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THE CORRELATION OF GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

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THE title may be taken to indicate in a general way the beliefs that a definite relation exists between the subject-matter of geography and history and that this relation is not sufficiently realized in our teaching of them. In order to make any definite suggestions toward improvement in the teaching it will be needful first to define their mutual relations.

If one compares the continents of the Northern with those of the Southern hemisphere in world significance, the contrasts, in both present and past times, seem marked. In the northern continents, almost without exceptions, have the virile races of the world—even civilization itself—developed. "Westward the course of empire takes its way"—in the Northern world only. These continents have helped one another to develop and now are reaching out to the southern continents. The latter have been the ones subject to missionary effort—physically, intellectually, and religiously. To make the observation is to seek the cause. The northern continents are those of irregular coastlines, offering good harbors and bays, hence inviting to commerce and mutual relationship; of great range of climate with prevailing habitable conditions; of diversity and abundance of plant and animal life. Physical conditions have stimulated and rewarded toil and growth; environment has made for civilization.

The one most apparent exception, Egypt, tests yet conforms to our rule. One of the earliest civilizations for the very reason that its physical surroundings were more favorable even than those in the northern continents; with water and prepared soil annually furnished by the river; with warmth of climate suitable for all manner of produce, what wonder that leisure was furnished, after necessities were provided, wherein to cultivate the higher things in life? Religion, caste, art, science, learning flourished. Well might they worship the Nile!

Greece, renowned for stalwart, liberty-loving people, for commerce, literature and art, was a peninsula centrally located in the Mediterranean world, a drowned region "up to its knees in water" with ridges standing boldly out in peninsulas and islands, its lowlands giving place to bays and straits. Those ridges, as any map of ancient Greece will show, formed barriers separating independent tribes. Beauty of

scenery, climate, and ease of communication with all parts of the known world invited her later distinction.

England furnishes another illustration in point. Situated at the center of the land hemisphere she can reach more readily than any other country to all parts of the world. Yet in her separation from the continent of Europe she has been free to go her own way and work out her own destiny. Insulated, yet central, she could seek out or keep out the world. Her nearest neighbors, the low plains of Europe, fertile and teeming with population, invited commerce and the exchange of manufactured for raw goods; her embayed coastline first gave access to pirate rovers, then encouraged their descendants to commerce, exploration, colonization. Geologically a part of Europe, fertile for plants, wealthy in mines, the invaders came for agriculture and remained later for manufactures and commerce. To-day Great Britain is an empire whose "drumbeat follows the sun"; the Bank of England has long been the standard for the world; and her commerce and manufactures are as widely known.

The German Confederation, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Spain,—many other cases might be cited further to demonstrate the point. Yet illustrations seem superfluous when we consider the real meaning of our problem. Geography is, simply, the story of the earth as the home of man; history, the story of man in his home, the earth. The former asks us to learn how people live to-day, all over this earth; the latter, how people have lived, in one locality or another, and how they came to live as they do to-day. The one is extended in space; the other, in time. Man depends to-day, fundamentally, upon the soil, although not every man need be a farmer. A man's occupation—a nation's occupation—depends now on place. It must always have done so. Man's problem in any age is, how to get a living, and, through perfecting the ways of doing that, find leisure to approach his ideals. With the latter grows civilization.

Enough has been said to indicate the belief that environment is a definite factor in determining the development of a man or of a nation of men. This does not mean, however, that it absolutely controls or that its influence is calculable. History is not, nor can it ever be, prophecy. Heredity and human reaction cannot be neglected. Indians and English had the same environment in our own land; how different their use of it!

Nor does the environment restrict growth in any narrow sense. By truer conformity to Nature's laws man may rise superior to his mere surroundings. Irrigation on an immense scale in our arid West

shows our real dependence on, yet superiority to, environment. Without water there cannot be agriculture; yet where the land is not near rivers water is being brought to it. The telephone and the electric car are transforming the life in our country portions of New England: such works as those of the United States Steel Corporation transform Nature through use of her own laws. Only through such use of Nature do we develop ourselves most highly.

Particularly evident is this relation of history and geography in the United States. Hence it is relatively easy and particularly beneficial to illumine our study of its geography by historical side-lights, and explain its history by relation to physical surroundings. Each study will then re-enforce the other. Let us see how history will illumine the geography.

From the purely geographical standpoint we think of the Appalachians as "old mountains," well rounded, wooded to their summits. We find them to consist of the Allegheny Ridges and Plateaus, Great Valley, and Blue Ridge; we notice also their geological structure and origin and the peculiar forms resulting from their erosion, whereby they have been for us storehouses of coal and iron. Why not see them also as fort and barrier for the early English colonists? If they furnished protection till the settlers grew strong, they also hemmed them in when ready for westward expansion. Any relief, drainage, or railroad map will indicate the lines by which this section could be traversed. These four were not only used in war and migration but they had been already marked out by buffaloes or Indians. The Iroquois Trail, early used as an Indian war-path, became as well the war-path of armies in the French and Indian War; and in the Revolution the Mohawk Valley was a contested way. The Erie Canal on this same natural route helped make New York City. To-day the road, canal, and parallel lines of railroad, crowded side by side in the narrower parts of this pass, show its abundant usefulness.

Farther south Nemacolin's Path became the road of Washington and Braddock, later a settlers' path to the new West, now the roadbed of the Pennsylvania railroad. The Baltimore and Ohio railroad now uses the Kittanning Trail—a pathway in Pontiac's War, the National Road of struggle and party division in our early constitutional days. The Wilderness Road, leading to the settlement of Boone and other pioneers, was much traveled and that long before its use in the Civil War.

In later days these same mountains have been robbed of coal and iron; they have witnessed the coming of the United States Steel

Corporation; and to-day their wealth—in bridges, rails, and locomotives—is found all over the world.

If our geographical study of the Appalachians can include such glimpses into the dealings of surface-scratching man, and his use of them, will not the vision strengthen the picture? Will it not pay, from the mere geographical standpoint? Is there anything in this which may not, in spirit, be applied as well to Prairies, Rockies, or Mississippi?

Attention to geographical factors as influencing history may, on the other hand, result in a new classification of the periods of our history, a better economic understanding of the present, and more intelligent outlook upon the future.*

From 1600 to 1700, the period of colonization, the contest was between English, French, and Spanish settlers,—each in his own way adjusting himself to an environment largely incompatible with his previous life. The Spanish had, indeed, their pick in the continent. Carried naturally by winds and currents to that portion most like the homeland in climate and resources, they at once set about either gaining from their new territory wealth in the form of gold, or Christianizing the natives—not so much for the good of the latter as to extend their faith. They showed themselves conquerors and rulers.

Their treatment of the natives is in striking contrast with that of the French. These, as traders, possessed themselves of the waterways and of the interior, established forts and trading posts. To the Indian they said; “Here are powder and bullets to help you get more peltries; bring them to us and we will pay you well; hunt, if you choose, under our very forts.” The *Coureurs des bois* adopted Indian customs and lived almost Indian lives. Small wonder that the Indians were their allies!

The Englishman's frontier was as much out of harmony with Indian life as the Frenchman's was in sympathy. He cleared, ploughed, planted the land; his settlements were compact, aggressive. He adjusted himself to pioneer conditions, fought the Indians in their own way, steadily resisting their mode of life. Very naturally the Indians hated the English—an advantage of which the French did not hesitate to avail themselves. Among all the tribes the Five Nations alone were openly the friends of the English, and that because the French had early joined their foes and fought against them.

To contrast, then, the claims of these rival nations, the Spanish had the claim richest in mineral and plant wealth; the French that of

* “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” by Frederick J. Turner, in Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1893, pp. 199–227.

greatest extent and resources; the English that most compact and permanent. Their mode of settlement meant a conquest and reclamation of the land with westward progress as fast as development permitted. By 1700 the frontier line coincided closely with the "fall line," extending from New York through the present Trenton, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, Raleigh and Augusta. Now marked by important cities, it had then long been a line of Indian villages, where falls interrupted the use of the rivers, navigable up to this point.

1700 to 1783 witnessed the struggle for possession, in two distinct phases. By 1750 the frontier had been pushed westward as far as the Alleghenies. In nearly all the colonies the western portions or the "backwoods" were not only less developed than the older eastern, but a marked difference in spirit had begun to be evident. The "backwoodsman"—self-reliant, independent, liberty-loving—was a marked contrast to the more cultivated citizen of the coastal region. An aristocratic feeling might develop in the "East" but pure democracy alone could exist on the frontier. During this time there were many Indian wars, and preparation was being made for the final struggle—the French and Indian War. It was a period of contest with the uncivilized occupants of the soil; it was a contest for life itself and for possession. (See Map I, page 392.)

From 1750 till 1783 the struggle became one for freedom. By the French and Indian War the French barriers were removed and expansion westward was, to the Mississippi, unrestricted save by Nature. Notwithstanding the stress of the time the frontier was pushed west of the Alleghenies as far as the limestone belt extended. (Compare the population map for 1790, Eleventh Census, with the United States geological map, 14th Annual Report, U. S. G. S.) In two places small islands of population show the beginnings of settlement in the Southwest Territory; in the blue-grass regions of Kentucky and in Tennessee, Boone and others had found the limestone again outcropping. (See Map I, page 392.)

During the same period occurred also the Revolution from England. Expressive of the self-reliant spirit of the frontier, it was also a strong lesson in mutual dependence and consolidation which alone could make a nation.

* The next period—from 1783 to 1815—was one of Federal union and consolidation. It witnessed the pushing of settlement almost

* It is suggested that in reading the following paragraphs reference be made to the series of maps in Part I. of the Report on Population of the United States, Eleventh Census. These show the advance of population decennially since 1790.

MAP II. THE FRONTIER OF 1820

The shading is arranged as in Map I. (page 302.) Notice the lines of advance; the thickly settled regions; the "islands" of unsettled areas left behind where conditions were unfavorable; and the settled "islands" in advance in the particularly favorable regions.

to the Mississippi; Northwest and Southwest Territories developed. Still, the most decided advance was in marking out the lines for later rapid extension. The first six years were mainly a struggle for government—the “Critical Period.” From 1789 to 1801 form was given to the new government. Yet in the very beginning of our institutions parties began to crystallize, and along the former lines; aristocratic and frontier spirits were represented in Washington’s cabinet, in all elections after the first, in foreign relations, in questions of internal improvements. Under Federalist supremacy a certain stamp was given our government which has influenced our whole history. (See Map II, page 409.)

Attention was absorbed from 1801 to 1815 in defending frontier and commercial rights and in uniting the country. It was essentially a time for showing to the world a united country, ready to be considered as a nation. It was a time, as well, of steady though quiet growth in preparation for the succeeding burst of progress.

The period from 1815 to 1850 may well be termed one of Westward Extension. The frontier pushed westward to eastern Kansas, Nebraska and Indian Territory, and nearly all the included land was occupied. Thirteen new States were added to the Union. It seems most natural to think of the latter part of this time as one dominated by the slavery contest; and yet the development of that question was in large part due to this same westward extension. The Northwest and Southwest were differentiated in both climate and soil—the former being largely glaciated, the latter not. The one was poorly adapted for slavery; the other well; the one was opposite the non-slaveholding North, the other adjacent to the slaveholding South. Slavery was from the first an economic question; not until late in the contest were its ethical aspects prominent. It is significant, too, that the question became bitter only when it became a frontier issue; the same self-reliant, independent spirit which showed in the Whiskey and Shay’s Rebellions, helped give the bitterness to the contest. Only when the available slaveholding frontier was becoming exhausted was the issue forced. During this same time the character of those chosen to the presidency changed significantly; previously they had been statesmen, like Washington and Adams; since then they have been largely popular heroes, as Jackson, Harrison and Lincoln.

Turning from these more prominent characteristics of the period we shall find that the more quiet phases show better the real growing strength of the time, and the resources which made it possible to endure the struggle and yet keep our place as a nation. It was a time of development of agriculture and of economic differentiation. Much

MAP III. THE FRONTIERS OF 1860 AND 1870

The shaded area includes the places whose population was in 1860 over two per square mile. Notice the slight advance and the relation to the lines of twenty, twenty-five and thirty inches annual rainfall, when aridity checked progress in the West. The dotted line is the boundary of cultivation of cotton, rice, sugar, etc. in California, Utah, and Colorado. Compare this with maps in any United States History showing the slave States or the loyal, seceding, and doubtful boundary States. Differences in soil and climate caused the differentiation between the Northwest and Southwest.

of the labor-saving agricultural machinery was put in use and agriculture began to appear a prominent industry.

The period from 1850 to 1880, from an industrial standpoint, was a time of slow laying of the foundations for another forward leap. It was characterized by the War Between the States and the restoration of economic unity. The first five years were given to the struggle and the second to the reconstruction necessarily following. During this time the frontier moved forward slowly. This was due, in part, to the fact that the arid frontier was reached. The frontier lines of 1860 and 1870 followed closely the line of thirty inches of annual rainfall, excepting Indian reservations; in no place did they approach that of twenty inches. (See Map III. page 411.)

The last ten years of this period may well be called the time of agricultural dominance, although agriculture had been assuming this importance since 1840. Exports of raw material, other than cotton, became extremely important and were an agricultural factor in the life of European nations. At the same time manufacturing made rapid strides, especially in the East; it became important to our own country but had not assumed world importance.

It is interesting to notice further that the arid west could not restrict the westward growth of population. Three islands of new settlements appear on the population map for 1870, where mining or agriculture offered inducements. Colorado, Utah and California show nuclei for future development.

1880-1898. This period is one of development rather than spreading of population. It is true that growth around the three nuclei of settlement mentioned above was so extensive that the superintendent of the census of 1890 declared the frontier practically exhausted, so that our task became one of developing and filling in the arid and otherwise undeveloped regions; yet the preponderating activity of the period seems to have been the development of manufactures. For home use mainly they became the dominant industry of our country. With the approaching exhaustion of the public lands there was a marked growth of socialistic ideas and the formation of trusts and labor unions. Hitherto men dissatisfied with their work could emigrate to fertile western lands almost given to them; that possibility now became much more restricted. Trusts and labor unions seem, in a way, a result of this dissatisfaction when the former alternative was removed.

In 1898 there seems to have begun a new period, in which we are now living. Industrially, our trade in manufactured articles in the world market has assumed international importance. To the older

manufacturing and commercial nations we now supply manufactured goods as well as raw materials.

At the same time our nation assumed among the nations of the world a new importance and entered upon a course of action perhaps un contemplated by our constitution—the career of expansion and colonial possession. Prowess in warfare led to new respect among nations. Possibly the extinction of the frontier has led to a bursting of our bounds as a new expression of the same activity.

To summarize the effect of our geographical illumination of history, one needs but recall that we have found a westward movement of successive frontiers,—those of the pioneer, ranchman, farmer, manufacturer,—giving us the key to the dominant questions of each period, to its political theories and parties, and to its economic questions. We have seen that any one physiographic region has felt the influence of these successive waves of industry until it has finally settled down, or is now settling down, to the industry to which it is best adapted. An interesting illustration of recent changes of this kind is seen in the farming regions of the Middle West. Ten years ago the farmers there depended upon immense crops of wheat or some other staple; the harvests were followed by immediate sales at whatever prices were offered. To-day diverse crops are produced. Large barns offer opportunity for storage to await favorable markets or use for fodder, which will offer double profit to the farmer when beef is in demand. (See the *World's Work*, Feb., 1903.)

The results upon American character have been marked. One hundred years ago the lank, drawling "Yankee" was called typical; now the general complaint is "Americanitis." We fear that we live at too great tension. The magnitude with which operations have been conducted in the West has led to the day of large things. Trusts are the natural results. Just now the trust question is at a vexed place and we are inclined to frown upon great combinations. May they not be, when rightly supervised, but an extension of the largeness of doing things and economy of production which will still further advance our nation?

Thus this study of history leads ever to present-day problems and conditions, and helps to an intelligent outlook upon the future—just the training for our future citizens.

In answer to the original query as to the relation of geography and history, then, we find that they cannot be combined as one study. The one subject is extended in time, limited in space; the other, the reverse. Yet each subject may re-enforce the other by explaining,

amplifying, making vivid, and fixing in mind through relation of cause and effect, for they view from different points the same facts. It is much like a trip through an unknown region by train. One may pay exclusive attention to the view from the windows on either side alone and yet gain a very imperfect idea of the country; successive trips, viewing but one side each time, will still not give a perfect idea; neither can we see everything on both sides at once. Yet we may on each trip view one side, with occasional glances at the other, so as to correlate properly the two sides and thus gain by two or three trips an accurate conception of the whole region.

The practical outcome of the whole matter is the question: how may we accomplish all this? To show in a measure how the proper associations may be made it will be well to consider briefly the stages in the development of average school children. In the period before the high school we may say that they pass through three stages, each roughly corresponding to three school years. The first is the period of self-consciousness, in which the child is learning to know himself and the outside world. At first he is able to amuse himself and a plaything is as good as a playfellow. Gradually, however, he becomes more and more interested in others and he passes into the stage of social consciousness. Now he is busy in knowing others and competing with them in games: interested to know what they are doing and to try for himself what he sees. At the third stage, that of adjustment of self in society, manhood and womanhood appear; the attempt is to fit the self into the work of others and find a place in the world; it is the time of "team-play" when the team's gain is worth the individual sacrifice: when the interest centers in seeing how other individuals and nations have fitted themselves into the order of things; harmony, adaptation, is the keystone.

In meeting the needs of children in the first stage we have done well to use history myths, birthday celebrations, stories of men and events where *action* predominates. In geography as well we are coming more and more commonly to study the home environment and to pass from that and the activities based upon it to noted and wonderful things of a similar nature throughout the world. Through these things the child is knowing himself and the outside world. He does not think the historical character so much as think himself in that one's place; he knows the hills as places for good or poor coasting. He learns to know and enjoy himself through his own and others' experiences.

The needs of the children in the second stage are met by the study of the whole earth, the regions of heat, cold, rain, etc., and the

life in those regions. This leads us, in our history, to the thought of different nations and peoples, through stories of the Greek, Roman, Jewish, English, as well as our own people. Explorers (those who were learning the outside world for the first time) in their own lives worked out what each child wishes to do at this stage; hence their lives and adventures are of deep interest. As attractive are the frontiersmen, who were living brave lives in maintaining themselves against foes animate and inanimate. In short, during this period children wish to organize their thinking of the geography and history of all parts of the world.

In the third stage, of self-adjustment, the pupil searches for suggestions throughout the outside world. His study of the nations leads him to see what each nation has done with its portion of the world; why some have increased in power, others lost; what each nation means to its colonies and to the world to-day. In geography the emphasis is on the present-day conditions as a result of evolution, of several different nations. In history, the emphasis should be upon the steps in the development of the nation,—the influence of inheritance, environment, and the effect of national reaction on each. The westward extension of successive frontiers, the development of national life, the relation of geographical factors to that development will all interest and seem a part of real life, far more than the older study of mere facts and dates.

The high school phase of this subject may be simply touched upon in passing. Geography there has assumed distinctly the scientific phase and is subdivided into physiography, meteorology, astronomy, etc. Its principles help even more in tracing the steps in the development of other nations—ancient, medieval, and modern—particular stress being given to the English; finally, a review of United States history, in the fourth year, is needed; the best preparation for American citizenship (for intelligent voting and for grasp of present-day problems) demands the careful use of the reasoning power which has developed during the high school course. Grammar school students, at best, have gained only partial power in judgment. Their best thinking and training must not be put exclusively upon Greek and Roman issues, peculiar to Greek and Roman environment of hundreds of years ago, but in part upon those which relate to successful life to-day and successful preparation for the future.

If we are able to follow these suggestions history will be something more than a dry record of the dead past; it will be part of the living present and the unknown future. Geography will be more than mere location or inanimate nature—it will be life itself. They will be mutually helpful and explanatory and both will be of vital interest to the every-day life of each individual.