The influences on Latin American education to which I wish to call particular attention in this paper are those affecting higher education. However, since this is the culmination of a process beginning in childhood, I feel it necessary to refer here and there to Latin American education at its various levels.

Often, the first impulse is to catalog such influences only as problems, couched in terms to make them appear unmitigated evils, beyond remedy. They are formidable, to be sure, but their solution requires nothing more than an awareness of them, clear thinking, people prepared and disposed to work hard and efficiently, and money.

There are in Latin America growing cadres of intellectual, moral and enterprising leaders who are already on the move, changing and innovating. Besides, they appreciate and know where to turn for more of the cooperation available in the United States, other countries, and the international organizations.

Latin American education, like that of the United States, is the product of an evolution with roots in the colonial period. But, whereas in the United States education has been from the start an expression of a pragmatic society, open to vertical mobility, in Latin America it began and continued for a long time at the service chiefly of social and economic elites.

Let me dwell briefly on Latin American history as it has affected education, for history and tradition leave their mark on the present. Upon winning their independence early in the 19th century, the Latin American republics found themselves faced with the problem of educating peoples who were more than 90 per cent illiterate. They adopted progressive constitutions providing for free and compulsory elementary education, to prepare enlightened citizens. But poverty and class prejudices discouraged the masses of humble people from aspiring to improve their lives through education, and early drop-outs became common. So much so that as late as 1950 the Organization of American States had to report at its Seminar on Elementary Education that the average period of schooling of Latin Americans was between two and three years. For most, secondary education was an unattainable dream. And so, the number of those qualified for higher education remained greatly restricted.

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The social function of education nevertheless remained fixed, not only in the words of the Latin American national constitutions, but also in the conscience and minds of great leaders. Among these, in the 19th century, were Andres Bello, of Venezuela and Chile, and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Argentina's outstanding president. The former gave impetus to university development for the education of leaders; the latter extended popular education, founding elementary and normal schools. Improvements included the education of women and the professional preparation of teachers.

The main foreign influence on Latin American education in the 19th century was that of France, making for a centralized system and strong emphasis on the academic and encyclopedic.

Since World War I the educational influence of the United States has grown large, especially since the 1940's, through the action of government, philanthropic foundations, universities, and private enterprise. So has the action of international agencies.

The Latin American countries are now addressing themselves more intensively than ever to their problems of economic and social development. They are aware that for the proper exploitation of their natural resources they must develop their human resources. Indeed, they know, as we all do, that their continued development involves more and more reliance on their own people, and less and less on foreign aid. In this undertaking their universities bear a prime responsibility.

The universities must produce leaders in science and technology for the sake of greater productivity and leaders in the humanities to help lend more grace to life; they must develop teachers to train technicians and skilled workers. In doing all this the universities must keep in mind that man is the end as well as the essential instrument of social and economic progress, and that the whole process must be inspired in the principles of human dignity and social justice.

How does Latin American education stand in the light of the foregoing reflections? What is its cultural, social, economic, and political environment? What is it doing now? What promises does the future hold? "Never before," says Professor Roberto Koch Flores, "has education been so intimately related to economics, politics, and sociology."

1 "Education in the Americas; a Comparative Historical Review," by Roberto Koch Flores, Professor of Education, University of San Marcos, Lima, Peru, and Visiting Professor, University of Chattanooga, published in Challenges and Achievements of Education in Latin America, report of the Eastern Regional Conference of the Comparative Education Society, May 7-9, 1964, at the Pan American Union.

Before launching into these considerations I must caution myself against generalizing about Latin America as if it were one solid block. There are 20 independent Latin American countries, with three national languages among them: Spanish in 18, Portuguese in one, (Brazil), and French in one (Haiti), not to mention the indigenous languages in active use by great numbers in some of the countries.

**Cultural and Social Influences**

Cultural and social influences on Latin American education, more or less peculiar to the countries to the south, may be identified as follows:

- Regard for broad knowledge for its own sake, as a cultural and social grace
- Class prejudices, with disproportionate influence wielded by small numbers
- Low rate of social mobility
- Clash between strong family ties and involvement in community and national betterment
- A deep-rooted tradition holding working with the hands in low esteem
- Slowness to innovate
- A great difference in living standards between urban and rural people, to the disadvantage of the latter, in a part of the world where 70 per cent of the inhabitants are rural, in certain countries heavily Indian
- Population growing at the fastest rate in the world for a comparable area
- A high proportion of youth in the population, the average rising with the birthrate -- half less than 20 years old, 46 per cent less than 15 years old

The migration of rural people to urban centers, aggravating many city problems, including unemployment and delinquency

- Between 75 percent and 80 per cent of the population lacking adequate housing
- Discouragement of local initiative because of the hegemony of the national capitals
- Poor health conditions and relatively low life expectancy

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These influences inevitably produce counter influences, like everything else in life. Latin America is slowly developing a true middle class, as persons of humble origin move up, thanks to such forces as increasing educational opportunities and growing industrial and commercial activity. The inter-American system is giving impetus to improvement of housing, community development, and other programs.

**Economic Influences**

The following economic influences may be identified:

Unemployment and low income among great numbers, keeping them from helping strengthen the economy

Large landholdings in the hands of a few

Low level of productivity

Low level of business administration

Dissociation of sources of private wealth from social responsibility

Conspicuous consumption and the disinclination to put off the immediate pleasures of consumption for the sake of producing capital for investment

Faulty tax collection

Unstable economy based on one or two principal raw materials at the mercy of world market fluctuations

As in the case of the social influences, counter forces have begun to make themselves felt. In Latin America, where the idea of the common market originated (though Europe made much of it first) there are two regional groupings for economic cooperation, one in South America, the other in Central America. The Alliance for Progress has helped spur the countries to higher levels of organized economic activity.
Political Influences

These political influences may be listed:

Centralized government

A power elite in many cases identified with the oligarchy

Instability promoted by social injustice and economic royalism

Frequent interruption of the regularity of democratic processes

Government playing an important role in social, economic, and educational affairs

A low level of public administration

Here also we see things happening as the forces favoring a better life for the common man clash with those that tend to maintain traditional privilege. Not all the changes are extreme, as in Cuba. A number have given proof of political and democratic maturity. Such is true of Chile, for example, whose president, Eduardo Frei, is making a deep impact on the world with his "revolution in freedom." In Chile democratic government, broadly representative of the people, and a program seeking to accomplish real improvements in daily life have earned the genuine loyalty of the people and given them good reason for confidence in their leaders.

To undo injustice or to keep justice secure, such leaders, respectful of each individual's dignity, are eternally vigilant against tyranny in all its forms, of both the left and the right, all the time.

Higher Education in Latin America

Concerned with keeping the subject of Latin American education within my grasp, I am going to limit the following observations to higher education.

Educational Influences

We have taken a brief look at social, economic, and political influences on Latin American education. Now let us examine some of the educational influences on education, which like all processes constantly produce feed-back.

Although the Latin American university antedates the United States university, it has changed much less than ours. Until recently life has been passing it by. But, as in the case of the social, economic, and political state of affairs, Latin American higher education is astir. It is in the process of self-evaluation, and some universities have initiated reforms to strengthen them for the three-fold task they recognize as their responsibility: to educate, to deepen and broaden research, and to help meet the needs of their local and national communities.
The educational problems of Latin American higher education are, of course, part and parcel of the social, economic, and political situation outlined on the preceding pages.

The Student Body

A striking revelation is made in the enrollment figures published by the National Autonomous University of Mexico. As of 1962, the socio-economic background of its Mexican students was as follows: working class, 52.2 per cent; middle class, 43.8 per cent; wealthy, 4 per cent. The fact is that Latin American universities are faced with a student explosion, which is part of the general population explosion and of the revolution of rising expectations. These data refer to a total enrollment of 69,000 Mexican students, including about 25,000 in the preparatory pre-university courses, of which more will be said later.

Of special interest here is the fact that in Latin American universities female enrollment is keeping pace with male. Perhaps those wishing to extend home economics education in the universities will find additional leverage for their cause in this fact.

The heavy influx of students is, however, deceptive, as we can see from the great difference in enrollment between the first and last years. There is great attrition in the form of drop-outs and failures, even well before the final year.4

Besides economic pressures, a major reason for that is the faulty preparation many Latin Americans bring with them from the secondary school.

The Teaching Staff

Latin American education suffers from an acute shortage of teachers at all levels, especially professionally prepared ones. In the universities this is compounded by widespread dependence on part-time staff members, whose main activity is the practice of professions or business careers outside education.

To the credit of the university as an institution it should be recalled that many successful professional and business people are eager to be professors, even as little as three hours a week, because of the prestige it gives them.

The University

Now let us take a look at the Latin American University itself and see what makes it tick as it does.

This is an autonomous institution, in most cases public; it depends for its budget entirely or almost so on the government. (The government also gives

some financial support to private universities, the great majority of the latter being Catholic.) Modern university autonomy in Latin America was won in 1918 in a movement arising in the University of Cordoba, Argentina, sparked by the students.

Autonomy meant freedom from political interference. It also meant co-government, i.e. student participation in running the university. While it has served this purpose well, autonomy has, on the other hand, contributed to the further isolation of higher education in an ivory tower. That accounts in part for the lukewarm interest shown by many universities in the problems of secondary education, specifically in training teachers for the secondary schools. All is not lost, however. More and more bright spots are appearing as self-study and international cooperation open the university to assuming its share of the responsibility for all the education of all the people.

The role of the students in university control has led to their interference in matters often regarded as of the province of the professional and administrative authorities. Yet few heads of universities are prepared to recommend eliminating student participation in university government. Most might be glad to see it modified.

Student strikes and the closing down of university faculties, or the universities themselves, are not simply due to co-government. They are often signs of general unrest and the encroachment of national or local politics on the campus. If the economies of the Latin American countries were more vigorous and stable, students would have less reason to go all out in politics. But politics and the government do loom large in their daily lives. Yet, in spite of all, most students do not lend themselves to political militancy.

"Who are we North Americans, to talk like that about Latin America?" one might ask, remembering what has recently been happening on some of our campuses. You will recall that one explanation for such behavior has been that U.S. professors are finding their time, energy, and interest drawn toward extra-campus work away from that direct contact with students for which this country has been so envied.

Well, that is precisely one of the problems of Latin American university life. The lecture method and part-time teaching hold sway, with little direct communication between professor and students.

Hand in hand with the lecture method goes verbalistic learning, unrelieved for the most part by laboratory work or practical application.

Latin American university autonomy is so deeply rooted that we find still another degree of autonomy within the first. I refer to the individual faculties, or professional schools. It is into this narrowly professionalized educational environment that secondary school graduates are thrust, to the confusion of many of them.

Intent on solving this problem, universities in various Latin American countries have adopted reforms, including the creation of schools or institutes of
basic studies, somewhat comparable to the first two years of our college of arts and sciences or junior college. Among the leaders in this movement are Mexican, Chilean, Colombian, and Central American universities, the latter through their exemplary regional system, the Central American Superior University Council.

The Latin American university has a number of other problems, all of a piece with the social, economic, political, and academic influences we have pointed out. They are of a physical, financial, and administrative nature. The most acute are: inadequate physical facilities for teaching, especially in science and technology; lack or weakness of central services, especially student guidance, student welfare, and libraries; and under-financing and financial insecurity, because of excessive dependence on the government for support.

The catalog of problems and the list of things to do are long and complex. Their solution requires painstaking review and planning. Recognizing this fact, Latin American universities have begun to set up offices of university planning.

Ancient tradition has been giving way. University leaders are urging coordination of the planning of higher education with that of the other levels of education and with the national economic and social development plans. Of course, fundamental to all this is the development of the human resources of these nations.

To bring the university closer to the community we must have a university in the community in the first place. In Latin America there is a serious gap in higher education between the capitals or leading cities and the other areas of the various countries. The main institutions are faced with an avalanche of students from far and near. So, a number have sprung up in regions removed from the capitals. What they lack in years they make up for in freshness of outlook, youth, and vigor in those directing them, and in the possibility of starting unencumbered by tradition, with the benefit of the latest ideas and accomplishments elsewhere.

Appreciation of the value of joint action has led to the creation of national associations of universities in most of the countries of Latin America. This will do much for higher education planning and financing.

Moreover, the universities of two Latin American regions have formed inter-American associations to help avoid needless duplication of personnel and facilities and excessive expense, and to promote greater cooperation and exchange among them for academic purposes, research, and regional service. The first of these groups embraces the five Central American universities, under the Central American Superior University Council, created nearly 15 years ago. The second, about a year and a half old, is the association comprising the four national universities of Buenos Aires (Argentina), Chile, San Marcos (Peru), and Uruguay.

Up-to-date leaders in Latin American higher education are fully cognizant of the value of close ties between the university and all the elements of the
university. They know that the university must not expect to attract adequate support simply by resting on its long history or detached academic dignity; on the contrary, they realize that it deserves and will get such support in the measure in which it satisfies the nation and the local community, public and private, that it is rendering them real service.

A few universities have developed impressive fund-raising programs.\(^5\)

One of the dynamos in the drive to gear Latin American universities to present development demand has been the recently elected young Rector of the University of Nicaragua, Dr. Carlos Tunnermann Bernheim. As executive secretary of the Central American Superior University Council, he did very much to make that body a model regional agency of university cooperation and reorganization. In the speech he delivered last November, on succeeding to the presidency of his university, his alma mater, he set forth a program to be carried out, if possible, during his term of office. He prefaced it with the following declaration of principles:

Our university is the highest educational institution in a country in the process of development. Therefore, it is called upon to play a role of the utmost importance in educational development, hence in economic and social development. For that reason the growth of higher education requires planning in the light of the human resources needs of such development. It is imperative that there be greater contact among the university, the government agencies responsible for planning, and private initiative. In integrating programs for the improvement of education with economic and social development plans, we must not pass over its prime function, the formation of the whole man, including his cultural values.

This is the program Dr. Tunnermann proposed:

1. Creation of an advisory committee of persons representing the different activities of society, to serve as a bridge between the university and society

2. Establishment of an adequate mechanism to permit the university, with due regard for its autonomy, to cooperate in the tasks of overall planning of education

3. Extension of access to university education, so that it does not remain the privilege of a few

4. Extension of the base of the educational system, at the primary and secondary levels, so that no youngster capable of it is denied the opportunity of a university education simply because of his social origin

In more specific terms he laid out the following things to do as of top priority:

1. A legal, constitutional guarantee of university autonomy, to ensure it against action by those who see university problems only as political
2. Increase of the government's allocation to the university to a minimum of 2 percent of the national budget

3. Establishment of a University Planning Commission for long-range forecasting of needs, for example, growing out of the expected doubling of the university's enrollment from more than 2,500 in 1970 to more than 5,000 in 1980.

4. Academic reform, with special attention to a cycle of general studies and the departmentalization of the basic sciences, making for institutional unity and, among other things, the stimulation of research

5. Improvement of university administration and the university professorship as a full-time career

6. Creation of a department of student welfare and guidance to involve the student more in the process of his education, thus contributing perhaps to improving his academic discipline, and to channelize vocations into modern, productive careers

7. Training by the university of teachers for the secondary schools

8. Improvement of the physical facilities of the university, laboratories, equipment, libraries, etc.

9. Expansion of university extension programs as community services

10. The establishment of a social work system under recent graduates of the university.

11. Encouragement of research and the combination of teaching with research, including joint effort in it by teachers and students.

12. Creation of an Institute of Economic and Social Research (each of the other Central American Universities has one)

13. Special attention to technological education and the opening of short courses applicable to industry

14. Continuation of the regional integration programs of Central American higher education.

Dr. Tuner mann has put the problem in a nutshell. There is not a project of the kinds he has listed that is not already in effect in Latin America in one form or another.

On being invited to speak on a topic particularly related to home economics, I pleaded ignorance and Dr. Eppright kindly left it up to me to make my talk less pointed. Now, after all, I am going to take the liberty of making some remarks about home economics. Innocence shelters me from responsibility for
for what I say, though I did inform myself a little with the help of Linda Nelson, home economics specialist with the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences, who preceded me on this program, and such sources as the American Home Economics Association.

I am convinced of the importance of home economics in raising the level of living of our people and of all people. The trouble often is that home economics is understood in a very narrow sense. I know of the recent rejection of the request by a Latin American university for a foreign professor of home economics, as being of lower priority than certain others.

I am also informed that, as home economics is supposed to be concerned with a very limited range of activities like cooking, people of the economically and socially favored classes prefer their daughters not to study it, as such a pursuit is meant for servant girls, who are, as a rule, of rural origin.

The outlook for home economics may not appear very optimistic, but all is far from lost. Tradition and fixed ideas confront us with problems, not necessarily with impossible choices. If you understand the different influences on Latin American education, you are likely to find rewards for your hard, skillful, patient work in international cooperation.

Surely, curriculum development, if anything, must respond to the needs of society and those who come to us for formal education. In Latin America these are the needs of an exploding population -- of an exploding student body -- of people more aware than ever of how much education means for social mobility and greater productivity, especially in the face of the modern technological revolution -- of people who require better health and living conditions to be better workers and enjoy life more -- of millions of families who, like too many even in the United States, are unprepared to provide the initial cultural and moral environment so essential to their young for a successful take-off into school life. Home economics has its foot in the door of the Latin American university. According to information gathered by our office at the Pan American Union only few schools of home economics and of dietetics and nutrition in Latin America offer full four-year courses. In some cases they are sub-professional, the prerequisite for admission to them being three or four years of schooling beyond the five to six years of elementary education.

Schools of dietetics and nutrition are largely oriented to functions related to medicine and public health. One, at the Chilean Universidad Tecnica del Estado, does train secondary school teachers of nutrition.

The same Chilean institution also trains secondary school teachers of needle trades.6

It is interesting that the Universidad Tecnica del Estado, of Chile, grew out of a vocational school, the Escuela de Artes y Oficios. Herein may be a helpful hint for one way of introducing home economics into the university

The training of secondary school teachers at the university level is one of the all-pervading concerns of Latin America's educational leaders.

Another approach is that of annexing a school to a university, as in the case of the Institute de Educacion Familiar (Institute of Family Life Education), in Chile. In 1940 it began to operate as an annex to the Catholic University of Chile. In 1959 it became a school in the Faculty of Philosophy and Education.

At the University of Trujillo, in Peru, a School of Family Life Education has been functioning since 1963 as part of the Institute de Cultura Femenina (Institute for Women's Education) in the Department of University Extension. Here is another way of reaching the university to help it reach the people.

The curriculum of the Faculty of Home Economics, of the University of Caldas, in Colombia, is patterned after that of similar institutions in the United States.

The Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences is contributing greatly to strengthening home economics and appreciation for it in the American republics, through model programs, training and advisory services.

UNESCO's CREFAL (Latin American Fundamental Education Center), in Mexico, has promoted education for community development and rural life improvement, including studies related to home economics. The Organization of American States takes advantage of this institution for the training of Latin Americans, financing it with fellowships.

A very special institution is the Inter-American Rural Education Center, at Rubio, Venezuela. For 10 years it operated as a technical cooperation project of the Organization of American States. As a Venezuelan national school now, it continues to serve as an inter-American center for training rural normal staff. Its curriculum includes home economics or related subjects.

Another is the center known as INCAP (Instituto de Nutricion para Centroamerica y Panama, or Nutrition Institute for Central America and Panama). This research and advanced training institution is a rich source of information and cooperation for home economics curriculum development.

Those multinational centers act as catalytic agents on the curriculum of Latin American educational systems. They serve to introduce subjects and methods or to make them more acceptable than before to those systems.

Home economics curriculum developers must, of course, be concerned with the education of women. I suppose that as the lot of Latin American women improves educational opportunities for women will improve, and their education in turn will redound to their further betterment. This statement will, I am confident, find approval in the Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States.
This audience is infinitely better informed on home economics than I, and what I am going to quote may be carrying coals to Newcastle. But I will chance it, because it is so much to the point of the thesis of this paper in general and home economics in particular. The report of the Commission on Higher Agricultural Education, sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, states:

The Commission believes that agricultural development cannot take place without the fullest consideration of family life, the general education of women, and the improvement of home conditions: nutrition, housing, sanitation and personal health, clothing and the cultural arts. Therefore, a vital issue in higher agricultural education is that of the rural home and family; no agricultural leaders can afford to omit it from his plans of agricultural education and research. The Commission, therefore, strongly supports the recommendation of the Bond Report to establish educational programs in home economics at the university level.

Conclusion

We have had a look at social, economic, political, cultural, and educational influences affecting Latin American education. Many are obstacles to change; some bear seeds of promise. Latin American leaders - intellectual, economic, political - are pressing forward. Their countries, in the process of modernization, do not have adequate resources at this time to keep up with their development needs. They must seek outside help and can turn for cooperation to foreign and international enterprise, both public and private. The action of these sources of assistance affects the influences on education that we have passed in review, and becomes an additional influence.

Not all the assistance Latin America needs must come from outside it. There are already strong points in some Latin American countries which put them in a position to offer cooperation to sister countries or institutions. This approach might well be used increasingly.

The Pan American Union and the specialized agencies of the inter-American system are sources of information and cooperation for all who are interested in contributing to the development of our member states. They are at your service.

\footnote{Commission on Higher Agricultural Education, "Higher Agricultural Education in Colombia," April 1961, Chapter XV.}