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## BRAZIL'S CIVILIZATION.

In taking a comprehensive survey of that seemingly strange anomaly of nature which is presented in the case of Brazil, it is presupposed that the fundamental laws which govern a nation's advance in civilization, together with the necessary and antecedent causes deduced from the history of previous ages, are generally known and believed. That such supposition is a valid one cannot be denied, until some master mind shall be able to confute these theories by supplanting them with others more acceptable, and more in accordance with the philosophical revelations of the time.

I have said that Brazil presents to the student of history a strange anomaly of nature, and one which, at first glance, might seem to be not only an exception to the general rule of intellectual development, but one even in direct opposition to it; for here we have an immense tract of land, favored by nature far above all other sections of the globe, and we should naturally expect to find an intellectual culture of the highest order—a general civilization equal to that of Europe or of our own country. And to the superficial observer, the existence of any other condition would be deemed an aberration—a problem incapable of solution. But that such prosperity is not the case; that Brazil occupies the lowest position among nations; that her civilization is only a little superior to her primitive barbarism, are facts so well established as to be beyond dispute. It is my present purpose to bring forward such arguments as will account for this position of a large empire, and to show from comparative historical evidence that such intel-

lectual stagnation might have been anticipated as an inevitable result—that this country does not exist as an isolated case in proof of the non-existence of a law, but that it is in just harmony with the demands of that law.

The four great causes to which I attribute this anomaly are:—1st. Physical laws and the aspect of nature; 2nd. The phonetic change and dialectic regeneration of its language; 3rd. Slavery; 4th. Its religion and the character of its clergy.

In following out this train of reasoning, and deducing from these four causes a solution of the present question, I shall be guided almost entirely by the modern discoveries of history and philology, which as branches of the highest order of study, even of the human mind, have made unprecedented strides into the operations of the intellect of man, and have pointed out the intimate relations existing between a nation's progress and its language. They have revealed to us facts of which the most learned of men a half a century ago were entirely ignorant. Nay, more; he who would have had the temerity to advance such opinions at that time, would have been pitied as a madman, and his doctrines received as the effusion of an unbalanced and unreliable mind. But the skepticism of our age, that hard belief in the infallibility of tradition, which has elevated science to its present position, and is by degrees raising our standard of morality to a perfected toleration, has furnished a key by the aid of which the long-closed doors of history, with their rusty, obstinate hinges, have been thrown wide open, that