

cotton had arrived at a good degree of refinement. Public storehouses were provided in convenient parts of the empire in which to deposit the revenues, both of church and state, which were kept separate and distinct from each other; but in times of scarcity, the stores of the Inca were drawn upon to supply the people, and, when necessary, the church stores were drawn upon by the Inca. In these store-houses were deposited vast quantities of grain and of every article of convenience and luxury within the compass of Peruvian skill. Such is the purity and dryness of the atmosphere of those high plateaus that grain will keep, in large masses, for a long time, without injury, and Mr. Prescott tells us that many of the magazines of grain, found by the conquerors, would have sufficed for the consumption of the adjoining districts for many years.

They understood, and extensively practiced the art of embalming their dead, and the mummies of many generations of Incas were exhibited at their great festivals.

The Peruvians had but a very limited knowledge of astronomy. In this science, they were greatly inferior to the Muyscas, inhabiting another portion of the same great southern plateau. They understood and practiced, substantially the Aztec astronomy, with variations approaching nearer the Asiatic systems. This, let us bear in mind, is one important link in the chain of evidence that South America was peopled, for the most part, if not exclusively, from the north-west coast, through the Isthmus of Darien.*

From this brief outline of the Peruvian civilization, we may draw the following points of comparison.

The government, in its general aspect, seems closely allied to the despotic governments of Eastern Asia, while there is nothing to establish the claim of any particular one to be the original model. They resembled the Chinese in many respects. Their implicit submission to authority, parental, sacerdotal and civil;

* For a full and interesting account of the Peruvian civilization, see Prescott's *Conquest of Peru*, vol. 1, Book 1, from which this sketch is chiefly gathered.