

Spain did not recognize the independence of Venezuela until 1845.

Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, lies 3,025 feet above sea level in a fertile valley entirely surrounded by mountains. It is a beautiful city containing many parks, all of which are abundantly adorned with the statues of patriots, scientists, artists, and philanthropists. Fifteen years ago one of the finest statues of Washington ever made was erected in Caracas, this being the first South American city to thus honor him. Richard Harding Davis once termed Caracas the "Paris of South America."

The internal resources of Venezuela are incalculable, and her geographical position, situated as she is in the centre of the northern part of the South American continent, peculiarly adapts her to close commercial relations with the United States. The principal ports of the Republic are La Guyra, Puerto Cabello, Maracaibo, Carupano, and Barcelona. Through Venezuela flows the second largest river in South America, the Orinoco, navigable for many miles and communicating with the Amazonas, the first. Ciudad Bolivar on the Orinoco is a great commercial centre.

The area of Venezuela exceeds that of France, Germany, and the Netherlands combined, or that of the states of Texas, Colorado, Idaho, and California. The healthfulness of the climate may be judged by the large number of persons reaching or passing the age of 100 years, as compared with the vital statistics of other countries. The summer or dry season extends from October to April, and the winter or rainy season, from April to October.

The agricultural belt of Venezuela embraces an area of almost 150,000 square miles. Both the land and labor are very cheap. One-fifth of the entire population are engaged in the pursuit of agriculture. The cultivation of coffee, cocoa, and sugar cane constitute the principal agricultural industries. The best grades of coffee and cocoa are exported to Germany. We grow as fine a quality of sugar cane as is produced in any country in the world, but we are sadly handicapped by the lack of modern machinery and improved methods of refining. Notwithstanding the fact that the original Spanish conquerors introduced wheat into the country, its cultivation has never been extensive. The state of Los Andes is the most productive, but the amount produced is