Chapter V

Protestantism and Society in Latin America
(The Option for the Middle Classes)

1. Why to attempt to win higher classes 316
2. The need for a middle class 321
3. Things that did not appeal to educated people 325
4. Step towards reaching the educated classes 329
5. The poor as an obstacle 343
6. Protestantism as a progressive religion 352
7. Perspective on Aborigines 372
   7.1. Translation work is advocated and opposed 376
   7.2. Obstacles to the work among Indians 380
   7.3. Indian work as a failure 397
   7.4. Outlook on Indian suffering 403

Chapter VI

A Liberal theology for a Prospective Liberal Constituency
(Contextualising the Message)

Introduction
1. Avoiding theological controversy 413
2. Grounds for dislike of dogmatic Christianity 418
3. Jesus is better and is above theology 427
4. CCLA in line with modern thought 434
   4.1. New Perspective on the Bible
   4.2. The Bible as important but not sufficient
5. The hold of modern ideas in Latin America 449
6. Response to Biblical criticism in Latin America 452
7. The Christianity that Latin America needs 457
8. The Social Gospel as an answer to Latin American needs 461
   3.8.1. Facing up to the Protestant heritage
   3.8.2. Importance of theological education
   3.8.3. Social Gospel is more than charity
9. The Uniqueness of Christianity 473

Conclusion
Chapter VII

The entanglement of Protestantism with Panamerican Movement
(Latin American distrust of Protestantism)

Introduction
1. Earlier distrust of Protestantism 491
   1.2. Protestants as filibusters
   1.2. Missions linked to foreign companies
   1.3. Missions supported US military actions
2. The Panama Congress and Panamericanism 499
   2.1. Internationalism or Imperialism
   2.2. A religious dimension is needed
3. Latin American dislike of Panamericanism 511
   3.1. Lead to Panamericanism
   3.2. Equated to Monroe Doctrine
   3.3. Haya de La Torre opposes Panamericanism
4. Protestants promote Panamericanism 519
   4.1. Panamericanism is a fact.
   4.2. CCLA born to promote it
5. Seeking consensus against Latin American unity 527
   5.1. Some support for Panamericanism
   5.2. Protestants fear Latin American unity
   5.3. In America: North and South- is the salvation
6. Distortion of history 538
   6.1. Sanitising North American actions
   6.2. Not only US is imperialistic.
   6.3. US imperialism is a myth
   6.4. Panamericanism but not under yankee hegemony
7. Protestant awareness of Latin American distrust 552
8. Samuel Guy Inman and US interests 562
   8.1. Progressive image
   8.2. Apparently critical of US
   8.3. Desire to be close to the State Department
   8.4. Role as an informer

General Conclusion i

Endnotes 587
Bibliography 647
Chapter V

Protestantism and Society in Latin America
(The Option for the middle classes)

Introduction

In this chapter we will deal with three subjects. First, the rationale that moved Protestant missions to stress the need for their work among the educated classes. Two main ideas were behind this rationale. On the one hand there was the belief that Latin America was lacking a leadership able to promote social development without deserting or rejecting the Christian faith. There was concern that the educated classes in Latin American had been influenced by materialistic ideologies that were leading people to see Christianity as something retrograde, that had nothing to offer for the development of Latin American countries. Protestant missionaries considered that the boost that their work received after Panama was timely in that Latin Americans were searching for better social institutions. The other idea was that the belief that the oft-dreamed of indigenous church, self-supported and self-propagated, was only possible if churches were in the hands of educated people. Protestants not only claimed the need of a middle class in Latin America, but believed that they were already creating that class. The other theme we deal with is the view that Protestant missionaries had of the poor. In attempting to win the educated classes, Protestants were critical of the social background of
the membership that Protestantism had so far attracted. It was argued that the educated classes were not ready to enter Protestant ranks because to be part of an organization made up largely of poor people would be to demean themselves. The educated classes demanded not only a different perspective of religion, more socially minded, but also changes in some features that marked Protestant churches. One of these was the appearance of Protestant premises. In the view of CCLA leaders the humbleness of Protestant churches was seen by educated people as a sign of Protestant disparagement of art. Similarly, we will show Indian work was indeed neglected by Protestant missions.

1. Why to attempt to win Higher classes

Protestant missions were always convinced that the welfare of Latin American societies could not be achieved unless their social make up was altered. They believed that the social disparity expressed in a small minority of aristocrats and a big majority of poor people should be modified with the emergence of a new intermediate social class. CCLA people used different terms to define class, such as "higher" "educated" "intellectuals" and "middle class". Neither the aristocracy nor masses could be the center of their Protestant activity. The aristocracy was traditionally linked with the Roman Catholic Church. The poor sectors were powerless, and consequently unable to introduce the changes that the societies were needing, except through rather frightening radical or revolutionary means.
Three reasons led Protestants to consider laying stress on the need for educated classes. First, the danger of their tendency to be anti-religious. Second, the role that the educated classes were playing in the shaping of the social and political structures of Latin American nations. Third, the belief that the future Protestant indigenous churches were only possible if they were lead by educated people.

With regard to the first, it was believed that these people were largely under the influence of materialistic philosophies, such as positivism. This tendency was interpreted at Panama as resulting from the revolt that they had gone through against their old Roman Catholic links. The report on "The Christian Message and the Educated Classes" contended that for Latin American intellectuals, defection from Catholicism had meant, "complete indifference to the whole subject of the spiritual life of man" and the rejection of "any authority of the Christian religion in any form." The case of Chile was mentioned where it was said that "the majority of both the educated classes and the more intelligent of the labouring classes are opposed to the Church.... the state teachers engaged in secondary instruction are adverse to the state religion... the high school boys follow the example of their teachers and are divorced from all religious practices." Protestant missionaries all over Latin America reported that cultured minds were identified with religious agnosticism and so opposed to Christian institutions. Presbyterians in Guatemala had warned in 1916 that "men of the upper or educated class appear to be
wholly indifferent to theology and to Christian worship".3 Protestants felt that they could deal with this negative attitude. According to them, the real opposition was against Roman Catholicism and not against Christianity itself. Even more, Protestants presumed that the discontent of the intellectuals with the Roman Catholic Church showed the need for an alternative understanding and practice of religion. In other words, cultured people were open to a more positive religious outlook in which their aspirations would be understood. It was felt that Protestantism was coming just at the right time for them. It shared not only their social concern, but also their negative outlook on traditional religion. Protestants agreed with them in "their altruistic idealism and morality" and in their firm position "against dogmatism and hollow ecclesiasticism".4

Though educated people were against the Roman Catholic Church and inclined to materialistic philosophies, Protestant missionaries linked with the CCLA believed that they were in search of religious truth. For Webster Browning, Presbyterian missionary in Chile and a leader of the CCLA, for instance, they not only were interested in religion, but also longed for spiritual life.5

The second reason was based on looking ahead to the power this class would have in shaping the destiny of the Latin American nations. It was seen that Latin America in the search for leadership was experiencing social upheaval:
The nations have grown stronger economically and politically. New social movements have arisen which mark a new interest by the common people in the development of their countries. The women are awakened and are coming out of their seclusion to take part in the solution of their nations' problems. Educational forces have taken on new life. Governments are reorganising their school systems, making necessary a restudy and readjustment of the work of mission schools. New health movements are demanding leadership...Above all, the spiritual awakening among all classes, especially among university students, offers great opportunities for helpful guidance. In countries like Chile and Brazil, government officials and other leading citizens have professed deep interest in the evangelical church and its power to aid their countries in solving their problems.6

Protestant Missionaries had a high concept of intellectuals as the builders and coming leaders of their nations. The Commission on "Survey and Occupation" at Panama called them "the flowers of the Latin America's civilisation".7 And the Commission on the "Church in the Field" referred to them as those in whose hands rested "the future greatness or failure of the Latin Republics".8 When the Women's Report referred to women of the upper classes it used the term the ruling class, and described them as most influential factors in creating sentiment against present conditions, and in bringing about measures of reform.9

Protestant missions were urged to think that concentrating on working with cultured people could provide the best leadership for Latin America. Some people interpreted this as being parallel to the work of Moses and Joshua looking for leaders for Israel.10

The gaining of a Protestant foothold in the national leadership was seen as a step towards dealing, in the light of Christian principles,
with the serious problems that the continent had inherited from past
generations. Among these problems were "child labour, the
oppression and neglect of the poor, inequitable taxation, evil
monopolies, and unfair labour conditions".11

Thirdly, discussions on the development of a native Protestant
church led to the stressing of the importance of having competent
educated local administrators. Sound local administration of an
indigenous church was unlikely to emerge from a membership
composed mostly of the uneducated poor. In short, the building up of
an "indigenous church", less dependent on missionary control, was
not possible unless there were educated Christians ready to assume
responsibility. Emphasising how only qualified people could provide
trusted leadership, the Commission on "Relevant Facts in Latin
American Civilisation" at Panama said:

To what extent is the indispensable, indigenous leadership
appearing in Latin America to carry forward (the cause) of
Christ ultimately independent of foreign supervision? Here
is a problem, a task, an ideal in one. And let it be recognised
at once that while it is a task whose end no one can see, it is
always the ideal towards which every plan is directed...The
testimony of every correspondent, national and foreign from
every field, is that a large measure of foreign cooperation in
supervision is necessary at present and will be for many years
to come...A chief fact to remember and to remedy is that few
men, naturally and professionally qualified, up to this time
have been led to devote their lives to evangelical work.
Furthermore, the classes have not been penetrated in Latin
America from which nearly all the leaders come in other
walks of life. One wise observer states: "I do not know a half
dozent indigenous pastors in South America of university
training or of its equivalent. It is the only area of the life of
these nations which does not have the privilege of a
university trained leadership. Only qualified men of any race
or nation can be trusted in places of leadership, and the Latin American of large calibre and good training can be trusted like any other."  

2. The need for a middle class

Missionary strategists pointed out continuously two main points about the Christian Churches in their contacts with the social classes in Latin America. Firstly, the Roman Church gave unbounded support to the national aristocracy, though their membership was almost entirely composed of people coming from the poorer sector of society. Secondly, the needs of the intellectual and cultured classes in general were being neglected by all the Christian churches, including Protestants. For the latter the latter indicated a serious mistake because Christianity was losing the opportunity to foster a middle class in which resided the betterment of society.

The interest that Protestant missions had from the outset paid to education, led them to believe that through it they were contributing to the changing of the old social structure of aristocracy and poor. They were sure that in their encounter with Protestantism, poorer sections of society would find social promotion. The welfare of these people would not necessarily come out of social revolution, but through the individual practice of the Protestant ethic. In Mexico for instance it was claimed that Protestantism had helped to develop a middle class. This was from poor people, who having entered Protestant ranks, wanted, as someone put it in 1913, to be "prosperous, clean, well educated,
independent, and good".13

Puerto Rico was one of the mission fields that Protestant missionaries used to hold up as a typical model of what Protestantism can do in society. Harlam Paul Douglas, of the American Missionary Association, was convinced that Protestant work was creating something which Puerto Rico had never had; namely, "an intelligent and self-respecting middle class".14 For Samuel Inman, "the raising of peones and rotos from serfdom into a thinking, efficient middle class" was one of the greatest contributions that Protestant Christianity had made to the development of Latin American nations".15 Such was this certainty of the Protestant contribution to society that, at Montevideo, in 1925, it was claimed that Latin America had already broken with its old social system:

Formerly there were only two classes of population in South America, the rich and the poor, the highly educated and the illiterate. While that condition existed there was little hope for the solution of South America's many social and political problems. With the gradual development of a middle class, with the introduction of a new consciousness of their rights among the labouring people, and with a new appreciation of social problems by the educated classes, most of which came about during and after the World War, there has come a breaking up of the old fixed castes, and today the social system of South America is in solution.16

Even in the 1940s the CCLA continued to stress the importance that protestant missions should give to the middle class. Stanley Rycroft, the Presbyterian missionary who, in 1939, succeeded Samuel Inman as executive secretary of the CCLA, described it as the "backbone of a country". He said that the solution of a democratic society rested,
not on the general improvement of the poor but in the emergence of a middle class.17

Mission criticism of the situation was based both on sociological and theological grounds. The social reasons were threefold: (1) the aristocracy was committed to maintaining the old colonial order; (2) the poor had not the power to introduce social changes; (3) and most important, the people who were going to govern these countries were being left out of all Christian instruction.

Protestant missionaries strongly argued there was no Biblical model for the neglect of the evangelisation of cultured people. Quite the contrary, they contended, it was vital that Christianity should contribute to forming a middle class. One of the findings of the Commission on "Survey and Occupation" at Panama, in 1916, referred to it thus:

The gospel for the modern world is the same that won the scholarly Saul of Tarsus and the slave Onesimus. An outstanding claim on Christianity in every country is that of the depressed classes for evangelisation, for education and for training into their just place in the national and social order. A major contribution of vital religion must always be greatly to accelerate the formation and growth of the middle classes...Equally clamant is the right of an intellectual or other aristocracy to have proffered them Christian faith, hope, and love that will transform them into servants of their generation. The educated upper classes have been ignored until the quite recent past.18

The idea that Christ had some particular affection for the poor was rejected, for, as Browning said, "He was consulted by the rich as well as the poor".19
Another argument for the need of a middle class was that this sector, far from looking on Protestantism as an enemy to their interests, considered it as an instrument to weaken the influence of the traditional ruling classes in society.

The educated classes in Latin America had embraced the liberal ideology that supported the arrival of Protestantism in Latin America. In fact the educational system that Protestantism established on the continent served this section of the population rather more than any other. The system was created with the idea of contributing to forming that middle class that, according to them, Latin America needed. To some Protestant missionaries the educational strategy that Protestantism put into practice had already been reaping fruit. Indeed to E. M. Lee this fact was one of the good results that justified the Protestant educational work:

The changing of even a few lives year by year has amply justified the existence of Protestant schools in Latin lands. But this educational work has to its credit other tangible achievements, such as the forming of an intelligent middle-class, the producing here and there of government leaders who have the spirit of Christian service, the breaking down of religious and social prejudices, the liberalising of communities, and the lifting of the status of women.20

Though there is no doubt that Protestant schools helped to form a middle class, there is no evidence that this class showed much lasting interest in Protestant churches, or that they contributed significantly to the improvement of social values in Latin America. The latter is very unlikely because the nature of the middle class is as a stratum that is
always longing for the standard of living of the upper classes, and as such could hardly contribute to the solution of social problems. Also appearing as a myth was the claim, Stanley Rycroft made, that the middle class, formed in the Protestant schools, came from a background of the poor:

The Protestant faith has made its appeal mostly to the middle and lower classes; very little effective work has been done among either the industrial workers or the intellectual class. One of the greatest contributions of Protestant missions has been in the field of education. Through the schools that have been established, the Evangelical people have been able to educate their children, and the influence of educational work of several decades is now being felt. The children of the former poorer classes have become the professional men, the doctors, lawyers, teachers, businessmen, and government employees of today. It has been said that the Evangelical churches of Latin America are producing their own elite.21

It is known that only the children of wealthy people could pay the expensive fees for tuition that these schools used to charge. Even nowadays the majority of the student population that attends Protestant schools in Latin America continues to be from the upper middle class. Protestant missions fell into the same mistake that the ideologists of the CCLA used to attribute to Roman Catholic Church, namely that the education they offered was to the advantage only of the people economically solvent.22

3. Things that did not appeal to educated people

In their purpose of reaching intellectuals, Protestant missions drew the attention of missionaries to those aspects that could
discourage educated people from accepting Christianity: that is to say, those features of the Christian churches that did not appeal to them. The first thing was the present social composition of Evangelical congregations. At Panama it was reported that educated people were not willing to join congregations made up of people of poor social background. To them to do this would mean to demean themselves:

One of the chief difficulties to be encountered, from the almost universal testimony laid before us proves that many people of the upper classes circles are deterred at the very start from open connection with the evangelical Communions because these are so largely composed of the poor and the uncultured. The fear of losing caste is apparently as great as among the higher classes of India. It is here that strong intellectual leadership is needed to support the spiritual appeal, to nourish and fortify the spiritual impulse which has been awakened.23

Another important item that was frequently mentioned as displeasing to educated people was the use of the term "missionary". We have to bear in mind that at that time Latin American intellectuals had clear misgivings about the interests of the United States in the continent. The nationalist spirit reinforced the traditional identification that Roman Catholic Church made of Protestantism as a basic component of North American culture. This led missions to ponder over how to eliminate any possible external feature that could present Protestantism as alien to Latin American culture. This explains why the Panama Conference changed its original name of "The Latin American Missionary Conference" to that of "Conference on Christian Work in Latin America".24 In addition to this, Protestant missions had
come to understand that this section of society "was proud of their heritage and slow to follow foreign influence".25

A third factor that served to create some hostility of educated people to Protestantism was the aesthetic appearance of Evangelical premises. The humble style of Protestant buildings was a hindrance to winning a class who had been used to praising the religious architecture of the Roman Catholic Church. Inman realised this in his first regional trip in 1917. His report alluded to the need for better Evangelical Church Buildings that draw and do not repel the Latin American. For a visitor, he said, nothing in the world is sadder than a Protestant church: "Wooden benches, dark walls, no pictures, no flowers, no candles".26 In preparation for the Montevideo Congress of 1925, some surveys had reflected this concern. For instance, in answering the question "Why Evangelicals do not register greater progress in these lands" some replied that Protestantism was "held to be hostile to art".27 It is not surprising that this matter was raised in the congress itself. In describing the religious attitude of educated classes, the Report on Unoccupied Fields said they were not used to going to church, and stressed that they would not go even to Protestant churches because they did not believe that they could find any solace in the humble Protestant "conventicles". 28 Webster Browning put it thus:

Accustomed to the ornate interior of Roman Catholic sanctuaries and the ritual droned in an unknown tongue, which calls for very little concentration of thought on the
part of the worshipper, he can but experience a severe mental shock when he enters a Protestant chapel and beholds its bare unattractive walls and listens to a service which is at complete variance with his accustomed psychology.29

The Venezuelan Commission at Montevideo referred to the "the consensus of opinion" among Protestants in Latin America regarding to the need to improve the external appearance of their buildings. "No more tin building that might well serve as stables, no more disused grocery stores" the report said.30 It argued also that the poverty of the worshippers should not be an obstacle to construct buildings in such way as to prevent an unfavorable impression.

The denominationalism that marked Protestantism was also mentioned as another distasteful factor that would prevent educated classes from entering into contact with Protestantism. At Montevideo the Report on Cooperation and Unity described this thus:

South American people are accustomed to the thought of a united Church as presented by the Roman Catholic Church. Great confusion is begotten in the minds of the people by the multiplicity of Evangelical names and organisations. Only as the missionary instils denominationalism into the national does the latter become a sectarian in his thinking. There are, at present, in South America, a large number of thinking people who have separated themselves from the Roman Catholic Church, yet are Christians at heart. The Evangelical churches, with their freedom of thought, their acceptance of modern scientific development and their democracy of government make naturally a strong appeal to this class of people. But when confronted with the necessity of selecting one out of several divisions of the Evangelical church and caring nothing for the historical differences which created those divisions, they are repelled from accepting any of them.31
Finally the nature of the Protestant religious service was mentioned as another factor that made a bad impression upon educated people. The Commission on the Evangelical Churches and the Social Gospel, at Panama, exhorted Protestant preachers to be more careful in the preparation of the worship:

And the preachers should be careful to see that in all formal and public acts of worship there should be great dignity, order, and beauty. Ragged and unprepared services, informal manners in the pulpit, familiar or irreverent tones in prayer, should all be avoided at Sunday services as sedulously as slipshod composition and careless, offhand delivery of sermons. There is a science and an art of worship even among non-liturgical Churches which all too few preachers master, and the absence of this offends the taste, shocks the reverence, and excites the contempt of cultivated people everywhere.32

4. Steps towards reaching the educated classes

The people who in this period reopened interest in the Protestant evangelising of Latin America were determined to influence, one way or another, the educated and intellectual classes. There was the conviction that the Christian Church was doing nothing for them, but also that they had lost all affection for Christianity. Protestantism looked on this attitude as the logical result of past and present behaviour of Christian Churches, especially the Roman Catholic Church. However it is frequently noted that work with these people was anything but easy. It called for careful preparation of a suitable message that responded to their ideals. This is why the Protestant leaders agreed that Protestant efforts of the past in Latin
America had to be assessed critically. To them, even Protestantism had to change its methods and theological basis. Their evaluation of the nature of Protestant missions was that they had dealt mainly with the interests of the poorer classes, and that this had become a hindrance to understanding the importance of dealing with other classes. They considered this a colossal mistake that now must to be amended. The message had to be qualitatively different from that of the past. This reasoning was in every sense logical, if we bear in mind that the intellectual had become par excellence the center of Protestant attention. These leaders thought that, as a principle, educated people needed a different message from that which had been given to the poor classes. At Panama it was argued that the methods of approaching intellectuals had to be different from that which had been applied to the poorer sections of society.33

Protestants believed that their churches were now being challenged to demonstrate that Christianity had the best intellectual ingredients to compete in a positive way with secular philosophical ideas. Protestant work with these people had to be grounded on the idea that Christianity was a superior ideology to that which was driving the intellectuals into materialism and agnosticism. The exponents of Protestantism now stressed in their conferences the more intellectual aspects of Christianity, believing that only through this way would educated people show interest. As the Commission on Literature reported in Panama:
They need not merely a reasoned philosophy which will enable them to see the fallacy of their conclusions, but even more, perhaps, they need vivid and profound spiritual meditations, exhibiting an insight that is in a sense superior to philosophy and that will appeal to their own profound religious instinct.34

Though this approach was not completely novel, it did take a new direction when compared with the approach of the previous generation. Protestantism had shown a special interest in working with the intermediate sections of society, and strengthening its ties with liberals, ever since its arrival in Latin America. Now Protestantism was looking forward to bringing the next generation into its ranks. This new effort was strengthened by the main North American Protestant Missions which had now made up their minds to consider Latin America as a mission field.

The intellectual agitation that Latin America was going through could not tolerate the view that religion should remain distant from all attempts to improve society. Protestant Missions felt compelled to claim that their ideological principles were in accordance with the most progressive ideas of the time. This was not a mere tactical measure, but a matter of conviction. This Protestant thinking had embraced many of the principles of the moderate advocates of Liberal theology in the United States. Bearing in mind this background, the attractive message that was being articulated for the educated people of Latin America becomes clearer.
One of the features of this message was the rejection of the traditional dichotomy that defined secular and sacred principles as categories opposed to each other. The ending of this dichotomy helped to overcome the perception that intellectuals had of Christianity as superstition. This Protestant thinking never accepted that the Church must be far from what was happening in society. The report on The Church in the Field at the Panama Conference expressed this point as follows:

Some such consciousness as this has done much to alienate the cultured Latin from the church. The first step towards winning his attention again to the things of the Spirit will be the destruction of the barrier which exists between the so-called secular and the so-called sacred in education...Christianity will fail in Latin America, as she ought to fail everywhere, if she does not deal, fearlessly and fairly, with the philosophical and scientific problems which vex men's minds and undermine their faith. While an occasion for the charge of obscurantism already brought by the intellectuals against the Roman Catholic leaders must not be permitted to arise by the evangelicals against our schools and churches, yet the convincing apologetic for these people will be transformed lives and self-denying social service adapted to the felt needs of particular communities.35

This principle, a landmark for Reformed theology, provided the basis for Protestants to understand the social implications of the gospel. The breaking of the wall between the sacred and the secular paved the way for this generation to postulate another principle that became a clearcut axiom for Protestantism. That is, that religious life cannot be detached from day to day events. This pragmatic side of Christianity
reflected the vitality that intellectuals wanted to see in religion. Many Protestants believed that past emphasis on the mystical factors of religion had given an impression of Christianity as something weak and ineffective. Browning affirmed this as follows:

The mystical side of Christianity needs but little interpretation. but its application to social and civic problems is a field of discussion into which but few have entered...There is a suggestion, too, that a small group of well trained men who know the language of the people be set aside to go up and down the country, challenging the thought of the intellectual classes through a series of well-prepared addresses and apologetic lectures...In any case, the Christ that must be preached to this class of hearers must be a masculine, virile Christ, not the effeminate, gentle Martyr who is so often represented in the images as beaten and scourged, bedraggled and scoffed at, covered with blood which oozes from thorn prick and sword thrust.36

We notice that in the first three decades of this century some Evangelicals felt that the social work appeal to intellectuals would be also vital for the survival of Protestant work in Latin America. This period was characterised by widespread social unrest, as the continent began to experience the presence of a dynamic revolutionary movement. The influence of the Russian Revolution stirred popular movements in every country of the region. The relevance of Christianity now faced the onslaught of socialist ideas. With regard to this, Baez Camargo, who was an outstanding leader of Mexican Protestantism, argued, in 1932, that the future of the Protestant Church in Latin America lay in its competence to respond to social challenges:

It seems that evangelicalism can only survive and accomplish its real work if it pressures and extends its influence as a church. Only thus can it keep alive the truly
religious spirit and be saved from deteriorating into a social philosophy. Mexico today is menaced by a new paganism, and history shows that whenever paganism and philosophy mingle the former conquerors, but that when religion and paganism meet religion triumphs. The church cannot stand still if does not expand spiritually and encourage its members to bring men into relationship with Jesus Christ, it has no alternative but to develop an exclusive social work.37

The social changes that Latin America was experiencing were competing strongly with a church that hardly reflected any of the features of their own Latin American cultures. All social values there were being rethought by the new ideologies. Principal among these was the character of education. The dogmatism that characterised education during the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century was disappearing. Many Protestant missionaries began to feel that Christian education must be made more open in order to take its place alongside the secular education system. Christian education must include the study of the most controversial issues, even though some of these issues, such as the Theory of Evolution, or the ideas of Auguste Comte, diminished the importance of Christianity. Christian Education must also deal with the highest theological issues that could give prestige to Christianity in the eyes of intellectuals. The Report of the Christian Message and the Educated Classes in the Panama Congress, in 1916 presented this thus:

With these thoughts before us we must now describe the main topics on which the evangelical teacher among the educated classes should be as thoroughly equipped as possible, (1) The Doctrine of Evolution theistically interpreted. The thinking world of Latin America is largely controlled by the idea of evolution. The form in which it has
mainly been presented and gained its hold is that which it has taken in the system of Herbert Spencer, based upon the doctrine of the persistence of force, the Darwinian theory of natural selection. For many the Spencerian philosophy has coalesced with the more humanitarian enthusiasm of August Comte, whose democratic convictions confirmed their rejection of supernatural religion .... And again our Christian apologist must remember that agnosticism was promulgated by Kant, Sir William Hamilton, Victor Cousin and Dean Mansel, not as the destroyer but as the helpmeet of faith...For this purpose he might well pay attention to the Ritschlian movement and its significant history both in Germany and in the English-speaking world....

It is clear that this respect for these philosophical systems was not merely of a theoretical or tactical interest for Protestant Missions. As we have said, Protestant thinkers of this period were influenced deeply by North American Liberal theology. This indeed was an asset in dealing with the cultured classes. Their affinity with progressive ideas helped them to present a more positive impression of religion to educated people. Thus Protestantism was presented as the religion of the new times:

The great names which seem to have ruled the minds of Latin America for the last two generations are those of August Comte, with his system of positive philosophy, Herbert Spencer with his majestic and imposing philosophy of mechanistic evolution, and Jeremy Bentham, whose doctrine of utilitarianism, as applied to legislation and governmental ideals, exercised great influence. As those thinkers systematically treat positive Christianity, and even active belief in God, as irrelevant to the study of mankind and the ordering of society...Naturally, therefore we are presented with a condition almost unique in the modern world, where religion is treated consistently as a superstition of the past which in none of its forms is worthy of the attention of free and educated men.

This approach was to serve two functions. It gave, on the one
hand, positive image to Protestantism as the religion of the new times. On the other hand, it stressed the points which showed it to be completely different from that of the Roman Catholic Church. We cannot ignore the fact that the Protestant effort of this epoch, rather than raising the image of Christianity in general, was interested in showing the virtues of Protestantism as the alternative religion which Latin America was needing. This explains the openness of Christian education as the hallmark of Protestant education; contrasted to Roman Catholic education:

The educational institutions, very naturally, were entirely ecclesiastical in their form of administration and in the courses of study offered, Instruction was dogmatic, there was no liberty of thought, no free study of history, no practical curricula, and the methods used were intimately in accord with those then in vogue in Europe, especially in the countries in which the Holy Office of the Inquisition had secured possession of the educational systems.

Then, as now, the whole purpose of the Church in her educational efforts was to protect the youthful mind from the influence of secular ideas which might disturb the carefully planned programme of enforcing dogmatic belief.  

The other aspect that characterises the encounter of Protestantism with cultured people, was its dealing with the Roman Catholic Church. Though Protestants believed that the Roman Catholic Church should be and would be eventually replaced; this, however, would take place in a natural process, in which social conditions and the progressive character of Protestantism would be the main components.

An open adversarial relationship with the Roman Catholic
Church could no longer be an important instrument of Protestant work in Latin America. These new times demanded that religion assume an ideological rather than apologetic posture. This is because the educated classes, though very critical of the religion in which they were brought up, still had a sentimental attachment to it. The Conference of Montevideo, in 1925, raised this issue in discussing what must be the message of Evangelical Christianity. Comments of the delegates confirmed the new atmosphere of the Protestant Missions: "The days when Protestantism judged that attacking the Roman Catholic Church had some benefits for the propagation of Christianity in Latin America, had gone" "Present circumstances called for a more positive outlook on traditional religion" It is a time to build up and not to tear down". The success of Protestantism could not be built on the destruction of the Roman Catholic Church. This conference underscored this new emphases in Protestant work by pointing out these two features:

(1) It must be warmly and thoroughly evangelical. An Argentinean who would not class himself as a Protestant writes: "Preach, before all and above all, Christ. Specialise around his person, his life, his teachings. The rest of it should come, and will come, as something supplementary. No dogmatisms, nor things contrary to reason..." (2) It must be irenic and constructive. No doubt there was a time when the evangelical missionary was obliged to recur to destructive methods in the presentation of his message. Such men as Trumbull in Chile, Butler in Mexico, Pond in Venezuela, and Thompson in Uruguay and Argentina, felt it necessary in their day to attack the dominant Church with all the power and argument at their command. In some countries this may still be necessary. But in general, what is needed is a constructive message which builds up, rather than tears down. ... It may be necessary to tear down the old to be able to put up the new building, but the object of the tearing down is
not the destruction of the old building; it is the erection of the new one. So it is with the Church. A certain amount of tearing down, of direct, formal attack on Rome is inevitable; but it would be the greatest misfortune for the cause of Christ if the Protestant Church should ever get the idea that her mission is to smash Rome...Protestantism does not live by its fight against Rome. It is not dependent on its fight against Rome. It flourishes most where Rome does not exist.41

Finally the Panama Conference recommended three precise steps to be used to win the attention of the educated classes to Christianity: (1) the publication and circulation of appropriate literature, (2) the selection of competent persons who could attractively state the Evangelical truths; and (3) the establishment at suitable centres of libraries containing a carefully selected and an ever-increasing list of works on religion, philosophy, science and Christian history.42 The suggestions of the conference were carried out. First, the CCLA began to disseminate diverse literature, and especially created a bimonthly Spanish-Language magazine to stir the interest of intellectuals in Christianity. This magazine was called La Nueva Democracia (The New Democracy), and was indeed vital for the work that Protestants wanted to foster among Latin American intellectuals. The magazine was first officially advocated in the annual meeting of the CCLA in 1919 by Samuel Inman and Juan Orts Gonzalez, who were appointed as director and editor.43 Its publication was subsidised by the Inter Church World Movement, a Protestant North American organization, on the ground that it needed a Spanish organ to present their work more properly to Latin Americans.44 The origin of the magazine was also
interpreted by CCLA as an indictment of the Protestant failure to get into touch with the educated classes. It was an experiment to see if through this means such contacts might be made.45

The title of the magazine reflects the oft-mentioned Protestant interest in the power of Christianity to build new social structures. In seeking to explain what led to the choice of the title, the editor argued that neither free commercial enterprise nor economic development were able to remedy the social problems of Latin America. La Nueva Democracia upheld that, in addition to these factors, the future of Latin American democracies was related to the respect held for human beings as individuals, and their relationship with God.46

In line with what the leaders of the CCLA always believed, the magazine sought to demonstrate that it was possible to speak of God in a secular way. The magazine soon ran into trouble with those who hoped to find sermons and direct allusions to Protestant activities in Latin America. At Montevideo the answer to these people was that La Nueva Democracia could not be "a pedagogical review, a political forum, and an Evangelistic tract all in one". The Commission on Literature said that the magazine was not purely religious and that there was no interest in turning it into religious journal:

It is the answer to the desire of the Boards represented in the CCLA for an evangelist to the educated classes of the Spanish countries. It is the only publication in Spanish language that seeks definitely to interpret world events from the Christian standpoint and to discuss present economic, political and social problems of the world on a genuine Christian basis,
showing that religion offers the only adequate solution of these questions.47

At Montevideo it was acknowledged that La Nueva Democracia was meeting the needs for which it was created; that is to say for reaching the educated classes. The Commission on Cooperation and Unity referred to it as the greatest single achievement of the Committee, and how it has long been recognized that such an organ was necessary for the purpose.48

In line with the fear of Protestantism being identified only with the poor circles of society, the annual meeting of the CCLA, in 1938, praised the fact that La Nueva Democracia had proved the opposite. Evangelical Protestantism is not a movement only for the illiterate and intellectually outcast, but is capable of contributing on the highest intellectual and literary level to the solution of the world’s problems: "It is the most far-sighted and ecumenical effort being made today by the Christian church to help guide the Republics of America and Spain.49 For Stanley Rycroft, CCLA successor to Samuel Inman, La Nueva democracia was "a special diet for diplomatists, professionals, and businessmen".50

The second recommendation was fulfilled in two ways. On the one hand Protestant Missions, early on, incorporated Latin American intellectuals in their team. For example the Latin American Mission (LAM), took advantage, in their campaign of evangelisation, of a set of outstanding Latin American preachers. And in addition, as a result of
the concern of the Panama Conference, a permanent team of people was created whose responsibility was to work in intellectual circles. The well known John A. Mackay played an important role in this regard.\textsuperscript{51}

The work with intellectuals was planned not only to keep people with a high level of education within in the Church, but also to win non-Christian people. It was thought that the same logic that had separated intellectuals from Christianity, could also affect the intellectuals that the Protestant Churches already had among their membership. Neglecting the educated people outside the church could result in the loss of those who were already in the Protestant church. Stress was laid on this argument by calling attention to the fact that educated Evangelicals had been dropping away from their Christian convictions because the churches were not meeting their needs. Browning, Presbyterian missionary, interpreted it as happening because of the tendency of the Evangelical bodies to try to transplant Anglo-Saxon styles into Latin American culture. He felt that the root cause was the poor attempt being made by Missions to penetrate "the psychology of the thinking classes, to make due allowance for social distinctions as they exist on the field, or to take into account the high artistic temperament of the educated Latin".\textsuperscript{52}

The Montevideo Congress, at which the work among intellectuals was an important part of its agenda, drew attention to the need for theological schools. It was suggested that only a well educated Protestant ministry could work effectively with educated people. Thus
stress was placed on the importance of solid theological institutions. As Webster Browning, secretary of educational affairs of CCLA, pointed out:

In partial explanation of this lack of approach to the cultured classes it must be said that in past years there has been no faculty of theology corresponding to the faculties of other professions, where young men could receive training for social service. Such a faculty does not yet exist, but may be established as a result of the discussions and resolutions of the Montevideo Congress. The caste spirit which prevails very generally prevents the well-to-do cultured classes from attending evangelical services. These services are adapted to the intellectual capabilities of the often illiterate proletariat and attract such for the most part. Educated persons are thus deprived of the message. Very few have any definite idea of its content or of real Christianity in any form. And yet, many vaguely feel that present conditions can be modified only by a renaissance of Christian faith.

The "Report On Special Religious Problems" drafted largely by John A. Mackay raised particularly the matter of the need for Protestant missions to stress their work among educated people. Since arriving in Peru in 1917, John A. Mackay had felt called to the evangelisation of intellectuals and university students. He believed that in Latin America they were dealing with societies clearly defined by three social classes which he entitled "the highly educated section" "uneducated mixed population" and "the uncultured indians" and he made it clear that it was right to work with first section, "since it is easily the directive and dominant class." Mackay saw that the encounter of the Christian gospel with the needs of this class would challenge the way the message was presented. He spoke of a less religious kind of religion:
"We must develop new forms of evangelism.... Without the use of liturgy or trapping, our simple message would be that religion is a life and that the gospel gives power.55

The Montevideo Congress was indeed seen as an opportunity to show intellectuals that Protestantism was not the sort of religion that they used to reject in Latin America. Some of these intellectuals, though not connected with Protestant churches, were invited to take part in the event. Their presence was described as one the most interesting things of the Montevideo Congress.56 Inman later interpreted this gesture of inviting non Protestants to a Protestant congress as evidence that the Protestantism that the United States was promoting in Latin America " was being conducted in a way approved by the people of South America".57

5. The poor as an obstacle

While the Protestant missions were making educated people of the middle classes the centre of their theological and missionary concern, the poorer classes were referred to derisorily. Along with the emphasis on the virtues of the former, went a despising of the poor by the Protestant leadership. On a social level any promising future for the poor hinged, according to this thinking, on their consolidation into a middle class. In religious terms the poor were, at times, presented as an obstacle to Protestant missionary work.

In accord with the liberal outlook on the poor, missionary
literature of this epoch hardly recognised that the suffering of the poor was in any way a result of the ill treatment that they were subjected to by the dominant classes. On the contrary, the poor were depicted as a class beyond redemption, as far as the improvement of society was concerned. The future of the Latin American countries was not seen to be in the amelioration of the poor but in the creation of a middle class. Protestant missions openly declared this. They pointed out clearly that the greatest obstacle to improvement of the political life of South America was the absence of a middle class. To Protestants the poor were, above all, victims of moral decay rather than of an unjust social system. The Report on Women at the Panama Conference, in 1916, made it clear that the "cruellest burden that falls most heavily on the poor's back was the burden of illegitimacy, brought about by the lack of any high standard of male chastity". In the same vein the poor, not the rich or the intellectual, epitomised the lowest level of morality in society:

There is but little drinking among business and professional men, except in the social clubs or the home...The Latin of the upper class generally limits his drinking to light wines and beer, and seldom, except as taught by foreigners, indulges in strongly spirituous beverages. Consequently, although much liquor may be consumed, it does not produce that degree of drunkenness which characterised so many of our citizens in the days when the saloon was tolerated. On the other hand, drunkenness among the laboring classes, in some of the countries, is very prevalent and tells heavily on the social and economic life of the people.

Given this outlook on the poor, Protestant missionaries viewed success not in terms of enlarging their membership, but in
the ability to influence social groups that could build democratic institutions in Latin America. The best indication of the advance of the Christian churches would be the presence of these progressive people. Thus a church with large membership, but composed mainly of poor people, was not looked on as a good thing in itself. On the contrary, this was a sign that something in Protestant Christian work was going wrong. It was in this way that Protestant missionaries assessed the fact that most of the Roman Catholic faithful came from a poor social background. The presence only of the poor in the Christian Church could not guarantee any social or religious progress. In referring to Bolivia, Browning and Grubb, in 1932, pointed out, as a disadvantage to the Roman Catholic Church, that "the class of boy entering the seminaries to prepare for the priesthood is now so poor".60

Even Protestant efforts of the past carried out in Latin America were criticised for being largely limited to the poor. Some writers were indeed displeased that Protestantism was winning a foothold only in circles of the poor in Latin America. The case of Chile, for example, where the poor found in Protestantism some sort of answer to their needs, was not seen as representing progress. Protestants, at large, were unhappy that Protestantism in Chile had become so definitely associated with the poorer classes. It was thought that because of their social composition, these Protestant churches had little to contribute to the lifting of society.

It is evident that the CCLA at Montevideo wanted to challenge
mission leaders to demonstrate that their message and work was suitable not only for the poor classes. In doing so the organisers were critical of the fact that Protestant churches were made up largely of poor people. The Report on Unoccupied Fields said that Protestantism, "with rare exceptions, is reaching the humble classes". It went further to say that the membership of Protestant congregations were in "the immense majority uneducated and lacking in social importance".61

This commission indicated the presence of some non Protestant intellectuals at the Conference could not be read as an indication that disproved their criticisms. This was seen only as a sign of a "slight contact", which had been made not through the work of Protestant churches, but "through literary communication" and the "personal friendship of Evangelical ministers and educationalists, in whose attainments and achievements has been discovered a common ground of intellectual interest and mutual appreciation.62

Chile was presented as an example where educated classes would have to lower themselves to join Protestant ranks. The Chile Commission at Montevideo put it thus:

Our pastors and their people are not wielding the public influence which they ought to have. They have not the leadership which they ought to possess. They are not prominent in the intellectual life of the community. It is a pity that Evangelical churches do not have workers better prepared intellectually.... The people who attend are mostly of the poor. Many hesitate to have their friends see them in such associations. To break with the dearest association of the past and enter a service so humble requires great sacrifice. Nor it is easy for a strong self-respecting man to enter a service so humble requires a great service. Nor it is easy for a
self-respecting man to enter the ministry under conditions which seem to him unjust and humiliating, which deny him the freedom of other educated men and consign him to poverty. The proper remedy for these conditions is not by any immediate change in social ideals and customs, but first by the appropriate attitude of the missionary and then by the provision of trained pulpit leadership.63

The Commission on Unoccupied Fields sought to soften the strong remarks on the progress that Protestantism had made among the poorer sectors in Latin America, by saying that what they were criticising were the methods so far used and nothing else. It made clear that they were not implying "that any social rank, much less that of the unlettered laboring classes, is regarded as of inferior significance and worth" because all humans being were alike the children of God.64 Yet what the Congress of Montevideo managed to achieve was to make delegates feel that the poor composition of Protestant churches was indeed something abnormal. This was expressed in the discussion of the report of the commission, in which a group of Chilean pastors read a statement whereby they denied as true that the membership of the Evangelical churches was, in large measure, uneducated and lacking in social understanding and activity.65

The mood at Montevideo was indeed one of understanding and sympathy for the classes that, in the eyes of most delegates, were deciding the fate of these nations. Yet there were warnings that Protestantism were going too far with this. In the discussion of the report of John A Mackay, John Ritchie, of the Evangelical Union of
South America, (EUSA) criticised this relationship. Ritchie and other missionaries believed that the religious interests of intellectuals was being overstated. He saw that those notable South Americans intellectuals that Protestant missionaries were flirting with "were notoriously unbelievers" and that they were not only opposed to the Christian Church but also hostile to it. Alvaro Reis, a Presbyterian of Brazil, was also not pleased with it. For him churches were doing a better job than those such as YMCA, which had been working among intellectuals and students, and which, in his view, were "reluctant to use the Bible and to encourage prayer and worship."

Samuel Inman later indicated that there were grave doubts among some Protestants for the way the question of relations with intellectuals had been addressed at Montevideo. The report of John A Mackay which advocated the need for the presentation of a Christian message in the least possible religious way was not acceptable to them. Expressions such as "a conferencia sin culto" (conference without worship), and the omission of the accompanying Protestant ritual of the Bible in reading, singing, and prayer were regarded as "selling out". Yet these criticisms did not deter the general trend among missionaries who continued seeing, as vital for Protestantism, contact with the educated classes in Latin America. This can be seen in the series of books on Latin American Protestantism that in the 1930s were written under the auspices of World Dominion Press. For instance in the book which Webster Browning wrote together with Kenneth
Grubb, of World Dominion Press, in 1930:

Probably the greatest problem before the evangelical workers in Chile to-day, as it is the greatest in all Latin America, is the discovery and proper training of Christian leaders. The mission has been largely content, in the past, to work among the more humble classes of societies, and leaders who have been developed have belonged to these classes. As a consequence, there are no national preachers who are in the position, socially, or intellectually, to appeal to the influential classes of society, the professional men and women and members of the legislative bodies. This is not a criticism of those splendid workers, but merely a statement of a well-known and lamentable fact.69

Given that the poor people were not looked on as the best field for the work of missions, Protestantism increasingly directed all its efforts towards a social minority. Even for Christian work they were an obstacle because their poverty was linked to their superstitious beliefs. The composition of the populace, as Kenneth Grubb said, referring to the work in Ecuador, has not favoured the progress of the work. On the coast a dull indifference, and in the sierra the fanaticism and prejudice of the Indian masses have added to the weight of national inertia which it has proved hard to withstand.70

When these authors spoke about the effects of the presence of the poor in the Church, they did not mean that the presence of the poor within Protestant churches was pointless. The writers acknowledged that the men who occupied the pulpits had done and were doing good work. The only drawback was that their work had been largely limited to the poorer classes from which they themselves have sprung. This problem was blamed largely on missions. For they
have not shown enough concern for the education of the people so far drawn to the Protestant churches.71

If we take into account the marked interest that Protestant missions now showed for gaining the educated people, it is not surprising that the presence of the poor came to be seen as a hindrance. This reality brought out the fact that Protestant churches had not qualified people to work with the intellectuals. This being so, the church lost all attraction for them, as Webster Browning and Kenneth Grubb pointed in 1930:

I believe that one explanation of our lack of progress is to be found in our moral standing in the community, and others have left for the same reasons. There are very few who work to bring others to a knowledge of Christ...We produce good administrators, but poor propagandists ... Another explanation is to be found in the fact that our ministries are in many ways deficient. This is due to the old system according to which it was believed that a shoemaker or any other workman could be taken, and, with but little preparation, turned into a preacher. We now recognise the enormity of that error.... The church has lowered its standing as to quality...Those who attended the services are simple people, of the lower classes, and of but scant education. Those who are mere intellectuals have left the Church because they found nothing in the sermons to satisfy their intellectual craving...72

Though Speer, Inman, Browning and other Protestant missionary leaders, who inspired the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America until the 1950s, stressed the need for winning the educated and middle classes, this did not mean that they were unaware of the danger of alienating the poorer classes. This had been one the gravest mistakes that they always attributed to the Roman Catholic
Church. In his visit to Latin America in 1917, as executive secretary of the CCLA, Inman told that he was surprised at seeing how the working classes were abandoning their church "and drifting into socialism". In the twenties Protestants drew attention to how in Brazil and Chile trade unions were opposed to the Roman Catholic Church. However, Protestants did not think that their view of the educated classes could, in any way, be compared to the political conservatism of the Roman Catholic Church. The Latin American intellectuals that they had targeted were those progressive sectors that, in their view, wanted to rebuild Latin America on more just grounds. These sectors were seen as the only solution to the problems of poor majorities of Latin America. In thinking this way, Protestant missionaries ignored that the suffering of working classes had been prompted by the modern political structures that these liberals elites had introduced after the demise of colonial structures. In other terms, poorer sectors of society, unlike Protestant missionaries, did not believe that, these elites were going to improve their social conditions. Popular sector began to fight liberal governments in the twenties. Against this background it is no surprise that Protestant missions began to be seen by popular organisation in the same way as they saw the Roman Catholic Church. At Montevideo, for instance, the commission that reported on Brazil informed that there "labor organisations whether those created by Roman Catholic agencies or those led by anarchist leaders "were usually against Protestantism". The report admitted that the people
organised by "social reformers" were, for Protestant churches, "the most difficult group to reach".75 It was said, not surprisingly at all, that popular organisations in Chile distrusted Protestantism, where radical socialists, according the report, looked on it "as an exploiter".76 So there was real reason to think, as Browning warned in 1926, that Protestantism must avoid falling into the mistake that Roman Catholicism in Latin America and Protestantism in North America had fallen, namely of alienating the working classes:

For reasons that the Roman Church itself has to explain, the labouring classes, almost universally, have looked on it as leagued with the government and the moneyed classes, and labor demonstrations very often flaunt banners which reflect their hatred of things religious...It might be said that the Roman Church is making the mistake it has made in Europe and that Protestantism seems to be now making in the United States. It has leagued itself with the capitalist and middle man to the neglect of the industrial classes who will in all probability be in power, and church that throws in its lot with them today, will then be able to Christianize society as it could not otherwise do. Rome is learning this lesson in the United States. Will Protestantism learn it in Latin America?.77

6. Protestantism as a progressive religion

The starting point of the strategists who advocated the relaunching of the Protestant cause towards Latin America through the work of the CCLA was that they considered Protestantism to be the progressive religion that the new times called for. This was to be the recurrent argument in the discussions during and after the Panama Conference of 1916. At that time the social implications of
the gospel theoretically challenged the Protestantism of that day to develop a commitment to the whole range of life in Latin America. Therefore the promotion of moral and political reforms not only was one of the badges of Protestantism, but also a feature of a Christianity that was "largely foreign to Latin psychology." To fail to respond to this would mean to fall into the same mistake as the Roman Catholic Church, which due to its dogmatic and abstract character had been aloof to social change. Protestantism must show a completely different face. The Conference in Montevideo made it clear that Protestantism must reinterpret Christian principles stressing their social values:

It must present the social implications of the gospel. The purely mystical side of Christianity has been preached and taught for centuries in Latin America, but has not given results in the development of character. The interpretation that is needed today is that of a virile Christ, a man among men as well as divine, who can take hold on life and turn it into new and cleaner channels. Whoever comes to South America with the intention of furthering the interest of dogmatism, or of propagating theological controversy, will meet with failure. Those questions do not interest South American youth, and, in my opinion, have ceased to interest the whole Latin race. And here is presented the great opportunity for those who have full faith in the regenerating power of the social message of the gospel. If there is anything that has really interested these last two generations in South America, from the Christian point of view, it has been the works of Tolstoy. If there is anything today in the Anglo-Saxon countries which can interest the young men here, when they become acquainted with it, it is without doubt the point of view of men like Rauschenbush.

This explains the perceptions of those Protestants who
believed that their religion had advantages over the Roman Catholic Church. While the former were interested in the real problems of people, the latter demanded "as the price of its ministrations, merely an intellectual assent to its doctrines rather than a life which shows that the heart is right with God".80

With this approach the advocates of this new Protestant offensive put under the fire of criticism not only the Roman Catholic Church, but also the efforts made so far by Protestant missions. These efforts, according to Browning, had fallen into the same mistake of putting excessive emphasis on theology instead of on life.81 In a clear allusion to Protestant work Browning said that what is now needed in Latin America is not so much the further dissemination of the Bible as a mere book, as the incorporation of its principles in the lives of its readers.82

The people of the CCLA were persuaded that the time had already arrived when the Christian Church must be judged by its fruits in society, and not by the validity of her set of creeds. At Panama the Commission on Survey and Occupation put it thus:

What was planted in the colonial days is being reaped. The new planting and the new harvest will be subject to the same law. The good seed are the children of the Kingdom. Then let only the choicest find their way to lands where name and form without the substance have dulled the scene of multitudes to every manifestation of religion except luminous reality. Evangelical Christianity must expect to be sternly judged by its fruits.83
To these people the presentation of Protestantism as a progressive and positive religion was not only a theoretical discussion but an essential policy. They believed that Protestantism had been the driving force behind the social progress of Protestant countries. The idea behind this argument was that the progress of nations was not the result only of social factors but especially of the role played by Protestantism. Therefore Protestant missions at this time believed that in Latin America history could repeat itself if the Protestant religion succeeded in influencing social institutions. In this way of thinking, the triumph of Protestantism, as a religion, would help to determine the social development of Latin American countries. This sort of religion was one which people, even the Roman Catholic faithful, were looking forward to. In this sense Protestantism would be welcome because of its interest in social reform. One of the findings of the Commission on Cooperation and Unity, at Panama, drew attention to it thus:

There are many individuals now in the Roman Catholic Church, or in a hereditary way affiliated with it, who believe that there is a valuable message for Latin America which can come through the evangelical Church, and there will be found cooperation on the part of many who, though still holding the faith in which they have been trained, count it not fully adequate to the awakening life and pressing needs of Latin America, and who are prepared, therefore, to give this new message a hearty welcome. They believe that especially in matters of civic reform and of social betterment there is large opportunity for a union of all who have supremely at heart the good of the nation... And it would seem wise that, in the prosecution of constructive and definite plans, workers should not be diverted to attacks upon, and controversy with, other forms of faith.84
All along the virtues of Protestantism were described as forces that promote dissatisfaction with, and a desire to improve existing social and financial conditions. An article "A good dissatisfaction" written, in 1912, by Edward. Haymaker, of the Presbyterian Mission in Guatemala, reflected this idea:

There are circumstances of misery caused by desperation, negligence, idleness, and ignorance. There are others that come as a result of the natural, social, and providential conditions that surround us, and which we are impotent to change. To be happy with this latter is a virtue but to be content with the former is a crime. The Evangelical Church is proud that her membership does not feel pleased to live in only one room when they might have two; to sleep miserably on the ground as dogs and pigs, when through their effort and honest work they can earn the money to buy a bed; to suffer the sad result of a vicious life, when they can live without it and enjoy a sound and clean life, to violate the most essential laws of hygiene and to suffer sickness, when it can be avoided if they respect such laws. In fact we foster dissatisfaction but it is a holy dissatisfaction, which is the mother of effort, industry, cleaning, salubrity and of a noble ambition.85

Missionaries did not spare themselves in efforts to compare the development of nations under the sway of Protestantism in contrast to those under Roman Catholic influence. Protestant literature is riddled with romantic and idealistic examples such as that of Paul Burgess, of the Presbyterian Mission in Guatemala, called, "Protestant Civilisation and the Fruits of Romanism" in 1928.

People who have travelled to Europe tell "We had the good
fortune to travel to Switzerland, one of the first Protestants countries of the world, and I cannot but offer my tribute of admiration for that virile people. There, jails have been empty for years... And as a natural result this situation enlarges the ideals, determines progress, multiplies wealth and enlarges civilisation". What we say of this model nation can also be said with regard to the United States, Germany, Holland, Denmark and Sweden. Their morality is superior to that of Roman Catholic countries, and as a real result, their wealth and progress is superior as well... Would Guatemala compare its morality, progress and civilisation with that of the United States? When I express this with a broken heart I wish that my country were the first in the world, but reality is contrary to my wishes. We cannot get away from that sad fact that as a result of Romanism a low level of morality overwhelms us, and that can only be destroyed with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.86

To writers such as Webster Browning, this process was under way. There were already signals that Protestantism was becoming "a greater social power". The contribution of Protestant hospitals and schools, together with other social activities, were signs that Protestantism was on the right track. Protestant involvement in social action, in his view, did not diminish nor lower its strictly evangelical standard. It rather would make its success greater.87

The practice of making comparisons between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism with regard to their effects on society was used to stress the good things of Protestant nations and to underline the defects of those under Roman Catholic influence. Furthermore, Protestant missionaries made the same efforts to emphasise the positive aspects of Protestant religion even within Roman Catholic countries.
One of the writers who stressed this practical side of Protestant Christianity was Dr. Stanley Rycroft. To this author there was a clear distinction between religion and faith. He saw Protestantism as a faith and Roman Catholicism as a religion. Faith had to do with the application of Christianity to social life; religion was only interested in challenging people to experience God at an intellectual and dogmatic level. Rycroft strongly asserted that what Latin America needed, was not more religion, but more faith and truly abundant life.88

The result of the work of the Roman Catholic church among the Latin American Indians was a clear example of the promotion of a religion instead of a faith. In Panama the delegates never got tired of repeating that religion in the Roman Catholic version became an oppressive force instead of leading to human betterment and social uplift. The Indian "is continually impoverished or in debt because of the many fiestas or on account of the demands made on him by the church".89 Rycroft put this in clear terms when he said that Christianity among Indians far from being a redemptive force and an uplifting, transforming power in the lives of the Indians, has exercised a stultifying and even a degrading influence.90

The advocates of this new Protestant effort were very concerned with the changes that Latin America was experiencing at all levels. On that ground they strongly believed that Christianity
had something to say in regard to this. They went further in saying that the fulfilling of the aspirations of Latin American people was connected with the sort of religion they would experience. In this regard Browning said that the future of Latin America lay in the application of the Protestant Gospel:

With this new vision has grown the conviction in the minds of multitudes that the golden days of Latin American Christianity lie ahead in a fresh reception and general diffusion of the pure gospel of the living Christ, and a progressive application of that gospel's dynamic principles to the expanding life of the republics— the conviction that Latin America's capacity is commensurate with her need for such new experience and manifestation of Christianity as will make her confederated democracies a powerful, creative factor in the new world civilisation.91

This progressive religion that the CCLA promoted never took off in Latin America. Rather it was the opposite kind of Protestant thinking that took root. Generally speaking it was a Protestantism interested mainly in promoting evangelisation and enlarging the churches than in paying heed to what was really happening in society. This explains the extent of the difficulty that Protestant churches had in dealing with the revolutionary situation that faced the region after the 1960s.

It must be admitted that the social dimension of liberal theology represented an important stimulus to the Church to be involved in social issues. In practice, however, this was never experienced by the ordinary Protestant believers and missionaries in Latin America. On the whole, as far as social interests were
concerned, in Latin America there was little difference between those who felt some identification with liberal principles and those who arrived inspired by theological fundamentalism.

In Protestant eyes the strongest evidence that denied any positive role of the Roman Catholic Church in society was her colonial past. The four centuries of Roman Catholic presence without major social change was the argument used by Protestant missions that Catholicism had failed to answer the needs of the people of Latin America. In this period we find a constant attempt on the part of Protestants to blame the Roman Catholic Church for her role during the colonial period. Her justification of the treatment that Latin America suffered was the main factor that discredited her religious pretension in Latin America. "The priest along with the soldier and the miser, said Charles W. Dress, a Baptist missionary, composed the trilogy that caused so much harm to Latin America" He went on to say:

The Roman Catholic religion, or its representatives, must be held responsible for the conditions which people have grown up under its tutelage during a period of nearly 400 years. The Christianity of South America is of Roman type...That its influence has been unfavorable to the diffusion of the blessings of civilisation, of general intelligence and of high moral ideals would be evident upon a most superficial survey of the facts. From the standpoint of the missionary enterprise much might be said as to the facts manifest upon the surface of social, civil and religious life in South America.92
Protestant writers stressed the fact that the churchmen who accompanied the conquerors were not only actuated by the longing for gold, but gave legal and theological justification to the claims of Spain to conquer the New World:

History records no outrages surpassing those committed by the brutal soldiery of Spain in the Conquest of the New World. And, although the Church took an active part in this conquest, its representatives, with but marked exceptions, not only did nothing to prevent the scenes of outrage and rapine, but stood ever ready to shrive and speed with its blessing all those of the invading hosts who might fall in battle or in private brawls.93

To them if the conquest and colonisation of Latin America was somewhat evil, then that was due to the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. Grubb insisted that far from contributing to the uplift of the masses, the clergy had too often combined with the local authorities to exploit the people.94 The report of the CCLA on the Indian situation made clear that religion did not bring redemption to them.

Religion has not brought redemption to the Indian, human betterment, social uplift, and an abundant life. It means that he is kept in subjection and ignorance. He is continually impoverished or in debt because of the many fiestas or an account of the demands made on him by the church. "religion is very far from being supplied gratis in Peru" says Moises Saenz.95

This legacy of the Roman Catholic Church had become one of the major hindrances to the transmission of a good image of Christianity. As a member of CAM put it: Because of the treatment the
Indians have received during upwards of four centuries at the hands of the white man, and especially at the hands of Rome, it is admitted that it is not easy to gain their confidence.96

Therefore the Protestant Church in its approach felt that it was necessary to select the most suitable message and the best way of presenting it. Protestant religion did not have a doubtful past among the Latin American Indians. Not being responsible for that past, it was thought that the road for Protestantism was being opened and paved. They held the best religious card for Indians, enhanced by their interest in the social problems of the continent.

However because of that past Protestantism had to deal with the misgivings of population. Dr. Clark in assessing the religious and commercial opportunity which Latin America presented, made the point that they had inevitably to deal with the prejudice that the population had with regard to Christianity. He put this in these terms:

The greatest handicap of South America, however, in comparison with North America, has come from the character and actuating motives of her first European occupants and, and it takes a continent many a century to overcome the wrong bias given by the original settlers. "Gold, gold, gold, Hard and yellow, bright and cold" brought the first settlers to the shores of South America. The religious motive, when present, was largely overlaid with the desire for conquest and riches, and was often a cloak for the most horrible atrocities... This quotation is only one of hundreds that might be made from the history of South America to show the perfidious and utterly inhuman way in which religion was made the handmaid of cruelty, treachery and avarice. South America had no Mayflower, she had no Plymouth Rock, and in these two facts can be summed up largely the difference between the two halves of
America...The character of the great public men of the two continents has been another determining factor in the civilisation of North and South America. North America has had Franklin, Washington, Lincoln...South America has had Pizarro, Almagro, and Bolivar, and many smaller adventurers of the same type, whose selfish lust for gold and power has cursed the land in the early days of European occupation.97

Even theologically conservative missionaries argued that Protestantism was par-excellence a progressive religion. Church Historian Dr.Wilton M. Nelson used this argument to contradict the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church which said that "no greater evil has ever befallen Latin America than the arrival of the agents of Luther, Calvin, and Henry VIII, who are pictured as monsters of iniquity or pathological cases".98 To him this outlook on Protestantism was completely wrong as it did not take into account the progressive spirit of protestantism in social terms. He had devoted more than three decades as a missionary in Costa Rica, and considered that the virtues that made Costa Rica different from the other countries of Central America were precisely the contribution of Protestantism during the 19th century. He presented this idea in his doctoral thesis published in 1963 thus:

A careful study by a Costa Rican of the economy and cultural history of his country during the nineteenth century would provide some surprising contradictions to this propaganda dinned into his ears from childhood. All Costa Rican historians are agreed that during the Colonial Period and the early part of her history as an independent nation, Costa Rica was miserably and poorly backward... In a short time she was changed into a prosperous, progressive and cultured
nation...Among the factors which produced this remarkable change, one of the most important was the coming of Protestants to Costa Rica.99

Though historical evidence does not support this argument in quite the way the author claimed, it should be seen in the context of presenting Protestant religion as superior to that of the Roman Catholic Church. We notice that this argument still appeared in the Spanish version of his thesis in 1983, although at that time Costa Rican historians were disavowing this kind of assertion. The author again in an apologetic spirit compared the arrival of the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century to that of the Protestants three centuries later:

The Spaniards had been enervated and lacking a sense of development brought about by a decaying and perverted form of Christianity, while the Europeans that arrived in Costa Rica in the 19th century were imbued with a trustful and enterprising spirit that produced the way of living and thinking of Protestantism. Protestantism is not "the opium of the people" but a transforming power, a sort of Christianity that "sanctifies the common life", by teaching that religion is not merely something practised within the walls of the church or monastery but also in the workshop, the factory, the school, following the advice of Saint Paul: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Cor.10:31).100

Nelson wanted to show that Protestantism was the cause of the social progress; however, what is manifested in his argument is that the origin of the Capitalism in Costa Rica had clear connections with Protestants immigrants. It is known that the founding of the national bank and opening of the country to international commerce in the
19th century were linked with Protestant business people. Nevertheless Dr Nelson, sharing the indifference of missionaries for understanding the functioning of society, too easily confused the origins of Capitalism in Costa Rica with the contribution of Protestantism.\textsuperscript{101}

The foregoing was not the only way in which Missions demonstrated the advantages of Protestantism for any society. In this period Protestantism was also presented as a helpful force to those who were working for the solution of the social problems of Latin America. However it does not mean that Missions understood these problems as the result of structural changes in these countries. When Missions talked about social change they would claim that it would come from a transformation in the morality of its people. Society, to them, was interpreted as something not more that the sum of individuals, and not the interrelation and conflict of structures of power. That is to say, if individuals changed their morals, this in turn would change society. In this way of looking at things, Missions could demonstrate that the simple fact of being Protestant would have good social effects. In 1914, Edward Haymaker, a North American Presbyterian missionary illustrated this principle with a parable that he called "The Two Peoples". This is a description of the behaviour of two different peoples in the same country but with different religions. The first part of it, portrays those whose lives are under the sway of Protestantism thus:
In the first, the population led by an altruistic and moderate spirit was dedicated to live in peace and progress. They put marriage as the natural base of the Christian family and banned all abuse against it. They abandoned alcoholism seeing that it was one of the main roots of criminality. With this emendation, murder and quarrels disappeared. Men became industrious, women kind, and homes became hygienic and well furnished...The citizens were interested in the public good, not by compulsion but by their own will...The lawyers had to look for another job because there were no quarrels anymore. For lacking of criminals, jails were closed... There, education and science were cultivated and flourished. Everywhere was heard the hymn to labour...In hundreds of factories there was heard the buzzing of the textile mill, the psalm of the industry...And everyone who passed uttered in admiration: what a happy people; what a happy people.102

The second part describes those who turned down living as Protestantism teaches and was put thus:

The other people in the same country, with same race, same weather, in similar circumstances, but ruled by a selfish spirit, sacrificed their future to supply the excesses of the day by submitting to the most animal passions and left aside their virtue and corrupted their chastity...Due to alcoholism the population invested their days in villainy and quarrels, and their nights in disgraceful acts and drunkenness. No serious industry succeeded, whether from lacking of an enterprising spirit or the lack of formal workers.... Individualism was rife because cooperation was impossible due to general suspicion. Every individual was enemy of the entire society .... Nobody wanted to feel sympathy for those who had the difficult task of governing. They were complaining of the law, mail, military men, police. The sound of industry could not be heard because there was no industry. The work was reduced to that of the miserable efforts made by the slaves of extreme necessity. The streets were dirty and smelly because they were not brushed...The streets were riddled with unhappy funeral processions. In commerce inertia reigned and public and social ideals became more and more monstrous. Everyone who passed by there sadly said: "What unhappy people" "they do not have peace".103
The moral of this parable is that the good society hinges on the transformation of its individuals unrelated to any social movement. Haymaker concluded the parable thus:

Dear reader all difference between this hell and that paradise is reduced not to politics, political parties, race, weather, laws, rulers, etc, but to a more fundamental thing, whose acceptance or rejection is within the free will of every country or individual. The former people chose the altruistic principles and the teachings of the Gospel. The latter turned them down.104

In this attempt to show the social usefulness of religion, missionaries again compared their religion to that of the Roman Catholic Church. They emphasised the democratic character of Protestantism in contrast to the dictatorial features that the Roman Catholic Church epitomised. To Stanley Rycroft, Presbyterian missionary, for instance, it was beyond doubt that the closeness and loyalty of the Catholic Church to the military forces was evidence of this.105 He accentuated the inability of the Roman Catholic Church, to cultivate the democratic values that the new times was requiring in Latin America. Beside this, the hierarchical system of the church was incompatible with democratic principles:

An authoritarian, hierarchical religion conditions a people to the inequalities of the class system, to a stratified society with its injustices and handicaps, and to a lack of initiative and obligation in civic affairs. We find a ray of hope in the fact that, unprepared as they were for political independence and for democracy involving individual freedom and responsibilities the Latin America people have shown repeatedly their desire for and love of freedom.106
On the other hand the Roman Catholic Church had lost the likelihood of having the least hold on the labouring classes because of its identification with the conservative ideals. On this Rycroft, quoting Patee, argued that for this reason, many faithful were leaving their church:

One reason the majority have drifted away, is because the Roman catholic Church has been too long tied to the conservative, landowning group, which is equivalent to saying the conservative political parties. The landowners (latifundistas) have done much harm to the Roman Catholic Church by being closely related to it, not for any spiritual reason, but because they believed the church stood for stability in the social order, which means the status quo. Some outstanding churchmen have been eager to break this pattern and to let the people see that the church is on the side of social justice.107

Webster Browning and Kenneth Grubb made this same point years later when they said that the poorer classes had been neglected by the Roman Catholic Church. Her affinity to and service of the interests of the wealthy and aristocratic classes caused her spiritual influence to be greatly attenuated.108 On the other hand, these authors believed there were not only theological but also sociological reasons to think that Protestant religion was synonymous with democracy. The fact that Protestantism had its roots in the Reformation showed its democratic character. To Rycroft the main ingredients of which a free society was composed are to be found in the Reformation, namely, the priesthood
of all believers, justification by faith, the right of private interpretation, and the authority of the word of God.109

Liberal politicians shared this impression insofar as they believed that the progress of Protestant nations resided in the role played by its religion. It was commonplace to hear from Liberal authors such as Sarmiento that "the Bible fertilised the roots of democracy".110 Indeed the ideologists of the CCLA had the impression that the Reformation was fundamentally a revolutionary factor in the history of Christianity. The movement had affected not only the course of the Christian Church but also of society in general. In the context of Latin America these authors were convinced that a Church that put into practice the principles of the Reformation would contribute to the bringing of justice and development to the continent. Rycroft, one of the greatest advocates of the social benefits of Protestantism, put it in these terms:

The question of individual liberties and rights as over against on external authority is of tremendous importance in any country, but particularly is it an issue in Latin America...The Reformation questioned, challenged, and broke away from the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and emphasised the dignity and rights of the individual, a cleavage that proved to be revolutionary in the social and political development of the northern countries of Europe and later of the United States.111

Contrary to this, the Roman Catholic Church not only rejected the movement that gave rise to the Reformation but also responded with a repressive instrument that was the embodiment of an
anti-democratic spirit, the Inquisition. Protestants thought that therein lies the root cause that made people, committed to the promotion of social change, distrust the Roman Catholic Church. The Commission on Survey and Occupation said:

The Roman Catholic Church in Latin America profited little from the Reformation, being the projection of national bodies that reacted from the prospect of religious freedom to the excesses of the Inquisition.... Most of the clergy languish in the conception of the Middle Ages.... So thinking men are without any programme to point the way for them to be at once Christians and yet true to the laws of the mind and to the accepted facts of modern knowledge with which their best institutions of higher learning are abreast.112

Protestants looked on social action as an integral part of the Christian message. They went even further to assert that there was an outstanding responsibility on evangelical enterprise for the inculcation of social ideals "to counteract dictatorship".113 Sadly this kind of Protestant interest in social issues which we have described before, became merely a theoretical and rhetorical matter. In practice Protestant missions reduced their message to talking about the issues only in a spiritual and religious sense. What gave rise to this was the fact that Protestant missions saw social progress coming as a result of the replacement of the influence of Roman Catholic Church, and not as a product of real political change at a structural level. In accordance with this, people could achieve democracy just by turning Protestant. That Protestant missionaries read the history of their own countries in this way we see in Paul Burgess:
The Evangelical Churches reject the popery system and govern themselves according to the old practices of true Christian churches. Individuals and people who aspire to be democrats cannot accept a church which is antidemocratic. To be democratic in politics and autocratic in religion is an inconsistency that produces sad perturbations. Why do democratic ideas hardly take root among Latin Americans, while in the United States they have had much success? Those settlers that arrived in the United States came from Evangelical churches where they had the most complete spiritual freedom that was applied to the political and social sphere. Thus they founded the first nation which in its Charter promulgated complete separation between the Church and the State. On the other hand the countries which were under the influence of Romanism had not achieved any civilising conquest without fighting first against clerical opposition... The incompatibility of Roman Catholic beliefs with democratic principles has made many people give up every kind of interest in religion and get into incredulity.\[114\]

This manner of speaking on social issues, such as democracy and dictatorship could hardly be understandable language for Latin American people who were longing to see democracy in real terms in their society. It was typical of the Protestantism that arrived in Latin America to talk in this way. E. Haymaker showed this in 1947 when he referred to the turn that the Synod of the Evangelical Church in Guatemala was taking. He rejected the influence that the American leaders of the Synod wanted to have on doctrinal matters. He saw this as an expression of imperialism and a negation of democracy. He put it thus:

Democracy says a man is sovereign in his own home, limited only by voluntary outside social agreements; but imperialism claims absolute, god-given authority on only occurring cause on pain of accusation of insubordination or even eternal condemnation .... Democracy says the Presbytery is the
fundamental ecclesiastical unit. But an imperialistic Synod will tend to impose its higher authority over details of purely presbyterial functions. Watch it carefully, Imperialism wants to decide for us what we shall eat and when we shall eat it, ....and when and how the pastor shall have, and how the laity shall dress...Authority tends to exaggerate itself and overreach. With such tendencies how shall we ever get our evangelical units to understand the democratic limitations of their authority?.

This shows the extent that Protestant Missionaries lived in a world quite different from that of the people to whom they were serving. The meaning of democracy and imperialism meant for missionaries something different from what Latin American people understood.

7. Perspective on Aborigines

From the beginning of Protestant work in Latin America missionaries became involved in a discussion regarding how they should deal with the aborigine languages in the mission field. They faced the alternatives of considering them as something vital to their work, or on the contrary, of carrying out their work without paying heed to them. Missionaries debated over whether it was necessary to learn these languages to communicate the gospel. Though they held different views, their practice, at large, was uniform. They attempted to carry out work among Indians without having to pass through the painful experience of learning their tongues.

In this section we consider the extent of the tension. The
references will be mainly from Central America.

It seems that shortly after the arrival on the mission field of the first missionaries of the Presbyterian Church of the United States and of CAM, they drew attention to the need of finding missionaries who were willing to learn the Indian languages. They called them "dialects". We will, however, lay more stress on references of CAM because this is where the issue is seen more clearly.

A. E. Bishop, for instance, in Guatemala, drew attention to this question as a fundamental issue to overcome the negative influence of the Roman Catholic Church. He put it in these terms in 1899:

So far as I am able to learn the Gospel of Mark, printed in Quiche, by the British and Foreign Bible Society, is the only general work in any of these dialects. The whole land is indeed desolate....Who has ever shed tears because of the darkness of the shadow of death that encircles these poor Indians? Who is grieved because Rome in proselyting them has made them two-fold more the children of hell? Oh that the children of God might manifest something of the zeal that Rome has shown in her labours of destruction which has brought such spiritual darkness and superstition, not only to these poor Indians, but throughout the earth. For years and years preachers have gone by, leaving them to Rome, to Satan, to everlasting death...Where are the devoted workers who, will give themselves to learn these dialects, that these despised ones may have the truth of God? The Indian tribes of Guatemala mostly occupy the higher altitudes, but in towns from a few hundred population to numerous cities of 10,000 to 25,000. Now is the time for vigorous work in Guatemala.116

This view was accepted as a sine qua non condition for the good development of work among the aborigines. As J. G. Cassel, of CAM, stated, "the language must be mastered before much can be done".117
Nevertheless in spite of that early concern, CAM had little success in placing people on the mission field who felt a real interest in learning and working in the local language. The topic itself was dropped to such an extent that for a long time there was practically no mention of it in the Central American Bulletin.

It was not until 1920, three decades after CAM was born, that the issue again came to the fore. Missionaries realising that their presentation of the gospel had not created amongst the Indians the interest they had hoped, wanted to consider more seriously the people to whom the message was addressed. W.C. Townsend wrote that the mastering the Spanish language was not enough to communicate the gospel in Guatemala. He was certain that people must be reached in their own tongues. Making it clear the little that had been done with regard to this, he wrote in 1920:

> Many problems confront us, chief of which is the need of learning the Indian language. A yet no Missionary, with the exception of Rev. Paul Burgess of Quetzaltenango, has learned any of the twelve or more tongues. In the highlands of the West, at any rate, the majority of the people can speak almost no Spanish. If this people is to be properly reached it must be in their own tongue. Though our workers read and understand much Spanish, yet if the Missionary could explain to them the Scriptures in their own language, they would grow much more in the Word.118

The concern was now expressed not only by single individuals but by an important group of missionaries. A Missionary conference in 1921 stressed the need of accomplishing the evangelisation of the Latin American Indians in the current generation. To achieve this, they
were convinced that it was necessary to reach them in their own tongues.119

A conspicuous figure in this matter was W.E. Robinson of CAM who believed that the best way of getting substantial results among the Indians rested definitely on the communication of the message through their own languages. In answer to those who advocated that the use of Spanish was sufficient, In 1921, he argued that there were few people who even spoke Spanish:

Owing to the limited number among them that understand the Spanish, and the obscurity with which the minds of these seem to be clouded when thinking in the Spanish language, we are discouraged at times when giving them the precious Word, and are made to realise that until it is given in their own tongue but a very small proportion of the Holy Seed will fall upon fertile ground.120

However, once again, this new wave came to nothing. Learning the native languages encountered unsurmountable obstacles. It appears that the Mission leadership was not convinced at all of the need for it. The learning of Indian languages was a demand that missionaries were not always willing to face. The situation was that Protestant missions gave more a mere lip service to a real understanding of the aborigine cultures than a true commitment.

This was demonstrated by the treatment that the missionaries who were really committed to the life of these communities, received both from within and from outside their missions. The opposition that Castell of the BFBS met from the missionary staff of CAM, was shared later by Townsend from his own CAM leaders, and by Burgess
from the ladino national leadership of the Presbyterian Mission in Guatemala

7.1. Translation work is advocated and opposed

Castell was the first to take up the cause of the need of aborigine translation. He was the representative of the operations of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Central America. He was known for his great interest in the languages of the aborigines of Central America. His passion for the matter showed that his interest was beyond his duties within BFBS. Castell really felt a calling in this regard. As soon as he arrived in Central America in 1893 he became involved in the first translation of Biblical portions into the aborigine languages.

Castell's main work for the BFBS was the distribution of the Bible but his correspondence reveals that he wanted to do more than his duties demanded of him. He looked forward to devoting himself to making the Christian message accessible to the aborigine community through translation of the Bible into their own tongues. He dreamt of devoting himself exclusively to this work and his bosses in London expressed respect for his intentions. One of them said to him that he sympathised warmly with his plea for greater freedom in order that he may devote himself more especially to the preparation of versions for the native tribes. After his success in translating St.Mark's Gospel into the Guatemalan languages, Quiche and Cackchiquel, in 1898 and in 1902, the official reports of the BFBS acknowledged him as a
considerable linguist. He not only advocated the right of the Indians to have access to the Bible in their own tongues but he also considered this work as his special responsibility:

Naturally my interest in the work among the aborigines is as keen as ever so I feel I ought to write again. It was always my own special department, and so I may be permitted to ask; Does the Committee realise that in Central America there are more aborigines than in the whole of the United States? Yet, important as this element of population is, the territories occupied by them are practically, (in respect of those who live in large towns where civilisation prevails), as remote as foreign places of which very little is known.

However Castell’s work found considerable opposition. He recounts that his work of Bible translation did not have the entire approval, to his surprise, of the missionaries who had already been working in the region. The reports of the BFBS tell of the doubts that there were among the missionaries over the significance of this work:

Until recently it seemed difficult to convince even missionaries of the claims of Central American aborigines. When in 1892, Senor Castell first set foot in Central America no one seemed to care much for the poor, down-trodden Indians. His first efforts were severely criticised. The languages of these tribes were not thought worthy of Bible translation. It was declared that any version produced must needs prove utterly useless. The Indian were considered too ignorant, and the society and its agent were renounced as visionaries.

Castell’s own words are very revealing on his fight to carry out his work. In one his letters addressed, in 1902, to G.O. Heath and related to the translation of the Gospel of St. John into the Bri Bri language of Costa Rican aborigines, Castell said: "in seeking to reach
these people with the Word of God I had to contend with the indifference and prejudice of those around me, but I submit that the results of any work have justified my contentions”.125

The references found in the records of CAM reveal indeed to what extent their leaders feared that the translation of the Bible into these languages would represent a waste of resources. In 1908 E. Bishop expressed his misgivings in these plain words:

To print the blessed Word of God in the very tongue spoken by these long neglected Indians, how precious! But will this give them the light? Can they read the scriptures when once they are translated into their own tongue? Not so the 20 Indian Tribes of Guatemala. To spend money on such translation is a waste of effort, a waste of time; a waste of God’s money. The Indians of Guatemala cannot read their own language; they have no literature in their own tongue; school in their own languages is prohibited by the government.126

Protestant missionary societies gave priority to the work among the ladino community. This resulted not only in discouragement to the translation of the Bible into vernacular languages, but to the work itself among aborigines.

As early as 1908 we see the leaders of CAM arguing that there was no reason for missionaries to spend time in learning the Indian’s languages. They thought that aborigines, that Protestantism church had already won, could be used. They believed that these people could be prepared and sent out to their own people. With this in mind Protestant missions established a category called "Indian evangelists". A. E. Bishop expressed this thus: In our church in Guatemala City we
have an Indian who speaks good Spanish and reads readily. In our work place there are three or four pure blood Indians who understand a little Spanish....All our native workers are in contact with Indians who speak more or less Spanish.... One of our foremost purposes under God is to train native converts for the purpose of evangelising this needy land.127

In 1945 G. Harris, of the Presbyterian Board in New York, summarising the difficulties that Protestant missionaries committed to aborigines had, was clear in asserting that the prejudice of the missionary agencies was in line with the racism of the white or "ladino" community. He stated this as follows:

The problem of Indian evangelisation is a real one, involving many angles which are not understood either by sympathy o sentimentality. The work that is being done for the Indian as an Indian is undertaken in the face of great opposition not only from the ladino-dominated evangelical church but too often against the will of the missionary agencies at work in the country. Strange as it may seem, Indian work is looked upon as a step backward, as the cultivation of barbarism and not of civilisation and progress, as those of Spanish speech define (it as an) abstraction. (Someone, referring to Burgess, said that ) "it was a sort of tragedy that Dr. Burgess, who in times past was so energetic in the work, had all of a sudden slipped into his dotage as was evident in his turning to the Indian for whom no one in his right mind would sacrifice time or thought". Others have expressed the thought that Dr Burgess is now a missionary to the Indians because he can no longer dominate the ladino Christians, who now know as much as he does...Mr Townsend of the Central American Mission, felt that he had to leave Guatemala to undertake his present projects in Mexico due to the lack of understanding in his mission with regard to his ideology for Indian evangelisation.128

Burgess in his book, Historia de la Iglesia Presbiteriana en
Guatemala, published in 1946, suggested that the tensions over the work amongst Indians came from within the missions themselves. He recounts that the special interest that Cameron Townsend and Edward Robinson paid to the work amongst Indians was seen as good to some missionaries, and as bad to others. He believed that both the Presbyterian Church and CAM were in danger of being split over the Indian work.129 In his doctoral thesis, The Maya evangelical Church in Guatemala (1976), Albert Lloret is clear in asserting that there were differences and resistance to a strong programme of evangelisation and church expansion in the work amongst Indians. Though, according to him, it was unclear whether these differences resulted from mission policy or were due to personal attitudes.130

7.2 Obstacles to the work among Indians

It is evident that there were important obstacles that prevented the missions from having a helpful understanding of the native peoples and consequently of the promotion of Protestant work among them. We can place these obstacles in three categories: (1) The cultural background of the missionaries, (2) the theological perspective of the missions, and finally (3) the outlook of Latin American governments on aborigine cultures.

(1) The cultural background of missionaries was formed largely by the set of values that North American society had developed with regard to their own aborigines. In the United States aborigines were
seen as a veritable hindrance to the establishment of a modern society.

The history of the United States shows clearly that the survival of aborigines as a community depended on their willingness to fit into the "white" society. Therefore the resistance of the aborigines to changing their values and adapting themselves to a new way of living explains their eventual destruction. As we said in the first chapter, the Protestant Church played an important role in this process of incorporation of the aborigines into the national life. The Prudential Committee of the American Board of Missions made it clear when they said that their intention was "to make the children of the forest into citizens":

English in their language, civilised in their habits, and Christians in their religion. Assimilated in language they will more readily become assimilated in habits and manners to their white neighbours; intercourse will be easy and the advantages to them incalculable.131

The Protestant Church as an institution thought that the outlook of the American government with regard to "the aborigines issue" was right. The difference between them rested basically on the perception of the best method to achieve this goal. This was an important ingredient of the cultural background of the people became Protestant missionaries and it helps to explain the outlook that missionaries had with regard to the aborigines of Latin America.

The missionaries understood Latin American aborigines in the same way they did with their own aborigines. There was no reason to
look upon the South American aborigines in any different way from those of North America. The idea behind this was that Indians are alike everywhere, as Alex Rattray Hay, of the South American Inland Mission, said, in 1928:

Whether he be in Alaska or Patagonia, in the United States, Central America or South America, he presents the same characteristics. The general type of features is the same. Mentally and temperamentally the differences are only of degree. In the mythology of the different tribes there is a strange similarity; their philosophy of life, ethics and religious ideas are always essentially the same.132

The cultural background of missionaries matched the prejudices that the white or ladino community in Latin America had about the Indians. Even Paul Burgess, before he became convinced of the importance of Indian work, expressed a clearly negative view on the Indians. In 1922 in a letter addressed to Reginald Wheeler of the Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, who had shown interest in the work among Latin American Indians, he expressed the view that the Indian civilisation had no future:

It is good to know that you have the vision of need of the Indian and are pushing plans for his evangelisation. Just at present this work is in a pioneer state and so far I have not seen that it will be possible to take any short-cuts... Of course we should not overlook the fact that the close relation of the various Indian tribes to the Spanish civilisation greatly modifies our problems. On the one hand it facilitates our work among the Indians to a certain extent, as there is always a fairly large group of Indians in every tribe who understand Spanish which can be reached thro the Spanish speaking missionary and the Spanish Bible. These in turn may evangelise their fellows in their own language and so the work may be carried on even without the missionary learning the Indian language...Personally I don't think that
the Indian civilisation has any ultimate future. It will in all probability be absorbed by the Spanish. But there are millions of Indians who can never be evangelised by Spanish today.\textsuperscript{133}

It is important to note that, despite his early misunderstanding of Indian culture, Paul Burgess became one of the most outstanding advocates of the Indian work in Guatemala. As a result of this he, after much opposition from the ladinos, was appointed as the superintendent of the Indian work in Guatemala in 1927.\textsuperscript{134} Ladino referred to the population of Latin America with Spanish and Indian blood. However, it is not difficult to understand why the ladinos could not understand Burgess' conversion to the Indian cause. He had been one of their best teachers and heroes and the education that Protestant missionaries fostered amongst the ladino community had strengthened their prejudice against Indians. Burgess did not acknowledge this. However he came to criticise, as a hindrance to the propagation of the gospel amongst Indians, the ladino view that a Christian Indian should renounce his customs and language, and that Indians, trying to gain status amongst the ladinos, had to pretend not to know their own language.\textsuperscript{135}

This attitude of Missions and missionaries was a by-product of the opinion of that time that any culture, not possessing Western values, could not have a future.

This led people such as Kenneth Grubb, of the World dominion Press, to think that the old cultures of these countries could not
survive unless absorbed by "civilisation". In his *Advancing Church in Latin America* (1936), Grubb said that race assimilation was the ideal of Latin America, but spiritual assimilation is a harder goal to achieve. It is only in Jesus Christ, he went on, that there is neither "Jew nor Greek, bond nor free". Grubb had a great fondness for Latin America, having been working there for more than thirty years since 1930. He wrote more than ten books on the religious situation of Latin America.

The theological principles that were characteristic of the missions in their purpose of propagating Protestant religion also influenced their outlook on native cultures. Both the theological postmillennialism on which the main missionary movement of the 19th century was based, and the premillennialism of the independent Faith Missions and others that were on the fringe of the largest missionary societies, either in the United States or in Europe, came to be unwitting enemies of the aborigine cultures. This was more explicit in the postmillennial stand than in that of Faith Missions.

The missionary movement took and promoted in the mission field the ideology of the optimism of social progress which was in vogue at that time. Protestant missions were convinced that the world was developing towards a better world in which Christianity would have supremacy among other religions. However for the purposes of our work, it is clear that that new order was linked to the success of Colonialism. Aborigines had not the least place in it. On the contrary,
the victory of Western civilisation entailed their annihilation or at best their assimilation. Josiah Strong, who was one of the most influential of the Social Gospel clergymen, and later appointed as advisor of the CCLA, far from lamenting the gradual disappearance of the American Indian, saw in this the "reflection of the will of God in preparing the land for a better race, the Anglo-Saxon".

On the other hand, though Premillennial thinking disagreed with liberal theology in regard to the progress of Christian civilisation, their advocates, like the liberals, did not show any real interest in the rights of the aborigine cultures. For them the world was heading to a near end, therefore they had to hurry in preaching the gospel to non-Christian people and the nations. Within these systems of thought, to teach as a principle the need of learning the language of the people whom they wanted to reach was pointless. This was the fundamental reason that conditioned their approach to the Indians. They felt compelled to use quicker means. Therefore in facing this reality the best way to do Indian work should be through native converts. As A. E. Bishop of CAM, put it in 1908:

The Indians are hard to reach. They are suspicious of the white man. Through the power of God the missionary can overcome in some measure this difficulty, and in time can learn the 'dialect' and can in this way eventually give them some knowledge of the truth. But there is a better way, a shorter and more successful route. The missionary who loves the Indian will accomplish more by learning the Spanish and praying that God will give them converts who have the dialects naturally, and by praying that God may place his spirit upon such converts and send them among their own
people, whose customs and manners they understand as the missionary can never understand them. After personal study and observation for years the writer is fully convinced that this is the best and perhaps the only successful method of reaching the Indians with the Gospel. 138

This approach typified the work of the missions among the Indians until well into this century. The urgency of the times, in the view of the missions, called for the best use of time. The missions and people who were under the influence of the Premillennialism were adamant in arguing that the church and missions must concentrate on the rapid extension of the Gospel of Salvation, leaving aside concerns such as social work, the understanding of native languages, and other aspects that were, for them, of minor importance.

In Great Britain, for instance, this line was represented, among others, by Arthur Arthington, a layman of the Plymouth Brethren. He was known for the great passion he had for the promotion of missions in places where the missionary movement had not entered. In his will he bequeathed a trust of £1 million to the cause of missions. Strangely, in spite of the respect he had for the missions working beyond the organised missionary movement, he left them out of his bequest.

Arthington represented the typical mentality of Faith Missions that arrived in Latin America. Inspired by Premillennial theology, he rejected all ideas that upheld the needs of learning the aborigine languages as prerequisite for the success of missionary work. He placed it among other aspects that could distract the attention of the church
from the pure proclamation of the gospel.

Arthington's biographer recounts that when the workers that he supported in Africa tried to persuade him about the importance of learning the language of the people and of translating the Bible into their languages he replied: "Use interpreters. Don't stop to learn the language or to translate at least some parts of the Bible, much less to teach the people to read, otherwise you will never reach all the tribes". The biographer goes on to say that when they protested, he withdrew his support.

Arthington established connections with missions all over the world, especially with those that had been excluded from the organised missionary movement. He showed a great deal of interest in the Aboriginal communities. In this he paid attention to what the Protestant missions were doing in Latin America. RBMU's magazine recounts that Arthington was on the committee of the Evangelisation Society for South American. On this continent he promoted the study of the of aborigine cultures with the end of giving them the gospel in the shortest possible way. CAM recounted that there existed good friendship between Arthington and the mission. It is possible that what contributed to this friendship was that both were under the influence of the dispensationalist and premillennialist system. Cyrus Scofield, founder of CAM, had embraced the principles of this theology. It is known that he was deeply influenced by Plymouth Brethren theology, especially through the person of J.N. Darby.
The relationship of Arthington with CAM was in fact so good that Arthington decided to finance a survey of its mission to the Aborigines in Central America. CAM referred to this as "the Arthington Exploration". This explains the similarity of views between CAM and Arthington regarding the urgency of evangelisation that determined the outlook on the aborigines. CAM never hid this premise and dispensational outlook. It can be seen for instance in the conference of missionaries working in Guatemala. The report says:

then followed a discussion as to the inadequacy of Indian languages to express all religious thought. Mr. Burgess argued in favour of putting the scriptures into Indian languages. Mr. Dwindie asked if any people had ever been evangelised except in their own tongue, which the meeting was forced to answer negatively....Mr. Toms raised the question as to whether the best way to reach the Indian is to translate the Bible into the Indian languages or to reach them through Spanish speaking Indians....Since the object of this organisation is to evangelise in the shortest possible time the Latin American Indians, it expresses its sincere willingness to cooperate with all sound, evangelical societies at work on the field.

(3) Missions were also hindered in understanding the reality of the aborigine cultures by the outlook that the Latin American governments themselves had towards them. It is known that the new liberal class that took power in Latin America after the continent broke away from the Spanish Crown continued the old racism towards aborigines. Here we have to bear in mind that the Protestant missions were loyal supporters of the Liberal governments. The Liberals were a strong body of intellectuals who, after the
independence of Latin America, engaged in a struggle for power with the Conservatives, often called "serviles". They advocated a federal government, the ending of ecclesiastical privileges, and land reforms, in contrast to the Conservatives who desired a strong centralised government, the continuation of the privileges of the church, and the maintenance of the system of landholding.143

The fact that liberals also advocated freedom of worship was enough to make them appear in the missionaries' eyes, as good governors. This image grew still more when these governments put into effect after the 1880s the so-called "Liberal Reforms" whereby they confiscated some Roman Catholic properties and expelled some clergy. So we hardly find any criticism of any action of the governments in Latin America by the Protestant missions. This was due not only to the line missions drew between the civil order and the religious one, but also because of the goodwill that these governments showed to the Protestant missions. Protestant missionaries however took advantage of every opportunity to make clear that their work had nothing to do with the political interests of the region. Church Historian Wilkins Winn observed that Bishop, avoided any possible identification of a link with President Cabrera:

Bishop expatiated in his article the purpose of the missionaries of the Central American Mission was to present the Gospel to every creature; they had no political inclinations, as their work was exclusively in the religious sphere; believed in absolute separation of church and state; never molested people of other religions; prayed for all rulers; paid taxes; and gave honour to whom honour was
due. He further elaborated that "we are for peace and that we believe in the sincerity of President Cabrera who has said: "The Constitution is my motto; personal rights shall be respected" .... Apparently because of his tenet of separation of church and state, Bishop did not want church leaders to become involved in political parties.144

The missionaries avoided criticising any circumstances of a purely political order always seeking to gain the confidence of the Latin American presidents, regardless of the fact that most of them were sanguinary. The practice of Protestant missions in greeting the election and birthdays of the Presidents and granting them Bibles was carried out more as a sign of respect and obedience to them than as a mark of evangelisation.

The Presbyterian Mission in 1916, publicly through its Spanish paper El Mensajero (The Messenger), not only greeted the election of the President Manuel Estrada Cabrera, but also complimented the people who elected him: "....In the same way we congratulate the Guatemalan people who knew whom to choose for that position; such a declared friend of public instruction... and of religious liberty". 145

Later the dictator Jorge Ubico, President of Guatemala was the first person in Guatemala to receive a copy of the Cakchiquel New Testament published in 1931 by the ABS. Mildred Spain in her book And in Samaria, a history of CAM published in 1954, says that the Indian Trinidad Bac handed over "a beautiful leather-bound copy of the book when he along with the representative of ABS, R.R. Gregory and Mr. Townsend visited President Ubico. The president graciously
received the New Testament expressing gratitude and asserting that this work was a real step of progress for this country”.146

The Presbyterian Mission also later greeted Jorge Ubico on his birthday.147 Later in 1954 following the overthrow of President Jacob Arbenz by the United States Army, the Presbyterian Mission presented a Bible to the new President of Guatemala. The Mission report said that the new President assured them that he would sustain liberty of worship.148

To Protestant missions the cause of all evils in Latin American countries were not political but mostly religious. They held the view that the Roman Catholic Church as almost solely responsible for the troubles that people were undergoing in Latin America. Even in the heyday of liberal governments they looked on social problems as the making of the Roman Catholic Church. It is in this context that Missionary sources refer to families that became Protestant as "families that have broken away from the political and religious domination of the Roman Church".149 To Protestant Missions the only oppressive system was the religious one. At times this very reason was used by Protestant Missions to consider themselves as helpers of liberal governments, despite their claimed neutrality. Criticisms of the political order made at times by Protestant Missions were based on this ground. Here I refer to the open criticism that the Protestant Missions made to the Roman Catholic Church about their association with those whose objective was to overthrow the Liberal Governments.
Protestant missions warned Liberal governments to be on the alert for Roman Catholic priests who were using convents and confessions as means for espionage.150

Protestant Missions were careful to avoid doing anything that somehow could contravene the status quo. Thus, no social group which was suffering unfair treatment through actions of a Liberal government could hope for any help from the Protestant Missions. On the contrary, one of the first things that Protestant converts learned from missionaries was the need to obey their government, no matter whether they thought it was good or bad.

When the Protestant missions arrived in Latin America they found that most of the people were living under cruel oppression. At times in fact it seems Protestant missionaries realised that the governments had little concern for the welfare of people. However at that time there is no evidence of any thought that missions could change the situation, but neither did they keep their distance from these regimes. They fell in with government policies in order to find room for their activities in Latin America. The end result was that the missions not only were unable to bear with the Indians in their suffering but openly advocated the goodwill of the system. When the missions had to choose between the people and the status quo they opted for the latter. Townsend revealed this when he acknowledged the impotence of Protestant missions to change the unfair social situation that Indians were
subjected to as "the government officials were ostensibly in the pay of planters".151

This also can be seen from a letter Paul Burgess wrote on behalf of an Indian who had became a fugitive of the law because he had abandoned his work in a hacienda in Guatemala. The Indians had been subjected to great misery in these haciendas. Burgess instructed him to return to the hacienda, bearing this letter:

Someone called Jose Santizo has come to me as an Evangelical minister. Apparently, according to himself, he escaped from your hacienda. My advice was that he, as a Christian, must return to his work and pay his debts. However he alleged powerful motives to not return, saying that he was bothered so much because of being Evangelical. Nevertheless he says that he will procure to pay what he owes. He has asked me to find out how much your books say he owes.152

The missionary overlooked the fact that most of these workers were forced to work in the haciendas under a cruel system that had been inherited from colonial times, and that the Liberal Governments had consolidated it into their constitutions. The liberal President, Justo R. Barrios, in a decree issued in 1877 obliged the police in Indian towns to supply the haciendas with workers. According to Barrios such action not only would help business to succeed but also it would contribute to getting Indians accustomed to work. Through this they would turn into useful and productive workers for the agriculture, commerce and industry of the country.153 The same decree laid down that no servant could abandon the hacienda without the written
permission of the patron. If in debt, the decree ruled that it should be established how much he owed and when he should return to work to pay such a debt.\textsuperscript{154} It is possible that Burgess was thinking of this when he asked the Indian to return to work. The Indian knew that the missionary would be concerned about the suffering he had for being an Evangelical. Burgess' letter showed no concern for the suffering of the man as human being working under feudal conditions. These feudal conditions looked upon the Indians as the personal property of the landlord who could buy and sell them. In 1926 F. J. Jordan recounted that a "Not uncommon advertisement in the newspaper of Guatemala is: For Sale- Plantation with its Indians. Owner going to Europe".\textsuperscript{155}

It is in this situation of relations with the Latin American governments that the translation of the Scriptures became for the missions a difficult task. How could they put forward the need for having the Bible in the aborigine languages when the governments thought that those languages should be abolished. The law in Guatemala on this, was a model of what happened all over Latin America. Aborigine languages were looked upon as pointless, as Guatemalan decree stated in 1877:

\begin{quote}
Whereas the national language must be one, and taking into consideration that while the languages of the Aborigines are so diverse and imperfect to educate the people, the State has decreed: The Priests, according to the municipalities of the towns, will procure, through the most sensible and effective means, to extinguish the language of the Indians.\textsuperscript{156}
\end{quote}
In 1908 E. Bishop became discouraged from developing Indian work in Guatemala through their mother tongues because the legislation forced Indians to attend public schools conducted in Spanish.157

The agent of BFBS noted the difficulty of the translation of the Scriptures into Indians languages in Central America, because "governments of Central America, in what appears to be a futile attempt to unify the languages, forbid any teaching in Indian tongues".158

Protestant Missions looked on these measures as sound. R. Ray, for instance, reckoned as correct the decision of the Brazilian government by which it banned all translations into Aborigine languages and compelled the conducting of all schools among the Indians in Spanish or Portuguese. He defended this stand in the following terms:

We believe that the position taken by the local government in this matter is justified. The numerous Indian tribes, some of them small and each with its own distinct language, have no future apart from the countries in which they live. There is really nothing to be gained by encouraging them to remain distinct from the general population of these countries.159

However it is clear that the governments understood that the translation of the Bible was in the hands of their allies, the Protestant Missions. This explains the authorization of the governments to Missions that they could undertake Bible translation. They knew that
the objectives of Protestant missions would consolidate their plans to incorporate the Indians. The only requirement of the government was that all translations into any aboriginal language must attach the parallel Spanish text of the portion translated. In other words, the government would see that the work of translation that had been done in line with its requirements. The missionaries were clearly aware of that, and therefore were careful not to spoil their opportunity. They knew that any mistake in this could endanger the work. This made Townsend, of CAM, draw the attention of Burgess to some of the liberties that this latter was taking in his translation work in Guatemala. Townsend on hearing that Burgess was not going to attach the Spanish text to one of his translations, wrote in 1924:

I hear that you are going to publish possibly some portions in Quiche without the Spanish text. May I enter an objection to this plan. The parallel text feature is what puts our Indian translations in favour with the government and now when the different governments of Latin America are making our work more difficult I do hope that you will not run this risk of queering all our translation programme with them just to economise and to permit greater liberty in following the Greek instead of the Spanish. It may be disastrous.160

From this we can see how the Missions had some reason to feel discouraged over investing human and financial resources in the translation of the Bible into the Indian languages. Their discouragement lay in realising that the governments were determined to compel the unification of the population under the Spanish language.
What seemed to be simply an initial tactic of Protestant Missions to open a relationship of confidence with Latin American governments became an essential but subservient practice that strengthened with the passing of time. Even 75 years after the Liberal governments had taken power in most of the Latin American countries, Protestant Missions were still speaking of coordinating their Indian work with them. Protestant writers spoke, for instance, of the Evangelical schools, as an effort that not only that had to be acceptable to governments but should be in cooperation with them. \(^{161}\) A commission on Indian Work of the Presbyterian Church of USA made the following statement in 1945:

Being the ideal of the Latin American nations to incorporate their masses of Indians to the national life, the missions should cooperate in this incorporation, making the Indian feel that he forms part of the nation, and should cultivate his civil and patriotic sentiments....We recommend that the organisation and direction of the work be in charge of the national bodies, preferably those already established, assisted by an international body for consultation, the Commission for work among Indians in the United States. We believe it to be indispensable that this work among the Indians be realised in complete observance of the laws and regulations of the governments of the countries under consideration, and it be carried out on the basis of the official or national language.\(^{162}\)

However though Missions at that point continued to speak of the incorporation of Indians into the nation it had already become clear that this had proved to be unworkable.

7.3. Indian Work as a failure
In the foregoing we have seen the interest that Protestant missions had shown in evangelising Latin American aborigines. However when looking back on these years at the Panama Conference in 1916, it was realised that these efforts had been no more successful in winning the hearts of the aborigines, and in improving their conditions, than had the Roman Catholic Church before them.

In setting out to launch a new initiative the ideologists of the CCLA argued that the religious abandonment of the Indians was, according to them, a clear signal that Christianity had not yet established a hold on society. The Commission of Survey and Occupation at the Panama Congress bluntly stated that "the pagan Indian's condition remains sad, hopeless and neglected" and that:

Large numbers of the native Indians ....in given sections of Latin America are pagan, in some areas without any contact whatever with Christianity, and in many others with too little to affect appreciably either their religious conceptions, their character or their low economic state. They constitute a field of pure missionary endeavour as apostolically conceived which no body of Christians can ignore who accept responsibility for the world's evangelisation.163

The findings of this Commission were that the Indians had no contact with Christianity and were still remaining "grossly superstitious and in spiritual stagnation". The Commission acknowledged that to reach them constituted an immense task that "called for the most heroic and self-denying type of apostleship.164

Indeed the attempts that came out of the Panama Congress did not have early results. Years later the Missions continued
complaining that the clue of how to succeed in Indian work had not yet been found. In the words of W.E. Robinson of CAM, the Protestant work in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, to mention one example, despite of being more than 30 years old, "is still in its infancy as far as Indians are concerned".165

Robinson, along with Townsend, both pioneers among the Cakchiqueles, thought that it was necessary to establish a programme of Biblical instruction specifically for Indians. In 1921 they adamantly advocated that, for the sake of both Ladinos and Indians, a separate training course for Indian work was essential. They dreamt of having a Cakchiquel Institute. Robinson’s death, however, interrupted the plan. However in 1923 Townsend and Archer Anderson, recently arrived from the United States, launched what they called The Robinson Bible Institute in honour of Robinson. Historian Albert LLoret says that the Robinson Institute did not bear much fruit: "Teaching in Cakchiquel at the Robinson Institute began to decline within a few years of its founding". He described it as a "rather poor missionary example in the use of the Indian languages for effective ministry".166

The Conference that the CCLA organised in Montevideo in 1925 revealed this same need when it "called for the development of missionary work in the almost untouched field of South American Indians".167 North American Presbyterian missionary, Webster Browning, also pointed out this matter when he referred to the failure
of the Roman Catholic Church and the efforts of the Protestant Missions as follows:

In religion, the great mass of Indians are today as thoroughly pagan as were the primitive tribes, although many, especially near the great centres, may have been baptised by priests of the Roman Church, and thus numbered among its faithful. Christianity, in such cases, is only skin-deep, a thin veneer of baptised paganism...The powerful Roman Church has done something in past centuries in an attempt to Christianize the indigenous population, but it has merely touched the fringe of the problem. The Protestant missions have done less, and there seems but little hope for the religious future of the Indian unless all present methods are changed. He has been generally neglected by Church and State, and does not know where to turn for the help and sympathy which he craves.168.

To Protestant authors, such as Webster Browning and Kenneth Grubb, the importance of the work with Indians was crucial to convince those who doubted whether Protestantism had something to offer to Latin America. According to them, on this issue depended the credibility that Protestant Missions needed to gain. Referring to the Bolivian Indians they said:

Indeed an effective work among the Indian masses, accompanied by definite and progressive results, is not only a work in itself which, as a spiritual triumph, is beyond definition, but is also one of most far-reaching means of convincing observers and critics, of the undeniable powers of the Gospel.169

As time went by reality showed that Protestant Missions did not gain any real influence in the Indian communities of Latin America. The majority of their membership was basically "mestizo" (mixed race) with very few members coming from pure Indian communities.
Mexican Methodist leader Baez Camargo, in spite of their defensive stand, make it clear, in the case of Mexico in 1935:

In general it may be said that the majority of the evangelicals are found among the mestizo class. The church membership includes many small country farmers and peasants, but, as much of the work is in the towns, a number of small traders, manual labourers, shop assistants, carpenters, builders, primary school teachers and clerks, are also found in the churches...The accusation is brought against evangelisation in Mexico that it has done little to bring the Gospel to the Indian masses. This is true in the main, but there are enthusiasts who greatly exaggerate both the need and the possibilities of such work.In the country churches there are nearly always individuals of pure Indian descent, and in some regions these are numerous; the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist and Episcopal Churches can all show examples of this. It is not true, however, that there has been a deliberate neglect of the Indian population, and it is natural in the face of equal opportunities that churches and missions should have taken the easiest path and profited by the widespread use of Spanish.170

The Presbyterian Church of the United States, through a commission appointed especially to study the situation of the Indian, acknowledged the weaknesses of this work. The report confirmed that the past interest of Protestant missions in this area had been a theoretical concern rather than a real commitment. In 1942 the commission put the matter thus:

We should confess with pain and repentance the lack of attention with which it has regarded for years the evangelisation of the Indians and it proposes to awaken a Christian responsibility in the respective national churches so that they shall not fall into such neglect again. As to the objects of this we believe that,( a)the central and essential object should be the clear and simple presentation of the gospel of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, and (b) the improvement of the economic, intellectual and social
condition of the Indian is of an urgent character and that the missions should provide the necessary agencies for this improvement.171

In 1944 the Presbyterians recognised, that despite having been working in a country composed largely of aborigines, their resources had been put at the service of the privileged classes. As far as the Indian work was concerned the report said that "it was less than half done":

In Guatemala we have reached the stage for putting the missionary emphasis on the rural work....Whereas at first our schools were only passable ones, as shown by the fact that we educated children for all the liberal children down to Estrada Cabrera as well as those of cabinet members and ministers of education, and hospital, nursing, printing press. So what? Shall we then "fold our tents like the crabs? By no means the work is less than half done. The great majority of the population live in the rural regions and most of them are still strangers to the gospel...In the evangelistic work, it is the rural who are most needy. They are most scattered, simpler-minded, a little harder to contact because more enslaved to custom and superstition and more cautious of anything new. They are farther from the protection of final authority and are much given to drunkenness, fighting, and shameless sexual liaisons. The illiteracy is high hence we must use the spoken word more...The scarcity of Roman priests in the country leaves this field largely to us. Most of them seem unwilling to make the sacrifice demanded by country life. If so we must be quick about it.172

However there was little evidence that Protestant missions wanted to take seriously the need of the Indians. This is clear not only for CAM but also for the Presbyterian Church in Guatemala. The belated translation of the Bible into aborigine languages and the slowness to organise the vernacular churches were clear signals of this
disinterest. The Mam people did not receive a version of the New Testament until 1940, and the Quiches until 1946, though the Quiche and Mam population represented nearly half of the whole population of Guatemala. It was not until 1946 that a governing board was elected to work amongst the Mam communities. Only in 1959 was a Maya-Quiche Presbytery organised.173

7.4 Outlook of Indian suffering

There is no doubt that Missions at times realised that the suffering of the aborigines was a result of the mistreatment to which they were subjected by the class in power. Though Protestant Missions avoided talking about the social and political domination of Indians, they could not entirely close their eyes to this reality. Eva T. Ridge, missionary of CAM, considered the Indians as the unloved people, who in addition to being hated and robbed by the ladinos or mestizos, were compelled by the government to work at certain times without recompense.174 Another missionary put it thus:

The old slavery system no longer exists, but the forced labour system which took its place is practically the same. As long as the Indian owes a penny he is forced to work, and being illiterate he falls an easy victim to the schemes of plantation owners to keep him in debt. One instance of rank dishonesty resorted to by a plantation manager came under our notice. The mozo or Indian labourer made a payment on his debt but instead of its being taken off his debt it was added thereto, and he remained more an slave than ever.175

When Protestant Missionaries ventured to denounce the mistakes of the country to which they had come it was on moral
rather than political and financial issues. With some exceptions, the
social implications of the colonial process were not a matter of concern
to the missions. The matters on which they spoke out strongly against
their government's policy were with regard to alcoholic drinks,
opium and others things of this nature.

In Latin America we see the same pattern. When missionaries
remarked on the social suffering of the aborigines, they did not suggest
that it resulted from the effects of an unjust social system. The main
reason for social problems was attributed to the moral degradation of
individuals. The idea behind this was that missions employed the
power of their message to change the individual as a necessary step
towards the betterment of society. This explain for instance the
emphasis that was given to the effects of the consumption of alcoholic
drinks on the Indians.

In this problem, missionaries not only saw the wickedness of
those who had this habit, but also of those who used it for ulterior
objectives. They denounced the selling of liquor among Indians as a
way to keep them as a dominated labour force. Missions saw this
clearly. They recounted that the Indians at times were encouraged to
get drunk, then jailed, and finally fined. H.C. Dillon, a missionary of
CAM, described how lacking money to pay the fine, Indians often had
no other resource than "to sell themselves to someone for money to
pay the fine". Thus "the Indian was then obligated to serve that person
for a certain numbers of years". It seems that this practice was a
successful way to supply workers to the haciendas. The Anglican Bishop H. Bury, noticed when he was passing through the Central American countries that "there would practically be no one in the prisons were it not for drink".177

The missionary J.G. Cassel also drew attention to this tactic of promoting Indian drunkenness to take financial advantage of it. He emphasised the importance of this issue in the framework of feudal agriculture, which depended mostly on the forced labour of Indians. He recounted, in 1927, to what extent Protestant work became troublesome to the landowner:

I have, however, since been forbidden to enter the plantation by the owner, who is an unreasonable Roman Catholic. He says that Indians without vices are not good, and since faith in the gospel of Christ saves them from drunkenness and other vices he claims the gospel is an enemy of agriculture. The explanation of this strange position is that while the Indian is a hard drinker and follows the R.C. religious, customs, he needs more money continually and thus becomes hopelessly indebted to the plantation and is to all purposes and intents a slave; but when the power of the gospel gets hold of him he is not only freed from the slavery of sin and vice, but also seeks to free himself from the slavery of debt. Thus the plantation owners lose their dominion over him. This makes the man I refer to, angry, claiming that the gospel hurts his business.178

The existence of the feudal system, that prevailed in Latin America until well into this century, cut deeply into the conscience of missionaries. But they could do nothing to improve the situation. The Missions were clear that the way out of this could not be through an Indian rebellion. In this the missions gave "their best service" to the
repressive governments in Latin America. The failure of the Missions was not in the fact that they declined to stimulate popular rebellion, but that they used Christian principles to encourage people to submit to oppression. In short, the trouble was that they did not really play an apolitical role. Missions always sided with the government. They considered it one of the main objectives of Protestant evangelisation to make citizens obedient to law”.179

Nevertheless the selling of alcoholic drinks as an instrument of social exploitation was, in the missions' view, not common. They stressed this as the greatest Indian problem, but interpreted it as being the result of their sinful nature. Indeed most of missionaries shared the impression of J.G. Cassel who believed that the great curse among the Indians was drink.180 Hence the reason why the consumption of liquor became a fundamental issue in Evangelical preaching. Therefore, what distinguished converts was the fact that they had given up drinking. Now everyone can say, as Burgess put it, "the fellow I used to be, he drink, but the fellow I am now, he not drink.181 One of the objectives of evangelisation, in addition to making citizens obedient to the law, was the salvation of "people from drunkenness".182

To Protestant Missions the only way out for Indians was to make them Protestants, because the cause of their suffering resided in their idolatrous practices. The Missions never distinguished between religious and political oppression. For them these two were not only
part of the same thing, but it was the spiritual condition of the people that determined their social and political standard of living:

What between oppression, vices and false religion, which only sink him deeper in the throes of his sins, the Indian is without hope. But praise God, no! He who was in times past without hope has now the light of the Gospel dawning round about him. The Christ who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" has heard the cry of the Guatemalan Indian and he is another trophy of the power of the Gospel to save every one who believes, be he white or black, yellow or red.  

7.5. How to reach the Indians

The importance of Protestant work among the Indians having been acknowledged, the question remained 'how can Protestant Missions draw the aborigines into the church?' The Presbyterian Church of the United States showed interest in serving the real needs of these cultures. The Board of Foreign Missions appealed to the CCLA in 1943 due to, as they said, "the urgency of the evangelisation of the Indians in Latin America, especially with reference to the Indians in the Andean Highlands" for the study of "the feasibility and method of approach of a mission to the Indians".

To the Commission it was beyond doubt that the resources invested in the past were marks of devotion and concern that deserved all admiration. However, the little achievement from such efforts was an indication that the methods used were not the best. They recommended that it was about time to change or at least to supplement the old methods by other types of approach.
Characteristic of CCLA all along, the commission argued that only the presentation of a pragmatic view of the Christian message would interest the Indians; that is to say, a positive presentation of the gospel through which the Indians might find answers to their social and material needs. Rycroft, who prefaced the final publication of the report, made it clear that the success of the Indian work depended on the way the message was presented. The Protestant message had to replace exotic and abstract religion. It had to be intrinsically linked with Indian life. The report said that "past experience of religion had not brought redemption to the Indian, nor human betterment, social uplift, and an abundant life."

When the report speaks about the new approach towards the Indians it does not mean of course that the Protestant churches must deal with the real oppression that this people was suffering. The pragmatic aspect of the message was related basically to the external features that made the Protestant Indian different from the pagan Indian. The report stated this more precisely:

In our observation of the Andean Indians we are convinced that, down through the years, in spite of a hostile environment, they have survived because of a will to live...Utility to them is in terms of living in the present. Our brief observation leads us to believe that the Indian could be moved by a presentation of Christianity as a religion which affects and improves every phase of earthly life. As far as we could ascertain this approach has not been made. Christianity could be an enriching factor in his present life as well as in the future. For example, one would expect to find the homes of Christians cleaner, more sanitary and comfortable than those of non-Christians of the same village. But frequently we found this was not the case.
The report was worded under liberal theological conceptions in which Christianity could make sense insofar as it meets the needs of people. Though taking into account the background of the fundamentalist-modernist polemic, the editors of the report tried to make clear that with these ideas they are not advocating "the social gospel" as a means of salvation, for they believed that Salvation is individual regeneration, first and foremost.\textsuperscript{189} It made it clear that the Protestant work amongst Indians had to bear in mind the psychology and virtues of these people. It was said that one of the values that Protestants must keep before them is what this commission called the utilitarian character and conservatism that characterised Indian life:

> We must never forget that cultures are a continuum in a state of constant change. They adopt what is of value and discard what is found inadequate. The Indian is ultra-conservative and only with difficulty does he accept new ideas. However, if he is convinced of the utility of anything, he is not entirely opposed to accepting it. Before he can accept the Gospel, it must be shown to be practical and applicable to every phase of his life...The Gospel must be concerned with the whole of the Indian's life-his person, mind, soul, home, work, pleasures, attitude and values.\textsuperscript{190}

**Conclusion**

Soon after their consolidation in Latin America, following the Panama Congress, Protestant missions forgot the old rational by which they asked for support, namely the need of the unchristian Indians.
Protestant preference for the educated classes confirmed, to some extent, the oft-mentioned misgivings and complaints of the Roman Catholic Church and of High Anglican circles that Protestantism wanted to work with disaffected catholics.

This Protestant thinking did not consider it important to stress work among Indians and working classes. These were rather seen, at times, as an obstacle to the reaching of the educated and middle classes. The irony of this is that despite the complaint that the poor social background of the Protestant membership made it difficult to reach the educated classes, these members did not find a place in the Protestant schools; nor were good schools created among Indian communities. Protestant schools and hospitals became luxurious services that only the higher classes could afford. The educational institutions that benefitted from the million dollars that the CCLA raised in the 1930s did not include any Indian school. The growing political power of the educated classes in Latin America created the illusion that Protestant influence might be able to determine the future, not only religiously, but politically and financially of Latin America, if they could only capture the support of these social elites.
Chapter VI

A Liberal theology for a Prospective Liberal Constituency
(Contextualising the Message)

Introduction

In this section we will consider the main theological concerns of the CCLA. Our interest here is to see the theological background of the advocates of the CCLA in order to discern which theological principles they stressed and on which they grounded their religious concern. However we are not interested in searching for clear-cut theological definitions on the part of the people or Protestant missionaries who were involved in the work of the CCLA. To attempt to discover for systematic theological ideas would be an anachronistic task, imposing on them our theological criteria. Protestant missions paid little attention to theology.

In the work of Protestant missions, what the Bible taught, along with what could be learned from experience, was considered more important than what theologians could deduce from their studies, whatever school of thinking they represented. The conceptualization of God, Christ, and the Church did not a prominent place in missionary statements. In the case of the CCLA this was coupled with the fact that religion was subjected to a new look based largely on social concerns. Within CCLA circles the dealing with social issues was often more important than religion itself. Religion was important insofar as it contributed to social life.
Of course this did not mean that religion reflected clearly was not developed from particular form of theological thinking. On the contrary, the way the advocates of Protestantism in Latin America understood their mission reflected clearly predominant theological assumptions in the United States, particularly those of Social Gospel. However in the dynamic of its work in Latin America, the theological concern of the CCLA was more implicit than explicit.

In other words the conferences of the CCLA — that is to say the discussions at Panama (1916), the regional conferences in different countries of the region (1917), Montevideo (1925) and Havana (1929) -- reflected on the one hand an explicit rejection of theology as an exclusive rationalisation of the Christian faith, and on the other hand the influence of liberal theology in their religious views.

John Fox, contributor to the Princeton Theological Review, perceived this tension in the discussions at the Panama Congress. Though he had not attended the Conference, he wrote a very negative review of it some months after its conclusion. His critique took the form of a long article: "Christian Unity, Church Unity and the Panama Congress" which appeared in the Princeton Theological Review, in 1917.

We will be paying some attention to Fox's remarks throughout this section. The CCLA leaders believed that critics like Fox not only lost sight of the Latin American interests, but also that they had nothing to say to them. Fox was a typical example of the
misunderstanding of Latin America within North American Protestantism. Instead of agreeing with people like Fox, the CCLA showed a special interest in the thinking of people in Latin America like Ricardo Rojas and in particular Julio Navarro Monzo, to whom we will be paying special attention.

1. Avoiding theological controversy

CCLA leaders not only avoided the rationalisation of God and the Christian faith, but they also, at times, viewed rationalisation as a hindrance to the promotion of the central aim of their missionary work, which was the preaching of salvation to the lost.

This view was strengthened by the challenge that modern thinking presenting for the Christian view of the world. The nineteenth century witnessed a bitter controversy between many exponents of science and the Christian religion. This confrontation was characterised by a clear desire on the part of scientists to break away, once for all, from the control of religion. The attempts to supress science in the name of religious presuppositions eventually discredited the Christian religion itself. Church leaders, and especially those involved in the work of the Protestant missions abroad, came to realise that confrontation could overshadow the essentials of the Christian faith. Missions leaders were concerned that the ideas that surrounded this controversy should not be taken abroad to the mission fields. This concern permeated the preparatory stages and also the discussions themselves of the Panama and other conferences of the CCLA.
The leaders of the CCLA, particularly Dr. Robert Speer, who was for various decades its chairman, had lived through the intensity of the theological controversy of the last two decades of the nineteenth century. They not only realized that it was suicidal to oppose the new advances of science, but that theology had to come to terms with modern ideas, even when these challenged traditional beliefs.

Pressing on them also was the realisation that the whole world was experiencing extraordinary changes at all levels and that Christianity must play a decisive role in the formation of a new order, especially in non-Christian countries. Their experiences had confirmed Protestant missionaries that Christianity must be presented in a new fashion in order to contribute to the new era in world history. Practical concerns and not theological controversies dominated their thinking. They did not want to become committed to any particular theologies. But this did not mean that they could escape from expressing their ideas in the context of current liberal theology. In the discussions at the Panama and Montevideo Congresses, however, that they made it clear that they had moved far from the old theological controversies that were now causing so much harm to the Christian church. This included a tendency to avoid theological controversy. The objectives of these conferences, namely the harmonization and the strengthening of the Protestant forces already working in Latin America also influenced this.
The tendency was clearly observed by John Fox. He believed that one of the main weaknesses at the Panama Conference was the absence of theology. The Conference by its very nature, according to Fox, seemed to say to missionaries: "Dodge theological difficulties whenever you can". Moreover, he pointed out that this resulted from the attitude of the organisers, who refused to recognised that "missionary administration involves here ecclesiology and theology". "That is why, to use a vulgar idiom", Fox said, "theological dogma, at the conference, took a back seat".

Fox's criticism was, to a certain extent, valid. Again and again people at the conference wanted to make clear that at that time the old theological discussions were out-dated. They believed that the new times and especially the encounter of missions with a more pragmatic view of life had displaced the old theological concerns. Francis McConnel put it thus:

"In theological history we have passed away from some discussions and we do not think of them any more. Why? Because we have been in contact with something actual, something concrete, and as we have done that, these other problems have fallen away. How are theological discussions stated to-day? If they get any hearing at all, they are stated in terms of life."

Fox believed that the tendency to avoid theological issues in Latin America was less a real conviction than a missionary tactic used order to accommodate the Christian message to the Latin American context. He failed to understand that one of the main reasons for this
avoidance was the fact that the CCLA people were tired of the consequences of theological polemics in the United States. Fox blamed the pressure of social and particularly religious conditions in Latin America, but turned a blind eye to the difficulties of the North American background. Further, he rejected the view that a proper understanding of the challenge of Latin America might lead Protestant missionaries to undermine or neglect any aspect of Protestant tradition. "South American manners and courtesy we must learn, he said, but mixing Anglo-Saxon directness and frankness with it would make a thousand percent better missionary than one who was always avoiding questions that ought to be faced".4

Fox believed that the Protestant religion that the Panama Conference was promoting in Latin America was a "watered down Protestantism" which would be unable to overcome the "hyper evangelical" stance of some of the Protestant missions that had already arrived in Latin America.5

According to Fox, a Protestantism which attempt through the sacrificing of fundamental principles to accommodate the Christian message to new cultural situation would eventually become a futile effort. In Fox's view, the major mistake of the Panama Congress was that it did not take seriously the reality of Roman Catholicism as a religion that should be confronted openly. He could not understand why the Conference was afraid to denounce the mistakes of a church that was theologically wrong. Rather, he suggested opposition to the
Roman Catholic Church should have been an integral part of the agenda of the Panama Conference. Here Fox noted the shift from the term "Protestant" to that of "Evangelical". For him to avoid the term "Protestant" was a great mistake:

It will be noticed that the term "Protestant" is carefully avoided throughout the whole literature of the Congress and "Evangelical" is substituted even where its use is misleading or absurd. We are disposed to think that this change will not be as satisfactory to Roman Catholics as the older term as it implies their unevangelical character. It ought not to be approved by Protestants for it makes us appear before Romanists ashamed of the name, if not the thing. We have another usus loquendi for "Evangelical". Protestant is the historic, natural and correct description of what such a Congress ought to be. It was not a Protestant Congress, it ought not to have been held. It is one of those straws which show how the wind blows. The whole temper of the rulers and leaders of the Congress was to touch far too lightly on Protestant affirmations.  

John Fox indeed did believe in the importance that doctrines and dogmas played in Christianity. Unlike the CCLA leaders, he thought that the Protestantism of the sixteenth century must be introduced into Latin America. The rereading of Christianity in view of Latin America conditions, for which some in the CCLA argued, was seen by Fox as futile. In this context, in criticising the book *Renaissant Latin America* (1917) in which the author, Harlam P. Beach, reviewed the Panama Conference, John Fox maintained that Latin America would not be saved by phrases. He firmly believed that a Christian message absent of creeds and doctrines could not be effective in bringing about a religious revival in Latin America. By every analogy
of faith and history and human nature and Divine grace, said Fox, there will be no spiritual Renaissance in South America save by the faithful and repeated preaching of the doctrines of grace, the very heart and center of the evangelical gospel.7 Since Fox considered that one of the main tasks of Protestant work in Latin America was the confrontation between Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church he suggested that the history of the Reformation was going to be repeated in Latin America. In the same way that Calvinism had faced Roman Catholicism in the sixteenth century, modern Calvinism was able to do so in the present century:

It is argued that we Presbyterians cannot afford to have Theological Schools in which our doctrines -the magnificent assemblages of sovereign truths which constitute the Calvinistic system -may be taught, because only a few students for the ministry can be secured; that it is cheaper to combine with someone else. This is glazed over by dwelling on "the sin of wasting the Lord's money" ... The backbone of European Romanism was broken by Calvin. Only Calvinism can break Latin American Romanism...John Calvin did establish righteousness and truth in the earth as no one else.8

The answer to Fox's argument was that the Protestantism that had arrived in Latin America before the Panama Congress was based on very strict credal formulations, and yet had not had much success.

2. Grounds for dislike of dogmatic Christianity

One of the outstanding things that characterised the activities of the CCLA was its indifference and at times negative attitude towards theological or doctrinal issues. It seems that this was so because they
had been deeply marked by the bitter controversy between those who espoused Biblical criticism and those who represented of traditional Christianity. This confrontation divided nearly all of the Protestant denominations in the United States.

The other thing that stands out when we study the CCLA is the outspoken opposition that they encountered among Latin American intellectuals to dogmatic expressions of Christianity.

In the context of their own experience and that of those who were disillusioned the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America, CCLA leaders looked at their work as a religious experiment destined to create a renewed vision of Christianity. They believed that the time had come when Protestantism could offer Latin Americans a Christianity able to transcend theological or dogmatic controversies.

CCLA disaffection with theological or dogmatical issues was continually put forward, but in an oblique way, namely, by arguing that their views were based largely on their knowledge of Latin American conditions.

They thought that many theological and doctrinal emphases did not touch on the essentials of Christianity. Nevertheless the CCLA view on theology was far different from the portrayal of men like John Fox, who believed that they were, per se, against theology. For the CCLA theology had changed its meaning. It had to do with a new social awareness, and not only with philosophical thought. They turned down any suggestion of working on the basis of the old concept
of theology. They made clear that they were against grounding their campaign in Latin America on old style theological controversies. On the other hand, they rejected as untrue the suggestion that the teaching of dogmas was not an important part of their religious programme.

The answer to this latter objection was that though theoretically there was no interest in stressing openly dogmatic issues, their practice was rooted in dogmatic convictions. From the outset, it its official organ, La Nueva Democracia, the CCLA unequivocally put forward this idea. Its first editorial stated:

If in La Nueva Democracia we do not want to discuss purely dogmatic issues, it is not because we playdown the importance of dogmas, but because we deal in a field where practical conclusions are asked for. However we will try so that far from clashing with the essential dogmas, practical conclusions will be its synthesis applied to individuals and societies.⁹

This concern was reiterated in the editorial of the third edition: "Our Greeting and Our Programme". Here the editor declared that the articles were not going to satisfy the interests of those believers and unbelievers who considered that religion is "a body of rigid dogmas, a body of mechanical rites, a body of temples, basilicas, cathedrals, an organization expressed in ministers, pastors, bishops and popes". It went on to say:

No. The religion we are going to talk about is the pure and simple religion of Jesus Christ... This religion, in its pristine purity filled with wonderful poets and writers like Victor Hugo and Chateaubriand, Castelar, Tolstoy, Rivero and Nocedal. It is a religion that when it is loyally and sincerely
interpreted can offer solutions to present problems. In a word we will go on to speak of Christianity in its sociological aspect.10

Professor Eduardo Monteverde drew the attention of the delegates at the Montevideo Conference to this aspect. In discussing the Report of Message and Method, he commented that Christianity in Latin America has offered "too many creeds and too little life" while they were now living in "an age of practical appreciation of truth".11

Later, in the context of the celebrations of twentieth anniversary of the Panama Congress, in 1936, Samuel Guy Inman maintained that the success the organization had experienced resulted from the fact that they had not laid its foundations on theological concepts.12

The thinking of people like the Argentine writer and art critic, Julio Navarro Monzo, became for the CCLA the prototype of people to whom a non-dogmatic Protestantism would appeal. This writer was convinced that Latin American youth was not interested whatsoever in a dogmatic religion. In referring to religious competition, he, in 1924, expressed that "whoever comes to South America with the intention of furthering the interests of dogmatism, or of propagating theological controversy, will meet with failure". He went on to say:

If there is anything today in the Anglo-Saxon countries which can interest the young men here, when they become acquainted with it, it is without doubt the point of view of men like Rauschenbush. The young men of South America will always be disposed to listen with attention to him who speaks of these things.13
Writers like Navarro Monzo sounded also a warning note to CCLA leaders with regard to what features Protestantism should have in Latin America. This was because at Montevideo it was mentioned that Protestants "were as dogmatic as the Catholics".14

That sort of criticism towards Protestant work made it central in the CCLA's agenda to awaken consciences among Protestant missions working in Latin America. They were told that unless they were ready to change their theological emphases they would not get further. The Conference in Montevideo sought to achieve this.

At the CCLA meeting in the run up to the Montevideo Conference, Dr. Lowe drew attention to the fact that Protestant Christianity had too often dealt with creeds and doctrines rather than with life. He saw this as the very negation of Protestantism. For him, Protestant Christianity had become an important world force because of what it could do, in practical terms, in human life. This is why he said that the Montevideo Conference would succeed if only at the end of the event "there should come out a consciousness of what looks like our spiritual bankruptcy".15

Unlike a message interested in stressing Christian dogmas, the Commission on Special Religious Problems in Montevideo accentuated the prophetic side of Christianity, namely to denounce "everything in life that is not in accordance with the mind of Christ". In the wake of this, Protestantism must point out "social and individual cases of sin in the light of God's law.16
In that Evangelical conference it was made clear that Protestant churches had not yet understood the Latin American mind. Instead of this, Protestant churches had been following policies which were in line with the interest of their parent bodies in the United States. The Commission on Evangelism described it thus:

On the whole the reports of the committees are comparatively free from emphasis on doctrine or dogma. To be sure, from the North comes the statement that it is wise to preach doctrine, while from the southern countries comes the equally strong statement that Latins do not care for doctrine..."We have yet to learn," writes the Argentine committee, "how to do the work of Jesus Christ, how to help men to live His life without loading them down with unacceptable dogmas. We must learn to give them the picture without the frame." A distinguished writer says, "At least dogma has lost its charm. Even the ignorant people do not take the teaching of the Church seriously any more. It is not that they do not believe in religion, but that they do not believe in the dogmas in which religion is clothed."

In this context one thing that the CCLA underlined was that Latin Americans were directing their criticism not against Christianity per se, but against Christian churches. This, they saw, as a positive factor in that they were offering a distinctly new approach to Christianity.

Among Latin American writers who had taken this line, Pablo Infran, for instance blamed the emphasis on dogma, and the efforts of the Church to ensure its dogmatic supremacy, for diluting the message of Jesus. In line with this argument, in 1926 another contributor to La Nueva Democracia, put it thus:

The apparent failure of Christianity... the good news to the poor...is because Christianity has been turned into ritualistic
and mythical doctrine and into a huge oligarchical organization which has disdained the founder's simplicity and humility.¹⁹

The emphasis on a practical Christianity was getting stronger among the activists of the CCLA, as they realised that critics of Christianity were not only pointing towards the faults of the Roman Catholic Church but also towards those Protestant churches that were already working in Latin America. The educated people who were displeased with the Roman Catholic Church were aware of the continual controversies among the different Protestant churches. This factor was, and still is, the Achilles heel of Protestantism in Latin America, which its opponents have used powerfully.

This criticism was coupled with another strongly negative judgment, namely the idea held by intellectuals, even among some supporters of the CCLA's work, that Protestantism was basically an Anglo-Saxon religion. The Chilean poetess Gabriela Mistral, columnist in La Nueva Democracia, was an example of this view. She believed that Protestantism would never fit into Latin culture.

This explains why the CCLA paid so much attention to the words of Julio Navarro Monzo when, in 1924, he wrote that, in the same way that people in Latin America had rejected the Roman Catholic Church, they would reject Protestantism if it is expressed in its denominational tensions. He put it thus:

The question of ecclesiastical organizations does not interest him (the Latin American), whether it be the Episcopal regime, the Presbyterian, or the Congregationalist, it is a
matter of indifference to him. He does not believe in the church, feels no need of her, and is accustomed to ignore her existence. Less still, can this interest be aroused in ancient disputes about predestination, free-will, eucharistic transubstantiation, auricular confession, or clerical celibacy.

Navarro Monzo looked on Protestant controversies as outdated experiences that could have significance for the sixteenth but not for the twentieth century. The value of the Reformation for the modern world best that modern times might learn from the Reformation lay not in its religious implications but in "the spirit of progress, the spirit of evolution" for which the Reformation stood. The movement that he looked forward to in Latin America would be "the reformation of the twentieth century".

Intellectuals like Navarro Monzo looked for a Christianity of the twentieth century that would emerge after its renewal as a social Christianity freed from all dogmatic emphasis. As Ricardo Rojas put it:

The world needs anew the coming of the Messiah; and if he came to the earth twenty centuries ago as a man of flesh, the Christ of ritual and temples, to-day we await the social Christ, who will come in spirit, as he announced, for the lifting of souls and peace of nations.

Here it is worthwhile to note that the leaders of the CCLA, at the time of the Montevideo Congress, in 1925, were convinced that the type of Christianity that would succeed in Latin America not only had to surpass that of the Roman Catholic Church but also all varieties of Protestantism so far known in Latin America.

Some factors may be mentioned as contributing to this
perception. On the one hand, there was the tiredness that the continual struggle with Protestant leaders in Latin America brought on the CCLA. They did not accept the attitude of Protestant leaders who believed their present work should be promoted above the stressing of denominational lines. It appears that CCLA leaders thought that such a battle could never be won.

Another thing that strengthened this concern was that they were convinced that the energies of Christian churches in Latin America, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, must be concentrated on dealing with the materialism and secularism that, in the twenties, were gaining momentum in Latin America. On the face of this they deemed as useless the traditional doctrinal confrontation among Protestants themselves and the Protestant opposition towards the Roman Catholic Church. Those preparing for the Jerusalem Conference (1928), convened by the International Missionary Council, to which CCLA was granted an important number of delegates, had become aware of the dangers of secularization. This provided the background of comments at the Montevideo Conference such as this:

Great social forces are at work in the South American nations. Out of the vast interplay of these forces something new in the world is to emerge. What shall it be?...Will it be a materialistic world or will it be Christian? We do not ask so much will it be Catholic or Protestant, but will it be Christian?.

The Jerusalem Conference itself advocated, more openly than that of Edinburgh in 1910, the need for cooperation and unity of
Protestants and Catholics.

3. Jesus is better and is above theology

Protestant missions in Latin America centred all their religious principles upon the person of Jesus. However this was not anything original, since the person of Jesus had for long played a decisive role in Protestant theology. We know the importance that was given to the person of Jesus in liberal theology in its encounter with Biblical criticism. As Marsden says, Christ stood at the centre of liberal theology embodying the close relationship between the divine and the historical.25 Some authors have suggested that this importance given to the person of Jesus by liberal theology was a signal of their loyalty to the Christian tradition.26 Christ, and especially his life in this world above all, became the answer to those who believed that the Christian church had nothing to offer in modern times. We see that this liberal emphasis on the importance of Jesus had great influence on the organisers of the Panama Conference. The mythical and transcendent figure of Jesus gave way to the example of His practical life or His immanent in human history.

Since the Congress Conference Protestant missionaries in Latin America were convinced that they brought with them a view of Jesus Christ which not only was unknown in these lands, but also that the political and social conditions there made it imperative for them to share. Alongside the importance that Protestantism has always given to Christ in theology, the relevance of Jesus Christ was also
strengthened by the fact that Latin America was under the control of a religious tradition that, according to Protestant missions, did not give Jesus supreme authority. The emphasis on Christ in Latin American Protestantism was a direct response to the importance that the Roman Catholic Church gave to the Virgin Mary.

The life of Jesus was one of the theological issues most frequently addressed by the advocates of the Protestant cause in Latin America. Robert Speer and J.H. McLean are good examples of the emphasis that the CCLA laid on studies on Christ. However it was John A. Mackay who made the greatest effort to write a Christological analysis taking into account the religious heritage of Latin American countries.

Other Protestant missionaries did not hesitate to stress that Jesus was above all theologies, and that what the mission field needed was not theologies but encounter with the very person of Jesus Christ. The author of the report, "Relevant Facts in Latin America civilization" defined this as one of the most fundamental aspects of the christian faith:

The centre of Christianity is the person and work of Jesus Christ. Concerning Him in such a field as Latin America: He is Divine, the Son of God incarnate, "God manifest in the flesh"...None other can surpass Him in making God known. None other than He, with the Father and the Spirit, can be the object of faith and worship after the example of the Apostolic Church.

Protestant Missions were convinced that the essentials of faith were what should be taught in the mission fields and not those things
that could generate confusion amongst non-Christians. The Rev. J. C. Kunzman, of the Pan-Lutheran Missionary Society made this clear in the discussion of the report on the Commission of the Cooperation and Unity:

As the task grows larger and the contest becomes sharper, God is compelling the Church to place the emphasis on that which is essential and vital. What after all is Christianity but the unfolding of Christ in the lives of men and nations? It is not a system of doctrines or a code of morals, though it possesses the loftiest teaching and advocates lives of purest morals. Its ultimate test is not found in our Confessions, but in our lives. Not by what we say, but what we do we are judged. There must be the doing of the Father's will as in heaven and that Father's will is summarized by our Saviour in His last commission, the fulfilling of which has brought us together. If socialists, liberals and conservatives, if Catholics, Protestants and Jews can without changing their views fight side by side to destroy men's lives in Europe, why cannot we be true to our special convictions and still map out a common program to save the unsaved in Latin America? 30

In this line of thinking Jesus Christ appears as the raison d'etre and the only revelation of God and the foundation Christianity. The Methodist Bishop, Walter Lumbeth, put forward the exaltation of Jesus Christ as the secret of the mighty God. He contrasted this with those who believed that God can only be known through the proclamation of a dogma.31

Protestant missions made it clear that the vitality of Christianity resided in the person of Jesus Christ and not in the dogmas about Him. In this sense the Panama Conference underlined the fact that Christianity was more than the subscription to dogmas but the encounter with a personality. James Vance, in his speech "The
Conquering Power of Christianity" was adamant that the best theology and sublimest doctrine was Jesus Christ, and that doctrines acquire importance only when they are experienced in real life and not when they are only believed as an intellectual creed. He went on to say:

the doctrines of Christianity exist, not when they are subscribed to, but when they are experienced. The doctrine of the atonement is not the dogma of a creed subscription, but the experience of Calvary. One may subscribe to the dogma and not change, but let him reproduce the experience, and its vitalizing power is at once apparent. For the truths of God to vitalize the world, they must become an incarnation. The exhibit of Christianity is a redeemed life, Christians are to be living epistles. Christianity's exhibit is not a cathedral, nor an altar, nor a sacred relic. It is neither sacrament nor ritual nor creed. It is a life across which God has written Himself.32

The relationship between the Bible and theologies was continually presented to make it clear that the first had predominance over the latter. Arthur Lloyd, President of the Board of Missions of the Domestic and Foreign Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, called attention to the fact that the disciples did not need theology to understand the message of Jesus. The element of "life" is time and again set forth as the key element for a sound comprehension of the Christian message. "What I would have you believe", said Lloyd, is that the apostle did not reach, by means of theological discussion, the clear understanding that made him able to declare without reservation that in his Master was life; nor yet did he attain it because he believed any particular thing to be true of Him. 33

The imperative of the proclamation of Jesus Christ in Latin America was connected with the view itself of Jesus as an actor not
only in religious terms but at all levels of society. The Commission that worked on "The Relevant Facts in Latin America Civilization" put it thus:

What His character was, what His lips spoke, is the supreme law of our individual character and of our social relationships...For the man who would follow Jesus, the tests are likely to be severe and the sacrifice great. We must learn to apply His teaching broadly and without fear to the whole of our social or national prejudices, to all our fashionable standards, to our industrial, political and ecclesiastical problems, for it is through Christ, God is made known. It is certain that through His character and teaching the very will of God is made articulate, the real secret and source of the evolution of humanity towards its ideal is laid open to our gaze.34

In this same line another Commission at the Panama Conference underlined the fact that no more inspiring message can be given to the people of Latin America than that of the personal leadership of Jesus Christ.35

Samuel Inman stressed that the gospel of Christ was not a theological tract. He distinguished between the two by observing that while theology adopts permanent rigid forms, the Gospel is like water, adapting itself to the medium. 36

Later Inman characterised Jesus as the best sociologist, who was going to bring about a new social order.37 In line with Inman, Emilio Schulze pointed out, in La Nueva Democracia, that the mistake of all Christian churches had been to forget the human Christ, "the author of a moral sociological doctrine which has a remedy for all evils". 38

In this, the thinking of these authors was in line with the social
gospellers for whom the teaching of Jesus contained measures by which to judge the social order.39

It was this claim of the social repercussions of Jesus that would make Protestantism a relevant religion in Latin America, and would eventually weaken the authority of the Roman Church lose in these countries. Protestants missionaries considered that this view of Christ was more effective than confronting openly the defects of the Roman Catholic Church. For example, Webster Browning thought that Latin Americans were attracted by the personality of Jesus and hungered for a virile interpretation of His message, and not for more dogmatic or ecclesiastical controversy. He saw that to give such a helpful interpretation of Christianity is to be the task of the Evangelical churches. 40

According to Protestant missionaries the faulty view of people in Latin America on the person of Christ resided in their failure to appreciate the social value of His influence. They thought that this continent had known only a dead Christ, trapped in the creeds of the Church, and aloof from the betterment of society. George Winton, missionary in Mexico of the Board of Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, referred, in 1913, to the "grossly inadequate conception of Christ" that existed in Latin America.41 In 1916 Homer C. Stuntz, Methodist Bishop in Argentina also complained that Christ was usually presented in Latin America as dead and nailed to the cross. 42
Protestant missions would often criticize Roman Catholics for their obedience to the Pope and the worship of the Virgin Mary. However delegates at the Panama Congress were conscious th the best way to confront the religious situation of Latin America was by stressing the social role of the person of Jesus and not through public controversy. One of the commissions expressed it thus:

Experience shows that direct and controversial public attack upon the worship of the Virgin, when thrust into the foreground of the work, awakens only fanatical hatred and detestation of Protestantism. But when the message of fellowship with the God of loving mercy through Christ the Redeemer, and of the promised leadership of Christ, is steadily, intelligently proclaimed, the worship of Mary and the saints falls away.  

The same commission pointed out that the risen Christ was the only head of the Church, and that it was blasphemy to think that any mediator was needed to persuade Him to have mercy. It was viewed as entirely contrary to the teaching of the apostles to suppose that any one could have more power with God than He. Christ alone was the Saviour. In this sense the Montevideo Conference stressed that one of the special needs of the Evangelical movement in Latin America was to specialize on the person, life, and the teaching of Jesus. The clear advice of the Commission of Church and Community was "to preach before all, and above all, Christ".  

The Commission of Evangelism recommended that the centrality of Jesus Christ must be the main feature in all evangelical preaching. The Report on Colombia emphasized that "The practical
doctrinal message should be Christ, the only Saviour from sin”; and on Chile "Jesus Christ, the hope of the sinner," "Christ and Him crucified". 46

4. The CCLA in line with modern thought

Latin America became a field for Protestant missions when the American Protestant churches were coming out of a religious crisis which had arisen from the gaining of ground by modern ideas in society. Protestant churches had come through a bitter confrontation that had exhausted tired all the parties involved. It was a struggle mainly between two parties. On the one hand there were those who believed that churches not only had to come to terms with modern thinking, but that Christianity must, for its survival, be adapted to modern thinking. On the other hand, there were those who believed that the new thought should not be allowed to set the agenda of the Church, and that it must be opposed.

It is clear that the North American advocates of Protestantism tried to keep Latin America away from that ideological confrontation that was taking place in the United States. It is difficult to find in the Protestant missionary reports any serious attempt to inform the Latin American constituency of the background to the crisis that modernism represented for Christianity. Nevertheless, at the time of the Panama Congress, Protestant missions were echoing modernist ideas with
regard to Christianity and especially with regard to the Bible.

Though these issues of modernism and biblical criticism were not openly part of the discussions at the Panama Conference, some of the organisers could not conceal their sympathy with modernist ideas. It is likely that Protestant missionary leaders somehow saw a parallel between what had happened in their own country and the impact that modern ideas were having in Latin America. They were concerned that the charm of the new ideas might be leading Latin American intellectuals to reject Christianity. It is in this context that we can best understand the expressions at Protestants concerning modern ideas on Christianity was concerned.

It can be said that the Protestantism that the CCLA was intended to promote was more in line with modern religious thinking than with the viewpoint of its conservative opponents. The promoters of the Conference argued that what modern criticism had done was to challenge the traditional view of Christian Church, but not the essence of Christianity, namely the view of Jesus Christ. This was for instance the point of view of the Methodist Episcopal Bishop, Francis J. McConnel in his main speech at the Panama Conference entitled "Christian Faith in a Age of Doubt". He said that after the battle between the Old Testament and the New Testament he could see that Christians had "better than before a sense of perspective of certain
spiritual elements that have always been at the heart of our faith." Even if we accept, he went on, the most radical statements of modern criticism concerning Christ, He came out with more force than ever.47

The Panama Conference did not take the least interest in fighting against Biblical criticism or modern thinking at large. There was rather a tendency to embrace more positive view of modern thinking. This explains why the Panama delegates, at times, blamed conservative theologians for having failed to deal with the challenge of modern society. They thought that the dry character of an abstract theology determined to head off, instead of coming to terms with, modern ideas, had made traditional Protestant Christianity an ideal target for its critics. However, they did not believe that the best of Christianity was in danger, or that the ideals of Protestant Missionary work had been harmed.

What made the difference here was that missionary workers were dealing not with theoretical or philosophical matters, but with the real problems of life in the mission fields. McConnel said:

The old pessimism and despair is passing away and it is a very significant fact that the persons who are most concerned with the final outcome are the persons who have the hardest problem to solve. They are not discouraged. Those who are facing the great problems of the field are not discouraged. The men in India and China are not discouraged. It is easy to become discouraged in the cloister, and it is easy to become discouraged when we are withdrawn from the world, but the men who are taking hold of the something, very seldom
become discouraged... Actual contact with things is keeping our feeling sane and wholesome. Much of the morbidness which characterised other days and much of that hopelessness and gloom, was the gloom of a mind that was not actually in contact with material things around about, striving to bring relief to men.48

In the context of the warfare between religion and science, McConnell criticised the way theologians argued for the relevance of God. This is why the old theological view based on abstractions had so much brought Christian religion into disrepute. What is more, he thought that old argumentation were now outdated. Teachings intended to defend the divinity of Christ by means theoretical definitions were useless. One example would be preaching which, in trying to establish the divinity of Christ, divided the argument into "pleromatic humanity, pleromatic divinity and hypostatic union".49

According to McConnell, this sort of argument, belonged to another age: "That is almost as far behind us as the problem of how many angels could dance on the point of a needle. What has brought about the change? We have a hold on material things. 50

The CCLA leaders took sides with those who worked to reconcile Christianity with science. They looked at Christianity as the only way to head off the materialist waves that were influencing new scientific studies. In like manner they distanced themselves from those determined to combat science for the very reasons that it took modern and non-traditional approaches.

La Nueva Democracia, in an editorial on the journal's first
anniversary (1921), warned its readers that they will have to pay tribute to science, in its theoretical, hypothetical and philosophical forms, as well as in its practical aspects. The editor pointed that "men live not only by religion alone but also by science".51

Same year Samuel Guy Inman, the journal's director, wrote that blind opposition towards science had not achieved anything but had held back the advance, of what he called "new pedagogical and humanitarian studies". He argued that it was possible to accept modern views on science and theology without surrendering the Christian faith.52

Later at the Montevideo Congress in 19125, it was reiterated that Protestantism should not fall into the same mistake as the Roman Catholic Church for which science was regarded as the foe of Christianity. It was said that this attitude contributed to making the scientific spirit positivistic, agnostic, rationalistic, even atheistic. 53

The emphasis that the CCLA gave to theological education in Latin America was looked on in the context of dialogue with science. The writers of the general introduction of the English version of history of the Montevideo Conference recorded that every report there underlined "that we are to love God with our minds". For those who may see it as commonplace, the writer replied that "its commonplaceness is its significance", contrasted with the old debates against the use of expert knowledge.54
4.1. **New perspective on the Bible**

The CCLA most revealed its partial agreement with the critical approach to Christianity in the way it dealt with the importance and meaning of the Bible. The Conferences convened by the CCLA did not show any interest whatsoever in advocating traditional views of the Bible. In other words they did not share the zeal of those within the church who rejected the new thinking as damaging to the authority of the Bible. On the contrary there was some agreement with the modern view of the Bible. The Conference of Panama, for instance, revealed that among the participants there were people of different schools with regard to the inspiration of the Bible. 55

In the documents of the Conference there is a lack, on the other hand, either of strong opposition to "Biblical Criticism" or defence of the traditional view of doctrines that the new thinking had denied. Although issues such as the Genesis view on the creation, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the Virgin Birth or the physical resurrection of Jesus, etc, were absent, some organisers did speak in favour on the modern view of the Bible.

The report on "The Christian Message and the Educated Classes" recommended, for instance, bibliographical sources where students could study this. It quoted Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* and his *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*. This source was praised for its "constant help in his effort to present reasonable, modern and constructive arguments for the authority of the Bible, and especially of
the New Testament, and for the complete trustworthiness of the person and work of Christ, the nature and claims of the gospel of the grace of God. 56

John Fox, of the Princeton Theological Review, criticized some of the organisers of the Panama Conference for their fondness of modern Christian ideas. Here it is worth recalling that Princeton Seminary was, at the time of the conference and long before, the Protestant institution that led the resistance to those who, within and outside the Church, believed that traditional Christianity must undergo changes in order to be in touch with modern times. Princeton Seminary was an important member of that alliance of conservatives that later set out rid the Protestant churches of those who did not accept a package of fixed doctrines and creeds as marks of their orthodoxy. Later, in the twenties, this alliance contributed to the birth of the Fundamentalism-Modernism controversy.

Fox drew attention to the Conference's departures from the traditional view of Christianity. For instance, he viewed the reference to Hastings' Biblical dictionary as indicating the "a weak and temporising manner in which the burning question of the day among Protestants is dealt with". 57 Nevertheless he was careful not to say that those modernistic inclinations were not espoused by everyone at the Panama Conference. For "the vast majority of the Congress would have been outraged by any open attack on the historical truthfulness of the Bible". For him the statement on Hastings was an ambiguous and a
delicately phrased intimation that the old view of the Bible may be set aside, in part at least, if we are to meet modern needs. 58 Fox indeed reflected the views of those for whom, within the North American context, Hastings' writings were so unpopular. Hasting had been pigeonholed as a liberal due to his Biblical approach. As a matter of fact his Dictionary of the Bible maintained that though there were some "higher Critics" against the Bible they were a minority. For the author of the article "Criticism" itself was neutral, it had no bias; it was a scientific process.59

Fox thought that the writers of some reports were not convinced that the Bible was the Word of God. He based this accusation on the fact that the report on "The Aim and Message of the Evangelical Churches" speaks of the Bible as the "Word of God". The fact that "Word of God" was in quotation marks pointed, in his view, to it being simply a matter of current usage, and not necessarily because of the conviction of the writers. From that report Fox deduced that the writers:

embody usually the corner-stone of the "modern view" that the Bible is only partly true and that criticism must determine for us what part of it we may believe and what must disbelieve. One of the most eminent members of the Congress in public discussion declared with transparent honesty that we must, in dealing with Latin America, accept the modern view of the Bible and the doctrine of evolution.60

John Fox was not the only one in perceiving modernist tendencies of some people at the Panama Conference. There were
others, even within the congress, who realised this and argued with those who upheld that position. One of these was another John Fox, a namesake of that linked with Princeton Seminary just mentioned.

This second John Fox was the secretary of the American Bible Society at the Conference, and lectured there on the subject "The Care and Study of the Scriptures". During the discussion of the report on "The Necessity and Importance of Christian Literature" he showed that he was openly in disagreement with the advocacy of those ideas. He argued with Dr. Henry Churchill King, from Oberlin College, who was the chairman of the Committee on Education at the Conference. King had presented lecture entitled "The Contribution of Modern Science to the Ideal of Interests", in which he presented a very positive view of modern science as an ally of Christianity.

These two speakers, with their obviously deep commitment to their respective views, revived th bitter polemic between the Bible and Modern Science. John Fox(ABS) referred to his clash with King thus:

It is needless to say that I disagree with Dr. King when he declares that modern historical criticism will prevail in the Christian church. That means in my opinion that the Bible is true in spots or false in spots. Those who hold such a belief soon find that the true spots are becoming fewer and fewer and the false spots are more numerous. I hope that Latin American students in the universities and seminaries are not to be placed under the influence of men who teach, however sincerely, that the gospels are only half true. 61

King, became an enemy to those who suspected the influence of Biblical criticism in the CCLA's work. King had in fact written books that had aroused much criticism long before the Panama
Conference. In one of his works he argued that it did not overstate the truth to say that "if one person is likely to suffer shipwreck through the employment of Biblical criticism, the faith of ten will break down -- for lack of the very help it would bring." 62

It is worthwhile noting that King's comment on "Biblical criticism" at the Panama Conference did not appear in the final edition of the documents of the Conference. This indicates that for obvious reasons his remarks were censored by the Conference authorities.

Nevertheless it would be wrong to say that the American Bible secretary, John Fox's concern was completely in line with the conservative school that Princeton Seminary represented. He would not agree with the principle of the inerrancy of Scriptures that Princeton Seminary, especially one of its academics, Professor Benjamin Warfield, had made a central doctrine and a test of sound doctrine. On the other hand that school of theological thinking would never agree with statements like this of Fox made at the Panama Congress of 1916:

If the copyists of the Bible, a thousand or fifteen hundred years ago, had all of them been as careful as a few were, there would not have been so many minor mistakes, and if there had been any way of controlling the production of the books, we would have been saved the necessity for the rather technical science of textual criticism. One thing is worth noticing, that the New Testament makes very little provision for its own preservation by formal enactment; indeed we might say almost none whatever. 63

On this we would say the same of Robert Speer, the figure that
ideologically and organizationally set the pace at the Conference. Nobody would have dared say that his thinking was unduly influenced by the Higher criticism. Yet neither did he go along completely with the conservative view of Christianity. He distanced himself from those who had a dogmatic view on the Bible. His view on the Virgin Birth was an example. Despite not denying the Virgin Birth, he said that "the Bible nowhere declares that knowledge of the Virgin Birth is essential to salvation and there is much preaching of the Gospel in the New Testament that makes no mention of it".

4.2. The Bible as important but not sufficient

Though it is true that the Panama Conference showed an open-minded approach to the modern views on Christianity, it is also true that the delegates believed that the Bible played a vital role in the Christian faith. The "Commission on Literature" stated clearly that the new thinking did not undermine the credibility in the Bible:

Now it is one of the clearest results of the whole modern historical movement that the study of the rise of Christianity as the supreme revelation from God and the study of the literary history of the Bible are intimately bound together. The Bible can be used as the "Word of God" because it contains the message of redemption and the offer of that fellowship with God which the heart of humanity was created to hunger after and to enjoy.

In all mission fields and in all mission work, the Bible is, according to this commission, the first book in both time and importance. The same view was expressed by the commission concerned with "The Preparation for Christian Work in Latin
America" for whom "no knowledge is more essential or useful to the missionary than a real mastery of the English Bible". The teachings of the Bible, they went on, are at the very basis of the evangelical message. It is the great text-book for Latin American work.67 It is in this framework that the American Bible Society Secretary, John Fox, praised the Roman Catholic Church view with regard to the modernist view of the Bible. He believed that Protestantism must learn to defend the Bible as the Roman Catholic Church had done: Protestants "ought to stand with Rome against the rationalists on this question, [because] She is more faithful custodian than they are".68

Here again John Fox went beyond the limits of the School of Princeton or of the Biblical Fundamentalism. This is not because conservative Protestantism did not acknowledge or approve of the stand taken by the Roman Catholic Church with regard to modernism. There is no doubt that conservative Protestantism felt pleased with the decisions that the Vatican had taken against the application of modern critical methods in its theological institutions.69 However Fox transcended their limits in that he appeared to regard the Roman Catholic Church as part of the Church of Christ, unlike those conservatives who, despite their sympathy with the Vatican position against rationalists, believed that the Roman Catholic Church represented a counterfeit version of Christianity.

Fox saw the problem with the Roman Catholic Church from another point of view. Though he rejected its exclusivism in claiming
to be the only true Christian Church, he agreed with Roman Catholics that the Church is the custodian of the Scriptures because the Church and the Bible belong together. But he asserted that the care of the Bible belongs to the whole Church and not only to the Roman Catholic part. It was in this context that Fox thinks that relations with the Roman Catholic Church should be considered:

We find ourselves obliged to discuss the vexed question of the relation of the Roman Catholic Church to the Bible. That Communion has always made the claim that the custody of the Bible is with the Church. I think that is a perfectly true and sound doctrine and an aspect of the truth which is far too little appreciated. I am thankful to the Roman Church for emphasising it. But then the question arises, What is the Church? Is the Roman Catholic Church the proper custodian and the only one or is it possible that there are other Churches equally entitled to consideration? If the Church is the logical and natural custodian of the Scriptures, we must sooner or later face the question what the Church is, what are the relations of the so-called Churches now existing to each other and to the Scriptures which all hold in common?

The opposition of the Roman Catholic Church to Modernism was seen at the Panama Conference as strengthening the Protestant cause in Latin America. It would help to convince Latin Americans people that the Bible was not simply a Protestant or Evangelical book. For Latin America, there was, at grassroots levels, even until well into the second half of twentieth century, the idea that the Bible was a Protestant book. The Yale University Professor, Harlam P. Beach recorded that Protestantism had to reckon with this:

He [the missionary] should so present it that it will appear to be the most catholic of the books, and not merely an evangelical document. Hearers may be reminded that the Roman Church accepts and appeals to the authority of this book as the Word of God. Upon this point the decrees of the
Council of Trent, the teachings of Roman Catholic theologians, and even the encyclical of the late Pope against modernism, are unanimous.72

As we have seen before it can be concluded that those who organised the Panama Conference not only had no interest in opposing the new ideas concerning the Bible, but that they also expressed their sympathy for much of the new thought, without accepting any loss of importance of the Bible.

Whatever the reasons within the North American context that led Protestant missionaries to take an open view on biblical criticism, the circumstances of the Latin American situation made that feeling even stronger. They knew that the educated classes, to whom the CCLA was giving special attention, had been exposed to modern ideas that so clashed with the traditional views of Christianity. Therefore they believed that while modernism had aroused such controversy in their churches at home, to be seen as supporters modernism would only have the effect of attracting followers in Latin America. It would put Christianity in touch with the educated classes in Latin America. It is not until the 1930s that North American fundamentalism begins to dominate the scene.

However much respect and importance they held for the Bible, the CCLA were convinced that were convinced that a Christianity based on Bible as the only source of Christianity, had no future in Latin America. This was, according to The Commission on Literature, the main weakness of the books and Protestant propaganda in Latin
America and the explanation of why Protestant work had such little result so far. They advocated the bringing up to date of Christian literature in order to be able to respond to modern thought:

Looking at the missionary task from the modern viewpoint, one of our first problems is the adaptation of our literature to meet, so far as may be possible, these native peculiarities and predispositions. This brings up many questions that were scarcely thought of when our older missionary literature was produced, and that have only begun to enter into the editing of some of the material that has been published in recent years. The forging of an opening wedge for the evangelical message that will not depend so patently on an appeal to the authority of the Bible and on its private interpretation is a task we might well consider.

The Commission on Survey and Occupation also in their report remarked that the Bible alone was not enough. They believed that the Christian faith "should be buttressed by, in addition to the Bible, an auxiliary Christian literature". They grounded this observation on that "many of the most influential leaders of Latin America have been educated in western Europe and have brought home with them the doubts or the antagonism to Christianity in those countries."

The Commission on the Christian Message went further by saying that a Protestant missionary to the uneducated heathen "has the right to go with the Bible in his hand and assert dogmatically: 'This is the Word of God, and I am here to declare the message which it contains for you and from Him'. But if that missionary would be working among people of Western education he cannot act in that simple way, [because] he will be confronted by many men and women who have caught at least the echoes, and by some who know the
substance, of the modern critical movement in Bible study".76

5. The hold of modern ideas in Latin America

We have seen that one of the main factors that contributed to shape the Protestantism fostered at the Panama Conference, was the concern of the Conference with the influence of modern thought among the Latin American educated classes. With their open-minded programme they sought to prevent Latin America from going through the traumatic experience that the encounter of modern ideas with traditional Christianity had engendered in the United States. The Commission on Survey and Occupation drew attention to one factor that according to them Christian leaders seemed not to grasp, namely that in Latin America, the moulding of the policy of the various nations was in the hands of an intellectual elite which practically atheistic in faith.77 In the discussion of the report of the Commission, E.T. Colton, member of the Press Committee, warned that the Panama Conference was confronted with the fact that Latin America was moving"under the darkened counsels of rationalism and unbelief with their attendant vagaries, licence and pessimism".78

The Commission on the Christian Message and the Educated Classes was also explicit in describing what they called the practical atheism which Latin American was experiencing as a result of the attraction of deism:
But it is said that many leaders of Latin-American thought who do not profess to be atheists adopt, nevertheless, the form of theism known as deism. That is, they seem to acknowledge the existence of a creative and intelligent will, without which nature cannot be explained as a vast but unified and orderly process; but they disclaim the idea that such a being has definite claims on individual recognition. They are deists who disown religion. They imagine, as indeed many do in other enlightened lands, that the future history of man, based on economic facts and ethical and social ideals, can reach its goal without any effort on man's part to enter into personal communion with the Will which orders all. That Will works immanently, it is said; and, so far as our knowledge or responsive action is concerned, it works impersonally.79

The impression of Colton was rife in the Panama Conference. The welcome that Latin America gave to new ideologies was challenging traditional Christianity and bringing about the birth of a more effective Protestantism. However, Protestants also that the indifference towards religion was indeed real and that it was coextensive with the spread of modern learning. It was the outcome of the educational influence of Encyclopedists, Positivists, Darwinists and Spencerists who, in their view, "systematically treated Christianity and even the active belief in God as irrelevant to the study of mankind and the ordering of society".80 The hold of the new thought on Latin America was described in the Panama Conference in these terms:

The thinking world of Latin America is largely controlled by the idea of evolution. The form in which it has mainly been presented and gained its hold is that which it has taken from the system of Herbert Spencer based upon the doctrine of the persistence of force and the Darwinian theory of natural selection. For many the Spencerian philosophy has coalesced with the more humanitarian enthusiasm of Auguste Comte, whose philosophy of Positivism has at once captured their democratic convictions and confirmed their rejection of a
supernatural religion. Thus they find themselves buttressed, by an interpretation of evolution which claims to be scientific, and a view of history which claims to be most human, in an attitude of defiance toward revealed religion. In their search for political ideals they assume that science must have the last and decisive word.81

Lucien Kinsolving, Episcopalian Bishop of Southern Brazil, in commenting on the speech by John F. Goucher of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, looked on this as a tragic factor insofar as he believed that the absence of the sense of an active God, meant the longing for freedom could never be complete in Latin America. He doubted that these countries could build free republics as "their destiny was in the hands of young men who were going forth from the universities to be the leaders in the destiny of these Latin American republics, honey-combed with infidelity, saturated with agnosticism and free thinking". Can you ever have free republics if those republics do not take God into account? 82

But in the Protestant view this situation was brought about not by the strength of the new ideas themselves, but by the weakness of a Christianity that had proved unable to meet the needs of its faithful. Protestants argued that Roman Catholic leaders were in the main responsible for the discredited image of Christianity amongst Latin American intellectuals. This because, as the Commission on Education put it, the modern ideas of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were in part a movement towards greater freedom of thought and expression in religion; and in part, a rejection of the control that Spain
had traditionally exercised in church and state.\textsuperscript{83}

The Church, instead of having equipped people to cope with the challenge of modern ideas, had brought them to believe that Christianity was by nature incompatible with modern thought. The attitude of University towards the church was, as E.T. Colton put it: "We were reared as Catholics, but no one can remain in the University and retain either faith or respect for the Church".

The fact that the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America resisted much of the modern learning of the nineteenth century meant that many educated people, as they were exposed to those ideas, were being unable to cope. "Unaided in their hour of need", Harlam P. Beach remarked, "the faith of the educated men suffered shipwreck".\textsuperscript{84}

6. Response to Biblical criticism in Latin America

The modern crisis to which, according to the CCLA, Protestant churches must respond, was exemplified in the sympathy that some Latin Americans showed for Biblical Criticism. The interest in the new Biblical approaches had reached these countries, through neither Protestant nor Roman Catholic education, but rather through a genuine search on the part of intellectuals who, looked to other regions for more creative views on Christianity. They were aware of the challenge that the new views in Europe and the United States represented for Christian churches, but none the less believed that modern thought could not be ignored.

452
Julio Navarro Monzo was one the most outstanding representatives of the group of intellectuals who thought that Christian churches must shaken up in Latin America as they had been in other continents. Monzo did not recognize all the implications that the new ideas, especially Biblical Criticism, had for traditional Christianity; for him the greatest value of the new ideas rested on the fact that they could help Church to become a more useful agent in society. Monzo extolled the idea that social service had become emphasized in churches in Anglo-Saxon countries because of the impact Biblical Criticism was making among them. He praised the work of theologians like Ritschl, and Rauschenbush. In contrast Monzo complained that Biblical criticism has been virtually unknown in Latin America. He knew just two persons interested in that subject: Jose Carlos Rodriguez of Brazil and the Argentinean Clemente Ricci.

Jose Carlos Rodriguez was a typical liberal minded man with whom the Protestant churches established a close relationship. He was the head and owner of the important *Journal of Commerce*, and was one the authors who showed interest in Biblical studies as they were developing in Europe and the United States. After his retirement as journalist he devoted his life to writing a long work on the issue. He wrote and published in Portuguese in Edinburgh in 1921 two large volumes entitled "Historical and Critical Studies on the Old Testament". The Commission on Special Religious Problems at the Montevideo Conference of 1925 praised this work as follows:
The other case is of Jose Carlos Rodriguez, the director of the leading newspaper of Rio de Janeiro, who became interested in Christ and the Scriptures. In 1921 he published a learned introduction to the Old Testament in two large volumes...This is the first book of its kind that has ever been published in Spanish or Portuguese, and may be taken as the first fruits of what may be expected when Jesus Christ takes possession of the hearts and the minds of intellectual men in South America, as He has done in other parts of the world.88

The other notable figure who wrote on Christianity and showed interest in Biblical Criticism was Ricardo Rojas. He was Professor and later principal of the National University of Argentina. Like Navarro Monzo, Rojas rejected Christianity as it was presented by the Roman Catholic Church. He became an international figure after the publication of his book, The Invisible Christ, in 1925. Rojas was also a friend of the CCLA, and wrote at times for La Nueva Democracia. The close relationship of Rojas with the Protestants was also reflected in the fact that CCLA’s Secretary of Educational Affairs, Dr. Webster Browning, translated his book into English while the and that CCLA’s chairman Dr. Robert Speer wrote an introduction on it.

Rojas believed the Biblical Criticism had made a positive contribution to Christianity. He did not agree with the attempt of some Church authorities to condemn or suppress it. In answering a presumed opposition on the part of, a Roman Catholic Archbishop, Rojas said:

Possibly you are unjust to the work of the critics who have purified and explained the Scriptures... Scientific criticism, so far from invalidating the text of the Gospels, has made them more human and forceful. Considered
simply as historical documents they have recovered an authority which they had lost in the eyes of the incredulous.\textsuperscript{89}

The openmindedness of such Latin American authors as Navarro Monzo and Ricardo Rojas was also expressed in their view on non-Christian religions. Rojas, for instance on occasion placed Christianity's Scriptural basis on an equal footing with "the Koran, Bahagavad of Hindus, or with Confucious' moral principles".\textsuperscript{90}

Though such ideas could have not been accepted by the leaders of the CCLA, they did recognize these ideas as an indication of the advanced Latin American thinking that Protestant missions would have to respect and engage with creativity. In the introduction to Rojas' book Robert Speer stated:

Whether he (the reader) agrees or disagrees with Senor Rojas's views he will be brought into touch with a distinctive and significant movement of the religious spirit in Latin America. It is a movement full of promise and hope.\textsuperscript{91}

For Navarro Monzo the presence of a petrified theology that "resisted the slightest breath of modern thought" was responsible for "the lowest and grossest superstitions" and the wave of unbelief in Latin America.\textsuperscript{92} For him the growing "chasm between religion and modern science....provided the modern man with an excellent excuse for giving loose rein to his sensualism, on the pretext that religion is a thing of the past and useless in our day".\textsuperscript{93}

Further, Navarro Monzo looked on the negative attitude of the Roman Catholic Church toward Christian engagement with modern
thought made official through the encyclical *Pascendi* in 1907, as a clear indication of its irredeemable character. He said that the encyclical *Pascendi* left him "without the slightest doubt that the Roman See would never lend itself to an internal reformation".94

The thinking of Latin American writers like Rodriguez, Rojas, and Navarro Monzo gives legitimacy to the arguments of CCLA leaders concerning the especial challenges that the Protestant message would encounter there. It supported the argument that there were many people in Latin America for whom "an appeal to the Bible has no authority".95 Nevertheless CCLA leaders also had a high esteem for these writers. This led the CCLA to take sides, at times, with them against their fellow Protestants. An example of this was the support which John A Mackay gave to Navarro Monzo, when the later encountered strong Protestant opposition because of his views on Biblical Criticism. Mackay referred to it thus:

Navarro Monzo has been very severely criticized by many Evangelicals in South America and he in turn has severely criticized Evangelical missions on the continent. It must be admitted that he does hold very advanced views on the subject of Biblical criticism...But those who hold that such views are incompatible with loyalty to Christ and a true spiritual life, must face the fact that Navarro Monzo is one of the most profoundly spiritual personalities and one of the greatest men of prayer it is possible to meet in these days.96

This stance of Mackay is not surprising when we know that he, together with others in the CCLA, was very concerned about the bigotry of American fundamentalists who in the 1930s were beginning to have
influence in Latin America. In 1944 Mackay wrote about the danger that meant turning Christianity into a relationship with a book, "forgetting the principal question: What is God doing right now?".97

7. The Christianity that Latin America needs:

Protestant missionaries linked with the CCLA became convinced that any attempt to reshape their work in Latin America must first change the way Christianity dealt with modern ideas. Protestantism they believed should not follow the example set by the Roman Catholic Church. Rather the encounter of the Protestant message with educated people required a new conception of the relation of religion to modern and intellectual thought. Protestant churches must be prepared to enter into dialogue with those who welcomed modern ideas, instead of opposing them. As Harlam P. Beach said, quoting a German saying, "the wounds of knowledge can be healed only by knowledge".

For this purpose Beach supported the suggestion made in the Panama Congress for the creation of hostel intended to attract students of the so-called "modern type". These hostels, he argued, should be run by competent missionaries who would pursue the opposite course from the Jesuits' system of ignoring modernity, or of opposing it. The aim for the hostels should be "Let the students hear what an unbeliever has to say; but at the same time, put by his side some good, learned man prepared to answer the questions that may arise in their minds".98

This is why the commission on the Christian Message and the
Educated Classes paid so much attention to the requirements that Protestant missionaries who wanted to come to Latin America to work with the educated classes should meet. Those missionaries who were going to work with the educated classes had to be ready to confront, from a Christian point of view, most thorny issues of modern thought. For instance, they had to make every effort to reconcile the theory of evolution with Christianity—pointing out that the mechanistic view of the theory of evolution, such as that held by Herbert Spencer, was not the only version of evolutionary thought. The conception that the evolutionary history of nature and man in our little world reveals the gradual enrichment of the field of reality by the advent of successive new causes, which come from sources, or a Source, in the invisible and spiritual universe, is sometimes which the Christian thinker must contemplate until its truth has filled and freely illumined his mind.99

The Commission asked Protestant workers to take full advantage of the theologians and philosophers who successfully confronted the atheist view on evolution and modern thought at large. Among these the Commissions recommended study of the contribution of Ritschl and the impact that his ideas had in Germany and in the English-speaking world:

Though Ritschlianism has not produced a commanding system of Christian doctrine, it had served the past generation as a helpful system of apologetic, and especially so among the intellectuals of Europe and North America. And yet Ritschl explicitly and elaborately founded his method upon a philosophical agnosticism which he expounded and defended with great conviction and energy.100
For this Commission it was obvious that conservative Protestantism could not make headway in Latin America. In the Latin American context, according the report, a simple denial of the doctrine of evolution or a shallow treatment of the philosophy of agnosticism would avail nothing.101

Hence the importance that was given to the setting up of libraries with the most varied modern literature. Horace Bushnell, Adolph Harnack and Karl Marx were among the authors whose books were recommended by the "Commission on Literature".102

The Commission on the Christian Message and the Educated Classes put it in this way:

It is clear that an important work could be done by the establishment in the chief centres of Latin American civilization of libraries which would contain the best works of modern Christian scholarship, works which are representative of the Evangelical churches and of that broad fearless research into science, history, philosophy and theology, which is laying the solid foundations of faith in Christ and His gospel for the modern mind...It ought to be added that those who are thus equipped and appointed to present the evangelical faith to the educated circles of Latin America will always seek to do this in the language of to-day.103

The leaders of the CCLA, as we observed in earlier chapters, rejected the idea that the Latin American continent was experiencing the same social, ethical, and religious problems as Asia or Africa. This impression was strengthened as they came into contact with Latin Americans, particularly with a section of Latin American intellectuals,
who showed some interest in Protestantism. Indeed CCLA leaders were astonished, both with the high education of these Latin American intellectuals and with the hold that European thought had on them. They were especially struck by the interest that Latin American intellectuals took in French anti-religious thought. The Report on Special Religious Problems at the Montevideo Congress in 1925, drafted largely by John A. Mackay, underlined this factor. According to the Americans Report, Latin looked to France for spiritual leadership.¹⁰⁴

Unlike the experience that Protestant missionaries had in Africa or Asia, those in Latin America recognized, at times, that many Latin Americans. Normally their missions would have included educating the people to whom they were sent in Western science and culture. However, the missionaries connected with the CCLA had been forced to revise the earlier impressions that Protestant missionaries had given of Latin America. It is in this context that the Report on the Unoccupied Fields, in the Montevideo Conference of 1925 stressed that the religious message for Latin America "must be a gospel for the modern mind, presented by teachers who are competent and defend it, not only with clear conviction, but with thoroughgoing Christian scholarship".¹⁰⁵ The knowledge of this reality led CCLA people to appreciate the words of Professor William R. Shepperd, of Columbia University in welcoming to New York the Mexican anthropologist, Dr. Manuel Gamio. He said that if Dr. Gamio had been European or North American he would have been considered as of the greatest
anthropologist of his generation, as indeed in his opinion he was. The Commission on Literature recorded Shepperd words thus:

I am sorry that you are a Latin American and a Mexican; and do not misinterpret my words. What I mean is that if you were a Frenchman, a German, an Italian, or an Englishman, then you would be considered as the greatest anthropologist of this generation, and your works would be read by the majority of cultured North Americans. But of you, North America will say what the Pharisees said of Christ: "Can anything good thing come from Nazareth? Can anything of real scientific importance come from Latin America or Mexico?" To anyone who can appreciate what is going on in Europe and in North America, Latin America appears today as creative and original as either North America or Europe.¹⁰⁶

8. The Social Gospel as an answer to Latin American needs

The Social Gospel was part of the ideological background to the religious thinking of most of those involved in the CCLA. This theological current had become especially evident after the Panama Congress.

CCLA sympathy with the advocates of the Social Gospel increased as they looked deeper into the concern and problems of Latin American countries. Indeed they increasingly looked on the Social Gospel as a means to facilitate their entrance into the region. It was also seen as a means to improve the limited image of Christianity that the Roman Catholic Church had too often presented. Furthermore, it was viewed a useful instrument for reaching out the intellectuals--emphasizing that the essence of Christianity would be found no in doctrinal or dogmatic teachings, but in its social commitments.
By the time of the second congress convened by the CCLA in 1925 (Montevideo), the Social Gospel had become an important feature of the Protestant message in Latin America. The Social Gospel formed the background of some of the discussions at the Congress, while the Reports of the Commissions, particularly those on Evangelism and on the Church and Community, reflected a fondness for it.

The Social Gospel was defined as it was understood in the North American context—that is concern for the whole social implications that Christianity might exercise in society.

The Social Gospel subjected all traditional theological emphases to new interpretations from a social point of view. The church, its mission, the kingdom of God, sin, and other fundamental conceptions, underwent a re-interpretation. The CCLA brought these new insights of Christianity to Latin America.

Before the CCLA began its work in the region, Latin Americans knew very little of the contributions that the Social Gospel movement was making to was making to Christianity in the United States. The emphasis on personal as a means to convert people to Protestantism and the association of the Social Gospel with the tainted ideas of Biblical Criticism led missionaries to remain at distance from it.

La Nueva Democracia, echoing the ideas of Charles Elwood, the North American social gospeller, ideas, referred to sin as a social issue.107 A speaker at the Montevideo Congress, defined the Social Gospel "as the gospel in action".108 Taking a similar line, the Report of

462
Evangelism at the Montevideo Congress stated plainly that not only individuals but societies as well, needed conversion. Societies are unregenerate bodies, and corporations, municipalities and nations must be born again.\(^ {109} \)

Discussing the report of the Commission on Social Movements, A. E. Day argued that the Christian concern with salvation, meant the salvation of real humans as part of a collective society:

No one can save an abstract man, but only a particular man who is living in a certain kind of home, whose body is healthy or sickly, who has leisure to read and pray, or who is bound to the wheel of toil twelve hours a day and seven days in the week, whose wife is a good housekeeper or one who keeps her family in a perpetual state of melancholy.\(^ {110} \)

In line with committed social gospellers, Day dared to say that the salvation of the individual "depends to a great degree on the condition in which he lives".\(^ {111} \) As we shall see later the Commission on Church and Community further accentuated this idea by arguing that those who stressed only the spiritual side of salvation failed to recognize that "before we can touch the inner spirit of multitudes of men, we must change their outer conditions".\(^ {112} \) The Commission went on to say:

A man may be converted in the personal purposes of his life, and yet be positively selfish in politics, social life, or business. He needs not only education, but further conversion and sanctification. His error is more than an error of judgment. He has not yet the right spirit. Instead, then, of saying that the religious life is one of outward external works, we all need to remind ourselves that religion is always of the inner spirit.\(^ {113} \)
Among the reasons those in the CCLA gave for the introducing Social Gospel in Latin America are these three. First, that the Social Gospel sharply contrasted the message of Protestantism to that of the Roman Catholic Church. Second, it would serve as an answer to materialistic ideas that in their opinion were enchanting Latin American intellectuals. Third, and following upon the first two Protestantism would be more palatable to the Latin American mind.

With regard to the first, one annual report of the CCLA in 1928, spoke of social concern as the distinctive feature of Protestantism, and the biggest difference with the Roman Catholic Church: "The greatest difference lies in what we call the social gospel".114 As to the second point the Commission of Evangelism in Montevideo wrote:

Two outstanding reasons may be given for a more active propagation of the gospel in South America just now. (1) There is a growing spirit of materialism as opposed to a spiritual interpretation of life, and an accompanying tendency to throw overboard anything that savours of religion; and (2) there is a rapidly growing tendency to question all traditional modes of thought and action, which finds constant expression in the political, social and religious realms and is particularly noticeable in the realm of religion.115

Finally related with reference to the third reason another commission at Montevideo asked how an unbeliever could be attracted by a religion which was indifferent to the suffering and injustice surrounding him.116

CCLA's leaders understood the imperative of making a response
to the real needs of people living in Latin America. At the Montevideo Congress, the role of social issues informed much of the discussion. This can be seen in the report of the Commission on Evangelism, which observed that although the discussions did not often it, the whole emphasis of the Congress lay on the practical implications of Christianity. Sometimes social needs were given more attention. An example of this was the Report on Argentina which declared that "more emphasis must be laid upon the social aspects of the gospel and far less upon the preaching of doctrine".117

The success of the YMCA in Latin America was cited as another example to support the argument that Latin American youth were open to the appeal of social service, especially as Rauschenbush presented it.118 Some Latin Americans were in agreement with those thinkers in the United States and Europe who were challenging traditional views on Christianity. Indeed Rauschenbush's ideas were becoming known to a small group of people who dreamed that a new expression of Christianity might be brought into Latin America. There is the case, for instance, of Julio Navarro Monzo, an outstanding Argentinean writer, who though he did not consider himself Protestant, was later appointed as a YMCA lecturer. He thought of Rauschenbush as a thinker who had much to offer Latin America.119

8.1 Facing up to the Protestant heritage

The CCLA realized that they would need to work hard to introduce the Social Gospel in Latin America, and that to succeed in
this they would have to face, not only of the conservatism of the Roman Catholic Church, but also the conservative character of the Protestantism that had arrived before them. At the same time the CCLA understood that unless Protestantism changed its approach, it could not meet the changing expectations of the Latin American educated classes.

In the CCLA’s view the Montevideo Congress revealed the weaknesses of much contemporary Protestantism. Among these weaknesses was the limited understanding of the Kingdom of God. In the words of the Argentine Report the problem was the school of thought that prevailed in most Protestant churches:

The establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth is not very strongly taught or preached by the Evangelical churches in general, for that concept of a "kingdom" is social and collective in its suggestiveness, while the schools of teaching that are most active in these countries turn their attention rather to the individual.120

The CCLA had noted, as a result of a questionnaire sent to missionaries, an insufficient perception of the Kingdom of God on the part of Protestant churches. One report concluded that the concept of the Kingdom "was not a central idea in the Christian platform".121 Intertwined with such misapprehensions of the concept of "Kingdom", was the distinction that Christianity had made in Latin America between profane and religious things, and between individuals and societies. For some CCLA people such distinctions did not fit with the Biblical meaning of the Kingdom of God. In the view of the Brazilian
report at Montevideo, for example, the establishment of the Kingdom of God was the Church's goal and in this, the regeneration of individual lives and the redemption of human relationships were inevitably interwoven.122

Though many thought that this dualism of natures was mainly present in Roman Catholic teaching, the Report on Literature observed that the Protestant churches had also not been able to transcend it. The presence of this dualism was seen as the root cause of why more people in Latin America had not become acquainted with Protestant literature.123 The commission of Church and Community referred to this as a great hindrance to enlisting the churches for the cause of social reform, saying:

Whatever is done by the clergy, in the church or according to a stated form of worship, is "religious"; everything else is "secular". When an evangelical church is formed, this discrimination creeps in. Anything besides worship and prayer is not considered as religious, but as secular. Consequently, most of the Evangelical brethren in Brazil classify civic or social celebrations, recreations and educational work in general, as "secular" i.e. as non-religious.124

The Commission did not hesitate to assert that while social conditions in Latin America pointed to the need for a social gospel, the Evangelical churches were prepared to meet the challenge. They were conscious that the Evangelical leaders were adverse to any social work. CCLA leaders viewed that opposition as a mark of the old North American Protestantism that had come to Latin America in the previous century. The Commission noted that:
Everywhere, both missionaries and native workers are found to oppose social service as an undue dissipation of sacred funds and of energy which ought to be invested in the preaching of the gospel. The attitude of the native congregations on this question reflects in some measure the attitude of the missionaries...These facts help to explain why the social gospel is generally considered a dangerous innovation.125

8.2 Importance of theological Education

Realising that a change of attitude was required, the CCLA stressed the importance of theological education in Latin America.

The importance that the CCLA gave to theological and humanistic education was related to the need to deal with the opposition that had arisen within Protestant circles to the introduction of advanced ideas concerning social action. Since the Panama Congress the CCLA believed that a renewed view on Christianity would only be possible if they were first able to offer broad theological education in the region. This led to higher theological education in South America becoming an integral part of CCLA's activities.126

Theological education was considered the best means to convince Latin Americans that personal religious experience was not incompatible with social action. William Adam, among others at the Panama Congress, drew attention to the need to educate ministers theologically in order to enable them to overcome the conservative North American Protestant thinking that had previously arrived in Latin America, and which taught that doctrine and experience were two different things.127
From the time of the Montevideo Congress, we see the CCLA becoming more determined to stress the importance of theological education as a *sine qua non* for building Protestant churches committed to the ideas of the Social Gospel. For too long, Protestants had seen conflict between church work and social work. "There is no reasonable hope", said one Commission, "of changing this attitude of the churches without a numerous ministry well prepared and wide awake to the opportunities and duties of Christian social work".128

For this reason the CCLA dreamed of establishing academic faculties on the level of the best theological seminaries in the United States. This need focus on higher theological education apparently grew out of the work of the CCLA's research team which held regional Conferences in several countries of South America in 1917. Some became convinced of the need for a graduate seminary, in which students could combine the study of theology with investigations of social problems. Proponents referred to this as "The Faculty of Theology and Social Sciences", and Montevideo, in Uruguay, was the place suggested to locate as a possible location.129 This plan, however, was not intended to discourage the work of local Biblical institutes. The Faculty of Theology and Social Sciences unfortunately did not materialise, although even well into the 1930s we find references to this interesting project. The fact that this particular project failed did not mean that the CCLA achieved in the area of theological education.

In its effort to create a consciousness of the need for new views
on Christianity in line with the principles of the Social Gospel, the CCLA challenged existing Biblical theological seminaries, Protestant schools and many of the missionaries. In Montevideo it was put thus:

These constitute an enormous task which challenges our best thought and earnest attention. Christian schools should feel their responsibility for the teachings of ethics as a means of Christianizing the social order. Missionary leaders should make it a definite object of their prayer and work. The efforts of all should be centralized at the seminaries to make them efficient training centres for an efficient modern ministry. The discussion of the social responsibilities of the Church should never involve a contrasting of the social and the evangelizing enterprises of the Church. Rather should we urge that life is a unity, that faith and conduct are inseparable; and that a new social order is the legitimate outcome of true evangelism.\textsuperscript{130}

8.3. \textit{Social Gospel is more than charity}

If there was an area in which the CCLA passed its most severe judgment on the past efforts of Protestant work in Latin America, it was on its narrow view on the social implications of Christianity.

This critique was most conspicuous at the Montevideo Conference. The Commissions on Evangelism, and on Church and Community made it clear that there was no reason for complacency about the social institutions the earlier Protestantism had created. The CCLA was aware that earlier Protestant missionaries had often made sincere efforts for social commitment, but it believed that those efforts had achieved only partial success, because they failed to deal with the underlying causes of social problems.

The Report on Evangelism at Montevideo echoed the words of William Adams who had argued at Panama that while medical work,
student hostels, schools, expressions of the social gospel, "do not cover the whole range of social applications of the gospel". Another commission report pointed out that such efforts did not demonstrate that the had become conscious of the larger nature of their social mission. This is illustrated by the origin of hospitals which according to this source were created to provide for the needs of Protestant patients who would otherwise be dependent upon the influence that nuns and priests had in the hospitals. One of the conclusions of the Report on Evangelism was that "Evangelical Christianity has not sufficiently emphasized the social phases of the gospel". At the Montevideo Congress CCLA leaders argued that the time had come to correct this weakness.

Delegates at Montevideo were asked if they had anything to say about the most urgent problems in the region; anything to say to the industrial, commercial and international problems or to the problems of the militaristic policy of the land in which Protestants were working. They went on:

Has it any message to the working-man as to his relationship with his employer? Has it any message to the employer regarding his relationships with his working-men? Has it anything to say regarding the profits which a man may legitimately take from his business? Has the church any message as to the right of the laboring classes to a larger share of the fruits of production? Has it anything to say as to the number of days a man shall work in a week, or the number of hours during which he shall work within a given day? Shall the Church have anything to say as to the age at which children may be taken from their homes and thrust into the industrial world? Has Evangelical Christianity anything to
say about the peon system in vogue in so many Latin American countries? Has it anything to say as to the exploitation of the natural resources of the land by a favored few, while the great majority of the people live in misery. Has it anything to say as to the housing conditions in our great cities and in our country places? Has organized Evangelical Christianity any word regarding the health and general sanitation of our cities and our country.134

In the same breath this commission disowned the idea that these national and international concerns were matters for individual rather than for Church action. For them these issues affected not only the physical well-being but also the moral and spiritual destinies of men.135

In this context the Commission on Church and Community reiterated what we observed earlier regarding the distinction between religious and secular things. For them social activism was not incompatible with their spiritual concerns. While they acknowledged that "the social gospel must work towards the inner spirit", they also maintained that before we can touch the inner spirit of multitudes of men, we must change the outer conditions.136

Someone mentioned that the person who avoids the Christian commitment called for by the Social Gospel would be little better than a pharisee.137 For some, to reject the social implications of Christianity would contribute to the idea that the Church was little more than an organization for the service of the conservative interests. The Commission on Evangelism at Montevideo put it thus:

Throughout practically the whole history of the organized labor movement, its adherents have seemed to think that the
Church is a capitalistic organization, dominated by capitalistic interests, which seek through the Church to keep in submission the less favored portions of society. Has Evangelical Christianity in Latin America done anything to disprove this statement? Have its children shown themselves in any special way to be the friends of the exploited groups in the national life? 

Although the view of social Christianity promoted by the CCLA drew attention and won over some educated people in Latin America, there was also a significant minority who, from the outset, rejected this view of religion. It was not simply because this minority was committed to the old Spanish regime and consequently closely connected with the Roman Catholic Church. Rather, these people rejected social Christianity because they held a mystic comprehension of religion. They believed that in the Protestant Social Gospel, Christianity was stripped of its element of mystery. Their religious view was expressed by Miguel de Unamuno when he argued that "there are two great heresies in Christendom, Arianism, which tries to rob Christ of his divinity, and Protestantism, which aims to make Christianity a collective and social affair".

9. The Uniqueness of Christianity

In any study of the theological concern of Protestant missions this subject cannot be ignored. The principle of the uniqueness of Christianity was at the heart of Protestant missionary thinking. It was given particular stress in countries where non-Christian religions were predominant, or in Christian countries with the presence of large
communities of aborigines holding to their own native religions.

The assumption that Christianity was a superior and universal religion was one of the foremost principles on which the relationship between American Protestant missions and the non-Christian world rested. To overlook this point would be to misunderstanding the logic and nature of Protestant missions. The uniqueness of Christianity is at the heart of the rationale that missionary leaders gave to Protestant work not only in non-Christian countries, but also in regions where the Roman Catholic Church held sway, particularly in Latin America.

Let us recall that the North American Protestant missions, since the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, worked to convincing their own people that religiously speaking there was no difference between Latin America and the non-Christian countries. Robert Speer was one of those outstanding Protestant leaders for whom this principle appeared to be the foundation for his worldwide missionary strategy. This section, therefore, will be based largely on his thinking.

Speer was also the driving force for the recasting of the Protestant cause in Latin America in the twentieth century.

What had to be faced in Latin America was not the influence of non-Christian religions, as was the case in Asia and Africa, but rather "impure" Christianity that had arrived there with the Spanish conquerors. However there were no major differences between the arguments used to support missionary Protestant work in Asia and Africa and these applied to Latin America. The particular point of Latin
America was that for North American Protestant missionary leaders Christianity meant basically Protestantism— which was perceived as the universal and superior religion not only in the face of purely non-Christian religions but also of the Roman Catholic faith.

For Speer there was no doubt that "the missionary movement springs from the conviction that Christianity is the universal religion, that is meant for every man and needed by every man". The superiority of Christianity, in Speer's view, was a concept well grounded in the findings of Comparative Religion. The encounter of Christianity with other religions had shown the faulty nature of non-Christian religions.

We have to take into account that the Comparative Religion to which Speer appeals was at that point strongly influenced by Protestant missionary thinking. Later, when the study of Comparative Religion became an independent discipline, the view of Christianity became more critical, and respect for the non-Christian religions increased. However, this later development is beyond the purview of this work.

In the view of Protestant missionaries who were involved in the study of comparative religions, Christianity did not experience any threat from these other religions. On the contrary Christianity easily passed the test. Furthermore comparative religion was seen as a natural task of missionary work. Speer viewed the study of comparative religion as necessary for missionary workers, who would
thus enabled to present the grounds in history, experience and reason, on which the Christian claims to supreme authority rested. The importance of comparative religion was put thus:

In the foreign field, assuredly, the comparison of Christianity with non-Christian religions is inevitable. It is precisely what the missionary enterprise invites. It cannot expect the people to whom it goes, at once to abandon their own religions and to accept a new one, on the mere fiat of the missionaries. What it seeks is intelligent and living faith. This involves the examination of the new and its comparison with the old. The new, indeed, can only be stated intelligibly in language associated with the old, and by the use of ideas created or preserved by the old.

Christianity, according to Speer, was proved to be superior by its very nature, namely its theological originality which had been demonstrated by studies in comparative religion.

Speer named these three features that proved that non-Christian religions were found wanting. These were (1) the conception of fatherhood of God and the discovery of the central need of man for forgiveness; (2) the idea of sacrificial service; and (3) the rising from the dead of the founder of Christianity.

In Latin America the Protestant missions stressed the principle of the fatherhood of God against both non-Christian religions and against the Christian education based on fear that the Roman Catholic Church too often provided. The Report on Evangelism in the Montevideo Conference of 1925 argued that in Latin America there was a crying need for the fatherhood of God. The Chile Report said that this
was the aspect of the gospel which appealed most strongly to the Chilean heart". The Brazil Report maintained that for many South American people, religious observances were based on an apprehension of punishment. The recognition of God as loving father, ready and disposed to help His children, was quite foreign to their thinking.\textsuperscript{146}

Advocates of the uniqueness of Christianity also stressed its ethical nature. Here Speer and other CCLA leaders best expressed their affinity with the way social gospellers perceived Christianity, for they believed that the ethical was the "all-inclusive aspect of Christianity and exhausts its contents".\textsuperscript{147}

Christianity was essentially, in Speer's view, an ethical religion: "Christianity, unlike non-Christian religions could not be conceived without ethics".\textsuperscript{148}

As we have seen earlier the ethical character of Christianity played an important role in discourses at the Panama Congress of 1916. The Commission on Literature made it clear that the message for Latin America must transcend the philosophical and theological dimension. "It must preserve, they asserted, that balanced relation of religion toward all interests of life which so distinguishes Jesus from the rest of earth's teachers." They went on to say "our intellectual presentation of the evangelical message as a group of doctrines to be believed, must be reinforced by the ethical and social content of Christ's teaching concerning the kingdom of God which he came to establish".\textsuperscript{149}
The third principle, which is intertwined with the second, is the social utility of Christianity. Protestant missionaries used to link the material development of the West with the efficacy of Christianity, and therefore blamed the uselessness of non-Christian religions for failing to contribute to the betterment of society. Speer maintained that non-Christian religions did not know what progress and civilization meant, while the best in Western civilization had been produced and fortified by Christianity. Further, he argued, what is in Western civilization, Christianity alone can correct and subdue.\textsuperscript{150} Contrasting Christianity with non-Christian religions, he observed:

The non-Christian religions, in their popular and applied forms, grow worse and worse. The chasm between their ideal and the real widens every year .... And there is in these religions no power of self-purification .... Christianity, on the other hand, has the power of self-renovation...This is one reason why Christianity is the only religion of progress. All the peoples who are beyond its pale are stationary and retrogressive. All the progress of the world is either in Christian lands or where Christianity extends its influence....And Christianity, the only religion which begets progress, is the only religion which can live with progress. All the theoretical defence of the non-Christian religions is wasted. The relentless movement of destiny is crushing them out.\textsuperscript{151}

The lack of the idea of progress in non-Christian religions, according to Speer, was one of the main reasons they had to meet the social needs of their people. Speer saw this single point as a sufficient reason to extend true amongst non-Christian peoples. Furthermore Christianity was the only force that could stop the decline which those cultures were undergoing. Their moral and material improvement

478
would come as they renounced their religious past. In other words they had "to break with their old restraints and feel the transforming power of Christian principles".152

For Speer and of most of other leaders of Protestant missions the concepts of evolution and progress were employed to serve the larger vision of the Kingdom of God. In this, they echoed the fashion of their time. The Kingdom of God was identified with the development of Western culture, and with its industrial and technological advances. "The Kingdom of God had been nationalized", Richard Niebuhr later asserted, "being used to support the feeling of national superiority and of manifest destiny".153

The striving to achieve the Kingdom of God in the West, especially in Protestant countries, had determined their material improvement. This is why mission strategists like Speer saw the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the non-Christian countries as the essential task of the missionary organizations. The great aim, for Speer, was the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth. This meant influencing all strata of society. Christianity would save the world and bring all human relationships, political, social, commercial and industrial, into harmony with the laws of God.154

The importance of the Kingdom of God for Latin America was often mentioned in the Panama Congress. The commission on "The Evangelical Churches and the Social Gospel" spoke of the need for the recovery of the Kingdom as "a saved society here in the earth".155
Lemuel C. Branes, Secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, referred to the kingdom of God as "an imperial democracy". However it was Arthur S. Lloyd who more precisely referred to the kingdom as the progress of society where, because of its presence, social evils are falling away: "We cannot think of the Kingdom of God without the world's development, just because we cannot think of the return of Christ while poverty prevails. All things which make for development, whether physical or mental or spiritual are ministering to His kingdom".

Protestant missions were seen as the messengers of the Kingdom of God. At the Panama Conference it was made clear that success in the expansion of Protestantism would inevitably bring forth the evolution and progress that Latin America needed and which only the Kingdom of God could bring. For James Vance history was the best witness that the Kingdom of God was an unstoppable force:

The kingdom is coming. The progress of the Gospel is the wonder of the ages. At the end of the second century, there were two million professing Christians in the earth; at the end of the tenth century, fifty millions; at the end of the fifteenth century, two hundred millions; at the end of the nineteenth century, five hundred millions. During the last hundred years, Christianity has more than doubled the number of its adherents, and this in the face of two things - the evolutionary hypothesis and higher criticism, which many felt sounded, and would seal, the doom of the future of Christianity. The kingdom is coming, and nothing can stay its advance... Christianity boldly proclaims that things are to go on getting better forever. Its conquest is not static, but dynamic. The claim staggers us.

Years later the Conference at Montevideo of 1925 also stressed
the attractiveness of the concept of the Kingdom of God in Latin America, because alongside its social dimension, it would appeal to those in the Roman Catholic Church who were taught that "the Church itself is everything and that out of the Church there is no salvation".\textsuperscript{159}

Nevertheless this linking of the expansion of Protestantism to the betterment of society, which Panama Congress had stressed, soon lost meaning. Those who held the progressive view on Protestantism soon realised that social conditions in Latin America were quite different from those in the United States where religion played an important part in society. Gradually the Protestant missionary view on the Kingdom of God in Latin America was stripped of its optimism regarding social progress. So the Kingdom of God became identified exclusively with the expansion of Protestant churches, and confined to the spiritual dimension of life. This feature has marked the life of the Protestant churches to the present day, as far as their view of the Kingdom of God is concerned.

This conceptual shift on the part of Protestant missions was expressed in the surveys of world Christianity made during the 1930s by the World Dominion Press.\textsuperscript{160} In the words of the Rev. Alexander McLeish, editor of the survey: "The World Dominion Survey Series seeks to describe briefly the situation in various countries from the standpoint of the Kingdom of God".

\textbf{The West Coast Republics of South America}, written by Kenneth
Grubb together with John Ritchie and Webster Browning, was published in 1930. In this book Kingdom of God was identified with the expansion of Protestantism. This idea also informed the later was at the heart of the publications of the World Dominion Press. Belief in the identity of the Kingdom of God and Protestantism was further demonstrated when the expression, "from the standpoint of the Kingdom of God", was in the foreword of later editions changed to "from the standpoint of world evangelization". This new foreword appears in the book, *The Northern Republics of South America*, written by Kenneth Grubb in 1931, and in all subsequent volumes in the series.

9.1 Opposition to Expansion of Protestantism

Speer, along with other leaders of Protestant missions, began to feel at the beginning of this century the effects of new more neutral studies of comparative religion. Contrary to the older negative view on non-Christian religions which Speer had exemplified, studies of comparative religion had begun approaching the non-Christian religions in a quite different fashion. The new departure stressed dialogue with non-Christians, instead of attempting to Christianise them. In his *Missionary Principles and Practice* (1902), Speer describes this new mood thus:

In the earlier days of modern missions Christians are supposed to have despised and condemned the non-Christian religions, and to have supported the missionary enterprise on the supposition that there was no element of good and no saving power in them. Today we are
called on to take up a quite different attitude. Some say that all religions are essentially alike, and that when once the external and local elements are subtracted, the fundamental conception is the same everywhere and of the same power. Others say that while there are great differences, yet the attitude of missions and missionaries should be wholly sympathetic and appreciative of the non-Christian faiths, and that missionary should be the affirmation of the truths held in common by all religions rather than the assertion of what is distinctive in Christianity. There is great deal of prejudice on both sides of this discussion.161

In this statement Speer appears to acknowledge mistakes that Protestant missions had previously made in their view of non-Christian religions. Yet fuller consideration of his thought reveals that comment of this type was more a rhetorical afterthought rather than part of his conviction. For in the same breath he argued that non-Christian religions had nothing good to offer. He thought that "however one tries to see the best of the non-Christian world the inevitable conclusion is that there is no best in them. For their elements of truth have been counteracted and distorted by their error".162 He pointed out that Christianity was a religion that has indispensable elements of good, but in contrast that "the non-Christian religions were full of evils and shortcomings".163 In this context Speer, like most of the Protestant mission leaders of his generation, thought that the encounter of the East with the West would inevitably lead to the absorption and disappearance of the non-Christian religions. In 1920 Speer wrote that Christian contact with non-Christian peoples would prove destructive for the "We are paralysing and overthrowing their old systems of ethical and religious belief".164 He maintained that
as non-Christian religions were morally chaotic, they could never meet the moral needs of their people.\textsuperscript{165}

The Protestant view of the hopeless condition of non-Christian religions left no room the idea that Christianity could learn anything from them. To be sure, Speer had no trouble in acknowledging that non-Christian people were not all bad:

The non-Christian peoples are far better than the evils of their religions. Even the sanctification of error and wrong in the non-Christian religions has not extirpated from these peoples the likeness of God, which will not be effaced, and that their original capacity for Him, for the indwelling of His life, for the execution of His will of righteousness, which is to be their contribution to the universal Church.\textsuperscript{166}

Yet Speer rejected the idea that non-Christian people could teach anything to Christianity, and he categorically asserted that the non-Christian religions were valueless for Christianity: "There is nothing good in them that is not in Christianity.\textsuperscript{167}

Non-Christian religions needed Christianity, not Christianity them. Anything positive in non-Christian religions was seen as just an indication that any presence of God in them required a fulfilment that only Christianity could provide. In their encounter with Christianity: "their broken lights are repaired and fulfilled".\textsuperscript{168} This is why it was seen that one of the duties of Christian nations was to help other races to realize their true character and mission. For Speer, quoting Professor Fisher, Christianity "was the complement of other religions" and Christ "the unconscious desire of all nations". The quotation concluded by asserting: "In a word Christianity is the absolute
However Speer did not rule out growth through encounter with non-Christian religions. He put it thus:

Our final question is not what Christianity, or any race so far it is Christian, can do to help other races to realize their true character and mission, but how will the contact of Christianity with other races bring out its own latent fullness more clearly and richly. We need to consider the reaction of the contact of Christianity with the non-Christian religions and peoples, not upon Christianity, but upon our apprehension and conceptions of Christianity.¹⁷⁰

For Speer the help of Christianity to non-Christian countries was justified not only by comparative religion, but because the non-Christian peoples were asking for help. In the context of this argument Speer could not understand those who, in defence of non-Christian cultures, opposed Protestant missions. Speer was adamant that Protestant missions were there because people were asking for help. Even in the mission field those who had the highest estimate of non-Christian religion, said Speer, were not the opponents but the friends of Protestant missions.¹⁷¹

Furthermore Speer complained that the same people who opposed Protestant missions often justified the economic penetration of the region by outside business interests. According to him if people had to name the more harmful influence they would pick the latter and not Christianity. For him the best the West could give to non-Christian countries was Christianity:

But it is held by some that the whole outward movement is wrong. The East should be let alone. It has a right to live its own life, and to think its own thoughts, and to pursue its
own ancient way undisturbed. Its civilisations and religious are its own, and better adapted to it than ours can be. The whole outward movement is an impertinence and an invasion. There are some who say this only of our religious mission. The political and commercial invasion they justify. But on what ground? If there is one aspect of our relationship to the non-Christian nations which can be singled out and defended as resting on superior grounds it is our religious propaganda. It asks nothing in return. It seeks only to give. It is willing to be judged by facts. We do not seek now to separate it for two reasons: first, because the rest of our Western projection upon the non-Christian world needs, as has already been pointed out, the moralising influence of the Christian mission, and secondly, because I believe that it is not by what we call the foreign missionary movement alone that God is working upon the non-Christian world.172

Speer continue to resist changing his view concerning the non-Christian religions. He steadfastly opposed any suggested that people of the East might find found the same, if not more, support from their religions than people in West found in Christianity. Two events showed Speer’s resistance to changing his view on non-Christian religions. The first was the famous World Parliament of Religions, held first in Chicago in 1893, which historians of Comparative Religion consider as “the most dramatic event to stimulate American interest in the religions of the world” 173 Speer, however, was shocked, because not only the Congress refused to endorse idea that Christianity was above all other religions, but also because at times the Congress seemed to take the view that the other religions had more virtues than Christianity.174

Second, a major crisis for him was the publication in 1932 of the report, Rethinking Missions, by the Commission of Appraisal under
the chairmanship of the Harvard University Professor William Ernest Hocking. This report was prepared after extensive travel by Commission member in the Far East. The report resounded worldwide, though especially in the United States where, quoting Hendrick Kraemer, "it burst like a bomb-shell". The attention given to the report was for Speer, according to one his closest friends Dr. John A. Mackay, a profoundly painful experience.

For Speer both these two events put into doubt the superiority and universality of Christianity on which Protestant missionary work had been built, and placed Christianity on an equal footing with other religions. He referred to the second meeting of the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1903 thus:

Yet once more we are told that the indisputable result of modern thought upon Christianity and the non-Christian religions is to make it impossible any longer to regard Christianity as the absolute religion, and unwise to speak of it more confidently than as "better" than the non-Christian religions, and many add the final religion is only to be reached when all the religions of the world have been fused into one, each making its own distinctive contribution, and humanity working out the ultimate result only by the patient evolution of life.

Speer went on to quote Swami Viva-Komanda as one the advocates of that view, for whom "If there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be that one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite like the God it will teach; whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and Christ, saints or sinners alike; which will not be the Brahmans' or the Buddhist', the Christians or
Speer, meanwhile had written a response to the report of Professor Hocking's commission, which he published under the title "Rethinking Missions Examined". In line with his view on the uniqueness of Christianity, Speer rejected Hocking's Report because, among other things it named "Jesus, with Buddha and Mohammed, as one of the great founders of religion who have been teachers of men, and also because it upheld the position that Christianity had also to learn from non-Christian religions".

Conclusion

The CCLA clearly brought fresh theological insights and attitudes to Latin America. They worked hard to understand the distinctive social and religious situations of the different Latin American countries, and they searched for a new religious expression that would be more in accordance with the real needs of these countries. In this they became adamant opponents of the Protestant efforts that had preceded them. The great drawback of CCLA efforts, as we have seen in chapter V, was that their new insights on religion responded mainly to the needs and interests of the middle and higher classes in Latin America. Yet this Protestant thinking opened the way for the search for new theological clues that will characterise some circles of Christian Churches, both Roman Catholic and Protestant in the 1960s. The judgment that CCLA leaders consciously made of the
old Protestant efforts in view of its limited success in the region, indicates that the theological renewal that is now being sought is not essentially new but has legitimacy.

The principle that led the CCLA leaders to criticize the religious thought that preceded their efforts, is the same that in the sixties, with ISAL (Iglesia y Sociedad en America Latina) and later with Liberation Theology, inspired Christians in Latin America to bring Christian witness more in line with what is happening at social levels. The great difference between these approaches is that the CCLA opted for the middle and educated classes, while contemporary efforts see the poor as the driving force in the emergence of new theological and pastoral thinking.
Chapter VII
The entanglement of Protestantism with Panamerican Movement
(Latin American distrust of Protestantism)

Introduction:

Until well into this century Protestantism had to carry the stigma of being alien to Latin American cultures. Furthermore, it had to face the accusation of being part of the imperialist policies of the United States in the region. The first chapter had demonstrated that this charge was not unfounded. The opportunity provided by the outcome of the Spanish-America War (1898) for the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America did serve the consolidation of North American influence in Latin America.

In this chapter we will see how the charge of being part of North American ambitions in the region seemed to be confirmed by the interest that Protestant missions showed in improving the relations between the United States and Latin American countries, which became known as the Panamerican movement. Panamericanism was seen as a central factor in the origins of CCLA and the Panama Congress was, in the view of some of its organisers and participants, part and parcel of the search for a new understanding between the North and the South. Protestant leaders connected with the CCLA became effective instruments of the North American government in selling a new image of its intentions in Latin America. In doing so these leaders sought to sanitise the imperialist interventions that had so much
prompted Latin American distrust.

In the 1920s Protestant missions linked to the CCLA used La Nueva Democracia, to foster among Latin Americans a desire for a stronger North American presence in Latin America. This in turn brought Protestant missions under criticism of those like Haya de la Torre who opposed Panamericanism as a new facade and who advocated Latin American unity, not only in order to face domestic problems, but to face North American inroads into the region.

The chapter will close with a section on Samuel Guy Inman and his links with the U.S. government. Initially a progressive, Inman eventually became in the 1940s and 1950s, a conscious player in the anti-communist campaign that the United States was fostering in Latin America.

1. Earlier Distrust of Protestantism

1.2. Protestants as filibusters:

The perception of missions as a servant of the United States' interests was not new. People who working for the Protestant cause in the region were entangled from the beginning. This was the case, for instance, of Mr. Wheeler, a North American colporteur who was working for the American Bible Society in Nicaragua. People associated him with the "filibusters" who invaded Central America in 1856. Wheeler was killed because he apparently refused to join in the fight against the invasion of William Walker's army in 1856. A French
Catholic missionary in a circular letter issued in 1899, called the missionaries of CAM "the Spiritual Filibusters".2

This line of thought also surfaced in an account by an agent of the BFBS in Central America, who he reported, in 1899, that the Roman Catholic Church was using this same argument:

The priests and friars traded on public ignorance and prejudice, and proclaimed from their pulpits, war against all Protestants and their heretical books...We don't want your books and prayers. What we need are ships and cannons to defend us from these Protestants who are assassinating us...They hissed me, saying that I was a missionary of the Yankees and of their religion.3

The inclusion of Latin American workers in important positions within Protestant missions in Latin America was assisted by this circumstance. Such inclusions served to counteract the feeling of distrust for the United States, which even the most conservative missions in the region had to recognise. From shortly after their arrival, Protestant missions paid attention to involving outstanding Latin American people in their work. The Latin American Mission (LAM) was an conspicuous example of this. The CAM also understood this situation, and their director emphasised the need for a training school. Its report of 1915 said: "the anti-foreign prejudices make it very much more effective to work by means of native helpers...They understand, as no foreigner, the temperament, the viewpoint, the prejudices, and the dangers of their own people".4

1.2.Missions linked to foreign companies
Another criticism of Protestant missions involved their close connections to foreign companies. Indeed Protestant missions considered the facilities of foreign companies as an important aid to their activities. Protestant missionaries, from the time of their arrival on the mission field, usually sought to establish close relationships with the railroad, mining, and fruit companies. These relationships are well documented in the experiences of the missions that carried out pioneer Protestant work in Latin America. The companies looked on the Protestant missionaries as their own people, and mission personnel were often treated preferentially by the company managers.

Mission records reveal the grateful feelings of missionaries in Latin America for such special treatment. Castell of the BFBS recounts that in 1897 he was allowed a first class pass for sixth months by the railroad company.\(^5\) Years later he also reported that he was granted a free passage from San Jose, Costa Rica to Belize.\(^6\) Similar things can be cited by other missions with regard to their connection with companies. Missionaries did seek to link their work with American companies which had business in Latin America, e.g. the United Fruit Company (UFCo). At times their closeness was such that the UFCo paid for missionaries of CAM to carry out religious activities among the company's workers.\(^7\)

When the missionaries could not go home to their country for medical treatment they used the facilities of the UFCo. Bishop recounts that he was operated on for hernia at the UFCo's hospital in Quirigua.\(^8\)
Some missionaries of CAM used the UFCO's letterhead for their business. This was the case of Bishop in the Honduras Division of UFCo.9

Such links of the missionaries with these companies obviously contributed to their being identified as unreliable. However the missionaries and missions were probably not aware that these companies were taking resources and introducing poverty into the countries. Because of the cruel treatment they often meted out to their employees, North American companies, soon after their arrival in Latin America, got into conflict with their workers. These companies were indeed powerful forces that, at times, decided who should be the president of the Latin American countries, and then worked as powers behind the throne.

Another argument that was used to bring Protestant work into disrepute was the connection that from the beginning the leaders of Protestant missions established with the liberal circles which were in power. Roman Catholic authorities particularly exploited this to a great extent. Liberals were characterised largely by their sympathy for the United States and by their rejection of the Spanish colonial legacy. This legacy was seen as being expressed in the Roman Catholic Church in Latin American societies; hence Liberals were openly determined to weaken the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. Protestants sought the support of liberals for their activities, while liberals recognized that the success of Protestant missions would eventually
help their cause.

A. E. Bishop, of CAM, recounts that the friendship of liberals with the United States caused some difficulties for the work of CAM. In quoting from an article entitled "Evangelistas y Democratas" (Democrats and Evangelists) which appeared in El Unionista, a daily newspaper of a political party which had clerical affinities, he said:

The article stated that the missionaries were the vanguard of the United States...insultingly called the "tribes of the north" for the conquest of Guatemala. That they are using U.S. gold for that purpose, and that a union has been formed between the Evangelists and Democrats. To keep a distance from the United States government was especially difficult for Protestant missionaries in the first two decades of this century. Continual social upheaval in Latin America led them to keep close contact with their government. Identification as United States citizens at times guaranteed their survival. Latin American people usually treated Protestant missionaries as they would any other United States citizen who was under the protection of the United States government. Sometimes the missionaries themselves reminded local people that the missionaries' security depended more on their United States' nationality than on their Christian convictions. For example A.E. Bishop in Guatemala displayed an American flag in front of his house at the time of the overthrow of the President Cabrera.11

1.3. Missions supported US military actions

One thing that made Latin American people suspicious about missions was that the United States' missionaries, with very few
exceptions, showed no willingness to oppose the military actions of their country. On the contrary they usually sought to justify them. The strong identification of the United States' missionaries with the ideals of their country blinded them to the position of nations which were open to intervention by the American army. This can be seen in reports such as this of CAM, of 1912, in which the American presence is viewed not as a military invasion of Nicaragua but as a force to protect American citizens.

Our friends have already learned through the press in this land, of the revolution in Nicaragua, that now seems to have come to an end through the intervention of the United States. From the news just at hand it seems some of the dear boys of our marine service, who were landed to protect the lives of our Americans, have given their lives in that cause, and a number have been seriously wounded, which is sad indeed. But the rebels had some of the cities surrounded and cut off from supplies, so that starvation was facing both natives and foreigners, and our marines went in and opened the way for food to be sent in, and in doing so were attacked by the rebels.12

The war was reported as though it were an insignificant thing, except when it affected the life and work of Protestant missions. It seems that the suffering of the general population in the midst of the war did not greatly disturb them. This was expressed in the report of W.H. Hooper, of CAM, in 1913: "The American troops drove the revolutionists from Masaya and Granada and have taken Leon. About 5,000 have been killed in the revolution. Personally we have suffered no harm from the bombardment, for which we thank our Father who cares for us".13
Herbert Bury, an Anglican Bishop, thought along these samelines. Believing that the United States was sincerely interested in the peace of these countries and not in protecting its own interests, he thought that what the United States had done in Nicaragua should be done also in Guatemala.

Guatemala is abominably governed and terribly oppressed. Like Nicaragua, it has had a Dictator President for nearly a dozen years. Oppression and misrule meet one everywhere. Moral force is all that a strong power need use in those countries, and as moral force got rid of Zelaya from Nicaragua last year, so, if employed by the United States Minister, acting on the definite instructions of his government, I am sure that the same results would follow in other places.14

Even in the thirties when the United States was selling the "Good Neighbour" policy, some North American Protestants believed that the time for it had not yet come. The "big stick", according to Edward Haymaker, one of the directors of the Presbyterian Mission in Guatemala, had been the only way to deal with Latin America -- the only method that United States diplomats could use in order to be understood.15

This explains the anger that Latin American, at times, showed towards Protestant missions. When the United States increased its dominance in the region the work of Protestant missions began to suffer the consequences by being under suspicion. The continual military actions that the United States carried out in Latin America exacerbated the feelings of the population. A case that well illustrates this was the opposition that emerged to everything American as a
result of the invasion of Nicaragua in 1912. This event brought about a great movement, not only in Nicaragua, but all over the region. In El Salvador, for instance, William Keech, a North American Baptist Missionary, described the repercussions on the work of missions there. In a letter to H.L. Morehouse, in 1912, he said: "Salvador, as usual, seems to be at the head of this thing. Several of the papers are advocating a boycott of everything American which, they state, should be applied even to the so-called evangelical missions".16

In some places the troubles that this brought to missionaries were very unpleasant, as was the threat that in 1924 Paul Burgess received in Guatemala, in the form of an anonymous letter:

For second time we address you to say that you must give up your constant song and your American religion. You must understand that it was for these reasons that your house was set on fire, though you do not know that. [We warned you not to] persist with your gospel and not to continue putting it to the service of the United States. [We know that] the gospel is a political instrument of North America, and we know that you are helping them. We do not want this gospel in our town anymore. This is the last time we will say this to you because it is a harmful influence for our people. Therefore we are compelled to make clear that your activity is foreign and pernicious, beyond our laws and subject to the consequences that this implies.17

This and other experiences reveal the distrust that local populations felt towards Protestant missionaries. It seems that the Latin American aborigines had become aware that their culture and their way of life was not compatible with the social ideas of North American Missionaries. This accounts for the misgivings that, according to Burgess, the native population had with regard to
Protestant missionaries. In a letter to Mrs. G. Quick, in 1933, Burgess put it thus:

The Indians have all sort of superstitions about medical work. Only some of the sickest ventured into the clinic and of course those who knew the Gospel. The witch-doctors, fearing no doubt for their own business, circulated the rumour that we were injecting poison to kill off all the Indians and give their lands to the United States.18

Stories of this nature were not new. Historian Mario Rodriguez recounts that in the nineteenth century it was rumoured that British business in Guatemala, in agreement with liberals, had poisoned a river to kill off the people so that the valuable land they occupied could be granted to an immigrant colony.19 In the twentieth century these rumours were abundant, and their origin is clear. The military actions of the United States, aided by an alliance of Protestant and Liberals were presented as reasons for the Roman Catholic Church and social activists to denounce the dangers of Protestant penetration in Latin America. The former did it for fear of losing her sway among the population and the latter because they believed that Protestant missions were against the popular liberation movements.

2. The Panama Congress and Panamericanism

An understanding of the Panamerican movement is imperative in any attempt to appreciate the link between Protestant missions and the interests of the United States in Latin America.

Panamericanism is a cooperative movement that emerged in
Latin America after its independence from Spain in 1821. Generally speaking the Panamerican trend went through different phases. We can distinguish, as far as our work is concerned, three different stages. The first extended until 1888 and is marked basically by the participation of only Spanish American countries. The aim of this first stage, which historians have called "old Panamericanism" was security, i.e. the defense of their newly-won independence. Simon Bolivar, though not the originator, is regarded as the father of this movement. He was the greatest exponent of cooperation among the republics in order to resist any attempt on the part of Europe to restore the old regime. 20

The second phase, known as "new Panamericanism" continued from 1889 until 1932. Its main features were the all-inclusive membership of the American republics and the virtual elimination of political security matters from cooperative consideration. Unlike the first stage, this stage was dominated by the United States, and commercial interests were its principal aim. The Commercial Bureau of the American Republics, which later became the International Bureau of the American Republics, was the organization which controlled and fostered Panamericanism.

The third stage from 1933 until 1945 is known as that of the "Good Neighbour" policy and is marked "by the significant expansion of security aspects of inter-American cooperation and their implementation during World War II."
The relaunching of Protestantism became entangled with the Panamerican movement through the Committee of Cooperation in Latin America (CCLA). The CCLA's interest in Panamanianism was not an isolated matter, but a consistent idea that became part and parcel of their strategy for Latin America. The Panama Congress was a clear example of the expectations that Protestants had with regard to this. Those involved in the preparation of its organization did not hesitate to contend that the objective of the event, together with religious questions, included "the relationship of North America and Latin American communities". Its significance was seen by some participants as a purely social event in the framework of the Panamanian movement, and not as the start of a religious movement.

Later at the Annual Meeting of 1938, CCLA leaders argued that their involvement in the Panamanian movement went back to the Panama Congress where "the question of justice and friendship between the United States and Latin America was thrust into the center of the discussion." Since then, says the report, "CCLA has worked towards a solution of this".

The Panama Congress was clearly seen not only as part of the Panamanian tide, but as a distinct step in the series of events that in the first two decades of the twentieth century showed the importance that Latin America had acquired for the United States. For Stuntz and Inman, the Panama Congress was of the same importance as the trip that the Secretary of State, Elihu Root, made to the region in 1906, the
inauguration of the Pan American Union building in Washington in 1910, the opening of the Panama Canal or the first and second Pan-American Scientific Congresses held in Washington in 1915 and 1916. After quoting these events, Stuntz concludes: "And, to crown all, there was held in Panama, in February 1916, the Congress on Christian Work in Latin America".22

This sense of continuity with Panamerican efforts was indeed very present in the discussions and speeches at the Congress. For Mott it was not only in line with the Panamerican Congresses, but added a religious dimension to the movement:

I fancy that not in the history of the Western Hemeisphere representative has there assembled a gathering so representenativ of the leaders and the forces of righteousness of this great sphere of the world's activity. There have been notable gatherings representing the political ideals and ambitions and hopes of the Western Hemisphere. There have been most successful gatherings to promote commercial relations between these nations. There have been scientific congresses-notably the one recently held in Washington-that have done much to cement the bonds between these peoples and to prepare for a better day. But not before this time have we had such a representative company of Christian workers, men and women of wide vision who have met together for this altruistic purpose in the realization of great hopes.23

Ernesto Braga, one of the most distinguished representatives of young Latin American Protestant Christianity at Panama, described the event as a milestone as far as American unity was concerned. For him no other episode had placed both civilizations "in such favourable conditions to exchange their differing heritages".24 Protestants, decades after, continued to describe proudly the contribution of the Congress to
Panamericanism. Such is the case, for instance, at the Protestant Congress of Havana, Cuba, in 1929 where it was said that the Panama Congress took place "to celebrate to unite both hemispheres, North and South".25

Since Panama Protestants continually stressed two central points. First, they maintained that the world was entering an "international era" in which nationalist interests not only were of minor importance, but were destined to failure. In this, Protestants were simply echoing the discourse of North American politicians who since the end of the Spanish American war were becoming more used to thinking in terms of the value of international affairs for the development of their country. What North Americans understood as internationalism, was what Latin American writers understood as imperialism.

The second central point, to which we are going to give more attention, was the religious dimension that Panamericanism should take on board. North American Protestant missionaries fully agreed with the efforts towards the promotion of good relations between the North and the South, but, in their view, the main objective, together with the search for commercial benefit, should be the transformation of the religious spectrum of Latin America. This meant the replacing of the Roman Catholic dominance or at least the creation of a strong Protestant movement in the region.
2.1 Internationalism or Imperialism?

The international and foreign character that marked Protestant missions all along, was seen to be in line with the international, not to say imperial mood of the time. It can be said, as far as North America is concerned, that Protestant missions preceded the internationalism or political imperialism of the United States. Yet the success of the internationalism of foreign missions, whether in North America or in Europe, depended largely on the consolidation of imperialist expansion. In a way the two international movements met and became committed to serve each other. The discourse is in a sense the same. Political leaders of large nations would say to small nations that their future welfare lay in their submission to stronger nations. The missionaries of these countries would say in the mission field that they had the right to change local social and religious values because they represented the true God, who transcends nationality, who wants the whole world under His Will.

As early as 1899, Robert Speer suggested that, as far as the missionary enterprise was concerned, "there is neither East nor West". However much diversity of mind and values there is among people, "the whole missionary movement rests upon the assumption that the divergencies are secondary and that in all essential needs and capacities the world is one". Behind this kind of argument lay the overbearing presumption of Protestant missionaries who believed that they were empowered to change the local culture and teach the values of their
own nations as universal truths. In the Panama Congress this was expressed in arguments which played down the real differences between North and South America, and which revealed the imperialism rather than the internationalism of the epoch. We can see this, for instance, in one the arguments of Irene Myers, of the Christian Woman’s Board of Missions:

Whether we are fundamentally Latin or Teutonic, or Indian in Race, we are all American; the consciousness of our likeness must strengthen the consciousness of our brotherhood. This continent is ours, and the responsibility for it is ours. May it be that we see it in the large! That we lose not the vision of the whole under the heavy pressure of the parts! On this continent we have wrought into our governments, ideals that are akin. We all aspire to freedom in the expression of ourselves, whether politically, or intellectually, or religiously; and although we of North America may work towards it in one way, and you of the Latin race in another, and in yet another, the ideal is the same. We are republics. Our political tendency is democratic, for the spirit of a nation will harmonise the character of its institutions.27

The same tendency of confusing internationalism and imperialism was also expressed at Panama by John F. Goucher, of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in his speech, "The Triumph of Christianity". For him the Panamanian Conferences, the Panama Congress and the interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine by President Wilson were part of the development of a personality of internationalism in America.28

This can also be seen, years later, in the Presbyterian Church of Guatemala when a writer attributes the origin of the Great Depression
to the failure to recognise the internationalism of the time, and the international character of Christianity. It was put thus:

We ought to be taking the lead in this instead of hanging back till providence kicks us into it. The whole trend of modern conditions is international, and though foolish statesmen keep building national, military, and economic barriers, tariff walls, diplomatic deceptions, and impossible immigration exclusions....sooner or later we must face the truth that the human race is "of one blood"...A too conservative nationalism is coming more and more to stand for selfishness. Christianity has always, since the time of Christ, been in the vanguard of internationalism, and today it is Christian mission work that is taking the lead and industrial interests are following close in line with modern development...29

2.2. A Religious dimension was needed

The search for a religious panamericanism runs through the whole history of CCLA. It did not deny the commercial overtone that the Government of the United States had given to the idea of inter-American rapprochement, and CCLA leaders were certain that commercial relationship would eventually help the material welfare of Latin American countries. Yet the CCLA leaders also believed that the moral and spiritual problems of the region could not be altogether overcome by a scheme that did not contemplate, nor have able people, to address the religious question. In this regard the ideal unity, in Protestants' sight, was one that could guarantee the whole change, material and spiritual, of Latin American societies. The aims that businessmen and diplomats were seeking would be fully achieved by strengthening of Protestant work in the region. As Speer put it,
Christianity was "the reformatory agency" able to foster moral and spiritual change. Besides this, he maintained that Christianity was the best instrument to cement relations between both Americas in sharing "common religious sentiments and beliefs and hopes". For him the future hopes of the Western Hemisphere lay in the United States sharing "with these people our Christian inheritance to which they are strangers".30

A Methodist Uruguayan, Eduardo Monteverde, who was made President of the Panama Congress, was convinced of the importance of good relations between both Americas, yet he warned that the religious question should be an integral part of these relations. He, like many intellectuals in Latin America, believed that the extraordinary development of North America was explained by the kind of religion that had influenced its people for generations. The unity between the two continents was important, for the sake of material aims but also for the success of North American religious institutions which were exercising "their beneficent action in Latin America".31

The idea of including the religious factor in the concept of Panamericanism was seen as a safeguard that inter-American relations were being sought in a balanced way. Protestant missionaries, naively or not, thought that they could avoid the old mistakes of North American businessmen and diplomats, that had led to so much distrust from Latin Americans. They considered themselves part of those North Americans who saw the need "for bringing the real
idealism" of their people into the relationship. Selfishness was the vice that could prevail if "the unity was expressed wholly in terms of politics and trade".32

The reason for arguing for the religious dimension of Panamericanism was twofold. On the one hand Protestant missionaries believed that God had prepared the conditions for the ongoing Panamerican efforts, and on the other hand, they believed that Panamericanism could go no further unless Protestant Christians, who were promoting Christianity in the region, contributed to it. God was acting towards the unity of America, and Biblical interpretations abounded to demonstrate it. Charles Thomson, for instance, had no doubt that when God created the continent he said "It shall be one". He meant that "the Americas should have a common spiritual destiny".33

The Panama Congress of 1916 was seen as a sign that God, and not only the United States, was interested in solving the old problems between the Americas. Arthur Lloyd thought that the Congress was a fulfilment of the dream of those who had hoped that "God in His providence was preparing to bring the two countries very near together, as if to make them realize that their destiny is one".34 In this context it was hoped "that the Panama Congress would help to banish the thought that there is any difference between the Latin-American and the Anglo-Saxon".35

The other idea that recurred in Panama was that God was healing the old Latin American wounds. On this it was claimed that
the Panamerican Union, the organization officially in charge of inter-American relations, was doing a good job: "As conspicuous offenders, the United States and her citizens are in the process of mending their manners in respect to the Latin American nations. The labours of the Pan American Union are being rewarded....".36

The Commission on Survey and Occupation at Panama maintained that despite of the annexation of Mexico, the occupation of Puerto Rico, and the acquiring of the Panama Canal, the problems were in the way of being settled.37 That God was acting in the healing process was the conviction of some speakers, such as Arthur LLoyd:

These continents have been developed in opposite directions. On its face it would seem that nothing could be more difficult than to reconcile the civilization of Latin America brought from Southern Europe, with the civilization of North America...Indeed, so unlike have they appeared that they have grown as though having no kinship nor common purpose, until suddenly through the mighty changes that God has brought to pass, they have been made conscious that the destiny of both is tied up in the same bundle of life...The continents are being brought closer by scientific investigations and in their commercial interests. It is for us to show that in thus working together and striving to make God's earth a fit dwelling place for his children, all men are our brethren...38

In regard to the need of Christianity to secure the success of Panamericanism it was said that neither "commercial interests, nor science, nor trade, but only Christ can ever unite the nations of the North and the South".39 Though North American businessmen, bankers, and scientists were thinking of a united continent, said Thomson, the idea can only be brought about by the united Church of

509
Jesus Christ?. For Ernesto Braga the danger of a unity of Latin American countries with any European power was a matter that only Christ could solve, because He was "the only power needed by the Latin American peoples to regenerate the individual man and to build up free and Christian commonwealths". He thought that Christ could give "spiritual meaning to Panamericanism".

William Cabell Brown, Methodist Bishop of Virginia was, at Panama, virtually the only one who directly addressed the importance of the understanding of both cultures. In his speech "The Common Ideals of the Latin Americans and the Anglo-Saxons" he said:

In thinking of this Congress to which I have been looking forward for many months with earnest prayer, I sometimes feel that as one result of our deliberations, not only will the ideals common to both peoples be brought into prominent view, but we shall all learn to realize that those high and splendid ideals of ours can never be fully realized, can never come to their best fruition, until we as individuals have come and taken our places at the feet of Him who, in the fullness of time, was sent to reveal His Father's will; until in some way we have learned to lay hold of that liberty with which Christ has made us free.

When the opposition to the United States in Latin America was stepped up in the twenties and the thirties, CCLA leaders openly declared that diplomacy had no chance of gaining the confidence of Latin America. The little that had been achieved was through the merit of Protestant missions, which, as was said in Montevideo, was "a foremost factor in promoting the increase of knowledge and good understanding". "We will never", said Inman in 1928, have the right
kind of political and commercial relations until we have the right kind of spiritual relations".44

3. Latin American dislike of Panamericanism

3.1. Lead to Panamericanism

Protestants were aware that the Panamanian movement had been rejected by an important group of Latin Americans. In his book Of One Blood (1910), Speer referred to the fact that some Latin Americans, as the United States had done, had employed the term "America" to describe only Latin America, and recounted how these people considered it "racial suicide" to be unified with North America.45 Inman, in 1917, mentioned how Latin American magazines and eloquent leaders condemned the optimism of those people and organizations who preached union "while Saxon ambition dismembers Panama, agitates Nicaragua, and overturns Mexico.46 It is in this context that some Latin Americans began to speak of the need for a more authentic unity, in which the United States not only should be excluded, but also in which Latin Americans should defend them against its encroachment into Latin American affairs.

In 1923, John A. Mackay, in La Nueva Democracia, drew attention to the fact that Panamericanism was being threatened by another "ism" — "Pan-Latinism." The first, said Mackay, was inspired by geographical unity, whereas the latter is inspired by racial unity.47 In the same issue was an article entitled "El Verdadero Monroismo" (The
True Monroism). The author, Rafael Hernandez Usera, showed his concern over the momentum being gained by Latin American ideas: "the usefulness of preparing grounds for a Latin American union in which not only the exclusion of Europe was advocated but also the exclusion of The United States".

As the years went by Protestants realised that whatever virtues they saw in Panamericanism, in Latin America these were seldom recognized. It had become, as someone put it in 1924, "the most favourite lie of Imperialism". By the year 1925 this concern was being seen in Protestant circles as something that was harming Protestant work in Latin America.

Inman himself, the greatest Protestant defender of inter-American relations, realised that, despite CCLA efforts, it was impossible to get across to Latin Americans that the old North American thirst for dominance was not present in Panamericanism. He quoted intellectuals like Alfredo Palacios, of the University of La Plata, Argentina, who feared that this sort of union would turn the weak countries of Latin America into "satellites and servants". The only salvation for these democracies of the South lay, in his view, "in the mutual identity of race and their inevitable unity in destiny...".

Concerned always about the importance of gaining the sympathy of the educated people in Latin America, Inman came to understand that they were involved in a quite different project from that which the Protestants were supporting:
Nowadays the best and most prestigious people in Latin America, even La Nueva Democracia, avoid talking of Panamericanism or of recommending the Pan American Union. It does not inspire trust nor interest. On the contrary, what is attracting interest is the Latin American Union. This movement has nowadays the support of the best intellectuals of Latin America.\textsuperscript{51}

If in the first decade and a half there were people who sincerely believed in the good intentions of Panamericanism, in the thirties there was no doubt that "military Imperialism and dollar diplomacy had turned the Pan American Union and the Panamerican conferences into a perfect farce".\textsuperscript{52}

\subsection*{3.2. Equated to Monroe Doctrine}

The discredit that Panamericanism had suffered in Latin America was based in part on the failure of its promoters to detach it from the old Monroe Doctrine. North America's fear of European intervention, or the possible political alliances between Latin American countries and European powers, made Inter-American relations appear as a new version of the Monroe Doctrine.

The link of Panamericanism with the Monroe Doctrine rested on the belief that the doctrine had been beneficial for the welfare of Latin American countries. Protestants in La Nueva Democracia kept on emphasising the fact that at least Latin American countries were independent from European powers. However Latin Americans understood the situation quite differently. They read the phrase
"America for Americans" as "Latin America for North America".

Belief in the virtues of the Monroe Doctrine and especially belief in the work of the Pan American Union, explains how Protestants, though always advocating that the United States required a new and more constructive perspective towards Latin America, found it impossible to break from the older views. The second issue of La Nueva Democracia, in 1920, reproduced a discourse of John Barret, given in the City Club of New York, in which Panamericanism was presented as the most powerful instrument for preserving the principles of the Monroe Doctrine, in order to avoid any meddling by European and Asian business interests and governments. George Winton, a Methodist missionary, echoed the same line on Panamericanism and the Monroe Doctrine:

It could happen during this century that the hemisphere developed to such an extent that world balance is put in jeopardy and it is necessary to talk, in a determined way, of war and peace. Whether we consider development as the pinnacle of power and glory, or as a sacred responsibility that should be accomplished with fear and humility, we have to bear in mind that, to carry it out, the union of both Americas is required. United we will survive; divided we will die. Now what could facilitate the union of both Americas? Commerce will help; and is helping, because commerce means reconciliation. Political interests will contribute to this union. The Monroe Doctrine had survived for a century, though present conditions differ a great deal from those which prevailed when it was proclaimed.

In 1925 the magazine also published an article by L.S. Rowe, Barret's successor, arguing the same. Rowe believed that the Caribbean countries were not part of Panamericanism because of Britain's
colonial possessions there. He defined Panamericanism as a concept based on cooperation and unity of interests whereby "the fear of aggression had been eliminated, and physical power was not the predominant influence". Yet he saw no contradiction in believing that the objectives of Panamericanism had virtually no difference from those which had marked the Monroe Doctrine in the Nineteenth century. He went to maintained "the foundations of Panamericanism were espoused by the Monroe Doctrine because the affirmation and respect of that doctrine prevented the American continent from becoming a theatre of European rivalries and the target of European diplomacy." So the correct application of Panamericanism, in his view, could make it possible for "the Monroe Doctrine to continue its honest tradition of service to the cause of Panamericanism".55

3.3. Haya de la Torre opposes Panamericanism

Haya de la Torre, a Peruvian, was one of the leaders of the group of Latin American intellectuals who advocated the old ideal of the unity of Latin American countries. He was clear that for achieving this, the presence of the United States had to be ruled out. Furthermore, Latin American unity was essential in face of the expansionism of the United States. In 1924 he founded the political party Alianza Popular Revolucionaria(APRA). Haya and APRA spoke for "the masses" in Peru in the 1930s and 1940s. While a student leader, he negotiated on behalf of the workers in the 1919 strikes for an eight-hour day, and set
up "popular universities" to train union leaders and build a political movement".56

Much has been said about the link that existed between Haya de la Torre and some Protestants in Peru, especially regarding the friendship that he had with John A. Mackay. Haya de la Torre, in his time as University student, taught at El Colegio Anglo-Peruano, the Protestant school directed by John A. Mackay and financially supported by the Free Church of Scotland.57 However this whole connection has yet to be studied. Though traditionally his respect and a great esteem for Protestant work has been stressed, we know that he was bothered by the open support that some Protestant members of CCLA were giving to the Panamericanism that Washington was promoting in Latin America. It is clear that he was not at all sure of the anti-imperialistic overtones of some of the articles that Protestants wrote in La Nueva Democracia. For him, nobody who understood the nature of imperialism, and had some knowledge of Latin American history, could support union with the United States. His views were further expressed in a interview, in 1928, with the Guatemalan Presbyterian newspaper El Noticiero Evangelico. There, he complained that Protestant agencies like YMCA, and people like Samuel Inman, should be rejected because of their political ideas. He found Inman's sincerity and liking of Latin America incompatible with his denial of the need for confrontation with the United States that these countries had to experience. Haya considered untenable Inman's message "of loving
each other", when according to Haya "there was a struggle that we have to fight to its end.58

Haya's articles in La Nueva Democracia were only occasional, but the image of neutrality that the magazine wanted to keep forced its directors to publish some of his views. In 1938 three important articles of Haya were included, which gave a full picture of his strong ideas about North America and its Panamericanism. His article "La Defensa Moral de la Democracia"(The Moral Defense of Democracy) outlined the beliefs of North Americans like Inman, who wanted to be acknowledged by Latin Americans, but were unable to understand Latin American unity without including the United States: "If I was North American Anti-Imperialist", Haya said, "I would vehemently endorse the unification of the twenty states of Indo-America, speeding up, thus, what sooner or later will come".59

Haya's most important article was "En Visperas de la Conferencia de Lima" (The eve of the Lima Conference) in November, 1938. There he made out that Panamericanism in North American style meant basically "buy our goods", a proposition that, in his view, could also mean "do not buy England's goods". He rejected as nonsense the idea of those who, in advocating a good relationship with the United States, claimed that "to love each other is to buy frying pans and pots from each other". He believed that Panamericanism only existed in formal business meetings and was a "term used in the official banquets that are offered to Argentineans and Peruvians
visitors who go as visitors to the United States under the patronage of shipping interests and car makers' entreprenours." In those commercial banquets, he went on:

The twenty one flags of the free and more or less sovereign republics of America are lined up together along the tables of speakers who strive to equate Simon Bolivar and George Washington in order to keep alive the Panamerican faith of some hundred New Yorkers that have goods to sell to Latin America.60

The policy of anti-imperialism and unity that his party, APRA, proposed, was in the eyes of Haya the only efficient instrument "to guarantee an effective assurance of a stable balance" in the continent.61

The "Good Neighbour Policy" that had so much enchanted Protestants in the region as indicating a genuine change towards Latin America, Haya described as a mere tactic to clean the face of Panamerican ideology. He assailed the "Good Neighbour" Policy in the preparation for the Conference of Lima in 1939. He resented how past Panamerican Conferences had served to strengthen dictators who were allies of the interests of the United States:

This time the Pan American Conference is going to take place when Imperialism has reduced its offensive under the screen of the "Good Neighbour Policy." This time we will not see the outrageous acts of the Santiago Pan American Conference, in 1923, or the noiseless protest of Morillo trying to denounce the North American occupation of his little country, the Dominican Republic. Neither will we see the grotesque gesture of Mr. Coolidge and the dictator Manuel Machado, fraternally getting together as in the Havana Conference in 1927, while the Patriot Sandino fought heroically for his broken Nicaragua...When the President of the United States went to Buenos Aires he drank and ate with the dictator Getulio Vargas. With "the New Deal" Mr. Roosevelt has reminded us of the new policy of the United States within the limitations that Wall Street always imposes
on North American governments. The Good Neighbour Policy has revised its methods of addressing its relationship with the twenty states of the divine Indoamerican nation.\textsuperscript{62}

Another writer of Haya's school, Luis Alberto Sanchez, thought also that the way out was through the confrontation of "Indoamerica" with "Panamerica", because Roosevelt promises a good neighbourhood, but under the surveillance of Wall Street.\textsuperscript{63}

For Haya de la Torre, Panamericanism failed in its purpose because it was confined only to solving problems of borders and assuring industrial investments and imperialist monopolies; and its distinguishing marks were known everywhere in Latin America as "elasticity, versatility, fallaciousness, mercantilism". If someone wants the Good Neighbour Policy to be accepted as a sincere and lasting instrument, Haya said, it must be lifted out of the old Panamerican mould with its ostentatious conferences, acts of violence and military interventions.\textsuperscript{64} So, he went on, let us be honest:

The old Panamericanism is unable to renew itself and no longer important. Let us declare that democracy is simply a beautiful and frozen term that, though despots continue to use, the people's blood deny the optimism of Roosevelt. This is why on him lies the burden of a great historical responsibility ...\textsuperscript{65}

4. Protestants promote Panamericanism
4.1. Panamericanism is a fact

The message that the United States wanted to get across through the Panamerican Conferences was fully echoed by
La Nueva Democracia, which gave full coverage to these Conferences after 1920. Inman, as its director, was convinced that these meetings had shown a new, non imperialistic attitude of the United States towards Latin America. He believed that the Fifth Conference held in Santiago, Chile, in 1923 was a turning point in regard to future relations between the North and the South. For him this Conference had demonstrated that "Panamericanism is a real fact; an American system quite different from those other systems of the world".66

The United States, after these conferences, according to La Nueva Democracia, had ceased to see its relationship with Latin America only from a commercial point of view. An editorial "Nuestra Campana y La Prensa" (Our Campaign and the Press) commented that one of the results of these meetings was that the most influential circles in the United States agreed that the core of the conflict with Latin America rested in the Latin American understanding that Panamericanism was a term based mainly on commercial ideals.67 So the point that Inman and other Protestants argued again and again was that the United States wanted to hear the legitimate political concerns of these nations.

This insistence on change from the old imperialistic attitude of the United States was stressed even further by the interest that Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, showed towards the betterment of relations between the Americas. According to Inman, Hull had become the gravedigger of Imperialism. Because of him one could speak of "Ex
imperialist North America". The editorial of March 1934, entitled "Norte America Ex-Imperialista", claimed that a new era in inter-American relations had been born. The article went even further to suggest that the world was witnessing "the close of the epoch of economic imperialism". The Pan American Conference in Montevideo, in 1933, had not only buried the old attitudes of the Monroe Doctrine or the Platt Amendment, but had also "been the grave of Imperialism. The article went on:

Samuel Inman, our director, heard the Secretary of State, Hull, asserting these foregoing points, that is to say, regarding the bankers' conspiracy, military intervention, secret diplomacy, and the supporting of dictators and friends of North American concessionaires. All this was condemned by Mr. Hull in Montevideo. So the thesis that we want to further, in view of this, is that a new era in inter-American relations had already begun.

The virtues of the "Good Neighbour" policy were what Inman and La Nueva Democracia were extolling. It was not only North American Protestants in Latin America who were excited by this new ideology. Some Latin Americans, who had been open enemies of the military adventures of North America in the South, began to cherish the hope that the "Good Neighbour" policy could really help relations between the two Americas. One of these Latin Americans was Manuel Ugarte, who, moved by this atmosphere of change wrote in 1934 of "El Crepusculo del Imperialismo Yanqui" (The Twilight of Yankee Imperialism). The statements of Roosevelt and Hull with regard to the abolition of the Monroe Doctrine, the Platt Amendment, and the
promised withdrawal from Haiti, were, for Ugarte, symptoms of the new Era. Yet the Protestant interpretation of this new juncture and the way that most Latin Americans looked on it were different. Unlike Inman, Ugarte did not view the change as the product of a new more charitable position of the United States. Rather, he understood their origin as a byproduct of the 1929 slump: "The failure of 1929, the series of revolutions which got rid of dictator friends of Wall Street, had demonstrated the futility of economic penetration in Latin America". Yet whatever the reason that prompted this change, he was sure that "this is the start of a new page—assuming that the chapter of arbitrary interventions is over. This man [Hull] has come to his southern neighbours, not as superior, but as equal".70

Ricardo Alfaro was also optimistic, believing that by the effects of the Pan American Conference in Montevideo "Roosevelt's policy, helped by Hull, had begun to bear fruit". In Montevideo, he said, had prevailed a spirit of harmony and trust as never before had been experienced in earlier pan-American meetings.71

4.2. CCLA born to promote it:

In the fourth chapter, we indicated how the people who had wanted Latin America to be part of the Edinburgh Conference's agenda, constituted the CCLA in 1914 as the organization that would bring together forces to re-launch Protestant Christianity in Latin America in the near future. Its success in convincing North American Protestant
missions and church constituencies of the importance of Latin America as a mission field, made clear that the exclusion of Latin America in Edinburgh was only a passing defeat. So its origin was grounded fundamentally on the religious needs of Latin American countries. Yet the more one studies its development, the more one realises that, together with purely religious aims, CCLA had also a political agenda; namely to support and encourage Panamericanism, or the inter-American friendship that the United States badly needed.

It is not surprising at that time to see Protestant organizations mixing religious ideas with social and political aspirations. However, in this case the political aims seemed to overshadow the religious objectives. Two concerns lay behind this. On the one hand Protestants realised that their government was right in arguing that good relations with Latin American countries were vital for the security of the United States. This feeling indeed increased after World War I. On the other hand Protestants like Speer and Mott, among others, were sure that the success of Protestant work in Latin America depended to a great extent on the political influence that the United States had in the region. This was part of the background that pushed CCLA to became, until the 40s, more a herald of the "gospel of Panamericanism" than of Christian principles.

The link of CCLA with Panamericanism had nothing to do with a hidden agenda. Its leaders openly admitted that they were committed to the process of rapprochement between the two Americas. At most of
its annual meetings, until well into the 30s, comments were made about the importance of Panamericanism. In 1918, for instance, Robert Speer, its chairman, categorically asserted that the unity of America was necessary if the future of the continent is to be a future of progress and peace. "CCLA", Speer went on, "will have a part in bringing this unity to pass. 72 To take part in this movement was not only an opportunity for Protestants to serve, but a way, as the annual report of 1920 put it, "to represent the Evangelical Church in many Pan-American Conferences which might otherwise overlook the importance of Christian forces.73 In 1922, CCLA's annual report made it clear that its task, together with the promotion of unity between Protestant missions in the field, was to strengthen the unity of America, North and South.74

As we have indicated, the main leaders of CCLA emphasized the importance of the Pan-American movement. The driving force in this regard was Samuel G. Inman. He was the Protestant leader who most involved CCLA in the dynamic of the Panamerican Conferences. Such was his commitment to this ideal that, at times, Inman forgot the religious character of CCLA. This can be seen, for instance, in the definition of it that he presented in his book, Problems in Pan Americanism (1921).

The Committee on Cooperation in Latin America represents a large movement among the churches of the United States to cultivate friendly relations with their Southern neighbors and help them to solve their problems by sending ministers,
teachers, physicians and social workers who will share with them the best of North American life.75

It was Inman, as its director, who made La Nueva Democracia an instrument, virtually the only one in the region, of the Panamerican cause in Latin America. Early editions made it clear that the magazine had that commitment. The editorial of the first issue, in January 1920, entitled "Nuestro Saludo y Nuestro Programa" (Our Greeting and Our Programme) defined its the main objective thusly:

To make of the magazine a public platform in which the ideals of the American continent can be expressed and crystallized in a public fashion. But not with the idea that Latin American civilization be subordinated to the Anglo-Saxon civilization, or vice versa. It is rather the opposite, to try to make the case that both civilizations can reach completion and perfection through the exchange of mutual influences.76

The second issue reiterated this in no uncertain terms, when it said that the task of the magazine was intertwined with the "promotion of solidarity and fraternity in the continent, based on mutual understanding, mutual friendship and permanent practice of international rights".77

Its coverage of the Panamerican Conferences mirrored the sense of duty and commitment that CCLA leaders felt towards this movement. Some of the conferences had preceded the CCLA because of its late formation in 1914. By that time four conferences, in Washington (1889), Mexico (1901), Brazil (1906), and Argentina (1910) had taken place. The first conference with which the Protestants of CCLA had some link was that held in Santiago, Chile, in 1923, the fifth
of the Pan American movement. *La Nueva democracia* cheerfully greeted this conference:

The Committee of Cooperation in Latin America welcomes with great pleasure the Fifth International Conference, in Santiago, Chile, believing that is highly appropriate and convenient for the interests of the American continent. The people of both Americas must reach a mutual understanding and a more close rapprochement, such as can influence the re-establishment of the world balance so deeply agitated nowadays.78

Commenting on its impression of the Conference, a month later, *La Nueva Democracia* declared itself the voice of the movement: "As an organ of Panamericanism, we celebrate the meeting in Santiago".79 The same pattern was followed in the coverage of next conferences in Cuba 1930, Montevideo 1933, and Buenos Aires 1936. Though Latin Americans in these conferences were very critical of the overbearing attitude of the United States, Inman extolled the new openness of the attitude that the North had with regard to Latin America. This tone was especially evident in the coverage of the Conference of Montevideo in 1933, in which several articles were devoted to arguing that the death of North American imperialism was already a fact.

Though by the time of the Protestant Congress in Montevideo in 1925 some missionaries in the field began to see the risk of identifying the Protestant cause with Panamericanism, CCLA presented its work in this regard as an achievement. The Report on Cooperation and Unity referred to it thus:

The missionary enterprise has secured a new place in the
building of international friendship. This Committee has always eschewed purely political questions. It has, however, sought to do whatever was appropriate in developing international friendship, since it has increasingly realized how Christian work is handicapped by misunderstandings and un-Christian relations between the various nations of America.80

At that time Protestants still believed that they could allay the suspicion that Latin Americans had of the United States. The annoyance that a naval commission from the United States to Brazil had caused in the region prompted the CCLA to say in Montevideo that careful students of Pan American relationships agreed that "The Evangelical missionary movement had been, by far, the most acceptable and successful agency in promoting international concord".81 They went even further by saying that the success of the "Good Neighbour" Policy rested on the work of CCLA. Stanley Rycroft, Inman's successor, pointed this out in 1941:

> During the last twenty-four years the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America has done more than any other organisation to foster good relations among the American republics and particularly between the United States and the Latin world. The change in attitude, which is expressed in what is known as the Good Neighbour Policy, was due, in large measure, to the work and influence of this committee. This, of course, has been only a part of its programme. 82

5. Seeking consensus against Latin American unity

5.1. Some support for Panamericanism

La Nueva Democracia managed to bring together a group of Latin Americans who believed in the advantages of a new relationship
between North and South America. Their thinking, generally speaking, permeated the magazine. Inman and Orts cleverly peppered their articles with ideas of these writers. They were as critical, and at times more critical than North Americans of the idea of Latin American unity. Contrary to those in the region who considered it suicide to unite with the United States however, they believed that to distance themselves from North America was suicide. Their writings drew attention to "the dangers of anti-Americanism." Zayas Enriquez, in 1920, called one of his articles "Los Peligros del Antiamericanismo". He insisted that both regions needed each other, and were compelled to make every effort to smooth the way of mutual understanding. The United States was not as bad as was made out in Latin America. He could not believe that North America was able "to lead Latin American countries to a point of despair." Furthermore, in alluding to people like Calderon and Ugarte, he said that he did not want to see "Latin Americans that want to carry their anti-Americanism to the point of giving in to pan-Germanism or Pan-Japanism".83

Zayas' thinking was similar to the North American line as to what should prevail in the relationship between the Americas. They had however lost sight of an important factor. This was the assurance that Latin American political leaders always had needed and demanded, namely that United States would not infringe upon the political sovereignty of Latin American nations. People like Zayas thought that commercial advantages were reason enough for the
search for continental unity. "We depend commercially on each other", he said, "the United States needs us as consumers of its industrial goods and as producers of raw materials that are indispensable to its vast industries. Besides we need the United States". For him any purely Latin American unity, that could put this at risk, was worthless. Though he dismissed the suspicion that Panamericanism had only the agenda of the United States in mind as groundless, he did see the need to make some changes of form to the concept of Panamericanism:

Let us establish Pan-Hispanism as a sure base to Continentalism, and so a guarantee to Panamericanism. If I say Continentalism and not Panamericanism it is because this latter has already become very well-worn and discredited among Latin American people, for it is a concept that involves the hegemony of the United states over the continent, a suspicion which it is important to dissipate if we wish to reach the ideal.

Other Latin Americans such as Ernesto Montenegro believed that a unity that meant breaking with the United States was destined to failure. The entrepreneurial spirit of North Americans was seen as "a lesson to those rich men in Latin America that only wanted to invest their money in mortgages." It was desirable from a pure economic point of view that "North America comes to exploit mines and industries" in Latin America. Finally he expressed his misgiving with the idea that was resounding everywhere in Latin America in the twenties, namely the building of an exclusive regional unity, or "a Hispano or Ibero-American league" as Montenegro described it. He
disliked the idea because this concept of unity "would bring with it an impulse, distrust and a common defense against the United States." For him Latin Americans had no other "stimulating example" than North America to rebuild their dreams as nations. Because Latin America needed an inspiration that could not come from Spain, "we have no other choice than to look towards the United States as a model of economic progress".86

Protestants in Latin America expressed, again and again, their opposition to the exclusion of North America in the search for political and financial development. Baez Camargo, in the Protestant Congress in Havana, in 1929, stressed that North and South America should learn to live together:

[The American continent] is a vast melting pot where Anglo-Saxons and Latin Americans represent qualities which should not be antagonistic, but complementary. Otherwise America would destroy itself and with it would die the hope of a spiritual transformation of the globe in which we live. It is necessary that Latin Americans and Anglo-Saxons learn to live together in our beautiful continent. It is necessary that Panamericanism is not a misty doctrine with only geographical and financial implications, but before all a spiritual doctrine.87

For Luis Santullano, "Iberoamericanism" was simply a "noisy thing" and he considered those who were championing it as "maniacs". These people, in his view, still believed that they were in the sixteenth century, and that nothing had happened since then. Any such term as "Iberoamericanism" "Indoamericanism" fell short of describing the dreams of Latin Americans. We have to consider, he said, "the new Inter-American policy that increasingly Washington is
fostering." For those who still do not know, he went on, "Panamericanism is an organization of twenty one republics with the inclusion of the United States of America".88

Most of these Latin American writers not only had a great admiration for North American economic progress, but also felt a great contempt for the Spanish legacy. They wanted to get rid of institutions and values that, in one way or another, mirrored the old link with Spain. The dream of an exclusive Latin American unity was, for these writers, an attempt to resuscitate that link. So in this context the Pan-American movement was timely because it asserted that the political and economic backwardness inherited from colonial times was about to disappear as result of a new colonial relationship, this time with a progressive nation. Antonio Rizutto contrasted what he called the real unity of both Americas with the exclusively Latin American unity that people like Haya de la Torre were seeking. This latter reflected, for him, the deadly blow that World War I had given to the Old World:

We believe that the true Pan American ideal is already in full swing, and we believe that the people of America - the three Americas- are newly born to reveal their own personality within the universal concert, and that they have reached, a precocious and providential phenomenon, a social and institutional maturity which enables them to try vigorous and dynamic action together.89

5.2. Protestants fear Latin American unity

Early in the twentieth century Protestants missionaries warned United States' politicians about the dangers of the Anti-American
mood in Latin America. Speer argued that unless the North American
to the South changed, the tendency of these countries
attitude towards was to seek an alliance with Europe. He was anxious about the
was to seek an alliance with Europe. He was anxious about the
thinking of Latin American writers like Calderon, who together with
his disliking of North American economic dominance, spoke of the
existence of "insoluble contradictions" with the North, marked by the
fact that "the traditions, the ideals, and the soul of these republics are
hostile to them". "The people of the United States" Speer said, "think
of themselves as so animated with the spirit of justice and good-will
that they cannot conceive how other people should mistrust them".90
Speer saw that Calderon and others in Latin America believed that the
survival of their countries from Yankee Imperialism would lead them
to "accept a German alliance or the aid of Japanese arms". These people
did not want unity with the United States and were critical of some of
the vices of its society such as the triumph of vulgarity, the increase of
divorce and criminality, plebeian brutality, excessive optimism,
violel individualism, confusion, uproar, and instability". "It is with
Europe and not with the United States and Canada", Speer concludes,
"that Latin America would identify its commercial, political, and
cultural interests".91

Unity with Europe was indeed a real feeling that Protestants saw
in many leading intellectuals in Latin America. Yet at the end of the
second decade, and especially in the thirties, Protestants became more
concerned over the possibility of a Latin American unity failing not
only in the face of their domestic problems, but also in their relations with foreign powers. Protestant commitment to Panamericanism was, in the twenties, more an answer to the likelihood of a Latin American unity, than to any European intervention. So they emphasized the futility of stressing the differences between the Americas. Though there were reasons for them to believe in the existence of irreconcilable differences, the need was for unity. Apart from their differences, Webster Browning, CCLA’s secretary of education affairs, thought that they shared common ideals and that their mood tended towards the building of a close spiritual alliance from which a new America would emerge.92

Persuaded that any American unity without the United States was wrong, Protestants like Clark, Inman, and Browning made every effort to show the commercial advantages of the unity of both Americas. Clark was clear for instance in pointing out that both regions needed each other:

Neither continent can reach its full development without the other. North America needs the coffee and the rubber, the cattle and the precious woods of South America, and she would give in return, not only her manufactured products, but the better gifts which she has to offer, of a spiritual faith, a free Bible, and an education that is based upon it, and is not hampered by the swaddling bands of priestcraft.93

They felt commissioned to work for the solution of the problems that had distanced the two Americas. The prospects that appeals to me, Browning said, "is the union of the people of the North
and the South, a unity possible through the practice of Christian ideas". This desire for American unity, however, clashed with the revival of the old dream of a united Latin America. Protestants did not hide their concern over exclusive Latin American unity. La Nueva Democracia, in its editorial of April, 1927, commented negatively on the decision of the Argentinean Congress and Senate to express, as never before, words of protest, "if not of separation", from the Pan American Union. But the most worrying thing, said the editorial, was that a Latin American Union had been created in Argentina, which, privately, was seen by Latin Americans as an effort "to unite Hispano-American nations against the official Panamericanism of the North American stamp. In August, 1927, the editor of the magazine, Juan Orts Gonzalez, told of the momentum that this idea was gaining. In his article "Preguntas a la Union Panamericana" (Questions to the Pan American Union), Orts drew attention to the fact that unless a unilateral reading of the Monroe Doctrine by the United States is brought to an end," Hispanoamerica has no other choice than the creation of a Hispanoamericanism looking towards Europe or maybe towards Asia". Yet he did not hide his animosity to this:

This would be a continental calamity. We are certain that this would produce analogous cataclysms to those created by the Great War. We do not reject the union of Hipano-American nations; but this would be an international calamity if that unity is promoted exclusively to protect themselves from North America.

In acknowledging the movement towards "Ibero-
Americanism" or a "getting together of all Latin American countries" Inman, convincingly or not, thought that this did not necessarily mean that the unity of both Americas was impossible. Tireless in his efforts to show that Latin Americans had no good reason for distrust of his country, and understanding the problem of Panamericanism being identified with the Monroe Doctrine, he in the same breath said that it must frankly be realised "that Pan-Americanism and the Monroe Doctrine are opposed to each other.97 The idea of a Latin American united could never be fully supported by Protestant missions in the same way that they supported the type of unity that the United States government was fostering. They were unable to accept any ideal of American unity which did not include the United States.

5.3. In America --North and South-- is the salvation

The view on Europe that World War I had prompted in the United States was brought in its entirety to Latin America by the Protestant missions. The failure of European countries in peacefully settling their conflicts was interpreted as a sign that Europe had lost its power and authority in guiding, ideologically and culturally, nations of the world. Meanwhile in Protestant eyes the decisive participation of the United States in settling the conflict, contributed to the building of a romantic and idealistic image of its traditions and culture. This fitted well in face of the search for new relations between the United States and Latin American countries. Protestants applied all the pride and
merit that their country had won in the War to the hemisphere and not only to their nation. For them the world would depend on the righteousness not only of the United States, but of the whole hemisphere. On this rests the importance of one America. "Europe is bankrupt, morally as well as financially", Inman said, "and the New World contains the only hope for the future...The mission of Europe has terminated; only America can save humanity".98 So for Inman, Latin American countries were not only going to be treated better by their neighbour, but they were destined, together with North America, to lead the world. Now, it is possible to talk of "La Actitud Primitiva de los Estados Unidos acerca Ibero America". In it America, the North and the South, had become the center of humanity from which "a new light would spread to the dry old continents, and would give them a new courage, a new life and a new youth".99

European civilizations was economically, morally and politically in danger. "If there is still salvation for humanity, it is in America" an editorial put it.100 As far as inter-American relations were concerned, the War had led both Americas to come together, and to break their old cultural links with Europe. America was no longer a copy of Europe. America, both the North and South, was now affirming its own philosophy, literature, sociology.101 In his Latin America: Its Place in World Life,(1937) Inman made out that the former feeling of both Americas towards Europe had gone:
We of the New World will always retain our affection for the ancestral home in Europe. But the former feeling, both of North Americans and Latin Americans, that the center of culture and the leadership of international life were in parental Europe, must now be changed. We may even re-enact the role of their ancestors a thousand years ago and take the place of Europe when she withstood the on-rushing hordes of terror from other continents who then threatened the destruction of civilization. If the American continent is to carry these additional burdens of civilization, it must learn to think continentally. It must be the continent as a whole. This means that neither Anglo-Saxon Americans nor Latin Americans must think of themselves as America and the rest of the hemisphere as an appendage.\textsuperscript{102}

This way of speaking was taken up not only by North American Protestants in Latin America, but also by some outstanding Latin Americans. Victor Andres Belaunde, brother of a later President of Peru, contended, in 1921, that after the tragedy of the war, this continent has replaced the influence of Europe. "The American continent has become the world's hope and the base and support of a new civilization".\textsuperscript{103}

There is no doubt that World War I consolidated the status as a world power that United States had attained since the Spanish-American War. What could sound ludicrous was the idea that Latin America was going to have a share in it. These were simply ideological arguments intended to fertilize the ground for better understanding of the United States by Latin American countries. Whereas this romantic idea of America was preached, Protestant missionaries at the same time were challenged by the reality of a Latin America reluctant to believe that something good could come out of a relationship with
North America. Though they were uncertain whether "Latin America will cast her lot with Europe or with America", the conviction manifested in the CCLA's annual meeting of 1925 was that Protestantism will contribute to the unity of both Americas. This was one of the topics suggested for discussion in Inman's book Ventures in Inter-American Friendship (1925). In it he asked, "Is the United States making a deliberate attempt to direct the policies of Latin America and draw it away from Europe? If so, is such a policy right?".

7.6. Distortion of history

7.6.1. Sanitising North American actions

From a Latin American point of view the image of the United States that Protestant missionaries wanted to get across in Latin America was based on a faulty knowledge of Latin America, and particularly, a distorted idea of the events that had so often led the United States to intervene in the region. They showed much sympathy for the misgivings of Latin Americans. In their view there was no reason for the Latin American people to fear the United States. Hence the grubbing of territories that had so much embittered Latin Americans, was in the Protestant eyes simply the product of negotiations in which the United States was gradually and peacefully granted the territories. Speer, for instance, when speaking of North American influence in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, says that these
countries were simply part of the settlement of the terms at the end of the Spanish-American War. Indeed he gives the impression gives that the people of these countries wanted to be taken over. In 1917 the regional Protestant conference in Puerto Rico, following the Panama Congress, argued that because "Puerto Rico was ceded by Spain to the United States", Protestant missions had the right to enter the Island.

Protestant reading of Latin America history sought to sanitize the more shameful actions of the United States, as Winton did in the case of Mexico. For him the war with Mexico was the result of the secession of Texas, and for that the blame lay with the Mexican people. The problem began, according to Winton, because of "the frequent changes in the Mexican government, and the lax and often offensively military administration of public affairs". In addition, racial antagonisms were added "which caused the colonists in Texas to chafe at their subjection to Mexico." Again the impression is given that the people of Texas wanted to be North American and not Mexican. As Winton says "the Texans declared their independence, which was recognized by the United States, and later they themselves requested to be recognised as a state of the Union.

This account loses sight both of the anguish and suffering of the Latin American population, and of the imperialistic ambitions of the United States. Winton and most of the missionaries who worked in Latin America during the first three decades of this century, seldom
spoke of the oil interests which were often at the heart of the matter. The actions of the United States in Latin America were interpreted in a benign manner and thus presented even to Latin American intellectuals as the truth. Even Inman, one the missionaries supposedly most informed of the history and life of Latin American countries, writing in 1921, described the power and influence of the United States in the region as something inevitable and maintained that its only mistakes were in the means used to gain its objectives. The headship of the United States on the American continent was the necessary result of a "natural outgrowth" by which "the United States had developed a hundred times more rapidly than any other country in America." The intervention of United States in Latin America had occurred in the same way as the authority of the Pope had come about:

The process is similar to that by which the Bishop of Rome became the Pope --the smaller bishoprics sent their problems to the great man in the city and thus his influence developed until he became supreme. In the same way the United States has grown very naturally into a position of leadership on the American continent. Whether we like it or whether Latin American likes it, there is no way of preventing the most advanced and the most powerful nation in the group from exercising the greatest influence.109

While Inman recognized that the problem that Latin Americans were often distressed over the methods and results of the United States' intervention, in his view these were simply unavoidable outcome of the United States responding to its sense of duty and its burden of leadership:

This headship signified, among other things, that we must
lead in the building of Panama Canal, though of course it did not prescribe the method. It likewise meant that we must acquire naval stations and zones of influence for the protection of the Canal and all that implies... Perhaps we did not have to do it in quite the way we did; better ways could have been found. Nevertheless the burden was laid upon us and we could not get away from it, so we took the lead just as other great nations have done in other parts of the world where their influence was dominant.110

Inman and Juan Orts Gonzalez, director and editor of La Nueva Democracia, also expressed publicly their belief in the goodness of the Monroe Doctrine. In 1923 Orts Gonzalez referred to it thus:

Some month ago I had the pleasure of defending the Monroe Doctrine in this magazine as one of the guarantees of the freedom and independence of the republics of this continent. I have a profound conviction that the Monroe Doctrine was highly beneficent for Latin America, and that without it Europe would possess parts of Latin America as colonies...111

Inman argued that it was easy to criticise the Monroe Doctrine and not to acknowledge its virtues. The importance of the doctrine rested in the permanent revolutions that had begun in Latin America after its independence in 1821. These uprisings were, in Inman's view, ideal opportunities for European meddling in Latin America. These revolts, he added, were a sort of cruel game, in which no country in Latin America should be allowed to engage it. "Hence", he concludes, "we have begun, following the ideas of Roosevelt, to intervene in these countries in order to prevent European nations from intervening".112

The control of the Panama Canal was also described by Protestants as though it had been transferred to the United States in the
most peaceful way. In commenting on how the North American presence in Panama had helped to promote Protestantism, Francis Clark drew attention to the treaty of 1903 in which "The Republic of Panama granted to the United States in perpetuity, the use, occupation, and control of the land". This ignored the fact that Panama belonged to Colombia at that point and that the United States gained later permission through promoting the secession of Panama from Colombia.

7.6.2. Not only US is imperialistic

In the twenties Protestants seemed even more determined to head off the opposition that the United States was facing in Latin America. In doing so they made common cause with a group of Latin American intellectuals who wanted to stress the commercial links of the United States with Latin America. Hence North American Protestants, headed by Samuel Guy Inman, along with some Latin Americans, were part of a campaign to present a new and better image of the United States' intentions in Latin America. La Nueva Democracia, as the organ of CCLA, was a vital instrument in the campaign. Indeed the origin of the magazine was closely bound up with this campaign to sanitize the image of the United States.

Though theoretically it wanted to address impartially the relationship between the United States and Latin America, in practice the line the magazine sought to support the claims of a a fresh start to
relations between the Americas. Despite being an instrument of an organization whose main interest was to further Protestantism in Latin America, *La Nueva democracia* threw in its lot with political groups which had solely political interests.

This was perceived not only by Latin Americans who opposed the presence of the United States in the region but also by Protestant missionaries who saw that CCLA was not meeting the needs for which it was created. This latter was clearly expressed in the Central American Protestant conference held in Guatemala on the occasion of the visit of John R. Mott in 1941. In that conference Dr. Paul Burgess took a hard line against the CCLA, especially for the approach of its journal *La Nueva Democracia*. Burgess complained that its articles aimed more towards the prompting of the discussion of social issues rather than towards the conversion of Latin Americans. In his response to this criticism, Dr. Rycroft showed the extent to which CCLA was politically linked to the interests of the United States:

I must say that this magazine *La Nueva Democracia* was not founded as an Evangelical magazine. At the time, in 1916, there was in Latin America much propaganda against the United States. There were people such as Alfredo Palacios who steadily maintained the attack. There was much propaganda against the country. So, many people believed that it was necessary to found a magazine to counteract that propaganda. Thus *La Nueva Democracia* was born to express the point of view of the best thinkers of the United States. With the name "The New Democracy" it was thought that a new democracy would emerge after the war to save democracy".114
From its publication, the main articles spoke of "the black legend" to which the United States had been unfairly subjected, and explained that its old imperialistic leanings were a matter of the past. In an article "El Verdadero Monroismo" in 1923, the Latin American writer, Rafael Hernandez Usera, stated that every effort should be made to avoid a confrontation between North America and Latin America. He believed that it was imperative for North Americans to destroy "the black legend" that was attributed to the United States. He considered it necessary, for the peace of the continent, that Latin American people understand "the good faith of the Great Republic, and above all, that they do not preach a holy war against the United States".115

Inman, Orts and other Protestants who were behind this rapprochement were, at most times, unable to see the old imperialistic attitudes that still constituted the main obstacle to the improved relations that they were seeking. On the contrary, they frankly acknowledged the inevitability of United States interventions. For them, the present fate of Latin America would have been worse if the United States had not militarily intervened. George Winton, Methodist missionary in Mexico, believed, for instance, that England, France or Germany would have been harsher with Mexico than the United States.116 The same was said with regard to the Dominican Republic. An editorial in La Nueva Democracia asserted, in 1921, that the United States occupation of that country was not so bad if
compared with the treatment it would have received from European nations. If the United States had not exercised its tutelage, "the country would have lost its independence and sovereignty and been divided up because of its debts with European countries". "Let's face it," went on the editor, "this would have happened not only to the Dominican Republic but inevitably to Haiti, Venezuela, and other nations in which European nations had large interests. After all, concludes the article, "the intervention of the United States has prevented these nations from being dismembered by the despotic impositions of European nations".117

So what the Protestants missionaries wanted to get across was that the United States was not the only imperialistic nation, but also that it had been drawn into what seemed an inevitable international trend. For Inman even Latin American countries were guilty of imperialistic actions:

Imperialism has nothing to do with the Monroe Doctrine, but is merely one of those tendencies of modern nations to take over smaller and more poorly organized countries. We have been following other peoples in doing that, for the tendency is not only worldwide but is a factor in the economic as well as the political field of today. Most of our territory has really been gained at the expense of other nations. Let it be said to our credit, however, that, in contrast with modern imperialistic nations, we bought most of the territory acquired. This is our imperialistic policy, a thing apart from the Monroe Doctrine. Let us remind our Latin American friends that Chile, Brazil and Argentina have done like things. The big nations in South America have done as the big nation in North America. Of course it is easy to think that the United States is the only sinner in the world, but every nation is imperialistic.118

545
In addition, La Nueva Democracia contended that opposition to Imperialism must also include opposition to those people in Latin American nations who serve the interests of foreign nations. Not pleased with the continual attack on the United States, the editor argued that to question the abuses of capitalism was an easy task, but what was difficult and more worthy was "to look at those corrupt statesmen, who in agreement with foreign capital betray their country. They should be stigmatised as traitors. This is the best way to bring Imperialism to an end".119

6.3. US Imperialism is a myth

Protestants always found it difficult to understand the opposition that the United States had to face everywhere in Latin America. They saw it as an unjustified and unfair campaign that Protestant Christianity, somehow or other, had to fight. J.H. McClean expressed his concern with regard to it in his Living Christ in Latin America (1916). He could not understand why Latin Americans, like Manuel Ugarte, known for his anti-imperialism, was sounding the alarm of the Yankee peril. For him this was simply a myth:

There is an undercurrent of hostility to the United States throughout all Latin American republics...Wholly unwarranted motives are imputed to the "Colossus of the North". She is suspected, if not openly accused, of an imperialistic policy; she is taunted with the reminder that Cuba and Porto Rico are now under her control. Manuel Ugarte has sounded the alarm to his compatriots and fanned the smouldering embers of distrust by hinting at a possible invasion and a threatened absorption - peaceable and commercial it is true - but none the less to be dreaded. Such a
bugaboo always throws some victims into a panic and it is not to be denied that their number is considerable all over Latin America to-day.\textsuperscript{120}

Though he acknowledged that his country had made some "few" mistakes in her relationships with Latin America, he saw it as not sufficient reason to continue scaring these countries. North America has marred the moral support that she had given to Latin American countries in their struggle against Spain by "a few misguided utterances of imperialistic orators, a few diplomatic infelicities, a few forced collections of debts, then the war with Mexico, the war with Spain and the Panama Canal".\textsuperscript{121} The real matter, was not, for MacClean, the record of his country, but the resistance that he was witnessing to all North American influence.

Like most Protestant missionaries, McClean thought that they had to work with the people in these countries in order to make them understand that the United States was not as bad as it had been depicted. He disagreed with the people in Latin America who thought that "the term yankee was a synonym for dollar diplomacy, aggressive commerce, and ruthless disregard for the rights of minorities". "Our immediate task", he said, "is to dissipate this illusion and restore the affection and confidence with which the nascent republics once regarded their elder sister". Protestants and North Americans at large were compelled to face this:

The average American knows too well how gratuitous are most of the above assumptions, but the average Latin
American still needs to be convinced. Every wise consul, every prudent tourist, every kindly host is helping to improve relations... The missionary has been a wonderful minister of reconciliation. What grudges can be held against a nation that sends such emissaries abroad? Genuine Christianity in all departments of exchange is the surest bridge for the sentimental chasm between peoples? Disinterested love is always irresistible and invincible.122

If Latin Americans kept raising what for MacClean was the "illusion" of the danger of being absorbed by North American interests, Protestants matched it by continually saying that this danger was unreal. In its editorial of March, 1924, La Nueva Democracia poured scorn on the fear of Yankee imperialism that was being stirred up in Latin America, and in which it was argued that "North American capital is waiting, as the eagles do with their prey, to devour the best of Latin American republics, and to lessen their own sovereignty". 123

Another article in La Nueva Democracia, entitled "La Verdad sobre Norte America: Nacionalismo e Imperialismo" (The truth of North America: Nationalism and Imperialism), questioned the grounds for the fear of Imperialism in Latin America. Though the magazine strangely preferred to keep secret the authorship of the article, by just saying that it was written by a Spaniard, the style and the tone is very similar to that of articles by Juan Orts Gonzalez. Juan Orts, Spaniard, was editor of La Nueva Democracia and a great advocate of the virtues of the United States. More important than the author is the content of the article. It rejects the picture that some Latin American writers had painted of the United States "as a monstrous country"
because of the wickedness and iniquity of its people, comparing it to "a voracious eagle always ready to snatch everything from the nearby weak nations of Latin America, and to an octopus with its big tentacles ready to suck the richness and sovereignty of Latin America".124

What is interesting in this article is not that the author thinks that those images were not true, but rather that he believed that the United States at that time making major changes in its foreign policy. The article repeated the usual argument of the twenties, namely that not only North America was to blame. It went on: "It is amazing that cultured people see such an aggressive attitude as something exclusive to North America, when Greece, Rome, Spain, England, France and Germany did the same in the past. Latin America also, not long ago, did the same and sometimes worse than North America!".125 When speaking on Chile, at the twenty anniversary of CCLA in 1936, J.H. McClean continued spoke of the existence of "the boogie of North American imperialism" as a cause of confusion. Yet, he said,"we have been able to set two decades of disinterested work for these lands and there is no confusion in the minds of the intelligent and fair-minded".126

6.4. Panamericanism but not under Yankee hegemony

This new political situation had confirmed for Protestants that their dream of a united America had not been in vain. Though they had not always believed the grounds of the Latin American fear of
North America, they were certain that the United States had now seriously shown her good intentions. The "Good neighbour" policy bore out what Protestants had always preached, namely, that the United States did not have imperialistic intentions in Latin America. The problem with this Protestant line of thinking is that it was based on something that never convinced Latin Americans, that is to say the idea that the political leaders of North America were indeed speaking the truth. Even well before the announcement of the "Good Neighbour" policy La Nueva Democracia quoted President Wilson as saying that both Americas cannot live apart in a world of rivalries, and that they must stick together in order not to be harmed. This is what Panamericanism means, said the article. "There is nothing of an imperialist spirit in it. It is the effective embodiment of the spirit of service, independence and mutual support".\textsuperscript{127}

The important thing here is that Protestants believed that the renouncing of any imperialistic attitude of the United States was a vital precondition to future success in gaining the confidence of the South. They meant it when they said that "Panamericanism in its yankee sense must be abandoned".\textsuperscript{128} Gonzalo Baez Camargo, Methodist minister, and one of the leaders of Mexican Protestantism, put it clearly in the Protestant Congress held in Havana, in 1929:

It is necessary that North American Capitalism ceases to consider Latin America as a propitious field for profit, and that the motto that North America uses as a screen "to develop Latin American resources" stops having a connotation of robbery and exploitation; and adopts the noble
gesture of a hand stretching out to help. It is necessary that North American political movements towards Latin America abandon the impertinent air of tutorship imposed by force, and of the protection of the financial interests of privileged classes. It is important that international friendship is established, in order to build one indivisible America, not by an imperialistic fusion based on the flag of the stronger nation, but respecting and carrying with it the small independencies, holding all flags together under the post of spiritual unity.129

The other line of thinking that Protestants stressed in presenting the new era was that the old style United States annoyed not only Latin Americans but also North Americans themselves. Inman held himself as an example of a new liberal generation in the United States which questioned the old imperialist adventures. This was one of the things that they complained of about the Latin Americans who opposed the United States. Protestants did not like to be included among those who were primarily serving North American interests. They were certain that "imperialism will not thrive" in that North America people did not support it: "Imperialism is as disastrous to North America as Prussianism is to Germany. North American people reject it, the mood in North America is opposed to it, and soon all ill-regarded leaders will fall in into disrepute and into oblivion".130 "The people of my country", said an article in La Nueva Democracia, have the deep conviction that the right of conquest should be eliminated forever in this hemisphere. It is, after all, avoided and rejected by its people."133 Another article signed by "a Spaniard" was still more clear in this regard:

551
We want to be categoric in saying that our long stay in North America and our painstaking studies on North America entitle us to speak like that. There is no people more ready to understand the vices of their capitalists, and more opposed to the wrongdoing of their statesmen than the people of North America. Those in Latin America who love the sovereignty and independence of Latin America must join with those circles in North America to carry out a truly, universal and more intense campaign of publicity.\textsuperscript{132}

The truth of the matter is that these apparently anti-imperialist arguments, were not convincing enough for Latin Americans. They were seen as a hollow rhetoric to serve the same interests that theoretically they were questioning. National loyalty was in the end stronger than their apparent sympathy for the suffering of the victimised nations:

La Nueva Democracia confesses that the United States has made mistakes in the past, and that even now her international policies are far from being faultless. But which nation whether in Asia, Europe or America has not made errors, and has not been responsible, - especially if it was a strong nation- , of abuses and injustices? Is it true that the colonial power of Spain, the various territorial acquisitions of France, Chile and other Latin American countries was inspired by a spirit of justice and altruism? Besides, is it not true that the best North Americans, e.g. President Lincoln and General Grant, protested against the annexation of Texas? Is it not true that these gentlemen considered that action as a national crime? Is it not true that Roosevelt was severely criticised by the methods applied in Panama? Is it not true that the United States government has agreed to compensate Colombia? Is it not true that the United States has withdrawn from the Dominican Republic? \textsuperscript{133}

7. Protestants awareness of Latin American distrust

We have seen that Protestant missionaries were always aware that United States aims and interests in Latin America had generated a
great deal of opposition. Yet it took time for them to realise that this opposition also included the rejection of the work of Protestant Missions. Though in earlier years there were some warnings of it, it was in the twenties that Protestants, at large, became more aware of this problem. Speer in *The Unity of Americas*, 1916, had underlined the fact that Latin America was more interested to learn from France rather than to see the virtues of the United States and Canada. "It does not love us", he said, "it distrusts and misbelieves our purposes".134

While most North American Protestants were unable to acknowledge that this distrust had a basis in reality, they did not recognize that the origin of the problem rested in the military expansionism of the United States in the region. Speer stated that the suspicions had started with the Mexican War and had developed into hatred after the United States gained control of the Caribbean as a result of the Spanish American War.135

It was in the 1920s that Protestant missionaries began to be more conscious of the consequences that distrust of North America was having for their work in Latin America. Particularly at the Montevideo Congress, in 1925, it was felt that Protestants, in order to achieve their aims, had to be more careful in not identifying their work with any political proposal that came from the United States.

The truth is that the Americas were more than ever separated, an article of *La Nueva Democracia* said. The Americas that the Panama Canal had united geographically were now separated by a
hatred. Hence Protestant missions had to come to terms with the fact that North American military actions had negative consequences for the religious aims they wanted to achieve, in that Latin Americans saw little real difference between their activities and those of their fellow citizens, politicians and businessmen:

This latent distrust of the English-speaking race by the Latin is most easily aroused by the work and influence of any organisation emanating from the United States, since it is feared that the Colossus of the North - having already, as it is claimed, put Florida, Texas, California, and Puerto Rico under its heel, and having set foot in the southern half of the continent, through the creation of Panama by the excision of the Province of Colombia - will continue its career of conquest and absorb other nationalities. The people and often the governments, of Latin America, always generously aided and abetted by their mother countries, profess to suspect that back of the confessedly altruistic programme of the evangelical missions lies some deep and hidden political scheme on the part of the Government in Washington to extend its own power and tutelage and to take from them their hard-won freedom.

This explains why Protestants spent a great deal of their energy in trying to dispel this impression. In commenting on the virtues of the Protestant Congress of Montevideo, Henry Holmes exposed as groundless the idea which upheld that "behind every Protestant missionary lies the plans of a clever Yankee minister of foreign policy". His answer to this was a categoric No.

Yet there were advocates of the expansion of Protestantism who called for Protestant boards to take this matter seriously. The Methodist Bishop, J. McConnell, was one of these outstanding people. McConnell could be considered as one of the most genuine supporters of Latin
American rights and aspirations. He disagreed with those Protestant missionaries who argued that to further their work in Latin America they had to exaggerate the religious "depravity" of those countries. In 1924, in a conference to discuss the upcoming Protestant Congress of Montevideo, he differed from people who dwelt on the spiritual bankruptcy of South America: "We take the wrong attitude if we speak of that condition as applying to them and not to ourselves."

McConnell defended what Latin American Protestants always demanded, and still do, from North American missionaries; namely, the knowledge of each other "on the plane of mutual respect, admitting our sins on both sides before our own Lord." He asked for the subject of "spiritual bankruptcy" to be omitted in the Congress unless, at the same time, was admitted "our own".139

His public ministry in North America showed that he indeed understood and genuinely rejected the imperialism of the United States in Latin America and elsewhere. For him there was no doubt that the interventions in Panama and the Dominican Republic were embarrassing acts, that had compromised the credibility of Protestant missions:

It would be folly not to recognize the obstacles to foreign missionary work in Latin America created by the real or supposed policies of the United States toward her neighbours to the South. It is not necessary to resort to a catalogue of the advances of the United States into Latin American lands to account for the obstacles placed in the way of the North American missionary work by national and racial suspicion...We would be blind if we failed to see the seriousness of the problem thus created for the missionary.140
Yet McConnel saw as unfounded, any suggestion that implicated Protestant work with political aims which favoured the position of the United States in the continent. In his Closing Remarks, at Montevideo, he rejected this possibility. He gave assurances that North Americans who were financially supporting the work in these countries had no other intention, than to share Christian principles: "They are absolutely devoid of any political or economic purpose...These churches give their money solely in order that principles of Jesus may become, as far as possible, the working principles of every Latin American community..."

So McConnel was one of those few delegates that in Montevideo contrasted with those there who felt proud of the contribution that in their view, they were giving to the cause of Panamericanism. Voices like his called for caution, on the assumption that political satisfaction could turn out to be highly costly, as far as the fostering of religious principles in the region was concerned.

An example of this was that there were some non-Protestant Latin Americans who had turned down the invitation to take part in the Congress. One of these was the Argentinean University Professor, Dr. Alfredo Palacios, for whom, according to Inman, Protestant missions were "unwillingly tied up with the Imperialism of North American business and government".

This Conference acknowledged the importance of good
relationships between the United States and Latin America, but the advice was to be cautious because of the feeling and suspicion that "evangelical work is likely to eventuate in furthering the political hegemony of Washington". Two reports addressed the issue: that on Special Religious Problems and that on Church and Community. The first called for prudence because the whole evangelical movement was viewed in Latin America as "essentially political in its aims" and as a weapon of the United States to prepare the way for Yankee Imperialism. This commission was clear in asserting that Protestants should not be involved with Panamericanism, not because of its limitations, but because Latin Americans did not understand it:

The Evangelical movement has been criticized as a tool of imperialistic politicians. This leads us to make one or two remarks, (a) The term Pan-American should be abolished from all connection with Evangelical Propaganda in South America. It is a term distasteful, even in its political connection, to many of the best minds on the continent. Used in connection with Christianity, as in the title of a well-known book, Pan-Americanism in Its Religious Aspect, it provincialises, or at best, continentalizes what is by nature universal. It is difficult for the popular mind in South America to appreciate the fact that men belonging to a powerful sister nation can work in other countries without being inspired by selfish or national interests...For that very reason, the Evangelical missionary should avoid all entangling associations with commercial or political interests in order that he may stand forth in the full light of day as God's representative... The second report drew attention to an official declaration of the Roman Catholic Church in Brazil, whereby Protestant missions were denounced as "a business proposition" and missionaries were portrayed as "political agents who were working with a view to
denationalize the people and pave the way for commercial and political interests of Anglo-Saxon nations". This commission elsewhere described these statements as baseless because they considered it impossible "to identify capitalism with anything resembling essential Christianity". In the discussion of this report, John Ritchie, a Scotsman of the Evangelical Union of South America (EUSA) in Peru, also raised the subject. Ritchie, together with other missionaries, disapproved of the association with Panamericanism, for it had nothing to do with Christianity, "it is a matter of international politics.

In the following Protestant congress in Havana, Cuba, in 1929, some Latin American Protestants complained of the difficulties of dealing with the suspicions that were in the minds of people, as to the link that they believed existed between Protestantism and Imperialism. Baez Camargo blamed those politicians who "had pushed the United States to write humiliating pages" with regard to relations with Latin America: "They did not imagine the extent to which they have obstructed the evangelization of our nations."

He considered it unfair that because of the justified misgivings and distrust of North America actions, Latin American Protestants should be insulted and regarded as highly suspicious. This situation led Protestants to intensify their efforts to make it clear that they were not moved by any political agenda, but purely by religious aims. They were representatives of Someone Mightier, Browning said:
Unfortunately, it must be confessed that the policies dictated and enforced by the State Department in Washington, in the past, have not always been wise or just in their relation to these young and very susceptible republics...The Evangelical missionary is to be the ambassador of a power mightier than any earthly government and he cannot afford to jeopardise his work by association with any party in local politics, nor by the slightest expression or deed that might suggest any connection with foreign power. By his work he may come to be a minister of reconciliation between warring factions, or for the establishment of better international relations.\textsuperscript{150}

After Montevideo the dangers of this relation were alluded to in some of the following annual meetings of the CCLA. In 1928, it was advised that the preaching of Christ's message "must be lifted out of the clash between Anglo-Saxonism and Latinism" for there was "a wide spread feeling that Protestantism is a form of Anglo-Saxon aggressiveness".\textsuperscript{151} Protestants were not only interested to argue that this impression was wrong but to show, on the contrary, that, the Protestant mission, as Browning believed, was "the greatest contribution of Anglo-Saxon America to the welfare of our neighbours in Latin America. It is the only enterprise that is founded on love."\textsuperscript{152}

The problem is that none of these voices and warnings seemed to have succeeded in stopping leading Protestants, like Inman, Executive Secretary of CCLA, from continuing his interest in Panamericanism. Protestants were caught up in a political movement which, despite its risks, they saw as beneficial for the Protestant cause and for the welfare of Latin American countries.

Their loyalty towards the United States prevented influential Protestants, both North American and Latin American, such as
Erasmo Braga, Eduardo Monteverde, Gonzalo Baez Camargo from being convinced that Latin America could be really threatened by the United States. They preferred not to speak of the matter except where the image of Protestantism demanded it.

After the Montevideo Congress, Juan Orts wrote, in 1927, one of these typical Protestant articles in which the role of the United States is questioned, though with the ultimate intention of showing its greatness. In his article "Afrontando la Situacion con Franqueza" (Facing the Situation Frankly) Orts expressed the view that Latin America urgently needed to understand the importance that Christianity had had in the evolution and greatness of the United States: "The United States' conscience rests on the Bible, and there is the stuff of messianic nations".153

The words that Charles S. Detweiler, Superintendent of Northern Baptist work in Latin America, uttered at the CCLA's Annual Meeting in 1927 are still more revealing. There he praised the United States's military actions in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Haiti, and Nicaragua as sign of how Latin America was being absorbed, interpreting it as "an unmistakable call to the church of Christ in the United States to keep pace with this new life". In a discourse that regarded as groundless any Protestant opposition to Imperialism, he said:

There is no part of the world today, outside the United States that is being Americanized more rapidly than Latin America. This is not simply because of the rapid increase in
commercial relations between those countries and the United States, nor because of the penetration of the moving picture industry, but largely because of the growing political influence of the American Government in these countries. Porto Rico is part of the United States and completely dominated by the American political and educational system. Cuba's sovereignty is limited by the Platt Amendment, and Cuba may therefore be considered a dependency of the United States. Haiti since 1916 has been a protectorate of the United States and will probably continue to be one for twenty years to come. The life of these peoples is being made over in a way less disturbing than by a revolution and yet more drastically than would be possible by their own efforts at reform. Nicaragua for a year at least will be an American protectorate. Some think that our government has set out to plow a long furrow in promising a fair election and then in supporting the administration so elected. Even in Salvador there is an arrangement by which Americans collect the customs and guarantee a loan contracted for internal improvements including schools and roads. There is an unmistakable call to the church of Christ in the United States to keep pace with this new life.  

Even when the "Good Neighbour" Policy had proved to be just another strategy of the United States to gain the trust of Latin American republics, Protestants insisted on the contribution of the CCLA to inter-American relations. The survey of the International Review of Missions in 1939 hinted that Inter-American cooperation was, for the CCLA, a matter not restricted to political or economic fields. So the North American champions of Protestant evangelisation in Latin America had become largely absorbed in the political interests of their own nation. The old lyric speeches of Speer and Inman on the need for evangelism which were used to inspire North American Protestant missions, had been forgotten.

Criticism towards CCLA in the thirties was still stronger than
that shown in the Montevideo Congress. Protestant missionaries in the field were not convinced that the link with political agendas like Panamericanism or the "Good Neighbour" Policy was helping their work in any way. Their view was that the CCLA was being inspired by motives different from those for which it had been created. Protestant leaders of Central America, gathered in Guatemala in 1941, gave support to this view. They used the conference to question the contribution of CCLA, now under the direction of Dr. Stanley Rycroft. Rycroft, unwillingly, agreed with them, acknowledging that too little attention had been given to purely religious matters of missions. The CCLA, according to him, was just beginning to deal with the reality of the evangelical situation. As though implying that the first phase had contributed little to Protestant missions, he asserted that CCLA had now arrived at a second phase in which its time would be devoted to Evangelical churches. He went on: "we are studying their problems, coordinating their forces, and making every effort for the progress of their work".

8. Samuel Guy Inman and US interests

After studying the life and work of the CCLA it almost seems that to speak of Samuel Guy Inman amounts to speaking of the CCLA. They were indeed inextricably linked. Inman was, for better or for worse, the life and soul of the CCLA.

In Chapter IV we pointed out how the new impetus that
Protestant evangelisation in Latin America received in the twentieth century found him working in Mexico as a missionary of the Disciples of Christ. Robert Speer managed to convince the organization that paid Inman's salary, the Christian Woman's Board of Missions, to release him to be the full time executive secretary of CCLA. Inman remained very close to both Robert Speer and John R. Mott, whom he considered as "the leaders that more than any other living men embody the idea of missionary strategy".157

8.1.Progressive image

Imman's social concern was one of his principal marks. He sincerely believed, as did many colleagues in CCLA, that Protestantism in Latin American countries could do, what the Roman Catholic Church had been unable to do, namely provide inspiration for their longing for freedom and economic progress. He founded in the Institute of Piedras Negras in Mexico which became known, among Protestant circles, as one of the models of what Protestant churches might do to promote the discussion of social issues. He felt proud of the welcome and the aid that the Institute received from the Mexican Government for its contributions to easing the political crisis there. Harlam P. Beach recounts that the dedication of the Institute, in 1910, was an official act of the government and that its auditorium often held patriotic meetings.158

Its main feature was a Sunday meeting at which people of the community, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, addressed their
main problems. The meetings were usually closed by the Institute's director, Inman, who sought to express the bearing of Christianity on those problems. The Institute was described as an example of "disinterested love" in contrast to "the dominant selfishness of trade and diplomacy". Inman said that a number of students of the institute joined the revolutionary army.

His numerous writings, and especially his constant trips, not only as executive secretary of CCLA, but also as a participant in the Panamerican conferences, made him known as an expert on Latin American affairs. He taught as a visiting professor in Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania, among other universities and colleges. Several publications in the United States recognized him "as one of the leading authorities on Latin America". Articles in La Nueva Democracia, which he founded in 1920, and directed for almost two decades, continually gave credit to him as "special expert" on Latin America. The writer of the foreword to one of his works considered him as "the greatest missionary authority in all Latin America".

Concerned with the poor progress made in the growth of understanding between the United States and Latin American countries, he committed himself to work for improved relations. Although he was appointed to foster the expansion of Protestantism, he devoted most of his life to promoting political understanding between the Americas. Indeed his reputation has been based more on
his activities in the political arena rather than on those in the religious sphere. The fact that the Library of Congress now holds his papers affirms this. The Librarian was encouraged to hold Inman's records because he believed, as he said in a letter to Inman in 1972, that his contribution to American relations was "of national significance".164

On the occasion of his visit to Bogota, Colombia, the daily, El Espectador, presented him as "the most striking figure of the new liberal democracy in the United States, and the most fervent defender of Latin American countries".165

8.2.Apparently critical of US

When Inman defended Panamericanism he was not blind to the failings of the United States in Latin America. In fairness, he criticised his country on many occasions. Yet the difference between him and the Latin Americans who distrusted North America, was that Inman believed that the United States could, and was, changing its imperialistic nature. Besides, he believed that, despite the mistakes of the United States, Latin American countries needed its help for their economic development.

His knowledge of the political crisis in Mexico in the first decade of this century led him to question what North American private interests, with the help of the United States government, were doing there. Because of this he was accused of mixing religion with politics. To this he replied that the two were inseparable.166 In his book
Trailing the Conquistadores (1931) he acknowledged his inability when he tried to draw a line between religion and society:

When I started out to write this book I planned to make it a human story with little reference to the debatable questions related to the United States's intervention in the Caribbean. But on retracing my steps in the islands, I could not get away from the overwhelming influence of the United States in regard to every question, spiritual or material, that concern them. And I am certain, in common with all students of the world as it is, that spiritual questions cannot be faced without recognition of the economic facts that condition the everyday life of the people, that are at the very root of the way human beings think and feel and what their behaviour is.  

Inman was one of those Protestant missionaries who, seeing as imminent a new invasion of Mexico by the United States, carried out, for several years after 1910, a campaign in the United States denouncing the dangers of any military occupation. For him Protestant missionaries "had a duty to lead the American people in a program away from armed intervention and towards the development of friendly relations between the two countries". In his Intervention in Mexico (1919), he considered the action of the United States which had been triggered off by in Mexico's confiscation law to be unjustified: "we have just confiscated foreign property by the million by passing the Prohibition Amendment, yet no one would think that gave a foreign government the right to intervene in our affairs". For Inman the events in Mexico had confirmed the validity of the distrust of Latin Americans.

For a long time coming into close contact with Latin Americans, I resented hotly this accusation that we Americans cared more for the dollars than for anything else.
But since I have studied the records of our State Department, which show how most of our dealings with those countries have been in connection with insuring a clear road for our investors, I have not found it at all difficult to understand the viewpoint of our neighbors...The real reason for our making war on Mexico, if we do, will be in order to protect American investors.170

His position with regard to this was later held up as an example of the genuine neutrality of his way of looking at North America. Even a decade later, La Nueva Democracia, was interested in recalling his position on Mexico. In the context of the Panamerican Conference of Santiago, Chile, in 1923, the magazine equated Inman with Lincoln and Grant, in having the courage to protest against the actions of the United States in Mexico, an iniquitous event, the article said, that was then reverberating in Santiago.171

He indeed was not blind to the vices of his government in Latin America. At the same time, however, he was very far from being considered as a Protestant leader who was really committed to the lot of Latin Americans. The perception that Haya de la Torre had of Inman showed that Inman was not entirely successful in selling the image of himself, through La Nueva Democracia; as someone at odds with the United States. The article "El Nuevo Panamericanismo" (The New Panamericanism) which apparently quoted references that the Colombian daily, El Espectador, had stated, in 1931, that Inman was not liked by bankers, petroleum executives, and politicians of the United States. It went on:

Professor Inman is an apostle of Panamericanism who does
not come to Latin America recommended by the board of the Pan American Union, and who does not report to the State Department on the social and economic situation of the countries he visits.172

Yet Haya de La Torre was an example of those Latin Americans committed to social change who believed that Inman, though ideologically progressive, was unable to take any consistent stand against the foreign policy of the United States. Inman's critical appraisals of Imperialism were seen as isolated references rather than the product of a clearly defined anti-imperialistic position. Without turning to any conspiratory theories, it is not surprising to discover that Inman was liked by the government of the United States for his contributions to Inter-American relations. Indeed early in the history of the CCLA, Inman had been approached by the United States government to contribute to its purposes. This is was recorded in CCLA's Annual Report in 1919:

The new conditions have opened up an entirely new sphere of service for the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America. Its Executive Secretary was requested to serve in an advisory capacity to the United States Government in its work done through the Committee on Public Information, and in coordinating the multiple agencies constantly being organized for the furtherance of Inter-American relations.173

The correspondence that Inman, in 1919, had with Robert Speer, chairman of CCLA, regarding a trip to the Dominican Republic, then occupied by the United States, revealed that he had little respect for the sovereignty of Latin American republics. He told Speer that he had been guest of the United States navy and that had gone to Santo
Domingo on a yacht of the US navy. His letter expressed surprise that all Executive and Legislative power was in hands of the US navy, with Rear Admiral Snowden, US navy Minister of Foreign Affairs as President, and Colonel Rufus Lane of the US Marine Corps as Minister of Education. There was not even a semblance of a Dominican government, Inman concluded. At times the overtones of the letter appeared to reveal some misgivings on the part of Inman, especially when he said, in a seemingly sarcastic fashion, that the situation had the advantage that now the US minister to the Dominican Republic calls on its President practically every day, does not have to use an interpreter and does not find it difficult to make the "President" see the matter in hand from the American standpoint". Yet "he was deeply impressed with the fine spirit with which the Admiral and his cabinet are carrying on their work, which they regard as a real missionary job". Not only did he appear to approve the occupation of the country, but he considered that the forces of occupation could help him to establish a religious program for the people:

After a walk in the Capital, I drew up a tentative program for the Republic, and I invited ten gentlemen to meet me at luncheon to discuss it. There were present the Admiral and his staff of the President and his cabinet...They all gave ideas concerning what ought to be done, glowing with a keen perception as well as a fine spirit in their suggestions.

He was also accepted the aid of the US navy in making investigatory trips around the country. In his report, "Through Santo
Domingo and Haiti: A Cruise with the Marines", Inman recounted that by courtesy of the North American government he had been able to save much time on his visit to the northern section of the country by being given a passage to Puerto Plata in government transport.177

These give indications of Inman's early commitment with the interests of the United States in Latin America. In later years he felt proud that Cordell Hull had followed his advice in his implementation of the "Good Neighbour" Policy. In a circular letter, in 1934, he stated that Cordell Hull had carried out all the suggestions he gave.178 He was pleased that in the period before World War II the US government had used his services:

The United States so far has paid little attention to the people we want to influence. On the other hand, we have hastily picked up our personnel from among advertisers, salesmen, and lobbyists, who have been successful in influencing our people at home...When President Roosevelt and Secretary of State, Cordell Hull started down to the Pan American Conference at Buenos Aires to see what could be done to hold Latin America with us instead of losing them to the totalitarians, I was asked to go with them as the first cultural advisor ever appointed on a U.S. delegation...On board the ship during the 19 day voyage to Buenos Aires, we worked out a treaty on exchange of students and professors.179

Inman's curriculum vitae included the fact that "he was secretary of the Latin America Advisory Committee to the United States Government during the World War I".180 In public conferences of the fifties he was presented as "former consultant to the State Department" "closely associated with Hull".181

Inman became a key resource for the shaping of North
American policy towards Latin America in the 1940s and especially in the 1950s. His experience and knowledge of the region were fundamental factors in his appointment to several official missions by the United States government. The ideological campaign which was implemented in Latin America through a carefully designed broadcasting programme was one of the areas in which Inman made an important contribution.

He had been a critic of the radio programs that until World War II had promoted the image of the United States in Latin America. This not only because of their weak reception, but because the programmes had failed to appeal to Latin Americans. He referred to the "unadaptability" of those programs. So in 1936 he was called on by Government to direct a six months radio program named "The Brave New World". In this regard he considered himself a pioneer. He described the programme as "the first serious effort of the Washington government to cultivate closer relations with other American republics".

This programme, which later came under the direction of Nelson Rockefeller, became the origin of The Voice Of America, the official short wave radio of the United States. This broadcasting station, since its origin, has been used to foster North American interests, and to counteract popular movements which oppose them. Inman hoped, as with many other North American strategies, that it would bring a new possibility for the evangelisation of these countries.

571
In describing what The Voice of America was, he said:

The real Voice of America is not the voice of ecclesiasticism, of business nor of the atomic bomb. It is the voice of true religion. It is the voice of Washington to God for his men and his country, it is the voice of Lincoln, commending his neighbours to God, as he leaves his Springfield home to face his terrible task in Washington.185

Another area in which he served was in the promotion of cultural relations that, in the 1940s, the United States had begun to take seriously. This resulted in the establishment of Cultural Centres, to promote the study of the English language and cultural developments of North America. Inman had in fact advocated this, long before it took place. He had talked, in 1923, of the need for establishing a programme to encourage Latin American intellectuals to visit North America, and North Americans to visit Latin American countries. For him the United States was, in this regard, lagging behind European countries like Germany, Italy, France and Spain, which continually sent "intellectual missions." He went on:

Inter-American relations in the past have been largely commercial. It is desirable that North America send more of her most distinguished men of the educational world to tell them of our social, intellectual and spiritual life. On the other hand, there are a number of distinguished South American who should be brought to this country to interpret their life and problems to us. Leaders in inter-American friendship have long urged this interchange of intellectual life between the two Americas, but little so far has been accomplished.186

This subject was a matter of discussion in practically every Panamerican conference, and in 1938 Inman drew attention to this fact:

A simple and straightforward way for the United States to meet the question as to what it should do to strengthen
democracy in other parts of the American Continent would be to carry out the program of cultural exchange which it has been requested by the Pan American Conferences to foster. Once taking seriously the realities and the recommendations of these conferences regarding cultural relations, we would find ourselves engaged in a legitimate, well-directed program of a strengthening democracy, with no legitimate accusation against us concerning "propaganda" for we would only be carrying out the program of a continental movement - almost entirely suggested by the Latin Americans themselves.187

Inman’s appeal was not ignored by the US government. On the occasion of Inman’s visit to Mexico, in May, 1938, the daily, Novedades, announced that he had been appointed director of an office "charged, under the Department of State, with the improvement of cultural relations between his country and Latin America". It was said that the functions of this office were similar to those of the Panamerican Union. His main task was to promote the interchange of Professors and students.188

Inman knew well what he wanted to achieve in the missions that the State Department asked him to undertake. For instance, North Americans who in connection with the programme of cultural exchange were to visit Latin America had to meet special requirements in their selection:

Visitors should be selected with the following characteristics in mind: true representatives of the labor movement, sympathetic to democratic political and social ideas...have possibilities of future influence on the labor movement in Latin America...The Cultural relations Section of the Department of State would like to be kept in touch with the project since it is [eager to learn] along the same lines as students.189

His interest in the labour movement in Latin America would
seem to have been a factor in his being given these appointments. This time he was named Director of the Inter-American Trade Union Project, whose task was to brings Latin American labor leaders to study labor and industrial conditions in the United States.190

8.3. Desire to be close to the State Department

His private correspondence with the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, reveals the high esteem that Inman had of him, and of the "Good Neighbour" Policy that was he was promoting. One might well suspect that where links exist between a government and an individual, whether a religious leader or not, those links would originate through the initiative of the government. Yet this was not quite so in the case of Inman. He often put forward his name to take part in Panamerican conferences or any other meeting where relations with Latin American countries were under discussion. He wanted to be close to the man that, in his view, had placed the relations of the United States and Latin America on a better footing, the one whom he praised for having shifted from "dollar diplomacy" to "good neighbour" policy.191 Besides this, he seemed to have believed that, because of his experience and contacts in Latin America, he was an indispensable resource that his country could not afford to waste.

The Department of State did not always accept his offers. The Seventh Panamerican Conference, in Montevideo, 1933, was one of the occasions in which Cordell Hull turned down Inman's offer. For
Inman there were many reasons for wishing to be there. For this Conference he had written several articles in La Nueva Democracia. It was to be the crucial conference at which the United States would announce the Good Neighbour Policy. Hull put his refusal to Inman in letter of May 14, 1934:

In answering a purely naked inquiry as to whether you were a technical adviser to myself during the Montevideo Conference or officially attached to the American delegation, I have responded by saying that in terms of strict accuracy my reply is in the negative. This too avoids any confusion of understanding as to everybody concerned.192

The next Panamerican Conference, the eighth, held in Buenos Aires in 1936, was better, as far as Inman’s interests were concerned. It had been called by Franklin D. Roosevelt, who sought to take advantage of the hostilities between Bolivia and Paraguay. In a letter to Hull of October 7th, 1936, Inman expressed his interest thus:

You have been kind enough to say that you personally would like me to go. But I know what pressure there is for such appointments. I have refused government appointments in the past, but would be glad to accept one in your Department because I am in such complete accord with your program. I would be glad to go as a delegate or as an adviser - whichever way I can better serve you. But I am anxious to go, for I think I can do some things for you that no one else can. I am on intimate friendly term with important Latin American delegates...I have attended every Pan American Conference since the Santiago meeting in 1923.193

Hull’s secretary wrote to Inman on October 23rd, asking in Hull’s name if he “would be willing to serve as special adviser to the United States delegation to the Conference of Buenos Aires”.194 On the 28th, it was confirmed that the President had approved of his
designation as Special Advisor. The letter also informed Inman that that appointment entitled him to "make application for an official passport". For decades the pattern of relations between Inman and US government was that sometimes he was considered useful, sometimes not. In 1960, for instance, the Department of State, through its Office of Caribbean and Mexican Affairs, turned down Inman's proposition that he be part of the official delegation to represent the United states at the celebrations of Mexican Independence. The answer was put in simple terms by Edwin E. Vallon, in September 13th,:
"regarding the possibility of your appointment to that special mission we regret our inability to include you in the delegation".

Inman also took advantage of his friendship with Cordell Hull, in his intention to obtain the position of Professor of Latin American Studies in Columbia University, after the death of Professor William R. Shepperd. In letter to Hull of November 9th, 1934, Inman put forward that the importance of him getting that position was in the growing influence of Latin America in world life and in the need for United States' attention there. He concluded by saying "I wonder if you would care to write President Nicholas Murray Butler about my being appointed....". Hull's answer to Inman was as follows: "I note carefully and with interest what you say. I am glad to write as diplomatically as possible to Dr. Buttler, as per your suggestion. I would be delighted to see you make the connection you have in mind".

8.4.Role as an informer
From a Third World point of view it is not difficult to draw the conclusion that Protestant missionaries had often been insensitive to the hard conditions of the people to whom they were sent. Surely there were, and there are today important exceptions; but these exceptions could never dispel this overall reality. Despite the protest of some Protestant missionaries against the abuses of colonialism, they were too often interested in receiving advantages from it for their religious objectives, rather than questioning its effects on the dominated people.

Dictators and wars were seen as trouble, mainly when they became an obstacle to the missionaries religious work. The common and charitable interpretation of this is that however much social interest Protestant missionaries had, their principal interest was in the spiritual dimension of life. Yet the general distrust that Protestant missionaries have had of popular movements tends to call this interpretation into question.

It is difficult to name a single Protestant missionary who wrote favourably about popular uprisings such as those led by patriots such as Farabundo Marti in El Salvador, or Augusto Cesar Sandino in Nicaragua in the 1930s. It is also difficult to find Protestant missionaries denouncing the dictatorships in Brazil in the 1970s or in Argentina in the 1980s. One is more likely to find references by Protestant missionaries in favour of the Somoza dictatorship, than in support of the people who, for several decades, suffered under him in Nicaragua. Despite this, it is fair to say, that Protestant missionaries are
not moved by sinister agendas or are clear political objectives. Many other factors served to determine their way of looking at things.

Yet Inman seemed to be an exception, a missionary who used his religious position to further political aims alien to Latin American people. His role in Panamerican conferences, his views on the occupying army in the Dominican Republic, his friendship with Cordell Hull, are indications of his commitment to furthering North American interests in Latin America. Furthermore he was not interested in keeping secret his link with the US government. This picture intensifies after World War II, and especially with the coming of the Cold War when the United States began making every effort to prevent Latin American countries from siding with Communism.

In this new political situation Inman continued to give the impression of being a critical supporter of the United States, but began in an undercover way to work closer with politicians whose main aim was to protect the financial interests of the powerful classes. For this he took advantage of the reputation he had previously gained in Latin America as a progressive religious leader who did not fear to criticise his own government's wrongdoing.

Reading his correspondence with the State Department after World War II Inman might well be considered as an intelligence officer of the United States in Latin America. Private memoranda like these to the Secretary of States in 1936 were not accidental:
The Secretary is already aware of the statement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina to the head of the Mexican delegation that Argentina does not propose to enter into any Inter-American pacts which might in the least separate this Continent from Europe, expressing the hope that Mexico would join with Argentina in resisting any Inter-American organization for peace...199

His sense that he was doing official work is perhaps the reason that led him to ask the Department of State to provide him with the same per diem (expenses) that its official workers received on their operations. In a letter to Hull, in April, 1937, he claimed this for work that he had done in Brazil.200 It is worth noting the he still was, at this time, the salaried Executive Secretary of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America.

The way in which he understood the programme of cultural exchange is another illustration of his desire to further U.S. interests in Latin America. In a letter to Edward Miller, of the State Department, he maintained that the programme must avoid the impression of being North American propaganda.201 Yet he continued to dream of the old ideology of Inter-American relations. This he expressed to Dean Acheson, the new Secretary of State, in January 11th, 1949.

I can assure you that the Good Neighbor Policy has now sunk to the lowest depths since the old intervention days. Probably the greatest reason for this is the fact that it is now left to the lower echelons in the Department, actually, I believe, to the fifth division in the rank... I am making bold as a citizen and one who in a private capacity has devoted his life to efforts to better Inter-American interests, to join with my expression of profound satisfaction at your appointment, but hope that you will give major attention to restoring the now-agonizing Good Neighbor policy. The Coming Economic Conference at
Buenos Aires offers the opportunity for beginning a new program.202

As he did with Hull, he offered to Acheson, his support and service in the crisis that the United Stated faced in the 1950s in Latin America. On April 3rd, 1950 Acheson wrote to Inman thanking him for his "cordial offer of assistance in the tough battle". "Your willingness to help is in itself very cheering. I will bear in mind your offer...").203

Inman especially served this administration in dealing with the conflicts that North American interests had in Guatemala and Panama in the 1950s. In these countries the popular movements were experiencing an extraordinary revival, and were demanding sweeping political and social changes.

In Guatemala the coming to power of Jose Arevalo in 1944, weakened the power and privileges that the oligarchies and the dictatorship of Jorge Ubico had granted to North American companies for five decades. Though his social reforms were in no way extreme, they were enough to upset the interests of the United Fruit Company(UFCo) and other North American companies. In his five years term, Arevalo had to put down 32 military conspiracies against his regime. He declared the United States Ambassador, Richard C. Patterson, persona non grata, for his involvement in many of these plots.204

In midst of this crisis Inman managed to make contacts in

580
Guatemalan political circles, even with Arevalo himself, who believed that Inman was really one of those political liberals inside the United States who opposed its intervention in Guatemalan affairs. Inman had correspondence with Arevalo in which he expressed his admiration for the President and his sympathy with Guatemala. Yet in truth Inman was not meeting with the President simply to express sympathy. Edward Miller, on behalf of Secretary of State, wrote to Inman on August 9th, 1950, to thank him for the report that Inman had sent regarding an interview that he had had with President Arevalo.

The situation in Guatemala became worse for the United States with Arevalo's successor, Jacobo Arbenz. He was a young army officer who had been legitimately elected as President in 1950. He provided conditions for a stronger working class movement and new agrarian reforms, and asserted national rights over against the dominance of foreign capital. The Communist Party, which had been banned, was legalized. A plot masterminded by the Central Intelligency Agency (CIA) ended in his being overthrown in 1952.

Inman and Arbenz corresponded. It is seems that Inman's political views had also impressed Arbenz. In a letter of May 30th, 1951, Arbenz expressed his thanks to Inman for some positive comments that he had made in the United States about the social changes he wanted to implement in Guatemala. Yet it is obvious that Inman was again quietly supporting US government policy against Arbenz. In
midst of the crisis that Arbenz was facing with the forces that wanted to get rid of him, Inman replied on March 11, 1952 as follows to the claim of Dr. Alfredo Chocano, the Guatemalan Ambassador in the United States, that United States was intervening there:

Someone reported an address made in Mexico by former president Arevalo in which he was supposed to have said that the United States government is making definite efforts to set different groups of Latin American republics against each other. Certainly such a statement will make it very much more difficult to the friends of Guatemala, since it is beyond any possibilities that the United States, which very much needs the friendship of Latin America, would be foolish enough to try to thus set Latin American countries against their own neighbours. I have never hesitated to criticize certain actions of my government with which I did not agree, but I certainly think that this kind of suggested action could not be true.

Inman had resigned as Executive Secretary of CCLA in 1939, after which he devoted virtually all his time to work closely with the State Department, though what he received from his work was basically per diem. In April 8th, 1952, when most busy with the crisis in Guatemala, Inman raised the possibility of receiving a salary with Phillipe Raine, of the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, of the State Department:

Please let me know what you would like me to do...It looks to me like I would be away from any activities in the United States which bring the necessary funds to keep the Inmans paying their bills. I wonder if the Department could do something in the matter of a salary.

The tide of protests that the United States government found in Panama in the 1950s concerning the future control of the Panama
Canal was another situation in which Inman played a role. Powerful forces like the Workers Federation, the Workers General Union and the Farmers Federation were calling for a complete review of the Treaty of 1903 that had given the United States perpetual rights in the Canal Zone. Inman offered his services in trying to influence some University Professors who were involved in the movement. In accepting his offer Philip Raine, of the State Department, in a letter of April 10th, 1952, said that he must make his own arrangements in order to keep secret his links with United States Government: "You will be wanting to speak to people there who would not be particularly receptive if they knew your trip was being arranged under the department's auspices".210

This same letter reveals that the State Department and Inman were in a relationship almost of employer and employee. The matter of a salary that Inman had raised seems to have been soon settled. Mr. Raine informed Inman the would receive "travel expenses, per diem, and salary".211 He was also recruited in July, 1952, for a mission to Panama under the mask of the Educational Exchange Programme. It was reiterated that he would be paid in accordance with Standardized Government Travel Regulations, and that he had to inform them on the results of his work:

The Department requests that, after the completion of your trip, a report be submitted so that it can benefit from your first-hand observations and thus be able to plan future projects with this added information in mind.212
In a letter to Edward Miller, Assistant Secretary of State, Inman recounted that on his arrival in Panama he put himself under the orders of the United States's ambassador in Panama, who did not meet him at the airport "for he considered that it would be better for my university activities if I was not identified with the Embassy". At lunch next day "I was warned by him of the Communist threat, represented by the Rector of the University and Dr. Ricardo Alfaro".213

Inman also expressed to Miller his satisfaction that keeping his position of independent scholar who in no way represented the government enabled him "to avoid pitfalls and dispel misunderstandings and promote better relations". He also maintained that while it was true that the communist threat "was real and needed careful attention", yet he feared McCarthysm was not helping the programmes that the United States wanted to implement in Panama.214

Inman thought that the United States had to ally itself with the people in Panama, businessmen and intellectuals, who ideologically were neither anti-North America, nor ultra conservatives taking advantage of the anticommmunist campaign. These arguments make clear the line followed by Inman with regard to the Cuban Revolution in 1959. Reflecting the old style of Panamericanism, in an interview with the daily Novedades of Mexico in 1960, he called for the unity of America in facing "the serious problem created by the Soviet intervention in Cuba".215
Conclusion

Loyalty to their country was the one thing which North American Protestants were unable to avoid. The "internationalism" and "universalism" that served to strengthen the rights claimed by Protestant missions to evangelise cultures which had a different set of religious values, were not strong enough to overcome their nationalism and their fondness of their own culture. While the importance of cultural and national identity of Latin America was being played down, Protestant missionaries were all along thinking in terms of their own culture. This serves to explain why Protestant missionaries could never dispel the image of being strange people, bearers of a strange religion, alien to the hopes and expectations of Latin America. When the time came for the choice between solidarity with Latin America and the interests of their own country, North American pioneers of Protestantism did not hesitate to choose the latter. Samuel Inman is a clear example of this missionary mentality. It remains to be studied what led Inman to resign as executive secretary of the CCLA in 1939. Was it because the new leadership wanted to safeguard the prestige of the organisation which Inman began to bring into disrepute by his open links with the interests of the United States at the beginning of the Cold War? Though we do not deal with this in the thesis, it could be concluded that he was compelled to resign. After this it seems that his financial problems brought him even closer to
the State Department in the 1950s and 1960s.

We should acknowledge that a factor that could have had influence on Inman becoming more conservative was the anti-religious campaign of communism which called for the end of Christianity.

Nonetheless whatever was Inman's end, he will be always considered as one of the greatest promoters of the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America.
General Conclusion:

To call the CCLA a "committee" seems inadequate description for a group of people, who fought against the odds successfully to persuade Protestant North American Organisations that Protestant work in Latin America was worthwhile cause. Regardless of the contribution of Protestantism in Latin America, this persuasion was in itself was quite an achievement. The success of the CCLA rested on the stature of its members, leaders of the principal North American Protestant missionary societies in the United States. The addresses at the Panama Congress revealed how the decision makers of the foreign work of the largest Protestant denominations in the United States responded to the call to recognize Latin America as a mission field. John R.Mott and Robert Speer in the Foreign Mission Boards of the United States and Canada ensured that Protestant work in Latin America would no longer only be the action of pious individuals largely isolated from the Protestant missionary movement. To speak of the CCLA is to refer to a "Protestant mentality", a set of religious values once held and expressed by CCLA leaders which subsequently became part and parcel of the life and work of the Protestant churches in Latin America.

None the less the Protestantism of this period did little in the way of building an indigenous Protestant Church. This Protestantism was largely dominated by North American missionaries, aided by a
Latin American Protestant leadership that did not feel the need to challenge this. The fact that it was a Protestantism developed institutionally with many schools and hospitals, among other services, made it seem inevitable that it should be under the control of missionaries. The financial survival of these institutions depended on the foreign missions, who always hinted that "quien paga la musica manda el baile" (who pays the piper calls the tune). As we can see with hindsight, a Protestant approach based on winning the educated and middle classes was inherently unable to foster a "native" Protestantism.

It was a Protestantism dominated by North Americans who could never overcome their loyalty to their country. The "universal" character of the Christian message preached in Latin America was too often based in a sense of the greatness of the United States, and a veneration of its cultural values.

The concept of "church growth" in the Protestantism of this period was quite different from that which today characterises the Protestant Churches in Latin America. Unlike contemporary Protestantism, the success of the religion that the CCLA fostered was to be measured by its capacity to influence the social development of the countries. This explains why there was so much interest in attracting educated and middle classes to the Protestant ranks, and why there was so much concern when it seemed that Protestantism was only appealing to the poorer sectors of society. The social prestige of
Protestantism was perceived as more important than the quantitative growth of Protestant churches, which today is seen as so important. Yet little was achieved in regard to capturing the social elites. Educated classes heard from Protestant leaders only what they wanted to hear, and not what the Christian message had to say. Inman and Mackay were overcautious not to offend this class. When the Christian message was presented in such a cautious and inoffensive manner, the educated classes were not challenged to see Christianity beyond their social interests. Protestant leaders seemed unmoved by the challenge that neo-orthodox theology posed after 1920 for a liberal Protestantism on social interests and relations. The writings of John A Mackay reflected how little influence these theologians had on his thinking.

It is striking how much attention these Protestant missionaries gave to bringing the Christian message into line with contemporary social concerns, especially in their appeals to the educated classes. The focus on the need to "contextualise" the Christian message, for which Liberation theology has frequently been criticized, is nothing new. What is new is the conception of which social groups Christians should concentrate on reaching with the Christian message. Liberation theology has been criticised for its preference for the poor as its "locus theologicum". Yet the Protestantism we have studied also opted, though not so explicitly on theological grounds, for a particular class of people; namely the educated and middle class. In opting for this, the poor were described, at times, as rather a hindrance to Protestantism
achieving its main goal: the winning of the elite and consequently the influencing of the building of new social institutions in Latin American countries. In trying to contextualise the Christian message by stressing its social dimension, CCLA leaders dismissed the influence that North American fundamentalism began to have in Protestant circles during the 1930s and 1940s, not only in North America but in Latin America as well.

This brand of Protestantism encouraged by the CCLA, ironically, smoothed the way for a new Protestant ethos inaugurated by an emergent dynamic Pentecostalism. The earlier Protestant preference for the middle classes had led the historical churches to work mainly in comfortable urban and suburban neighbourhoods, leaving aside the poor, the majority of society, who would emerge as the driving force of Protestantism in Latin America after the 1960s. The Pentecostal movement shook this old Protestantism that now appeared alive only in its respectable church buildings and schools. This new Protestant ethos prevailing in Latin America, unwittingly or not, opts for precisely those people whom Inman and others in CCLA had depicted as non influential in society.
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