THEORIES AND PRACTICES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ORGANIZATION
AND ADMINISTRATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA

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This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Mary. She has been a constant inspiration and help in the composition and editing of it.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Education is decisive in the life of a nation. It is through education in one form or another that a people develops its mental, social, and spiritual values. Through education a nation preserves its social heritage, penetrates the mysteries of nature, inquires into the possibilities of the supernatural, and comes to grips with the role of man in the universe. It is the process of education which makes it possible for the people of a nation to progress and thus to surpass the achievements of their forefathers. It is not surprising, then, that men of all ages have been concerned with the education of the growing generation. Because of this interest education has reached its due place among the things considered indispensable for the happiness of humanity. Thus, it is very important that each country approach its educational task with a deep sense of responsibility and a sincere desire to put its greatest resources to the service of education.

A democratic nation, through its proper agencies, is responsible for providing the best educational system available for its citizens. It is its duty to create an atmosphere favorable to experimentation in order that its citizens may find new ways and new answers to the educational quest, which are adapted to any new situation in which it may find itself. A nation, through its educators, has the double task of moving away from the old ideas and practices which have been found at fault and of consolidating the new ones until further changes in the world make another evaluation necessary. Only in this way can a nation guarantee the best
educational opportunities to its citizens.

Without doubt in a democracy education is looked upon as the means of liberating the minds of the people. But frequently this desire for improvement is blocked by natural barriers, financial problems, or traditional habits of thinking and acting. It is only through the patient, and sometimes painful, labors of those that have the vision of a greater future that progress finally comes.

The Republic of Colombia has faced many struggles and obstacles in its development. In the course of the present century it has been slowly recovering from the scars produced by internal strife and instability. The recovery is not complete even now. It still faces many problems. Political and religious persecution, ignorance, sickness, poverty, vice - all of these are burning issues in the minds of thinking Colombians. They are stark evidence of the need for an evaluation of the ideas which have been considered of great importance in the past and which probably have produced the present situation. Is the present attitude of the Colombian people in regard to the problems mentioned above the result of their social heritage? Or is it the result of geographical factors? Or can it possibly be attributed to racial composition? At this crucial time it is indispensable that the elements entering into the composition of the Colombian nationality be evaluated to determine the causes of the complex situation of present-day Colombia.

It is the purpose of this dissertation to evaluate the educational system of Colombia by seeking to determine what educational theories have influenced the development of the Colombian secondary school system and what administrative and organizational practices have been produced by
them, and by exploring the possibilities of a new administrative policy in the light of modern educational trends.

The problem under discussion has been confined to the administrative aspects of secondary education at the national, departmental (state), and municipal levels. Secondary schools are considered to be those offering training to elementary school graduates between the ages of twelve and twenty-one. According to the Colombian classification, these are divided into university-preparatory, vocational, and normal. The university-preparatory schools, commonly called colegios, have a six-year course leading to the degree of bachiller, which entitles the graduate to enter the university. The vocational schools offer training in technical, commercial, agricultural, and semi-skilled trades. The normal schools prepare teachers for urban and rural elementary schools. The unifying factors in this grouping under the term secondary are the age-span of the students and the prerequisite of having completed the elementary grades.

Although the main concern of this work is to explore the possibilities of a new approach to secondary school administration in Colombia, it has been necessary to include some background material about the country, its people, its institutions, and its problems. It was also deemed important to include a historical discussion on the development of education in Colombia. The rest of the work is devoted to problems within the area of school administration. The general organization of this dissertation is as follows:

Chapter I, Introduction, sets forth the problems, defines terms, outlines the organization of the work, and gives information on sources.
Chapter II, Contemporary Colombia—Its People and Their Institutions, is a description of the country, its people, and its institutions, with a sociological analysis of outside influences, illiteracy, economy, social status, religion, and politics.

Chapters III, IV, and V, Historical Development of Public and Private Education, familiarize the reader with the three periods in the development of educational institutions—the periods of the Colony, the Early Republic, and the Modern Republic. Through the discussion in these three chapters the reader will become aware of the factors which have delayed progress in the educational field.

Chapter VI, Present Organization and Administration of Secondary Schools, describes the current system of secondary schools with particular reference to the organization of the Ministry of Education and other departmental and municipal educational agencies. It also discusses the most common organizational and administrative practices at the local school level.

Chapter VII, Evaluation of the Present Organization and Administration of Secondary Schools and Proposed Plan for Reorganization—after considering briefly the general principles of education, the task of the secondary school of today, and the particular role of administration—formulates proposals for the improvement of the organization and administration of the secondary schools of Colombia. The proposals refer to the national system in general as well as to the local school in particular. They are based on the most recent trends in educational theory and practice in the United States of America and Europe. The recommendations represent an effort to apply the experience and
resourcefulness of these peoples to the particular situation in Colombia.

Finally, Chapter VIII, Conclusions and Summary of Recommendations, presents a resume of the conclusions arrived at in this study and a recapitulation of the recommendations presented.

The composition of this work has required the consultation of many sources. Colombian authors have been given preference whenever possible on the supposition that they are more familiar with the general problem under consideration and with their country. American, French, and British authors have been consulted, especially for the development of Chapter VII. The historical part, Chapters III, IV, and V, represents a modest effort to put together facts that heretofore have been scattered in publications of different institutions such as the Colombian Academy of History, The Government of Venezuela, The Colombian Ministry of Education, El Consejo de la Hispanidad, and others. It was very fortunate for the author of this work to have at hand some recent Colombian publications, such as, Rivas Sacconi's El Latín en Colombia, a very illuminating study of the history of the Latin language in Colombia; Hernandez de Alba's Aspectos de la Cultura en Colombia, a series of essays on the cultural development of the country; and Epimaco Cabarico's Política Pedagógica de la Nación Colombiana, a brief study of the attitude towards education of the different regimes during the period of the Republic. The general historical chronology follows mostly that of Trevor Davies in The Golden Century of Spain, and of José M. Henao and Gerardo Arrubla in Historia de Colombia. The latter is recognized as an authoritative Colombian publication.

The descriptive part of the Colombian educational system is based
principally on publications of the Ministry of Education. The statistical data is taken from reports of this agency as well as from the report of the Currie Mission, a group of American experts sent by the Reconstruction and Development Bank to make a general survey of Colombian economy. As part of its over-all investigation, this group made a study of the relationship between the economic status of the people and their educational opportunities. Some of the conclusions of the Currie Mission are quoted in this work. Due credit has been given in each case.

In the writing of the last section of this dissertation the following works were very helpful: La Practica de la Escuela Activa, by Adolphe Ferriere, professor of the J. J. Rousseau Institute in Geneva; La Escuela y la Psicologia, by E. Claparede, founder of the same J. J. Rousseau Institute; La Democracia en la Teoria y en la Practica, by Antonio Garcia, Colombian professor of economics; Democracy in School Administration, by Koopman, Miel, and Misner; Principles of Public School Administration, by W. G. Reeder; and The Administration of the Modern Secondary School, by Edmonson, Roemer, and Bacon. The Evaluative Criteria, prepared by the Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards, has also been very useful. In addition to the authorities mentioned above, the personal experience of the author as a teacher and administrator in the secondary schools of Colombia, especially in Bogota, has helped him immensely in analyzing and evaluating this problem.

No work dealing specifically with the administration of Colombian schools was found. The following authors deal with the Colombian educational problem in general: Gabriel Anzola Gomez, Rafael Bernal Jimenez, Julio Camelo, and Luis Emilio Pinto. Their discussions have been very
helpful. The names of their works appear in the general bibliography at the end of this dissertation. The study of education in Colombia by John H. Furbay, specialist on education in Latin American countries, of the U.S. Office of Education, is very thorough; although the recent changes in Colombian educational policy have rendered it largely out of date. Finally, this dissertation grew out of a similar study made by the author in 1948 as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts, at The Ohio State University. The title of that early work was A Critical Study of Secondary Education in the Republic of Colombia.

The passages originally written in Spanish and quoted here were translated by the author. He is also responsible for all the shortcomings of this work.
CHAPTER II

CONTEMPORARY COLOMBIA—ITS PEOPLE AND THEIR INSTITUTIONS

The Republic of Colombia derives its name from Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America. It is located in the northwestern part of South America, having the rare privilege of facing both the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. Its specific location is between 12° 30' 40" north and 40° 13' 30" south, and 66° 30' 54" and 79° 01' 23.1" west of the meridian of Greenwich. Its territorial extension, which originally included the countries known today as Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama, was finally reduced in 1903 to its present size of approximately 527,732 square miles. This is roughly equivalent to the extension of the six Central American countries plus the Antilles. It is about twelve and one-half times the size of the state of Ohio.

A. Physical Features

The Andes Mountains, as they enter the country from Ecuador, divide into three branches—the western, the central, and the eastern cordilleras—which run parallel to each other from south to north towards the Atlantic Coast. The Andes have had and still have a great influence on the cultural, social, and economic development of the

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1 Arango Cano, Jesús, *Inmigrantes para Colombia*, Librería Voluntad, Bogotá, 1951, p. 56.
2 Ibid.
Altitude is the determining factor as far as the climates of Colombia are concerned. Three main zones can be determined. The tropical zone rises from sea level to altitudes of about 3,000 feet, with temperatures varying from 24° C. (75.2°F.) to 40° C. (104°F.). The temperate zone is located between 3,000 and 6,000 feet, with temperatures between 18° C. (64.4°F.) and 24° C. (75.2°F.). The cold zone includes all the regions between 6,000 and 9,000 feet high, with temperatures ranging from 6° C. (39.2°F.) to 18° C. (64.4°F.). In addition, there are the highlands called paramos, which lie higher than 9,000 feet, the temperature there being from sub-zero to 6° C. (39.2°F.). Snowcapped peaks, rising as high as 18,000 feet, are common in all three branches of the Colombian Andes.

Many rivers flow within Colombian territory. Chief among them is the Magdalena River, the "Mississippi of Colombia." It is about 2,000 miles long and navigable for almost half of its course. It crosses eleven of the sixteen departments of the country. Today, in spite of the development of air transportation, it continues to be the only surface way of connecting the Caribbean Coast with the interior of the nation.

B. Outside Influences

The Spanish conquerors had to meet the strong opposition of the aboriginal tribes they found in what is today Colombian territory. Some

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4 Arango Cano, op. cit., p. 57.

5 For a more detailed description of the physical features of Colombia see Valencia, op. cit., Chapter II.
of these tribes, especially those located on the Caribbean Coast, were very savage. They fought against the invaders with great courage and effectiveness. As the conquerors reached the interior of the country, they found Indian tribes that were more civilized. In spite of their peaceful disposition they let it be known they were not ready to give up their land without a fight. Chief among the Colombian Indians were the Chibchas, who lived in the fertile plateau known as the Sabana de Bacata. They had reached a degree of civilization superior to that of the surrounding tribes. The Chibcha Empire is considered one of the four Indian civilizations of importance in the Spanish colonies. Together with the Aztecs, the Incas, and the Mayas, the Chibchas were an outstanding example of pre-Colombian culture in America.

The Chibcha civilization, however, had to give way to the Spanish culture represented by the rude soldiers of His Majesty, the King of Spain. Within a few years after the arrival of the Spaniards, the Indians who had survived the conquest were practically reduced to slavery through the system of encomiendas established by the Spaniards. Many of them died working for their masters in the silver mines or serving as beasts of burden in the building of primitive roads. The rest apparently were assimilated by the Europeans to the extent that at present only 2.5 per cent of the Colombian population is pure Indian.

Although the Indian population has ceased to be an important factor in Colombian sociology, its influence can definitely be detected in the

6 A discussion of the encomienda in Colombia is presented in Chapter III of this work.

7 Arango Cano, op. cit., p. 87.
racial composition of the Colombians of whom 46 per cent are mestizos, the result of the mixture of white and Indian blood. From their Indian ancestors the Colombians derive their natural distrust and skepticism, their almost pessimistic outlook on life, their superstition, and their courtesy. Although the Indians possessed a certain amount of manual skill, as is revealed by some of their artistic creations in ceramics, carving, and work in gold, this trait was destroyed by the Spaniards, who looked with contempt on manual work, as well as by the hard labor imposed upon the Indians during colonial times.

The desperate condition of the Indians in the Spanish colonies caused Bartolomé de las Casas and other humanitarians to denounce vehemently the tremendous injustice of burdening the Indians with hard work and treating them as animals. The solution they offered to this problem proved to be a very unfortunate one, for in their concern for the Indians they justified the use of Negroes to replace them. This, of course, opened the way for another injustice without solving the Indian problem. As a result, after the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Negro slave trade was an open practice. Negro slaves were brought by the hundreds to the Spanish colonies. Colombia received its share. However, they were declared free in 1850 and have ever since been considered citizens of the country with all the rights and responsibilities inherent to this state. Many of them remained with their old masters, but the great majority settled in the regions of both the Caribbean and the Pacific coasts where climatic conditions were more favorable to their subsistence. As they came in contact with people of other races they intermarried freely. Today those of pure Negro blood comprise only about
5 per cent of the population, while the mulatos, the result of the mixture of white and Negro blood, reach about 15 per cent. The mixture of Negro and Indian blood, called zambo, was not very successful, for only 3 per cent of this combination has remained.  

The cultural contribution of the Negro as such has not yet been evaluated. But it appears that, as in the case of the Indian, his main influence has been in the racial composition of the people. To a careful observer the differences between the communities predominantly Indian and those predominantly Negro are very striking. The Negro is expansive, talkative, frank, passionate, and pleasure-loving. His taste is sometimes extravagant, and he is not afraid to show it. He is strong in body and ready for action at any time. Superficial in his abstract conceptions, he is a realist. All these characteristics are in contrast with those of the Indian. Against this background, the European and American influence can be better understood.

1. Spanish Influence

The first European influence in Colombia, of course, was that of Spain. Spanish soldiers reached Colombian territory as early as 1500, but the first settlements did not appear until nine or ten years later. The actual exploration and conquest of the territory lasted for over fifty years. At the end of this period several towns were already founded and Spanish homes established. The task of transplanting
Spanish culture to the colonies began on a large scale at this time and continued for the rest of the colonial period. Although Latin was commonly used from the beginning, especially for religious services and practices, Spanish soon became the official language of the colonies. The Spanish language had its origin in Castile from a vulgarization of the Latin language spoken by the Romans. A large percentage of the Spanish words have their roots in Latin. However, a certain amount of Greek, Arabic, and American Indian dialects also enter into the composition of the Spanish language. Colombia has been outstanding in the cultivation of Spanish. Literature in all its forms has been and still is one of the preferred intellectual pursuits of the Colombian people. The Colombian Academy of Language, founded about the middle of the last century, watches over the purity of the Spanish language in the country.

Religion was an important concern of the early settlers. The Spanish Crown utilized the Roman Catholic Church as its main cultural agency. One of the responsibilities of every Spanish subject, including the priests, was to "Christianize" the aborigines. By supporting the clergy in the establishment of educational institutions, churches, convents, and seminaries, the Spanish rulers expected to have a strong hold on the people from the beginning. They achieved this through the loyal diligence of the Catholic Church. In return, the church was left free to enjoy its religious monopoly. It was given the power to extirpate any unorthodox or heretical principles through the powerful Inquisition. Thus Roman Catholicism became the religion of the country.

The unique representative assembly called the cabildo, a body of
citizens chosen by the authorities to rule over the affairs of the municipalities, had its origin in Aragon in the sixteenth century. The Spaniards established similar institutions in the colonies and appointed an alcalde mayor to preside over the cabildo in each municipality. These political institutions still exist. The alcalde mayor is now appointed by the governor of the department, while the members of the cabildos, called concejales or ediles, are elected by popular vote.

The influence of Spain is especially noticeable in the racial composition and the habits and customs of the people of Colombia. The Spaniards mixed freely with the other races, as the composition of the present population shows. Today about 30 per cent of the population are pure whites, 15 per cent are mulatos, and 46 per cent are mestizos. This means that about 91 per cent of the 11,000,000 inhabitants are of total or partial white blood as against 9 per cent who are of pure Indian or Negro blood or their ethnical combinations. Most of these white people trace their ancestry to the Spaniards, since immigration from other countries has been almost negligible.

Luis Lopez de Mesa, noted Colombian sociologist, has this to say about the result of the fusion of the three races:

...The product of the combination of the Spaniards and the Colombian aborigines, especially the Chibcha, tends to a deep culture: introspection, reserve, long pondering of purpose, courtesy, ... vocation for law, politics, the priesthood, manual arts; devotion to the land and to the political parties which are more inclined to tradition ... are characteristics of a race ... that tends to a deep culture.

10 Arango Cano, op. cit., p. 87.
11 Lopez de Mesa, Luis, De Cómo Se Ha Formado la Nación Colombiana, Libreria, Colombiana, Bogota, 1935, p. 8.
The Negro influence he summarizes in this statement:

... The mulato is so effusive, so generous with his thoughts, his money, and his passions; carried away by dancing, laughing, and sensuality ... all spread out ... like a sentimental map.\textsuperscript{12}

In regard to the European contribution he makes the following appraisal:

The European blood gives us the norms of its culture, endowing us with the metrical sense that characterizes it ... the most outstanding thing is its capacity to measure, its arithmetical ability.\textsuperscript{13}

The characteristics of the three races blended together within the spacious tropical environment of Colombia has produced, according to the same author, a man of ecumenical mind, sympathetic, hospitable, plastic, generous, with an aesthetic appreciation and mental curiosity.\textsuperscript{14}

Spain's prestige in Colombia has been rather low since the War of Independence. This, however, has not prevented Colombians from appreciating the great intellectual achievements of the Spanish nation and considering themselves a part of this cultural stream. What some Colombians resent is the attempt to identify the utterances of a particular political and social group at the present time with the cultural tradition of Spain. It is also regrettable that some groups in Colombia are sponsoring a return to Spanish tradition on this false basis.

2. French Influence

One memorable day in the month of August in the year of 1794, Don Joaquin Mosquera y Figueroa, a representative of the Spanish authority,

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 9.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., pp. 9-11.
entered the home of Don Antonio Narino, a high officer in the Treasury of the New Kingdom of Granada. He had been commissioned to search for evidence that Narino had circulated seditious literature against the Spanish government. Mosquera found the design of an obelisk drawn by Narino with this Latin inscription: Libertas nullo vendit tur auro. (Freedom is not sold for any price.) Other things he found were the busts of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, the latter with this inscription in Spanish: "Quito al cielo el rayo, y de las manos el cetro a los tiranos. (He took lightning from the sky and the staff from the hands of the tyrants); and some suspicious letters from Narino's friends. He could not find, however, printed copies of The Rights of Man and Citizen, translated by Narino from the History of the Constitutional Assembly, by Galart de Montjoie. Narino had been accused of translating, printing, and distributing such a document. The evidence that was found, however, was enough to condemn him to ten years imprisonment in an African jail, perpetual banishment from America, and confiscation of all his property.

Antonio Narino was the forerunner of the struggle for independence in Colombia. He belonged to a distinguished family in Santa Fe and enjoyed the friendship of the high authorities, including the viceroy. He was highly educated. By translating and printing the Rights of Man and Citizen he planted the seed of freedom in New Granada.

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16 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 305.
The political principles of the French Revolution became popular again in the 1850's, when a radical party led by José Hilario López was in charge of the government. Henao y Arubla paint an interesting picture of this generation:

The young members of both parties supported the idea of limitless progress under the protection of a Christian democracy. The magic words freedom, equality, fraternity, democracy, sovereignty of the people, universal suffrage, of which the people of Paris dreamed, were in vogue among the popular societies of both parties; their orators used them intermixed with those of the Bible and of Jesus Christ...

Out of this enthusiasm for the French philosophers came the laws abolishing slavery, guaranteeing the absolute freedom of expression, the abolition of capital punishment, and the separation of Church and State.

France has always been a favorite place for Colombian young people to go to study. The exquisite courtesy and good taste of the French nation has an irresistible appeal for the rich. The traditional love for beauty makes France the country of the dreams of many artists, actors, and literary men. At the same time, the free political atmosphere enjoyed there has taken many a disillusioned politician to its doors. Those who have been in France always want to go back. It is no wonder, then, that French culture has enjoyed such prestige and has been so intensely studied and imitated by the Colombians. The educational system of France and Belgium have served as models for the organization of some aspects of Colombian education.

3. British Influence

In spite of England's neutrality during the War of Independence of

17 Ibid., p. 647.
1810, many British citizens volunteered to fight in Bolivar's army. Those who came formed the British Legion, a valiant regiment which helped the patriots to secure the victory over the Spanish troops. The contribution of the members of the British Legion made the British Empire very popular in Colombia. Anything British enjoyed great popularity in the early days of the Republic. It was during this period that the British influence was felt most strongly. In the field of education, Joseph Lancaster's monitorial system served as the model for the schools; Colonel James Fraser, a devoted Protestant and a member of the British Legion, tried to introduce Protestantism; James Thompson, a British subject, founded the first Bible society in Colombia under the auspices of several government officials and other distinguished citizens; and, finally, British utilitarianism was introduced by Santander through the works of one of its most outstanding British exponents, Jeremy Bentham.

4. German Influence

German influence has been rather limited in comparison with that of the countries already mentioned. It has been confined to educational advice and to commercial exchange. In the educational realm two German missions came to the country. The first one had a short lived influence, while the second one provided many ideas which were put into practice shortly after 1930. These missions are discussed in detail in Chapter IV. In the commercial field, a few veterans of the German airforce founded the first commercial airline in Colombia in 1919. Since then this means of transportation has become the most important in the country. World
War II put an end to German influence in Colombia.

5. **Influence of the United States of America**

Two great examples presented themselves to the political leaders of Colombia at the time of the declaration of independence from Spain; namely, the French Revolution of 1789 and the revolution of the American colonies in 1776. The issue was a vital one, for the organization of the new nation depended to a great extent on the amount of power that the new authorities could command. Antonio Nariño favored a centralized government. Miguel de Pombo, another outstanding leader, translated the text of the Constitution of the United States of America and the Declaration of Independence of the American colonies into Spanish in 1811 for the purpose of fostering federalism. Those who advocated imitating the example of the American colonies were so convincing that the first Colombian constitution (1811) embodied the federalist principles. Of the eight constitutions that Colombia has had four have been federalist and four centralist. The two ideas have alternated through the years. The present constitution, approved in 1886, is centralist but operates on the principle of "political centralization and administrative decentralization." A great many of the features of the American constitution found their way into the Colombian constitution.

In the field of religion American churches have met with some success in their missionary work. The first Presbyterian missionary arrived in Colombia in 1856. This marked the beginning of Protestant

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Christianity in the country. Since then several American and British denominations have entered the country. Their contribution has been great in education and in medicine. There are at present about 27,000 members of Protestant churches and about 210 foreign missionaries, most of them of American nationality. Four fully accredited high schools and many elementary schools in both rural and urban areas are operated by these missions in connection with the emerging national Protestant Church.

It has been in the field of economics, however, that the American influence has been felt most. Recognizing the financial experience and success of the United States, the Colombian government in 1923 invited a financial mission, headed by Mr. E. W. Kemmerer. After a careful study of the economic structure of the country the mission recommended a comprehensive program which was adopted immediately with excellent results. The work of the mission was very beneficial judging from the prosperity that resulted from the recommendations put into practice. Another American mission, representing the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development is at present studying the economic situation of the country in order to offer some suggestions for its further development. The mission is headed by Lauchlin Currie, an expert of the above-mentioned bank. Some preliminary reports of its work are already in circulation.


20 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 826.
In order to understand how closely related the economies of the two countries are one has to consider the statistics. The total value of Colombia's exports for 1948 was $284,476,000 (U.S.). Of this amount 82 per cent went to the United States. For the same year, the total value of Colombia's imports was $277,840,000 (U.S.), of which 73 per cent came from the United States. The total investment of foreign capital in 1947 was $251,876,000 (U.S.), most of it American capital. The total public external debt in 1949 was $146,000,000 (U.S.), most of it borrowed from the Export-Import Bank of the United States of America, from other New York banks, and from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

There are other American institutions operating in Colombia. The Rockefeller Foundation, the Inter-American Cooperative Service of Public Health, and the Findley Institute are scientific organizations helping in the development of an adequate health program. The Centro Colombo-Americano is an agency through which the United States embassy presents the cultural aspects of American life. In the large cities, where a concentration of American families is found, private schools with American teachers and curricula exist. There are two of these schools in Bogotá, and others have been established in the capitals of several of the departments.

21 Currie, Lauchlin, Bases de un Programa de Fomento para Colombia, Banco de la República, Bogotá, 1951, pp. 356ff.
22 Ibid., p. 368.
23 Ibid., pp. 372-3.
From the previous discussion about outside influences two things appear evident: (1) The preeminence of a European cultural pattern, mainly Spanish and French, with the African and Indian ethnical elements playing a secondary role in the formation of the culture; and (2) the limited influence from abroad in the form of immigration. These two factors help to explain the perpetuation of the traditions and ways of thinking which are more in accord with the colonial period than with modern times.

C. Humanism and Illiteracy

It is a common belief that Colombia has a humanistic tradition. Without denying this generalization it is necessary to qualify it in order to present a more realistic picture of the cultural potentialities and needs of the country.

Most Colombian authors who have expressed their opinion on humanism seem to agree that it is a philosophy of life which offers an explanation of all things in terms of man and that its best exponents are the classical authors of the Greek and Latin cultures. José María Restrepo Millán, defines it thus:

Humanism, historically speaking, is the specific and intransmissible name of that . . . culture . . . which, starting from wisdom and beauty, . . . spreads itself . . . to everything that pertains to the human.24

José M. Rivas Sacconi, referring to Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada, founder of Bogota, says:

24 Restrepo Millán, José M., "Qué Hay de Nuestra Famosa Tradición Humanística?" El Tiempo, Bogota, April 22, 1951.
He was a humanist because he knew how to combine such a universality of knowledge with certain human qualities, both based on a solid and well assimilated Latin-classical formation.\textsuperscript{25}

But if the authors agree on the meaning of humanism, they do not agree on the extent to which this definition applies to the specific case of Colombia. Those who affirm the existence of a humanistic tradition do so on the grounds that Colombian culture has developed along the lines of the Greek-Latin cultures. There is substantial support for this belief in the literary productions of Colombian authors since the colonial period to the present time.\textsuperscript{26} On the other hand, those who deny the existence of a humanistic tradition point out that the literary production of the colonial period, as well as that of the Republic, with a few exceptions, is only a formal imitation, void of the spirit of the Greek-Latin tradition. In a daring analysis of the problem Antonio Garcia voices the opinion of a great many Colombians:

What we have arbitrarily called "humanism" is a hybrid of two tendencies: one, a reduction of culture to the formal knowledge of the Greek-Latin in grammar, rhetoric, and theology; the other, a vital reduction of culture, isolating it from the currents of experimentalism.\textsuperscript{27}

Taking a more realistic view of the cultural problem of Colombia, the discussion about humanism serves only to illustrate the emphases of

\textsuperscript{25} Rivas Sacconi, Jose M., \textit{El Latin en Colombia}, Publicaciones del Instituto Caro y Cuervo; Libreria Voluntad, Bogotá, 1949, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{26} For a complete treatment of Colombian literature see Oretega, José, \textit{Historia de la Literatura Colombiana}, Editorial Cromos, Bogota, 1935.

\textsuperscript{27} García, Antonio, \textit{La Democracia en la Teoría y en la Práctica}, Editorial Iqueima, Bogotá, 1951, p. 21.
the two different currents of thought. Regardless of whether the one
side or the other is right, it is a fact that culturally speaking
Colombia is divided into two worlds, as the optimistic Kathleen Romoli
implies in her excellent book on Colombia. The presence or absence of
a humanistic tradition concerns only a small intellectual group -- the
elite, the educated classes. The situation among the other social
groups is quite different. Rafael Bernal Jiménez has given a vivid
analysis of this contrast:

"Between the mentality and the forms of existence of the
elite and those of the great mass of people there is a dis-
tance so great that it almost makes impossible the life of
correlation between the one and the other. In the same ter-
ritory, often within the limits of one narrow piece of land,
two peoples exist, two types of culture, two human nuclei
live bound by the ties of identical nationality but separated
psychologically. They are two peoples, two different man-
kinds: the civilized man of the cities and the primitive man
of the country and the slums."

Perhaps no more dramatic confirmation of this sociological split
can be found than the index of illiteracy in Colombia. An illiterate
in Colombia is a person who cannot read or write. The famous newspaper
La Prensa of Buenos Aires reported that the percentage of illiteracy in
Colombia previous to 1944 was 46.8. The official percentage given by
the National Office of Control (Colombia) for the same year was 50.
Roque Casas, quoting the figures from the census of 1938, concludes that
illiterates comprise only 39 per cent of the population. More recent

28 Romoli, Kathleen, Colombia, Gateway to South America, Doubleday
Doran and Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1944. See Chapter V,
pp. 32ff.

29 Bernal Jiménez, Rafael, La Educación—He Ahi el Problema, Prensas

30 Casas, Roque, Lo que Ud. Debe Saber de Colombia, Editorial
studies indicate that instead of progressing towards the solution of the problem, the country is going backwards. Here is a comparative estimate of illiteracy in Colombia for the years 1937 and 1947, given by Currie, to show that there were more illiterates in 1947 than ten years before:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1947</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>1,048,501</td>
<td>1,265,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1,253,960</td>
<td>1,476,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,302,461</td>
<td>2,741,613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children (7-14):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>499,972</td>
<td>601,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>473,712</td>
<td>569,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>973,684</td>
<td>1,170,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of Illiterates</td>
<td>3,276,145</td>
<td>3,912,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>10,544,670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pondering the problem of illiteracy, the discussion whether Colombia has a humanistic tradition or not seems an academic question. If the humanistic tradition has existed, it has done so at the expense of the most elementary intellectual and spiritual needs of the people. It has been a tradition of the few built upon the ignorance of the many. It is time to dispel the illusion of intellectual grandeur and face the problem through a more realistic approach to education, an approach designed, not to eliminate the humanities, but rather to increase the number of those who can enjoy them, if they wish.

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31 Currie, op. cit., p. 275.
D. **Social and Economic Status—High and Low**

The economy of Colombia is based mainly on the rural activities of its inhabitants. Nearly seven million, or 63 per cent of the population, live in rural areas and devote themselves to agriculture, cattle raising, dairy industries, and small agricultural industries. Agriculture is by far the main occupation of the people.\(^{32}\) The wide variety of climates permits the raising of a great diversity of agricultural products. The main crops are coffee, sugar cane, corn, potatoes, rice, wheat, yuca, bananas, barley, beans, fruit, cotton, tobacco, cacao, and henequen. Of these products only coffee and bananas are consistently exported. Coffee is the main article of exportation and the most important source of foreign money exchange. The production of coffee in 1950 was 6,000,000 bags of 60 kilos each. The amount exported to foreign countries was 4,472,357 bags with a value of $307,351,410 (U.S.).\(^{33}\) The great demand for coffee and the excellent climatic conditions for its production have caused farmers to neglect other crops. Nearly six and a half million stems of bananas with a value of $18,679,253 (U.S.) were exported in 1950.\(^{34}\)

Colombia is rich in natural resources. Oil, gold, and emeralds are the main minerals exported.

Turning now to the balance of the population, the 37 per cent not

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\(^{32}\) Ibid., p. 16.


\(^{34}\) Ibid.
engaged in agricultural pursuits, we find that they work in mines, factories, trades, transportation, public service, banks, construction, government service, and professional careers. The following table, adapted from Currie's report, shows the distribution of occupations among the urban population:

*Table: Full-time Workers 1947*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>146,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Industries</td>
<td>185,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>96,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>95,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>194,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>98,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Services</td>
<td>79,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Professions</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Service</td>
<td>140,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,125,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Classes According to Income**

The distribution of personal income, according to the findings of Currie's study for 1947, seems to suggest the existence of three main groups among the gainfully employed Colombians. The low-income class, about 2,524,000 or 87.7 per cent of the gainfully employed, received an average income of $696.50 a year. The middle-income class, about 280,000 or 9.7 per cent of the gainfully employed, received an average

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37 All references to money in this work are in terms of pesos, the national currency of Colombia, unless otherwise indicated in the text. At present the official exchange is 2.50 Colombian pesos to 1.00 U.S. dollar. (The sign $ is used in Colombia to indicate pesos and will, therefore, be used here also.)
income of $1,457.00 a year. The high-income class, about 75,000 or 2.6 per cent of the gainfully employed, received a yearly income of $12,307.00. Currie also reports variations within the different categories of income. For example, in the high-income bracket 350 people received over $100,000 a year, while a great number of them received only $2,000 a year. The average annual income of the three groups is $1,073.

A typical Colombian family is usually composed of five or more members. In order to support a family of this size most of the income has to be spent for food and rent, leaving a small amount for other needs of the family. Families in the lower-income group are usually reduced to poverty because of this distribution of income.

2. Social Status

The social status of the people depends on their income. The social ladder in Colombia is composed of three classes: the lower, middle, and upper. The lower class is composed of the manual workers, domestic servants, rural laborers, and others whose income is within the lower bracket. The families in this group are usually extremely poor, unable to acquire the essential things of life. They are discontented, sick, and ignorant. Unfortunately this group is very large since 87.7 per cent of the gainfully employed belong to it. The middle class is very small. Only 9.7 per cent of the employed fall within this category. This small class is usually found in the cities. The cost of living is higher there than in the rural areas. They spend most of their salary on the living expenses of their families but can afford a higher standard
of living than that of the lower class. They are better educated and more sophisticated. At the top of the ladder are the wealthy people, who have no financial worries and, therefore, can enjoy the best standard of living. They are highly educated. Many of them retire from business early in life and go to live abroad. The great differences between the low and high social classes are a permanent source of resentment and strife.

D. Church and State

Roman Catholicism is the religion of most Colombians. This has been emphasized so much that it is very difficult to find reliable data as to the exact number of Catholics in Colombia. The Catholic Church itself claims that 99 per cent of all Colombians are Catholics. Other religious faiths, such as the Protestant churches and the Jewish groups, do not have exact statistical information. Henry L. McCorkle, news editor of Presbyterian Life, the official publication of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., after spending some time in Colombia for the purpose of studying religious persecution, reports:

Of the nation's some 11,000,000 inhabitants, at least 10,500,000 are claimed as members of the Roman Catholic Church. This is probably true if one counts all the Catholic baptism certificates in circulation.

But today, there are—at most—only about 2,500,000 who could be called practicing Roman Catholics-- the ones who go to mass and confession regularly. Of this group, only 600,000 at most are men. In this group are some 3000 priests. Easily 350 of this total are Spanish . . . This compares with about 210 foreign Protestant missionaries. The rest of the ten and a half million are nominal—if anything.

In addition are the some 27,000 members of the Protestant community (communicant members and those who attend Evangelical churches); some 5,000 Southern Baptists and Adventists (who do not consider themselves Protestant); around 45,000 Communists and sympathizers; and Jews, Orthodox, and atheists. 39

Evidences of Catholic influence are everywhere. Even in the smallest towns church buildings are found. Along the highways and railways statues of the Virgin Mary and of Christ attract the attention of the traveler. Colorful processions, elaborate ceremonials, and church festivities are frequent, especially in the rural areas. Many bookstores, print shops, newspapers, schools, and other concerns are operated by religious orders. These orders usually possess large areas of land and many buildings, both in urban and rural areas.

The Roman Catholic Church had no competition during the colonial period. Spanish authorities were very careful to preserve the religious monopoly of this religious institution for the sake of cultural unity in the colonies. Although the Catholic Church was subject to the Crown, it became very powerful and rich in its own right, so much so that the civil authorities became concerned. Antonio Manso Maldonado, president of the Royal Audience of New Granada, wrote in his report to the king in 1729 that in spite of the wealth of the country and the industry of its inhabitants the people did not prosper. In the following excerpt of his report he discusses one of the fundamental reasons for this paradoxical situation as he found it:

39 McCorkle, op. cit., p. 9.
The piety of the faithful in these lands is excessive. It has enriched monasteries and religious orders with several donations. Many persons, not having 'forced' heirs, establish a chapel in their house, lot, or farm to be administered by a given convent. With this and its product, the convents have increased their capital and bought considerable farms. It happens that they loan their principal to the neighbors at the honest interest of 5 per cent, on a mortgage of their house or property. If some time passes without their paying the interests, they are sued, the property sold, it invariably becoming the possession of the convents. The owners have to work to pay the interest to the convents, without having anything left for their maintenance. Little by little all the important real estate has become ecclesiastical; if it does not belong to a convent it belongs to a secular priest.

From time to time these warnings on the part of the civil authorities revealed the power of the Roman Church. There will be occasion to see, in the following chapters, the influence of the Catholic Church on education and intellectual developments.

The relations between Church and State have gone through three different stages during the Republic: (1) The Patronage, which subordinated the Church to the State on the grounds that Pope Alexander VI had given the protection of the Church to the Spanish kings and that the government of the new Republic was succeeding the Spanish government. (This principle was preserved in the constitutions of 1811, 1821, 1830, 1832, and 1843.); (2) Separation of Church and State, which began with the Constitution of 1853 and ended with the Constitution of 1886; and (3) Regime of the Concordat, from 1886 to the present.


The situation at present is as follows. The Constitution has these provisions about religion:

**Title III—Article 44:** In order that they may enjoy the protection of the law all religious associations shall present to the civil authorities their authorizations issued by their respective ecclesiastical superiors.

**Title IV—Articles 53, 54:** The State guarantees liberty of conscience. No one shall be molested for his religious opinions, or compelled to profess beliefs or observe practices contrary to his conscience.

The liberty of all cults not contrary to Christian morals or law is guaranteed. Acts contrary to Christian morals or subversive to the public order done in connection with or under the pretext of the exercise of any cult shall be subjected to ordinary law.

The government may celebrate with the Holy See, subject to subsequent approval of Congress, conventions for the regulation of the relations between the State and the Catholic Church on bases of reciprocal deference and mutual respect.42

The Concordat signed by the representatives of the Holy See and the Colombian government in 1887, which is still in force, sets forth the relationship between the two powers:

**Article 1**

The Roman Catholic Apostolic religion is that of Colombia; the public powers recognize it as an essential element of the social order and bind themselves to protect it and cause it to be respected, as also its ministers, preserving for it the full enjoyment of all its rights and prerogatives.

**Article 2**

The Catholic Church shall conserve its complete liberty from civil power, and consequently, free from all intervention on the part of the latter, shall be permitted to exercise freely all its spiritual authority and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, conforming with its own laws in its government and administration.

**Article 3**

Canonical legislation is independent of the civil, and

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42 Ibid., pp. 370-1.
does not form part of it; but it shall be thoroughly respected by the authorities of the republic.

Article 4

The State grants the Church, represented by its legitimate hierarchical authority, true and proper personality before the law and capacity to enjoy and exercise the rights which correspond to it.

Article 7

The members of the secular and regular clergy shall not be obliged to fill public offices that are incompatible with their ministry and profession, and they shall also be exempted from military service.43

Other articles of the same document establish that education shall be conducted in accordance with the Catholic religion and gives this church the right to intervene in the censoring of textbooks and the control of teachers.

The interpretation of these legal provisions is usually determined by those in charge of the government. A Liberal regime usually tries to reduce the intervention of the Roman Church in public affairs to a minimum while a Conservative government grants it a free hand. The decline of the church's influence in the early period of the Liberal regime, which began in 1930 and ended in 1946, and the almost unbelievable power given to it since 1947 by the Conservatives, illustrate this statement. The reason for this difference in attitude towards the Catholic Church is simple. A substantial number of Colombians, for

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either religious, political, or philosophical reasons, believe in separation of Church and State. They believe in granting each citizen the freedom of conscience provided by the Constitution. This freedom, some believe, is violated by clauses of the Concordat. On the other hand, the Catholic Church and its followers demand that the Concordat be enforced, that in a country of Catholic majority the union between Church and State should exist.

Under these circumstances the question arises whether the separation of Church and State is possible in Colombia. Before answering this question the Catholic conception of the relation between Church and State should be clarified. In Catholic philosophy, the position is as follows:

Each man belongs to two societies . . . the Terrestrial City which seeks the temporal common good, and the City of God, the Church, which seeks the eternal common good of mankind . . .

It is evident that these two different powers are not on the same level; the one is over the other; since the Terrestrial City is a moral whole, it has in virtue of this, its duties towards God . . . . There is only one universal sovereignty, the Creator. When the distinction between the spiritual and the temporal sovereignties is made, the subordination of the latter to the former is affirmed, for the things that belong to Caesar also belong to God before belonging to Caesar.

The subordination of the terrestrial power to the spiritual power is a logical consequence of their respective ends.44

From the start, the Church, a divine agency, is placed above the State, a terrestrial agency, since the end of the Church is divine and that of the State is merely temporal. From this distinction there is only one step to the following conclusion:

The preponderance of the Catholic religion in the midst of society, imposes upon the State a regime of union with the Church, demands of it the public profession of the Catholic faith, the recognition of the Church's sovereignty in spiritual things, its association with it... and the submission of all its activities to moral and religious principles.46

For those societies that are divided into several religions, the regime of collaboration between the Church and the State establishes the mutual recognition of rights and duties by means of public treaties called Concordats.46

This philosophy, tenaciously held by the Roman Church and enjoying the sympathetic support of the Conservative regime now in power in Colombia, makes it very doubtful whether separation of Church and State will be accomplished soon. However, the excessive intervention of the clergy in public matters is bound to cause a reaction against the Church. It is also possible that the longer the change is delayed, the stronger the reaction will be.

Before closing this section on the separation of Church and State the treatment of religious minorities in Colombia should be mentioned. It is not a secret that Protestant churches have been stoned and burned, Protestant ministers killed or injured, and that whole families have been driven from their homes in some rural areas because of their religious faith. Why such persecution in a country considered 99 per cent Christian? Why, in a republic, member of the United Nations and signatory of the Bill of Rights? The Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience. Why, then, the persecution? The answer can be found in the fact that the union of Church and State produces an unhealthy association in which the

46 Ibid., p. 59.
secular or civil, has to surrender itself to the religious or ecclesiastical. The following quotation, taken from an article by an authorized spokesman of the Catholic Church, reveals the meaning given to religious freedom in Colombia:

The Constitution of Colombia 'guarantees freedom of conscience' and 'the liberty of all cults not contrary to Christian morals or law' (Article 35). The freedom of conscience guaranteed by the Constitution is the freedom of any individual to follow the dictates of his conscience; and the freedom of cults means the freedom to exercise the cult of religion that each one practices according to his conscience....

For the exercise of the cult the temple is built, and, for that reason, protected by the Constitution, diverse religions have built their temples in Colombia and practice their cults in them. But the practice of the cult within the temple is not the same as the public propaganda outside the temple. Giving away Bibles and printed tracts is not an act of cult. The freedom of propaganda is not guaranteed by these articles of the Constitution.47

The implication of this statement is that the practice of all religious cults, other than the Catholic, should be confined to their church buildings, and that they should be denied the right to propagate. This position is consistent with the following belief, also supported by the Catholic Church:

The Roman Catholic Church, convinced through its divine prerogatives, of being the only true Church, must demand the right of freedom for herself alone, because such a right can only be possessed by truth, never by error .... In a state where the majority of the people are Catholic, the Church will require that legal existence be denied to error, and that if religious minorities actively exist, they shall have only a de facto existence without opportunity to spread their beliefs.48

47 Ospina, Eduardo, S. J., "La Propaganda Protestante," El Tiempo, Bogota, January 22, 1952. (The underlining is the translator's.)

The following statement of Pablo G. López, S. J., a Spanish priest, describes the Colombian situation even though it refers to Spain:

Moreover, Spaniards discontented for religious reasons have no right to enjoy more ample religious freedom than they do enjoy. For one reason they are non-Catholics, and therefore in error; and error, even when in good faith, has strictly speaking no right to show itself or be professed. For another reason, the religious ideal of a tiny erring minority ought not to be respected in its public manifestations, when these gravely injure the Catholicism of the immense majority of the nation, and can be prevented without danger to peace.49

The existence of religious minorities is threatened by the coerciveness of the above point of view. Persecution is the brutal expression of this philosophy, which flagrantly ignores the rights of the individual to dissent. The persecution of Protestants is antidemocratic and anti-Christian, to say the least.

F. Politics and Government

The leaders of the War of Independence were not experts in governmental procedure. They advocated the separation from Spain because they loved freedom and justice. They had learned to identify the viceroy and his employees with an unjust and tyrannical regime which was responsible for the inequalities and oppression existing in the colonies. When the time for a new order came, the elimination of the Spanish governmental institutions was unavoidable. The problem was how to replace them. The American and French systems of government provided the answer. The first Colombian constitution, approved in 1811, embodied the following political

49 Ibid., p. 112, quoting an article by Pablo G. López, S. J., published in Razon y Fe, a Spanish Catholic paper.
principles:

1. The government derives its authority from the people, as opposed to the idea that authority came directly from God through the king.
2. Authority in government should be exercised in accordance with a document called the Constitution.
3. The authority of the government should be checked by the representatives of the people through the legislative power.
4. No law or administrative act contrary to the dispositions of the Constitution can be compulsory for the citizens. The judicial power will have the mission of determining the constitutionality or unconstitutionality of the laws.
5. The life, liberty, and property of the citizens are protected.
6. The possession of property is the right of each citizen to be used and enjoyed as he wishes.

Thus from the beginning Colombian leaders recognized the right of the people to elect their own government in a democratic fashion; the separation of the three organs of the modern state—the executive, the judicial, and the legislative; and the protection of life, liberty, and property. In spite of the ideological differences of the several constitutions adopted at different times in Colombian history, these three elements have remained constant.

The Republic of Colombia is regulated by a democratic constitution, which provides for a representative government with the three branches or public organs—executive, judicial, and legislative. The President is the head of the executive branch and is elected by all male citizens over twenty-one years of age, for a period of four years.

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51 Colombia has been under martial law for more than three years.
He appoints the thirteen members of the Cabinet, the governor of each department, and the officers in charge of the territories.

The legislative branch is formed by the House of Representatives and the Senate. The representatives are elected by the people for a period of two years. There is one for each 90,000 inhabitants or fraction thereof. The senators are also elected by popular vote, one for each 190,000 inhabitants. They remain in office for four years. Each department has its own legislature elected by popular vote. The laws, resolutions, and agreements made by the legislative branches must be within the framework of the Constitution.

Justice is regulated by the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Court, the departmental tribunals, and the municipal judges. The decisions of the Supreme Court are final. The members of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President from candidates recommended by Congress. The departmental tribunals are appointed by the governors, but the municipal judges are elected by the municipal councils.

The country is divided into sixteen departments, three territories called intendencias, and six comisarias. The intendencias are territories which do not have the necessary population nor the economic status needed to become departments and are not incorporated in any department. The comisarias are undeveloped and remote regions in the process of becoming intendencias. The administration of the whole country is highly centralized with only a few administrative responsibilities carried out by the departments. Bogotá, a city of over 700,000 inhabitants and the capital of the Republic, is the seat of the three public organs.
Three organized political parties have been active in Colombia—the Liberal, the Conservative, and the Communist. A Socialist group has also been active but has not reached the status of a fully organized party. Most of its leaders belong to the left wing of the Liberal Party. The historical parties are the Liberal and Conservative. They had their origin in the period of the Early Republic in 1827 when Bolivar declared himself dictator in an effort to save the country from anarchy. Those supporting Bolivar were called Bolivianos; those opposing him were called Antibolivianos. The former was the forerunner of the Conservative Party; the latter, of the Liberal Party. The Antibolivianos stood firmly against Bolivar's dictatorship and advocated the return to constitutional government. During the last one hundred and fifty years these two political forces have alternated in power. From their experiences in government they have formulated a definite political philosophy. Their differences and similarities may be seen in Diagram I on page 41.

The Communist Party follows the principles of international Communism.

The relative strength of each political faction can be measured by the number of senators and representatives that each one had in Congress in 1945. Of the total number of 65 senators, 21 were Conservatives and 42 Liberals. Of the 131 representatives 47 were Conservatives; 80, Liberals; and 4, Communists.

At present there is a Conservative president and a homogeneous Conservative Congress because the Liberal Party refused to take part in the last elections and the Communist Party received very few votes.
## Diagram I

Diagram Showing the Ideological Differences and Similarities of the Liberal and Conservative Political Parties in Colombia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Liberal Party</th>
<th>Conservative Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Education:</td>
<td>Compulsory to grade school. Opportunities for all.</td>
<td>Non-compulsory. Opportunities for the intellectually fitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Extension.</td>
<td>Prefers scientific and technical.</td>
<td>Prefers classical to any other kind. Accepts the others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Freedom.</td>
<td>The State controls it but there is freedom of teaching.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Freedom.</td>
<td>Separation of Church and State.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Church and State.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This chapter has offered a description of the main physical, social, religious, economic, and political features of present-day Colombia. A knowledge of these features is necessary in order to understand the setting of the educational problem under discussion.

In addition to the description of all these features, an effort has been made to interpret current events in Colombia and their relationship to education. For the purpose of discovering the historical reasons of the present situation, the development of education will be discussed in the following three chapters.
CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION:
THE COLONIAL PERIOD (1492 - 1810)

The task of this chapter is to trace the evolution of the educational system of the New Kingdom of Granada (present-day Colombia). To deal with this long period of time it will be necessary to begin with a short summary of the conditions in Spain at the time of the discovery of America (1492), and to consider the main educational events in the New Kingdom of Granada in each century, concluding with an over-all analysis of the characteristics of colonial education.

A. The Cultural Heritage—Spain at the Time of the Discovery of America

The first inhabitants of the southwestern peninsula of Europe, called Hispania, were the Iberians and the Celts, both of Arian origin. They mixed to form the Celtic-Iberian race, which dominated the peninsula until the fall of Numantia in 133 B.C. The Romans defeated the Celtic-Iberians and took control of the land until the decadence of the Roman Empire made it possible for the Visigoths to defeat the Romans and move in during the fifth century A.D. Under the leadership of Recaredo, the converted king, the Visigoths became a Christian nation in the sixth century. The end of the Visigothic dominion came when the Arabs invaded the country in A.D. 711 and replaced the cross, symbol of Christianity, with the crescent, symbol of Mohammedanism. The faithful and long-suffering Spanish Christians fought the Arab invaders for nearly eight centuries and finally ended their rule in 1492, the year of the discovery of America.1

1 Henao, Jesus María, and Arrubla, Gerardo, Historia de Colombia, Libreria Colombiana, Bogotá, 1936, pp. 43-44.
At the time of the discovery of America, Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic rulers, by virtue of their marriage, had united politically the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon. The defeat of the Moslems guaranteed religious unity and opened the door for cultural and political unity. This was not achieved, however, until later in the sixteenth century; but Ferdinand and Isabella laid the basis for it. They utilized the Catholic Church as their agent. This church was rich and respected by the people, who looked upon it as the preserver of the faith and the main instigator of the struggle against the infidels. Furthermore, these rulers favored the efforts of the Inquisition (founded at their request in 1478) to keep Spain racially and religiously pure. The tribunals of the church and the Inquisition were subordinates of the Crown, "paid by it, managed by it, and inspired by it."^2

At the death of Isabella (1504) the Crown had under its power an obedient Castile. By reducing the power of the nobility and strengthening the councils in the towns, the Crown was able to control the political strings in the Cortes (Parliament), which was composed of a limited number of representatives of these towns. They were easily persuaded, through bribes and rewards, to work for their rulers. In addition to this control, the Crown appointed a corregidor, whose task it was to watch over the members of the councils and to see that they were faithful to the king. Castile was really in the hands of the Crown.3

This was not true of the other important section of the Spanish

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3 Ibid., pp. 4-6.
kingdom, Aragon. The nobles there were more powerful than the Crown here. They had a parliament composed of four classes: greater nobles (ricos hombres), lesser nobles (caballeros), the clergy (el clero), and the municipalities (municipios). The greater nobles considered it their right to be free from taxation and to be outside the jurisdiction of the regular courts of justice. They also claimed the right to grant or refuse their support to the king at will and to engage in private war. There was a committee of eight members of the Cortes in charge of checking the powers of the Crown and watching over the liberties of the kingdom of Aragon while the Cortes was not in session. They also had an officer, El Justicia Mayor, who had the task of acting as a mediator between the king and his subjects. Ferdinand and Isabella had to be very tactful with the proud and independent people of Aragon.

The probable population of Castile was about seven million, and that of Aragon less than three million. This makes a total population of nearly ten million who devoted themselves to different occupations. The military and religious careers were preferred by the nobility. A substantial number of people derived their income from the wool industry. Agriculture was not considered an honorable occupation. This regrettable trait of the Spanish character was brought to the Spanish American colonies, where it has had harmful consequences.

The cultural renaissance that reached its climax later in the

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4 Ibid., p. 8.
5 Ibid., p. 17.
6 Ibid., p. 19.
sixteenth century began to show its first signs at this time. In this period there was "a taste for beauty and a craving for knowledge." This intellectual and cultural movement was fostered by the universities then in existence, but it was promoted even more extensively by the ones that came into existence during this period. The University of Salamanca had been and continued to be one of the centers of learning in Europe. Other universities, notwithstanding their recent foundation, became very important at this time. Chief among these new universities was Alcalá de Henares, founded by Cardinal Jiménez de Cisneros in 1508. It soon became the center of new ideas and was regarded as such by scholars and humanists who departed from the traditional scholastic ideas of the old university of Salamanca. As early as 1514 the first fruits of scholarship and learning of this university were made known with the publication of the Polyglot Bible, considered by Davies as "the first scientific work of the modern world." Culturally speaking, the stage was set for the Golden Century of Spain.

Something about the Spanish character should be mentioned at this point. Modesto Lafuente, in his Historia General de España (1888), says on this score:


8 The list of new universities is given as follows: Siguenza (1472), Saragossa (1474), Ávila (1482), Barcelona (1491), Valencia (1500), Santiago (1504), Sevilla (1516), Granada (1526), Alcalá (1508). See Davies, op. cit., p. 26.

9 Castillejo, op. cit., p. 10.

Courage; the tendency to isolationism; a conservative disposition and adherence to the past; trust in God and a love of religion; steadfastness in times of disaster and suffering; courage and indiscipline, which are the result of arrogance and high self-esteem; the kind of pride that is advantageous at times for collective independence, yet is harmful because it leads to individualism . . . ; soberness and temperance which lead to the neglect of work; all these qualities make Spain a singular nation that cannot be judged by analogy.\textsuperscript{11}

Such were the characteristics of the people who launched the conquest of America.

\textbf{B. The Development of Educational Institutions in the New Kingdom of Granada of the Sixteenth Century\textsuperscript{12}}

Mention has already been made of the important role that the Catholic Church played in the effort to achieve the religious and cultural unity of Spain. Its influence on the development of education in the colonies was even greater since the Crown charged this church with the task of transplanting the peninsular culture to the newly discovered lands. Its specific task was to convert the aborigines to Christianity. Along with this it was the duty of the priests to teach the Spanish language and to

\textsuperscript{11} Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 44, quoting Lafuente, Modesto, Historia General de Espana.

\textsuperscript{12} The map of present South America on page 48 shows the territorial extension of the original New Kingdom of Granada in 1717. This section was part of Tierra Firme, the name given by the Spaniards to the northern part of South America. Tierra Firme was under the jurisdiction of the Royal Audience of Santa Fe and included the countries known today as Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Panama. In 1564 Ecuador was organized as an independent presidency but was returned to Tierra Firme in 1717. This territory became the New Kingdom of Granada at that time. Later on Venezuela and Ecuador were independently organized and the New Kingdom of Granada was reduced to Colombia and Panama at the end of the colonial period. See Coroleu, Jose, América, Historia de su Colonización, Dominación e Independencia, Vol. I, Barcelona, Montaner y Simón, Editores, 1894, p. 310. See Also Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., pp. 170ff.
THE NEW KINGDOM OF GRANADA
in 1717 included the countries colored in this map of SOUTHERN AMERICA.
help the natives to assimilate the ways and customs of the glorious kingdom of Spain. For this reason the expeditions to America always had one or more priests with them. It was the policy of the Crown to send as many priests as possible to the colonies.

In addition to the priests who came with the conquerors, many religious orders sought permission to enter the colonies. As early as 1514 Pedro Arias Dávila, governor of Panama, brought with him several Dominicans as well as the first bishop of the New Kingdom of Granada. With Pedro de Heredia, the founder of Cartagena (1533), came several regular priests and two Dominicans. Sebastián de Belalcazar was accompanied by several members of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy in 1541. The Franciscan Order arrived in 1550 and the Society of Jesus in 1590. By 1556 the Catholic Church was strong enough to hold its first synod to study the best ways of evangelizing the Indians. It was decreed that "all those whose responsibility it was to instruct the Indians should adapt themselves to the capacity of the Indians and do this with love . . ."14

The first educational problem encountered in the New Kingdom of Granada was how to teach the Indian population. This task proved to be a difficult one. The priests, ignorant of the language of the natives, and the Indians, not familiar with the Spanish language, had a difficult time communicating with each other. After a few months, however, the

13 Hernández de Alba, Guillermo, Aspectos de la Cultura en Colombia, Prensas de la Universidad Nacional, Bogotá, 1947, p. 80.

14 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 184.
teachers developed pictures representing the main articles of faith. These they showed to the pupils who caught the ideas through this improvised visual method. They also used sign language. A more satisfactory means of communication developed when some Indians learned either the Latin or the Spanish language and could be used as interpreters. The method of using interpreters was resorted to, not only for teaching, but also for confession with priests. This was given up, however, when it became evident that the interpreters used the information for their own advantage and against their fellow Indians. The problem of communication was not satisfactorily solved until the Jesuit Order demanded that the missionaries to the natives learn their language first, and established special classes for this purpose. The advantage of this step is obvious. Once the missionary was able to communicate with his disciples, it was only a matter of presenting the subject matter to the best of his knowledge and ability.

The subject matter that he had to present was very simple. The curriculum was limited at first to the teaching of doctrine, hence the name doctrinas was given to the early schools. The articles of the Catholic faith took precedence over everything else. Prayers like the Lord's Prayer, the Salve, the Ave Maria, and the Creed were the main ones taught. These prayers were often taught in Latin since this was the official language of the church. Most of the instruction, however, was

15 Rivas Sacconi, José Manuel, El Latin en Colombia, Publicaciones del Instituto Caro y Cuervo, Libreria Voluntad S.A., Bogota, 1949, p. 74.
16 Hernández de Alba, op. cit., p. 84.
17 Rivas Sacconi, op. cit., p. 74.
carried on in Spanish. Religious instruction also included the preparation for confession and participation in Communion. The first synod (1556), to which reference has already been made, advised the inclusion of reading, writing, figuring, and singing in the curriculum. It also advocated the teaching of the Spanish language and the reading of "devotional books containing good doctrine."\(^{18}\)

The organization of the first educational centers is closely related to the political and social developments in the sixteenth century. As the nucleus of Indian population under the Spanish authorities increased with the submission of numerous Indian tribes and the need for a more stable civil organization became acute, the early conquerors developed a unique institution, the encomienda. According to Parry,\(^{19}\)

An Encomienda was a group of Indian villages 'commended' to an individual Spaniard—the encomendero—who undertook the obligations of military service, the instruction and protection of the Indians, and the maintenance of the clergy in the villages. In return, the encomendero was entitled to support himself and his household by levying tribute from his charges—tribute which in the early days frequently took the form of free forced labour.\(^{19}\)

With the establishment of the encomienda the conquerors expected to form a political unit of government, to concentrate the Indians in one place in order to assimilate them better in the faith and culture, and to control the man-power the Indians could yield. Eventually, this last consideration was uppermost in the minds of the colonists, and the encomienda became a means of enslaving the Indians instead of a means of

\(^{18}\) Ibid., p. 75, quoting Groot, José Manuel, Historia Eclesiástica y Civil de la Nueva Granada.

redeeming them. The encomendero ruled his encomienda as an omnipotent sovereign rules his subjects. The Indians were compelled to pay tribute to the encomendero, to work for him as many hours as he demanded, and, what was worse to go to whatever place the encomendero sent him to work, leaving his home and family.

Each encomienda had a *doctrina* or little school in charge of the *doctrinero*, as the teaching priest was called. This was located in the church and closely connected with the religious activities of the encomienda.

Chapman describes what he calls the "mission system," an institution which resembled the encomienda and which probably had its existence in the northern part of the continent and in some of the southern countries, mainly Paraguay. "A mission was founded," he says, "through a process of voluntary conversion, by gathering the Indians of a community or limited region into a 'reduction' or mission village. No Spaniards other than the missionaries, the mission guard, and an occasional civilian official could stop at the mission or reside there."

He points out that the teaching was religious rather than secular--a study of the catechism, attendance at mass, etc.; and concludes that the "institution of the Spanish mission was one of the most interesting examples of 'benevolent despotism' which human history records."

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21 Ibid.
In addition to the encomiendas there were some small Indian villages which were under the direct control of the representatives of the Crown. These towns also had a doctrina with its doctrinero, but the source of economic support was different. The encomendero was supposed to pay the priest for his teaching duties as a doctrinero, which could be considered a private source of income. But the priests in these towns received their support directly from the government, that is, from a public source. According to Book I, Title XVI, Law XXIIJ, of the Laws of the Indies, the church as a whole received seven-ninths of the tithe-tax for its support. The doctrineros received their support from this source.

The encomienda system aroused a great deal of opposition in some quarters especially among the Dominicans. Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566) became the spokesman for those who opposed the encomienda system. He gave up his own encomienda in Cuba, explaining that the practice was inhuman and contrary to Christian principles. He also advocated the use of pacific means to civilize the Indians. During his long career in the Indies and Spain, Las Casas used his influence and energy in behalf of the exploited aborigenes. He is known in history as the "Defender of the Indians." He succeeded in convincing the Consejo de

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22 The Crown collected this tax from all its subjects. It was roughly equivalent to one-tenth of their total income.

23 Recopilacion de Leyes de los Reynos de Indias, Tomo I, Consejo de la Hispanidad, Gráficas Ultra, Madrid, 1943, pp. 15-36.

24 For a good appraisal of Las Casas' contribution to the defense of the Indians see Hanke, Lewis, Bartolomé de Las Casas—Pensador, Político, Historiador, Antropólogo, Sociedad Económica de los Amigos del País, La Habana, 1949, and Iñiguez, Agustín, Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, Ediciones Xochitl, México, 1942.
Indias (Council of the Indies) and the king of Spain of the inhuman and unjust conduct of those supporting the encomienda. The result of his work was the proclamation of the famous New Laws of 1542. Parry considers these laws as "the only radical and comprehensive attack ever made upon the system. . ." The New Laws ordered the freeing of the Indians who had been enslaved, the taking away of the encomiendas from those who illtreated the Indians, and the receiving in money and not in labor the tribute paid by the Indian to the encomendero for his instruction; it also forbade public employees, monasteries, hospitals, and convents to have encomiendas. The statutes went further. They forbade the using of the Indians against their will in the mines and for carrying heavy loads; they ordered that the big encomiendas be divided into smaller ones; they forbade former public employees from securing new encomiendas; and, finally, they ruled that only the Crown could grant encomiendas in the future and that the heirs of the present owners would be given a pension by the government instead of the right to continue with the encomienda.

The reaction against these laws was very strong in the colonies. Too many people were interested in keeping the system since it represented a profitable way of earning a living without working very hard. The opposition was so strong that the laws had to be modified a year later. Since it was impossible for the Crown to control the situation in the colonies, the humanitarian purpose of the laws was defeated and things

25 Parry, _op. cit._, p. 11.
26 Henao y Arrubla, _op. cit._, p. 132.
continued the same as before.

So far consideration has been given only to the education of the Indians. The provision of education for the children of the Spaniards was also necessary, however. The first Spanish women came to the New Kingdom of Granada with the expedition of the governor of Santa Marta, Jerónimo Lebrón, in 1540. Lebrón was determined to convert the province under his supervision into a prosperous settlement. He brought with him at this time seeds of wheat, barley, and other cereals, as well as of vegetables.27

The coming of the Spanish women made it possible to establish permanent homes. Most of the settlers did not consider the Indian women their equals. Even though the early conquerors had not been very scrupulous about mixing with them, yet they had no intentions of making them their legal wives. The Spaniards still considered the Indians as pagans and beasts.

With the establishment of permanent Spanish homes and the birth of the first creoles, the need for educational institutions became apparent. Without doubt the doctrinas helped to solve the problem in some cases, especially in that of the mestizos. But better schools were needed. Until these schools could be provided, the parents resorted to the tutorial method. Those who could teach their own children and had time to do it did so. Frequently, however, a private tutor was hired. He kept the children busy with declensions and conjugations of Latin nouns and verbs.28 This was not satisfactory because of the expense involved.

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27 Ibid., p. 111.

28 Rivas Sacconi, op. cit., p. 45.
and the poor training of the tutors. But the colonists considered it better than nothing.

The pressing need for formal education and the clamor of the parents made the Dominican Order aware of an opportunity. This order had already organized a convent, which had been formally opened in Santa Fe, the capital of the New Kingdom, in 1550. Thirteen years later the first grammar class was offered to the public. The Spanish settlers immediately sent their children to this school. It took this school almost ten years to widen its curriculum to include the other two classical courses, arts and theology.

The Franciscan Order opened a small school called Colegio del Nombre de Jesús in 1569; and the Archbishop Zapata founded the first regular seminary, the Seminario de San Luis, in 1580. This institution, however, did not remain in existence very long. A Jesuit priest started a grammar class for the children of the colonists in 1599.

The educational institutions of the sixteenth century can be considered only as elementary schools. However, they provided the basis for a more advanced system of schools which began in the next century.

C. The Beginning of Secondary Education in the Seventeenth Century

The interest of the Spanish government in education increased notably towards the end of the sixteenth century. This interest sprang

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29 Ibid., p. 41.
30 Ibid., p. 42.
31 Ibid., p. 43.
mainly from the recommendations of the Council of Trent (1545-1563), which decreed the foundation of seminaries for the training of future priests. The decree of the Council required the following:

(1) Every diocese is bound to support, to rear in piety, and to train in ecclesiastical discipline a certain number of youths, in a college to be chosen by the bishop for that purpose. . . . (2) In these institutions are to be received boys who are at least twelve years of age, can read and write passably, and by their good disposition give hope that they will persevere in the service of the Church . . . . (3) Besides the elements of a liberal education . . . the students are to be given professional knowledge to enable them to preach, to conduct divine worship, and to administer the sacraments. (4) Seminaries are to be supported by a tax on the income of the bishoprics, chapters, abbeys, etc. . . . (5) In the government of the seminary, the bishop is to be assisted by two commissions of priests, one for spiritual, the other for temporal matters.32

Philip II, a staunch supporter of the Catholic Church, followed the advice of the Council to the letter and issued decrees regulating the founding of these seminaries, referred to as colegios seminarios, in the Indies. Law J, issued in Segovia in June, 1592, states:

We charge the archbishops and bishops of our Indies to found, support, and preserve the colegios seminarios recommended by the Council of Trent. And we also command our viceroys, presidents, and governors to take very special care in helping them and in giving the necessary aid for their existence, leaving their government and administration to the prelates. . . .33

The purpose of these colegios seminarios was clearly defined in a later law in which the officers were advised "not to receive . . . those candidates who do not have the necessary qualities for the priesthood


and for the teaching in the doctrinas ... According to these instructions the colegios seminarios should be devoted to the preparation of the clergy. This same law established some of the requirements for the candidates to be accepted.

In the choosing of candidates for the seminaries the prelates should prefer, other things being equal, the sons and descendants of the first discoverers, conquerors, and settlers of the provinces; honest people of good promise and standing; the children of manual laborers should not be admitted. ... Admission to the seminaries was thus restricted to the children of Spanish parents who were related to the early servants of the Crown. The children of Indians, manual workers, and other social groups were excluded.

It is very interesting to note the similarity between the decrees of the Council of Trent and those of Philip II in regard to the seminaries. This similarity shows how closely the Church and the State worked at that time.

The first colegios seminarios appeared in the New Kingdom of Granada under the dual support of the Church and the Crown. As already noted, the Seminary of San Luis had been founded by Archbishop Zapata in 1580. However, the lack of teachers and funds made its continuance impossible, and it disappeared after a few years without having made any permanent contribution.

Archbishop Bartolomé Lobo Guerrero considered it his duty to open another seminary on more solid foundations than those of San Luis. He provided some funds from personal income and convinced the authorities of the need for the seminary. He was also instrumental in bringing the

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35 Ibid.
first Jesuits to the colony in 1590. Realizing their ability in educational matters, he decided to put them in charge of his proposed school. A second group of Jesuit priests arrived in Bogota (at that time called Santa Fe) towards the end of 1604. They began with classes in Latin grammar, philosophy, and theology. A third group of Jesuits was sent to reenforce the work. There were forty-six in this group. With enough personnel and means of support, Lobo Guerrero opened the new seminary on October 18, 1605, and left it in the hands of the Jesuits. Eventually, the school started in 1604, called El Colegio Maximo, and the seminary founded by Lobo Guerrero in 1605 were combined under the name of Colegio Seminario de San Bartolome. This fusion was effected only after the first expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767. Until this date the two institutions functioned separately. This school still exists.

After the founding of San Bartolome, schools in the provinces began to open, chiefly under the direction of the Jesuits. The most outstanding provincial school was El Seminario de San Francisco in Popayán, founded by Bishop Ambrosio Vallejo in 1621 and organized according to the precepts established by the Council of Trent. A reorganization of this school in 1640 enabled it to receive lay students.

The next important school to appear was El Colegio Mayor de Nuestra

36 Hernández de Alba, op. cit., p. 92,


Señora del Rosario, founded by Archbishop Cristóbal de Torres in 1653. This school was placed under the care of the Dominican Order. It has had a long and honorable history and is still functioning in Bogotá.

Other schools were founded in Cartagena, Pamplona, Velez, and other cities. But the three mentioned above furnished the leadership of the country for a long period of time; and one of them, El Rosario, was destined to play a very important role in the events of the revolutionary period.

In order to understand the type of education provided by these colegios seminarios a study must be made of their characteristics during the seventeenth and part of the eighteenth centuries. John T. Lanning, in his study of the academic culture of the Spanish colonies, has shown how the institutions of higher learning were all a transplantation of the scholastic university of Spain. Most of them, according to him, were patterned after the University of Salamanca, not only in administration, but also in spirit. An observation of the spirit and organization of the colegios seminarios in the New Kingdom of Granada proves this to be the case. They were founded by priests who had received their training in Spanish universities and who were obliged to follow the instructions of the Spanish Crown and of the Council of Trent, a Spanish dominated council. Furthermore, the founders of these colegios had hopes that in time their schools would receive the privilege of granting degrees and of becoming fullfledged universities. This desire for transforming the

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40 Lanning, John Tate, Academic Culture in the Spanish Colonies, Oxford University Press, New York, 1946, p. 5.
colegios into institutions of higher learning usually caused friction among the different religious orders, especially between the Dominicans and the Jesuits. The founders of the colegios seminarios usually drew up the school regulations which they called constituciones. These constitutions had to be approved by the local ecclesiastical and civil authorities and sent to Spain for the approval of the king. The Council of Indies studied them and advised the king as to their orthodoxy. After receiving a favorable report the king would issue a decree approving the constitutions and they were put into practice in the schools.

The constitutions of the three schools mentioned in this chapter were almost identical since they were inspired by the same source, namely, the standards set by the Council of Indies. A brief comment on the Constituciones del Colegio Seminario de San Francisco will clarify the nature of these early secondary schools. This constitution is an extensive document written by Bishop Francisco de Lerma in 1639. After a long introduction setting forth the basis for the foundation of the institution; composed mainly of scriptural quotations and allusions to the decrees of the Council of Trent, Chapter I deals with the name of the school and the privileges of the founder. Chapter II appoints the Society of Jesus as administrator of the school; Chapter III provides for the officers, namely, a treasurer, a business manager, and a col-

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41 One of the privileges of the founder, according to the constitution, was that "all the scholars will say a third of the Rosary every Sunday for the founder and his successors." Vargas, op. cit., p. 438.
lector. It also states that $110\textsuperscript{43}$ should be devoted for the support of each of the students. Chapter IV refers to the conditions of admission to the institution. They were:

First of all they should be old Christians, clean from Moorish and Jewish blood, free from accusations of the Holy Office, born of legitimate marriage, not suffering from any contagious disease, and with Spanish blood from all four sides.

In order to be admitted and supported by funds from this seminary the poor children and grandchildren of the conquerors, ceteris paribus, should be preferred.

. . . If after being accepted . . . it is found that they lack the above requirements, they will be expelled from the school.

. . . Many others, even if they are rich, can be accepted in the school as convictores (secular students) provided that they pay for their support the same amount that is given for the seminary students. . . \textsuperscript{44}

Other rules about how to dress and behave within the institution followed.

The constitution also made provisions for the daily schedule. A

\textsuperscript{42} A cedula issued by Philip III in 1625 sets forth the requirements for the rector or director of the Colegios Seminarios of San Felipe and San Marcos in Lima: "We command that in order to be rector of the Colegios of San Felipe or San Marcos . . . the candidates should be members of the present faculty and should have been so for at least two years; they should be twenty-three years old; they should have graduated as Bachelors, Licentiates in Theology, canonical or civil law . . . . The election will be made by the government; and the term of office will be for one year. . . ." Recopilación de Leyes, op. cit., p. 211. The administrative staff was usually formed by the rector, the vice-rector, the treasurer, the business manager, and the collector, all elected by the civil authorities with the approval of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. See Vargas, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{43} As mentioned in Footnote 37 on page 27, all references to money in this work are in terms of pesos, the national currency of Colombia, unless otherwise indicated in the text.

\textsuperscript{44} Vargas, op. cit., pp. 440-1.
school day followed more or less the following order:

5:00 a.m. — The beadle awakened the students.
6:30 a.m. — Attendance at mass.
      — Breakfast and recess.
8:00 a.m. — Classes: Grammar, philosophy, and moral theology
      (each lasting two consecutive hours, except
      the last named which lasted only one hour).
10:00 a.m. — Time for preparation of lessons (individual study).
11:00 a.m. — Seminars for each of the classes in grammar,
      philosophy, and theology.
12:00 noon — Lunch.
2:30 p.m. — Grammar class (two-hour).
3:00 p.m. — Philosophy and theology classes (one and one-half
      hour each).
4:30 p.m. — Free time.
6:00 p.m. — Prayers: Rosary and others.
7:00 p.m. — Dinner.
7:30 p.m. — Study hall.
9:00 p.m. — Bedtime.  

As mentioned above this was the schedule for school days. On Sun­
days church services and ceremonies replaced the regular program. This
schedule seems rather rigorous and heavy for young people, but it was
considered proper at the time.

The curriculum was based mainly on the famous Jesuit program of
studies called Ratio Studiorum. This was to be expected since secondary
education was directed mostly by the Jesuits. This program of studies
embraced three periods: 1) Latin grammar and literature, which lasted
usually for three years and sometimes four or more. In this course the
students made an intense study of the analogy, syntax, and prosody of
Latin. They also studied rhetoric and poetry in the original. 2) Philos­
ophy, which was divided into three years. The first one dealt with logic,
metaphysics, and elementary mathematics; the second one, with cosmology,
psychology, physics, and chemistry; and the third one, with theodicy,
ethics, and advanced mathematics. 3) The higher colleges: Theology,
ecclesiastical law, and civil law. These took from four to five years. At first glance this curriculum appears very complicated and difficult. It has to be remembered, however, that aside from the memorization of rules and the repetition of already discussed theses the students had little to do. In terms of years, had a student begun his training at the age of six, he would have spent two or three years on the elementary level, four on the secondary level, and four in higher learning. He would have been able to receive his doctor's degree before the age of eighteen! And it is a fact that many students received their degrees before their twentieth birthday.

Before closing the review of the system of education of this century it should be pointed out that the education of women had received no particular attention up to this time. It may be assumed that the girls were taught at home if they received any education at all.

In 1605 the Jesuits also made the first attempt at teaching the children of Negro slaves. This was done in the city of Cartagena. The slave trade had begun in the New Kingdom of Granada early in the sixteenth century. Cartagena was the main Spanish port in the Caribbean and for this reason had a great concentration of Negro slaves. The Jesuits were successful in teaching the religious doctrines to these unfortunate people and in baptising them into the Catholic Church. San Pedro Claver distinguished himself as a protector of the Negroes, thus winning for himself

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46 Ibid., pp. 462-3. See also Rivas Sacconi, op. cit., p. 55.

47 "Prodigies at thirteen or fourteen held degrees in law, practiced before the Royal Audiences, and competed against their professors for their posts." Lanning, op. cit., p. 64.
the title of "Apostle to the Negroes."

D. The Eventful Eighteenth Century

During the two preceding centuries the exclusive and one-sided educational policy of the Spanish Crown was unchallenged. Civil authorities as well as religious leaders made efforts to keep all institutions under their control in order to avoid the teaching of principles in conflict with the scholastic philosophy. Since the culture of the colonies was almost homogeneous and the clergy had great influence in the conduct of affairs, there was little hope of change. The New Kingdom of Granada had become a gigantic monastery, so to speak, whose members were charged by the pope and the king with the irrefutable duty of preserving the Catholic faith and the Spanish culture. Any intruders had to be driven away for fear that this duty would not be properly discharged. Fortunately for the colonies, the changing currents of thought were too strong to be kept out and finally l'esprit de siècle invaded Spain and its possessions. As far as the New Kingdom of Granada is concerned, the new ideas produced an intellectual renaissance; they opened the door to scientific education and to political change. And, what was even more significant, they challenged, even if temporarily, the religious and philosophic monopoly of the times.

The first sign of change was noticed when Spain sent two of its best scientists, Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, to participate in the project of the French government for the purpose of determining the real shape of the earth. The French government had sent Charles La Condamine, Peter Bouguer, and Louis Godin to make studies at the equator, in the province of Ecuador, a part of the New Kingdom of Granada. Juan and Ulloa
were the representatives of the Spanish government to help in these studies. The two Spaniards made a short visit to the western section of the country in 1735 before proceeding to their destination, Ecuador, where they joined the rest of the mission. Although Juan and Ulloa did not spend much time in the New Kingdom, the object of their visit was known and it helped those who came in contact with them to realize that the Copernican theory was being given a chance even by the conservative Spanish government.

To the conservative and dogmatic minds of the religious leaders of the time it was a flagrant violation of the Church's teachings to expound the Copernican theory that the earth moved around the sun. The Dominicans especially were strong opponents of the teaching. They definitely believed, as subsequent events showed, that it was opposed to Scripture, to the teachings of the Church Fathers, and was prohibited by the Inquisition. Nevertheless, the inevitable happened in Santa Fe.

Pedro Messia de la Cerda, an outstanding lieutenant-general of the army, a nobleman and a scholar, was appointed viceroy of the New Kingdom of Granada in 1760. He came to Santa Fe to establish his government and, as was customary, he brought with him a number of Spanish subjects to help him in his task. Among them was the viceroy's personal physician, Dr. José Celestino Mutis (1732-1808), a true scientist with a far-reaching and unusual vision which placed him ahead of his times. In coming to America he not only intended to practice his profession but also to

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48 The result of Juan and Ulloa's expedition was published in a book called Viaje a la América Meridional. There is an excellent translation in the English language, A Voyage to South America, Volumes I and II, Lockyer Davis, in Holborn, Printer of the Royal Society, London, MDCCXXII.
discover the natural treasures that lay dormant in the vast territories of the New Kingdom of Granada. He had the best scientific education that Spain could offer at the time and kept in contact with the new developments of the scientific movement in other countries of Europe. While he was in Santa Fe, he devoted his time to the study of the natural resources of the country and thus became the forerunner of the scientific movement which culminated in the famous Botanical Expedition and the War of Independence.

Mutis arrived in Santa Fe in 1761 and a year later began teaching his famous class in mathematics and astronomy at the Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario. For several years he alternated his practice as a physician with the teaching of philosophy. He made frequent trips to the surrounding villages and mountains in order to collect materials for his classes. He made a reputation for himself as a consecrated scholar. In 1772 he became a priest. After a thorough study of the subject he came to the conclusion that the Copernican theory of the universe was right and decided to teach it in spite of the opposition he was certain to receive from the conservative priests. He decided to have a public discussion of the subject and organized a conclusiones, the equivalent of the modern debate. Intellectuals, students, priests, parents, and the civil authorities, including the viceroy, were present at that memorable night in July, 1774. Mutis made a brilliant exposition of the history of astronomy; the contribution of Ptolemy, Copernicus, and Galileo; of the position of the Catholic Church on the subject; of the stand of some prominent scientists, members of religious orders within the Church; and ended with these words:
If my love for the truth has detained me more than was just in expressing my inclination to the Copernican system, it is time now to finish celebrating the happy epoch in which we see the rebirth of the natural philosophy in this kingdom. . . . We can hope that youth, encouraged by such a noble example, will devote itself to the study of natural science, and that, imitating their countrymen of Lima and Mexico, the American minds will compete among themselves. . . .

The lecture caused a sensation among the different religious factions. A great many people entertained the Copernican system as a hypothesis while others repudiated it entirely. The prior of the Dominicans immediately wrote a denunciation of Mutis and his thesis and sent copies to the viceroy and the inquisitor. The copy of the letter that was sent to the tribunal of the Inquisition was a virtual accusation of heresy, and the tribunal had to take some action. The text of Mutis' lecture was sent to the tribunal in Cartagena, where the two members, one a Dominican and the other an Augustinian, tried to solve the problem. The Augustinian ruled that the system could be dealt with only as a hypothesis and that dealing with it as a thesis was opposed to Catholic doctrine. The other member did not give his opinion. A year later the accusation was sent to the Supreme Council of the Inquisition in Castile. No answer was received. The support the viceroy gave to Mutis and the indifference of the Supreme Council of the Inquisition to the complaints of the Dominicans was enough evidence that a new approach to education was in the offing and that Mutis was going to have his way after all.

49 Hernández de Alba, op. cit., pp. 121-2. The quotation is a fragment of Mutis' original speech.

A very significant event came to disturb the peace of the colonies even before José Celestino Mutis took his daring stand. Viceroy Messía de la Cerda, the one responsible for the coming of Mutis to the New Kingdom, had an unpleasant task to perform in July, 1767. Charles III, the new Spanish king, who ascended to the throne in 1759, considered the Jesuit Society as dangerous to his political views and to the progress of the country. In February, 1767, he issued his well-known Pragmatic-Sanction, ordering "...to exile from all my domains of Spain and the Indies, the Philippine Islands and adjacent lands, the regular members of the Society of Jesus, and the novices who want to follow them, and to confiscate all the properties of the Society in my domains."51 By virtue of this law all the Jesuits were forced to leave the country in a very short time, the government taking over their properties and their institutions, including their convents, schools, seminaries, churches, real estate, mines, and farms.

At the time of the expulsion the Jesuits had fourteen schools scattered all over the New Kingdom of Granada with a total of 5,000 students.52 Neither the government nor the other religious orders were prepared for this exodus. Consequently, most of the schools were temporarily closed until provisions could be made for their administration. A few of them reopened under the direction of the Dominicans and other orders, but most of them never opened again.

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51 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 249.

There is no doubt that the radical measure against the Society of Jesus had harmful effects, for the country lost its only dynamic educational force. However, the absence of the Jesuits brought the government to the realization of how meager a contribution the State had made to education. It also cleared the way for the liberal forces to attempt the secularization of education which came later. The revenue received from the confiscated property gave the colonial government the necessary income for any future educational plans.

With the Jesuits gone, the reputation of the Dominicans at a low ebb because of their hostile attitude towards new ideas, and with the increasing acceptance of the natural philosophy propounded by Mutis, it was high time for an attempt at reform. The progressive viceroy, Manuel Guirior, in charge of the government at the time, saw the opportunity and used it.

Guirior, lieutenant-general in the Spanish navy, a nobleman and member of the Order of Malta, was the successor of Messia de la Cerda. He served as viceroy from 1773 to 1776. He was a progressive man with an alert mind and a desire for change. His ideas on education were expressed in his Relación de Mando in 1776. He wrote for the benefit of his successor:

The instruction of youth and the fostering of the sciences and arts is one of the fundamental principles of good government from which the happiness of the people and the prosperity of the state emanate . . . . Knowing this and the interest with which our wise monarch and his government have tried to establish adequate methods of teaching, I tried to inform myself about the situation of this kingdom in order to be able to contribute to the great enterprise of continuing what my Most Excellent predecessor planned, that is, establishing a public
After the expulsion of the Jesuits, Messia de la Cerda had appointed the Junta de Aplicaciones, a committee of outstanding citizens under the direction of the fiscal of the Royal Audience, Dr. Francisco Moreno y Escandon, for the purpose of deciding what to do about the administration and continuation of the work left to the government. He had also suggested the possibility of founding a public university. Viceroy Guirior sent his ideas to this committee.

Guirior's main concern was to found a national university in order to take away the monopoly of granting degrees held by the Dominicans since the sixteenth century. This monopoly had always been a problem for the government because of the frequent frictions among the different religious orders. The students graduating from San Bartolomé or El Rosario had to take their degrees in the Universidad Tomística, the only one authorized by the Crown to grant degrees. This university was controlled by the Dominicans. A national university would enable the government to control the situation, thus putting an end to the traditional quarrels. The Dominicans were opposed to the idea from the beginning. They used all their influence before the king to prevent this from becoming a reality. However, the Junta de Aplicaciones considered and approved Guirior's plan. But for the capable and liberal Antonio Moreno y Escandón, a native of the New Kingdom of Granada, this was not enough. He convinced the Junta of the need for a complete new plan of education which would take into consideration the new ideas. He drew up

the project himself. The Junta approved it and put it into effect in September, 1774.

Moreno’s plan was built around the idea of secularization. First of all, it called for the establishment of public classes in the two main institutions of the capital as well as in the provincial schools, these classes to be separate and distinct from those given to seminary students. This was necessary to avoid intellectual bias. It also established that the Latin classes should be given on a more practical basis. In regard to the class of philosophy, its main purpose was to introduce the "useful philosophy," to teach the "knowledge of nature based on observations and experiences; for in no other part of the world is this so necessary as it is in this country whose land and sky invite to acknowledge the wonders of the Most High." The course should teach "to think," for "in any civilized republic it is convenient for all its members to get used to thinking quickly." Philosophy being so important, every professional curriculum should have at least one course of it. The theological course should abandon the Aristotelian approach and concentrate on Scripture, the decisions of the councils of the church, ecclesiastical history and the teachings of the Church Fathers. The course on civil law should be separated from the canon law and should concentrate on Roman law, the entire course being five years in length. A course in medicine which was urgently needed was also begun.

The plan also aimed at the improvement of method. It forbade dictating the lessons and requiring the students to copy them. It

required that each student finish his course with the same teacher. For this purpose each school was to have thirteen teachers: three for philosophy, five for theology, and five for law. At the end of the year the students would be submitted to an examination. If they were successful, they could pass to the next course; if not, they could not change teacher (i.e., course). If the student failed twice he was expelled.

The school year began in October and ended in July. The school week was five days long. For the rules and regulations not mentioned in the plan, the rectors were referred to the Constituciones of the University of Spain, founded by the king in 1769.

Viceroy Guirior, evaluating the program a year later, wrote:

In spite of the repugnance shown by some of those educated under the old system, especially by the regulars of the convents who are responsible for keeping education stagnant in their convents, and who hated to see themselves pushed aside, unable to participate in the teachings for which they would have had to study anew, the new method has been initiated in the two schools of this city, allowing the youth to attend these classes as public classes only, with such success that in only one year... it has been revealed by experience how much progress the students make in arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and trigonometry...

The plan was put into practice in the New Kingdom of Granada before the king had given his approval. Unfortunately the intrigues of those interested in preserving the old tradition proved too strong in the court and the plan was not approved by the king. Colonial education was set back to medieval times once more.

Moreno's plan was the first serious attempt to organize education in the New Kingdom. Its actual importance lies in the fact that it was

55 Posada e Ibanez, op. cit., p. 159.
a reaction against the Catholic Church and a rebellion against the thought-control prevalent in the colonies. On the positive side, the plan aimed at a more practical and scientific approach to learning. Mutis' natural philosophy found expression in this first project, but the times were not yet ripe.

The first educational institution for women was founded in 1783 in Santa Fe. This school was badly needed. "The education of women was almost forgotten in the colonial period; very few of the girls of the aristocracy could read and write, and . . . ignorance was great among the daughters of the poor . . . " Realizing the need, Señora María Clemencia de Caycedo gave a substantial amount of money for the founding of the Colegio de la Enseñanza. This institution was put under the care of the nuns. Six years later Viceroy Caballero y Gongora referred to the school as a success and asked permission to bring ten more nuns to care for the large number of students. Pedro de Ugarte and Josefa Franqui, his wife, founded another school for girls, but it did not last long. The endowment funds left by the couple were taken over by the government and used for a similar purpose at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Both institutions were private.

The idea of establishing a public university haunted almost all the viceroys since the middle of the eighteenth century. Antonio Caballero y Gongora, known in Colombian history as the archbishop-viceroy because of his holding both positions from 1782 to 1789, was no 

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56 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 265.
57 Posada e Ibañez, op. cit., p. 250.
58 Hernández de Alba, op. cit., p. 242.
exception. He was also a progressive officer. In spite of his being an archbishop of the Catholic Church he did not approve of the way the Dominicans and other orders handled education. In 1787 while spending a vacation in Turbaco, a town on the Atlantic Coast, he wrote "A Plan of General Studies Proposed to the King Our Lord to be Established, if it is His Sovereign Wish, in the City of Santa Fe, Capital of the New Kingdom of Granada." The document is an extensive plan for the erection of the public university, the program of studies which should be adopted, the organization and administration proposed, and the general outline of each course offered. The purpose of the new plan was explained by the viceroy himself:

The whole object of the plan is aimed at substituting the useful exact sciences for the merely speculative ones, in which time has so pitifully been wasted. A kingdom full of very precious products to be utilized, of mountains to be leveled, of roads to be opened, of swamps and mines to be drained, of waters to be channeled, of metals to be purified, certainly needs more people who are able to know and observe nature and use the calculus, the compass, and the rule, than those who understand and discuss the ens of reason, the first matter, and the substantial form. 59

His plan was a very detailed one, somewhat similar to the one adopted several years before by Moreno y Escandon. It was based on the same theory, namely, that the study of nature should have precedence over the purely speculative philosophy. This was not surprising since Jose Celestino Mutis was still one of the chief advisers to the viceroy.

Caballero y Gongora sent his plan to the king, asking his permission to open the public university. He waited in vain for an answer.

The climax of the scientific movement begun in 1762 was the

59 Posada e Ibanez, op. cit., p. 252.
Botanical Expedition, the only worthwhile intellectual achievement of the colonial period. It had been one of Mutis' dreams to devote his entire life to the study of the natural resources of the New Kingdom of Granada, but his other duties kept him from doing so. His chance came when the Archbishop-Viceroy Caballero y Góngora, afraid that foreigners would come to discover the natural resources of the kingdom with permission of the king, decided to establish the institute on his own. He created the Expedición Botánica, composed of a director, an assistant, and a designer. The main purpose of the Expedición was "to study the flora of the northern part of South America, to make geographical, physical, and astronomical observations, and to draw a complete map of the regions visited." José Celestino Mutis was appointed director of the project.

Mutis and his associates began work in 1783 in a village called Mariquita, where the Expedition was located for several years. When Mutis became sick, it was moved to Santa Fe, where it remained until the War of Independence began.

The Expedition served as an incentive to the young generation educated under the influence of Mutis. They had the opportunity of pursuing their interests and of becoming known in the realm of science as their preceptor was. Eloy Valenzuela, the assistant, became well known as a mathematician and specialist in natural science; Francisco Javier Matiz was the best designer of his time. He drew most of the specimens of the flora and fauna. Francisco Antonio Zea joined the

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60 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 292.
Expedition as a botanist after receiving private lessons from Mutis. Jorge Tadeo Lozano, the zoologist, studied the fauna of the New Kingdom; Sinforoso Mutis, nephew of the great Mutis, became director of the Expedition upon his uncle's death.

Among the brilliant collaborators of the Expedition one excels all others for his talents and consecration to science: Francisco Jose de Caldas. Caldas was born in Popayan about 1770 and died a martyr to the cause of the independence of the New Kingdom in 1816. He studied law at the seminary of Popayan, but his inclination toward science made him prefer this field to any other. Tired and in poor health he decided to give up his studies and become a merchant. But this lasted for only a brief time. The rest of his short life he devoted to science. His main teacher in Popayan was a disciple of Mutis and one who became famous in his own right, Felix de Restrepo. He encouraged Caldas and helped him to go to Santa Fe to study under Mutis. Upon his return to Popayan, Caldas was given the task of making investigations for the Expedition. In this position he traveled extensively for a period of four years. At the end of this period he was appointed the first director of the newly founded Astronomic Observatory, which functioned in Santa Fe as an integral part of the Expedition.

Caldas, like most of the outstanding leaders of his time, was a self-made man. His schooling was inadequate for his keen intelligence and

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61 Andrede, Mario, El Sabio Caldas, Editorial Aguila, Bogota', 1938, p. 29. There is no agreement among historians as to the exact date of the birth of Caldas, perhaps because his birth certificate has not been found. Henao y Arrubla think it was 1770, Andrade places it at 1768, and Lino de Pombo gives it as 1771.

62 Ibid., p. 29.
his insatiable desire for knowledge. In spite of all the difficulties
he became an authority in mathematics, astronomy, physics, and natural
science. His main accomplishment in the scientific field was the dis­
covery of a method of measuring the altitude of mountains by the use of
the water barometer. His literary abilities are well recognized; his
political activities caused him to be executed by the Spanish commander
upon the reconquest of the territory of the New Kingdom of Granada after
the first attempt at separation. Caldas represents, more than any one
else in Colombia, the encyclopedic ideal of the eighteenth century.

The Botanical Expedition lasted practically until the declaration
of independence in 1810. Mutis died in September, 1808, leaving his
task to his young nephew, Sinforoso Mutis. During the last two years,
the strongest supporter of the project gone, the interest lagged, and
the work became rutinary in nature.

The accomplishments of the Expedition, however, were astonishing.
At the end of its existence it had the following:

Many manuscripts about plants, meteorology, and mines;
a herbarium of 20,000 plants; thousands of pictures of the
vegetable species of the country; a nursery; a series of
oil paintings showing the natural and respective colors of
the most outstanding animals in the New Kingdom.63

Mutis had also discovered and classified the quinine trees in the New
Kingdom. In 1817, after the reconquest, all the possessions of the
Botanical Expedition were sent to Spain.

At the turn of the eighteenth century there was evidence of the
reaction against the scientific movement. A similar event to that in
which Mutis had such a prominent part in 1762 took place. It seems

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63 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 298.
that Juan Francisco Vasquez, professor of philosophy at the Colegio del Rosario, was not teaching his course according to the textbook by Godin, a Dominican opposed to the heliocentric theory of the universe. The rector dismissed him a few months before the end of the year. The fiscal of the Junta de Aplicaciones ordered the rector to reinstate Vasquez in his job and to send the problem to the Junta; at the same time he asked Vasquez to abide by the decisions of the rector. The Junta decided then to inform the rectors of the two schools—Rosario and San Bartolome—not to have any conclusiones or public debates without the previous censorship of the Junta.\textsuperscript{64} This event, occurring so late in the century, reveals that the scientific movement was not universally accepted.

The situation did not change during the remaining period of this century nor during the first ten years of the next century. The civil government had decided to have a permanent Junta de Estudios or educational board, through which all educational matters, quarrels, and arguments had to pass.\textsuperscript{65}

The almost sixty-year-old idea of a public university continued to be a pet project of the viceroys. Along with this idea the desire for new programs of education was very noticeable. Finally, as if nothing had happened since the fifteenth century, the government decided to tighten up thought-control. Pedro de Mendinueta, viceroy in 1803, reported to his successor:

\textsuperscript{64} "La Astronomia en Santa Fe," Boletin de Historia y Antiguedades, Vol. I, No. 5, 1903, Bogota, pp. 303-7.

\textsuperscript{65} Posada e Ibanez, op. cit., p. 33.
The careful vigilance of the government in all things related to the best literary instruction has been recently extended to the appointment of religious censors who check and examine the topics of public conclusions...

This new post... not only will contribute to banish any unhealthy doctrine but may also serve to improve public education.66

E. Concept of Organization and Administration of Schools in Colonial Times

It is difficult to make an objective appraisal of colonial education for lack of statistical data. It is possible, however, to judge its efficiency by the end-products. Historical investigation shows that aside from individuals who excelled in their respective fields of endeavor there was not a single cultural movement of significance during the colonial domination. The scientific movement of the eighteenth century is the only light in the middle of the darkness, and even that light was extinguished by the reactionary forces. "Where are the great men produced by the colonial period before 1760?" asks a Colombian historian. And he answers his own question: "Colombian history does not remember their names. Why? Because they do not exist. We can only mention the name of Moreno y Escandón who educated himself rather than being educated in the schools...67 Men like Moreno y Escandón, Mutis, Nariño, Caldas, Bolívar, Santander, and the legion of patriots who made independence from Spain possible prepared themselves by securing books from abroad or studying in foreign countries. What were the reasons for

66 Ibid., p. 495.

the failure of Spain to develop stable, well-balanced nationalities in its colonies?

One answer which has been given is that the Spanish government was more interested in the economic exploitation of the colonies than in their cultural development. This seems to be true, and yet one has to recognize the honest efforts of men like Mutis and Caballero y Gongora in developing a new scientific era. Another suggestion on the matter is that the decadent and authoritarian Spanish culture could not make a positive contribution to the development of the colonies since it was already corroded by all the vices without being strengthened by any of the virtues of the time. The Inquisition and the encomienda seem to give some force to this argument. Still another appraisal brands the Spanish rule as a "reasoned despotism," pointing out the difficulties involved in attempting anything new in any field of endeavor, the red-tape and delay in receiving approval of the central government for every little thing. "Everything was subject to the impediments dictated by the ignorance and greediness of an oppressing and stupid administration." Education was definitely hampered by this policy.

Narrowing the evaluation to the main concern of this study, education, the first reason for the failure of Spain appears to be its prev

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68 Prada, Carlos Garcia, "El Movimiento Educatacional Colombiano," an address to the Northwestern Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish. (No publisher or date given).

69 Latorre, Hugo Cabal, La Hispanidad, Editorial Kelly, Bogotá, 1980. The whole book is a denunciation of the vices of the Spanish colonial policy which he calls Hispanidad.

70 Cortazar, Roberto, op. cit., quoting Juan German del Rio, a Colombian writer of the nineteenth century.
lent philosophy. Spain, being the champion of Catholicism in Europe and the main inspirer of the Counter-Reformation movement which culminated with the Council of Trent, was fully committed to the propagation of the faith in the Indies. In addition to this, Pope Alexander VI had given Spain the possession of the Indies in 1493 with the absolute confidence that the vast territory could be conquered for the Catholic faith.

Education, therefore, was placed under the care of the Roman Church but under the control of the Crown. The church acted as an obedient agent of the king, a fact which did not matter as long as the king continued to act upon the philosophy of the Catholic hierarchy.

The educational philosophy of the colonial schools was scholastic. Authority was the supreme principle. Aristotle, Saint Thomas Aquinas, and the Church Fathers were the ultimate authorities in the system, and the church was the interpreter of their doctrines. Any other sources strengthening scholasticism were also accepted. Those opposed were rejected. The study of philosophy consisted in the memorization of the theses expounded by these authorities, which, according to them, contained the answers to all philosophical inquiry. Reasoning was encouraged only for the purpose of agreeing with the prescribed authors. The result of this authoritarian principle was to encourage rote memory and conformity. Little progress could be expected along creative lines since all the answers were already given. This authoritarian method also brought immediate benefits to the church. A lack of ability to think and an attitude of conformity to authority put the people in the hands of the priests who were considered the main authorities in their respective places.
Another characteristic of colonial education was its narrowness. This also sprang from the dogmatic philosophy of the schoolmen. Since they believed that the truth had already been discovered, they felt it their duty to stand by it and combat all possible heretical influence. No outside influence was felt in the New Kingdom until late in the eighteenth century. It was to the best interest of the regime to maintain a homogeneous culture free from competition. When naturalistic ideas appeared in Santa Fe, after being adopted by many Spanish scientists in the homeland, the authorities clung to their traditional theses and established the censorship of the conclusions. It was a matter of being with the system or against it. Those who were against it lost out. The Inquisition usually took care of them.

A third trait of colonial education was its aristocratic nature. From the constituciones of the different schools one learns that the students should be "free from Moorish and Jewish blood . . . born of legitimate marriage . . . with Spanish blood from all four sides." It was also commanded that "the children of manual laborers should not be admitted." With such a limited number of educational institutions this exclusiveness meant that a great percentage of the population was denied education. The mestizos, the illegitimate children, and the children of manual workers were left out. The government ordered the establishment of schools for the Indians, but this order was never carried out in the New Kingdom of Granada. Only the children of Spanish parents and of these only those of the upper social class had the oppor-

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71 See page 62 of this work.
72 See page 58 of this work.
Finally, colonial education placed overemphasis on intellectualism. The whole curriculum was based on the assumption that training of the intellect was the main objective of education. The study of Latin grammar, philosophy, theology, law, etc., was exclusively an intellectual pursuit. Practical subjects studied on an experimental basis appeared with Mutis and disappeared with him. Manual training was out of the question, for manual work was considered undignified and degrading. The faculty theory of mind, so dear to the scholastic school, was fully applied here, only that the main faculty used and trained was memory.

It is difficult to draw boundary lines between the three divisions of education as we know them now except in terms of the curriculum. We may assume that the elementary school culminated with the mastering of the three R's and took between three and four years for completion. The secondary period lasted until the philosophy and Latin grammar courses were mastered, taking usually from four to five years. For the higher studies another four or five years were required. The organization of the schools was in terms of these higher colleges as we can deduce from the interest of the administrators in calling them universities. All three divisions operated in the same building and were under the same administration. The administration was usually composed of the rector, the vice-rector, the treasurer, and the collector, the last-named officer being in charge of collecting the money from the archbishop and the civil authorities. The faculties of these schools did not have much authority except in their classes. In matters of policy the rector was the supreme authority. His authority was surpassed only by that of the governor of
the state or the archbishop of the diocese. Although the official regulation demanded that there be two boards in each school, one for temporal and another for spiritual matters, this was not the practice in the New Kingdom. The governor or the higher representative of the civil authority, the archbishop and the rector more often than not determined what was to be done. The schools were supported from taxes collected by the church and by the government. But most of the money for schools came from the donations made by rich benefactors. The whole atmosphere and discipline of the schools were very religious since the schools were run by religious orders. In the colonial period religious education was the education of the State. It was uniform throughout the country. The only variations were those made by individuals in the planning of their courses or the differences in the buildings. Education was clerical rather than secular.

Having education in the hands of the clergy, in addition to the disadvantages already discussed, left the country without lay teachers from the beginning. All the teaching was done by members of the religious orders or by other priests. The need for teachers was not felt until the Jesuits were expelled. And even then no effort was made to train them. The situation did not encourage teaching as a profession, for the main objective of the schools was to prepare young people for the priesthood. Teachers were a by-product.

Diagram II on page 67 shows the organization of the educational system at the end of the colonial period (1810).

During the colonial period discussed in this chapter, Spain was able to leave its deep mark in the life of Colombia. But in spite of its
efforts to preserve the indolence and conformity that characterized colonial life, new ideas had already caused radical changes in other nations and were penetrating the Spanish colonies. The desire for independence finally interrupted the somnolence of the colonies and produced the events commonly known as the fight for independence. With the declaration of independence in 1810, and the final victory over the Spanish army in 1819, Colombia began governing itself as a sovereign and independent nation. The next two chapters of this historical treatment will deal with education during the period of the Republic.
Diagram II
THE SYSTEM OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AT THE END OF THE COLONIAL PERIOD (1810)

King

Supreme Council of Indies
(Located in Spain)

Viceroy

School Board
(In Santa Fe)

Catholic Church
(In Santa Fe)

Local School Boards

Principal

Faculty

Students

Secondary

Elementary

University
CHAPTER IV

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION:
PERIOD OF THE EARLY REPUBLIC (1810 - 1840)

In order to understand the agitated history of modern Colombia, especially that of the nineteenth century, some factors in the Spanish heritage of the country have to be explained. The powerful influence of four centuries of colonial education left its scars upon the nation. The Colombian mind was "conditioned" through the consistent and methodical policies of the Crown and its main cultural agent, the Catholic Church. Although the War of Independence was successful in shattering some of the features of colonialism, it can still be asserted without hesitation that many of these features are present even now in the way of living of the Colombian people. Two of these factors will be discussed here in connection with the development of education, namely, authority and instability.

It has been mentioned in previous chapters that from the beginning Spain established a benevolent despotism in its colonies. Although the viceroys, presidents, and governors had a certain amount of independence, they were checked by the Royal Audiences or by special envoys of the king. Their decisions were subject to approval by the Supreme Council of Indies, and finally by the sovereign himself. The Inquisition frequently had the task of controlling these servants of the Crown. In practice, their authority over their subordinates was exercised with the same painstaking care with which the Crown exercised its vigilance and scrutiny over the officer. The orders were carried from above down to the humblest officer.
Educational matters were handled in the same way. Education was placed in the hands of the Catholic Church. One of the outstanding characteristics of this church is its authoritarian and dogmatic attitude. Its organization is very similar to that of a monarchy, with the pope as the supreme ruler. Here, as in the political system, orders were given from above and carried down to the humblest priest. The result was that the colonist's subsistence depended to a great extent on his attitude towards these two great forces, the civil and ecclesiastical governments which surrounded him. Realizing his impotence, he surrendered and became an obedient subject. Through the years this attitude of unquestioning obedience became a habit. He relinquished his right to think for himself, becoming only an instrument in the hands of the powers that had annihilated him as an individual. Frequently this attitude degenerated into the unhealthy vice of adulation to gain the favor of his superiors.

Contrary to expectations, the repudiation of Spain's political domination on the part of the patriots in the early years of the nineteenth century, did not effect, at the same time, the breaking down of the authoritarian philosophy on which colonial culture was solidly founded. The same aristocratic tendencies continued. What was more significant, the same agency that had been responsible for implanting authoritarian methods in education, the Roman Church, continued to have a great influence in the new era. This influence has never disappeared. In periods of hostility it has lain dormant, only to spring to new life, like the mythological bird Phoenix, out of its own ashes.

The other factor, instability, has been one of the great impediments
to the progress of the country. Between 1810 and 1903 sixteen revolutions took place. These include the War of Independence and the separation of Panama. It seems as if the history of the nineteenth century, in a truly Hegelian fashion, was plagued with antagonistic forces that had to come to terms almost every decade in order to find an adequate synthesis for peaceful living. Some of the revolutions were caused by political differences, the issue being federalism versus centralism in government. Others were caused by the ambition of generals who had become drunk with power and wanted to dominate the country. Still others were the result of differences in the philosophy of the two political parties, the Liberal and the Conservative. At least one was caused by religious fanaticism. With such unrest and insecurity the citizens could hardly devote themselves to constructive enterprises for fear of being cut short in their efforts. Industry, trade, agriculture, cattle raising—none of these could progress even to the point of making the country self-sufficient. Thousands of young people lost their lives. Many who survived were crippled or disabled. One has to agree with the cruel, but none-the-less true, statement made by a Colombian writer: "Unfortunately war has been our preferred and constant occupation since 1810."1

From the smoke and debris of the tormentous nineteenth century the major elements of the present Colombian system of education emerged. The relatively peaceful twentieth century has consolidated the main educational ideas of the previous century, and, in addition, has developed

1 Arboleda, Sergio, Las Letras, las Ciencias, y las Bellas Artes en Colombia, Publicaciones del Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Editorial Minerva, Bogotá, 1936, p. 144.
new ones. How this modern system of education developed during these two centuries is the subject of this and the next chapters. This chapter is mainly devoted to the period of the Early Republic (1810-1840), when very significant changes took place under the leadership of Francisco de Paula Santander, the father of public education in Colombia.

A. The Consolidation of Independence

The revolutionary principles embraced by Nariño and the other fore-runners of the War of Independence, which have been discussed in Chapter II of this work, produced their first visible results in 1810. On July 20, 1810, the Cabildo (Municipal Council) of Santa Fe demanded an open meeting in which any citizen who wanted to speak to the people could do so. The viceroy accepted, and a large crowd gathered in the Plaza Mayor (main square). Several speakers addressed the assembly. As the enthusiasm grew, the speakers became bolder in voicing their grievances against the Spanish government. The outcome of the meeting was the appointment of a junta in charge of the provisional government and the drawing up of the Declaration of Independence. The Spanish viceroy fled with his retinue, and for several years the New Kingdom of Granada was free from Spanish rulers.

However, dissension among the patriots brought about a revolution in 1812, which weakened the country and paved the way for its reconquest by the Spanish general Pablo Morillo in 1816. Morillo and the new viceroy, Samano, sentenced to death most of the patriots who had taken part in the 1810 movement, including the great savant Caldas. After four years of merciless war, known in Colombian history as the Regime of Terror,
the patriotic army defeated the royalist forces in the Battle of Boyaca on August 7, 1819. This battle was the final blow to Spanish domination in the New Kingdom of Granada.

Simon Bolivar, the supreme commander of the army, was appointed the first president of the Republic of Colombia by the First Constitutional Congress, which met in Angosturas (Venezuela) in December, 1819. The first republic included the provinces of Cundinamarca, Venezuela, and Quito, each governed by a vice-president. General Francisco de Paula Santander was elected vice president of Cundinamarca. His had been a brilliant record in the struggle against the Spaniards, which had earned for him the title of "Organizer of Victory." Upon the invasion of Morillo in 1816, he had retired to the eastern part of the country with a handful of faithful soldiers. There he had reorganized the Republican army and kept alive the hope for freedom. When Bolivar was ready to invade the New Kingdom of Granada in 1819, he received help from Santander's army, which became the nucleus of the great army of liberation. Santander's vision and hard work made it possible for Bolivar to rebuild the military strength which led to the triumph of the patriots at Boyaca.

Francisco de Paula Santander was born in Cúcuta, in April, 1792. He studied law at the Colegio de San Bartolomé in Santa Fe and then enlisted in the army at the early age of eighteen. His preparation and good judgment made him ascend rapidly from his position as a private to that of a full general. In the short period of ten years his contribution to the cause of independence was so great that after the Battle of Boyaca, Bolivar chose him as his substitute by appointing him vice president of Cundinamarca. "In Santander," Bolivar remarked, "I leave you
another Bolivar." Santander's profound belief in freedom and in civil government caused him to leave aside his glorious past as a general and to devote himself to the civic organization of the country. His clear understanding of the dangers of war and force led him to urge, whenever possible, the foundation of Colombian institutions upon law and order rather than upon force and violence. His profound conviction of the need for education made him an indefatigable champion of popular education. He served his country in different capacities; as a soldier he is called "the Organizer of Victory," as a statesman he is known as the "Man of Laws," and as an educator he is "the Father of Public Education." In politics he is considered as the founder of the present Liberal Party. After he had served his country as vice president of both Cundinamarca and The Great Colombia, his political differences with Bolivar caused him to be exiled from his country for a few years, after which he returned at the request of Congress to occupy the presidency of the Republic of New Granada, as Colombia was called in 1834. Again he devoted his talents to the service of the nation. After finishing his term he retired to private life. He died on May 6, 1840, at the age of forty-eight. His name stands out as one of the most far-sighted, liberal-minded, and progressive statesmen in Colombian history.

B. Beginning of the Public School System

The first constitution of the State of Cundinamarca was definite in regard to the source of authority in religious matters. It stated that the Patronage exercised by the king of Spain was taken over by Congress, which would appoint prelates and other officials of the church,
and undertake relationships with the Holy See. The State was considered as the "natural protector of the Church and as conservator of one of the first rights of the people, that is, their religion and conscience."² There was no doubt in the minds of the leaders that the Church should be under the civil authorities. This, of course, had its reflection upon the educational institutions still in existence under ecclesiastical supervision and control. Santander thought that "the government is the only and exclusive protector of educational institutions; it is the principal head of all institutions consecrated to the prosperity of the Republic."³ He was an advocate of education as the function of the State. Bolivar, at the suggestion of Santander, issued a decree transferring the right of patronage and the government of all educational institutions, seminaries included, to the vice presidents of the states, leaving the prelates only the right of choosing the seminarists.⁴ Santander, thus authorized by Bolivar, decreed that the government had the right to appoint the rector, vice rector, and the faculty of all existing schools, except for the professors of theology who would be appointed by the seminary authorities.⁵ Santander's aim was to separate religious education from that which was strictly secular and to


⁵ Ibid., p. 337.
unify all educational efforts in order to concentrate supervision and organization in the State. From the beginning Santander had placed all educational matters in charge of the Secretary of the Interior, whose responsibility it was to carry out the policies adopted by the executive department and to help provincial authorities to interpret these policies.

The first comprehensive decree on education was issued by Santander and his Secretary of the Interior, Estanislao Vergara, on October 6, 1820. This decree embodied the general's viewpoints on education. The introduction stated that "public instruction is the best means by which the citizens of a country can acquire the knowledge of the rights and duties of man in society," thus giving education a social purpose.

"The government is obliged to give . . . this instruction which contributes to the welfare of the individual and the happiness of all." This same decree provided that the right to vote after 1830 should be limited to those who could read and write. Considering that it was indispensable that all citizens should be able to exercise their right, "for the active vote constitutes the exercise of citizenship in a representative government," it also provided for the creation of public schools in each city, village, or township that had enough income to support a teacher. It was the responsibility of the governors to carry out these orders. It further decreed that in every convent a public school should be established and a teacher appointed from among the members of the order.

Schools should also be organized in small Indian towns where there were

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6 The resume and quotations referring to the decree of October 6, 1820, are based on the text of said document as found in Archivo de Santander, Vol. 5, pp. 231-4.
The priests were required to cooperate with this project. Each teacher was charged with the responsibility of teaching "reading, writing, arithmetic, and the dogmas of the Christian religion and morals. He will instruct them in the rights and duties of man in society and will teach them military exercises." The governors were responsible for the success of the program. To make this more emphatic, they were to serve as directors of the schools and were to visit them at least once every four months. "The Government and the Republic," says the decree, "will make the governors responsible for any negligence . . . on a matter of such importance." Foreseeing the possibility of some towns not being able to pay the teacher from the regular income, the provision was made that in places where there were thirty or more inhabitants the political representative of the government should ask the inhabitants to make a monthly contribution for the school fund. This contribution was given to the representative of the government who paid the teacher from this fund. The inhabitants of these towns were also enjoined to provide for the education of the Indians, that they might "come out of their backwardness and servile condition in which they have been for so many years."

An interesting characteristic of the decree was its pedagogical insight. Article 9 charges the governors with the duty of banishing the férula (stick) and the azote (whip) as inadequate for good education. It also made clear that in punishing and rewarding students the teacher should take into consideration "the diversity of conditions . . . and the difference of characters and inclinations" among them. The prohibition

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Ibid.
of corporal punishment and the consideration of individual differences were ideas that could occur only to men like Santander in a time when the prevalent philosophy of teaching was in accord with the popular Spanish saying, "The letter enters with blood."

Santander continued his educational activities of the year of 1820 with the modification of the program of studies. The substance of the new program of studies is given by Estanislao Vergara, the Secretary of the Interior, in his report to Santander, December, 1920.

Your Excellency, wishing that the young people receive all kinds of useful knowledge in the schools, formulated a plan of studies on October 16. . . . Spanish grammar will be taught before Latin grammar; the classes in rhetoric will be given in connection with the classes of Latin and philosophy. . . . The youths will learn arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry, and civil and military architecture.

In this program of studies there was nothing new except the emphasis on the teaching of useful courses instead of the merely speculative.

C. Basic Laws of Public Education

The First Constitutional Congress of the provinces of Colombia met in Cúcuta in 1821 to organize the Republic. It lasted for several months, during which time the new constitution was approved, social and economic laws were passed, and the heroes of the War of Independence were honored. The country, which included most of the territory known today as the republics of Colombia, Panama, Ecuador, and Venezuela, was named The Great Colombia. Bolivar was again appointed president and

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Santander vice president of The Great Colombia. In educational matters the Congress of 1821 approved four basic laws, conceived and proposed by Santander and his cabinet and based on their short experience in the State of Cundinamarca. A brief summary of these four laws follows.⁹

One of the laws was a repetition of the decree issued by Santander in Cundinamarca in 1819. This provided that an elementary school should be started in each city, village, or township of more than one hundred inhabitants. The support of the teacher was the responsibility of the city council which was to collect a school tax from the citizens. The citizens had to promise to pay to this fund, although the amount was not specified but left to each individual to decide. In order to guarantee good administration, a school board, composed of the judge, the priest, and three citizens, was formed. The board was charged with the financial administration of the school, the examination of the teachers, and any other local business relating to the institution. The teachers were appointed by the governor of the respective provinces, who made his selection from a list of three candidates submitted to him by the city councils. The governors also specified the salaries, which, however, were paid by the local judges. It was within the jurisdiction of the judges to take a school census of all the children from six to twelve years of age. The parents were obliged to send their children to school within its first month in session. They were fined if they failed to do so. Exceptions were made for those who were very poor or had to travel

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⁹ Cortázar, Roberto, y Cuervo, Luis A., Congreso de Cucuta, Libros de Actas, Biblioteca de Historia Nacional, Vol. XXXV, Imprenta Nacional, Bogotá, 1923. The text of these four laws is found on pages 373-5, 384-5, 405-8.
a long distance to get to school. The methods of teaching and the organization of the schools was to be uniform throughout the country. In addition to the local boards there was to be a director of studies in each province under the supervision of the governor. This director was also the superintendent of all the schools within his jurisdiction. In places where no city council existed, the priest was in charge of the inspection of the schools. The law also recommended the establishment of schools for girls whenever and wherever this was possible. Finally, this Congress authorized the executive department of the government to found normal schools of the Lancastrian type for the preparation of elementary school teachers and to make any decrees necessary for the fulfillment of this law.

A second law was aimed at the organization of secondary education. It required the foundation of a colegio in each of the provinces of the country. The minimum curriculum was to include mathematics, philosophy, Latin, and Spanish grammar. Those schools that were able to support courses in higher education could do so. The financial support of these schools was to be derived from donations, contributions of the citizens, and money assigned by the city councils. But the main income was expected to come from the confiscation of estates taken over by the church upon the death of their owners in cases where no heirs were known. The church was instructed to cooperate with the government in the revision of these cases. The government was authorized to give aid to those provinces with financial problems. The program of studies was uniform in all secondary schools since the government was in charge of preparing it as well as of formulating all the regulations concerning its administration.
The other two laws approved by the First Constitutional Congress were aimed at securing the help of the church in the educational reorganization. One of them ordered the establishment of schools for girls in all the convents existing in the territory of the Republic and asked the nuns to support them. Congress advised the archbishops and bishops to cooperate with the government in convincing the reluctant nuns to help. The other law required that all monasteries with less than eight regular priests should be closed and their property turned over to the government for the support of education. These monasteries, which usually possessed huge extensions of land and big buildings, had a diverse source of income. Most of it came from donations given by the rich members of the church and from the tithes collected from the citizens. This Congress did not think it was right that all this property should be without use when there was such a pressing need for school buildings and funds.

There was a long debate as to the advisability of placing the education of girls in the hands of the nuns. The main objection came from those who considered the purpose of education for girls as that of preparing them to be good housewives and mothers. Their opinion was that the nuns, having been secluded from the world, had not had any experience of normal home and social life and were, therefore, unable to teach the girls the elements of domestic science and home living. But this objection, plus the one of putting education under the influence of the church, was defeated by the realization that, for the time being, the government needed all the help it could find. And the church was in a position to lend its aid.
D. The Introduction of the Lancastrian Method

But not all the help came from the church. There were individuals outside the country who were watching the developments in the new republic and who were ready to help for the sake of freedom. One of these was Joseph Lancaster, a British teacher who had developed a system of education known in history as the Lancastrian or monitorial method. Lancaster was born in London in 1778 from a poor family. He was reared as a Quaker or Friend. From his religious beliefs he acquired a deep sense of responsibility for the welfare of his fellow men. His own sufferings and difficulties showed him that, unless proper care and education would be given the new generation, vice and immorality would continue to make them their victims. He devoted himself with Quaker zeal to the education of the poor. He was only eighteen when he opened his school in one of the suburbs of London. No fixed tuition fee was charged, and only those who could and wanted to do so paid. His school grew rapidly in numbers, but it was impossible for him to meet his financial obligations. In order to save time and money he began to give responsibilities to the more mature children in his school. Through the years he developed this method for which he became famous, and devoted part of his life to its propagation. A society for the propagation of Lancastrian schools was founded in London by his friends. Lancaster published a series of pamphlets on his experiments, which were distributed by the society. The King of England, George III, became his protector in 1805. A year later his works were published in New York, and the first Lancastrian schools appeared in the United States. He visited this country in 1818-1819 lecturing extensively. He also visited Canada.
One of the features of his endeavor was to train teachers in the Lancastrian method. Many of his trainees spread the method in countries of Europe, Asia, and America.¹⁰

Simon Bolívar met Joseph Lancaster in 1810 when Bolívar visited his school in London.¹¹ Bolívar made an official visit as a representative of the city council of Caracas. He was very much impressed with Lancaster's educational theories and promised to send two students from Venezuela to this school to learn the method.

There is no evidence that Santander knew Lancaster personally. It is possible that Bolívar or some of the British officers serving in the Colombian army who knew him or his method brought his educational theories to Santander's attention. But regardless of how he became familiar with this method, the general saw in it the answer to the educational problems of his country. He was informed that a priest by the name of Sebastián de Mora, who had recently returned from Spain, had opened a small school in the little town of Capacho in the province of Venezuela, in which he was employing the Lancastrian method which he had learned in Spain.¹² Santander immediately brought him to Bogotá, charging him with the propagation of this new educational gospel. Mora opened a school in Bogotá in which he taught, in addition to traveling extensively in the country as a representative of the government for the


purpose of organizing schools.

Another happy occasion was the arrival of Professor Peter Commetant, a French teacher, who came to Colombia supported by an outstanding Venezuelan patriot, Rafael Ravenga. He brought with him all the necessary materials for the Lancastrian normal schools. He set to work training the first Lancastrian teachers in Bogota. After the first institute, forerunner of the normal schools, was successfully established in Bogota, Commetant traveled in the provinces founding similar institutes. The method spread rapidly throughout the country. It prospered greatly because of its novelty and efficiency. So great was the demand for the Lancastrian schools that Joseph Lancaster himself wrote to Bolivar asking his permission to begin a school in Caracas. The messenger did not arrive in time to deliver the letter to Bolivar, so he spoke to General Soublette, one of the Venezuelan leaders, who immediately presented the petition to the city council. Joseph Lancaster, thereupon, was invited by the city council to direct the educational program of the city government. He arrived in Caracas on May 15, 1824. During the first year the council gave him all the necessary facilities, but in the second year things changed. In a letter to Bolivar written from Caracas on January 7, 1826, Lancaster complained that the municipality of Caracas had denied him all the materials of instruction and withheld his salary for the whole year of 1825. Friends had helped him to meet his financial obligations. Bolivar immediately wrote to the

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13 Ibid.
14 O'Leary, op. cit., p. 246.
15 Ibid., p. 247.
council asking them to cooperate with Lancaster.

In order that Mr. Lancaster might develop as much as possible the institutes of mutual teaching that he has begun in our city, I offered him the amount of 20,000 pesos. . . . But great is my surprise to discover that the Most Illustrious Municipality of last year, instead of cooperating in the extension of such a useful plan for the youth of Caracas, has opposed it from the beginning. It is in consideration of this that I have decided to address Your Most Eminent Highness to protest against an abuse which I cannot yet believe to be true, and to enlist the zeal and patriotism of the Municipality in order that, instead of opposing the truly beneficial purposes of Mr. Lancaster, it give him all the protection that those institutions interested in the propagation of knowledge should offer . . . .

In spite of this letter the situation in Caracas did not improve for Lancaster. The municipality bitterly opposed him; Bolívar was unable to redeem his bank note for $20,000, which he gave to Lancaster in the hope that England would grant Peru a loan for several thousand pounds; and apparently his personal enemies abused his wife. Finding himself in this difficult situation, Lancaster left Caracas. Years later he wrote bitter accusations against Bolívar in his Epitome.

The hostile attitude toward Lancaster was caused mainly for religious reasons. He represented a new type of philosophy in which the freedom to investigate played a major role, and this was too much for the clerically dominated council to tolerate. Lancaster was striving towards the emancipation of the mind. His coming to Caracas represented an unprecedented attempt to break down the monopoly of education that had existed thus far. This the conservative forces were not ready to

\[\text{16 Lecuna, Vicente, Cartas del Libertador, Vol. V, Publicación del Gobierno de Venezuela, Litografía y Tipografía del Comercio, Caracas, 1929, pp. 236-7.}\]

\[\text{17 Lancaster, op. cit.}\]
accept. They fought it and won. Lancaster's sad experience in Caracas, however, did not curtail his influence. His method continued to have the support of most of the leaders. It became void of its philosophical implications, but the mechanics of the procedure remained.

An explanation may here be in order of the main features of the Lancastrian method, or the monitorial or mutual method of education as it is also called. In his Improvements in Education, published in London in 1805, Lancaster explains both his philosophy and his method. His philosophy of education was a simple one. He considered the child as an active being with "an almost irresistible propensity to action."\(^{18}\) He believed that "this liveliness should never be repressed but directed to useful ends" and that the task of the teacher was to direct "those active spirits to good purposes."\(^{19}\) In regard to the main objective of education his position was clearly stated in this sentence: "The object of education and industry is to qualify youth for future life."\(^{20}\) The cultivation of affections and the study of the child's character was indispensable. He treated his students as members of his family in order to know them well. His method called for an atmosphere of freedom in the classroom; the students should be free to pursue their own interests under the direction of the teacher. It was through this free atmosphere and the constant observation of his students that he discovered the ones with natural aptitudes for helping their schoolmates. Whenever

\(^{18}\) Lancaster, Joseph, Improvements in Education, as It Respects the Industrious Classes of the Community, Darton and Harvey, London, 1805, p. 31.

\(^{19}\) Ibid.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., p. 117.
a student showed traits of leadership, he was given a responsibility in the school. He was appointed a monitor.

For Lancaster economy of time and money was a very important factor. He always lacked money and teachers. He was also much concerned with the time the students had to spend in school. He felt it should be shortened, especially for the poor. He saved time and money by using the students as monitors. Here is his own description of how the system worked:

The whole school is arranged in classes; a monitor is appointed to each, who is responsible for the cleanliness, order, and improvement of every boy in it. He is assisted by boys, either from his own or another class, to perform part of his duties for him, when the number is more than he is equal to manage himself.

The proportion of boys who teach, either in reading, writing, or arithmetic, is as one to ten. In so large a school there are duties to be performed, which simply relate to order, and have no connection with learning; for these duties, different monitors are appointed.

The word monitor, in this institution, means, any boy that has a charge either in some department of tuition or of order, and is not simply confined to those boys who teach.21

One of the original features in the Lancastrian schools was the use of sand and slates. The students who were learning to write had boxes of fine sand available in their classroom. The monitor or master would write sentences on the sand, and the student had to copy these literally. As soon as his task was accomplished, the writing on the sand was erased. Older children were graduated from the sand box to the slate. The slate was used as a portable blackboard by the pupils. While in Caracas, Lancaster planned to establish a slate factory and a print

21 Ibid., pp. 37-8.
shop to publish his own textbooks. His sudden departure left this project unfinished.

Another unusual feature in Lancaster's method was the use of the Bible as a textbook in reading. His religious convictions impelled him to spread the Word of God as a means of combating ignorance. He was also interested in the distribution of the Bible. The British and Foreign Schools Society, the institution which supported the propagation of the Lancastrian schools, joined with the British and Foreign Bible Society "in sending James Thompson as their representative to South America, to help the newly independent countries to set up a system of popular education and to carry the Word of God." Mr. Thompson arrived in Bogota in 1825. Realizing that the Lancastrian method was already fully established in Colombia, he devoted his time to the organization of a Bible society. After several meetings with prominent individuals and members of the clergy the Sociedad Bíblica de Colombia was founded with a capital of $1,380 (U.S.). Dr. Pedro Gual, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Santander's administration, was appointed chairman of the new society. This society did not remain in existence long, since the reaction of the Catholic hierarchy was too strong. It disappeared without accomplishing the ambitious plans drawn by Dr. Gual and Mr. Thompson.

The monitorial plan was of great help to Colombia. It served as a means of mass education; it did not require too much training on the part

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22 Clark, Allen D., A Tentative History of the Colombia Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., unpublished and incomplete work found at the Presbyterian Mission Library, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York.

23 Ibid.
of the teacher; and the equipment needed was not elaborate. In addition to this the philosophy behind it was one of freedom and respect for the children, two elements which had never been present in the old type of education where authority took precedence over everything else. For a new and free country a new and free education was needed.

E. The French Educational Mission

Santander's administration continued to make steady progress in the field of education. In January of 1822 the first normal schools were founded in Caracas, Quito, and Bogotá. Immediately the old colegios and seminaries were ordered to accept all children, including the Indians. The first naval school was established in Cartagena in June of the same year. Several secondary schools were opened in the provinces.²⁴ At the beginning of 1823 Congress approved the coming of a French scientific mission for the purpose of continuing the work of the Botanical Expedition and of founding a national museum. Santander asked Francisco Antonio Zea, the government's representative in Europe, to make the arrangements. As a result a group of six scientists came to Bogotá in 1823. They remained until 1825.²⁵ The members of the mission founded the museum, organizing it according to the provisions of the decree which required the establishment of classes in natural sciences and minerology. Eduardo Rivero, a member of the mission, made special

²⁴ Hernández de Alba, op. cit., p. 205.

studies of the mines and caused some of the old silver mines to be opened for operation again. A school of minerology was also started. The mission was instrumental in stimulating a scientific revival which led to the discovery of some of the natural resources of the country and of an old Indian culture in the southern part of the republic. Unfortunately, after the mission left, the interest waned and its accomplishments were lost. Many young people, however, had benefited from the instruction they received in the short-lived institutions which the mission directed.

F. The Educational Law of 1826

The culmination of Santander's liberal educational program came with the revision of the course of studies. Since 1824 Santander had presented his project to Congress, but nothing had been done. In the meantime he issued a decree aimed at the intensification of the study of the Spanish language in order to correct the serious tendency of colonial education of studying all subjects in the Latin language. He also decreed that a new course of philosophy should be offered in Spanish in all universities and that such course should be taught from Jeremy Bentham's point of view. He changed the textbooks in most of the courses, particularly those in law and legislation.

Congress finally acted upon the administration's proposal and approved an all-inclusive law in March, 1826. This law provided for


27 Restrepo Tirado, op. cit., p. 666.
the creation of a General Direction of Public Instruction, a centralized office in charge of administering the educational system at the national level. It also created the National Academy of Culture, and reorganized the three existing universities of The Great Colombia, in Quito, Caracas, and Bogotá. This same law authorized Santander's administration to draw up the new plan of studies for the whole educational ladder.

That same year, 1826, a government decree established the new program of studies. As far as secondary education was concerned, the new curriculum required the teaching of modern languages and an intensification of the study of the Spanish language. A scientific interest was manifested in the inclusion of courses in physics and chemistry. A patriotic note was introduced by the provision that the Constitution of the country should be studied. This was the forerunner of the study of Civics as a subject. Classes in national geography were also required. On the university level the provisions of the decree of 1825, requiring a course in philosophy in the Spanish language and the teaching of Bentham's legal ideas in the law courses, were repeated in the new decree.

The Catholic Church and the Conservatives opposed the teaching of Bentham's theories in the schools on the grounds that they were immoral, dangerous, and against the doctrines of the Roman Church. Bentham taught that mankind is governed by pain and pleasure, "it is for them alone to point out what we shall do." At the heart of his system was his principle of utility, hence the name of utilitarianism, "that

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principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words, to promote or to oppose that happiness . . ."29 This, the opponents claimed, was selfish language, which would lead to the corruption and destruction of the traditional moral principles of the Colombians. The opposition was so bitter that one of the priests, who boldly advocated that the governmental decrees should be ignored, was sent to prison.30 This opposition was not isolated; it was part of the reaction to the eclectic position of Santander and his collaborators.

It is astonishing to note the achievements of Santander's administration by the end of 1827: Four national universities—Quito, Caracas, Panama, and Bogotá—all well organized and under government control; twenty-one secondary schools, seven of them offering a curriculum of higher studies in addition to those on the secondary level, and ten with both elementary and secondary divisions; fifty-two Lancastrian schools and 434 of the old type;31 the National Museum, the School of Mines, and the Naval School. This period was one of the most prolific in Colombian history as far as cultural development is concerned. No other period has seen so much interest in education as that manifested by the country during the early years of the republic.

29 Ibid., p. 126.
31 Hernández de Alba, op. cit., p. 215.
G. Educational Counter Reforms of Simón Bolívar

The year 1828 was a crucial one for Colombia. Already in the two preceding years the political atmosphere had been anything but calm. Simon Bolívar, president and liberator of The Great Colombia, encouraged by some of his followers, decided to assume dictatorial powers in order to reorganize the country and to avoid its disintegration. He made it known that the Constitution of Cucuta, approved in 1821, would be revised according to his political views, which were embodied in the Bolivian Constitution. This constitution had been written by Bolívar for the new country of Bolivia in 1825. One of the provisions of this constitution was that the senators, representatives, electors, and the president be chosen for life. This, as well as other stipulations, did not appeal to the legal-minded representatives to the Congress at Cucuta, who had worked so hard to draw up the Constitution of Cucuta. They thought that a new constitution based on Bolívar's views was the legalization of tyranny. Santander was the most ardent defender of the old constitution. He naturally became the leader of the opposition. The two parties became known as Bolivianos and Anti-Bolivianos, the former supporting Bolívar's ideas and the latter opposing them. The situation became extremely tense. Bolívar finally came to the capital to take over the presidency of the country. He declared himself dictator in August, 1828, and immediately suppressed the vice presidency. Santander was, thus, ousted from the administration.

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32 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 547.
One of Bolivar's first measures was to suppress the teachings of Jeremy Bentham and to establish a class in Catholic morals in the schools, thus encouraging the return of the philosophy that Santander had tried to extirpate. Some of the radicals of the liberal wing decided to take justice into their own hands. They planned a revolution against Bolivar, but the plot was discovered. So, in order to carry out their intentions, they advanced the date. On the night of September 25, they attacked the presidential palace where Bolivar was sleeping, intending to kill him. However, Bolivar fled through a window, and the plot was unsuccessful. Immediately Santander was accused of having been the promoter of the conspiracy. He, with a few of his friends, was sentenced to death. It was impossible, however, for the government to prove that Santander had had any part in the attempt against Bolivar's life, and so the death sentence was changed to one of exile from the country. After a short imprisonment in Cartagena, he sailed for Europe only to return triumphantly a few years later.

In spite of Bolivar's efforts to control the political situation of the country, unrest and uncertainty continued. The historical events of this confusing period have no place in the discussion here. It suffices for the purposes of this chapter to point out that the cabinet of Bolivar's government voted unanimously to establish a constitutional monarchy with Bolivar as the first king. This measure was favorably received by some of the states, but others refused to accept it. This disagreement resulted in the withdrawal of Venezuela from

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33 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 567.
Great Colombia in September, 1830, following the example of Ecuador, which had taken the same step a month earlier. And so The Great Colombia was dissolved as a political unit and three new nations were born: Venezuela, Ecuador, and New Granada. Simon Bolívar, sick, tired, and disillusioned, had already left the presidency early in 1830. He died on December 7, 1830, in San Pedro Alejandrino, a country house near the Caribbean.

After Bolívar's retirement from the presidency several men occupied this position, most of them self-appointed. Domingo Caicedo had been named vice president by Congress, and he took charge in the absence of the president, Joaquín Mosquera. Rafael Urdaneta, a general, deposed Caicedo and governed for some time. Caicedo and Urdaneta reached an agreement by which Caicedo would return to the presidency on the condition that a new constitutional convention would be called to draw up a new constitution and to reorganize the country. The convention met, approved a new constitution very similar to the one of The Great Colombia, reinstated General Santander as full general with all his rights, and decorations, and appointed him as first president of the Republic of New Granada for the period of 1832-36. He returned to the country to assume his position in October, 1832.

**H. Education in New Granada Under Santander's Administration**

Santander's interest in education did not diminish. He returned with greater enthusiasm and experience acquired during his trips abroad. He revived many of his old decrees, such as the teaching of Bentham's theories, the improvement of the old schools, and the foundation of new
ones. At the beginning of his administration a new school for girls was founded, El Colegio de la Marced. José Ignacio de Márquez, who had been appointed vice president and who was in charge of the government until Santander arrived, signed the decree founding this school. He also assigned funds belonging to old foundations, as well as the income from suppressed convents, to promote education. Santander arrived in time for the inauguration of the school.34

Private education seems to have enjoyed much popularity at the beginning of 1832 according to a statement that José Manuel Restrepo makes in his history of New Granada: "The private school in charge of Mr. José María Triana, founder of this kind of institutes which have spread a great deal lately, excelled among the others."35 In fact, already shortly after 1821, when the laws issued by the Congress of Cúcuta proclaimed the State as the natural protector and regulator of education, private institutions began to appear. The government took over most of the schools from the religious orders or at least supervised and supported them. This made all of the religious schools, as well as those supported by the government, part of the national system and, therefore, official schools. The cultural climate fostered by Santander inspired some of the citizens to contribute to the education of the new generation by founding private schools based on the program of the government but autonomous in their administration. There is no way of knowing the extent to which these private schools contributed to the

35 Ibid., p. 49.
educational efforts of the government except for the testimony of Dr. Restrepo already quoted.

Santander completed his term of office in 1836. His record in the promotion of education was again impressive. Tables I and II at the end of this chapter show the extent of the public educational system of the Republic of New Granada. They are taken from the report of Santander's Secretary of the Interior and Foreign Affairs, Dr. Lino de Pombo, to Congress in 1835. Table I gives us the following insights:

1. Although the Lancastrian schools were numerous, the old type was more prevalent. There were 116 Lancastrian schools with a total attendance of 6,679 students.

2. The Lancastrian schools were mainly for boys. Out of the 116 in existence only 4 were for girls.

3. Of the old type of schools there were 499, with a school population of 13,652.

4. The total number of schools was 615, and the total number of elementary school students was 20,931.

5. There were more schools for boys than for girls of the old type also.

6. None of the schools were coeducational.

According to the census of 1825, the nineteen provinces composing the Republic of New Granada had a total population of 1,223,938 people. The increase in population for the year 1833-34 in these same provinces was 47,828.36 By multiplying this number by ten a rough estimate of the increase in ten years would be arrived at. Adding this number to the total population of 1825, the result would give an estimate of the total population of 1835.

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population of the country in 1835. This total is 1,702,218. Figuring on this basis, the number of students attending elementary school in 1835 was only approximately 1.28 per cent of the total population. This is a very significant percentage for a period so close to the unrest and turmoil of the revolutionary years.

Table II depicts the status of secondary and higher education. There were three universities, located in Bogotá, Popayan, and Cartagena, with a total of 523 students, distributed as follows: 110 studying medicine; 388, law; and 25, theology. This shows a departure from the previous trend, namely, that of studying theology in preference to any other career. Now law was first, followed by medicine. Theology was at the bottom of the list with only twenty-five students. As far as secondary schools are concerned, there were twenty-two with a total of 1,807 students. This was only 0.10 per cent of the total population. There were very few schools for girls.

In synthesis it may be stated that by 1840 education had improved tremendously under the leadership of Santander and his collaborators. The early patriots did all they could to guarantee a free and adequate education for Colombian youth. They saw in education the foundation of the greatness of the nation. The influence of Santander was felt in this movement of renovation even after his death. In the years that followed educators tried to follow in his steps, as will be seen in the next chapter.
TABLE I

CHART OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS IN NEW GRANADA, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THOSE OF THE LANCASTERIAN SCHOOLS OF STUDENTS THAT WERE

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<th>Provinces</th>
<th>Men Schools</th>
<th>Men Boys</th>
<th>Women Schools</th>
<th>Women Girls</th>
<th>Partial Total Schools</th>
<th>Partial Total Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>--</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>Pasto</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>165</strong></td>
<td><strong>116</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,679</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bogotá, March 2, 1835.

Lino de Pombo, Secretary of the Interior and of Exterior Relations.

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THAT EXISTED AT THE END OF THE YEAR 1834
LANCASTRIAN AND THE OLD METHOD, AND NUMBER
EDUCATED IN THEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOLS OF THE OLD METHOD</th>
<th>MEN</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>PARTIAL TOTAL</th>
<th>GENERAL TOTALS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Girls</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>1,465</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>1,312</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

390 | 11,581 | 109 | 2,071 | 499 | 13,652 | 615 | 20,931
## Table II

**Chart Which Shows the Number of Universities, Existing in the Republic, and the Courses and Students Figured According to the Data Sent**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROVINCES</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Houses of Educ.</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antioquia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogotá</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buenaventura</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartagena</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casanare</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocó</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariquita</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mompos</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neiva</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamplona</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panamá</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasto</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Popayán</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rionegro</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santamaría</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>97</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunja</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Víeles</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veragua</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
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</table>

**Notes:**
1. In addition to the establishments listed in the preceding chart, there is a school for girls in the capital of the Republic, in which 22 students live and receive instruction in Spanish grammar, writing, drawing, French, arithmetic, geography, Christian morals, manners, music, home economics, and other classes helpful to girls.

38 Ibid., pp. 224-5.
SCHOOLS, AND HOUSES OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
THAT ARE IN THESE ESTABLISHMENTS,
TO THIS OFFICE.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>AND STUDENTS</th>
<th>TOTALS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurisprudence</td>
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<td>Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion &amp; Morals</td>
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<td>Theology</td>
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<td>Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
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<td>Drawing</td>
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<td>Students</td>
<td>Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matics</td>
<td>Students</td>
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<tr>
<th>Jurisprudence</th>
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<th>Theology</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Music</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Omitted because of irrelevance.
3. There is a school for novices in the priesthood, about which this office has no information.
4. In the provinces of Choco, Neiva, Riohacha, and Veragua there are no schools nor houses of public education.

-- Lino de Pombo
Bogota, March 2, 1835
CHAPTER V

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION:
THE MODERN PERIOD (1840-1952)

A discussion of the most significant changes in education from 1840 up to the present time will be given in this chapter. During this period of time and in spite of the many political revolutions, the school system received, for the first time, the influence of foreign educators like Pestalozzi, Decroly, and others. Thanks to these outside influences a new point of view was introduced. Although the results were not immediately apparent, the ideas brought by the German missions and Agustin Nieto Caballero culminated in a series of improvements, especially at the elementary level. This process of change will be developed in the following pages.

A. The Federalist Period: 1840-1886

Santander's educational program continued without modification until 1840, although the need for change had been felt even before that time. By 1840 Congress approved a law by which public secondary education was left to the provincial legislatures. These were authorized to make state laws for the administration and support of the schools as well as for the curriculum. They should include in the curriculum, the law suggested, "those branches of mathematical, physical, and natural sciences which offer a more positive benefit ... modern languages, geography, and history." Another interesting suggestion was that some funds be devoted to the bringing of specialists and equipment from foreign countries.

This law departs rather sharply from previous legislation. A strong federalist tendency is implied in the measure of leaving the task of providing for secondary education to the state legislatures. This was just a sign of the times. Within a few years a radical political change would take place which would transform the country from a centralist to a federalist nation.

Higher education was also the subject of attention of Congress in 1841. It approved a law authorizing the executive branch to modify the current plan of studies and the administrative organization of the existing universities. The reform came later in 1844 with the famous plan known as Ospina's plan of studies. Mariano Ospina Rodriguez, the Minister of the Interior and Foreign Affairs, after being duly authorized by Congress to draw a plan, decreed that the three existing universities of Popayan, Cartagena, and Bogota should be the centers of three university districts. He did this redistricting in order to simplify the handling of the problems by the central government. Each university had five schools: literature and philosophy, physical and mathematical sciences, medicine, law, and ecclesiastical studies. The local universities were supplied with a long and detailed set of rules of discipline for the purpose of restoring the principle of mutual respect between students and professors. Authority was the key word of the whole document. In order to insure that all the rules were complied with, an inspector was appointed to represent the government.

Elementary education was also considered. Several laws were passed

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2 Ibid., p. 45.
for the improvement of these schools. A differentiation was made of the types of elementary schools supported by the government, namely, regular elementary schools (separate for boys and girls), elementary schools for adults, trade schools, higher elementary schools, nurseries for infants, and normal schools for elementary training. In elementary education the influence of Lancaster was still prevalent. Elementary normal schools were established in each province of the country.

Jose Alcántara Herran, constitutionally elected president, took office in 1842, after quenching a revolution led by General José María Obando which lasted for almost two years. He was interested in preserving peace after such a bloody struggle. Assuming that one of the causes of unrest was the indifference which had been shown the Catholic Church, he favored the Conservative faction. The administration, under the leadership of its Secretary of Interior, Ospina Rodríguez, invited the Society of Jesus to come back to the country putting its members in charge of mission schools in the territories and charging them with "the education of youth." The Jesuits came back to New Granada in 1844, seventy-nine years after they had been exiled by Messía de la Cerda.

The reconstruction program was slow. Lack of money, teachers, and buildings rendered impossible the good intentions of Ospina Rodríguez. His only achievements at the time were the bringing of the universities back to normal functioning under the severe control of the executive department and the reintroduction of the Jesuits.

3 Ibid., p. 52.

In contrast with the government of Herrán and his Secretary of the Interior, Ospina Rodríguez, the administration of General José Hilario López, which began in 1849, did not favor the control of education by the Catholic Church. López and his followers were the radicals of the time. They had a deep belief in the principles of the French Revolution and favored a radical change in the institutions of their country. As far as education is concerned, a significant event was the expulsion of the Jesuits in May, 1850, brought about as a reaction against the Conservative forces that had instigated their return to the country. Once more the Jesuits left their colegios and mission schools, which they had opened since 1844. The government took them over.

However, a change in politics in 1858 brought the Conservatives to power again with Mariano Ospina Rodríguez as president-elect. The same year a new constitution adopting the federal system of government was approved by Congress. The country changed its name to Confederación Granadina. Ospina Rodríguez immediately brought the Society of Jesus back to the country. Three years later, in 1861, President Mosquera expelled them again. They returned in 1886 and have been there ever since.

The Jesuits have always been one of the most aggressive orders within the Catholic Church. Ever since their expulsion by Messía de la Cerda during colonial times, they have been accused of mixing in politics and of trying to influence the administrations which allow them to do so. It is, therefore, quite natural that the Liberal administration, as a measure of self-defense, determined to ostracize them. This radical
attitude did not help to bring about a reconciliation of the parties involved, but rather added bitterness to the already tense situation.

Leaving behind a few years of the agitated history of the country, during which education passed through critical moments, a promising period began around 1870. By this time the country had a new constitution and a new name. The constitution was approved in 1863. It embodied the federal system of government. The new name was therefore, Los Estados Unidos de Colombia (United States of Colombia). The Liberal Party was in power, with General Eustorgio Salgar as the constitutionally elected president of the Union. President Salgar was a moderate and conciliatory man who did not like extreme political measures. Congress supported him. The Conservative Party, although not satisfied with the regime, did not oppose the president. The administration was progressive without being radical. There was a truce between the political parties, which Salgar used wisely for the improvement of the country.\footnote{Henao y Arrubla, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 705.} Education received a great deal of attention at this time.

The agitation in favor of education was started by the publication of an official weekly magazine called \textit{La Escuela Normal} (The Normal School), which appeared for the first time on January 7, 1871, under the direction of José María Mallarino, the General Director of Public Instruction.\footnote{Cabarico, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 58.} This magazine served as a means of information, and at the same time published thought-provoking articles about the lamentable condition of education. Outstanding teachers were encouraged to publish
their ideas on the matter. After this public presentation of the problems confronting education, the government decided to bring a German educational mission for the purpose of directing the new normal schools to be opened in each of the nine sovereign states of the Union as well as teaching in them. The German educational mission arrived in January, 1872. Each of the nine experts was assigned to a state, with the explicit charge of organizing an elementary normal school that would teach "according to the method of Pestalozzi." They found obstacles as soon as they started their work. The first one was the lack of adequate materials, teachers, and appropriate quarters. At least one member of the mission did not want to work under these conditions and went back. But the rest adapted themselves to the situation and tried to do their best. The mission also encountered opposition on the grounds that their members were Protestants and represented a Protestant point of view. This opposition came from the Conservatives. In spite of all these difficulties, after two years the first teachers from the normal schools were graduated. The report of the General Director of Public Instruction for 1874 gives the number of male teachers graduating that year as forty-two. The course given at the normal schools became a three-year course including Spanish grammar, arithmetic, bookkeeping, geography, history, geometry, physics, biology, pedagogy, school legislation, music, penmanship, and gymnastics. The normal schools for women, which were started in 1874, had the same curriculum plus some courses on etiquette, sewing, home

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7 Ibid., p. 66.
8 Ibid., p. 70.
economics, and first aid.\textsuperscript{9}

The new era of peace and progress promised great fruits. Unfortunately, it did not last very long. The fateful shadow of a new revolution appeared in 1876, and with it came chaos and disorder. All the gains in the educational field were lost once more.

A few words should be said about the influence of the German mission. Although the circumstances did not permit them to complete their plans, through their efforts the Pestalozzian method became known in the Union. This is perhaps their greatest contribution. They also brought a clear understanding of the need for organization as is revealed in the normal schools they founded. However, neither the Pestalozzian method nor the organizational concepts exerted great influence after their departure. The revolution that followed caused the death or disappearance of most of the graduates of the normal schools. Had it not been for this unfavorable circumstance, a more progressive line of thinking might have been possible. The influence of the mission would have been great.

The Pestalozzian principles were an innovation in the Colombian schools. It was the first serious challenge to the firmly entrenched scholastic education. The scientific movement championed by Mutis had been only a shift of emphasis within the same type of education. Lancaster's contribution had been an administrative device to save teaching power more than a psychological approach to teaching. But Pestalozzi, from his experiences as a teacher in different schools but especially at Yverdun (1805-09), conceived a system which had great influence in his

\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., pp. 69-70.
time because of its soundness. Here are some of the main characteristics of Pestalozzi's pedagogical doctrines, summarized by Payne and quoted by Painter in his *A History of Education*:

1. The principles of education are to be sought in human nature.

2. This nature is organic, consisting of physical, intellectual, and moral capabilities, ready and struggling to develop themselves.

3. The function of the educator is both negative and positive. He must remove impediments to the learner's development, and he must also stimulate the exercise of his power.

4. Self-development begins with sensations received through the senses. These sensations lead to perceptions which registered in the mind as conceptions or ideas, constitute the basis of knowledge.

5. 'Spontaneity and self-activity are the necessary conditions under which the mind educates itself, and gains power and independence.'

6. Practical aptness depends more on exercise than on knowledge. 'Knowing and doing must, however, proceed together. The chief aim of education is the development of the learner's powers.'

7. All education must be based on the learner's own observation—on his own personal experience. 'This is the basis of all knowledge. The opposite proceeding leads to empty, hollow, delusive word-knowledge. First the reality, then the symbol: first the thing, then the word.'

8. What the learner has gained by his own observation has become an actual possession which he can explain or describe in his own words. His ability to do this is the measure of the accuracy and the extent of his knowledge.

9. The learner's growth necessitates advancement from the near and actual to the more remote; hence, from the concrete to the abstract, from particulars to generals, from the known to the unknown.10

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These advanced theories must have stirred the imagination of the young Colombian teachers educated by the German Pestalozzian experts. Little did they know that within a few years all their dreams and hopes for a better education would be drowned in the blood of their fellow citizens.

B. Period of the Concordat

More than eleven years passed without any significant event in the educational history of Colombia. During these years the political parties alternated in power, not always through peaceful means. Two revolutions were fought, one in 1876-77, and the other in 1885-86. At the end of the latter the government assembled delegates from all the states of the Union and proposed a radical change in the organization of the country. The Constitutional Assembly drew up a new constitution which was approved in August, 1886. The name of the country was changed to Republica de Colombia (Republic of Colombia), the federation was dissolved, and a central government with the three branches—the executive, judicial, and legislative—was established. The Catholic Church became independent from the government but with the right to intervene in the education and the morals of the citizens. In order to make this clear, the Constitution authorized the government to "negotiate agreements with the Holy See," and stated in Article 41: "Public education shall be organized and directed in accordance with the Catholic religion."


12 Ibid., p. 20.
In December, 1887, a Concordat between Colombia and the Vatican was signed. The parts pertaining to education follow.

**Article 12**

In the universities and colleges, in the schools and other centers of instruction, public education and instruction shall be organized and directed in conformity with the dogmas and morals of the Catholic religion. Religious instruction shall be obligatory in such centers, and the pious practices of the Catholic religion shall be observed in them.

**Article 13**

Consequently, in said centers of instruction, the respective diocesan authorities, by their own authority or by means of special delegates, shall exercise the right of inspection in all that refers to morals and religion, as also that of the revision of texts. The Archbishop of Bogotá shall designate the books that are to be used as texts in the teaching of morals and religion in the universities; and, in order to make certain the uniformity of instruction in the matters indicated, this prelate, in accord with the other diocesan authorities, shall select the texts of the other centers of official instruction. The government shall prevent the propagation of ideas contrary to the Catholic dogma and to the respect and veneration due the Church, in the instruction given in the literary and scientific departments, and, in general, all the branches of instruction.

**Article 14**

In case the teaching of morals and religion, in spite of the orders and attention of the government should not conform with the Catholic doctrine, the respective diocesan authority shall have the power to take away from the professors or instructors the right to teach such matters. 13.

And so once more education was left in the hands of the Catholic Church with the exclusion of any possible competition. This time it was not only sanctioned by the government but also consecrated in the Constitution and agreed upon in the Concordat. The monopoly of colonial times

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had returned.

An important administrative measure was taken in 1886 with the organization of the Ministry of Education directed by a minister who became a member of the Cabinet. This office replaced the Secretariat of Public Instruction created around 1850. The Ministry of Education or Public Instruction was charged with the direction of education in all the territory of the new Republic of Colombia.

C. Educational Theories and Practices: 1887-1930

Again the peace of the Republic and the progress of education were disturbed by one of the most devastating political cataclysms in the history of the country—a civil war, known as the War of the Thousand Days. The nineteenth century had a tragic ending, and the twentieth century was born under bad omens.

1. The Organic Law of 1903

Order and peace were restored in June, 1903. The toll of the revolution, according to one historian, was: "Over one hundred thousand men were killed in action; many men were left crippled and, therefore, unable to work; commerce was in ruins; the means of communication were difficult; production was almost nil; and the national currency . . . was depreciated . . ."15 Under these circumstances one can imagine what was left of the old educational system! Fortunately, the leaders set to work. Only four months elapsed after the return to normality when Congress

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14 Cabarioo, op. cit., p. 73.
15 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 782.
approved Law 39 on public instruction, which has served as the main statute on education for half a century. The legislators summarized in it the points of view expressed in the Constitution of 1886 and the Concordat of 1887. The first article states that "public education in Colombia will be organized and directed in accord with the Catholic religion." From the start the Concordat served as the basis for education. Elementary education was to be free but not compulsory. The government exercised control of all public institutions which were elementary, secondary, industrial, and professional. The Ministry of Public Instruction was in charge of "organizing national public instruction and of inspecting this branch . . . through its officers, in order to study its progress, propose the necessary improvements, correct errors, informalities, and abuses . . ." Without inspections, the government thought, "all efforts made to develop popular instruction will be sterile . . ." Consequently, a host of inspectors were required. There was a Secretary of Public Instruction for each department appointed by the Minister of Public Instruction from a list of three names sent in by the governor of that department. He was the immediate inspector for departmental education. A group of departmental inspectors were under his jurisdiction. There were the provincial inspectors in charge of visiting and "correcting abuses" within their provinces, and finally, there were


17 Decree Number 491, of July 3, 1904, explanatory of Law 39 of October 26, 1903, found in Ibid., p. 9.

18 Ibid., p. 11.
the municipal inspectors, those who came directly in contact with the teachers and pupils. All these officers, representing the national, departmental, provincial, and municipal levels, were necessary in order to insure the proper discharge of responsibility at each level. The nation, the department, and the municipalities had to contribute to the support of instruction. Chapter X of Decree 491, of July, 1904, explanatory of Law 39, divides the financial responsibility thus:

Article 26. The nation will take care of the expenses involved in the support of secondary, industrial, professional, and artistic instruction, when the last three function in the capital of the Republic.

Article 27. The expenses involved in elementary instruction will be in charge of the departments and municipalities, in the manner ordered by the departmental assemblies.

The departments and municipalities having enough funds are allowed to maintain establishments for secondary, industrial, professional, and artistic education.

Article 28. The expenses involved in elementary education in the territories, and those of the education of the Indians will be in charge of the National Treasury. 19

A new trend was visible in the organization of secondary education. The law called for a division of the secondary curriculum into technical and classical. The former was to include "the indispensable elements of general culture, modern languages, and those subjects preparatory for the respective professions." The classical was to offer those subjects commonly known as humanities. But in the schools supported with national, departmental, or municipal funds "technical instruction will be preferred." 20 The definite support of technical education was a new development in the thinking of the official educators. They felt, no doubt, that in order to reconstruct the country the schools should offer

19 Ibid., p. 18.
20 Ibid., Article 11, Law 39, 1903.
some positive contribution in the form of a more practical approach to the realities of life. However, the two documents that served as the basis of the reorganization carried failure within themselves. They demanded that education should be organized according to the Catholic Church, the same force that had been in charge of education for centuries without any practical results, as far as technical preparation was concerned. It is not difficult to understand that tradition and authority would be in favor of intellectual rather than of technical education. For this and other reasons secondary education continued within the classical path in spite of the efforts of the government. Epimaco Cabarico comments on this point as follows:

... The intention ... to deviate secondary education towards more practical ends and to avoid the continuation of old prejudices ... suffered failure; for having only two higher institutions for technical education as against a respectable catalog of law schools scattered all over the country, in addition to the course of philosophy and letters in the Colegio del Rosario, the technical curriculum was not received favorably. If it functioned, it was in a very limited manner and only to give way to the classical curriculum.21

Two serious handicaps of Colombian education had their origin in the legislation of this time. The first one was the excessive emphasis on inspection as a means of accomplishing the ends of instruction. The system, based on authority, lent itself to suspicion and resentment, not to speak of the political and personal intrigues which it could produce. A certain amount of duplication was also present since the national, departmental, provincial, and municipal inspectors had very similar responsibilities to discharge. Coordination was not always possible

21 Cabarico, op. cit., pp. 61-2. The two institutions for higher technical training were the School of Mathematics and Engineering, in Bogotá, and the School of Mines, in Medellín.
with so many people involved in the process. The second handicap was the three-party share of responsibility in the matter of support. This was more noticeable on the elementary level where the nation supplied the textbooks, the department appointed and paid the teachers, and the municipalities provided the buildings and furniture. This again resulted in difficulties since there was no uniformity in its application. The departments that were financially sound could pay higher salaries to the teachers, and the prosperous municipalities were able to have good buildings; but the poor states and municipalities could not do the same.

Another curious consequence of the system, and one which could be possible only in a politically minded country, was the closing of the schools by the municipalities whenever they wanted to get rid of a teacher, on the pretext that the municipality could not afford the repairs of the building or that the building was needed for something else. The textbooks came, the teacher was appointed by the department, but there was no place for the school. Sometimes the process was reversed, either the teacher or the books were lacking while the buildings stood ready.

In spite of all its defects the legislation of 1903 and 1904 gave education a modern touch which promised good fruits if consistently pursued.

The results of this energetic effort were manifested by the increase in the number of schools. In 1911 there were 4,070 educational institutions, both private and public, with a total of 245,893 students. A year later the number of institutions had increased by 301, and the
number of students had augmented by 26,980. Mr. Phanor J. Eder, a
business man who spent several years in Colombia, has this to say about
secondary education:

The secondary schools called colegios, both public and
private, are generally well housed but are insufficient in
number to admit all who apply. They are found as a rule,
in the larger or the older towns. There are 229 of these
high schools . . . The total attendance is 18,802 . . . 23

2. The First Pedagogical Congress

Another demonstration of the interest in education that animated
both the government and Congress was the celebration of the First
National Pedagogical Congress in Bogota in December, 1917. The sessions
were officially opened by the Minister of Education. One hundred
fifty-three delegates from different parts of the country were present.
Some of the papers presented at these meetings were symptomatic of that
which concerned the educators as is revealed by their titles: "Study
of Professional Teaching and Its Role in Colombia," "The Normal Schools
and the Teachers," "Physical, Intellectual, and Moral Culture of the
Child," "Plan of Studies for the Normal School for Teachers," "Spelling
Exercises for the Upper Classes of the Elementary School," "Educational
Gymnasia without Apparatus in Colombia."24 The Society of Christian
Brothers, an order of the Catholic Church established by John the
Baptist de la Salle in France, had become active and well known in

23 Ibid., p. 252.
24 Cabarico, op. cit., p. 89.
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Colombia. It contributed with several of the topics of discussion for the pedagogical congress.

3. **Protestant Private Education**

While education continued to be conducted according to the Concordat, other religious groups were already strong enough to establish their own schools. Since 1866 the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. had sent missionaries to Colombia. In spite of the opposition, the missionaries founded a school for girls in Bogotá in 1869 with an enrolment of eighteen students. The school grew rapidly. The need for a similar school for boys was apparent and so these same Presbyterian missionaries founded a school for boys in 1885, also in Bogotá.25 A few years later two schools were established in Barranquilla, the capital of a northern department. The educational work of this mission was well received by the Colombian people. Reginald Wheeler and Webster Brown of the Board of Foreign Missions visited the work in the early 1920's in order to make a study of the conditions of the country and submit their recommendations to the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Their observations were published in a book called *Modern Missions on the Spanish Main*. The chapter devoted to education is a penetrating study of the educational conditions of the country at the time of their visit and the extent of Protestant contribution to education. According to their report, in 1922 there were nine Presbyterian schools in different parts of the country, with 916 students, four of the schools having both primary and

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secondary sections. There were thirteen American teachers and many Colombian teachers in charge of these nine schools. Based on the deficient statistics available for the year 1921, they give the following general educational picture of the nation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Pupils/Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td>5,249</td>
<td>338,792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary schools</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>17,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2,026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial and Technical Schools</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>5,544</td>
<td>358,928</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After presenting this picture they add:

If the population of the republic is 6,300,000, as stated in official publications, the above figures give one primary school to every 1,200 inhabitants, and one pupil to every 18; one high school to every 77,228 inhabitants, and a high-school pupil to every 366; one professional school to every 630,000, and a student in these institutions to every 3,109; and one industrial or technical school to every 9,000.

Referring to secondary education and to the discriminatory policy of the government they write:

In the same year (1921) there were 283 secondary schools, with a total of 17,407 pupils. Of these secondary schools only 73, with 7,305 pupils, are governmental; the remainder are private, generally controlled by the Church. Forty-two of the total number, many of them under Catholic orders (Roman), are authorized to grant the diploma of bachiller which entitles the holder to begin his professional studies in any of the five universities of the country. None of our mission schools, although giving the same or a more extensive course of study under better trained teachers and superior equipment, has been able as yet, in view of the terms of the Concordat, to secure this privilege.

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26 Wheeler and Brown, op. cit., p. 262.
27 Ibid., p. 242.
28 Ibid., p. 244.
29 Ibid., pp. 241-2.
The contribution of the Protestant schools has been great, not only in the realm of educational improvement but also in character education. One could desire that Wheeler and Brown could have been in Colombia in 1939 and the years following to see the efforts of the three main Presbyterian secondary schools rewarded by the authorization given by the government to grant the diploma of bachiller. They would be amazed to discover that one of these secondary schools in Bogotá dared to introduce coeducation on a large scale after a period of experimentation. Coeducation was so successful that a number of other schools adopted it against the criticisms of the traditionalists. Coeducation has stood the trial even until now when a more conservative and orthodox educational policy, under the leadership of the Catholic Church, is in the making again.

4. The Second German Educational Mission

The only practical result of the First Pedagogical Congress was to make some of the people aware of the urgent needs of education in Colombia. This, however, was confined mostly to educational and official circles, and, therefore, did not have the popular appeal which is indispensable for great movements. But if this congress of educators, practically speaking, failed in its purpose, another attempt to bring these problems to the public eye was soon to have wide repercussions. This was the work of one man, Agustín Nieto Caballero, who sincerely believed that it was time to do away with the "fossilized school" of the Colombian system. Nieto Caballero was a member of a prominent family in the capital. He had been educated in Europe and the United States, where he became a progressive educator. He had also attended several educa-
tional meetings of international character where he met a great many of the outstanding pedagogues of different nations. Upon his return to Colombia in 1913, he launched an unsuccessful campaign to modernize the antiquated methods and to change educational institutions. Thinking that it was impossible for the time being to obtain official support for his ideas, he founded his own school in Bogotá in 1914. The Gimnasio Moderno became one of the first schools to adopt modern methods of teaching, mainly those principles held by the Deorolian school. It was founded for the specific purpose of experimentation. When Nieto Caballero had made for himself a national as well as an international reputation, he was in a position to demand the attention of his fellow citizens. He accepted his responsibility and began a public polemic on education in 1923. The climax of this debate was a letter he wrote to President Pedro Nel Ospina. The President had shown a great interest in modernizing the different aspects of Colombian life. Several foreign missions had come to the country to make studies of its economy, public services, public works, etc. with favorable results. Nieto Caballero’s efforts were not in vain. The President answered his letter assuring him that "... it is my purpose to pay careful attention to the branch of popular education ... ."31

The government authorized the coming of a German educational mission at the end of 1923. Its members arrived a year later. It was composed of three recognized authorities in education highly recommended by the

30 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 827.

31 Cabarico, op. cit., p. 93, contains the full text of the letter of President Ospina to Nieto Caballero.
German government. All three members were Catholic. Their task was to study the educational situation of the country and to write their recommendations for improvement in the form of a bill to be presented to Congress by the Executive. In order to insure the realistic approach to the national problems, three outstanding Colombian educators were appointed to work with the three German professors. They worked intensely for a period of almost a year. Their findings were submitted to Congress by the President. The Senate approved the bill with some modifications and sent it to the House of Representatives, where it was mercilessly killed. Then a regular change of government came in 1926. The new president was not much interested in the project, and the whole thing was dropped.

Differences of opinion over the proposed secondary and higher educational program caused the setback. The mission advocated a more technical curriculum for secondary schools with a set of examinations in each of the subjects at the end of the six years of study, leaving the responsibility of the success of these tests up to the interest and application of the student. The passing of the examinations entitled the student to enter the university. The opponents of the proposal argued that the secondary school was not the place to begin technical education and that the examination method would foster laziness.\textsuperscript{32} In regard to the university the report asked for a centralization in Bogotá of the five existing universities, on the grounds that it was too expensive for the country to support five institutions of higher learning. Since this recommendation threatened the existence of the departmental

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., p. 102.
universities, the opponents fought the bill because of its tendency to centralization. And so education suffered a severe blow when everybody expected it to receive needed improvement.

Ospina's administration made a good contribution to the teacher training program by bringing some German women teachers to be in charge of the National Pedagogical Institute for Women. The establishment of this type of normal school had been authorized since 1816, but so far nothing had been done. The German professors performed their task with zeal; and at the beginning of the following administration, in 1927, the Pedagogical Institute was opened as a teachers training college for elementary education. This Institute still exists.


On August 7, 1930, Dr. Enrique Olaya Herrera, one of the most outstanding Colombian statesmen of all times, was inaugurated as President of Colombia. He was elected with the support of the people of all political parties since they saw in him an honest and capable man. His record as a public servant, both in national and international affairs, was impressive. Although a Liberal, he was respected and liked by almost all Colombians. His was a coalition government. He appointed to his Cabinet members from the Liberal and the Conservative parties. During Olaya Herrera's administration a vast educational plan was outlined. Beginning with the most urgent needs in elementary education it gradually

33 Cabarico, op. cit., p. 102.

34 Henao y Arrubla, op. cit., p. 827.
covered the whole educational ladder. The administrations that followed immediately, also under the regime of the Liberal Party, continued improving the system along the line of progressive education. However, a change of party took place in 1946, bringing to the government the Conservative forces. Although since their ascension to power they have gradually begun changing education to suit their own ideas, in the main, the changes made by the Liberals are still the rule of the land. A brief summary of the most important improvements during the Liberal regime (1930-1946) follows.

1. **Elementary Education**

The new government appointed Dr. Agustín Nieto Caballero, who had been experimenting in his Gimnasio Moderno with the Decrolian philosophy, as national inspector of education. He had been the most ardent exponent of progressive education, but his efforts had failed because of the indifference of the authorities. Now his enthusiasm was so great that he and a group supporting the Gimnasio brought Dr. Ovidio Decroly himself to teach his educational theories to the teachers of the school and to visit other schools in the country. It was not strange then that the apostle who had been preaching in the desert in favor of new horizons was now given an opportunity to spread his ideas. Under his leadership and with the support of both the government and Congress, elementary education was transformed. The main accomplishments were:

1. **Modification of the length of the elementary school term from six years to four years.** The other two years were devoted to a vocational course for those not entering high school. Those finishing the fourth grade enter high school directly without taking the vocational course. (Decree Number 1487, 1932)
2. A change of the program of studies to shorten it to a four-year elementary course. The program was organized according to the Decrolian point of view.

3. Establishment of school restaurants supported by the national government in order to provide free lunches for the children of the poor. (Decree Number 219, 1936)

4. Reorganization of the national inspection of schools through a competent body of inspectors. (Decrees Numbers 620 of 1936 and 902 of 1938)

5. A building program for elementary and normal schools. (Law 30, 1944)

6. Provision of shoes by the government for the children of poor families. (Decree 1771, 1936)

7. Equality of opportunities in the enrollment of children in the elementary schools. Aimed at the abolition of discriminatory practices on the basis of race, illegitimate birth, religion, or social condition. (Law 32, 1936)

8. Establishment of the National Register of Elementary School Teachers. Each teacher should be registered and salary and position determined by his training, his tenure, and other factors. (Several decrees)

9. Organization of the Technical Council of Elementary Education as a consulting body for the Ministry of Education. (Decree Number 1340, 1941)

10. Organization of special schools for sick children, located in recognized healthy surroundings (Decree Number 14, 1939)

11. Short courses given in Bogotá as part of an in-service training program for the teachers in all parts of the country.35

All these measures brought about an unknown activity and stimulation on the part of educators. Nieto Caballero himself and his body of collaborators traveled all over the country lecturing and meeting with teachers, parents, civic clubs, school administrators, and all those inter-

35 All decrees pertaining to education are found in the Regimen de la Enseñanza Primaria, op. cit., and Regimen de la Enseñanza Secundaria, of the Ministry of National Education. Decrees pertaining to education since 1940 are published in Fabian, Gilberto, Instruction y Cultura, Librería Stella, Bogotá, 1948.
ested in the solving of the problem of education. Buildings were erected, teaching materials were provided, sanitary conditions were improved, poor children were helped. In the classroom the iron discipline was replaced by a "discipline of confidence." In some rural areas orchards and gardens were introduced as part of classroom teaching. Parents were brought into the school program. From all appearances it seemed as if the elementary school in Colombia had become progressive—the European way.

Before continuing further it might be well to say something about Decroly's life and educational theories. Dr. Ovide Decroly was born in Renaix, Belgium, on July 23, 1871. He studied psychiatric medicine at the universities of Brussels and Paris. Upon his return to his native country he became very much interested in abnormal children and founded in his own house the first Belgian laboratory for the study of such children in 1901. He was also instrumental in the founding of several scientific societies interested in the study of children. From the observations he made in his laboratory he evolved his educational theories not only for abnormal but also for normal children. In 1907, at the request of some friends, he founded his famous school "L'Hermitage," in Uccle. This was for normal children. The educational achievements of Dr. Decroly in this school became known all over the world through his own writings and those of his disciples. He traveled extensively disseminating his theories. He visited Colombia in 1925. Dr. Decroly died in Belgium in 1932.

36 Hommage Au Dr. Decroly, Imprimé par Les Usines Reunies Scheerders —Van Kerchne, A Saint Nicholas, Belgique, 1933.
The starting point of the Decrolian theory is the consideration of
the child's interests at different psycho-biological levels. A great
emphasis is placed, consequently, on the study of the development of the
child. The curriculum is based on the interests of the child as they
are revealed by psychological studies and direct observation of the
child by the teacher. There must be careful distinction between the
interest of the child and those of the adult in order not to jeopardize
the child. "According to experiments of psychologists, the interests of
children form three-year units."37 The curriculum should, therefore, be
planned in three-year cycles to match the interests of the children.

From studies and observation a set of interests corresponding to each
three-year cycle is available. The method for presenting the material
to be learned is called "the centers-of-interest" method.

What is "a center of interest"? "It is anything that calls our
attention and to which we devote ourselves with pleasure, enthusiasm,
love, and persistence ... "38 Knowing the interests of a given age
group, as the teacher should, and having grouped the children according
to their interests, several steps should be followed. These are obser­
vation, investigation, association, and realization.39 During the obser­
vation period the children are taken to the place where the object of
observation is found. They are supposed to look at it, study it, compare
it, take pictures of it, draw it, etc. This is direct observation. The

37 Camelo, Julio, y Bernal, Juan de J., Centros de Interes-Preocupaciones
Escolares, Librería Colombiana, Bogotá, 1937, p. 42.
38 Ibid., p. 79.
39 Ibid., Chapter XIV.
period of investigation is the time spent in answering questions suggested by the observation period about the object or anything connected with it. Reference books, excursions, talks, and other means are used. Association comes when the children begin wondering whether the same object could be found in other places. This association in space lends itself easily to the teaching of geography. Association in time, that is, the placing of the object under observation in history, gives a chance for the study of history. As for realization, this step includes the summarization by means of drawings, recitations, descriptions, compositions, etc., of the knowledge acquired about the "center of interest" under study. The role of the teacher is that of a paternal, loving guide.

The introduction of the Decrolian theory was an attempt to bring Colombia up to date on educational theories and practices. The credit goes to Agustín Nieto Caballero, the indefatigable champion of modern education.

2. Teacher Training

In 1932 the government was compelled to close almost all the existing normal schools for lack of funds for their support and for lack of competent teachers to direct them. Almost immediately, however, the Ministry of Education opened the so-called "Course of Information," under the direction of specialized professors in elementary education in order to speed up the preparation of teachers for the normal schools in the different departments. A year later, (Decree 1990, 1933) the Faculty of Educational Sciences was opened as a part of the university for the
purpose of preparing teachers for the normal schools as well as teachers and administrators for secondary schools, national inspectors, and other officers of the national school system. By 1942 Agustin Nieto Caballero reported that there were sixteen normal schools scattered throughout the country and that there were plans for improvement.

Another significant development was the almost identical curriculum for secondary schools and normal schools. The purpose of this was to raise the cultural level of the prospective teachers in order to make them more efficient in their jobs and also to avoid giving them a lower status than that of a high-school graduate. The normal schools gave some specialized teaching, such as psychology, methodology, and others, in addition to the subjects required by the secondary curriculum.

The Faculty of Educational Sciences was declared autonomous and its name changed to Higher Normal School in 1936.

3. Secondary Education

The following can be considered the most outstanding developments in the field of secondary education:

1. Organization of the section of secondary education as a part of the Ministry of Education. (Law 12, 1934)

2. Creation of a body of national inspectors of secondary education in charge of the supervision of teachers and the administrative practices required by legislation. (Decree 620, 1936)

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41 Kandel, I. E. (Editor), *La Educación en la América Latina*, Anuario Educacional del Instituto Internacional del Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1942, Chapter on Colombian Education.
3. Modification of the curriculum with an attempt to bring back the division between technical and classical bachillerato. Upon the failure of this attempt, the separation of vocational and industrial education from the bachillerato. (Several decrees)

4. Control by the government of both public and private secondary schools, and of all educational institutions in the country. (Article 35 of the Constitution of 1935)

5. Limitation of the right to grant degrees to the government. (Decree 1070, 1938)

6. Approval of secondary schools by the government in order to be recognized as institutions meeting the standards set by the Ministry of Education. (Decree 503, 1936)

7. Nationalization of seven departmental, municipal, and private secondary schools.

8. Drafting a comprehensive set of rules for the administration of the public secondary schools. These rules also applied to private schools, or at least served as models for their organization. (Decree 63, 1939)

9. Creation of semi-professional schools for girls who, finishing the fourth year of secondary school and not desiring to continue to the end of the sixth year, needed additional training. (Several decrees)

In regard to the new spirit of secondary education, Dr. Nieto Caballero wrote in 1942:

The plan of studies of the secondary school and the programs that develop it, offer a wide basis for general culture which is foreign to that requiring premature specialization but with the value of true mental disciplines within the four great branches of teaching: mathematics, natural sciences, languages, and social studies. The educative nature of this program is also primordial: Ample room is given in them to physical and moral formation; drawing, manual arts, music, and singing are found in the whole educational cycle.

And of the social content of all education he said:

The school that we are advocating today tends to include within its influence the home and the whole community. It is a school with a definite social orientation whose action is

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\[42\] Ibid., Chapter on Colombian Education.
4. Higher Education

Before 1935 the several schools of the national university were located in different places, without any special connection except for the cultural objective of their task. Each one depended directly from the Ministry of Education. President Alfonso Lopez, who was elected in 1934 for the period 1935-1938, conceived the idea of building a University City in Bogota, where all the branches of the university could be located. The idea was included in a bill presented to Congress by Carlos Garcia Prada in 1935. It was approved in December of that same year and work was begun immediately in the northwestern section of the capital. The same law provided that the university be autonomous, governed by a board representing the Ministry of Education, the faculty, and the student body. The rector was to be appointed by the President from a list of three names submitted by the board of the university.

University City is one of the most outstanding cultural achievements in Colombia of this century. Modern buildings house all the schools. The buildings are surrounded by beautifully landscaped gardens, trees, and the statues of national heroes. A unique feature of University City is the existence of dormitories on the campus. This is unusual, for Latin American universities do not usually have dormitories for students. The campus of Colombia's National University resembles the modern university campus in the United States.

During the administration of Alfonso Lopez and as part of the

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43 Hernández de Alba, Guillermo, Aspectos de la Cultura en Colombia, Prensas de la Universidad Nacional, Bogotá, 1947, p. 69.
development of the National University, all other national universities, which had thus far been located in the provinces, were administratively united with the National University.

5. Summary of Improvements

The following statistical data will help to appraise the development of education during the period under discussion. The great interest in education and the attention given to all its branches is shown by the increase in monetary allotments to educational pursuits.

Total budget for education in the year of 1930 .... $ 4,067,220.00

National budget for education in 1945 ................. $12,258,940.00

Special fund for the construction of school buildings:
  the nation ....... $ 3,564,256.57
  the departments ... 3,564,256.57
  the municipalities. 3,564,256.57

  $10,692,769.71

Departmental budgets in 1945 .......................... $15,000,000.00

Municipal budgets in 1945 .............................. $ 5,000,000.00

Total national, departmental, and municipal budgets in 1945 $42,951,709.71

The number of school buildings increased enormously. The report of the Ministry of Education for 1947 estimates that between 1940 and 1946 a total of 3,306 schoolrooms, with a capacity for 132,240 children, located in rural and urban areas, had been built with the cooperation of the nation, the departments, and the municipalities. 46

Some minor changes have been effected in the system of education


since the change in administration between 1946 and the present. This is true especially in matters of philosophy, program of studies, normal schools, and higher studies. However, since these changes are still in operation and, therefore, part of the present system of education, they will be discussed in the following chapter.

E. Development of the Organization and Administration of Schools

From the historical survey presented in this chapter the main administrative and organic features of the Colombian system are evident. It is a centralized system with the Ministry of Education in charge of controlling, inspecting, and improving the four branches of education—elementary, secondary (including industrial and vocational), normal training, and university. The ministry does this through a national body of inspectors. Each department has a secretary of education appointed by the central government for the purpose of watching over education in his own department. There is also a body of departmental inspectors for elementary schools. Each municipality also has a body of inspectors.

At the local level, the university and the normal schools are autonomous institutions. The elementary schools are under the direct responsibility of the departmental and municipal authorities, while the secondary schools are mostly under the direct control of the Ministry of Education. In matters of support the nation pays for secondary, teacher training, and higher education, while the elementary schools are supported by the departments (teachers), municipalities (buildings), and the nation (materials).
Private schools of any kind are compelled to comply with the regulations of the Ministry of Education, which are the same as for the public schools. Upon the approval given by the national inspectors the schools are recognized for the purposes of certification of the studies of the children.

A more detailed discussion of the organization and administration of secondary schools is not within the scope of this chapter but will be given in the following one.
CHAPTER VI
PRESENT ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The historical events narrated in the three previous chapters have produced the system of education which has served as the backbone of Colombian culture. It would be desirable to explore its main characteristics and manifestations in order to determine its advantages and disadvantages. The main interest of this work, however, is on secondary education, and particularly on secondary school administration. For this reason this chapter will be confined to the description and analysis of the secondary school system. Reference to the other aspects of Colombian education will be made as they are needed.

A. Orientation of Secondary Education in Colombia

The main purpose of secondary education during the colonial period was to prepare youth for the priesthood, or in law, medicine, or philosophy. There was little or no interest in technical and vocational education since this type of work was left to the Indians and the peasants. During the early period of the Republic the emphasis on the exploration and use of the natural resources of the new country shifted the emphasis of secondary education from the merely academic to scientific subjects as well. The influence of French and English thought determined the inclusion of modern languages in the program of studies. It was during this early period that the secondary school curriculum was enlarged to include natural sciences, modern languages, and social sciences, in addition to the subjects previously included. Through the teaching of these subjects educators expected to prepare promising
students for the university since the goal of secondary education was preparation for entrance to the university. This trend continued until the beginning of the twentieth century when attempts were made to meet the needs of the large number of students who would not go on to schools of higher learning but who needed to prepare for an occupation. The Organic Law of 1903 divided secondary education into technical and classical, but the conditions of the country at the time did not permit the establishment of technical schools, and so again the objective of capacitating young people for their economic well-being disappeared from the schools and the classical curriculum prevailed.

It was not until the educational movement led by Agustín Nieto Caballero in the thirties that secondary education undertook the double task of preparing young people for university and for earning a living. Secondary education branched out into the many phases which will be indicated later in the discussion of types of secondary schools in this same chapter. Industrial, agricultural, trade, commercial, and normal schools appeared in different parts of the country, thus making it possible for young people to receive the benefits of a varied secondary education.

The main objectives of present secondary education in Colombia have been formulated by several Colombian educators. Perhaps Gabriel Anzola Gómez, professor of education at the Higher Normal School, has come closest to defining these objectives. From the brief discussion of this subject in his Orientaciones sobre Segunda Enseñanza, the following summary is taken:
The task of secondary education is

1. To prepare young people for further study or for an occupation.
2. To teach them the social heritage of the country and the world.
3. To give them an understanding of social values.
4. To develop a sense of responsibility on the part of the student.
5. To develop the skills necessary for the adaptation of the individual to society.1

The Colombian secondary school has been moving within these objectives, although recent reforms point towards the return of secondary education to the objectives of the last century. The compulsory study of Latin, the intensification of philosophy, and the diminishing of the total number of hours devoted to the study of science indicate a rebirth of the classical curriculum. Although the Ministry of Education did not give reasons for the changes, the Revista Interamericana de Educación, published in Bogotá by the Confederation of Catholic Schools, has this to say about the changes in the program:

In Colombia where more than 99 per cent of the population is Catholic according to the last census . . . this (change) has been . . . directed and inspired by the Catholic religion, whose morality founded on divine authority and Christian charity, is the best educator in the customs and the best molder of virtuous character and personality.

The end pursued by the government with this reform is to replace through a total change the intellectual and technical encyclopedism with a more human and rational system in which the formation of the moral personality, the will, and character takes precedence over the formation of intelligence; a system which, in order to be perfect, must be religious and Christian.2

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1 Anzola Gomez, Gabriel, Orientaciones sobre Segunda Enseñanza, Libreria Colombiana, Bogota, 1939, Chapter I, pp. 15-24.
It is possible that in the next few years education will be more than ever geared to tradition and sectarianism.

B. The National System of Secondary Schools

The national constitution of Colombia gives the State the "absolute power of inspecting public and private educational institutions...." (Article 35). It also charges the President with the duties of regulating, directing, and inspecting national public education (Article 115). The President discharges his duties through the Ministry of Education, at the head of which there is a cabinet member, the minister of education. The minister of education delegates some of his responsibilities to national, departmental, and municipal officers who share with him the task of carrying out the educational program. Thus the national system of education is administered jointly by three agencies—the Ministry of Education, the departmental secretariats, and the municipal secretariats.

1. The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education is organized according to the provisions of Decree No. 2261 of July, 1947, with the following sections: Office of the Minister, General Secretariat, Permanent Higher Council of Education, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Feminine Education, Teacher Education, Vocational Education, Cultural Extension and Fine Arts, Scholarships and Cultural Exchange, National Library, Architecture,

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Legal Office, Business Office, and Personnel Office.

The minister is responsible to the President and to Congress for the proper functioning of the Ministry of Education. He is a political appointee without a specific term of service. His immediate collaborators are the secretary general and the heads of the sections listed above. The minister and these officers form the Administrative Council of the Ministry of Education.

For expert advice on educational policies the minister calls on the Permanent Higher Council of Education, which serves as his advisory body. It is composed of twelve members, representing the presidents of the universities, the Catholic Church, the national inspectors of education, the teachers' union, the principals of the private secondary schools, and the president of the country. This council acts as the official representative to UNESCO.

The section on secondary education is divided into three departments: Office of the Director, the General Affairs Office, and the Inspection Office. The other sections of the Ministry of Education have a similar type of organization.

The Ministry of Education regulates all educational activities by means of decrees. Through its body of inspectors it controls and inspects all educational institutions except the university, which is autonomous. The section of cultural extension maintains adult education, several art schools, the national band, and the national theater. The Academy of Language, the Academy of History, and other specialized agencies are also directly responsible to the Ministry of Education.
Diagram III on page 159 shows the organization of the Ministry of Education and its several agencies.

2. The Departmental Secretariats

Each of the sixteen departments of the Republic maintains a secretariat of education headed by a secretary who is appointed by the national minister from a list of three names submitted by the governor of the department. Although this office represents the Ministry of Education, it is authorized to pursue any educational activities that the departmental legislature or the departmental government may wish to assign it. The salaries of the secretary and of the other employees in his office are paid by the department. The departmental secretariats are usually divided into the following offices for organizational purposes: Office of the secretary, office of departmental inspectors, office of physical education, and office of the National Register of Teachers (registration and records of teachers). The secretary is responsible both to the national and departmental executives.

3. The Municipal Organization

In the local set-up, the mayor is usually also the educational authority. He, the priest, and the municipal judge constitute, what might be called an ex officio local board of education. Only in the large municipalities which support vocational or high schools in addition to the elementary schools is there a municipal director of education. This officer is appointed by the mayor and charged with the supervision of the schools that function in the municipality. The main duty of the
NOTE:

All the divisions of education depend from and are administered directly by the Office of the Minister of Education. The general sub-offices (General Secretariat, Personnel, Business, Legal Offices, etc.) are consultative and, therefore, at the service of any of the divisions as needed, but they are controlled by the Ministry of Education.
municipalities, as far as the general program of education is concerned, is to furnish the buildings and facilities for the elementary schools within their jurisdiction.

4. **Types of Secondary Schools**

In order to have a point of reference, all schools offering training to elementary school graduates between the ages of twelve and twenty-one will here be considered as secondary schools. There are three distinct types that will be discussed here—university-preparatory, vocational, and normal.

a. **University-Preparatory**

The most common type of secondary school is the university-preparatory. It offers a six-year course of study, at the completion of which the student receives his bachelor's degree which entitles him to enter the national university. The curriculum in this type of school is academic in nature, including classes in mathematics, physics, the social sciences, the natural sciences, arts, languages, religion, and philosophy. (Table III on page 162 shows the curriculum prescribed by the Ministry of Education for these schools).

b. **Vocational**

A second type of secondary school can be classified as vocational. These schools are intended for those young people who desire to finish their training as soon as possible in order to be able to earn a living in a semi-skilled occupation. The curriculum of these schools is terminal in nature, although the students can go on for further study in other schools offering more advanced vocational training. Among the
schools that train for a specific vocation may be mentioned the commercial, agricultural, and trade schools. A brief description of each of these types follows. As an example of the program of the vocational schools the curriculum offered by the commercial schools is also given here.

(1) **Commercial Schools**

The commercial schools offer six courses as shown below. At the completion of each of the first four a certificate is granted, while the last two lead to the granting of a diploma.

1. A two-year course in typing.
2. A two-year course in shorthand.
3. A three-year course in secretarial work.
5. A four-year course to train experts in commerce.
6. A six-year course to train technicians in commerce.

Each of these courses is terminal but at the same time so designed as to allow the students to take any advanced commerce courses they desire. (Table IV on page 164 shows the curricula of the commercial schools.)

(2) **Agricultural Schools**

The agricultural schools operate in the rural areas. They receive students from thirteen to eighteen years of age who have completed the elementary grades. In the curriculum a few conventional subjects are included, but most of the classes are practical in nature. These schools have large tracts of land and modern farm equipment, in order to insure the best results in agricultural education. Because of the lack of dormitory facilities many of the students come from the near-by farming communities. However, a movement is under way to provide
TABLE III
CURRICULUM OF THE UNIVERSITY-PREPARATORY SCHOOLS
IN COLOMBIA IN 1952

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botany and Zoology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anatomy and Physiology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Grammar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthography</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian and Spanish-American Literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian History</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian Geography</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Geography</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World History</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free time for intensification of subjects, study halls, and other activities(^5)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total hours per week</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) See the following decrees: No. 75, No. 2550, and No. 0062, all of 1951, Ministry of Education, Bogota, 1951.

\(^5\) Another decree issued in January, 1952, requires that all students receive, in addition to the above subjects, the following: drawing, 4 hours per week; penmanship, 2; music, 4; civics, 3; and etiquette, 6. Each school is free to distribute these subjects and hours as it sees fit over the six-year period. The time for these classes is taken from the hours left above for the intensification of subjects, study halls, and other activities, thus reducing this time considerably.
dormitories in strategic areas in order to make it possible for more young people to attend. These schools provide a three-year course at the end of which the student receives a certificate. If he wants to continue his studies in agriculture, he has to go to some other institution.

(3) **Trade Schools**

The comprehensive program of trade education is of recent origin. Law 56 of 1947 provides that a trade school shall be founded in each of the sixteen departments as well as in the nine territories. However, due to the lack of finances for the project the enforcement of this law has been difficult and, in some areas, impossible. Therefore, trade schools have been opened only in those areas where the need was especially great.

The three-year program prescribed for these schools includes some basic academic subjects, such as, arithmetic, grammar, history, and geography; and courses of specialization in one or more of the following trades: fishing, carpentry, tanning, weaving, ceramics, cobbling, masonry, leather work, and others, according to the needs and resources of the region.

(4) **Industrial Schools**

The industrial schools prepare industrial experts and technicians. Those who prepare themselves as experts take a five-year course in which some academic subjects are taught in addition to the courses dealing with the industry chosen. It is possible to specialize in mechanics, electricity, forging, foundry work, metallurgy, motor
### TABLE IV

**CURRICULA OF THE COMMERCIAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN 1952**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF COURSE</th>
<th>Two-year Typing and/or Shorthand</th>
<th>Three-year Secretarial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Composition</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthography</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian Geography</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian History</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penmanship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorthand</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Geography (World and Colombian)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total hours    | 26 | 25 | 28 | 25 | 25 |

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF COURSE</th>
<th>COMMERCIAL ACCOUNTING</th>
<th>EXPERT IN COMMERCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Composition</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthography</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian Geography</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian History</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penmanship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Calculus</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Law</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Geography</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Geography</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorthand</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total hours</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 For the degree of Technician in Commerce two additional years are required after the degree of Expert in Commerce has been secured.
mechanics, etc. In these schools the first three years are devoted mostly to an exploration of the abilities and aptitudes of the students. The last two years are devoted to training in the chosen field. The course for technicians is a seven-year course. It includes a study of the basic academic subjects and practical training for electricians and mechanics only.

The question might arise, how the industrial schools differ from the trade schools. The difference is one of intensity of the teaching program. The trade schools offer a three-year course, at the end of which the graduate is given a certificate. The industrial schools offer a five-year course for experts and a seven-year course for technicians. They prepare their students for the semi-skilled professions in industry, while the trade schools prepare the student for home industries.

c. Normal Schools

The pressing need for teachers, especially in the rural areas, has produced a unique three-year normal school for the training of rural teachers. The candidates for this school must have completed their elementary education. Theoretically they are supposed to be at least sixteen years of age to be admitted to a rural normal school, but the need for teachers has made it necessary to accept younger candidates. The curriculum covers the essentials in both the academic subjects and the educational courses. Each normal school has an elementary school annexed to it for practice-teaching purposes. The teaching is adapted to the problems and needs of the region in which the normal school is located.
In addition to the rural normal schools there are normal schools that prepare elementary school teachers for urban areas. These follow a six-year program of which the first four are identical with the college-preparatory school. The last two years are devoted mainly to courses in education. (Tables V and VI on pages 168 and 169 show the programs of studies of the two types of normal schools.)

d. Other Schools

In addition to the types of schools mentioned above there are a few specialized schools that cannot be classified in the more general types. They are those devoted to the teaching of art, music, and nursing, most of them located in the capitals of the departments.

5. Integration

The public school system of Colombia provides for five years of elementary schooling, followed by six years of bachillerato (university-preparatory) or from two to seven years of technical education, as the student chooses. After the completion of the bachillerato course, the student who wishes to prepare himself for one of the professions may apply for admittance to the university. In other words, the national government provides and regulates education on the three levels—elementary, secondary, and university. The logical conclusion would be that this could only mean a complete integration of these three levels. However, this is not the case as the following discussion will reveal.

A common criticism, voiced by secondary school teachers, is that the training at the elementary level is superficial and inadequate for the subsequent training at the secondary level. This criticism seems to
TABLE V
THREE-YEAR CURRICULUM OF THE RURAL NORMAL SCHOOLS IN 1952

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical Sciences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual Arts and Domestic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Agriculture and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total class hours per week</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the above classes, the students have the following practical training: First year, Observation; second year, Practice Teaching, 2 hours per week; and third year, Practice Teaching, four consecutive weeks.

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8 Decree No. 1791 of December 14, 1945, Ministry of Education, Bogota, Colombia.
TABLE VI

SIX-YEAR CURRICULUM OF THE REGULAR NORMAL SCHOOLS IN 1952

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Hours per week</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V10</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Literature</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian Literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Hygiene and Nursing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics and Sociology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Legislation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian History</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian Geography</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual Arts or Domestic Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Agriculture and Zoology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total hours per week</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the above classes the students have the following practical trainings: fifth year, Practice Teaching, three weeks; sixth year, Practice Teaching, four weeks.

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9 Decree No. 2979 of December 5, 1945, of the Ministry of Education, Bogotá, Colombia.

10 The first four years of this normal training course are the same as that of the university-preparatory schools.
he justified considering that the first year in secondary schools must be spent almost entirely in reviewing the things studied on the elementary level. Because of this the government at present requires that all students entering the secondary school take an entrance examination. If they pass all the subjects in which they are examined, they are accepted; if they fail in more than two, they have to repeat the last year of elementary school. This situation seems to reveal a lack of common goals at the two levels, making the transition from the elementary to the secondary level extremely difficult for the student.

The same problem seems to exist between the secondary and the university levels. At the beginning of the school year of 1951, the Ministry of Education gave an entrance examination to all the applicants for entrance to the national university. Less than half of the candidates passed the examination. The Ministry of Education reached the conclusion that the secondary schools were not giving adequate instruction for entrance to the university and decided to require a preparatory year at the university in order to review all the work done on the secondary level before allowing the student to enter his field of specialization. Without questioning the adequacy of the examination and the validity of the conclusion, the problem of integration has not been solved by requiring an extra year of preparation.

Another aspect of the problem of integration has to do with the transfer of students from one school to another. The common procedure is for the local school officers to study the credits of the student and to compare them with the credit system required by the Ministry of Education.
If the student has not taken a given subject required in the school to which he wishes to transfer, he is asked to take a make-up examination in the subject or subjects he lacks. This practice again presents the problem that not all schools have the same standards and the same emphases.

The problem of integration is of great importance. Unless common goals are set for the whole educational system the present waste of time, money, and effort will continue.

6. Dual System of Schools

Practically speaking, there are two systems of schools in Colombia—one for boys and another for girls. In the Ministry of Education there are two separate sections of secondary education—the secondary school section and the section of feminine education. Each has a different field of work. The former takes care of all the educational institutions for male students, while the latter ministers to the educational institutions for girls. A boys' school and a girls' school of the same area, or even of the same governing entity, may not be under the same administrative staff. They must have separate officers, male for the boys and female for the girls. This has been a traditional practice both at the elementary and secondary levels. On the university level men and women students are allowed to enroll in the same university and go to classes together. But this practice seems to be disappearing also as is shown by the recent division of the Higher Normal School into two separate sections, one for male students and one for female students. Without reference to the ideological implications, the practical consideration
of this feature would seem to emphasize a wasteful duplication of build-
ings, faculty, and other facilities. Uniting some of these schools
would in most cases offer opportunities for more children and young
people to receive an education.

The Colegio Americano de Bogotá, a private school, in 1939 began
an experiment in coeducation at the elementary and secondary levels
with excellent results. The Colegio Santander, an official school, es-

established coeducation on the secondary level in 1947 but was ordered a
year later to discontinue it. At present, the only coeducational
secondary school for Colombian students is the Colegio Americano de
Bogotá. The Ministry of Education, however, has ordered the school
to suspend coeducation.

7. Private Schools

Private secondary schools of all kinds constitute almost two-
thirds of all the secondary schools in the country. The inability of
the government to keep pace with the educational needs has encouraged
the founding of private schools. The government, however, exercises
control over these schools. There is no distinction between official
and private schools in regard to the rules and regulations governing
them; the only difference is the source of their support. Private
schools are expected to meet the standards set for the public-school
system in every detail in order to receive the approval of the govern-
ment as degree-granting institutions.
8. The School Year

All secondary schools must offer at least ten months of instruction each year. The school year begins the first Monday in February and ends the third week of November. In some sections of the country the year begins in October and ends in July. The usual vacations are Holy Week, a fifteen-day mid-year vacation, Labor Day, and about a dozen religious and patriotic holidays. The average number of days in attendance is 180 a year. Students are not permitted to miss more than 20 per cent of the school days except for serious illness. In this case the allowance is 40 per cent. Professors are not allowed to miss more than 10 per cent of their classes. In case of serious illness they are allowed 30 per cent of the total number of schools days.

9. Extent of Secondary Education

In 1946 there were approximately one thousand institutions devoted to secondary education. Analyzing the data given about these institutions there are certain facts that stand out.

About two-thirds of the total number of these schools were private, the rest, public. Table VII on page 175 shows the distribution of schools by source of support and kind of instruction offered. The total number of students attending these schools was 63,960. The private schools served more than half of this number as Table VIII on page 175 indicates. More boys than girls were attending school that year. The majority of the girls preferred private to public schools, although a considerable number of them received instruction in public schools.
Table IX on page 176 shows the distribution of the student population by sex and by type of schools.

The number of teachers engaged in secondary instruction was 6,369. About one-third of this number were women. More than half of the teachers were employed by private schools. Table X on page 176 indicates the distribution of male and female teachers in private and public schools.

As far as types of schools were concerned, the university-preparatory schools were the most common. They had the greatest number of students and teachers. Second in the list were the commercial schools, with the normal, industrial, and agricultural at the bottom of the list.

Other statistical information, not given by these tables, that might be important is the percentage of young people in school. The number of young people of secondary school age in 1946 was 1,549,624\(^{11}\) while the secondary school enrollment was only 63,960. This means that half of the young people of secondary school age were left without schooling. The total population for 1946 was estimated at 10,470,801.\(^{12}\) The percentage of the total population of the country represented in the secondary schools was only 0.61. As a contrast to the Colombian situation, in the same year of 1946, the United States of America had about 8,780,020 young people of secondary school age of which 6,237,133 were students.


\(^{12}\) Ibid.
TABLE VII
NUMBER OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN COLOMBIA IN 1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>University Prep.</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Industrial and Trade</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Commercial</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>991</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE VIII
NUMBER OF STUDENTS ATTENDING SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN 1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>University Prep.</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Industrial and Trade</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Commercial</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>19,324</td>
<td>5,667</td>
<td>3,775</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>1,995</td>
<td>31,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>26,354</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>4,532</td>
<td>32,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45,678</td>
<td>6,432</td>
<td>4,253</td>
<td>1,070</td>
<td>6,527</td>
<td>63,960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statistical data for all the tables on this and the following page has been adapted from the report of the Seccion de Educación Vocacional, 1947, and the Currie study, op. cit.
TABLE IX

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO SEX, 1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Prep.</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Industrial and Trade</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Commercial</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>3,618</td>
<td>3,946</td>
<td>1,660</td>
<td>1,279</td>
<td>10,503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>15,706</td>
<td>1,721</td>
<td>2,115</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>21,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>12,663</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3,299</td>
<td>16,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>13,691</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>1,233</td>
<td>15,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>45,678</td>
<td>6,432</td>
<td>4,253</td>
<td>6,527</td>
<td>63,960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE X

NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF COLOMBIA IN 1946, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO SEX AND TYPE OF SCHOOL WHERE EMPLOYED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Prep.</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Industrial and Trade</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Commercial</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>1,277</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>2,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1,046</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>1,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>1,478</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>1,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4,100</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>6,369</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
enrolled in secondary schools. The total population of this country for that year was estimated at 142,672,762. Therefore, the percentage of the total population represented in the secondary schools that year was approximately 4.37.

10. Size and Location of Secondary Schools

No special study has been made to determine the size and the location of secondary schools. However, the author, from personal experience and knowledge, can state that secondary school enrollments vary in number from 100 to 1500. This difference in size depends on the location and type of school, as well as whether the school is private or public. As a rule, the university-preparatory schools are larger than the other types, regardless of their location. The agricultural, trade, and normal schools tend to be comparatively small, with enrollments of about 100 students. The normal, agricultural, and trade schools are better distributed throughout the country than the rest; although each of the sixteen departments has at least one school of each type. Most university-preparatory, industrial, and commercial schools are located in urban sections where parents are more interested in giving their children an education. The Colegio San Bartolomé Nacional, a university-preparatory school located in Bogotá, has 1500 students enrolled. The largest university-preparatory school located in a rural area of Central Colombia, the Liceo de Zipaquirá, has about 700 students. The Escuela Industrial (Industrial School) of Barranquilla, in the northern part of

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the country, has more than 1000 pupils. The Escuela Nacional de Comercio (National Commercial School), located in Bogota, enrolls more than 900 students every year.

11. Financial Support of Secondary Schools

The national government supports the public school system from taxes collected from the people. The distribution of funds proceeds in the following manner: The President and his Cabinet present to Congress an annual budget, in which they include all public expenses. According to Law 12 of 1934, 10 per cent of the total national budget shall be devoted to education. The minister of education and his collaborators also make a budget and then spend the money allotted to education according to their budget. The local schools receive their allocations on the basis of a local-school budget prepared by the principal and the treasurer of the school. Local-school authorities spend the money received only for those items included in the budget. In addition to the funds received from the Ministry of Education, the local secondary school receives a small enrollment fee from the students. This fee usually amounts to $50 to $60 a year for each student. There are no other sources of revenue for the public secondary schools.

Some departments and municipalities maintain their own secondary schools. In the case of the departments the governor and his secretary of education include the expenses of education in the yearly budget which they submit to the departmental legislature. The secretary of education distributes the funds to the local schools. The municipalities follow the same procedure, that is, the mayor presents the budget to the municipal
council and distributes the funds to the local schools. The departments and municipalities are authorized by law to levy taxes after receiving due approval from the national government. Some of them earmark certain taxes for education.

Private secondary schools charge monthly tuition and other fees of their students. The total cost of a year of study in a private secondary school varies from $380 to $450 a year for day students. Boarding schools charge more or less $1000 a year extra for board, room, laundry, and incidentals. Some private schools receive financial help from the national government.

C. The Local School

Public secondary schools in Colombia are all organized according to the same pattern no matter where they are located. Private schools are required to follow the government's regulations in this matter, but there is a certain degree of freedom of interpretation in regard to administrative procedures. It is possible to affirm that both public and private secondary schools have the same basic organization although the details may vary.

1. The Administrative Staff

All secondary schools are required to have the following members on their staff: principal, vice principal, head of discipline, secretary, treasurer, librarian, chaplain, doctor, dentist, nurse, porter, and janitors. If the school has dormitories, a dietitian and a head-cook are added. Obviously, only schools with a large student body can
afford to have such a large staff. Most schools combine the duties of
two or more posts in one person. A typical secondary school has a
principal, a vice principal, a head of discipline who is one of the reg­
ular members of the faculty, a treasurer, and a secretary. The librarian,
the chaplain, the nurse, the doctor, and the dentist usually work only
part time. Whenever there is a public health center in a community,
the schools, both public and private, avail themselves of its service,
thus avoiding the need for a full-time doctor and nurse.

The administrators of the public secondary schools are appointed
by the Ministry of Education from the teachers listed in the first
category of the National Register of Secondary School Teachers. The
National Register divides all teachers into four categories on the basis
of their training and experience. Graduates of the Higher Normal
School, teachers with the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, ordained priests
with six years of teaching experience, teachers who have taken summer
courses for several years, those with more than eighteen years of experi­
ence, as well as any person with a university degree provided that he
has had nine years of teaching experience in an approved school, are
entitled to be registered in the first category. To qualify as adminis­
trator in a public school the candidate must meet the same requirements
as those stipulated for the first category of the National Register.
However, in spite of this regulation, persons who are not professional
teachers are often appointed to administrative positions in the public
schools. Private schools are free to appoint their own administrators
regardless of the above regulations; but they are encouraged to employ
as teachers those who are registered, if possible.
a. Duties of the Administrative Staff

The Ministry of Education has a long list of duties for each member of the administrative staff. A summary of the most important duties of the principal, vice principal, head of discipline, secretary, and treasurer will be given here:

Duties of the Principal:

1. To supervise the total program of the school and to be responsible for its success.
2. To write the rules and regulations for the students and teachers.
3. To distribute the teaching obligations and other duties among the members of the faculty and other employees.
4. To maintain the morale of both the student body and faculty.
5. To supervise teaching.
6. To suggest the names of the teachers to be appointed by the Ministry of Education for the school.
7. To hire janitors and other domestic servants.
8. To supervise the use of the school plant.
9. To prepare, in cooperation with the treasurer, the annual budget of the school.
10. To write a report of the activities of the school at the end of the year.
11. To teach at least six hours a week.

Duties of the Vice Principal:

1. To take the place of the principal in his or her absence.
2. To make the schedule of classes.
3. To control the attendance of the faculty.
4. To keep in touch with the parents of the students.
5. To organize the extra-curricular activities.
6. To supervise the sending of reports to the parents.
7. To teach between six and eight hours of classes a week.
8. To perform any special tasks that the principal may assign.
9. To supervise the library services of the school.
10. To organize excursions and field trips.

16 The duties of school administrators are set forth in Resolution No. 331 of February 20, 1952, Ministry of Education, Bogotá.
Duties of the Head of Discipline:

1. To supervise the discipline of the school.
2. To organize the schedule for the use of the playground, and to distribute the supervisory duties of the playground activities.
3. To supervise the health program of the school.
4. To supervise the care of the school plant.
5. To teach from six to eight hours of classes a week.

Duties of the Secretary:

1. To keep the files and records of the school.
2. To be in charge of the correspondence, under the immediate supervision of the principal.
3. To issue the various certificates to students and parents.
4. To furnish the teachers with the teaching materials, books, etc., needed for their classes.
5. To send out the records and grades of the students.
6. To be in touch with the Ministry of Education in order to obtain any materials, instructions, or changes of policy.

Duties of the Treasurer:

1. To administer the property of the school.
2. To receive the money from the Ministry of Education and other sources for the support of the school.
3. To prepare the annual budget with the cooperation of the principal.
4. To pay the salaries and the bills of the school from the school funds.
5. To keep the accounts of the school.
6. To buy the materials and other equipment needed by the school.
7. To make a yearly inventory of the total property of the school.
8. To present a monthly financial report to both the principal and the Ministry of Education.

b. Organization of the Administrative Staff

The principal is the supreme authority of the school. He or she has to approve everything that goes on in the school. Consultation among the staff members is frequent, but the hierarchical status is respected. The line of authority passes from the principal to the vice principal, the head of discipline, the secretary, the treasurer, and the faculty, respectively.
c. Salaries of Administrators

The salaries of the principal and vice principal are determined by their category in the National Register. Since they supposedly are in the first category, their salaries at present would be as follows: that of the principal, $4,560\text{^17} a year, which includes room and board and a certain amount for his or her administrative duties; that of the vice principal, approximately $3,962 a year, which also includes room and board and a certain amount for his services as vice principal. The salaries of the secretary and the treasurer are between $3,000 and $3,500 a year. The head of discipline is usually paid according to his or her category in the National Register only, but his salary usually exceeds $3,000.

2. The Faculty

In the year 1947 Congress passed a law requiring that all secondary school teachers, in order to practice their profession, be registered with the Ministry of Education. Since then, the Ministry of Education has organized the National Register of Secondary School Teachers.\textsuperscript{18} According to the subject taught, the National Register divides the teachers into two groups: Group A comprises the teachers of general education, that is, social sciences, languages, biological sciences and chemistry, physics and mathematics, and physical education; and Group B is composed of the teachers of the fine arts, commerce, and technical and vocational education.

\textsuperscript{17} See footnote No. 37 on page 27 of this dissertation for explanation of references to money.

\textsuperscript{18} See Decree No. 00030 of January 12, 1948, Office of the President.
a. Preparation of the Faculty

In the National Register the teachers are classified into four categories according to their preparation and experience. The requirements for qualifying for the first category have been explained in connection with the requirements for administrators. To the second category belong the teachers who have the academic preparation of those in the first category but who do not have the necessary years of experience to qualify for the first category. To be registered in the second category requires a minimum of seven years of experience. The third category is composed of teachers who have the academic preparation of those of the first category but have only from four to six years of experience, and those who do not have any academic degree but who have taught for seven years. The fourth category includes all the teachers who have failed to meet the requirements of the first three categories. Most of them have neither the academic titles nor the necessary experience to qualify for higher categories. In most cases they have been accepted as emergency teachers.

The majority of the public school teachers are already registered and classified. Private schools are making efforts to get their teachers registered also.

b. Selection, Appointment, and Dismissal of Teachers

The teachers for the national secondary schools are selected and appointed by the Ministry of Education. Those for the departmental and municipal secondary schools are appointed by the governors of the

19 See page 180 of this dissertation.
departments and the secretaries of education. The procedure for the appointment of teachers in the local schools is for the principal to suggest names of teachers for his school to the proper authorities, who then make the appointment. The principal does not have the power to appoint teachers. All appointments are made on the basis of the classification of the teachers in the National Register. Teachers of the first and second categories are preferred whenever possible.

The National Ministry recognizes the following as valid reasons for the dismissal of teachers: 1) Manifest inability of the teacher to discharge his obligations; 2) Frequent absence from his duties without reasonable excuse; 3) Scandalous behavior; 4) Public adverse criticism of the educational policies of the government; and 5) Failure to cooperate with the local school authorities. Most dismissals occur for the above reasons, but sometimes political and religious discrimination enter into consideration.

c. Teaching Load and Other Responsibilities

Most schools have both part-time and full-time teachers. The part-time teachers have several classes a week and no additional responsibilities. Their salary is figured on an hourly basis. Full-time teachers are employed for the whole school day. Their teaching load consists of twenty to twenty-four classes of fifty minutes each a week. In addition, they are asked to attend faculty meetings about twice a month and to supervise the school playground twice a month. If a full-time teacher is in charge of a home-room, he is expected to teach only from sixteen to twenty hours a week and to be responsible for the discipline,
attendance, and counseling of his group. An estimate of the approximate time the full-time teacher spends in teaching, supervision of the playground, attendance at faculty meetings, supervision of study halls, preparation of his lessons and correcting papers and notebooks would come to about forty clock hours a week.

d. Salaries and Social Security

The amount of salary a teacher receives is determined by his category in the National Register. Full-time teachers receive their monthly salary over a twelve-month period. Those of the first category receive a minimum monthly salary of $270.00; those of the second, $230.00; those of the third, $190.00; and those of the fourth, $170.00. Since each department is free to pay as much as possible, several departments pay a little more than the minimum salary.

Part-time teachers of the first category receive at least $3.00 an hour; those in the second, $2.50; those in the third, $2.00; and those in the fourth, $1.50. These teachers are also paid over a twelve-month period in the public schools but only over a ten-month period in private schools.

In addition to his salary each teacher receives an annual bonus equivalent to one-half month's salary. He has two and one-half months of paid vacation, plus all national and religious holidays during the school year.

Teachers, like all other employees, are protected by labor legislation. Each school must take out life insurance covering all its teachers and providing one year's salary to his legal heir or heirs in
case of the teacher's death. The school pays the total premium. A teacher also receives a compensation payment at any time he leaves voluntarily or is dismissed from his job, whether it be after a short time of service or after many years of employment. This, too, is paid entirely by the employer. This compensation is equivalent to one month's salary for each year of service in the institution, computed according to the last salary received. This serves as a savings account, since the law forbids the employer to pay this compensation except at the termination of employment or for the purchase or improvement of real estate.

A third protection that a teacher enjoys is that of social security. For this protection the law requires that the teacher make a financial contribution to the Institute of Social Security (Instituto de Seguro Social), an official institution which offers medical and dental care. The Institute is supported by the national government; by commercial, industrial, and educational institutions; and by the employees. The schools, both public and private, are required by law to participate in this project in order to protect their teachers and employees. For the purpose of computing the premium all employees are divided into eight categories according to salary, and each category is assigned a weekly amount to be paid to the Institute. Each month this premium is deducted from the employee's wages. The employer is required to pay double the amount paid by each employee, and the national government matches the amount paid by the employee. To illustrate, a teacher who earns a monthly salary of $270.00 would be classified in Category VI, to which the weekly
premium of $1.40 has been assigned. Therefore, the teacher and the national government would each contribute $1.40 a week, while the school would pay double that amount, or $2.80 a week. The total contribution for the support of the Institute in this particular case would be $5.60 a week.

The Institute of Social Security provides the following services: dental work (except plate and bridge work); medical and surgical care; hospitalization, if necessary; medical assistance in the home; medicines; and salary compensation in case of protracted illness. The wife of the employee is cared for by the Institute only in case of maternity. None of the rest of the employee's family are entitled to the care of the Institute.  

The inclusion of the teaching profession in the progressive social legislation was possible through the efforts of the Liberal regimes which were in power from 1930 to 1946. There was opposition to this social legislation from the Catholic Church and the Conservative Party, but the Liberal majority in Congress passed it. Unfortunately, the salaries have not kept pace with the increasing cost of living thus nullifying any attraction that this plan of social security might have for promising young people.

e. Evaluation of the Teacher's Work

In general two methods of evaluating the efficiency of a teacher are employed, namely, school inspection by the national inspectors

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20 For a more detailed discussion of the Institute of Social Security see Cartilla del Seguro Social Obligatorio, Bogotá, 1950.
and the rating given by the school principal. The inspectors visit the schools as often as possible. This is very seldom because of the many schools to be visited. They usually spend from one to two weeks in a school, during which time they visit each teacher in his various classes for the purpose of observing his methods, mastery of the subject, rapport with the students, material used, and the like. After this they write a detailed report of their visit, leaving one copy with the principal of the school and filing another copy at the Ministry of Education. The teacher does not have access to this report unless the principal calls him in to discuss the parts that pertain to his classes.

In a similar way, the principal of the school is required to visit his teachers in their classes to observe their teaching efficiency. The visit of the principal is not so formal as the visit of the inspectors. This can result in teaching improvement since the principal is better acquainted with the teachers as well as with the school.

Both of these means of evaluation are subjective. They depend to a great extent on the judgment of the inspectors and the principal and usually take into consideration only those factors that produce intellectual progress in the students, without taking into account the ones designed to educate the whole child.

The Ministry of Education relies almost entirely on these evaluations for the promotion of teachers from one category of the National Register to the other.

f. Organization of the Faculty

There is no formal organization of the faculty in the secondary
schools of Colombia. The usual policy is for the principal to delegate authority to the vice principal, who then serves as intermediary between the principal and the members of the faculty. The vice principal and the secretary are the two officers who are in constant touch with the faculty. They, in turn, delegate authority to different teachers for specific tasks, such as, gathering data about the character of the students, advising pupils, etc. There is usually a committee of discipline to decide serious problems of student behavior. Many details of routine are discussed and voted upon at teachers meetings. Even though suggestions and contributions for the improvement of the school are generally welcomed and encouraged, participation on the part of the faculty in the government of the school is limited, for most teachers do not have the interest nor the motivation necessary to spend extra hours doing school work.

3. Organization for Learning

The general atmosphere of school life and the main features of class room procedure are described in this section.

a. Schedule

The number of hours that the students spend in school varies according to the type of school. In university-preparatory and normal schools a minimum of thirty-five class periods a week is required. In commercial and other types of secondary schools this varies from twenty-five to thirty or more. Since each class period is fifty minutes in length, the number of clock hours spent at school each week by the average student is between twenty-one and thirty hours. These periods are
distributed among the school days of the week.

In cold climate the regular school day begins at 8:00 a.m., is interrupted for two hours between 12:00 and 2:00 p.m., and ends at 5:00 p.m. In hot climate classes begin at 7:00 a.m., the noon hour is from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and the school day terminates at 4:00 p.m.

The students spend about seven hours a day at school. After dismissal in the afternoon the extra-curricular activities begin. The schedule of a secondary school student is usually very full and leaves little opportunity for relaxation and enjoyment except on Sundays.

b. Grouping, Promotion, and Graduation

Students are placed in the grade for which they are ready. Whenever there are two or more sections of the same grade, the grouping is usually made alphabetically rather than on the basis of maturity or other psychological factors. Theoretically, only thirty-five students are to be placed in each group. In practice, however, this regulation is often ignored, and groups ranging from thirty-five to fifty in number are not uncommon in crowded schools.

In order to be promoted from one grade to the next the student must pass all the subjects of his grade. The marking system is by numbers from 0 to 5, the latter representing the highest grade. For passing, a grade 3 is required. If a student fails in no more than one practical subject (drawing, physical education, etc.) and two academic subjects, or in one academic and two practical subjects, he is permitted the following year to take make-up examinations in the subjects failed. If he passes these, he is admitted to the next grade. If he fails these, he is
required to repeat the year. In short, if he fails in more than two academic subjects or more than four subjects in general, he fails the year.

When a student completes successfully all the subjects of his curriculum in a school approved by the government, he receives a diploma granted by the school and ratified by the Ministry of Education. If the student finishes all his courses in a non-approved school, the Ministry of Education requires that he take examinations in all the subjects of his curriculum, that is, all the subjects he has taken during the six years of secondary training, before it will approve his certificate or diploma.

c. Extra-curricular Activities

Because of the heavy load of classes carried by secondary students and also because of the prevalent tendency to consider all out-of-class activities as a waste of time, secondary schools do not have, as a rule, an adequate program of extra-curricular activities. Except for an athletic program, which is rather common, most schools have very few extra-curricular activities. The school paper, dramatics, and glee clubs are probably the most common.

The athletic or sports program usually includes intra-mural and inter-school tournaments in the main sports practiced in Colombia. These are basketball, soccer, baseball, volley ball, tennis, and track. The athletic program is in charge of the physical education teacher of the school, who serves also as coach. The students like these contests and spend much of their limited spare time practicing for them.
In schools that have other student activities besides sports, a member of the faculty is assigned to each club or group as counselor.

A few schools have experimented with the organization of student councils, but at present it is not a common practice for the secondary schools of Colombia to have this type of student organization.

d. Guidance

Informal counseling is the extent to which guidance is offered by most secondary schools. This is usually aimed at the adjustment of the student to the school program. In general it is done with the purpose of "disciplining" the student rather than with the aim of helping him to recognize and solve his problems. The main reason for this is the prevalent conception that education is only a matter of mastering subject-matter and that discipline is the means by which this objective is achieved. A guidance program is a real need in most schools.

e. Pupil-Teacher Relationships

One of the decisive factors in the education of youth is the inspiration that the teacher can offer in the classroom as well as in the informal life of the school. A friendly relationship between him and the students is necessary in order to facilitate learning. The pupil-teacher relationship in most Colombian schools, although cordial, is still marred by the idea that the teacher is the center of knowledge and authority and, therefore, is unapproachable as a person. Some exceptional teachers use their privileged position to inspire and guide their students. Such cases, however, are rare, and most teachers, considering themselves superior to the students, demand strict obedience and
even submission to their authority. As in any case where authority
overpowers reason, the result of this attitude is a feeling of fear or
antagonism on the part of the student and an atmosphere of distrust in
the classroom. Needless to say, this unreasonable attitude on the part
of the teacher, not only curtails his own efficiency but also hampers
the normal development of the students. For the good of both parties,
the pupil-teacher relationship as it now exists needs to be replaced by
one of cooperation and mutual understanding, a relationship in which all
are considered with equal respect and each is given an opportunity to
participate in the thinking and development of classroom plans. In his
new role as a friendly and understanding guide, the teacher will be
better able to gain the respect and love of his pupils and thus set the
stage for a profitable learning process.

f. Teaching Methods

A few lines should be devoted to the teaching methods used
in Colombian Schools. The lecture and recitation method is the most
prevalent. A typical class in any of the subjects of the curriculum
relies extensively on the textbook chosen and on the extra material pre­
mented by the teacher. Most teaching consists of the explanation given
by the teacher, the reading of the lesson in the textbook, and the
recitation of the material learned by the student. This procedure is con­
tinued throughout the year, at the end of which a final examination on
the subject-matter is given. Classes in literature require outside
readings as part of the course. In the study of natural science—biology,
physics, and chemistry—laboratory experiments and direct observation are
Field trips and excursions are encouraged, but these are the exception rather than the rule.

Perhaps the best word to characterize the teaching methods in most Colombian schools is passivity. Since the task of the student is to memorize the material in the textbook or in the notes dictated by the teacher, the duty of the latter, as he sees it, is to direct the memorization. Teaching thus becomes void of its most challenging features, i.e., exploration of the subject through experiences meaningful to the students, and motivation by interest. This point of view is further encouraged by the insistence of the Ministry of Education that the long programs prescribed for each subject in the curriculum should be covered.

The monotony of the passive method of the university-preparatory schools is somewhat relieved by activity in the industrial, trade, and agricultural schools. In these the very nature of the subject to be learned requires extensive practice in workshops and in the fields. It is fortunate for the students, that these schools are provided with the necessary elements for "learning by doing."

4. The School Plant

The school plant deserves some consideration at this point.

a. Facilities

Secondary school plants vary according to their location and the courses they offer. Modern university-preparatory school plants usually have, in addition to the offices for the administrators, the following facilities: a library; laboratories for physics, chemistry, and natural sciences; a properly equipped auditorium; classrooms with
adequate light and ventilation and equipped with properly designed seats and desks; and, in some cases, an indoor gymnasium. Most schools have sufficient playground space. Some of them also have small offices where the teachers can confer with parents and students.

Normal schools have the facilities mentioned above, and, in addition, an elementary school annex where the students can do their practice teaching under the supervision of their normal school teachers. The vocational schools are adequately equipped with machinery and technical instruments for the courses offered.

The government has many old and some new buildings for the housing of its secondary schools. Most of the old buildings are former convents or monasteries which have been adapted for school use. In some sections, however, specially designed modern buildings are in use. As a rule, private schools have better school plants than do the public schools. Most schools have the facilities needed for carrying out the academic program required by the Ministry of Education.

b. Use of the School Plant

The school plant is generally used only for the activities of the school and for the few cultural functions which may take place under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. With the exception of a few rural schools that have night courses, most communities rarely use the school plant outside of schools hours, perhaps because they are not encouraged to do so.

21 New secondary school buildings have to be approved by the Ministry of Education before they are built.
c. Administration of the School Plant

The administration of the school plant is usually in charge of the head of discipline. He sees to it that it is kept clean and in good condition. In consultation with the principal, he also makes the schedule for its use during after-school hours and supervises the janitors in their work. He is responsible to the principal for the care of the school plant.

The survey of the main features of the present secondary school system of Colombia presented in this chapter will enable the reader to judge of the necessity for its improvement. Some suggestions conducive to this aim are given in the next chapter.
CHAPTER VII

EVALUATION OF THE PRESENT ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF COLOMBIA AND PROPOSED PLAN FOR REORGANIZATION

Efforts have been made in previous chapters to present a complete picture of the development of Colombian education. Consideration has also been given to those factors which affected that development. The present organization and trends in the administration of schools have also been discussed. What remains to be done, according to the plan of this dissertation, is to evaluate the administrative practices in the secondary schools of Colombia in the light of modern trends in this field and wherever possible to offer constructive suggestions for improvement. That is the task of this chapter.

A. Factors Adverse to Educational Progress

Although it has been implied in the historical presentation of Chapters III, IV, and V that there are factors adverse to educational progress in Colombia, it is necessary to devote some space to this topic here in order to place them in the right perspective. It is not the intention of the author to discuss all the factors that may have entered in creating the defects of the school system, but rather to point out those that have been most decisive in bringing about the present situation.

1. Geographical Factors

The vast extension of territory, the rugged system of mountains, and the impenetrable jungles have made impossible the even distribution of the population and the construction of modern roads. Some sections
of the country are overpopulated while others are sparsely inhabited. Entire regions are isolated by lack of means of transportation. These geographical factors are barriers to progress of any kind on a national scale. The educational system shows the effects of these obstacles.

2. Economic Factors

Along with the natural barriers, a poor national economy based mainly on the production of coffee makes progress difficult. Although the country has enormous resources, industrial development has been slow. Judging from present indications it will take years before big industries even begin to take advantage of these resources. The modernization of agriculture has also been slow, thus limiting the productive capacity of the farmer. Because of this poor economy the allocation of funds has been insufficient to provide education for all the children of school age.

3. Social Factors

By far the greatest obstacles to educational progress have been of a social nature. First among these is what has been called "educational demagogy." It is the consistent opposition to all new educational ideas on the grounds that they are harmful to the traditions and culture of the country. In the name of culture and for the sake of perpetuating the status quo these "demagogos" defeated Mutis at the turn of the eighteenth century, ostracized the liberal ideas of Santander at the beginning of the Republic, threw into oblivion the recommendations of the German

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1 Pinto, Luis Emilio, Reflexiones de un Educador, Editorial Kelly, Bogotá, 1946, p. 204.
missions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and are busy now pushing back the educational renaissance of the thirties and early forties. Unfortunately, this demagogy has a great appeal to both the aristocratic and the lower classes. It appeals to the former because it promises the preservation of the status quo, and to the latter because it produces a nationalistic feeling of grandeur which appeals to uncultivated minds.

Another social obstacle has been the absence of an objective or scientific approach to educational problems. From the beginning the school was isolated from the currents of scientific thought. It followed the pattern established by the early Spaniards without questioning its adequacy for the needs of the children and the nation. This approach has resulted in periodic attempts by new educational officers to introduce new ideas in the educational program without casting off the old.

Paradoxically, this desire for change has become an obsession with almost every new minister of education coming into office. It seems to be the general belief of these ministers that in order to give the appearance of progress the course of study must be revamped. To cite but one illustration—the program of studies of the secondary schools has been changed by the Ministry of Education no less than five times in the last five years. These numerous changes in such a short time indicate that there has not been a thorough testing to determine their value. Often they reveal the lack of a guiding policy in educational matters. Besides being haphazard, the "reforms" are imposed from above with
little or no explanations. Educators have become skeptical and somewhat cynical in their attitude toward changes coming from the Ministry. Their attitude is further encouraged by the fact that the minister and his immediate collaborators are political appointees who, in many cases, are not members of the teaching profession.

Another impediment to the progress of education is the excessive power enjoyed by the Catholic Church in educational matters. Previous chapters have shown the historical contribution of this church to education. In all fairness it must be given credit for its efforts to maintain institutions of learning, especially during the colonial period. But the dominant position occupied by the Catholic Church in Colombia has produced an aristocratic and authoritarian type of education, a blue-print of tradition and aristocracy to which the country has been subjected since its discovery and colonization. Jose Gil Fortoul, a Venezuelan, author of Historia Constitucional de Venezuela, writing to Carlos Arturo Torres, a Colombian poet and sociologist, suggests:

I recommend that you explain clearly to us ... the true cause of the tenacious persistence of mixing the religious with the political in Colombia. Why is it that the same thing has not happened in Venezuela? Nevertheless, the intellectual level of New Granada was higher than that of Venezuela since colonial times. Perhaps--paradoxical as it may seem--one of the determining causes of this phenomenon could be found in this difference.2

Carlos Arturo Torres gives no answer, but Gil Fortoul himself implies it in his question. The answer is found in the fact that the intellectuals of Colombia have been conditioned, nursed, and raised in

the Catholic education, which has given this church great authority, not only in political, but also in educational matters. The long educational process which the Catholic Church has led, has produced what Hoffet calls "conscious" and "unconscious" religious affiliation. By "conscious" religion he means the open and active practice of the dogmas. By "unconscious" religion he refers to the religious habits and attitudes acquired by a person or a nation which manifest themselves in spite of the religion professed. In Colombia, perhaps more than in any other country in Latin America, the Roman Catholic Church has a strong backing because of this powerful educational conditioning achieved through its schools and universities. It is because of their "unconscious" background that most leaders in government have failed to bring up-to-date educational theories and practices into the schools and have continued in the paths of medieval education.

B. Factors Favorable to Educational Progress

Colombia is on its way toward solving some of the problems caused by geographical and natural limitations. The airplane is making it possible to reach isolated regions. In fact, this means of transportation has become so popular because of its convenience and utility that it has practically replaced most other means for both passenger and freight service. The government is also working on a comprehensive plan for road construction and improvement. Work has also started on the construction of a much needed railroad from the interior to the northern coast.

of the country. There are also encouraging signs of development in the industrial field. The nationalization of the oil industry, the opening on a big scale of iron and coal mines which has begun recently—all these factors point towards a bright future for industry. These improvements are bound to bring about a more stable and richer economy, which, in turn, will permit more funds for education.

There has been an unusual interest in educational topics during the last twenty years. Many books dealing with education have appeared during this period. Newspapers have devoted a considerable space to the subject. This interest can be largely attributed to two factors: the vigorous efforts of Nieto Caballero and his followers to present the real educational situation of the country to the people and to the atmosphere of experimentation which was prevalent. Most of this literature shows signs of discontent with the status quo and a deep concern with the most pressing educational problems. The authors, in most cases, express their hopes for a better future in the educational realm. This can be considered a very significant step in the direction of progress.

Mention should also be made of a possible source of inspiration for educational progress. Colombia has participated in all the cultural and educational movements sponsored by the Organization of American States and UNESCO. As a member of these institutions, Colombia has pledged its support to progressive educational ideas. It is evident that the moral obligations contracted with membership in these agencies cannot be taken lightly. International cooperation in education can
result in the introduction of new ideas and practices and in the awaken­ing of the people to their cultural possibilities. This international membership is a favorable factor to education.

It is not external influence alone, however, that will produce a good system of education. The hope for the future of Colombia lies in its human resources. There have been periods in history when peace, order, and democracy have been the guiding principles of the country. And there are people today who still have faith in the intelligence of man, and trust that no matter how dark the present situation appears, the times are ripe for a new philosophy which will take into consideration the fundamental postulates of democracy. Hugo Latorre Cabal, noted Colombian journalist, seems to gather up this liberal tendency in this significant paragraph:

... We advocate free primary education and easy access to the university. We advocate free examination. We advocate the democratic freedom in Congress, for the press, in the plaza. We believe that in this manner the common man will be educated. And once he is educated he will be a liberal.4

This author belongs to the innumerable advocates of freedom and democracy found among the intellectuals, the labor leaders, the students, and the dissenting religious groups of the present generation. To these people, many of them engaged in the teaching profession, the suggestions for change in this chapter are submitted.

C. The Task of Education Today

The most urgent task of education in Colombia is to define its objectives. The failure of the old school to prepare for life was due to its insistence on ignoring the changes caused by the advancement of

4 Latorre Cabal, Hugo, La Hispanidad, Editorial Kelly, Bogotá, 1950, p. 381.
science and the challenge of new ideas in social and economic living. The school became an "ivory tower" detached from life and its problems. The present confusion can be dispelled only when educators, recognizing the failure of the past, agree on a future strategy which will correct previous mistakes. The school of the future should have as its main objectives, among other things, the practice of four principles which seem indispensable in any modern conception of education: the principles of the liberation of the human personality, social responsibility, differentiation, and activity. These will be discussed as the basis for a new approach to education in Colombia.

1. Liberation of the Human Personality

The task of education is to provide all possible opportunities for the complete development of the whole child. In striving for this the educator seeks to know the child and to guide him according to his needs and interests until he has developed his own powers and is able to be his own guide. The Commission on Secondary School Curriculum of the Progressive Education Association expresses this same idea when it states that "any theory of learning must take its departure from a conception of the nature of the individual, the human organism." And later it adds:

It is the business of the teacher then to understand the nature and needs of the individual in his manifold relationships of living and help him to meet his needs in such a way as to make life ever richer and more meaningful.


^ Ibid., p. 22.
In schools where these ideas are put into practice there is a free atmosphere in which the child can grow. At the same time a conscious effort is made on the part of the teachers to surround him with those experiences leading to the complete fulfillment of his emotional, social, physical, and intellectual needs.

These principles of psychology, which are commonly practiced in some countries, have been neglected in the Colombian schools. There has been emphasis on the cultivation of the intellect at the expense of the other aspects of the child's life. One might think that this emphasis on intellectual education would lead to objective thinking on the part of the child. This has not been the case, however, for the type of intellectual exercise stressed is one of memorization and repetition of facts void of challenge to the reasoning powers of the child. This method dooms him to the status of a defender of the prejudices and errors of the past unless he can free himself of the habits acquired at school. It should be one of the objectives of education to free the human mind so that it is able to draw conclusions and attack problems as objectively as possible. To quote the Commission again, "An important responsibility of education is to promote to the optimum the student's ability to plan and direct his own life." The Colombian schools need to accept this challenge.

As for behavior the concept of repression has been stronger than the concept of expression. Outward discipline, with all its rigor and dulling effects, has had the upper hand. In an attempt to liberate the

human personality such discipline is out of place. True discipline is an inner development in the life of the child and as such cannot be obtained by outside pressure. Guidance, orientation, and understanding are means of bringing about this inner discipline.

2. Social Responsibility

The child has definite social needs at the different stages of his development, as well as social responsibilities to fulfill as soon as he becomes old enough to face his environment consciously. His education should seek to make of him, not an isolated unit, but a member of his community to the progress of which he must contribute. This fact places upon the school the tremendous duty of giving social content to its activities. The school becomes an agency of society for the preparation of its citizens in order that they may relate the knowledge acquired to the life of the community. In a penetrating analysis of the Colombian schools, Santamaria Pinzón, a Colombian educator, remarks:

The school cannot remain isolated within the four walls of the classroom, it must reach out; its mission is not to study and educate the child in isolation, it is its duty to . . . guide him in his own environment . . . where the stimuli are so numerous, so varied, so natural, and so decisive . . . . If the school wants to know him and educate him, it must follow him in the social group in which he lives, so that it (the school) can know and improve it.8

The school has also the obligation of educating the child for democratic living. The ideals of democracy—respect for human personality, freedom of conscience, social justice, civic responsibility,
cooperation, service—all these should be vital to the secondary school graduate. The school should have helped him to acquire a set of values as well as a method of living by which he can improve his social heritage.

The acceptance of the social role of the school is very important in a nation like Colombia where social problems are so acute. The leadership of the school, especially in the rural communities, would produce excellent results in terms of improvement of the social conditions.

3. The Principle of Differentiation

A third discovery of modern education is that each individual has a personality of his own. "Individuals differ from each other in their psychological process," declares Claparede. "Living organisms," says Gilliland, "to the extent to which they are more complex than inanimate objects, exhibit more differences one from another." Individual differences are taken into consideration today in any serious formulation of educational principles. The effect on educational policy has been revolutionary. In the first place, the old idea of conformity to an external common denominator for all becomes obsolete. The child is encouraged to show his own personality even if it deviates from the common standards. Teaching in the classroom becomes more flexible in order

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to encourage these differences instead of curtailing them. In the second place, the emphasis is shifted from subject-matter, schedules, and other external pressures to the child's needs and abilities, making it possible for the teacher to aim at the optimal development of each child. In the third place, this principle makes it possible to correct the great injustice committed by the traditional schools to children of below-average intelligence. The common practice in Colombian schools is to set up the same standards for all the children. These are usually determined by the abilities and the needs of the gifted students. This practice ignores the children of lower intelligence, who become discouraged in trying to meet these standards. The school must see to it that all children receive an education according to their needs and abilities.

The principle of differentiation in practice manifests itself also in the variation of curricular offerings in the local schools. All secondary schools should offer a variety of courses to meet the needs of the students. If this is not possible, the child should be given the opportunity to attend a specialized school in which he can receive adequate training. In other words, the tendency to consider secondary education as university-preparatory has to be abolished, since the majority of secondary-school students do not attend the university, and, therefore, need a more practical type of education. More technical and vocational schools are needed in a country with a developing industry and an agricultural economy. The recognition of individual differences demands the provision of schools of various types.
4. The Principle of Activity

From the study of the nature of the child, psychology gives the educators one of the most important principles in modern teaching: The child is active by nature. "The living organism," say Wheeler and Perkins, "is a unified system of energy." And John Dewey, the founder of the activity movement in America, puts it this way: "Learning is active. It involves the reaching out of the mind."

Taking the cue from this principle the movement of the activity schools emerged in North America, Europe, and some Latin American countries. These schools advocate that the child, being purposely active, demands for his education the use of active methods, thus taking advantage of the energy of the growing child. "Learning by doing" becomes very important. Undergoing an experience becomes more important than reciting a lesson by memory.

When this principle is applied in the classroom, several things result. The passivity of the old classroom (one of the capital sins of Colombian education) is replaced by the activity of the children. The teacher assumes the role of a guide who stimulates and provides useful activities instead of lecturing. The conception of controlling student behavior changes from one of outward discipline in which his movements and vivacity are frowned upon as undesirable, to one of directing the energy of the child to good ends. Above all, the children are given the

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opportunity of learning through experiences which are meaningful to them. The aim of these experiences is to produce fresh, spontaneous, and uninhibited children who, instead of storing knowledge in their minds, are able to use it in their living. Activity for the sake of activity is a misunderstanding of what the advocates of this principle mean. Activity for the sake of the development of the child is the aim.

D. The Task of the Secondary School

The secondary school must be considered as a stage in the educational development of its students. Educators must determine the nature of the development taking place during the years that the students attend secondary school. They must also determine what set of values they consider important. And, finally, they must choose the method they are going to use in developing their program. In other words, the needs of the children, the philosophy of education, and the way of living in the school must be clarified. The four principles presented above would serve as a point of reference for determining the task of the secondary school.

Specifically, the task of the secondary school is to meet the needs of the children. There are several studies from which the educators in Colombia can derive a knowledge of these needs. This, however, is not sufficient but must be supplemented by a thorough study of the particular needs of the Colombian youth, undertaken by a new section of research in the Ministry of Education. The classification of the needs

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A list of several studies on the needs of adolescents is given in the Bibliography of this dissertation.
of secondary-school students developed by the Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards, seems to be appropriate as a basis for further study and elaboration. It takes into consideration almost all the important aspects of the life of adolescents. The list as it is given in the Standards follows:

A. They Need to Learn to Live with Other Human Beings.
B. They Need to Achieve and Maintain Sound Mental and Physical Health.
C. They Need to Learn to Live in Their Natural and Scientific Environment.
D. They Need Sound Guidance.
E. They Need to Learn to Think Logically and Express Themselves Clearly.
F. They Need to Prepare for Work, for Further Education, or for Both.
G. They Need to Use Their Leisure Well.
H. They Need to Learn to Live Aesthetically.  

The task of the secondary school, then, is to provide ample opportunities in its program for the fulfillment of these needs.

E. The Task of Administration

The task of the administrators in the modern secondary school is two fold. Because of their special preparation and position in the school, they are called upon to offer leadership. They are responsible for the adequacy of the program of the school. In their task they are not confined to the internal affairs of the institution, for very frequently their influence projects itself into the community through the agencies connected with the school. As leaders the administrators bring the community into the school and make the people aware of its existence.

Good administrators have the preparation and personality for this type of work, as well as the vision to strengthen this bond between the school and the community.

Administrators are also responsible to the community for the efficient organization of their schools—an organization which will enable the school to achieve its objectives. Since the main objectives proposed here are the liberation of human personality, social responsibility, differentiation, and activity, the organization of the school faculty and the student body should be prompted by these principles. In addition, the organization of the school should reflect the concern of all for the fulfillment of the needs of the students. To insure these considerations it is necessary to have a flexible, cooperative, and creative organization. This is possible only with a democratic type of administration. Koopman, Miel, and Misner interpret this point of view when they set up five principles of democratic action. Since these principles are pertinent in illustrating the role of the administrators in the modern secondary school, they are given here.

1. To facilitate the continuous growth of individual and social personalities by providing all persons with opportunities to participate actively in all enterprises that concern them.

2. To recognize that leadership is a function of every individual, and to encourage the exercise of leadership by each person in accordance with his interests, needs, and abilities.

3. To place the responsibility for making decisions that affect the total enterprise with the group rather than with one or a few individuals.

4. To achieve flexibility of organization to the end that necessary adjustment can readily be made.15

F. Proposed Plan for Reorganization

Having set forth the guiding principles for the modification of the present educational policies and practices, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to the consideration of practical suggestions for the improvement of the Colombian school system. No attempt will be made here to cover all the problems confronting secondary education in Colombia today. That would be a study in itself and would require more thorough treatment. Instead, several basic problems at both the national and local school levels have been chosen for discussion. There are no simple solutions to these problems, but the ideas expressed here could serve as points of departure for further study.

1. At the National Level

For the reorganization of the educational system at the national level the following suggestions will be presented in this section: Professionalization of the Ministry of Education and other agencies in the educational system; separation of Church and State; the need for the study of adequate integration; appropriation of funds for secondary education; encouragement of the formation of educational associations in the country; and the preparation of administrators and teachers.


It has been mentioned in this chapter that the lack of an objective approach to education has been one of the handicaps of the Colombian school system. The root of this evil can be found in the fact that all educational authorities are political appointees and that many of them
are not members of the teaching profession. To eliminate this evil legislation should be passed by Congress providing for the appointment of the minister and all educational authorities from among those teachers and university professions who have distinguished themselves in their profession, regardless of their political affiliation. This should also be a requisite in the case of departmental secretaries and municipal educational officers. With professional educators in charge of formulating educational policies would at least tend to insure an honest and intelligent effort towards the solution of the many problems facing the school system without political pressure being exerted on the educators. Further, it should be required by law that these educational officers remain in office for at least two years in order to secure continuity in the discharge of their responsibilities. This would help to eliminate the haphazard changes made in the course of studies for schools.

The Higher Council of Permanent Education is one of the promising features of the present organization. It has twelve members. Two members are appointed by the President, two others are appointed by the national inspectors of education, two are chosen by the minister from a list submitted by the teachers' union, two are appointed by the minister from a list presented by the principals of private schools, two are named by the Catholic Church, and only two, namely, the representatives of the universities, are elected. This makes the Council subject to the will and policies of the Ministry of Education. It would be more convenient, for the sake of democracy and effectiveness, to let each group elect its own representatives. The parents should also have a voice in
the Council. The two representatives of the Catholic Church could be replaced by two members representing the parents. By eliminating the political and undemocratic features of its formation, the Council could become a very important part of the Ministry of Education. Its position could be strengthened further by giving it more freedom to act.

A section devoted to educational research is badly needed in the Ministry of Education. This section would be in charge of experimenting with educational theories, making studies in child psychology, preparing psychological tests, making surveys of the needs of the communities, and making the findings of its studies known to the public through the publication of a regular bulletin or magazine. The section should be headed by a specialist in educational research who should be free to appoint his collaborators. This bureau of educational research should have branch-offices in each of the sixteen departments. The establishment of this section would meet three existing needs: the need for experimentation, the need for specialized advice in the Ministry of Education, and the need for divulgation of educational literature adapted to the Colombian situation.

With professional leadership in the Ministry of Education, impartial advice from the Permanent Higher Council, tenure for the leaders, a technical agency for experimentation, and a better coordination among the different sections of the Ministry of Education, it would be possible for the minister to render valuable service to education.

b. Separation of Church and State

In Chapter II of this dissertation reference was made to the problem of the present union of Church and State in Colombia. At this point,
after reiterating the belief that the separation of these two powers would be beneficial to the country, it is necessary to state the reasons and to suggest possible lines of approach to the problem. Above all, it is important to determine what would be the implications of this separation for the organization of the school system.

The separation of Church and State is necessary because it makes possible one of the most cherished rights of the individual—freedom of conscience. The Colombian constitution is very explicit on this matter: "The State guarantees liberty of conscience. No one shall be molested for his religious opinions, or compelled to profess beliefs or observe practices contrary to his conscience . . . . The liberty of all cults not contrary to Christian morals or law is guaranteed." (Title IV, Articles 53 and 54). These provisions indicate that each individual has the right to profess the religion of his choice or to disregard all religion if he so desires. It also provides the right for any Christian church to exist and propagate without limitation, and makes it the duty of the State to protect both the individual and the churches in the exercising of that right without partiality to any given church or group. This alienable right is violated whenever a given group is permitted to impose its creeds and practices to the exclusion of all others. This right is denied when a majority group is permitted to disturb and persecute the minorities. The alliance of a majority religious group with the power of the State to eliminate minorities, is a flagrant violation of modern democratic principles. Such an alliance reveals that the political party in power needs the support of the religious groups to
preserve its authority over the minds of the people.

The union of Church and State tends to produce uniformity of thought from above. It is one of the postulates of democracy to maintain diversity in order to insure freedom. Lindeman has expressed this thought very aptly:

> Multiformity when applied to human affairs is one of the conditions of freedom. Where conformity is imposed as an external discipline, liberty is by definition excluded. The right to differ is the sine qua non of freedom and hence the symbol of humaneness in personal relations. The moment one person demands the privilege of shaping others to his image, kindness, generosity, and tolerance remove themselves from the equation.¹⁶

A state which tries to stamp out religious differences by protecting one religious group over the others is stepping out of the boundaries of democracy. By the same token, any religious majority which tries to gain religious monopoly by putting pressure on the State is denying democracy. The chief aim of the democratic state is to protect the rights of the individual against the pressure groups which threaten to take away his freedom. This duty cannot be discharged properly when the Church interferes with the function of the State. The same thing happens when the State invades the jurisdiction of the Church. The nature of each institution determines its functions and the realm in which they should move. Most religions would consider it their task to minister to the spiritual needs of the people. The State ministers to the secular life of its members. In order not to jeopardize the functions of either and to avoid clashes their radius of action should be

carefully defined and kept separate.

The separation of Church and State in Colombia should be accomplished on the following bases:

1. There should not be an official religion.
2. The State should be impartial towards all religious groups.
3. The present Concordat between Colombia and the Vatican should be abolished.
4. All religious groups should be equal before the law.
5. Official education should be secular.

Although all the above points deserve consideration, only the fifth one will be discussed here as pertinent to the topic of this dissertation.

i. Secularization of Public Schools

By secularization of public schools is meant in this case the removal of any control exercised on public education by any religious organization, and the omission of religious instruction from the curricular studies. The aim of the secular school is to preserve the freedom of conscience by avoiding the imposition of one religious point of view to the exclusion of others. In other words, since the aim of the public school system should be to serve all children without discrimination of any kind, it must find a common ground on which to accomplish this task, leaving instruction along confessional lines to the religious agencies in the community, that is, the churches. On the positive side, secularization means the teaching of the moral code of society and the presentation of those ideals that have been found worthwhile in the experience of the race. As Condorcet, the French exponent of the secular schools would have it: "The moral principles taught in the schools... will be those which, being founded on our natural
sentiments and on our reason, belong to all men." V. T. Thayer seems to share this idea when he approves the teaching about religion "for the purposes of education, not propaganda." 

This positive side of the secular school is usually ignored by the enemies of the "neutral" or secular schools when accusing them of being irreligious and atheistic. As a matter of fact, the "neutral" school advocated for Colombia would not be a school opposed to religion; neither would it be an agent of any given denomination. It would cooperate with the religious groups in the community in any project tending to emphasize the common elements rather than the differences among them. To quote Thayer again, the school would use religion "for acquainting young people with the cultural groups and the forces within their own community, for developing in them an appreciation and a sympathetic understanding of the people with whom they associate daily and the background out of which they come . . ." The secular school, conceived as having a moral obligation, cannot be labeled materialistic or antagonistic to religion.

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19 Ibid., p. 187.
20 In dealing with the secularization of the school system there are a number of possibilities which can be explored. The extreme position, held by those who oppose religion, would be to ignore it completely. A second position, at the other extreme, would be to have the religious group in the majority control education. Neither of these positions seems to guarantee freedom of conscience, for there will always be a minority which will claim its right to dissent. Only in a democracy can this right be preserved. The democratic solution to the problem seems to be the secularization of the school and its friendly attitude towards those
In the case of Colombia the secularization of the public school system would bring denominational private schools into prominence, at least at the beginning. The State should guarantee the freedom of the private schools to offer religious instruction along denominational lines, if they so desire, since the monopoly of instruction by the State could be dangerous in the hands of dictatorial governments which would use education to further their particular aims. These private schools, however, must meet the standards of competence demanded of the public schools.

In order to secure the secularization of the schools the first step should be to abolish the present Concordat with the Vatican which gives the Catholic Church the power to conduct education according to Roman Catholic teachings. The possibilities for the revocation of the Concordat are not very great at present, as has been pointed out in the discussion of the separation of Church and State in Chapter II of this work. The Conservative Party which is in power at present is an unconditional supporter of the Catholic Church. There is also a homogeneous Conservative Congress. The only hope of achieving the revocation of the Concordat is the return to normalcy in political matters, thus making possible the accession to power of the Liberal Party through free elections. The Liberal Party has as one of its principles the separation of Church and State.

elements which the religions have in common, and which emphasize the brotherhood of man. Whether a program of released-time religious education similar to that practiced in some states of the United States of America or the inclusion of religious teaching "as a field of knowledge comparable with the fields of literature, natural science, history, philosophy . . ." will meet this democratic demand in the Colombian schools, is a matter for experimentation.
ii. Abolition of the Dual System of Schools

The separation of Church and State and its immediate corollary, the secularization of schools, would permit doing away with the artificial separation of the sexes in Colombian schools. The case for coeducation is a simple one: The normal association of boys and girls in the healthy atmosphere of the school is not only natural but necessary. By this association a healthy relationship comes about, which helps to meet the social needs of the individuals. If education has as its objective the preparation for life, it is contrary to reason to separate boys and girls during their formative period only to bring them together during adulthood. No one can doubt the truth of the assertion that in a great many cases broken homes, sex offenses, and other misled behavior is due to the element of mystery which surrounds the boy-and-girl relationships in Latin America. The separation of the sexes seems to be based on two assumptions, namely, that of masculine superiority and of the sinfulness of human nature. The first assumption leads to a differentiation of curricula, one for the boys and another for the girls. The education of the boys includes any subject that might help them to become leaders in society. The education of the girls includes those subjects considered useful in conducting the home and for the pious rearing of a family. Since the men are to be the leaders and woman's place is in the home, the education of the latter is limited to that of making good housewives. Although the tendency toward a feeling of masculine superiority is strong in Colombia, there is no differentiation in the curriculum at present.
The second assumption leads to the conclusion that it is very
dangerous to have boys and girls together, for they are impelled to
mischief by their very nature. Coeducation becomes, in the eyes of
its opponents, an immoral practice. This is the argument used
against coeducation in Colombia. A recent decree issued by the
governor of the Department of Santander, abolishing coeducation in one
of the public secondary schools, states:

Considering that the Catholic Church has always condemned
coeeducation . . . in the secondary school . . . and it is the
duty of the government to enforce the law, to promote the
morality of the associates, and to give an example of respect
to the ecclesiastical authorities . . . , coeducation is
declared abolished in the Colegio de Santander de Bucaramanga
. . . 21

In answer to the above criticisms, it is recognized at present,
in modern progressive society, that women are entitled to receive an
education that enables them to be, not only good mothers, but also
good citizens. Limiting their education to a certain type of curricula
because of their sex is anti-democratic. All rights enjoyed by men
must be extended to women if a just society is to exist. As for the
second assumption, it denies the possibility of reason guiding instinct.
It also denies the value of education as a means of changing behavior.
Sometimes the argument is advanced that the home background and the
experiences of the children in Latin America often have not been such as
to make it advisable to put the sexes together; but this is not sufficient
reason for keeping them apart when intelligent and adequate help and

21 Decree No. 1640, November 15, 1949, issued by the Governor of
the Department of Santander, Colombia. The underlining is the author's.
supervision can guarantee their growing up together in a natural and healthy relationship, especially when they are thrown together in all other areas—on the street, in church, and in the theater.

In addition to the above arguments in favor of coeducation, there are other considerations. The fusion of the section of Feminine Education and the section of Secondary Education in the Ministry of Education would be the first step in accomplishing some administrative advantages. This would eliminate the duplication of services, time, and expense in the secondary system. Although most secondary schools are crowded at present, there are cases where the combining of girls' schools and boys' schools would be advantageous for the operational budget. This should make possible the acquisition of more and perhaps better plant and laboratory equipment.

c. Appropriation of Funds for Secondary Education

The pressing need for adequate funds for secondary education can be judged by the fact that in 1946 Colombia had about 1,549,624 young people of secondary school age, of which only 63,960 were enrolled; the rest did not attend for lack of room in the educational institutions or because of personal or financial difficulties. Of those who attended school many were enrolled in private schools at the expense of their parents. Only 6.5 per cent of the young people in school, or 4,159, finished their secondary training. This is a serious situation considering that the nation must depend mainly on this limited group for leaders in the future. Opportunities for education are limited because

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22 See tables in Chapter V, pp. 175-6, of this dissertation.
of the inability of the government to provide for schools.

The main reason for this unfortunate situation is found in the indifference of legislators and government officials in educational matters. Law No. 12 of 1934 requires that 10 per cent of the national budget be devoted to education. However, in 1948 only 5 per cent of the national budget was spent for education. In 1952 the total national budget was 630 million pesos, and the allotment for education, 43 million pesos, which was about 3 per cent less than the minimum required by law. Of this amount more than 60 per cent was for elementary education, while the balance was to take care of secondary, university, vocational, and special education, including the salaries of employees and national teachers. This law is violated since, in the minds of the government officials, the support of an army is more important than the support of education.

The legislators and government officials are not the only ones who must bear the blame for this sad situation. It must be shared by the public for not demanding a solution to this problem. It is they and their children who suffer.

The departmental and municipal budgets are in a similar condition. In these an average of 13.7 per cent is devoted to the support of their

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23 Currie, Lauchlin, Bases de un Programa de Fomento para Colombia, Libreria Voluntad, Bogota, 1951, p. 289. Lauchlin Currie was an assistant to Franklin D. Roosevelt in the early days of his administration. He is now in Colombia as a representative of the Development and Reconstruction Bank heading an economic mission which is studying the present Colombian economic situation.

educational institutions. However, many departments and municipalities are at a disadvantage because they do not have enough income to maintain their institutions and receive little help from the national government.

To fill the need for new schools and equipment Currie has estimated that it will take 50 million pesos within the next five years. Of this amount, 19.5 million pesos will be needed for secondary schools. This would be in addition to the current expenses that have to be met yearly.

Currie gives two possible solutions for the problem; first, to raise the national budget for education within the next five years 60 to 80 per cent over the present allotment; and second, to ask the help of industry in building new technical and vocational schools. A third solution would be to obtain assistance from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. This help could be given in two ways; first, in the form of technical assistance by sending an educational mission composed of leading educators from the United States of America to study the needs of the country; and second, by giving financial assistance by way of a loan to meet the immediate needs, such as, the construction of buildings, raising of salaries, scholarship programs, and the like. None of these three proposals should be adopted singly; the three should complement each other.

The raising of the budget for education can be accomplished through legislation which would stipulate that the municipal, departmental, and

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26 Ibid., p. 637.
27 Ibid., p. 637.
national budgets devote at least 30 per cent of their total budget to the support of the school system. The departments and municipalities in need of additional funds would apply for them to the Ministry of Education. This agency would then make grants to these departments and municipalities on the basis of need.

d. **The Need for the Study of the Problem of Integration**

The problem of integrating the different levels of the educational ladder demands special attention. Some of the reasons for the existence of this problem are the inadequate preparation of the teachers, the poor conditions under which they and the students work at school, especially in the rural areas, and the excessive emphasis on subject-matter. The poor training of the teachers affects the quality of teaching; the lack of equipment and good building facilities cripples the efficiency of the school; and the emphasis on subject-matter confuses both the teachers and the students. Some primary teachers put emphasis on one subject to the neglect of the others, with the resulting disadvantage to their pupils. The amount of material to be covered in each subject as prescribed in the government course of study is usually excessive. For this reason the teachers, in their effort to finish the program, do not cover it thoroughly. All of these deficiencies manifest themselves when the children are transferred to the secondary level.

The solution, of course, would be to eliminate incompetent teachers and improve conditions in the schools: buildings, as well as to limit the programs of studies to the essentials, coordinating the subjects in the curriculum in such a way that the unit method of teaching might be
applied. The possibility of adding one more year to the elementary level, thus providing for six years of elementary education, should be explored. This seems advisable for several reasons, chief among them being (1) that it would give an additional year of training to those children who will not continue in the secondary schools and (2) that it would permit a more even distribution of subjects over the six years thus alleviating the heavy schedule of studies of the elementary curriculum.

The same problems found at the elementary level are present at the secondary stage. Here, too, the improvement of teachers and of school facilities and the shift of emphasis from subject-matter to the students are necessary. In the university-preparatory schools the prescribed and inflexible curriculum should give way to a curriculum with a wide variety of electives. The fact that many students who enroll in these schools do not graduate and that many of the graduates do not go to the university places upon the schools the responsibility of offering some practical vocational courses. For those who go to the university, exploratory courses in the special fields of studies should be included. This would enable the graduates to enter their field of specialization without first spending a preparatory year at the university. The Ministry of Education should allow the individual schools a certain amount of freedom in planning their curricula to meet this need.

e. Formation of Educational Associations

One of the most difficult things to accomplish is to enlist the interest of the citizens in the improvement of education. The
common attitude of the people is that the government should take care of planning and guiding the educational program and report to the public. It seems that the only time when some signs of interest are shown is at the beginning or end of each school year when parents discover that there is no room for their children in the public schools and that they will have to enroll them in private institutions and pay the tuition or be left out entirely. At such times there is bitter criticism and protest. But the incident is soon forgotten and the only ones who continue to complain are the ones who are not able to place their children. This lack of vision on the part of the common citizen is evidenced by the fact that, with the exception of a few alumni associations and a teachers' union, there are no private societies for the purpose of advancing education. The alumni associations are for the most part those of private schools, and their activities are mainly of a social nature. The teachers' union has as its main emphasis the economic improvement of its members rather than the improvement of education as a whole.

One reason for this attitude can be found in the failure of the schools to impart a feeling of social responsibility to their students. It is the result of the isolation of the school from society. Another reason is the failure of the Ministry of Education to present the facts to the public and to consult public opinion on matters of such importance as the education of its youth. The average citizen, unless he has children of school age, is indifferent to these problems.

The Ministry of Education and other official educational agencies must immediately begin a campaign to secure the support of the public in its efforts to improve education. Frank and candid discussion of the
problems, of the plans of the government, and of the ways in which the
public can help would probably result in more constructive action than
the "ivory tower" attitude so commonly assumed by those in the Ministry
of Education.

The government should also encourage the formation of civic and
professional clubs or societies for the purpose of fomenting interest
in education without aiming at their control and direction. These
private societies would be especially helpful if they would study the
needs and adopt projects in research or of financial help to advance
the general program of education. They could also be a source of
popular opinion which the Ministry of Education could consult on any
project or reform under consideration. Further, it could serve as a
means of checking the soundness of new ideas by promoting experimentation.

The press and the radio could also render a valuable service to
the country by using their influence on public opinion in a constructive
way. They could launch periodical campaigns in favor of education. In
these campaigns the political party lines, at present so carefully kept
by the press and the radio, would have to be left aside in an effort to
promote the educational welfare of all the citizens of the country.

f. The Preparation of Administrators and Teachers

The lack of well trained administrators and teachers is one of
the serious problems facing the secondary schools of Colombia at the
present time. Among the numerous reasons for this shortage there seem
to be two that are decisive, namely, the lack of schools to train them
and the low salaries paid. The government should move fast to eliminate these two causes.

The approximate number of graduates of all the normal schools in Colombia is eight hundred teachers a year. Of this number only about 30 per cent remain in the profession; the rest turn to something else.\(^2^8\) The secondary school administrators and teachers are trained at the Higher Normal School (for men), the Pedagogical Institute (for girls), the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the National University, and the School of Philosophy and Letters of the Universidad Javeriana (a private Catholic university). The first named is located in Tunja; the rest, in Bogotá. A liberal estimate of the number of graduates of all these institutions combined would be a hundred graduates a year. The number is hardly enough to replace the teachers who retire or die. The rest of the teachers and administrators needed are recruited from other professions. With the increasing development of secondary education more teachers are needed and the government will have to provide institutions for their training. An immediate solution to the problem would be to strengthen all the urban normal schools now in existence in the country by adding a year of specialization for those students who want to continue in secondary education after taking the six-year course of elementary education. These urban normal schools, of which there are about twenty, are conveniently located to serve almost all regions of the country. In addition to strengthening the urban normal schools, steps should be taken to establish schools of education,

\(^{2^8}\) Currie, op. cit., p. 284.
for both elementary and secondary school teachers, in all the branches of the national university, and to encourage private universities to do the same. In order to attract capable young people a program of scholarships is also needed.

According to the economic status of the people presented in Chapter II, administrators and teachers are a part of the small middle class. Their salary is barely enough for their support. The government should raise their salaries on the basis of their training and experience with the triple purpose of improving the present economic situation of those in service, keeping in the profession all the graduates of the normal schools, and attracting promising young people to administrative and teaching positions. 29

B. The Local School

The local school should have greater independence than it enjoys at present. All educational institutions, including the secondary schools, are under the regulation of the Ministry of Education. All important policies are decided at the Ministry, usually without consulting the local educational authorities. The regulations are enforced by the national inspectors, and deviations are allowed only in minor matters. This control has crippled local initiative and created an unnecessary centralization. Were the local schools allowed to carry on experimentation with the curriculum, methodology, and general organization, based on the local needs of the community, it is probable that extraordinary

29 This seems to be the goal of the government as reported by Currie, op. cit., p. 636.
progress would be noticeable. However, aside from what might be done if more freedom were allowed, the following suggestions are offered within the limits of the amount of initiative that secondary schools enjoy at present. A desired outcome of the improvement of local leadership would be the willingness of the central government to transfer some of its responsibilities to the local administrators and teachers.

1. The Administrative Staff

As has been stated before, some of the administrators of the public schools are appointed on a political basis. This practice must disappear because it fosters inability, disorder, and frequently corruption. Administrators should be appointed on the basis of their experience, preparation, ability, and honesty. To this end, legislation should be passed requiring that all administrators of secondary schools be chosen from the first category of the National Register of Secondary School Teachers without discrimination on the grounds of political or religious affiliation.

The number of persons required for the administrative staff in each school and their responsibilities, as explained in Chapter V, seem to be adequate for the average secondary school in Colombia. Some suggestions will be offered later as to their contribution in the general organization of the school.

2. The Faculty

What has been said about training, salaries, and appointment of

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30 See Chapter V, pp. 179-80.
administrators applies to the faculty of the local schools as well. Only a few words related to the evaluation of the teachers' work and their in-service program will be added here.

a. Evaluation of the Teachers' Work

The rating of teachers by the national inspectors is a source of anxiety for the teachers. They look upon the visit of the inspectors as an unpleasant, nerve-wrecking experience. This feeling of insecurity, stemming from the certainty that attention will be directed more to the weak points in classroom teaching than to the strong ones is not dispelled by the attitude of the inspectors. The inspectors consider themselves the representatives of the Ministry of Education, whose duty it is to investigate how things are done and to report to their superiors. Their inspection consists of observing classes in progress, examining the notebooks of the children, asking the pupils questions pertaining to the subject-matter, and seeking information from the teachers. No attempt is made to put the teachers and the students at ease, and no discussion of the visit follows. The inspectors rate the teacher according to their observations. It is obvious that their rating depends on their personal point-of-view and their mood. Their opinion should be taken into consideration for what it is worth, namely, as one of the factors involved in the rating of a teacher; but it should not be the only source of evaluation.

As long as the visit of the inspectors is conducted in the above fashion, no justification seems to exist for it, and it should be confined to the checking of the administrative and secretarial procedures of the
school. A new orientation, however, could be given to the visit of the inspectors. A competent group of educators, such as the body of inspectors, should be able to offer invaluable help to the teachers in solving their classroom problems. Their task should be to visit the schools for the purpose of helping to improve teaching.

Assuming that the local administrators have been chosen according to previous suggestions, the evaluation of the teachers' efficiency should be left to them. They should develop a method by which to judge the teacher, not so much by casual visits to the classroom as through frank and sympathetic discussions with each teacher of ways and means of improving his teaching. The teacher should always be given ample opportunity to recognize problems and be encouraged to use his initiative in solving them. The Ministry of Education should rely on the reports of the local administrators for evaluating the teachers, knowing that their judgment is based on many factors which would probably escape the attention of the national inspectors.

b. In-Service Training

The need for improvement of teachers and administrators is ever present in a secondary school. This need is especially felt in Colombia since many of the teachers have not had sufficient training. An in-service training program is indispensable in each local secondary school. It should include an annual teachers' institute, professional meetings during the year, and occasional lectures and group discussions on the problems of the school. A more detailed consideration of this
point will be presented in the next section.

3. Organization of the Staff and the Faculty

The organization of the staff and the faculty in the local school must be democratic. It must offer an opportunity for each member to express his views and to contribute to the general program of the school to the best of his ability. It should give each member of the faculty a definite responsibility to perform. It should use the method of cooperation in carrying on all the activities of the school. The following suggestions for organization seem to be in accordance with these principles. Some of them have been successfully used in the Colegio Americano de Bogota for a period of two years.

The faculty is divided into five committees, taking into consideration their interest and preparation. These committees are the Committee on Cultural Activities, Committee on Guidance, Committee on Improvement of Teaching, Committee on Physical Education, and Committee on Public Relations. In addition, there is the Coordinating Committee, composed of the chairman of the five committees. Each of these committees, as the names indicate, has a particular sphere of action.

a. Committee on Cultural Activities

The purpose of the Committee on Cultural Activities is to promote and plan all the cultural events of the school in cooperation with the student body. The main activities sponsored by this committee are the school assemblies; student extra-curricular activities; special emphasis weeks, such as health week and book week; festivals; programs in English; concerts, etc. In the planning and actual presentation of the
programs this committee works with a similar committee composed of students representing the different grades and elected by them. The students are given as much responsibility as they can take and as their limited time allows. Because of the heavy schedules and limited time some of these activities are planned to take place during class periods, especially if they are related to certain subjects in the curriculum.

The objectives of this committee may be summarized thus:

1. To offer the students the opportunity to appreciate beauty through its cultural manifestations, such as, art, music, and literature.
2. To offer the students opportunities to participate in this type of cultural manifestations.
3. To bring the students in contact with the culture of other countries.
4. To enrich the curriculum.
5. To offer opportunities to the faculty and the students to work together.

b. Committee on Guidance

The Committee on Guidance replaces the Committee on Discipline of the old school. Its purpose is to help the students to realize their abilities and discover ways and means by which they can put these abilities to use. It also aims at helping the students to solve their problems, with an understanding and human approach to discipline. To develop this purpose the committee has the following goals:

1. To replace the old concept of authoritarian discipline with the concept of guidance.
2. To study the character and attitudes of the students in order to help them.
3. To keep a complete record (psychological, intellectual, anecdotal, etc.) of each child in the school for reference purposes.
4. To devote some time to the counseling of students.
5. To develop a comprehensive program of testing in the school.
6. To educate the parents in the new approach to discipline.
One member of the committee (the head of discipline in the old organization) devotes some of his school time to help carry on the program of the committee and to keep the records. He must be interested and trained in guidance. The following activities might be approved by the committee:

1. Investigation of the psychological tests available in Spanish. Study and adaptation of these tests to the Colombian situation. Translation and adaptation of French and North American tests, if possible.
2. Testing of the student body in order to gather information about each student. The type of tests needed are intelligence, aptitude, social attitudes, etc.
3. Beginning of an individual cumulative record which includes the results of the tests, the medical profile, the grades, and any other significant data about the student.
4. Interviews with the parents in order to explain the new approach.
5. Assigning some of the time of one or two committee members for individual counseling with the students during school hours.

c. Committee on Improvement of Teaching

The Committee on Improvement of Teaching is very important because of the great need for the enrichment of the prescribed curriculum and the need for an in-service program for the teachers. Its purpose is to investigate and study the latest discoveries in educational practice and, wherever possible, apply them to the local situation. Its activities lead to the improvement of teaching at the local school. Its general objectives are:

1. To make use of community resources to improve teaching.
2. To clarify educational concepts through discussions, research, and study.
3. To acquaint the teachers with new theories and practices of education developed in Colombia or other countries.
4. To promote an experimental attitude towards teaching.
5. To develop a desire for improvement on the part of the teachers.
The goals of the Committee on the Improvement of Teaching for the school year should be:

1. To have at least three week-ends devoted entirely to the presentation and discussion of educational topics.
2. To use as many of the bi-monthly teachers' meetings as possible for the same purpose.
3. To plan an annual teachers' institute of at least one week's duration.
4. To promote a program for the effective utilization of audio-visual aids in the classroom.
5. To begin an experimental project in any phase of educational practice, such as, determining the needs of the students by observation and research, using a unified curriculum in one of the grades, determining the effectiveness of audio-visual aids in the teaching of any given field of studies, determining the value of the grading system in use, developing objective examinations, or some other necessary phase.

d. Committee on Physical Education

The Committee on Physical Education deals with the promotion of activities leading to a sound and healthy physical development of the students. The program of the committee has two phases: (1) that of education for health and the prevention of disease, and (2) that of developing a program of physical education within the school. In order to carry out these two tasks the following things should be planned by the committee:

1. To see that the health and sanitary regulations of the Ministry of Hygiene for the functioning of secondary schools are fulfilled.
2. To take care of the individual physical examinations of the students and to advise the parents when serious health conditions are found in their children.
3. To educate the children and the parents in preventive measures against common diseases through lectures, movies, and other means.
4. To have a health emphasis week every year to stress the importance of health, prevention of disease, and physical fitness.
5. To supervise the physical education program in order to secure a balance of play, work, and exercise.
6. To promote intra-mural sports and the participation of school teams in city-wide tournaments.

e. Committee on Public Relations

The task of the Committee on Public Relations is to promote good relations between the school and the community through intelligent and constructive action. Most of its work is related to the parents, alumni, and extension work in the immediate community. All its efforts are aimed at the formation of a Parent Teachers Association, an Alumni Association, and a program of extension with literacy classes and night classes for adults, according to the needs of the community. This committee, after organizing the Parent Teachers Association and the Alumni Association, would try to interest these in the projects of the school for the community. Boundless resources can always be found in the student body, the faculty, the parents, and the alumni to carry out the plans of the committee.

f. Coordinating Committee

The principal of the school and the chairmen of the five committees form the Coordinating Committee. The purpose of this committee is to avoid duplication of activities and to facilitate cooperation among the committees. It also tries to keep the general objectives of the school before the teachers in general and before each committee in particular.

C. Organization for Learning

The excessive rigidity of the curriculum produces some undesirable characteristics in the school program: rigid schedules, long school days,
extreme adherence to grade placement on the basis of credits, too high standards for promotion, and limitation of student-organized extra-curricular activities. It seems that the only solution for these problems lies in a change of policy in curriculum development by which all the subjects offered at present could be successfully correlated. It is not mere wishful thinking to look forward to the time when subject-matter boundaries will be erased for the sake of a more vital and challenging curriculum. This can happen only when subject-matter is considered as an instrument for the integration of the individual and not as an end in itself. It is the duty of all educators to work for this change to the best of their ability so that the students may reap the benefits of this change as soon as possible.

Until such time as the local school can enjoy more freedom for experimentation, it can make use of its limited freedom to improve existing conditions. Some suggestions for two possible improvements in the methods of promotion and the program of extra-curricular activities follow.

1. Promotion

The present basis for promotion from one grade to the next in the secondary schools of Colombia is the quality of the academic work performed by the student. His performance is evaluated through the traditional or essay type of examinations, answers in class, written papers, and conduct. The evaluation is mathematically computed according to a
scale from zero (0) to five (5). The passing grade is three (3). The student is required to have at least a three (3) in each of the subjects of his course in order to be promoted. The Ministry of Education checks the grades very carefully.

As can readily be seen, this system of grading has definite faults. In the first place, the measurement of intellectual knowledge in mathematical terms can be only relative and not absolute. And yet in Colombia this grade is the only criterion by which the achievement of the student is judged. In the second place, the standards are unfavorable to the average student. Considering the number of subjects in the curriculum (sometimes ten or more in each grade), and the emphasis on memorization and recitation, three (3) as the standard for passing seems too high. In addition, there is little coordination among teachers of different subjects. This usually results in excessive home-work for the student. Teachers are always concerned with covering all the material required in the course of study, ignoring the real problems that the students have to face. Only about 30 per cent of those entering the first year of secondary school continue to graduation. Some of the drop-outs result from sickness or death, financial difficulties, and, most significant of all, from a failure to make the grade because of the unfair methods of evaluating their work. In the third place, the subjectivity of the grades is another fault of the grading system. Most

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The grades, interpreted according to the usual grading scale in the schools of the United States are: 5 corresponds to A; 4, to B; 3, to C; 2, to D; 1, to F; and 0. See pages 191-2 of this work for a discussion of the grading system in Colombian secondary schools.
examinations, papers, and answers in class are subjectively evaluated by
the teacher. In giving the grades the teachers are influenced by per­
sonal characteristics, such as, the attraction of certain personalities
and the repulsion of others, the concept of discipline, and the personal
standards of scholarship.

In view of the problems resulting from the present system of
grading, it is necessary to adopt a new policy for promotion. The grad­
ing system has to be continued until such time as the government realizes
its shortcomings, but the local school is in a position to give new
meaning to it. The new policy for promotion could be based on the
following general principles:

1. Grades are relative and only one source of evaluating
the readiness of the student for promotion.
2. The readiness of the student for promotion is determined
by his grades, his general attitude towards all subjects,
his possibilities for further study, and his physical
and social needs.
3. Grades must be obtained by objective examinations and in
relation to the total class or group of which the
student is a part.
4. Teachers must realize that, while mastery of subject-
matter is required for promotion, an excessive amount
of it may impair the balance of the student's development.

2. Extra-curricular Activities

The possibilities in a program of extra-curricular activities for
the student body have already been suggested in connection with the plan
for the organization of the faculty. What remains to be done is to
determine how such a program should be put into effect.

The nature of the Colombian secondary school curriculum demands
that the students devote almost all their time to their subjects, leaving
only a few hours for extra-class activities. But in order to balance the one-sided program which places undue emphasis on intellectual pursuits, the extra-curricular activities are needed. They offer a means of injecting some activity into the passivity of the classroom as well as a way of giving the students the opportunity for active participation in the school program. The extra-curricular activities provide valuable experiences which otherwise are absent.

Much can be done to incorporate some of the activities considered as extra-curricular into the curriculum. Projects, such as, debates, plays, series of talks for all the students, can grow out of the classes. This trend should be greatly encouraged. Until this method is generally accepted there is need for a student organization which can plan it with the advice and cooperation of the Committee on Cultural Activities. To provide such an organization it is recommended that the students be encouraged to form a Cultural Center or any similar student society on the following bases:

1. Election of two representatives of each grade in the school.
2. Election of a faculty member as adviser of the student organization.
3. Establishment of the student organization or Cultural Center with representatives of each grade in the school and with the advice of the faculty member elected.
4. Division of the representatives to the Cultural Center into small permanent committees in order to facilitate the distribution of responsibilities, the number of, and the functions of, each committee to be determined by the projects adopted by the Center. The following committees are suggested: Journalism, Literary, Artistic, and Sports.
5. The launching of a campaign for membership by each committee among the students in order to offer the opportunity of participation to the greatest number possible.
6. A discussion of all projects in a general assembly of the Cultural Center, in order to avoid duplications and confusion.
As an example of what a Cultural Center can do, some of the achievements of a similar organization in the Colegio Americano in Bogotá are related. A series of talks on vocational education was planned for the school assembly. Outside speakers representing different professions and vocations were secured. Another series dealing with "Great Men of America," was planned. For this diplomatic representatives of six Latin American countries were invited to speak. Through the efforts of the Cultural Center a concert was given at the school by the National Band of Colombia. These are only a few of the activities for which outsiders were brought in. Of a different nature, a book week for which a special assembly was planned by each grade was celebrated. As a part of this week, a short play was presented by each of the six grades. A committee of judges selected the best play to be presented to the public. Further evidence of the value of such student activities can be seen from the fact that the play judged to be the best was written by one of the students. This fact was unknown to the judges and the audience until after the verdict had been given. A small admission charge was made for each play during the week, and the proceeds were spent by the students of the respective grades for the school library.

Another project of the Cultural Center was an English program prepared for the commemoration of the Fourth of July and given in honor of the North American colony in Bogotá. For this the students of one of the upper English classes wrote an original dramatization of the signing of the Declaration of Independence of the United States. The entire program was in English and arranged by the students with the help of two English teachers.
D. The School Plant

It is apparent that there is a definite need for improvement of school plants and equipment, and the Ministry of Education is doing all that is possible under the present circumstances. Its department of architecture controls the building of new plants in order to secure the best architectural advantages for the new schools. It would be advisable for this office to make a survey of the need for secondary school buildings in the nation, with a study of trends in population change, birth rate, death rate, and financial capacity of each region to help in the support of a school. A map of the educational needs of the country would be very revealing. In fact, such a map is a prerequisite for any wise investment in the building of school plants for the future. Out of this study a plan for replacing the old buildings and locating the new ones should come.

Along with the new buildings, new equipment should be secured. Most of the comparatively new schools are well equipped with laboratories, furniture, and playground apparatus. But most of the old ones, especially those in the rural areas, are destitute of the mere essentials. This is particularly true in the schools located in the municipalities with a low income. Help from the national government is necessary for the purchasing of good equipment for these schools.

It was mentioned in the preceding chapter that the school plant is generally used only during school hours. This is an unfortunate practice caused by budget limitations and lack of personnel. By continuing this policy the school is missing a great opportunity to serve the community and to receive the benefits derived from such service. Schools in rural
areas are the logical centers of community activity. They are the logical agencies for reaching the thousands of illiterates, for improving agriculture and helping in the development of home industries. In urban areas illiteracy, unhealthy and unsanitary conditions, disease, immorality, and many other social problems are acute. The school cannot pretend to have met its obligation unless it has made some effort to correct this evil. It must make its students conscious of them and of their responsibility. A program of extension offering classes for illiterates, instruction in crafts for those interested in home trades or industries, elementary school classes for adults, and courses in health and sanitation should be planned under the auspices of the Committee on Public Relations. Some night courses for high-school students would facilitate the attendance of those who need to work during the day. This program can be carried out only through the active participation of the faculty and the help of the student body.

The preceding pages of this chapter have outlined some proposals for the improvement of the secondary schools of Colombia. The recommendations submitted have been made with the sincere belief that they are feasible and beneficial to the over-all educational program. It is necessary to admit, however, that most of them have been made with an eye to the future rather than with the hope of their immediate realization. The present situation of unrest and political strife in Colombia is having a negative effect on education. It is the belief of the author that this crisis will continue for some years. It will take some time before the Colombians can regain the peace of mind and freedom from fear
required for a constructive campaign in favor of education. The present situation in Colombia must be considered temporary; it could not be otherwise in a country that has had a democratic tradition for so many years. When the country returns to the civil and constitutional life which was interrupted by the tragic Ninth of April of 1948 and its sorrowful consequences, there is reason to believe that the recommendations of this dissertation might have some practical meaning.
CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the discussion presented in the seven previous chapters definite conclusions as to the nature of the Colombian educational system, particularly at the secondary level, have been reached. These conclusions have been stated and discussed in their appropriate places and within their natural context. The study of the system has also revealed some weaknesses and strengths. Consistent with the purpose of this work, recommendations for improvement have been offered in Chapter VII. It is proper, however, to end this dissertation with a resume of these conclusions and with a recapitulation of the recommendations proposed.

A. **Summary of Conclusions**

1. There is at present in the Republic of Colombia a comprehensive organization of public schools which includes all aspects of education. This system developed over the years reveals the ability of the educational authorities at different times in history to grasp the demands of education.

2. In spite of all the obstacles brought about by periodic revolutions, the secondary school system has progressively developed. The development of the university-preparatory school has been most marked although vocational and normal training have been given a place in recent times.

3. Vocational training has been included in the program of second-
ary education because of the constantly growing demand of industry and modern agricultural practices. Technological changes are demanding now and will continue to demand the preparation of managers, experts, and other employees and workers needed in industry.

4. The Roman Catholic Church determined the philosophy of secondary education during the colonial period. The school at that time was aristocratic, authoritarian, and mostly religious. It emphasized verbalism and religious instruction to the extent that other vital aspects of education were neglected.

5. Colombian educational thought has been isolated from modern world educational theories in an effort to preserve religious and cultural uniformity. Progressive ideas in education have been defeated in their incipiency by the strong religious pressure exercised on Colombian leaders. This isolation explains why the modern Colombian secondary school still has the characteristics of colonial education, notwithstanding the efforts of people like Mutis and Moreno y Escandón in colonial times, Santander at the beginning of the Republic, Mallarino in the nineteenth century, and Nieto Caballero in more recent times. With the exception of the Lancastrian, Pestalozzian, and Decrolyan educational theories, which have received some consideration in Colombia, the prevalent philosophy has been and continues to be scholasticism.

6. The inadequacy of the prevalent philosophy of education can be judged by the large number of people who suffer the evils of ignorance, poverty, vice, and disease. The aristocratic character of the Colombian secondary school has made it possible for only a few to receive an
education, while the masses are forgotten.

7. The secondary school has failed to meet the needs of even those young people who have the opportunity of attending by placing an excessive emphasis on the mastery of subject-matter rather than on the total development of the student.

8. The secondary school has failed to prepare for life because of its insistence on ignoring the changes produced by the advancement of science and its failure to accept the challenge of new ideas in social and economic living.

9. The pressure of religious leaders on the educational authorities is evidenced by the legislation passed by Congress. The Concordat between the Republic of Colombia and the Vatican establishes a relationship of cooperation between the two institutions. In reality, however, the relationship goes beyond cooperation; for, by giving the Catholic Church power to conduct education in accordance with the Catholic faith, it establishes a de facto union of Church and State.

10. The monopoly of education by one religious group has killed freedom of thought and created a spirit of intolerance which has resulted in discrimination and even persecution in the public schools. This monopoly, in addition to causing anti-democratic behavior, is giving a bad example to the growing generation in whose hands the future of the country lies.

11. The inability of the Colombian leaders to separate education from politics has led to inefficiency and incompetence by the appointment of administrators and teachers on political rather than on professional bases.
12. The excessive centralization of education in the hands of the Ministry of Education has crippled initiative and progress at the local school level.

13. The frequent turn-over of officers in the Ministry of Education, particularly of the minister and his immediate collaborators, produces a lack of continuity in the educational program. This results in frequent changes in the curriculum and in the administrative practices without due study and proper orientation.

14. The present financial support given to education by the national, departmental, and municipal governments is inadequate. The shortage of teachers and inadequate facilities for taking care of all the young people of secondary school age are problems demanding solution. To solve them the budget for education must be increased.

15. Extended observation seems to reveal a lack of integration between the programs of the elementary and secondary schools and between the secondary school and the university.

16. The general public is indifferent towards education. This unhealthy attitude shows itself in the lack of civic and professional societies for the advancement of education.

17. The shortage of teachers in the secondary schools is due to insufficient normal schools and also to low salaries.

18. The present system of inspection and rating of teachers by the inspectors of the Ministry of Education is inadequate and requires new orientation along the lines of constructive supervision.

19. Since many of the secondary school teachers now in service
are deficient in their preparation, each local school has the problem of preparing them while in service.

20. As a consequence of the prevalent authoritarian philosophy, administration in the Colombian schools is also authoritarian. The need for a democratic organization of the secondary schools is pressing.

21. The policy of promotion based excessively on grades and intellectual achievement overlooks some other desirable factors, such as, total readiness of the student, emotional readiness, and the like. The promotion policy needs to be revised.

22. One of the most noticeable shortcomings of the Colombian secondary school is the passivity of methods of teaching. The lecture and recitation type of classroom activity is prevalent. A program of extra-curricular activities is absent in the secondary schools.

23. There is a crying need for the improvement of school plants and equipment. Data on the need for new buildings in the different communities are indispensable.

24. The local school plant is used at present mostly during school hours. There is no attempt to relate the activities of the school to the activities of the community.

B. Summary of Recommendations

In the light of the above conclusions the following recommendations have been offered for the improvement of the secondary school system:

1. Educational principles. The failure of the old school to prepare for life was due to its insistence on remaining aloof from the changes produced by the advancement of science and the challenges pre-
sented by new ideas in social and economic living. It is time for the Colombian people to define their objectives of education in the light of these changes. Four basic principles have here been proposed as a point of departure for an elaboration of a progressive point of view in education:

a. The Liberation of Human Personality places upon education the task of guiding the development of the child at the different stages of his life in a free atmosphere and through methods which are adapted to his nature. The outcome of educational practice based on this principle would be the fulfillment of the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of the child. For their task the teachers need a knowledge of the nature of the child and the teaching process.

b. The Principle of Social Responsibility requires the school to relate its teachings to the community in order to make its students aware of their duties as citizens thus developing a sense of social responsibility. Such ideals as are indispensable to democratic living—respect for human personality, freedom of conscience, preservation of the right to dissent, social justice, civic responsibility—should be vital to any secondary school graduate. The school should help him to assimilate their meaning through an active and interesting program of social experiences provided in the curriculum during his school years.

c. The Principle of Differentiation recognizes individual differences and requires the conducting of the school program accordingly. This principle manifests itself in practice in the variation of curricular offerings in the school and in the diversification of secondary education.
int into vocational and university-preparatory.

d. The Principle of Activity takes into consideration the fact that the child is active by nature and therefore requires the use of active methods in the classroom. "Learning by doing" is not a mere slogan; it is a sound educational principle on which the school can base its total program in an effort to provide meaningful experiences for the adequate development of the child. Active methods in education help to develop fresh, spontaneous, and uninhibited children, who are able to use their knowledge in every day living.

C. Administrative Reforms

Having set forth the principles on which the modifications of secondary education should be based, the following recommendations have been submitted:

1. At the National Level:

   a. The Ministry of Education and other educational agencies should be directed by experts in education in order to guarantee the maximum of efficiency in the formulation of educational policies and in the administration of the total educational program. It is recommended for this purpose that legislation be passed by Congress providing that the Minister and all educational authorities be appointed from among experienced educators and for a period of at least two years.

   b. The Higher Council of Permanent Education should be allowed more freedom to act by letting each group represented in the Council elect its own members. This would diminish the strict control that the Ministry of Education exercises over it at present. It is also
recommended that the parents be given representation in the Council by replacing the two representatives of the Catholic Church with two representatives from among the parents.

c. A section devoted to educational research should be established in the Ministry of Education with branch offices in each of the sixteen departments. This office would be charged with the following duties: experimenting with educational theories, making studies in child psychology, preparing psychological tests, making surveys of the needs of the communities, and publishing its findings in the form of a periodical. This office, naturally, should be headed by an expert in educational research.

d. It is recommended that legislation be passed by Congress establishing the separation of Church and State on the following bases: 1) The country should not have an official religion; 2) the State should be impartial towards all religious groups; 3) the present Concordat between Colombia and the Vatican should be revoked; 4) all religious groups should be equal before the law; and 5) public education should be secular.

e. Public education should be free from the control of any religious group and should leave religious instruction to the home and the church in the community. This does not mean that the school would be anti-religious. It would cooperate with the churches in developing a plan for moral and civic training.

f. The present practice of separating the sexes for school instruction should be replaced by a healthy program of coeducation in the
In order to solve the problem of lack of funds for education three recommendations are offered: 1) that legislation be passed by Congress increasing the budget of education from 10 percent to 30 percent of the total budget; 2) that the government secure the financial cooperation of industry for building vocational and technical schools; and 3) that assistance be obtained from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The last recommendation could be carried out in two ways, namely, by securing technical assistance from a mission composed of leading educational experts from the United States of America, and by securing a financial loan to meet the immediate needs for the construction of buildings, increase of salaries, and others.

A study of the problem of integration at the different levels of the school system is recommended. The possibility of adding one more year to the five year elementary school should be explored. The Ministry of Education should grant freedom to the local schools to include some exploratory courses in the fields of study offered at the university.

The Ministry of Education should encourage the participation of the public in the discussion of educational matters. With this in view, it should encourage the formation of private organizations for the purpose of promoting the improvement of education.

To alleviate the present shortage of administrators and secondary school teachers it is proposed that a year of specialization for secondary education be added in the urban normal schools now in

secondary schools.
existence in the country. In addition to this, steps should be taken to establish schools of education both for elementary and secondary school teachers in all the branches of the national university, and to encourage private universities to do the same.

k. Salaries of secondary school teachers and administrators should be raised on the basis of experience and preparation in order to secure better teachers.

2. At the Local Level:

a. The local school should be given more freedom that it has at present in order to allow for educational progress.

b. The local administrative staff should be appointed on the basis of experience, training, ability, and honesty. Legislation should be passed by Congress requiring that all administrators of secondary schools be chosen from the first category of the National Register of Secondary School Teachers, without discrimination on grounds of political or religious affiliation.

c. It is recommended that the evaluation of the teachers' work be left to the local administrators instead of having it done by the national inspectors of secondary education. For this, the local administrator should develop objective means of evaluation. He should aim at helping each teacher to improve his teaching by discussing his problems frankly and constructively with him. The Ministry of Education should rely on the information given by local administrators for granting promotions of teachers in the National Register.

d. An in-service program of education is considered indispensable for each local secondary school and is, therefore, proposed here.
The national inspectors should consider it their duty to help the local school with the orientation and organization of this in-service program.

e. The administration of the staff and the faculty of the local secondary school should be democratic. To achieve this end, it is recommended that the faculty be divided according to experience and interest into five standing committees for the purpose of carrying on the different phases of the program of the school. The following are the committees proposed: 1) Committee on Cultural Activities; 2) Committee on Guidance; 3) Committee on Improvement of Teaching; 4) Committee on Physical Education, and 5) Committee on Public Relations. The names of these committees are indicative of the nature of their tasks. The principal and the chairman of the five committees would form a sixth committee, the Coordinating Committee, for the purpose of facilitating cooperation among the various committees and avoiding duplication in their work.

f. In view of the problems caused by the system of grading at present used in Colombia, it is necessary to adopt a new policy for the promotion of the students from one course to the next. The new policy should be based on the idea that the readiness of the student for promotion is determined by his grades, his possibilities for further study, and his physical and social needs.

g. The trend towards incorporating the activities commonly considered extra-curricular into the curriculum should be greatly encouraged in the secondary schools. Until this point of view is generally accepted, an organization of the student body should undertake the pro-
gram of extra-curricular activities. A member of the faculty should be assigned as adviser of this student organization.

h. The Ministry of Education, through its Office of Architecture should make a survey of the need for secondary school buildings in the nation, taking into consideration the trends in population shift, birth rate, death rate, and financial capacity of each region to help in the support of a secondary school. Out of this study a plan for replacing the old buildings and locating new ones should come.

i. The Ministry of Education should help the schools located in rural areas to equip their buildings adequately.

j. A greater use of the school plant should be encouraged. Those schools having facilities and personnel for an educational and cultural extension program should utilize these advantages for the improvement of the status of the community.

D. A Final Word

The proposals offered in this dissertation are not aimed at changing the secondary school overnight. Minor changes are possible in a rather short time, but those involving established principles and national habits need much time and patience. Only the persistence and endurance of men of vision will make them possible. Sometimes, too, the spirit is willing but the means are nowhere in sight. Ingenuity is required to get along on a shoestring when a steel cable is needed. It is fortunate that the people of Colombia, and especially those interested in the future of the country rather than in its past, have the patience, and
the ingenuity to bring about the improvements in the educational theories and practices so badly needed in its school system. May they not lose courage but persist until their hopes, dreams and efforts have come to fruition.
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