There is not much doubt that this war will prove, in the word of Mr. Churchill, a climactic victory among other victories upon the Balance of Power. One of the new forces to be reckoned with may be the third largest political entity in the Western Hemisphere, with over forty millions of people and three million square miles of territory, Brazil, a country larger than the United States. Brazil has suddenly produced a new architecture and this, coupled with the fact that Brazilian Architectural Exhibition is shortly to be opened in London, has evoked this Special Issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. There is an introductory survey by J. de Sousa-Leão, who is a Counsellor at the Brazilian Embassy in London. Mr. Schaevecherh Stielle, our greatest English architect, has commented upon the modern movement which has so suddenly blossomed is recorded by word and camera by Mr. G. E. Kidder Smith, of the American Institute of Architects, who was recently commissioned by the Museum of Modern Art in New York to visit Brazil for this purpose. With two or three of the artists following the three Swedish students (April, 1943), also largely his work, will agree that Mr. Kidder Smith is proving himself one of the great architectural photographers of our time. To the Museum of Modern Art in New York and to the Brazilian Embassy in London, without whose help this issue would not have been possible, special acknowledgments and thanks are due.

BRAZIL: THE BACKGROUND

BY J. DE SOUSA LEÃO

Brazil was discovered by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. Its settlement began in 1532, that is about one hundred years before Virginia and New England. The country was divided in fifteen hundred exploratory expeditions of the States of the Union. In spite of Brazil's vast area, spreading over the South American continent for more than three million square miles, the world has only lately begun to realize the possibilities of this country of over forty million inhabitants. It was first known for its dye wood, which it supplied to the world. The seventeenth century saw the spread of sugar cultivation—a valuable colonial product, of which Brazil became the largest producer. Then followed the gold, during which she supplied the world with more of precious metal than it had ever possessed. When this had run its course, cotton and tobacco were to be the main resources, with ups and downs, until coffee succeeded them, in the second half of the nineteenth century. This quick succession of economic periods with its continued temporary dependence on the crop accounts for the slow material progress of the first centuries of its national existence. Another cause was Portugal's rigid colonial policy—policy pursued by all the other European countries in their possessions overseas as well.

After the loss of their Indian Empire, the Portuguese clung zealously to Brazil, since it was from this, their last remaining asset of real value, that the Crown derived its main sources of revenue. This feat of colonizing and holding together such a gigantic country against the French and the Dutch, with the scant population of Portugal, was nothing short of a miracle. A price had been paid: million ports remained closed to international trade until 1808, when the Portuguese King returned to Brazil.

Later with the advent of the industrial revolution, it was the lack of transport, legislation, health and education to be the biggest handicap. Political and economic rivalries between states became a threat to the country. The Presidential elections were often disputed by the industrialists and given to the group of states behind them. A general dissatisfaction, together with an insipid threat of foreign ideologies, brought about the 1937 coup d'état, on the line of Salazar's authoritarian democracy, by which much of the autonomy of the States was withdrawn. In 1897, the Latin American States united to form the league of nations. Perpetual stability in time to be the greatest achievement of the Republic. It led, when the movement for independence came in 1822, to João's son, Pedro, becoming the first Brazilian Emperor. It spared the country the civil struggles which the Spanish Viceroyalties had to undergo, when breaking off from the Mother Country. It gave Brazil the stability of a sixty-year monarchical regime. The unity thus assured saved the country from breaking up into several parts, as had been the case with Spain and America. And it made it possible for Brazil to get safely through the difficult passage from a slave-ridden country to a modern democracy, which the Republic inherited in 1889 from the magnanimous hands of the second Emperor. The liberalism of a model parliamentary Government was enshrined by Brazilians of the mid-nineteenth century, based on the English two-party system, which withstood successfully two foreign wars and derived its strength from a central authority and the Emperor's moderating power.

The Republic in 1889 changed this system into a Federation of States, patterned in some measure on the United States of America. This subdivision of authority was a challenge to the military, the federal order, and the country unprepared. The interests of each individual State became paramount, and national problems such as transport, legislation, health and education opposed the goal. But Brazil's history is the same as the United States in rejecting the rubber that was once the source of its wealth. Furthermore, on the economic, the great rubber boom in the Amazon required much digging and milling. The rubber trade, with a few orange and palm plants, now shy high on the old ground level, is left temporarily as proof of work done when settlement day arrives. A map on the pages gives the position of the places described in the articles which follow.