the Tordesillas line, which, by decree of the Pope, separated the possessions of Spain and Portugal. But he was further interested in the report that the upper reaches of the river would bring him to localities where silver might be abundant, as the natives of Paraguay possessed ornaments of this metal. So the old motive came
into operation, gave its name to the river, and carried a few expeditions northward to Paraguay. There docile Indians were found who could be forced to work. On the great plain to the south were only natives of a fierce, degraded type who presented no existing social order that could be taken over and used. Incidental settlements were made on the river, which were overwhelmed or deserted. This kind of thing was not congenial to the Spanish temperament. In course of time the settlement of the Argentine plain was effected by half-breeds moving south from Paraguay, and based economically upon the great herds of cattle and horses that had grown from the few animals left behind when the Spaniards had given up their settlements. When Buenos Aires was founded in 1581, it was a Gaucho settlement drawing support from the cattle ranches established along the river. Here at least was one real settlement.

Meanwhile the Spaniards had extended their operations southward from Peru as they brought the mines into operation. The silver mines of Potosí were opened in 1545, and those of Oruro in 1575. The simple fact that miners needed provisions brought prosperity to the neighboring plains where the natives were numerous and plantations could be established. By the end of the sixteenth century the northwestern portion of Argentine was filled with thriving settlements. These two streams from Peru in the northwest and from Paraguay in the north gradually came together, and the eastern settlements were, of course, brought fully under Spanish control. But Buenos Aires was, so to speak, the tail-end of the system. It had no metals and no natives to exploit. It could boast only of half-breed cattlemen. Until the end of the colonial period, freedom of commerce was denied. A monopoly in horsehair was established. Export
Social Forces in the Growth of Latin America could be effected only by transportation across the continent, over the Cordillera, up the west coast, across Panama, and so to Cadiz. Commerce could only exist by permission of the government. It is not strange, therefore, that Buenos Aires should have become a community of smugglers dealing especially with the English, whose power was extending itself over these seas.

This case is mentioned to illustrate the fact that the typical Spanish colony could have no healthy economic growth. For this Argentine stone, rejected of the builders, is the corner-stone of the whole South American edifice. A handful of half-breeds with work of their own and smuggling their products to foreign traders were a community more pregnant of ultimate prosperity than those of Lima and the city of Mexico. As this community grew, it was to be expected that governor and archbishop would arrive on the scene to initiate the usual methods of control and extortion. But the Argentines of the plains were not Indians subservient to the will of their Spanish masters. Hostility grew from the start, intensified with every new administrative stupidity, and finally broke the bonds. These were the true revolutionists whose determination, carried into Chile and Peru, destroyed the hold of Spanish dominion on the South American continent.