THE HUMAN HABITAT

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CHAPTER XV

AMERICA PRESENT AND PAST

Why are the United States and Canada so different from Great Britain and Europe? Why are some parts of the United States and Canada so different from other parts? Why is the distribution of progress in these countries so different now from what it was before the days of Columbus? These three questions by no means embrace the whole of human geography. Yet complete answers to them would require a discussion of practically the entire subject. The answers depend largely upon the interplay of four great factors: first, selective migration; second, climate; third, resources; and fourth, stage of development.

Americans often pride themselves on their activity, alertness, progressiveness, and readiness to try something new. They seem to Europeans to be always boasting that everything of theirs is bigger, better, and more up-to-date than anywhere else. Is all this because the United States is new and young, and has not yet learned to do otherwise? It certainly seems to be true that the newer a region is the more likely its people are to be "boomers." Nowhere is this more evident than in the newly settled parts of Australia. But what about the fact that a similar spirit is obvious in China? In spite of the enormous difference between Great Britain and China, the gradual transition from conservatism to the pioneer type of progressiveness as one goes out into the more recently settled tracts is the same. From England go to Nova Scotia or New England, thence to Ontario or Illinois, and on to Alberta or Wyoming, and you will find a change of character almost identical with what you will find in going from conservative Shantung to southern Manchuria, thence to central Manchuria and on to the north. The same type of contrast, although to a milder degree, follows the trail of Chinese migration from North China to South China, and then across the sea to Formosa, Java or Hawaii. It can be seen likewise if one goes with the Italian emigrants from Naples to Buenos Aires and then into the newer parts of Argentina. Even when one compares Bostonians who still live around Massachusetts Bay with those in New York, in Florida, and finally in China, Mexico, or equatorial regions, one likewise finds a progressively strong development of what are well called the characteristics of the pioneer.

Thus it appears that the contrasts with which we are now concerned are not due to either new lands or old lands in themselves, but to the selection arising from migration. As a general thing new lands are also remote and inaccessible, so that they are not reached from the old lands at a single bound. The usual method is for people to move into the nearest or most accessible region that suits them. Such movement, when purely voluntary and unassisted, involves a selection on the basis of health, optimism, the spirit of adventure and the like. It also involves financial and social selection, for the well-to-do, unless young and adventurous, are generally kept at home by their worldly position, while the poor, unless they are unusually enterprising, are kept at home by their poverty and by the inefficiency which commonly lies at the root of that poverty. After the migrants are established in their new homes, a later generation is likely to migrate once more, as from New England to Ohio and Illinois. Again selection takes place, although all of the selective factors need not necessarily be the same as before. When New England was settled the religious factor played one of the chief rôles; but when the sons of
New England began to go West, the economic motive was dominant. A generation or two later another similar migration and selection brought a new population to Iowa, Nebraska and the Dakotas. The last wave of all has done the same thing for Wyoming, Montana, and the Canadian Northwest. Each time the resultant population in the newest region has been more completely of the pioneer type than formerly. It is as if each migration put people through a sieve whose meshes more and more assume a peculiar shape.

Migration to new and unoccupied lands does not differ greatly from migration to any other place with fresh opportunities. Those are what count. They cause the young men and women who migrate from the country to the city to be sifted in much the same way as are the people who go from the older East to the newer West; and the same is true of the migrants to Florida during the boom of 1925. The California climate, a newly opened gold field, a tropical region with unusual opportunities for making a fortune are samples of the hundreds of conditions that lead to migration and selection. The city and the tropical country may indeed appeal mainly to the love of gain, while the new country and the remote mine may appeal still more to love of adventure, but that is a minor difference. Thus the outstanding difference between new countries like the United States and old countries like those of Europe is that the new countries contain a much larger proportion of the pioneer type of people, whose characteristics become more pronounced the more remote and new the country.

We who live in new countries are apt to glorify the pioneer type. Undoubtedly it possesses a high degree of vigor and energy, a strong spirit of progress and reform, and much of the "go-get-it" temperament which gives the United States the reputation of being dollar-mad. By no means all of these qualities are good, and it is doubtful whether most new countries re-

ceive their full proportion of people who are intellectual, artistic and highly cultured, or of those most competent to carry on the affairs of government. In many cases, indeed, a "new" country fails to get the most earnestly religious types unless there happens to be persecution. Of course the circumstances vary continually so that no generalization is universally true. Nevertheless, while a new country does usually obtain settlers endowed with unusual energy and initiative, its failure to obtain enough of the more thoughtful, artistic, literary, and cultured types is one of the chief reasons why it is so apt to seem young or even childish. Its people are so active that they often suppose energy to be a reasonable substitute for sound judgment, or wealth for culture. When looked at in this way the mere fact of migration and selection seems to account for a good deal of the difference between Europe and America, between the East and West in America, and between states like Florida and its neighbors.

These facts seem to explain so much that one is tempted to inquire what remains for the other factors. So far as climate is concerned, part of the answer, for the United States at least, is found in the difference between the areas of highly stimulating and healthful climate in Europe compared with North America. The European area is excellent partly because the temperature and humidity stand close to the optimum for physical activity during several of the summer months. Only rarely is the weather hot enough, cold enough, or dry enough to be really harmful. The other main element in the excellence of the weather of the North Sea regions of Europe is the constant succession of storms, usually mild in character, but nevertheless bringing frequent stimulating changes. In the northeastern United States the factors are a little different. Here as in the North Sea regions, there is a highly stimulating contrast of seasons, but with us the summers are likely to be too warm
and the winters too cold, while very dry spells may occur at all seasons, thus doing considerable harm. This happens largely because our main area of the best kind of climate lies on the eastern side of the continent, and the prevailing winds blow from the west, thus bringing the extremes which are characteristic of continental interiors and which are one of their great disadvantages. These disadvantages, as compared with Europe, are balanced more or less fully by the fact that our storms are more frequent and bring more pronounced changes of weather than do those of western Europe. That region has nothing to compare with our rarest days when a storm has just passed and a marvelous wind from the northwest brings the most crystal-clear of skies and combines with a temperature of sixty or seventy degrees to stimulate every nerve.

As to which of these two types of climate is the better, it is hard to say. I am inclined to give the palm to Europe, for the European climate favors a more steady and less nervous type of activity. There the mind and body of the person whose health is good are never swayed far above or below a reasonable level of activity, so far at least as the weather is concerned. It is therefore possible to work cheerfully, purposefully and effectively day after day and month after month without exhaustion. With us the fluctuations are much greater both from season to season and day to day. We are pulled down by our winters, and often by our summers; our activity may be checked for a few days at almost any season by cold spells, warm spells, or extreme storms. To make up for this our best seasons, and our best days at almost any season, possess a stimulating power almost unknown elsewhere. Thus although our activity is often checked, it is also often spurred to the utmost. When such a stimulus is applied to people who have been selected because of their relatively alert and active temperaments, extreme or even undue activity and nervous energy are almost inevitable, and action is in danger of outrunning judgment. We are likely to resemble the Filipino who described himself as having too much engine for his steering gear. That then is the handicap which we must face as a partial offset to our undoubted ability to put things over.

Now for the differences between one part of the country and another. Figures 6 and 7, which are like the corresponding maps of Europe and the world, show the close agreement between climatic energy and the degree of progress as estimated by a group of experts. Figure 8 allows us to test the opinion of these experts. It is a map of progress based on exact statistics selected so as to reflect the actual economic, social, educational and personal characteristics of the people as accurately as possible. Transportation facilities and income per capita have been selected to illustrate the purely economic conditions. In order to give each state a rank in transportation we find how many miles of railway there are for each square mile of ter-
ritory and each inhabitant, how much is spent per mile in maintaining the public roads, how many trolley cars per thousand people, and how many people for every automobile. When all these facts are put together by the proper mathematical methods, we can rank the states according to the ease with which one can travel within them, and can make a composite map illustrating transportation facilities. Southern New England and the states from Ohio to Iowa stand in the van. New York and Pennsylvania rank almost as well, but fall a trifle behind because of difficulties imposed by the Appalachian mountain system. The most backward states, on the other hand, are Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas, and still more the whole tier of Rocky Mountain States with New Mexico at the bottom and Montana and Nevada next. The Pacific Coast stands high. The map as a whole looks surprisingly like a map of climatic energy, except that the Appalachian mountains and especially the Rockies introduce obstacles which even our system of transportation has not yet overcome.

For information as to income we rely on the estimates of the National Bureau of Economic Research. In 1919, 1920, and 1921 the average income per person in the United States ranged from $263 in Mississippi to $943 in New York state and $909 in California. Except for Nevada, Wyoming and Colorado, which are high, and North Dakota which is low, the states rank very closely as in the maps of climatic energy (Figure 6) and progress according to the experts (Figure 7). The incomes in the South are depressed by the presence of the Negroes who are not separated in our statistics, but even without them the general aspect of the map would not be changed.

Let us look next at the distribution of social conditions as shown by the percentage of the people engaged in professional work and manufacturing. We have assumed that high percentages indicate progress. The range in the percentage en-
gaged in professions is great, from 7.7 in California to only 2.7 in Mississippi and South Carolina. Here again, the census data do not separate the colored people, and this tends to depress the southeastern states, but the presence of great numbers of foreign-born does the same in the northeast. Hence New York, which stands highest among the eastern states, is rivalled or surpassed by ten states lying west of the Mississippi, namely Iowa, Nebraska, the Dakotas, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and the three states on the Pacific Coast. Manufacturing is quite different, for the regions from southern New England to Illinois are easily supreme. A map of manufacturing looks much like the maps of climatic energy and progress except that the Pacific Coast is not yet so much of a manufacturing region as one might expect from its other conditions. Mississippi and North Dakota stand at the bottom in manufacturing.

Although these economic and social conditions are an important element of progress, the education of the individual members of the population is still more important. We can test this by means of illiteracy and educational facilities. When colored and foreign-born persons are omitted, illiteracy is least prevalent in southern New England and in a triangle with its apex in Minnesota and its base along the whole Pacific Coast. The worst conditions are in the southeast, in practically the same place where Negroes are abundant even though the Negroes have been omitted. New Mexico, however, is still worse, presumably because of its large number of Mexicans who were born there and are counted as native whites.

Illiteracy is only a moderately good indication of progress because in newly settled regions such as our western triangle of low illiteracy, the education of the people depends on the places whence they came, not those where they now live. We want to know how well those same people maintain their educational facilities. In order to make this as accurate as possible let us combine five different conditions. We will begin with the percentage of native white children seven to fourteen years of age who are actually enrolled in the schools. This is highest in the northwest where Utah and Idaho stand in the lead, and lowest in the southeast where Maryland and Georgia rank a little better than Louisiana. The frequency with which we find a contrast between the northwest and the southeast is interesting. Another good criterion of education is the young people eighteen years of age who have graduated from a high school. Maine, New Hampshire, Oregon and the neighboring states rank five or six times as well as Georgia, South Carolina and their neighbors. This great contrast occurs even though we have given the South the advantage of omitting the Negro population and assuming that all the High School graduates are whites. Another characteristic of the better school systems is that they are open for a large part of the year and the pupils are in regular attendance. The number of days when the average child is actually present ranges all the way from about a hundred and fifty per year in Massachusetts and New Jersey to only half as many in South Carolina and Mississippi.

How about the salaries of teachers? Contrary to general belief, the salaries are about the same in the northeast as in the far west, the highest averages for all the public school teachers in individual states being nearly thirteen hundred dollars in New Jersey and Massachusetts compared with fourteen hundred in Oregon and thirteen hundred in Washington. In the southeast the level is very low, with a minimum of less than three hundred in Mississippi and a little over four hundred in Georgia, but this includes colored teachers as well as white. Nevertheless the scale for the white teachers is lower in the South than anywhere else. Finally, one of the best indications of the effectiveness of a school system is the extent to which the boys as well as the girls keep on into the higher grades. Our
social system has departed so far from the ancient method where men alone were educated that now our girls often get more education than our boys. Maryland and Utah keep their boys the longest, while Wyoming, Montana and the Dakotas are the places where the boys are most likely to be out-distinguished by the girls. When all these conditions are combined it appears that education is most advanced in the states from southern New England to Illinois, on the Pacific Coast, and in Utah. This last state illustrates the way in which a social institution may alter the results which one would expect on the basis of environment. The Mormons insist that their children shall be educated. Otherwise the map of education is almost identical with those of climatic energy and progress.

The systematic way in which most of our maps conform to the climatic map, or else to modifications of that map which are easily explained by migration and selection is becoming monotonous. But we must face it again when we attempt to estimate the personal qualities of our people. One intimately personal quality is health. Strange as it may seem this boastful country of ours is so backward that a reliable map of health based on official statistics is still impossible. Some states keep no such records, and in others, such as Mississippi, the records are doubtful. The records of insurance companies give a map of health which might almost be mistaken for the map of climatic energy except that farming states such as Iowa and Nebraska make a better showing than manufacturing states like New York and its neighbors.

As a final measure let us take something even more personal, namely the accuracy with which people answer the census questions as to age. This seems like a queer criterion. How does it measure people's ability, and how do we know whether they answer correctly? As a matter of fact it is an extremely good measure of general intelligence, and we can tell with great ac-
accuracy how much error there is in the answers of thousands of people, although we cannot be sure with respect to any given individual. The matter works in this way: — If you are an intelligent, careful person the census-taker has no terrors for you. You give him the names and ages of all the people in the house with accuracy. If he is also intelligent and careful he makes sure that you understand everything and that he understands you. But suppose a careless census-taker is talking to a shiftless, ignorant mother or grandmother who looks upon him as a nuisance and perhaps even a menace. When she gives the names of the children she says that Austin is twelve when he is really thirteen, and forgets that Virginia's tenth birthday will not come till next month. When the man of the house comes home and she relates the day's experiences, she exclaims, "Good land, I clean forgot the baby. Did you ever hear the beat of that?" This is not mere imagination; it actually happens. Moreover, not a few census-takers think it too much trouble to go half a mile up a side road to get the facts about a house or two. They or their wives think they know all about it, but they get the ages wrong and have never heard that a new baby came four months ago.

If you want the proof of this look at the census tables and see whether the number of children decreases systematically with age. In any normal population those under one year of age must be more numerous than those between one and two, because from a tenth to a fifth of the babies usually die during the first year. In the same way the two-year-olds must be more numerous than the three-year-olds, and so on. Again, children aged four, six, eight, ten and especially twelve — even ages — ought to be a little less numerous than those of the preceding odd ages — three, five, seven, nine, eleven and so on. According to the census neither of these conditions prevails in large parts of the United States. Babies almost never appear to be
quite as numerous as they really are; children of even ages, especially twelve, almost invariably appear to be more numerous than is warranted by the facts; the only odd age that gets a surplus is twenty-one, mainly among the boys because they want to vote while they are still twenty. In a high-grade population consisting largely of recent native-born migrants from the old states such errors are slight, as in Minnesota. In Mississippi, on the contrary, even the native whites of native parentage report more children at the ages of ten and twelve than at any other age. Ridiculous as it may be, the census figures would seem to indicate not merely that none of the infants ever die, but that the number of children born in 1910, let us say, has increased greatly by 1920. Then it drops ten per cent or so, and in 1922 again rises as high as in 1920. Of course this is the sheerest nonsense. It arises simply from the fact that the people as a whole, and likewise the census-takers, are so careless that perhaps a fifth of the children, even those who are native whites of native parentage, are not recorded in the census, and the ages of those who are there are often wrong.

Among foreign families and especially among Negroes these tendencies are still stronger. Among the Negroes of South Carolina the children twelve years of age are actually reported as forty or fifty per cent more numerous than those eleven years of age or than the babies under one year. Yet in Minnesota, among the native whites of native parentage, the twelve-year-olds are reported as a trifle less numerous than the eleven-year-olds, and the infants under one year of age exceed them by more than fifty per cent. Thus it appears that the census data as to age are one of the most delicate tests of the average intelligence of a population.

When we apply this test to the United States as a whole, but limit it to native whites of native parentage, we find a strip of high intelligence and accuracy from southern New England to Oregon, including all the northern tier of states except northern New England. Maine falls off quite badly, perhaps because many of her more intelligent people have migrated away, and perhaps because the sparsity of her population causes the census-takers to do a great deal of guessing. In the southwest, California falls in the same class as New Hampshire and Vermont, but the other states stand somewhat lower. Nevada falls as low as Maine, perhaps because there is too unfavorable outward migration has occurred. The southeast brings up the rear, especially South Carolina, Louisiana and Mississippi, but Florida, by reason of recent immigration, rises to the level of New Hampshire and California.

When these eight methods of measuring progress are put together, as is explained in An Introduction to Sociology, the result is Figure 8. That map seems to me the best measure yet available of the degree of progress and intelligence in different parts of the United States. In spite of minor differences it resembles the map of progress according to the experts so closely that we feel assured of the general accuracy of the latter. But our map of progress on the basis of statistics is even more like the map of climatic energy. Thus by the most accurate tests yet available our main conclusions as to the intimate relations between climate, health, energy and progress are verified. Migrations may upset this pattern, but the extraordinary feature is that in a new country like the United States, where people are still moving actively from place to place, the general pattern of progress conforms almost perfectly to that of climate. This is partly because energetic people more or less unconsciously seek energizing climates, but it is also because with equal unconsciousness most people conform their degree of activity to the type of climate in which they live.
Although the direct effect of climate may determine the main lines of the distribution of progress, we must not overlook other factors such as the distribution of the Negroes, and the occurrence of upheavals like the Civil War. If there had never been any Negroes in the United States it is almost certain that the general aspect of Figure 8 would be essentially the same, but the shading of the southeast might be one degree lighter. But after all, the presence of the colored people and the occurrence of the war are closely connected with climate. Black slaves were originally brought to New England as well as the Carolinas, and nobody thought it wicked. In the North the slaves did not thrive because the climate was too cold for them; in the winter they spent most of their time shivering and trying to keep warm. In summer they did not work hard enough to be of much use in a region where the white man loved to work and did it very vigorously. As house servants the slaves were of some use, but not very good or cheap compared with the efficient white servants who could easily be brought over from England. In the South all this was different; the Negroes enjoyed life, had better health, and worked better because it was warm. The white man did not like to work so well as in the North and could not work so hard. Moreover, it was much cheaper to support a slave where the demands for clothing and shelter were so much less than in the North. More important still was the fact that in tobacco the South had found a highly profitable crop with a market much larger than the early colonists could fill. Negroes were just the people for such a crop, and so it paid to keep them. Then in later days, after the invention of the cotton gin, cotton supplied another highly profitable crop just fit for Negro labor.

To make a long story short, the climatic conditions gradually exerted their usual power of selection; they drew the Negroes to the South, but not to the North. They also selected a moral idea for preservation in the North. In Europe the problem of whether slavery was right or wrong became acute before it did in America; the people opposed to slavery won because those to whom it was an economic advantage were few and not highly influential. In America the ideal of liberty and equality for all men throve in the North where black men were of little use as slaves, but was forcibly rejected by the South. That is the way it often happens. An idea may originate anywhere, but in some environments it is nipped in the bud; in others it grows and bears fruit, even if that fruit is a devastating civil war. Thus while the contrasted climates of the North and South are not the direct causes of slavery and the Civil War, they are the reason why two opposing ideals were located within one country so that they had the opportunity to come into conflict.

One other phase of progress in America still remains to be considered. Is not a large part of what we have said about climate and civilization contradicted by the distribution of human progress among the Indians before the days of Columbus? Not at all. On the contrary, the adjustment between man and his environment was just as close then as at any other time and perhaps closer. In those old days there were three centers of progress among the Indian population of America. In one, the central feature was the corn type of agriculture. In another it was fishing and commerce, and in a third, war and government. One had its center in Guatemala and Mexico where the Mayas were its highest exponents; the second had its center among the Haidas in the Queen Charlotte Islands off the coast of British Columbia north of Vancouver Island; and the third among the Iroquois or Six Nations of the state of New York.

The relation between the cultivation of grains and human progress has been so fully explained that it is easy to see why the first and only really great civilization of America arose
where corn was cultivated. The cultivation of corn requires certain very distinctly limited climatic conditions. The corn seed will sprout properly only in a fairly high temperature and with a fair amount of water. The growing plants must have abundant moisture for two or three months, especially when the ears are making their first growth. After that a relatively dry season is needed, for otherwise a large part of the crop may be ruined.

We are so familiar with corn as the greatest crop of Iowa, Illinois and the other richest agricultural portions of the United States that we fail to realize that among the Indians it was almost impossible to grow corn there. Bear in mind that in North America the Indians had no domestic animals that could plow the land or even carry burdens to any appreciable extent. In addition to this they had no iron implements and practically none of copper. Thus no matter how high their cultivation might rise in other respects, it could not spread into grasslands and only very imperfectly into forests. Just why the greatest of all native American civilizations grew up in the lowlands of Guatemala rather than in the highlands is not yet certain. Selective migrations may have had something to do with the matter. It is also possible that the storm belt at that time was shifted far enough south so that the climate of that region was fairly stimulating as well as drier than now. That, however, is by no means certain and we must leave the matter unsettled. This much, however, is clear. When the white man came to America, something had caused the Maya civilization to fall almost completely into decay. It was scarcely more than a memory, and the Mayas themselves did not know who built the great ruins among which they lived.

The highest American civilizations at that time were located in Peru among the Incas and in Mexico among the Aztecs. In both cases the basis of life was corn grown by means of rain during a relatively short wet season. This kind of culture spread as far as the climate permitted, reaching its northerly limit just north of the boundary of New Mexico in Colorado. Northward, eastward or westward from there corn culture on any large scale is impossible for people who have neither draft animals nor iron tools. Even in Texas the rains increase so that grassland becomes more and more common, and finally forests prevail. Nevertheless the grasses there are sufficiently bulky rather than turfso that corn culture did spread intermittently as far east as Georgia. Northward the summer rains which corn loves give place to winter rains which are of little use to it. Westward the same is true. Where the Colorado River provides natural irrigation, the Mojave Indians formed the last outpost of the corn type of civilization on the west and were immensely superior to their immediate neighbors whom we shall describe in a moment. The similar northern outposts in southern Colorado, the northern parts of Arizona, and New Mexico eked out a precarious existence by means of small streams used for irrigation. Some dwelt in such desert regions that when the time for corn-planting came they placed each seed of corn in a ball of mud, and buried the saturated ball in the sand of a dry flood plain—one of those rivers that flow with the sandy side up, as they say out there. The corn was able to sprout and grow for some time before it again needed to be watered.

Beyond the limits of the corn area the culture of the Indians fell to an extremely low level, especially in California and Utah. In our day California seems to have a very good climate—the people there claim that it is the best in the world. But for primitive Indians the California environment is about as bad as that of the Kalahari Desert. The Californians of today, so far as they depend upon local products, owe their prosperity mainly to cattle, wheat, barley, oranges, grapes, vegeta-
bles, gold and petroleum. Every one of the main food products is of European or Asiatic origin, and was not available to the Indians before the days of Columbus. Moreover, all except wheat and cattle depend upon systems of irrigation much more elaborate than was possible for the primitive Indians. The steepness of the California mountains, the early ending of the rainy season, and the general conditions of topography cause the streams to provide almost no natural irrigation fit for corn. Consequently the few Indians who lived in California were doomed to a mode of life almost identical with that of the Bushmen in the Kalahari Desert.

In Utah, Nevada and the other dry regions where winter rains prevail, the condition of civilization was equally low for similar reasons. Farther east in the great plains, agriculture was practically impossible. Not only did the absence of beasts of burden for plowing and of iron tools wherewith to cultivate the land make it impossible to subdue the grasslands, but the presence of great herds of buffalo added another serious difficulty. Not till the buffalo were exterminated could even the white man profitably cultivate most parts of the great plains. On the other hand, the buffaloes provided a means of livelihood more reliable and abundant than that of the hunters elsewhere, and the plains Indians were correspondingly advanced in culture.

The second center of primitive Indian culture lay, as we have said, in the Queen Charlotte Islands, north of Vancouver Island off the coast of British Columbia. There the Haidas, although unable to practice agriculture, built relatively large and permanent villages; engaged actively in commerce, kept slaves, and had a rather highly organized system of government and of social intercourse. How was this possible? Simply because the sea provided two of the great necessities of civilization. One was a permanent supply of food within easy reach
and abundant enough so that a considerable number of people could live close together without being obliged to wander about. The other was easy transportation. The Haidas were primarily fishermen. Of course the fish wander around, but nevertheless among the Queen Charlotte Islands they are found in abundance much of the time and every year are so abundant at some seasons that a supply can be laid by for the rest of the year. The cool but not unpleasant summers were a great help, while the mild winters made it possible to engage in fishing of some sort practically all the time. The fact that the Queen Charlotte Islands form an archipelago and that there are many deep bays and narrow inlets along the coast made navigation easy, as did the presence of forests of splendid pines from which boats could be hollowed. Thus among the Haidas, ships took the place of horses and cattle, just as fish took the place of corn, rice or wheat. In addition to all this the climate is very healthful, so that this small area provided the primary requisites of civilization.

Turn now to the northeastern part of the United States where manufacturing is now most abundant and the population most dense. There where the climate is most stimulating ought we not to expect the highest development of Indian civilization? Certainly no such thing occurred there, but the reason is clear enough in the light of the previous discussions of this book. Without iron, beasts of burden or any such special advantages as those enjoyed by the Haidas, the Indians could not to any large degree practice any mode of life except hunting. They did indeed cultivate a little corn in openings in the forest, but to clear large patches and maintain them as permanent fields was out of the question. The speedy growth of grass and the extreme difficulty of spading up enough weedy, grassy land with their crude implements made it impossible.

Nevertheless, and here is the significant fact, so far as
energy, activity and the development of ideas are concerned, the Indians of the north rank extremely high. The Iroquois or Six Nations take the lead. They lived in what is now the state of New York. Only recently has the world realized how far these people had gone in the way of developing governmental institutions. A sort of constitution framed by them and preserved by word of mouth, has recently been published. It is crude and cruel, but it shows the prevalence of high ideals. The constitution outlines an institution suggesting the League of Nations. Its purpose was to create peace and justice among a group of neighboring and often hostile tribes. It provided that if any tribe had a grievance against another there should be meetings for consultation and adjustment. It further provided that if any tribe failed to keep the peace, it should be chastised until it was ready to join with the rest in the great aim of creating a stable political system.

In addition to this germ of modern ideas as to peace and arbitration, the Iroquois had what may almost be regarded as the germ of woman’s rights. At any rate, women were respected among them as among very few other primitive people. The main councils were indeed composed of men, but the older women had the privilege of nominating the chiefs.

The more these people are studied the more probable it seems that if they had had an adequate material basis for civilization, they would have progressed rapidly. If beasts of burden and iron tools had enabled them to join their political sagacity with the material prosperity afforded by the corn culture of the Pueblos and with the commercial skill of the Haidas, as might readily have happened, who knows but that Columbus and his followers might have found a highly civilized and populous nation occupying the region where now the United States makes greatest progress. Taken as a whole does it not seem that when allowance is made for their stage of culture, the ad-