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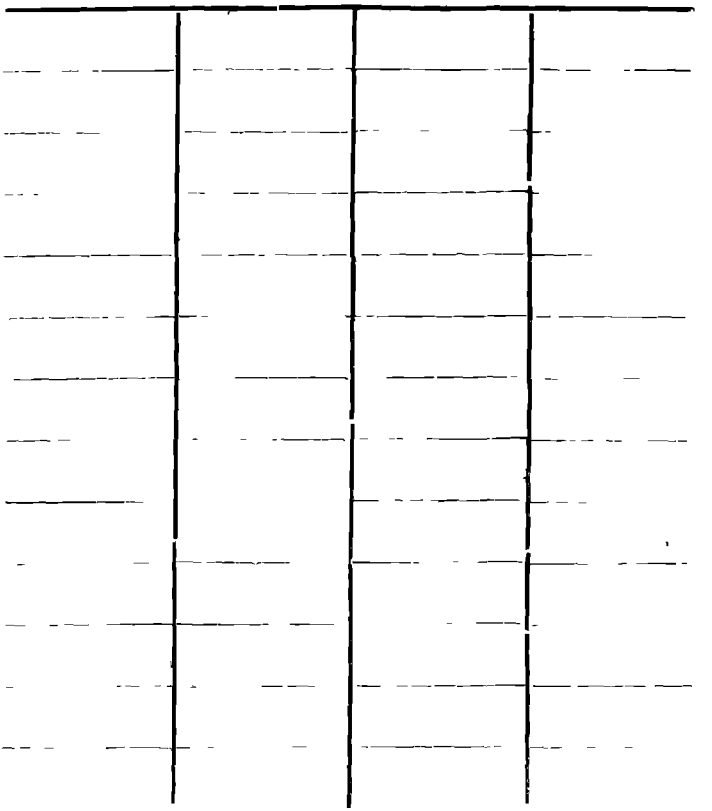
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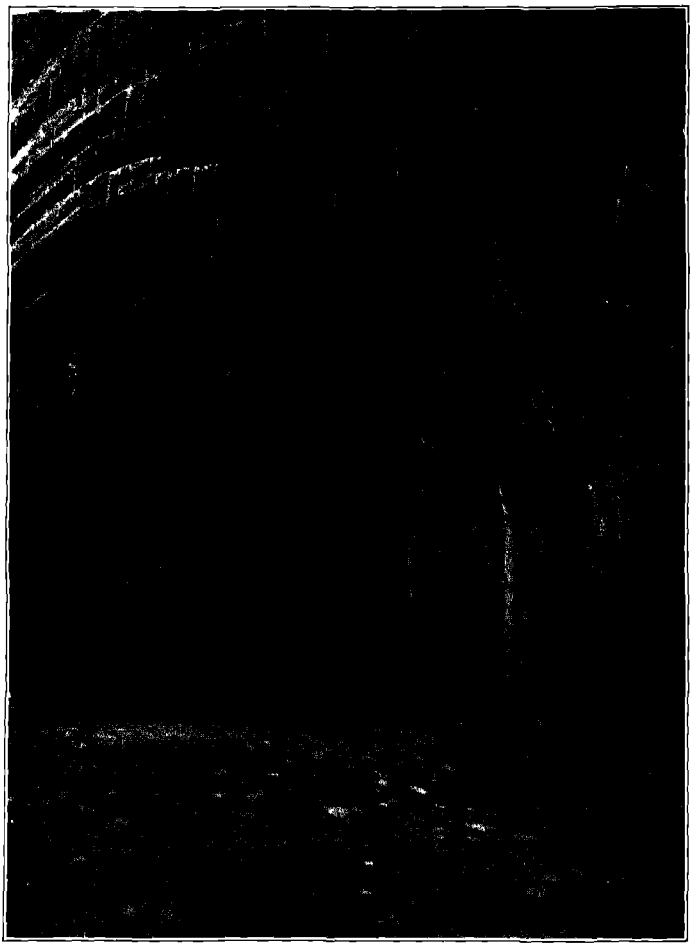
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MEXICO AND ITS HERITAGE



DUNGEON CELL IN FORTRESS OF SAN JUAN ULLOA

Located on an island in Vera Cruz Harbor this fortress erected in the last decade of the sixteenth century has played an important part throughout Mexico's history It remained in possession of the crown until 1825 and for four years after Independence served as a base of attack for Spaniards against the Mexicans Into its dungeons political prisoners were cast until the fall of Porfirio Diaz Some cells were below water level and the percolation of salt water caused the stalactites here shown The use of the fortress as a prison was abolished by the Revolution at the close of 1914 (See p 99)
Photograph by the author 1927

MEXICO AND ITS HERITAGE

BY

ERNEST GRUENING

ILLUSTRATED



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TO

DOROTHY, ERNEST, JR,

HUNTINGTON, AND PETER

The Mexican question has never anywhere been fully stated, so far as I know, and yet it is one which is in need of all the light that can be thrown upon it, and can be intelligently discussed only by those who clearly see all that is involved

WOODROW WILSON

PREFACE

THE project of writing a book on the Mexican Revolution was conceived in the autumn of 1922 More than a decade had passed since the fall of Porfirio Díaz, a decade of destruction, confusion, and then slow re-orientation out of chaos For two years the Harding administration had withheld recognition from the Obregón administration for reasons little understood by the majority of Americans Following eleven years of incessant difficulties such a policy portended further tension between the two countries Many reports about Mexico received in the United States clearly emanated from biased sources, from groups or persons with a purpose to serve No authoritative books in either Spanish or English shed much light on the purposes and prospects of the Revolution, at our very door [1] The obvious fact that Mexico is our only nationally independent land neighbor, and will continue to be so, would justify any investigation that might illumine the causes of disagreement between the two governments and the possible estrangement of the two peoples The United States had assumed world dominance and was looked to for new leadership Its failure to get along with its immediate neighbor was tragic, not only by itself, but in its bearing on all our foreign relations

International good-will and peace are deeply involved in the relations of the United States with Mexico, Latin-America's northern outpost If the two countries are to be truly neighborly, knowledge and still more knowledge are prerequisite

The writer went to Mexico at the end of 1922, staying half a year But while sufficient to gather many impressions and for writing newspaper and magazine articles, six months was entirely inadequate for a real understanding of Mexico's problems Mexico was therefore revisited in 1924, and again in 1925, 1926, and 1927, the itinerary including twenty-four out of the twenty-eight states The total time spent in Mexico over the five years was eighteen months but contacts were maintained and the study of Mexican history and literature continued throughout The succession of trips proved useful in noting changes, and the intervals of absence for reflection with the detachment that distance from the scene promotes Even so the time expended is far from sufficient for a fundamental study of a people and its civilization A life-time in their midst would be none too long

[1] Ross, Social Revolution in Mexico, and Beals, Mexico An Interpretation, appeared in 1923

Moreover such research required preparation which no one completely possesses To write comprehensively, one ought first be a trained historian, a specialist in Spanish and Mexican history, acquainted with the comparative status of the other Hispanic-American countries One needs be an ethnologist steeped in Mexican lore One should be an economist, expert in latter-day industrial problems, a social scientist, intimate with the reform movements of the past fifty years — agrarian, labor, cooperative — learned in the comparative jurisprudence of nations, familiar with educational methods, old and new One should have achieved moderate proficiency not only in Spanish, as did the writer, but in Aztec and possibly in some of the other Indian tongues spoken in Mexico

Nevertheless, the study seemed increasingly worth attempting with the discovery that the meaning of Mexico had not yet been fully deciphered The history which adequately approaches the culminating events of the last seventeen years remains to be written In few countries is political history less significant than in Mexico, yet its historiographies are preeminently political They do not answer the first questions which contemporary events in Mexico evoke

Why are there revolutions in Mexico? Will they continue? Are Mexico's troubles of political, economic, or racial origin? What underlies the recurrent religious conflict? What causes the unceasing friction between the governments of Mexico and the United States, which has brought the countries repeatedly to the verge of war and may again? Why is Mexico a so-called "backward" nation? To these questions the writer found no satisfactory solution in the published material on Mexico

He did find it, however, in Mexico's past — though not merely the past generation of Porfirio Díaz against whom the Revolution was ostensibly launched He found it by going back to pre-history on the American Continent and to epochs in Spain antedating the discovery of America He found, in short, that the contemporary Revolution is the culmination of an entire past, and that Mexico's history and present problems are of one piece It is a truism that every nation is a derivative of its past But in other countries the present has frequently so far distanced its remote past that much of it has only an attenuated and academic relation to contemporary events The reverse is true in Mexico Continuity is the marrow of Mexican history beneath changing surface events

An appreciation of Mexico needs above all a revision of our concepts of time and of the changes that a given unit of time, such as a century, is expected to work in the development of what we may call "progress," or "civilization" This attitude is especially difficult for Americans of this generation who live during the most rapid transformation the world has ever known, which seems likely to make the whole world dance to its new *tempo* To understand Mexico one must think in terms of other centuries

as well as of this One must realize that its anachronisms introduce factors virtually unknown to us in the United States of this day

In Mexico we deal not merely with many races but with many epochs, with many stages of human progress, and merely to assert or assent to this proposition falls far short of driving home its full significance We learn, in fine, that many of Mexico's troubles are rooted in a past which in point of years seems very distant, but in fact is extremely recent and often merges into the present In Mexico, a society that in part is primitive, and varyingly represents successive stages of the advancement through which other peoples of the world have passed, is invaded by modern industrialism and many ultra-modern social theories

A primitive religion, a Pretorian army, a medieval church, handicraft folkways, into which twentieth century mechanism has intruded, tribes, a highly educated and modernly cultivated minority — all these are found to-day in Mexico *The time element is the transcendent factor in the understanding of that country* Once this is grasped it remains but to study what age is represented in the various segments of Mexican society and how *rapidly and in what manner these are evolving to a subsequent state*

It has been the writer's purpose to be as factual as possible Yet the interpretative approach could not be excluded However undesirable this may be, it is unavoidable, for facts in their relation to their environment cannot be demonstrated without a certain amount of explanation which inevitably tends to become subjective Nevertheless, the writer disclaims any desire to prove a thesis, to strain for any point, to weight the scales on any side of controversial issues He would present Mexico as objectively as may be and leave each reader to form his own conclusions That perhaps is an unattainable ideal To what extent he has fallen short of it, he is fully aware and herewith expresses his regret therefore Mexico, as those who have more than a casual acquaintance with the country well know, is an extraordinarily difficult country in which to reach the rock bottom of fact Far more so than in any other country with which the writer is familiar, things are not what they seem Statistics are in their infancy Information may be checked up almost indefinitely without certainty A general rule is not deduceable as elsewhere from two or three identical or similar instances The reader will find numberless contradictions and inconsistencies They are an integral part of the Mexican complex

The writer believes that he has (1) indicated for the first time the agrarian basis of Mexican history, (2) shown more fully than has been done before the background of the so-called religious conflict which has come to the surface repeatedly in recent years, (3) has made clear the economic basis and method of Mexican militarism and Mexican politics, (4) has given the first documented account of Mexican (and perhaps Latin-American) contemporary politics, (5) has made clear the issues underlying the recurring

differences between the United States and Mexico, and brought the story of their relations up to date, (6) has brought into relief the unity of Mexico's past and present

Each of these tasks is by itself worthy of research far longer than has been given to all of them Each merits the undivided study of competent investigators, to produce as scholarly and thoroughgoing a treatise as has been recently given us, for instance, on the relations between the United States and Mexico by Professor Rippy The justification for such less exhaustive surveys is the desirability of including in one volume the various aspects of Mexican society in their relation to each other Their joint presentation is really essential to the aim of making contemporary Mexico understandable

A very earnest attempt has been made to check and recheck every statement, much that could not be verified incontrovertibly has been omitted The historical parts have been documented, but except in one or two cases it seemed unnecessary to give more than one reference for facts for which several authorities exist Foot-noting may become an affectation, and is, after all, largely a matter of self-imposed discipline for the writer Its chief justification is the aid it gives the student and the specially interested reader In the treatment of recent events the writer has as far as possible spared readers the annoyance of footnotes because much of his material is based not merely on written sources but on the verbatim testimony of eye-witnesses and principals of events described or matters touched upon At times, also, these witnesses, while wholly dependable, did not desire to be identified He has cited his authority wherever the subject matter obviously called for documentary substantiation, and he was in possession of it Considerable material concerning the Revolution is derived from "primary" sources, and appears in these pages for the first time

Finally, it should be repeated that the writer makes no claim to completeness, finality, or infallibility on a subject which involves the major portion of the field of human knowledge — the study of a people — for which, moreover, much essential documentary material is not yet available He is also well aware of the highly controversial nature of many "facts" — from Cuauthemoc to Calles He will be satisfied if the book makes Mexico more understandable and proves in any degree suggestive for intensive research in a field in many respects almost unexplored This field lies invitingly at our door for historian, sociologist, and ethnologist, a challenge, not to combat, but to greater understanding and sympathy

The separate treatment of the problems confronting revolutionary Mexico is a somewhat arbitrary division of the subject These issues overlap at many points, and are often closely interrelated Nevertheless, in order to bring them into the clearest relief it has seemed advisable to consider each by itself Therefore, after introductory chapters on the fundamental

difference between the heritage of the United States and Mexico, the Spanish and Indian heritage, and the political history from the Conquest to date — in order to familiarize readers with its most salient points — follow chapters on Land, Church, Army, Labor, Politics, Justice, Education, Health, Foreign Relations, Women, and on the Cultural Products of the revolutionary movement The greater part of the actual writing took place in 1927, certain chapters completed earlier in the year were not again touched to include subsequent events — otherwise revision would have been interminable

It is impossible to acknowledge the innumerable courtesies and kindnesses which have facilitated the accumulation of the data upon which this volume is based Mexicans in official positions and in private life have been most generous in giving their time in setting forth their views, and making available sources of information at their disposal Particular thanks are due Presidents Obregón and Calles for credential letters which opened many doors, to Miss Anita Brenner for invaluable aid in the compilation of material, to Señor Marcelo Rodríguez for secretarial assistance and many useful suggestions

If some facts set forth seem unduly harsh, those who made such facts available will, the writer believes, feel that their exposition is the best service to which they could have been put It is the writer's desire and hope that such facts, or partial aspects of the entire Mexican complex, be not extracted from their context, and perverted to serve any special aim They belong in a picture of Mexico because they were found there They are kept there to serve the cause of truth as the writer saw it, and nothing else

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MEXICO AND ITS HERITAGE

HISTORICAL

MEXICO AND ITS HERITAGE

PROLOGUE

For centuries the world failed to grasp the fundamental differences that underlay the founding of Anglo-Saxon and Latin America The superficial resemblances between those two great episodes obscured the profound differences beneath

Economic motives alike impelled British and Spanish to cross uncharted seas and penetrate hostile wildernesses Both overcame and dispossessed the redmen in their native haunts Both in time developed a national consciousness and threw off the rule of the mother country And both discarded monarchy for republicanism Of this analogy everyone is aware

The contrast — of far greater import — is less obvious and less known Differing in origin, character, and purpose, the pioneers faced a corresponding diversity in climate and topography, but still more vital, a totally different human opposition In the North they found a virtually empty country whose sparse nomads they exterminated In the South they encountered an established agricultural people, numerically far superior, whom they subjugated Anglo-America was settled, Hispano-America was conquered From this original distinction — and its implications — largely derives the wide divergence in the two civilizations Nowhere is this more marked than in their two adjacent representatives, Mexico and the United States

THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

FROM the beginning nearly every factor in the American colonies predisposed toward effective, popular, evolutionary self-government The first seed had been firmly planted at Runnymede There royal autocracy was first limited by those next in rank in the social order, the barons Absolutism regained ground under the early Tudors But the seventeenth century when America was colonized saw Britishers' civil rights increasingly asserted and for a larger proportion of the people With the accession of the House of Stuart in 1603 the powers of kingship had already begun to decline, the modern state to emerge The colonists who left England to settle America were imbued with the newer ideas of the century that was to witness the decapitation of a monarch, the Commonwealth, and the bloodless revolution which again ousted royalty and placed William and Mary, sovereigns by popular assent, upon the throne

The British settlements in America were founded by corporations or individuals united in a common business venture [1] Freedom to worship as they listed was also a motive in two colonies But although the basis of these undertakings was economic, the colonists did not purpose to accumulate wealth rapidly and return No vision of gold or hidden treasure lured them across the North Atlantic wastes They were prepared to exchange the hardest toil for the remainder of their lives to found a new home in the unknown continent They brought their wives and children And the expectation that their descendants would live in the new community made the settlers solicitous for its future

The earliest settlers were conscious of their civil rights The first Virginia charter provided that they and their posterity "shall have and enjoy all liberties, franchises and immunities as if they had been abiding and born within this our realm of England" [2] The second Virginia charter removed one obstacle existing in the first, and gave the stockholders, many of them participants in the enterprise, the right to control it The colony became therefore virtually self-governing

In Massachusetts the freemen evolved a representative system At first nearly all attended the meetings of their "Great and General Court," but

[1] Channing, Hist of United States, vol I, ch xix

[2] Quoted in *idem*, vol I, ch vi

as the settlements extended further and further into the wilderness, and the difficulties of a journey to Boston increased, delegates chosen in local "town meetings" spoke for the respective communities Massachusetts early became a small republic essentially independent of the mother country

In Maryland Lord Baltimore's charter provided that "the laws must receive the consent of the freemen of the province assembled either in person or by deputies" [1]

Dissent within a colony often led to further autonomy Thus when Roger Williams with his separatist doctrines — his belief in the complete disunion of church and state — clashed with the established non-conformism of the Puritans, he moved away to Rhode Island to found "the purest democracy that up to that time had ever developed in an English-speaking community" [2]

Of tremendous significance was the weakness of the English monarchy during the seventeenth century It was too much harassed at home to enforce rights which successive kings regarded as their own and never formally yielded The idea that colonies existed merely for the benefit of the mother country was held no less firmly in England than in other mother countries But the American colonists not only claimed whatever gains had been secured by the subjects at home, but in framing their laws adopted only as much of the common law as suited them It was their sacred birthright as Englishmen insofar as it shielded them from the encroachments of royal officials And when it interfered with colonial development they disregarded it The king, to be sure, could veto their legislation But it was in effect until he did so — a considerable time in those sailing-vessel days And although the governor, as the royal appointee, had the right to adjourn and dissolve the legislatures, composed of elected representatives, these by effective tightening of the purse strings encroached more and more on the executive until they became the real spokesmen for colonial sentiment and the real governing force

As early as the middle of the seventeenth century, there was throughout British America a constant tendency to protest against and to resist taxes and other forms of economic restraint

In 1680 the New York merchants refused to pay customs duties because Governor Edmond Andros in the haste of a sudden departure for England had neglected to renew the ordinance imposing them When his collector attempted to enforce payment by seizing a vessel with her cargo, he was sued, indicted, and sent to England for trial charged "with having contrived innovations in government and the subversion and change of the known ancient and fundamental laws of the Realm of England contrary to the great Charter of Liberties, contrary to the Petition of Right," [3] and when Dyer was acquitted in England the New Yorkers continued to

[1] *Idem*, vol I, ch IX [2] *Idem*, vol I, ch XV [3] *Idem*, vol II, ch II

act independently of the Duke of York's officer, refusing to pay duties levied by his command And this was a century before Otis and Hancock

The provincial legislators impinged increasingly even on the military function of the royal governor They not merely furnished the funds for Indian wars but often directed campaigns and supervised the discipline of the troops Thus the soldiery — civilians who had taken down musket and powder-horn from the walls of the humble dwellings — became an instrument of defense responsive to local civil authority, instead of to that of the British king [1]

Social evolution in the colonies kept pace with political Labor at first was shared in by both freemen, especially in the North, and by indentured servants The first emigration to Maryland counted ' twenty gentlemen and two hundred laboring men " [2] Before long the terms of service of the indentured servants, contracted in return for their passage, expired Larger estates were subdivided, and servants became entitled to fifty acres of land and the right to vote Unskilled labor for the felling of forests and the building of homes was always in great demand Aristocratic distinctions faded in the face of the necessities of the day The conflict with nature proved a great leveller Nor was hard labor considered unworthy William Penn invited to his colony of Quakers "industrious husbandmen, carpenters, masons, weavers, shoemakers and other mechanics, industrious spirits that are oppressed about a livelihood, younger brothers, and men of universal spirits who understand the promotion of a just government among a plain and well-intending people " [3]

Slavery, limited to blacks, played an unimportant part in the *formative* American colonial period Its blight scarcely touched the budding nation Nor was the scattered Indian population of moment except as it made for increased hardiness among the advancing frontiersmen In South Carolina, the greatest slave-holding colony, Negroes did not surpass whites numerically until 1700 In only one other state, Virginia, were black and white about equal on the eve of the Revolution In North Carolina in 1760 there were 77,000 white to 16,000 black [4]

Indeed the scarcity of labor and the ease with which the worker, if dissatisfied with his status as a tenant, could hire himself elsewhere and better still, acquire land, upset the social relations which the settlers carried with them from the Old World Labor could not be tied down to a fixed residence as in Europe, and was virtually free to sell its services to the highest bidder A pair of strong arms and a modicum of ambition soon lifted the penniless worker into the property-holding class, where he could exercise the franchise His first demand might then be for educational opportunities to

[1] Greene, Provincial Governor in the English Colonies of N America p 188–192
[2] Channing, Hist of United States, vol I, ch II
[3] *Idem*, vol II, ch IV
[4] *Idem*, vol II, ch XII

equalize him in every respect with his earlier settled and more advantaged neighbors

Education became an established fact in New England almost immediately after settlement, and neither poverty nor lack of social station deprived the child of the advantages of primary schooling Elementary education in England under the first Stuarts was perhaps more widely diffused than in any other country on earth The Pilgrims and Puritans counted among them not a few university graduates Their religion required a first-hand acquaintance with the Scriptures, and under their system of government it was assumed that voters could read and write The town meetings and legislative gatherings to which merchants, farmers, and professional men brought their points of view, the contacts of hardy yet less educated farmers with intellectual leaders, later such men as John and Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and George Mason tended to broaden the outlook of all assembled, to promote intelligent consideration of the community's problems, and to foster local and national solidarity Newspapers and magazines sprang up Freedom of the press came to be generally recognized, there being few vested interests to offend An important milestone was the Zenger case in New York in 1735 when an American jury broke with English tradition and took from the judge the power to decide what was libellous

In other respects the colonists anticipated British legal reform A barbaric code persisted in the mother country toward the end of the seventeenth century In England men were still hanged for theft of the value of twelve pence In America where the social frame-work was less rigid, and tradition less onerous, where above all human labor was scarce, humanity and expediency were readily joined Since 1620, *simple* theft was never punished in America by death

Many faiths were represented in the colonies The motive to secure religious autonomy was present in the Pilgrim enterprise at Plymouth and in the Massachusetts Bay colony Lord Baltimore had a similar purpose for his Catholic co-religionists in the Maryland colony, although his ideas of tolerance were far in advance of the Puritans, who suppressed dissent But this very intolerance gave birth to further religious autonomy in the establishment by exiles from Massachusetts of the Baptists in Rhode Island The Netherlanders planted Dutch Lutheranism in New York Pennsylvania was a Quaker settlement Episcopalians predominated in Virginia to which during the Commonwealth came also royalist refugees who had risked and lost all in their sentimental devotion to the king The members of the dominant faith in each locality were, to be sure, the elect, and in the earlier days alone entitled to the privilege of office-holding In 1660 every colony except Rhode Island and Maryland had a religious qualification for voting and holding office Spheres of bigotry and periods of intolerance

alternated with areas of relative religious freedom and times of diminishing fanaticism As early as 1663 Charles II granted liberty of conscience in religion to Carolina colonists Gradually politico-religious restrictions waned although social discrimination survived their ultimate disappearance, and still persists to limited extent But the great variety of creeds, the infiltration of lesser sects and variants from the existing — French Huguenots, Scotch Presbyterians, German Lutherans, Pietists, Mennonnites — tended to increase tolerance and pave the way for universal religious freedom in the United States Moreover, toward the middle of the eighteenth century the intense interest in doctrinal matters had given way to a greater agitation over political rights

Colonial America was the prolific budding of vigorous stock transplanted to virgin soil, rooting freely and welling with juice under a coarse bark It was the great boy adventure among nations, and kept its lusty youth No great wealth, but the poorest new-comer rich in hope and perhaps in prospect No stone palaces, no glittering cathedrals of intrenched orders, but log cabin, frame-house, and porticoed mansion resplendent only in white painted pine columns, inviting every man's effort Slender white steeples, carpentered, atop the common meeting-house beckoning familiarly to those who had erected them

Despite its crudities and cruelties, and they were many, its intolerances and inequalities, imposed by code and custom, its pious hypocrisies, some of which hold over to our day, in Colonial America men were more nearly tested by their fiber than anywhere else in the contemporary world

The colonial era lasted but a century and a half — scarcely more than the span of two lifetimes It was a period of rapid growth The selected and inherently superior immigration, the necessity for unremitting toil in the struggle with nature to found homes in the wilderness and extract a livelihood, the separate settlements largely self-governing from the start — not far from their neighbors geographically or in political ideals, the subsequent fusion of these diverse yet closely related people rendered self-reliant by frontier life, the absence of constricting social molds — these explain the apparent ease and relative success of the American experiment Yet overshadowing in importance all other factors was the opportunity for evolutionary self-development It made the American colonists' experience the greatest political training-school in history

THE SPANISH HERITAGE[1]

The adventurers who conquered the great Hispanic empire in the New World carried with them an unshakable faith in the divinity and omnipotence of kings The monarch was the fountain-head of all right, privilege, and property All others counted themselves his humble vassals regardless of their distance from the throne That the Spaniards settled the New World a full century earlier than the British in no wise accounts for the intenser medievalism of the Spanish belief In the Iberian peninsula absolutism was steadily growing In the centuries just preceding the discovery of America, the kings of Castile, Alfonso X, his grandson, Alfonso XI, and the latter's son, Pedro I, had greatly increased the royal power at the expense of the nobles The first of this trio enacted that the legislative, judicial and executive, with which were combined the military powers, as well as the right to coin money, were inalienable rights of the king His successors had the strength to enforce this assumption In Aragón, Pedro IV achieved a similar conquest

The *cortes*, an advisory body to the king, had existed as early as the twelfth century in the kingdom of León, and was soon established in the other Spanish kingdoms These were assemblies composed of deputies of the clergy, nobility, and towns They had never succeeded in obtaining their convocation as an obligation of the monarch They had no initiative in legislation[2] Their activities were confined to petitioning the king to grant certain ordinances — which he did or did not as he saw fit — and to grant subsidies, an economic rather than a legislative function They sought at various times to affirm that no new taxes could be imposed without the *cortes's* consent

But the kings increasingly disregarded this aspiration By bribery and intimidation the only elective body in Spain was reduced to merely giving its assent to the royal demand for money, while its own desires were flouted And since the money came from the burghers only, the kings began to omit the clergy and nobility from their convocations, and to appoint

[1] While other authors have been consulted, notably Lafuente, Mariana, Hume, and du Dézert, this chapter is based on Charles E Chapman's "History of Spain," in which every statement of fact unless otherwise footnoted may be found This work has been used, first, because it is authoritative, second, because within the confines of scholarly accuracy, Professor Chapman is himself friendly to Spain, his history being largely derived from Rafael Altamira y Crevea's monumental Historia de España y de la Civilización Española

[2] Desdevises du Dézert, L'Espagne de l'Ancien Régime, vol II, ch III

the deputies from the towns, thus destroying even the slight elective feature of the assembly The *cortes* was in full decline in the fifteenth century During the important period from 1482 to 1498, when Granada was being wrested from the Moors, the Jews expelled, the Inquisition established, and America discovered, the Castilian *cortes* was not once summoned to meet by King Ferdinand [1] In the reign of Charles I (the Emperor Charles V), from 1516 to 1556, the Castilian deputies became so submissive that regardless of the exhausted financial state of the country they never failed to accede to the royal wish The Bourbon kings who came into power in 1700 completed the *cortes's* annihilation Its semblance of democratic character caused them to view it with suspicion When convoked at all it was merely for ceremonial purposes

The power of the towns had also begun to decline in the fourteenth century, the king's appointed officials, such as *corregidores*, taking over functions formerly exercised by the general assembly of local citizens After a time the kings did not hesitate to sell these offices in perpetuity, thereby netting a handsome revenue By the eighteenth century municipal offices had become hereditary by right of purchase

Under Ferdinand and Isabella the nobles were still further shorn of their power and compelled to appear at court as satellites of the royal luminaries This assembling of the nobles at the very time of concentration of many powers in the royal hands, together with the expansion of affairs due to the discovery of the New World, gave rise to a tremendous court officialdom Among the various councils formed to dispatch business, was the famous Council of the Indies, the directing body for transatlantic matters The final authority over all this bureaucracy was of course the king So great a mass of affairs could never be decided by one man Important decisions were either interminably delayed until passed upon by kings like Philip II, who gave no man his full confidence, or by court favorites who dominated his weaker successors The century and a half following the death of Philip II was a continual series of intrigues by different court factions for the king's confidence, so that the winning clique might rule for its own enrichment

Office, especially high office, was a perquisite To rise in the social scale, to secure the emoluments and exemptions that went with rank and with admission into the official family, was the consuming ambition of Spanish society The Consejo de Hacienda (council of the treasury) alone at the end of the seventeenth century was said to have more than sixty thousand employees At the same time the number of vagabonds in Spain was estimated at 150,000 While the structure of bureaucratic incompetence and dishonesty was steadily mounting, the masses lived in profound misery Besides the sanctioned pillage from the top, society suffered from widespread banditry, and the corruption of officials nullified attempts to suppress it

[1] Chapman, *op cit*, p 221

Spain decayed increasingly through the centuries that had begun with her possession of the vastest empire the world had ever known From being the greatest state in Europe and the center of the highest culture in Western Europe in the tenth century, Spain became "economically about the most backward land in Western Europe "[1] Despite the treasure-laden galleons from the Americas, Spanish governments were never able to overcome their deficits And when the ordinary sources of taxation at home and in the vast overseas domain had been exhausted, forced loans, confiscations, and debasing of the coinage were resorted to This last, from Philip II on, became a regular financial measure

Meanwhile court nobility and clergy lived loosely and luxuriously Concubinage among the hierarchy was common and was indulged in even by bishops, some of whom entailed their estates to their sons, and by such eminent churchmen as Alfonso de Aragón, archbishop of Saragossa, and the great cardinal Pedro de Mendoza, despite the efforts of the Popes and other high Castilian prelates[2] The ranks of the nobility were steadily increasing, due to the practices of successive kings of selling titles for revenue Ferdinand VI (1746–1759) officially recognized that *all* the people of the province of Vizcaya were of *hidalgo* rank Entry into the religious orders was easy, carried with it exemptions from certain financial obligations, and the privilege of being subject only to ecclesiastical courts, while it did not prevent concurrent lucrative business activities In 1787, out of an adult male population in Spain of 3,295,526, virtually one fourth, 781,912, were ecclesiastics, nobles, government employees, and soldiers Of this number nobles reached the astonishing total of 480,589, more than one seventh of the male population, fifty per cent more than there were merchants and artisans in the kingdom These figures alone give an inadequate picture of the dislocation of Spanish society, for they do not consider the many retainers and servants attendant upon the nobility Neither the merchant, in a day when commerce was a more hazardous adventure than to-day, nor the most learned man of letters, was the social equal of the lowest *hidalgo*, a "noble" — usually a former Plebeian whose rank acquired by purchase carried with it the privilege of devising and flaunting a family coat of arms

In profligacy and immorality the standard and example were set by the king himself, the head of the Spanish church and state With the exception of Charles III, the ten kings who ruled from the conquest of the mainland of the Americas, in 1519, to its eventual liberation in the third decade of the nineteenth century were the incarnation of Spanish vices and weaknesses As a rule they ranked beyond their subjects, in this as in all else Charles I (1516–1556), who bribed the German electoral princes heavily to become Emperor Charles V, was always more concerned in his purchased than in his inherited domain He drained Spain to satisfy his imperialist ambitions

[1] Chapman, *op cit*, p 324

[2] *Idem*, p 164, 216, 305

The traditional picture of his son Philip II as the embodiment of sinister intolerance and ferocity may be overdrawn Yet he more than any other monarch made the Spanish Inquisition an object of terror and oppression in the Peninsula and the Netherlands, and extended its jurisdiction over the New World "In exchange for the greatest heritage that Christendom had ever seen," writes Hume, who takes a more favorable view than other British historians, "with the apparently assured prospect of universal domination which opened before him at his birth, he closed his dying eyes on dominions distracted and ruined beyond all recovery, a bankrupt state, a dwindled prestige and a defeated cause He had devoted his life to the task of establishing the universal supremacy of Catholicism and he was hopelessly beaten" [1]

Of his son, Philip III (1598–1621), he is reported to have said "God, who has given me so many kingdoms, has denied me a son capable of ruling them" [2] The third Philip, restoring the practice of government by favorites, turned his kingdom over to the Duke of Lerma "while he indulged in wasteful extravagances punctuated by an equal excess of religious devotions" [3]

His successor, Philip IV (1621–1665), father of thirty-two illegitimate children, "was of a frivolous and dissolute nature, unable to give consideration for any length of time to serious affairs" [4] So another favorite, "possibly the worst man who could have been chosen," [5] the Count-Duke of Olivares, managed the realm

Charles II (1665–1700), who followed, known as *El Hechizado*, "the bewitched," because he was subject to epileptic fits, though weak in mind and body, ruled in name for thirty-five years

Philip V (1700–1746), the first of the Bourbons, but seventeen when he ascended the throne, was "a weak and irresolute character * * * fond of hunting and exceedingly devout" [6] He proved to be the tool of Louis XIV who had been instrumental in placing him on the throne and of his Italian wife, Elizabeth Farnese of Parma Thus French and Italian ambitions alternately dominated Spain during his reign

Ferdinand VI, the next king (1746–1759), "displayed tendencies to melancholia and even insanity" [7]

With the second half of the eighteenth century under way, the succession passed to Charles III (1759–1788), an able despot who strove valiantly to undo in part the long heritage of incompetence, corruption, and wastefulness established by his predecessors He accomplished not a little administratively, but the task was beyond the powers of a single ruler in a single reign With his death the government relapsed into the old ways, not to emerge again

[1] Hume, Philip II of Spain, p 2 [2] Chapman, *op cit*, p 256 [3] *Idem*, p 259
[4] *Idem*, p 261 [5] *Idem* [6] *Idem*, p 373 [7] *Idem*, p 382

As the nineteenth century opened, Charles IV, "a handsome, ignorant, good-natured imbecile," occupied the throne, while his wife, María Luisa, "the true ruler of Spain," was "an ambitious and passionate profligate"[1] His successor, whose personal conduct was to play no small part in precipitating the ultimately inevitable disruption of his empire, was "idle, incompetent and faithless, a coward and a hypocrite, base, tricky, a debauchee" and "coarse voluptary"[2]

Such were the men who arbitarily ruled the destinies of their vassals in Spain and in the New World, as well as the conquered millions overseas who had become the vassals' vassals The characters and personalities of kings are deemed little important nowadays[3] But these monarchs were the source of all authority, initiative, and direction in the Hispanic domain They "were the state" not merely in their own Louis-Quatorze-like concepts but in their embodiment of the political, social, and spiritual legacy which they imposed on Hispanic America

[1] Bancroft, History of Mexico, vol IV, ch v
[2] *Idem*, vol VI, ch viii
[3] "No country in the world," wrote Hume, "has ever been so completely ruined as Spain by the avoidable faults and follies of its governors" Spain, Its Greatness and Decay, p 137

"I came to get gold, not to till the soil like a peasant," [1] said nineteen-year-old Hernán Cortés upon his arrival in Cuba in 1504, when offered a liberal grant of land to settle on

"The Spaniards are troubled with a disease of the heart for which gold is a specific remedy," [2] he told Teuhtile, the first Aztec chieftain he encountered on reaching the mainland fifteen years later

This proved the objective of Cortés's freebooters [3] Their original ambition had been to return to Spain and live the roistering life of a *caballero* Their easily won spoils inflamed the imagination of later arrivals The prospect of seizing a life-competence made agriculture, even under tropical productiveness, look pale And when the portable plunder gave out, search for mines from which precious ores were to be extracted by the effortless employment of Indian slave labor, replaced the more direct method of acquisition [4] This fever made the establishment of a permanent society seem unimportant To the Spaniards, New Spain was from the start a place to take from, to grow rich in without labor, and to leave heavily laden at the first opportunity

Yet many stayed By the standards of that, or any age, their daring deserved high recognition The crown rewarded their conquest of Montezuma's empire with grants of land and of Indians So these rough soldiers became in this luxuriant land of sunshine, masters of men, owners of vast estates, the aristocracy of the new world

Excepting the caciques and their families — such as had not been slaughtered — every Indian became some kind of a slave The greater portion were "given in trust" to be "made use of in farms and mines" [5] Another class of serfs, usually house servants,[6] fared worse than the *encomendados*

[1] Prescott, Hist of the Conquest of Mexico, vol II, ch II

[2] López de Gomara, Crónica de México, ch XXVI

[3] Dr José Guerra says, "most of the Spaniards in America were escaped criminals" Historia de la Revolución de Nueva España, Antiguamente Anáhuac, vol I, p 143

[4] "The Spaniards, who had no taste for work, preferring chivalrous robbery, sought first the centers of trade and the treasure already laid up in them" Bandelier, The Gilded Man (El Dorado) and Other Pictures of the Spanish Occupancy of America, ch VII

[5] The deed of *encomienda* read as follows "Unto you, so and so, are given in trust (*se os encomiendan* — hence these distributions were called *encomiendas*) under chief so and so, with the chief, so many Indians, for you to make use of in your farms and mines, and you are to teach them the things of the holy Catholic faith" Fr Bartolomé de las Casas, Historia de las Indias, vol III, ch III

[6] They were called *naborios* V Riva Palacio México á Través de los Siglos El Virreinato, vol II, ch VII

who were theoretically under their master's guardianship A third category were frankly slaves, rebellion serving as a pretext for branding them on the cheek Even suckling babes were seized at the mother's breast and marked for life [1]

The subjection of vast numbers to the will of a handful was characteristic of all the new Hispanic empire But in the Antilles and in several South American countries, the indigenes, fewer in number, hunters and fishers, less advanced on the path of civilization, soon disappeared under the combined ravages of enslavement and the white man's diseases Negroes partly replaced them [2] But though countless natives perished in New Spain, the race had the strength to survive At all times they were in a vast majority over their conquerors

Thus a caste system, political, economic, and social, sprang up over night To call it feudal is undue praise Common consent, conceived in mutual advantage, had been the basis of Europe's defunct feudalism Whatever its faults, it instilled robust notions of loyalty and service New Spain's régime, ruthlessly imposed, without reciprocal obligation, degraded *the serf and degenerated the master It gave to a few enormous power and* wealth without effort and responsibility

No women accompanied the discoverers But native maidens there were Twenty beautiful slaves, presented to Cortés by a Tabasco cacique [3] became the mothers of a new mixed race on the American continent The invaders were 633 strong [4] Interbreeding proceeded rapidly Later the Indian women sought it in the knowledge that their half-breed children would be free from slavery The home government encouraged it [5] In the course of three centuries this mingling was fundamentally to affect the fate of the colony In its society four strata developed European-born Spaniards, or *gachupines* ("those who wear spurs"), [6] native-born whites or *criollos*, [7] mixed bloods, or *mestizos*, and the Indians

Conquest accomplished, the crown organized its new kingdom Grandees alone were deemed worthy of administering it The magnificence and power of absolute monarchy were delegated in New Spain to the viceroy "He represents our royal person" [8] As captain-general he was commander-in-chief of the kingdom's army and navy As governor of the province he headed the civil administration As president of the *Audiencia*, and in other capacities, he dispensed justice He was superintendent of the royal treas-

[1] Guerra, *op cit*, vol II, p 366
[2] Saco, Historia de la Esclavitud, vol I, p 89, 135, 143
[3] Antonio de Herrera, Historia General de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas i Tierra Firme del Mar Océano Dec II, Lib 4, cap xii
[4] These are Cortés's figures Gomara says 550 Historia de las Indias, cap 1
[5] Herrera, *op cit*, Dec I, Lib v, cap xii
[6] Alaman, Historia de Méjico, vol I, ch vii
[7] The common and mistaken acceptation of the English equivalent, "creole," connotes a mixture of darker blood Not so the Hispanic-American term
[8] Recopilación de Leyes de las Indias, Lib III, Tit iii, Ley 1

ury, responsible for augmenting, collecting, and transmitting the king's revenue [1] He published *bandos* or proclamations, enacting His Majesty's legislation sent through the Council of the Indies He was vice-patron of the church He exercised a great variety of lesser duties, filled many offices temporarily until the arrival of the royal appointee,[2] settled commercial disputes, concerned himself with public health and morals [3] His extra-official powers were enormous and his favor or displeasure could make or ruin all but the best-connected

Five checks there were on the arbitrary power of the viceroy

I His appointment was limited to three — in the eighteenth century, to five — years, and this could be extended at the king's pleasure or cut short A few viceroys served more than a decade, but the average term was just over four and a half years

II The *Audiencia* in Mexico as in other colonies, was a sort of vice-royal council and colonial supreme court It consisted first of five, later of eight *oidores*, who were counsellors and civil judges, four *alcaldes del crimen*, or criminal judges, two prosecuting attorneys, a sheriff [4] The viceroy was for many years its president He consulted with it on important matters at regular sessions, or *acuerdos*, but was not bound to accept its view when it differed from his However, serious differences of opinion could and did lead to estrangement and intrigues at court, as the *Audiencia* had the right to communicate directly with the king [5] It was also independent of the executive in that persons who felt themselves wronged could appeal to it Toward the close of the colonial period, the *Audiencia* increased its judicial powers at the expense of the viceroy's though he never wholly relinquished them [6]

III The king occasionally appointed a *visitador general*, who clothed with plenary powers sought to ferret out abuses The most notable of these high inspectors was José de Gálvez, who effected many administrative reforms in New Spain during the reign of Charles III [7]

IV Nominally the viceroy was subject to the Council of the Indies, an advisory body appointed by the king to direct overseas matters It made the laws for the colonies [8] It served as final court of appeal, and as a consulting or nominating board in regard to civil and ecclesiastical appointments Appeals could be made to it by the influential against the viceroy's decision [9]

[1] Instrucción General Que Trajo de la Corte El Marqués de Amarillas de Fernando VI Paras, 42–44
[2] Mora, México y Sus Revoluciones, vol I, p 175
[3] Donald E Smith, Viceroy in New Spain
[4] Bourne, Spain in America, ch xv
[5] Recop , Lib II, Tit xv, Ley 3
[6] Guemes Revillagigedo, Instrucción Reservada, art 84
[7] Priestley, José de Gálvez
[8] Published in the Recopilación de Leyes de los Reinos de Indias Lib II, Tit xv, Ley 1
[9] Bourne, *op cit*, ch xv


MEXICO
SCALE OF STATUTE MILES
SCALE OF KILOMETERS
State Capitals shown thus ● DURANGO
Important Towns are shown in heavy face type
Railroads
U N I T E D S T A T E S
M E X I C O
G U L F O F
P A C I F I C O C E A N
CALIFORNIA
NEW MEXICO
TEXAS
ARKANSAS
LOUISIANA
MISSISSIPPI
ALABAMA
FLORIDA
SONORA
CHIHUAHUA
COAHUILA
DURANGO
NUEVO LEON
TAMAULIPAS
SINALOA
NAYARIT
ZACATECAS
SAN LUIS POTOSI
AGUASCALIENTES
GUANAJUATO
QUERETARO
JALISCO
COLIMA
MICHOACAN
GUERRERO
MEXICO
PUEBLA
TLAXCALA
MORELOS
OAXACA
CHIAPAS
TABASCO
YUCATAN
CAMPECHE
GUATEMALA
HONDURAS
BRITISH HONDURAS
Mouths of the Mississippi
GULF OF CAMPECHE
GULF OF TEHUANTEPEC
TROPIC OF CANCER
Longitude West from Greenwich

V Before the normal expiration of his term the viceroy was expected to undergo a *residencia*, a judicial inquiry to expose any wrong-doing on his part Anyone with a grievance could prefer charges This proceeding the viceroy naturally viewed with annoyance and disdain, because it furnished an opportunity for the disgruntled, especially those of humbler station, to take a fling at him Probably in consequence, the proceedings faded into a relatively innocuous formality Writes a thorough student of the viceroyalty

> Unless the viceroy had offended some person of influence or antagonized some powerful interests, he was practically sure of a vindication [1]

Excepting this last, which Viceroy Revillagigedo declared "obstructed the king's service," [2] these five checks on the autocratic powers of the viceroy in no way served to protect the community On the contrary, they fortified absolutism at home and were admirably devised to stifle national self-development

The shortness of the viceroy's term prevented his identifying himself with the colony's welfare and kept his eyes fixed on his future honors at the king's hands

The *visitadores generales* were even closer to the throne than the viceroy

The members of the *Audiencia*, reporting independently to the king, would emphasize only viceregal digressions from the crown's interest To guarantee their identity with that interest they were forbidden by law to marry in Mexico [3]

Lastly, the legislative function which offered the greatest opportunity for correcting evils as they might appear to the colonists, was in the hands of an unwieldy bureaucratic body, five thousand miles away, composed of ecclesiastics and courtiers At best they could know little of the multitudinous problems in the vast domain which stretched from the Strait of Magellan to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and from Puerto Rico to the Philippines At worst their judgment was warped by servility, intrigue, and personal interest

In short, as Viceroy de Croix pithily observed "The colonists were born to be silent and obey and not to discuss nor to proffer advice on the higher affairs of government" [4]

Croix was a soldier, like most viceroys [5] Their duties as captains-general outranked in importance their civil functions, and increasingly so throughout the colonial period [6] One of the ablest, the younger Revillagigedo, considered his military responsibilities "of an order much superior and much more extensive than any other" [7] Yet New Spain was menaced

[1] Donald E Smith, *op cit*, p 134
[2] Revillagigedo, *op cit*, Art 140
[3] Domenech Hist du Mexique vol I ch xii
[4] Rabasa La Evolución Histórica de México, cap II
[5] Viceroy 1766–1771 He had been a lieutenant-general in the royal army
[6] Donald E Smith, *op cit*, p 194
[7] Revillagigedo, *op cit*, Art 512

by no foreign enemy Its isolation and the absence of powerful hostile neighbors made preparations for external defense unnecessary Force was needed within The laws which forbade Indians to carry weapons [1] and ride horseback, [2] which prohibited their being sold arms [3] on any pretext or shown the art of arms manufacture,[4] reveal where the authorities sensed danger And the sword was drawn to maintain the tyranny established at the conquest and other artificial conditions imposed during three centuries of despotism

These conditions, in the sphere of industry, are thus set forth by Bancroft

> The jealous and exclusive system adopted by Spain * * * has no parallel in the history of mankind For three centuries the political and commercial dependence of the colonies upon the mother country was as complete, and absolute, as selfish policy, rigorous laws, and oppressive government could make it To drain the Indies of their wealth and draw it to Spain was the sole aim which influenced Spanish monarchs in legislating for their colonial possessions, and the prohibitive system of commerce pursued by them makes glaringly conspicuous their indifference to the welfare of their transatlantic settlements [5]

A multitude of imposts, duties, fees, monopolies, charges, commissions, royalties, tributes, licenses, were laid upon every person, every human activity, and every article of common or uncommon use The royal monopolies included such diverse items as salt, tobacco, quicksilver, the snow brought from the lofty volcanoes for refrigeration, gunpowder, playing cards, cock-fighting, "bulls of the crusade," *i e*, indulgences, lotteries, and the sale of titles and offices [6] Toward the end of the colonial period there were more than sixty distinct methods of extracting revenue from New Spain for the king's coffers [7] Industry and vice, religion and crime, were all grist to the royal mill. On top of everything forced loans and confiscation were resorted to [8] The king's income from New Spain alone averaged during the colonial period just under seven million dollars annually In 1804, it amounted to nearly two thirds of the revenue of Spain [9]

But far more serious than the actual squeezing, was the frustration of legitimate human activity Commerce and manufacturing in the colonies were deliberately hamstrung to benefit merchants in Spain Not only were

[1] Recop, Lib VI, Tit 1, Ley xxiv
[2] "Because of the undesirability of having them become skilful in riding" *Cédula* of April 5, 1528, in Puga, Cedulario, vol I p 67
[3] Recop, Lib VI Tit 1 Ley xxxi
[4] *Idem*, Lib III, Tit v, Ley xiv
[5] Bancroft, Hist of Mexico, vol III p 627
[6] Fonseca y Urrutia, Hist de la Real Hacienda, vol I, p 10–38, quicksilver, p 285–387, lotteries, vol II, p 119–188, gunpowder, p 189–294, cards, p 295–392, tobacco, p 439–486, offices, vol III, p 62–88, bulls, p 261–337, salt, vol IV p 5–140, snow, p 392–397
[7] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III p 662–5, 755
[8] *Idem*, vol III, p 630, 677, vol IV, p 28–30
[9] Desdevises du Dézert, L'Espagne de l'Ancien Régime, vol II, p 400

the colonists forbidden to deal with foreigners under penalty of death, trade with the other Spanish colonies was choked off, and with the mother country itself confined to one port — until 1720, Seville, thereafter Cádiz The carrying trade itself, limited as it was, was wholly closed to the colonists To ship even in Spanish bottoms all manner of special import and export licenses were required from the *Casa de Contratación* of Seville, a board of Spanish merchants With few exceptions finished goods that might be shipped from Spain could not be fabricated in the colony [1]

Thus colonial enterprise and initiative were blighted Any new undertaking was almost certain to be nipped in the bud by a competing interest in the Peninsula The artificiality of these restrictions was the more glaring since Spain itself boasted little manufacturing Due to lack of initiative and the cheapness of its labor, Spain was chiefly an exporter of raw materials which it exchanged for manufactured articles [2] As the colonies were arbitrarily kept as raw material countries, it meant that their raw products — metals, food staples, dyestuffs, cotton, wool — were exported to Spain, reexported to other European countries by Spanish traders, exchanged for manufactured articles, which were in turn imported into Spain, and exported from Spain to her colonies By the time this quadruple process overlaid with profits, duties, imposts, and freightage was completed, the price to the colonists was staggering [3]

The mining industry furnishes an example of inventiveness stifled and enterprise penalized For several decades the conquerors followed the primitive Aztec metallurgy In 1557 Bartolomé de Medina, a miner at Pachuca, discovered the amalgamation process with quicksilver, which revolutionized silver mining Immediately the crown reserved the quicksilver monopoly to the mines of Almaden in Spain Quicksilver extraction in New Spain was forbidden This fiat both destroyed a potential industry and greatly hampered an existing one Mercury was sold to the colonists at excessive prices Its shipments were at times interrupted by Spain's loss of sea control during wars with England, France, and the Netherlands But even in such emergencies the crown did not relax its grip When the supply from the Spanish mines themselves proved inadequate, the king purchased the additional supply needed for New Spain in Austria, from his Hapsburg relatives, at a higher price Yet here was a discovery that had been made in Mexico [4]

Culture of the olive and grape was prohibited in New Spain so that the cultivators and exporters of old Spain could reap exorbitant profits [5] Grow-

[1] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 628–635
[2] Chapman, History of Spain, p 229–324
[3] A barrel of Spanish wine worth six or seven pesos in Spain cost forty-eight in Mexico City Priestley, *op cit* p 27
[4] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 261, 382, 582–4
[5] *Idem*, vol III, p 613

ing flax, hemp, and saffron was forbidden [1] Silk raising begun in the early colonial days was deliberately strangled [2]

These were injustices far more oppressive than those against which the thirteen American Colonies rebelled Yet, paradoxically, *they left the Mexican creole economically unscathed* It was upon *mestizo* and Indian that they bore instead, for each class passed its cumulative burden to the stratum beneath it However Peninsular and native-born white men might quarrel, they were united when it came to despoiling the original inhabitants [3] Wealth piled up for the few with a contrasting destitution for the many, unsurpassed in modern times One looks in vain outside of the limited court circles of Europe and Asia for luxury and extravagance equal to that of the whites of New Spain in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Mexico was a city of palaces, but many literally had not even hovels, and passed day and night in the streets [4]

A Spanish muleteer who became rich enough to lend the king a million pesos was created Conde de Regla, when his son was christened the whole party walked from his home to church on ingots of silver But in 1784, 300,000 perished in New Spain from famine and its consequences

In 1810 at the alarm of Hidalgo's approach to Guanajuato, European and native whites there brought together currency, bullion, and plate worth three million pesos "So rich was the country in those days," wrote a resident, "that even in a provincial city such a sum could be collected in a few moments" [5]

The terrain which *gachupin* and *criollo* most bitterly contested with one another was that of office-holding With industry restricted and manual labor held degrading, public employ with its perquisites became the object of universal desire — the be-all and end-all of the literate Unquestionably it furnished the career of maximum opportunity In the immense bureaucratic structure, the important posts went to friends of court favorites and "he was a humble Spaniard indeed who filled no public position" [6] The lesser posts were sold at auction, one constant source of royal revenue [7] "As the mania for office-holding increased and the royal treasury became greedier," a great variety of new positions was created [8] Purchase of office had two motives To enrich oneself and to improve one's social standing High sums were paid In the early seventeenth century the position of sheriff to the *Audiencia* brought 120,000 pesos — a fortune [9] Many bought positions merely on speculation tendering other offices in payment [10] Others went into debt and to repay the obligations contracted for obtaining the office and retiring rich, resorted to any means [11]

[1] Hall, Extracts from a Journal, vol I, p 294
[2] Riva Palacio, *op cit*, vol II, ch xxvi
[3] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 613
[4] Francisco Sedano, Noticias de Mexico, vol II, p 95
[5] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 413–4
[6] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 301
[7] Bourne, *op cit*, ch xv
[8] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 529
[9] *Idem*, p 530
[10] *Idem*
[11] *Idem*, p 451

"Justice" was for sale [1] Few judges were above temptation [2] Their pecuniary interest held the scales except when some mightier power had a stake in the finding It was impossible to secure a verdict against the will of the viceroy,[3] or his friends For an *oidor* merely to signify his desires in a given suit — was sufficient If he wished, he could sit in judgment where his interest was involved [4] For offenses so minor that they were punished merely by fine, the judge often received one fourth or one third of the sum mulcted and the denouncer a like amount [5]

In the smaller municipalities the *alcalde* (mayor) and *regidores* (aldermen) collected excessive tribute from the Indians,[6] sold them under compulsion useless goods at excessive prices,[7] and surrendered them as well as *mestizos* to private creditors to work off hydra-headed debts [8] At one time the *regidores* of Mexico City appropriated for themselves the annual subsidy of one hundred and thirty thousand *reales* granted in aid of the public granary [9] Holding up the Indian peasants outside the town limits and compelling them to part with produce at negligible prices, to sell it again at exorbitant rates within, was another device of the city fathers [10]

The crown itself was systematically defrauded of its revenue by the officials entrusted with its collection [11] How much speculation was practiced by the viceroys can never be known It was easy for them to cover their tracks The viceregal salary, $60,000, toward the end of the colonial régime,[12] was intended to be large enough to dispel cupidity Besides this the viceroy had other legitimate perquisites and fees [13] The custom of showering gifts on the dispenser of so much privilege required unusual viceregal stamina to resist Some viceroys there were like Casafuerte, Amarillas, Revillagigedo the younger, Azanza, and others who found their princely incomes sufficient, but the enormous powers vested in one person afforded great temptation The viceroy could determine the number of Indians to be awarded in an *encomienda* [14] He could make or unmake merchants He could give preference in the sale of the always limited supply of quicksilver essential to the miners [15] With the enforcement of regulations in his hands he could connive at the nullification of those that proved burdensome to his friends When recommendations to the crown for appointments to office bore fruit he could exact his commission

Don Diego Carrillo Mendoza y Pimentel, Marqués de Gelves y Conde de Priego (1621–1624), acting through an intermediary, "cornered" the

[1] H Villarroel, Mexico Por Dentro y Por Fuera, p 32–40
[2] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 451, 547
[3] Lorenzo de Zavala, Ensayo Histórico de las Revoluciones de México, vol I, p 33
[4] Bancroft, *op cit* vol III, p 29
[5] F Lorenzot, Ordenanzas de Gremios de la Nueva España, p 13, 61
[6] Riva Palacio, *op cit*, vol II, ch XXXV
[7] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 524
[8] *Idem*, p 547
[9] *Idem* p 29
[10] *Idem*, p 30
[11] *Idem*, p 30, 504
[12] Donald E Smith, *op cit*, p 128
[13] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 44
[14] Riva Palacio, *op cit* vol II, ch XI
[15] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 538, fn

corn and wheat supply His successor, Don Rodrigo Pacheco y Osorio, Marqués de Cerralvo (1624–1635) monopolized salt [1]

Don Diego López Pacheco Cabrera y Bobadilla, Duque de Escalona y Marqués de Villena, the seventeenth viceroy (1640–1642), to augment his personal income required the registration of mulattoes, free Negroes and *mestizos* with their families, for fees which he pocketed To his own servants he sold the concessions of such vital utilities as the city police control, granary and meat supply For 50,000 pesos annually his head stableman became the *pulque* commissioner The water concessionaire was so thirsty that the city supply was often lacking and saline water had to be purchased at two or three *reales* a *carga* Other servants "corralled" more than 7,000 *cargas* of cocoa, forcing up the price to the total deprivation of the poor [2]

Don Miguel de la Grúa Talamanca y Branciforte, Marqués de Branciforte, the fifty-third viceroy (1794–1797), brought with him a large quantity of valuable goods and arranged to have all his effects passed through the custom-house at Vera Cruz without examination, thus defrauding the royal exchequer [3] When he embarked for Spain three years later he took with him nearly five million pesos accumulated in his short sojourn [4] Iturrigaray, who became viceroy in 1803, similarly defrauded the customs by securing a royal decree permitting him to introduce into New Spain unfinished family apparel and landing in its stead a cargo of merchandise which he sold at great profit He padded the price of the paper purchased for the royal tobacco factory and pocketed the difference Taking another leaf out of his royal master's book he established an impost for his own benefit on quicksilver A secret arrangement was also made with certain mine owners by which they were favored at the expense of the majority One of the vice-queen's ladies-in-waiting acted as go-between [5]

Despite the enormous yield of the mines, the virtually unpaid labor which worked them and tilled the soil, the exchequer could rarely show a creditable balance sheet

> The royal treasury is administered like a bankrupt's estate, the viceroys playing the part corresponding to that of the assignees, merely liquidate the most pressing debts [6]

Thus Linares, one of the abler viceroys, described the plight of the *real hacienda* early in the eighteenth century

[1] Luis González Obregón, La Inquisición y la Independencia en el Siglo XVII, p 375
[2] Rivera Cambas, Los Gobernantes de México, vol I, p 135
[3] Alaman, Disertaciones, vol III, App 83
[4] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 490
[5] Alaman Historia de México, vol I p 47 Writes a contemporary "Doña Joaquina's name resounded throughout the kingdom * * * without her mediation no favor could be secured She collected much money She was useful to the viceroys" Cancelada, La Verdad Sabida y Buena Fe Guardada Origen de la Espantosa Revolución de Nueva España, p 17 The lady's present-day equivalent in Mexico is known as a "coyote"
[6] Instrucción á su Sucesor Linares, in Instrucciones que los Vireyes de Nueva España Dejaron á sus Sucesores, p 311

With a gross revenue for the crown in one year at the beginning of the nineteenth century of four hundred million *reales*, the net transmitted was but two hundred and ninety-five millions, or more than a fourth for the expense and losses incidental to collection [1]

"As long as there remains a cobbler from Castile or a mule from La Mancha, to them will belong the government of America," [2] was the oft-voiced dictum of the *oidor*, Miguel Bataller, member of Mexico's *Audiencia*, in the closing days of Spanish rule

No more galling or unnatural cleavage was ever devised than that placing the son in a political category inferior to the father The commonest Spaniard scarcely debarked, took no pains to conceal his feeling of superiority to anyone born in America He was certain through the dispositions in his favor to secure honors, social position, and wealth Spaniards numbered but 15,000 at the close of the colonial régime, less than one third of one per cent of the population of New Spain [3] From their number seven out of eight of the bishoprics, all the canonries and many of the curacies were filled [4] Out of sixty-three viceroys, but three, accidentally born in America, of families highly favored at court, had been able to overcome the handicap of their place of birth [5] It was Archbishop Núñez de Haro y Peralta, viceroy in 1787, who advised that only inferior posts be conferred on the Americans that they might remain "submissive and humble" [6] He was thinking of white Americans, of course The four fifths of the population, composed of *castas* and full-blooded Indians, were never dreamt of in his political philosophy

But the proud Spaniards of to-day begot the creoles of to-morrow, no less haughty because reared in affluence, softer because of the greater ease of living, resentful of the newly arrived Peninsular, disdainful of the castes beneath More polished in the superficial ways that wealth confers and etiquette required, indolent and spoiled by a luxurious upbringing,[7] their faults were intensified by political exclusion Although Mexicans by birth and environment and better acquainted with the country than the Spaniard, they were deprived of the opportunity of governing themselves and of the incentive that the recognition of ability and merit provides *Therein lay the only real injury done the creole by the Spanish régime* It made him contemptuous of work, a vain, useless member of society If the young *caballero* took up any career at all, it was the church, army, or law, professions which had degenerated into opportunities for dignified idleness, intrigue, and

[1] Du Dézert, *op cit*, vol II, p 402
[2] Chevalier, Le Mexique Ancien et Moderne, p 337
[3] Fernando Navarro *y* Noriega, Memoria Sobre La Población del Reino de Nueva España en 1810
[4] Alaman, *op cit*, Lib I, p 13
[5] The second Velasco, Casafuerte, and Revillagigedo, the younger
[6] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 13
[7] Francisco de Paula Arrangoiz, México Desde 1808 Hasta 1867, vol I, p 11

impunitive vice Often he considered even this semblance of activity beneath him He rose late, lounged through the morning in his dressing-gown At noon he made his appearance in military uniform, emblem of a purchased commission The afternoon bull-fight found him in civilian dress clothes The evening and night were a round of pleasure alternating between venery and cards [1]

Spanish blood flowed in the veins of the *mestizos* Therefore even the crown occasionally waived its policy of class stratification Martín Cortés, son of the conqueror by the Indian maid, Malinche, was made a *comendador* of the order of St Iago [2] The *castas* (mixed-bloods) were exempted from the degrading tribute, more aristocratic taxes taking its place Unlike the full-bloods, their residence was not fixed, nor their costume prescribed They were paid the dubious compliment of being, as *gente de razón*, subject to the Inquisition, while the Indians, regarded mentally as children, were not [3] Gradually the *mestizos* crept up into the lower ranks of society They were artisans and lesser foremen, privates and even non-commissioned officers in the army They filled a few of the poorer curacies As independence dawned they were regarded by the Indians with aversion and suspicion as allies of the white oppressor Spaniard and creole feared and mistrusted them as possible leaders of the Indians against white supremacy [4]

The Indians were the disinherited Legally their status had improved A mass of protective enactments may be found among royal *cédulas*, and in the *Leyes de Indias*

"How dare Columbus!" Isabella had exclaimed indignantly on learning that the discoverer had taken three hundred slaves in Española (Haiti) "How dare Columbus thus dispose of my subjects!" And she decreed that no one under pain of death should destroy the natives' personal liberty [5] But within a generation slavery had nearly wiped them out [6]

In a *cédula* sent Cortés in 1523, Charles V specifically forbade *encomiendas* and commanded that the Indians remain "free vassals" like those of Castile Yet Cortés to the end of his life kept the largest *encomienda* in New Spain [7]

Considering the harsh character of the times much of the benevolent legislation obviously was "too good to be true," [8] too much "for effect"

[1] Negrete, México en el Siglo XIX, vol I, p 336–7
[2] Prescott, *op cit*, vol VII, ch III
[3] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 23
[4] Riva Palacio, *op cit*, p 480
[5] *Idem*, vol II, Introd 6
[6] Fr Bartolomé de las Casas, Brevísima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias
[7] Riva Palacio, *op cit*, vol II, ch VIII
[8] A royal order as early as 1525 provided that the Indians "be well treated and maintained in justice * * * that they receive no vexation from anyone and be treated with all love and friendship" Instrucción Segunda al Lic Luis Ponce, in Puga, Cedulario, vol I, p 12
But what actually happened in New Spain was described in 1716 by one of the viceroys in a confidential report to his successor "Indians are imprisoned and forced to labor for a debt of a peso, being refused settlement of their account, and treated with the utmost brutality, and if one dies or flees, his woman or children are seized as slaves, these, badly nourished spiritually and worse physically, suffer in a land of Christians what barbarians would not practice" Fernando de Alancastre Linares, Instrucción á Su Sucesor el Marqués de Valero, p 303–4

to be effective [1] Queen Isabella (of Portugal, wife of Charles V) ordered that "the natives * * * be not tired nor molested, and that they be given no oppressions or vexations, *and with this we discharge our consciences and encharge yours*" [2]

Philip II repeatedly forbade clerics to imprison Indians,[3] place them in stocks or whip them,[4] but the whipping of Indians by the clergy continued to the end of the colonial régime, and after [5]

With the execution and interpretation of royal mandates intrusted to those whose interests were often contrary, *obedezco pero no cumplo* ("I obey but I do not carry out") became proverbial The law limiting slavery to those captured in war and rebellion caused thousands encountered in the woods or fleeing to be declared "rebels" without regard for age or sex [6]

The *encomiendas* were definitely suppressed in 1720, after two centuries But debt slavery [7] imposed by the *corregidores*, among whose duties was safeguarding the Indians,[8] replaced it [9] And the "far-reaching" reforms of Charles III changed nothing [10]

If apparently well-intentioned legislation went unenforced, it was because all took for granted the permanent inferiority and incapacity of the Indian The whole social edifice rested on that assumption His brain and hand were purposely stunted He had been forbidden to engage in the jewelry craft,[11] although the Aztecs' jewelry in many respects surpassed the Spaniards' [12] This and other native excellences were lost [13] He was driven out of the cochineal industry [14] Deprived of the exercise of his inherited talents, denied advantageous contacts with the whites, to say that the Indian was in a "state of tutelage" was bitter irony

The Indians' isolation and abasement were, paradoxically, intensified by the introduction among them of previously unknown caste lines No established feudal system had existed among the Mexicans despite the testimony of the Hispanic chroniclers The Conquistadores mistakenly assumed the existence of a *vested* Anahuac nobility [15] Cortés not merely

[1] This is still characteristic of much contemporary Mexican legislation
[2] By royal *cédula* dated April 2 1535 Puga, *op cit* vol I, p 359 (Italics not in original)
[3] Recop Lib I Tit xiii, Ley vi
[4] Royal *cédula* of Sept 4, 1560 Document LXX in *El Clero de México Durante la Dominación Española*, Genaro García ed
[5] Zavala, *op cit*, vol I, p 15
[6] Riva Palacio, *op cit*, vol II, ch viii
[7] Chevalier, *op cit*, vol III, ch i, p 265–6
[8] Donald E Smith *op cit*, p 138
[9] Establishing the system that reached its culmination under Porfirio Díaz
[10] Donald E Smith, *op cit*, p 249 These reforms increased the efficiency of the royal officials and the royal revenues Priestley *op cit*, p 295 Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 89–90
[11] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 622
[12] Bancroft, Native Races, vol II, p 488–490 In the opinion of the foremost American authority on Aztec art "their craftsmanship was equal to that of the best lapidaries of Europe at the beginning of the sixteenth century" Saville, Turquois Mosaic Art in Ancient Mexico, vol I
[13] Bancroft, Hist of Mexico, vol III, p 618, 622
[14] Clavigero, Hist of Mexico, vol I, p 74
[15] Bandelier, On the Distribution and Tenure of Land, and the Customs with Respect to Inheritance, Among the Ancient Mexicans, p 433–434, fn 437

left the local rule in conquered regions to the existing cacique,[1] but even appointed at times the son of a chieftain whose resistance had brought death at the stake.[2] Successive kings confirmed the hereditary character of the formerly elective caciqual rights.[3] The change admirably served the new absolutism and the exploitation under it. The productiveness of the *encomienda* was greatly increased by the intermediation of the irremovable chief who went with it.

Toward the close of the colonial régime in every larger village, under the Spanish office-holders, or in the hamlets too small or too remote to attract them, were half a dozen Indians, little "noble" in appearance and deportment who, exempt from tribute,[4] as were their first-born, and permitted to carry arms, exercised a sort of local magistracy.[5] They could collect tribute and imprison or whip offenders.[6] Usually the only ones who had been taught Spanish, and to read and write, they used this scant knowledge to tyrannize over their fellows and to perpetuate their own sinecures. The prevalent use of public office — oppression and pilfering — they adopted unerringly. They themselves had often to pay twenty or thirty pesos to a higher official, besides the cost of a journey to the capital, for a "confirmation" of their hereditary caciqual titles.[7]

The ignorance and isolation of the Indian four fifths of New Spain's population in a sense was typical of the whole colony. Immigration was limited by settled policy of the crown and special permits were required to strain out those tainted with Jewish, Moorish, or other infidel blood. Even the grandsons of heretics were excluded.[8] Humboldt had to voyage to the court at Aranjuez and personally solicit a permit from the king to enter the colonies.[9]

New ideas were contraband within the colony as well.[10] Mexico had set up the first printing press in the New World.[11] But the majority of books dealt with doctrinal matters, to retailing miracles, or expounding the virtue and apostolic zeal of some defunct cleric. After the American and French revolutions the Inquisition's embargo tightened, thousands of additional authors falling under its ban.[12] Freedom of the press was non-existent. Freedom of speech and assembly were undreamt of.

The historian Rivera Cambas thus described the education of the whites at the close of the colonial era.

[1] Prescott, *op. cit.*, vol. I, ch. II, fn.
[2] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 100.
[3] Guerra, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 595–597.
[4] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, vol. II, ch. VIII.
[5] Chevalier, *op. cit.*, p. 272.
[6] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 525.
[7] Villarroel, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
[8] Bourne, *op. cit.*, ch. XVI.
[9] Chevalier *op. cit.*, p. 294.
[10] Fortino Hipólito Vera, Colección de Documentos Eclesiásticos de México, vol. III, p. 37–41.
[11] J. García Icazbalceta Obras, vol. I, p. 22.
[12] In 1805 Mexico's Inquisitors demanded an increase in salary, alleging that the suppression of new ideas had so greatly increased their labors. Carta del Virrey Iturrigaray á José Antonio Cabillero, Ministro de Gracia y Justicia, Carta No. 303, vol. 226, in Archivo General de México.

Not one free elementary school existed either in the capital or the provinces and the other institutions of learning were in charge of friars, almost always ignorant and cruel, while the girls' institutes were directed by women who inculcated superstitious beliefs by ridiculous narrations Of real teaching a little reading and writing alone were furnished The school of mines was an institute in name only It lacked professors, instruments, and apparatus, and produced little in the way of practical result [1]

In his "instruction," which every viceroy left to his successor, Count Revillagigedo in 1794 spoke of the failure to create a school for "noble Indians" [2] That successor, Branciforte, was wont to assert that in America education should be confined to the catechism [3]

The colonial régime lasted three centuries It was a period of comparative peace — the peace of suppression, stagnation, and decay Its outstanding characteristics were Politically — absentee absolutism resting on military and religious domination, with complete denial of local self-expression and self-training, and disregard by officials of laws that it was to their interest to disregard, economically — extraction of raw materials based on slave labor, with office-holding the universal desideratum, socially — splendor and privilege contrasted with misery and degradation, spiritually — corruption, ignorance, fanaticism, intercaste hatred

Three hundred years rooted these traits deep into the Mexican social fabric — one century has not sufficed to eradicate them No worse preparation for self-government and the evolution of a modern state could have been bequeathed to a people

[1] Rivera Cambas, Los Gobernantes de México, vol I, p 476
[2] Revillagigedo, *op cit*, art 39
[3] Chevalier, *op cit*, p 277

HOW INDEPENDENCE WAS ACHIEVED

The soil of New Spain deep sown with the dragons' teeth of oppression was ready to sprout revolution But no rumble foretold the coming upheaval Then in 1808 Napoleon crossed the Pyrenees Ferdinand VII, head of church and state in Spain and the Americas, meekly capitulated to the little Corsican So unrelated and distant was the event which was to sunder the two continents [1]

In the Peninsula the people rose to defend their soil and the divine right of an unworthy king *Juntas* in different sections, assuming to speak in his name, sent representatives abroad [2] In the face of their conflicting claims, the creole *Ayuntamiento* of Mexico City — composed of hereditary *regidores* whose fathers had purchased the offices — suggested to Viceroy Iturrigaray that New Spain elect its own *junta* to hold the country safe till the exiled king's return [3] The *Audiencia* bluntly told the city administration to tend to its business of keeping the *léperos*, the beggars of the capital, in order [4] But with the anarchy growing in Spain, the viceroy considered the suggestion — thereby earning the hatred of *Audiencia*,[5] episcopate [6] and Spaniards generally

"A national *junta*," exclaimed Bishop Abad y Queipo of Michoacán, "that is indeed rebellion " [7]

A conspiracy among the Spaniards was hatched The leader was the cattle and sugar magnate, Gabriel Yermo, who feared for his monopoly of the capital's meat supply at the hands of the creole *Ayuntamiento* He and others were also combating the heavy and irregular viceregal tax on *aguardiente* or rum made from cane There were other grievances One dark night in September, the palace guard was bribed, Iturrigaray seized, imprisoned in the Inquisition, and deported to Spain [8] The *Audiencia*, appointed

[1] Bustamante, Campañas de Calleja, p 5 The author, the first important Mexican historian after independence, hails Napoleon as the liberator of Spanish America "To thee America owes the liberty it now enjoys Your sword struck the first blow at the chain which tied the two hemispheres "

[2] Alaman, Hist de Méjico, vol I, p 58

[3] Lorenzo de Zavala, Ensayo Histórico de las Revoluciónes de México, vol I, p 36–7

[4] Chevalier, Le Mexique Ancien et Moderne, p 338

[5] Bustamante, Cuadro Histórico vol I, p 6 (ed 1823) *Oidores* Aguirre and Bataller felt that they might lose their positions and be replaced by Americans

[6] Guerra, Hist de la Revolución de Nueva España, Antiguamente Anáhuac, vol I, p 184

[7] Bancroft, History of Mexico, vol IV, p 64, fn

[8] The obvious economic motivation of Yermo and his followers is not treated fully by any historian although Bancroft, *op cit* vol IV, p 21–31, 52–53, comes nearest to it Patriotism for

in his stead an aged and pliable general, Garibay, who proved its mouthpiece [1]

The Spaniards themselves had shown the way In their own interest they had rebelled against the highest authority The Americans' discontent took active form in secret organizations Their grievance was local — not transatlantic — to get rid of the dominating clique of *gachupines* But it was a time of ferment The fall of Spanish royalty had shaken society to its foundations Ideas did not remain stationary

In Spain, the Bonapartist domination, bitterly resented as it was by the inhabitants, allowed the propagation of French revolutionary concepts sufficient — the Bourbon king being away — to bring about the assembling of a national *cortes* At the same time, the fleeing *junta central* and its successor in authority on the Peninsula, the regency, desiring to strengthen the fidelity of the colonies, to which it was frantically appealing for money, decreed that the Spanish domain overseas was no longer colonial, but an integral part of the nation, and as such entitled to representation in the coming *cortes* Said the regency's proclamation of February 14, 1810

> You are elevated to the dignity of free men No longer are you the same as formerly, bent under a yoke, all the harsher because of your distance from the seat of power, viewed with indifference, oppressed by avarice, and destroyed by ignorance [2]

A unique admission! But subsequently the regency, regretting its rash act, restricted colonial representation, undoing the good effect of its apparent generosity, while the colonists' eyes were still further opened to the possibilities inherent in their "dignity as free men"

It was a village priest, Miguel Hidalgo, born in 1753 of native white parents, that is, a creole for at least two generations, who was to make vague aspiration dynamic A thinker and dreamer, as well as a man of action, he had spent many leisure hours reading the Encyclopedists and other philosophical works forbidden by the Inquisition [3] By establishing small pottery and textile works and a tannery in his pastorate, teaching the natives beeculture and introducing them to the silk worm, by encouraging them to plant grape-vines, he had already antagonized the civil authorities, who tore up the Indians vines in the village of Dolores to preserve the Spaniards' monop-

Spain versus patriotism for New Spain are generally assigned as the bases for the incident, which is not incorrect if we understand by these two patriotisms not national but group rivalries in Mexico for public office power, and profits Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 238–243, seeks to prove that Yermo was actuated only by lofty motives, and he and other pro-Spanish writers, such as Cancelada, emphasize the indignation felt among the Spaniards at Iturrigaray's peculations True, the viceroy was a shameless grafter, but so had been other recent predecessors His fatal error came in being the first to favor the creoles rather than the Spaniards, choosing a moment when conditions in the mother country for the first time apparently made it safe for him to lean the other way, toward an element that was growing relatively stronger every day

[1] Mora, México y Sus Revoluciones, vol III, p 347

[2] Gaceta de Mexico, 1810, vol I, p 418

[3] Bancroft, *op cit* vol IV p 109

oly [1] Apparently the economic emancipation of the native was not to be wrought without national political independence

Hidalgo had been in touch with a group in the neighboring city of Querétaro led by Ignacio Allende, captain in a provincial regiment, whose desire for national independence had been kindled by Iturrigaray's expulsion [2] The conspirators met as members of a literary society at the home of the presbyter José María Sánchez Active sympathizers were the *Corregidor* of Querétaro, Miguel Domínguez and his wife, María Josefa Ortiz Domínguez His official record was unusual — he had actually protected the Indians When local cloth factories had reduced their workers to the supposedly obsolete slavery by pecuniary advances, Domínguez abolished this system, earning thereby the enmity of the Spanish owners [3] The viceroy removed him from office for heading a protest against the sequestration, at the king's command, of the real estate belonging to clerical benevolent institutions [4] His support of independence dated from that moment Plans were being laid — and betrayed — to the government Hidalgo resolved to act On September 16, 1810,

> what had been quiet New Spain during three centuries rose in arms at the magic words, liberty and emancipation and the shout of war raised in Dolores resounded throughout the soil of Mexico from the vast deserts of the North to the shores of the Usumacinta [5]

The bell of the parish church of Dolores began tolling and from the surrounding hills the Indians flocked to the call of their beloved pastor Word had spread that great events were impending The white-haired curate entered his pulpit, and gazing over the anxious upturned faces of his flock, addressed them for the last time

> My children, this day comes to us a new dispensation Are you ready to receive it? Will you be free? Will you make the effort to recover from the hated Spaniards the lands stolen from your forefathers three hundred years ago? [6]

He spoke to them earnestly, reviewing the oppression under which they lived, the impossibility of securing justice, and his purpose to free them Probably few Indians understood the full import of his plea But their own suffering vibrated in answer [7]

[1] Mora, *op cit*, vol IV, p 8 Emilio del Castillo Negrete, México en el Siglo XIX, vol I, p 256
[2] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 102–5
[3] *Idem*, p 114–15, fn
[4] *Idem*, p 30
[5] Zarate, México á Traves de los Siglos La Independencia, vol III ch IX
[6] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 117
[7] There are various versions of what Hidalgo said to his congregation, and none of them are conclusively authoritative Bancroft's rendering seems closest to the essential spirit of the curate's words

His venerable aspect, his ringing voice and his convincing words conquered his audience, and from the dense throng rose the vibrant cries of "Long Live Independence Long Live America Down with the Bad Government!"[1]

Hidalgo raised as his standard the image of the Indian Virgin of Guadalupe, the national patron saint[2] "The villages are joining him voluntarily," wrote Riaño, the royal commander at Guanajuato, to Viceroy Calleja ten days later[3] Despite the anathemas of the Mexican episcopate[4] the ragged hordes grew, armed with machetes, pikes, slings, bows, and arrows[5]

In six weeks they numbered 80,000[6] Hidalgo was an apostle — he was neither a military leader nor an organizer[7] Moreover, he was wholly lacking in means His untrained levies melted before well-led troops His Indians could not hope, as they tried, to shut off artillery fire by covering the cannon's mouth with their straw *sombreros*[8]

After preliminary successes his forces were routed Moreover, the Indians' pillaging, by which they sustained themselves, and their ferocity, frightened away many creoles, some of whose number had fallen victims in the indiscriminate sacking that followed victory Hidalgo, and Allende, his second in command, were unable to restrain their followers[9]

Hidalgo, moreover, though by nature kindly, was imbued with a crusading fervor which made him careless of persons — including himself — where his cause was involved His was the zealot-martyr type He believed that with the odds so greatly against him, terror was a necessary weapon[10] At all events he was swept along in the hurricane of long-pent passions His visions are clearly revealed in his proclamations.

Let us establish a congress composed of representatives of all the cities and villages * * * which will enact mild and beneficent laws, appropriate to the circumstances in each community These representatives governing with the kindliness of fathers, treating us all as their brothers, will exile poverty, moderating the devastation of the country and the extraction of money Crafts will be stimulated, industry will come to life, we shall make free use of the intensely rich products of our fertile land, and in a few years, its inhabitants will enjoy the benefits which the Sovereign Author of nature has poured over this vast continent[11]

[1] Nicolás León, Historia General de México, *op cit*, Cap xxii
[2] Zamacois, Historia de Méjico, vol VI, p 253
[3] Alaman, *op cit* vol I, p 420
[4] Hernández y Dávalos, Colección de Documentos para la Historia de la Guerra de Independencia, vol II, p 106
[5] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 144, 214, 250
[6] Hernández y Dávalos, *op cit*, vol II, p 274
[7] Zavala, *op cit*, vol I, p 47
[8] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 459
[9] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 121, 155, 156, fn, 173
[10] *Idem*, p 122
[11] Proclamation issued in Valladolid, Dec 15, 1810 Reprinted in Alaman, *op cit*, vol II, App Doc 8

As Hidalgo's army dwindled pardon was offered him, but he declined it

In the discharge of our duty we will not lay aside our arms until we have wrested the jewel of liberty from the hands of the oppressor We are resolved to enter into no arrangement which has not for its basis the liberty of the nation, and the enjoyment of those rights, which the God of nature has given to all men — rights inalienable, which must be sustained by the shedding of rivers of blood if necessary * * * Pardon, your Excellency, is for criminals, not for defenders of their country [1]

He ordered the emancipation of slaves, abolished the tribute and restoration of their lands to the Indians in the Guadalajara district,[2] and was battling undaunted when treachery cut short his career [3] He had been in the field but six months, and the fire he had kindled was blazing amid the accumulated fuel of centuries

The standard of leadership dropped by the inert hand of Father Hidalgo was grasped by another village priest, José María Morelos, curate of Carácuaro, a *mestizo* Under his statesmanlike leadership the independence movement made great headway again, aided greatly by events in Spain

Four years of desperate warfare had taught the Peninsulars that blood shed so freely for royalty deserved some recognition In 1811 the *cortes* abolished torture [4] In March, 1812, it adopted a new constitution This vested sovereignty in the people, limited monarchy through a cabinet responsible to the *cortes*, which retained the legislative function, created electoral machinery, made municipal officers elective instead of hereditary, and guaranteed freedom of press and assembly In all these respects it was a democratic charter It established Catholicism as the only religion with the practice of all others forbidden It abolished the Inquisition and seignorial rights [5]

In New Spain officialdom took the oath of allegiance but withheld the liberation of the press as long as possible and promulgated the constitution with much misgiving The consequences were exactly what the authorities dreaded — enlightening discussion of the evils to which the country was heir Municipal elections in Mexico City produced even more horrendous results — only Americans known for their sympathy with independence were chosen — a clear manifestation, notwithstanding grave irregularities in the balloting, of majority sentiment In other cities the independentists made a similar sweep [6]

Military, civil, and ecclesiastical authorities were one in their agreement that this was an intolerable state of affairs Accordingly the viceroy suspended liberty of the press, jailed editors and writers, ordered assemblages

[1] Quoted in Negrete, *op cit*, vol III, p 75
[2] Hernández y Dávalos, *op cit*, vol II, p 169–70
[3] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 272–5
[4] Alaman, *op cit*, vol II, p 440
[5] Chapman, Hist of Spain, p 494–5
[6] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 461–2



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"THE GOD-MATES, POPOCATEPETL AND IXTACCIHUATL" (See p. 77)



"THE APPROPRIATE BEAUTY OF THE COLONIAL MANSION" (See p 635)

Patio of the Palacio de Gobierno Aguascalientes

dispersed by armed force, and annulled the municipal elections Despite their oaths sworn on the crucifix with unprecedented solemnity,[1] the officials, lay and clerical, did not hesitate to nullify the constitution These high-handed acts gave the revolutionary movement great impetus

The next year, 1813, Morelos, successful in the field and controlling a considerable section of the country, felt able to call a national congress On November 6 it formally declared the Independence of Mexico from Spain It confirmed Morelos's decrees annulling all caste distinctions under the equalizing designation of "Americans," opening offices in church and state to all, abolished slavery, the use of the lash for Indians as well as the tribute, and limited taxation to excise, tithes, and parochial fees [2] Emancipation was at the flood

But in Spain, with the decline of Napoleonic power, Ferdinand VII returned to the throne, and immediately declared the Constitution of 1812 and all the reforms of the *cortes* null and void [3] Its members were thrown in prison Not only was Bourbon absolutism reenthroned but liberalism was stamped upon with the utmost ferocity In Mexico Ferdinand reestablished the Inquisition and the special privilege courts, the gallows, and the whipping-post [4] Clergy and military rejoiced

Morelos countered with a constitution for the new nation that he hoped to set free It was drawn up at Apatzingán in 1814 While never put in practice it reveals the ideals which actuated the revolutionists American revolutionary, French, and Spanish ideas were reflected It preserved the democratic features of the Spanish constitution of 1812 and the maintenance of Roman Catholicism as the only religion It vested sovereignty in the people, and guaranteed freedom of speech and press [5] But the Inquisition, as early as August, 1808, had condemned "the manifest heresy of the people's sovereignty" [6] The hierarchy now imposed the penalty of major excommunication not only on whomsoever read the new charter, but on those who failed to denounce others whom they knew to possess copies of it [7]

Renewed efficiency in crushing rebellion marked the Bourbons' return Additional forces were sent to New Spain The new viceroy, Calleja, spared prisoners on the field only to save them for gallows and firing squad,[8] dragged the wounded from hospitals to be shot,[9] included women and children in his butcheries [10] Non-combatants fared as badly — inhabitants of towns or *haciendas* that had sheltered insurgents, he put to the sword [11]

[1] Alaman, *op cit*, vol III, p 278, 280
[2] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 461, 464–5, 566–7
[3] Chapman, *op cit*, p 459
[4] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 599
[5] *Idem*, p 601–2
[6] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 214–15
[7] *Idem*, vol IV, p 176–7
[8] *Idem*, vol II, p 392, 511, vol III, p 148, 165, 240–1
[9] *Idem*, vol II, p 154–5, vol IV, p 607
[10] *Idem*, vol IV, p 543
[11] Communications of Nov 23 and 29, 1810, from General Cruz to Viceroy Calleja Document No 5, Vol II, Alaman, *op cit*, vol III, p 156

When toward the end of 1815 Morelos was captured, the Inquisition declared him to be

> formally a heretic, a propagator of heresy, pursuer and disturber of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, profaner of the holy sacraments, schismatic, lascivious, a hypocrite, irreconcilable enemy of Christianity, traitor to God, King and Pope,[1]

and released him "to the secular arm" for execution[2]

The death of Morelos ended an epoch The insurgents were scattered One by one their leaders fell Most of the survivors accepted amnesty offered by Calleja's humaner successor, Viceroy Apodaca[3] Guadalupe Victoria, rejecting compromise, was a lone fugitive in the Vera Cruz mountains[4] Militarily the revolution was practically suppressed by 1817[5] In that year even the gallant Spaniard, Xavier Mina, fugitive from Ferdinand's tyranny, could not with his 270 men find aid or comfort among those whose cause he had come to espouse and for which he gave his life[6]

The remaining active rebels had become mere looters,[7] others were openly brigands Such there had been from the start Gómez de Lara, half-savage Indian, fighting from the sierras of San Luis Potosí, not only Spaniards, but all not of his race[8] Others without even the motive of race-hatred, preferred raiding to the hardships of peace they had known Morelos did his utmost to hold these *devorantes* as he called them in check,[9] and shot several for banditry[10] With his death, principle gave way to pillage Of the original insurgents only one, Vicente Guerrero, maintained an effective resistance, impregnable in the fastnesses of the southern Sierras Yet independence was not dead It but waited an opportunity Throughout Latin America identical causes had produced similar results To the south a whole continent had risen

In Spain discontent was to register once more — fleetingly — but, as before, with tremendous repercussions in the colonies Mutiny among troops destined for the unpopular service in the Americas obliged Ferdinand to restore the Constitution of 1812 and pledge himself to support it[11] In Mexico this news caused consternation among the upper clergy[12] Revolt under its auspices was soon brewing[13] Among the most active were the Bishop of Puebla, strongly opposed to democratic principles, Canon Monteagudo who had played an important part in Iturrigaray's deposal, the ex-Inquisitor Tirado, now deprived through the Constitution of his functions in the Holy Office Another conspirator was the *oidor* Bataller, whose

[1] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, p 325
[2] *Idem*, vol IV, p 326–7
[3] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 694–5
[4] Ward, Mexico in 1827, p 229–31
[5] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 658
[6] Robinson, Memoirs of Mexican Revolution, p 43–276
[7] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 671
[8] *Idem*, vol IV, p 322
[9] *Idem*, vol IV, p 382–3
[10] *Idem*, vol IV, p 471, 514
[11] Chapman *op cit*, p 490
[12] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 697
[13] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 14, 50–1

position likewise was virtually abolished,[1] and whose prospects of office-holding under an elective system were nil Meetings were held in the oratory of the church of San Felipe Neri in the capital and were attended by many of high official and social standing [2] But to achieve rebellion a strong arm was needed

It was found in the ambitious person of Agustín de Iturbide [3] Of limited education he had chosen a military career at fifteen As lieutenant in the provincial infantry of his native Valladolid, in Michoacán, he offered to serve the government succeeding the coup d'état against Iturrigaray [4] He declined Hidalgo's invitation to take an important command in the independentist movement [5] Subsequently Iturbide rose to a colonelcy in the royalist forces and was successful in the field where he was known for his merciless execution of prisoners, women as well as men,[6] and of non-combatants [7]

On April 17, 1813, he wrote from Salvatierra to his superior, General Cruz

> I have signalized with abundant blood, Good Friday, 1813, in the history of this place It is not easy to calculate the number of excommunicated wretches who in consequence of the action descended to the most profound abyss, but from the accounts of the commanders in different places and the corpses I saw, I infer they numbered three hundred and fifty [8]

The "wretches" had been excommunicated for espousing independence Iturbide's robberies and peculations, however, were so shameless that in 1816 he was obliged to resign and appear at Mexico City to answer charges [9] The affair was hushed up for the maladversions of which he was accused extended to many royalist commanders who were inclined to make common cause with him [10] Excepting Father Lavarrieta,[11] the curate of Guanajuato, witnesses, fearing his vengeance, dared not testify [12] Despite his military ability he was not restored to a command [13]

Four years later his stolen fortune had been wasted in self-indulgence [14] and he was ready for any adventure that promised success [15]

[1] Bancroft *op cit*, vol IV, p 460
[2] *Idem*, vol IV, p 701–2
[3] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 51
[4] *Idem*, vol I, p 259
[5] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 176
[6] *Idem*, *op cit*, p 392, 516, fn , Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, p 122, 280–1
[7] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, App 71
[8] Printed in the Gaceta de México, April 20, 1813
Justin H Smith in his scholarly The War With Mexico vol I, p 32, gives this version "In 1814 he wrote to the viceroy on Good Friday, 'In honor of the day I have just ordered three hundred excommunicated wretches shot'" This picture clearly paints Iturbide in even blacker colors, for it indicates a deliberate execution in honor of Good Friday It is possible that he sent another such message a year after the one to Cruz above recorded but I have been unable to find any trace of it in the official Gaceta de México where the reports of the commanders in the field were printed — or elsewhere I give it therefore merely on the authority of Professor Smith
[9] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, p 42, 446, vol V, p 55
[10] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 702 fn
[11] Vicente Rocafuerte, Bosquejo Ligerísimo de la Revolución de Méjico, p 22–39, reprints Fr Labarneta's testimony in full, detailing Iturbide's thefts of money, silver, cattle, etc
[12] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, p 447
[13] *Idem*, vol IV, p 451
[14] *Idem*, vol V, p 56
[15] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 703

This was the man selected by the Mexican hierarchy and conservatives whose hatred of the liberal constitution in Spain [1] led them to lay aside their vaunted rôle of supporters of constituted authority and pillars of his royal majesty Rebellion had ceased to be treason "to God, King, and Pope" when it was in the clerical interest The Bishop of Guadalajara advanced 25,000 pesos towards the enterprise [2]

To succeed Iturbide needed a command He persuaded the viceroy to give him one to subdue the hitherto invincible Guerrero [3] who had kept alive the embers of revolution Apodaca, completely deceived, furnished troops and supplies Iturbide's plans at first miscarried He had previously sought to win over Guerrero by favorable offers, but the insurgent scornfully rejected anything that savored of pardon [4] Iturbide's military ventures were equally futile His encounters were severe defeats [5] But he concealed the facts as well as he could in his reports [6] and entered into communication with the insurgent leader, pretending to his chief that it was for the sole purpose of offering amnesty

This time he sent Guerrero word that he had been converted to independence and suggested that the two work together Guerrero, simple, rugged, seeing here the fulfilment of his ten years' struggle, consented, placing himself at Iturbide's orders [7] With his force doubled and the moral support of the outstanding insurgent, Iturbide now merely needed money to ensure his success He secured this by offering to safeguard the convoy of half a million pesos for the Spanish merchants in Manila awaiting safe transportation from the capital to the coast, and then appropriating it en route [8]

Deception was no longer necessary Iturbide proclaimed his "Plan of Iguala" [9] It provided for national independence under a "constitutional" monarchy The crown was to be tendered to Ferdinand VII of Spain, and in case of refusal, successively to his two brothers or some other member of a reigning family Ad interim a *junta* under the presidency of the viceroy was to govern the country subject to existing (*i e*, Spanish) laws, and to convoke in whatever manner it deemed fit, a congress which should draw up a national constitution Caste distinctions were abolished, all were now citizens with equal rights, advancement would be based on virtue and merit, without discrimination between European and American born All officials, civil, ecclesiastic, and military, were to retain their positions if they subscribed to the plan, and to lose them otherwise Catholicism was to be the religion and none other tolerated The three essential planks or "guaranties" were "Independence," which everyone for one reason or another wanted, "Religion," which no one opposed, and "Union" to signify the equality

[1] Alaman, *op cit* vol IV, p 725
[2] Bustamante, Cuadro Histórico, vol V, p 95–6
[3] Alaman *op cit* vol V, p 57
[4] *Idem*, p 85
[5] *Idem*, vol V, p 81–3
[6] *Idem*, p 91
[7] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 708
[8] *Idem*, p 709
[9] Text in Mémoires Autographes de Iturbide, p 109–115

for European and American born, which all approved, the Americans because they had never enjoyed it, the Spaniards because they feared reprisals An "army of the three guaranties" was to defend these principles, and former independentists, that is, rebels, were to be included in its ranks

The plan was politically astute Every group got something It enabled each to think that objectionable features could later be eliminated

Apodaca discovered Iturbide's duplicity too late Another royalist general, Anastasio Bustamante, promptly swung his forces, six thousand strong, to the rebels [1] Others switched with equal facility [2] Counting now on most of the military, and on the powerful support of the church which had made a complete volte-face, independence was achieved in a few months and almost without bloodshed

[1] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 713

[2] *Idem*, p 714

THE MEANING OF INDEPENDENCE

Independence was a fact But the connotations of that high-sounding word were non-existent An administrative severing from Spain had taken place — nothing more It had been brought about under auspices wholly committed to continuing things as they had been, and for that purpose Hidalgo had launched, and Morelos had continued, what was in essence a social revolution They had precipitated a civil war — and lost, the established order had won The radicals of 1810 had instinctively viewed independence from Spain as an essential preliminary to fundamental change The conservatives of 1820 espoused independence only when they saw the danger they had defeated in the colony looming again unexpectedly in the mother country

Viewed in terms of progress the political revolution of 1821 was a defeat Its champions intended to change nothing For the moment it was a step backward Its consummation embodied the quintessence of the colonial vices It was achieved by duplicity, perjury, treason, and robbery Its instrument and dominating figure was a militarist wholly devoid of principle whose hands had for ten years been steeped in the blood of his countrymen

The independence of 1821 had one far-reaching implication which its promoters did not appreciate, and consequences which they did not anticipate Into the cable that tied the colony to Spain had been twisted all the strands of the elaborate fabric of privilege and discrimination Its ultimate unraveling till the social pattern was wholly changed was inevitable — once the cable cut Supreme authority — obedience to the king imposed by arms and tradition, inculcated by the church as an article of faith — was no more

The Spaniards found this out a few months after independence, and fully realized its painful implications when most of them were stripped of their property and driven from Mexico The white Mexicans who absorbed their wealth were able to maintain their economic advantages for another hundred years, when oligarchical rule fell with Díaz In other words, the independence of 1821 turned out to be wholly a Hispanic family affair between European and American born members It was a political fight within the dominating social class The defeat of the 1810 insurrection was made possible only because many creoles, frightened by the emergence of Hidalgo's Indians and the evident social aspects of the movement, swung

back into the arms of their European born brothers and made common cause with them against the darker bloods — the really dispossessed The victors in the Mexico City municipal election of 1813 — the first ever held in Spanish America — were Americans, favoring independence, but "all of the most distinguished class of society" [1] No Spaniard or Indian was among the eighteen deputies chosen for the Spanish *cortes* from Mexico three months later [2] The white Americans had wanted to take to themselves the Spaniards' political advantages, but not to relinquish their own economic dominance of *mestizo* and Indian To lose the latter was a far more horrifying prospect In this respect both white groups were wholly successful in 1821 The native aspect of the revolution was relegated to the background and eliminated but for an insignificant reference to the legal abolition of the caste system,[3] which meant no more than the colonial laws protecting the native because contrary to the interest of those who profited by maintaining his serfdom The feudal land tenure remained unchanged Clerical and military privilege were unabated Except in individual cases, the lower four fifths of the Mexican population did not figure in the Iturbidist revolution and secured no benefit therefrom Their emancipation was not to be even seriously attempted for another century

[1] Alaman, Historia de Méjico, vol III, p 412 [2] *Idem*, p 422
[3] Plan of Iguala, Art XI

WHAT HAPPENED IN SPAIN

Before pursuing Mexico's destiny let us glance at the mother country Spain, at least, was free from the peculiar discriminations and the race caste enslavement fastened on her colony Yet Spain's own contemporary history reveals the nature of her political legacy to the New World

The 1820 restoration of the constitution of 1812 was short-lived Its defenders could not agree Ferdinand the faithless who had no intention of keeping his pledge called in the foreign troops of the Holy Alliance to abolish the constitution and the liberal laws of the *cortes* and to persecute their proponents savagely But even this ruthlessness was scarcely necessary There was no popular resistance Says Chapman

> The masses were yet so steeped in ignorance and weighed down by traditional influences, that they rejected a system intended for their benefit * * * From 1823 to 1829 the political history of Spain was a series of alternations between terrorism and a relaxation of coercive measures * * * but the dominant note at all times was absolutism [1]

The "Carlist" wars to decide whether a daughter and only child of Ferdinand VII should reign, or the male line represented by his brother Don Carlos, tore Spain in the thirties Hundreds of thousands had to fight, suffer, starve, bleed, and die — over a family quarrel between individuals not far from degenerates

There followed "an era in which successful military men were * * * the virtual rulers of Spain," [2] while thirteen-year-old Isabella, illegally proclaimed queen, ruled nominally An unbiased historian thus describes her

> Isabella was notorious for her bad conduct Furthermore she was perfidious, selfish, superstitious and lacking in principle Withal she was devoutly religious The result was that her opinions were swayed by her numerous transitory lovers, or by her confessors, and ministries rose and fell according to the dictates of the *camarilla* [3]

Execution or exile was the fate of those who hoped audibly for better government After twenty-five years a revolution dethroned Isabella II, but the *cortes*, packed with life appointees of the crown — grandees, ecclesi-

[1] Chapman, A History of Spain, p 497 [2] *Idem*, p 499 [3] *Idem*, p 501

astics, and soldiers — voted to continue monarchy The problem was to find a king After several, including a Hohenzollern, had declined, Amadeo of Savoy reluctantly consented The clergy opposed him because the House of Savoy had just taken over what was left of the Papal states, and feared he might withdraw state financial support leaving the church dependent entirely on the contributions of the faithful After six years he abdicated, unable to harmonize the warring factions and unwilling to rule with an iron hand Republicanism tried unsuccessfully for a year to control chaos Then the Bourbons returned with Alfonso XII, son of Isabella, promising general amnesty and constitutional government It proved an era of "pseudo-democracy under constitutional forms" [1] The forms at least were a gain

The new constitution of 1876 created a two chamber *cortes*, half the senate's seats going automatically to princes, captains-general, nobles, archbishops, and appointees of the king, while the lower house was elected by suffrage limited through a property qualification In 1889, however, universal male suffrage came in The clergy was conciliated by providing continued state support though it protested bitterly against the grant of toleration of other faiths Convivial excesses having cut short the king's life, María Cristina, his widow, ruled as regent until the majority, at sixteen, of Alfonso XIII At his accession in 1902 Spain is the most backward country in Western Europe, unless it be Portugal, where similar conditions obtain The Iberian Peninsula is still medieval in spirit and largely in fact The ruling power is the aristocracy composed of the hereditary nobility, rich merchants who can buy their way into the titled ranks, clergy, and army The masses are desperately poor, barely able to keep body and soul together The connecting link between upper and lower classes is "charity" Thousands line up daily to receive the unused food of the army [2]

But it is the twentieth century A few eddies from the current of world progress seem bound to stir the edges of the stagnant peninsular pool Bubbles of a vigorous literature are rising from its depths Novelists like Pérez Galdós, Pérez de Ayala, and Blasco Ibáñez, Benavente, the dramatist, essayists such as Ortega y Gasset are even churning away the thick scum of a dead past The lower house of the *cortes*, filled with elected deputies gives hope, whatever their inevitable shortcomings, of becoming in time a national forum, a political training-school But not yet! The king clings to the belief that the throne is his "by divine right" [3] *Latifundia*, vast estates held out of use, present a pressing agrarian and social problem [4] The people are densely superstitious and ignorant — how could they be otherwise? [5] Law fundamentally is still the royal will, with the sword to enforce it

[1] *Idem*, p 503–505 [2] *Idem*, p 505–6, 522, 524
[3] Ortega y Gasset, La Verdad Sobre La Dictadura, p 288
[4] Chapman, *op cit*, p 522 [5] *Idem*, p 524

In the third decade of the twentieth century, military ventures in Morocco — virtually all that remains of the wrecked colonial empire — meet with disaster To the rottenness of the army oligarchy, thousands of young lives are needlessly sacrificed While the be-medaled and be-paunched generals are gaming and drinking far from the front, fattening on the funds intended for equipment and efficiency, undisciplined hillmen defending their soil are slaughtering the sons of Spain who have been lured on by the will-o-the-wisp of an illusive glory The scandal grows as mourning enters more and more Spanish homes Grave charges are going to be aired in congress — implicating the highest Intolerable thought to those who know no law but their own will and desire! Moreover investigation of one grave abuse often uncovers others The whole edifice of corrupt privilege may be assaulted by presumptuous upstarts This sort of thing must be stamped out!

A military coup d'état on September 13, 1923, takes place with the king's consent and approval Against whom and what? It is, according to its *caudillo*, Primo de Rivera, to rid the country of administrative corruption[1] The charge is well-founded — but, as an ironic ditty expressed it

España entera está boba
Porque no recapacita
Que está más sucia la escoba
Que la basura que quita

Which freely translated says

Let Spain not forget,
To clear the dung-hill
The broom that we get,
Is dirtier still

The dictatorship suppresses the *cortes* as an unnecessary expense Yet in 1926 the army has more colonels than Germany before the war[2] The elected municipal authorities it replaces with creatures of its own — the ballot-box in Spain has become a museum piece[3] Judges who do not find as the army wills are removed[4] The death penalty is imposed on workmen innocent of any offense, but whose political convictions are distasteful[5] Acquittal of "nobles" involved in fraudulent bank failures is exacted, and the release of an arrested cocaine-vending prostitute because a general "needed" her[6] A censorship so rigid blankets the country that no book, pamphlet, or newspaper article may appear without inspection[7] Imprison-

[1] Proclamation of Primo de Rivera "To the Country and to the Army" issued in Barcelona, Sept 12, 1923
[2] Blasco Ibáñez in Current Hist, Sept 1926 p 827
[3] Ortega y Gasset, España Encadenada, La Verdad Sobre la Dictadura, p 292
[4] *Idem*, p 270 [5] *Idem*, p 279 [6] *Idem*, p 269–270 [7] *Idem*, p 199–220

ment, ruinous fines, and exile for editors and writers who transgress and suppression of their publications crush out information and comment [1] Under cover of the censorship, graft large and small flourishes with greater impunity than ever, from stock frauds to the "commandeering" of automobiles for the local military commander [2] In fact the movement has created for itself a new name which passes from mouth to mouth — *impunismo* Vice prospers — with the excess profits of the dens that made up Melilla the rear of the Morocco front where the generals played, a Catholic church is built [3] The bishop of Barcelona had hastened to bless the dictatorship at the start [4] It is building for permanency "In the schools we shall permit no education other than religious and patriotic" is Primo de Rivera's dictum [5]

Meanwhile men of public spirit and integrity are jailed and deported like criminals Because Dr Gregorio Marañón, senior surgeon of the Madrid General Hospital, a scientist wholly alien to political life, made no secret, in private conversations, of his belief that the existing arbitrary form of government was a misfortune to his country, he was arrested and for weeks held *incomunicado*, even to his family His case is not exceptional Jailed without procedure of any kind or unceremoniously deported to the Canary Islands — even humanists and gentle philosophers, men of international repute, like Miguel de Unamuno, have not been spared [6]

Do the Spanish care? Apparently not a bit The day after the dictatorship proclaimed itself, the only group seen on the Calle de Alcalá in Madrid, where crowds foregather in moments of excitement and public upheaval, was, according to Indalecio Prieto, deputy of the abolished congress, clustered about a man in a chef's livery ballyhooing the merits of a cheap restaurant [7]

Such is the political state of Spain — *madre patria* of Mexico and other nations in the second quarter of the twentieth century Anno Domini

As Ortega y Gasset points out — dynasty, not country, has always been inculcated as the object of Spanish patriotism As the vast empire conquered by the energy and bravery of the Spaniard shrank — thrown away by the incompetence and oppressiveness of the ruler — the duress weighed the more heavily on the area that remained With all the colonies lost, the need of exploiting improvised the colonial system in Morocco, where the fighting was kept up for the purpose of maintaining the army "But now Spain herself has become the colony of the one machine of oppression We find ourselves in a situation analogous to that of the American peoples, when at the beginning of the last century they aspired to their independence The Spaniards to-day need to conquer their own country" [8]

[1] *Idem*, p 214–15, 251–63, 314 [2] *Idem*, p 236–242, 296, 298–300
[3] *Idem* p 15 [4] *Idem*, p 164 [5] *Idem*, p 289
[6] Un Testigo Ocular, España Bajo El Dictador in *La Reforma Social* Jan 1927
[7] Ortega y Gasset, *op cit*, p 187 [8] *Idem*, p 295

His Catholic Majesty, Ferdinand VII, King of Spain, will be first called to the throne of the Mexican empire * * * In case of refusal, it will be his brother the most serene *infante* Don Carlos, should he decline, the most serene *infante*, Don Francisco de Paula, in case he refuses, the most serene *infante* Don Carlos Luis * * * and in case the last renounces, the person whom the *cortes* of the (Mexican) empire shall designate [1]

Thus read the Treaty of Córdoba made by Iturbide with Spain's last viceroy, O'Donojú, who landed in July, 1821, just after independence was achieved, thus confirming it as outlined in the Plan of Iguala A Bourbon, if possible, but at all events a monarch [1]

And when Iturbide, author of Plan and Treaty, appointed the *junta* which in turn was to select from its number the regency of five that would govern pending the emperor's acceptance, this body consisted, besides Iturbide, of the viceroy, "because it is fitting that a person of his rank take an active and immediate part in the government," [2] and three other staunch royalists and previous opponents of independence, namely an *oidor* of the late *Audiencia*, a former secretary of the vice-regal government, and the governor of the bishopric of Michoacán When the viceroy died a few days later he was replaced by the bishop of Puebla Iturbide's *junta* then conferred upon him the title of "most serene highness," the rank of "generalissimo of the army and navy of the empire," a yearly salary of $120,000, a gift of a million dollars, an estate twenty leagues square and to his father the honors and salary of $10,000 pertaining to a member of the regency [3]

Iturbide in turn promoted the generals who had elevated him The highest rank, lieutenant-general, went to Pedro Celestino Negrete,[4] who as a royalist commander had never spared his captives and for ten years had filled his official reports with invectives against the independentists as "monsters, infamous rebels, and vile canaille" [5] Guerrero, whose adherence had made Iturbide's success possible, alone among the original insurgents, received important, and Bravo lesser, recognition [6] Iturbide's slighting of the *antiguos patriotas*, as these now began to style themselves,[7]

[1] Text in Mémoires Autographes de Iturbide art III, Treaty of Córdoba
[2] Iturbide, *op cit*, p 121
[3] Alaman, Historia de México vol V, p 325 339–340, 361
[4] Bancroft, History of Mexico, vol IV, p 738 fn
[5] Bancroft, *op cit* vol IV, p 738, 744.
[6] Alaman, *op cit*, vol III p 183
[7] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 149 fn

went so far as to prohibit applicants for office or preferment to mention any service in favor of independence before the previous March, the date of the Plan of Iguala [1] Dissatisfaction among their number grew The wounds of ten years' massacre were not healed and here were the hated Spaniards under the "independence" which should have driven them out securing most of the "plums" of office

Protests cropped out in the press Carlos María Bustamante dedicated each issue of his daily, "La Abispa de Chilpancingo," to one of the former insurgent chiefs The name of the publication referring to the place where Morelos had first proclaimed independence was in itself an irritation to Iturbide He ordered the paper stopped, imprisoned Bustamante,[2] and the regency decreed that written attacks on Spaniards were treasonable, and criticism of the *projected* constitution illegal [3] Additional censors were appointed to enforce these decrees A broadside advising Spaniards to sell their goods and leave the country netted the author, Lagranda, a sentence to six years' imprisonment, and the loss of his civic rights [4]

The regency's first duty, according to the Treaty of Córdoba to which, like the Plan of Iguala, all officials, military, ecclesiastical, and civil, had sworn solemn allegiance, was to convoke a national *cortes* by the electoral methods provided in the existing Spanish constitution [5] But as a body so elected might not be wholly subservient to the generalissimo and his backers, the regency, disregarding the method they had sworn to support, arranged to "pack" the congress The upper chamber was to be chosen principally by clergy and army, and the lower house obliged arbitrarily to include also members of ecclesiastical, military, and legal professions The illegality of this procedure and Iturbide's purpose to dominate were apparent But the only method of opposition possible was conspiracy A plot among earlier independentists sought a legal and untrammeled congressional election The plot was discovered and its members arrested Feeling ran high Despite Iturbide's carefully laid plans many of his political opponents were chosen [6]

To meet the situation the generalissimo planned to use the army which he had created Spain meanwhile had rejected the Treaty of Córdoba which left Iturbide a pretext for consummating his supreme ambition The breach between him and congress, which upon assembling had assumed the title of "Majesty," and following Spanish custom declared its members "inviolable," that is, not subject to arrest or trial except by itself, became wide open when it proposed reducing the army in the interest of the bankrupt treasury — a wholly necessary measure since foreign danger no longer threatened and the government was living beyond its resources at the rate of $300,000

[1] *Idem*, vol V, p 351, 409
[2] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 407–8
[3] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 742
[4] *Idem*
[5] Text in Mémoires Autographes de Iturbide, art XIII, p 123
[6] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 336–7, 376, Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 744–8

monthly A further regulation providing that no member of the regency could hold military command was projected This settled matters In the barracks of the capital the cry of "Viva Agustín I" went forth amid the firing of musketry, and the generals and officers notified congress that they had unanimously proclaimed Iturbide emperor [1]

A mob composed of soldiery, monks, and others [2] invaded congress shouting "Emperor or Death," [3] overawing the deputies who in fear of physical violence endorsed the empire — the Iturbidists willing, the others, cowed But so many had absented themselves that the legal requirement of 102 members voting was not met [4]

This did not matter to the army and Iturbide Elaborate preparations were made for the coronation The congress now outdid itself in subserviency and in a proclamation declared

> Mexicans, you have to-day on the imperial throne — Iturbide-the-Great, your most ardent wishes are realized He has ascended the throne not to exercise over you his absolute authority, such as was exercised by the former Spanish monarchs, but to fulfil toward you the tender duties of a father toward his children, to govern in conformity with the laws and constitution which your congress will adopt, to protect the weak, to do justice in an equitable manner, to maintain the integrity of the empire, and conserve in full vigor, the apostolic and Roman Catholic religion, tolerating no other Here is what he has sworn to-day before the king of kings and nations, manifesting * * * his hatred of tyranny and his respect for law, protesting in the most solemn manner that he would die rather than fail to perform such sacred duties, and proclaiming the principle of the sovereignty of the people [5]

Congress declared the monarchy to be hereditary, conferred the title of "prince imperial" on the oldest son "prince of the Union" on Iturbide's father, prince and princesses on the other children The day of the emperor's "election" was voted a national holiday, coinage was to bear his nude bust with a Latin inscription, and an elaborate court with an imperial guard, almoner, chaplain, gentlemen of the bedchamber, master of the horse, equerries, lords and ladies in waiting, and pages, was provided for As the treasury was empty a forced contribution was decreed to cover all this magnificence The national pawnshop's director incurred the emperor's enmity by refusing to hand over its jewels for the imperial crowns and scepter, but many ladies hastened to lend their precious stones [6]

Amid salvos of artillery, blare of military bands, and tolling of church bells, over carpeted streets, beneath floral arches, between houses fluttering with banners, the imperial cortège, enlarged by the freshly improvised court

[1] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 769–771, Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 423, 501, 593
[2] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 595
[3] Lorenzo de Zavala, Ensayo Histórico de las Revoluciones de Méjico, vol I, p 131
[4] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 773
[5] Iturbide, *op cit*, p 139–40 [6] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 610, 621–2, 624

and the newly created order of the Knights of Guadalupe entered the great cathedral in the Zócalo Here four bishops sprinkled the emperor and empress with holy water, escorted them to their thrones, anointed them with sacred oils, blessed their regalia, celebrated high mass, and intoned "Vivat Imperator in Aeternum" [1]

The imperial eternity lasted eleven months Iturbide's desire for absolutism further antagonized the deputies When congress sought to remove itself to Texcoco to avoid the emperor's pressure he arrested fifteen deputies on the charge of plotting and despite protests and the absence of evidence refused to release them Congress now being definitely hostile Iturbide determined to make it compliant by reducing the number of deputies When that body refused to be shrunk the emperor dissolved it by armed force [2]

Some of Iturbide's staunchest supporters were now disgusted To preserve the appearance of a legislative body, he appointed a *junta* composed of the most faithful among the suppressed congress under the presidency of Bishop Castañiza of Durango This assembly was also sorely needed to provide funds for the bankrupt empire [3]

A forced loan was again invoked but as even this arbitrary method could not produce funds with sufficient speed, Iturbide repeated his performance of eighteen months previously and seized a quarter of a million dollars belonging to Spaniards awaiting safe conduct at Vera Cruz for Spain This further increased the number of those who were weary of him [4]

But the throne was to receive a vital blow from another quarter A former royalist officer, Antonio López de Santa Anna, not satisfied with promotion in six months from lieutenant to brigadier-general,[5] plotted against his immediate superior, a recent royalist captain, Echávarri, whom Iturbide had likewise promoted to the captaincy-generalship of the provinces of Puebla, Vera Cruz, and Oaxaca,[6] a post Santa Anna coveted In an affray with the Spaniards who still held the fort of San Juan de Ulloa in Vera Cruz harbor, Echávarri narrowly missed being killed or captured and charged Santa Anna with plotting his death Moreover, there were defalcations in Santa Anna's regimental funds, and complaints of his riotous behavior poured in from such a variety of sources that Iturbide, to keep peace in the military family, decided to remove him, using, however, the gentle method so often adopted thereafter with military scoundrels in Mexico, of giving him an agreeable commission in new surroundings [7]

"I await you in Mexico City to make your fortune for you," said the emperor as he warmly embraced Santa Anna who had come to Jalapa in answer to his master's summons But Iturbide was dealing with his match

[1] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 630–4
[2] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 781–784
[3] *Idem*, p 785
[4] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V p 667–70
[5] *Idem*, vol V, p 341
[6] Iturbide, *op cit*, p 84
[7] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 676–8

in astuteness, duplicity, and ambition Santa Anna concealed his feelings, thanked his chief effusively and hastening back to his regiment in Vera Cruz before news of his removal reached there, induced it to revolt in the name of republican government — alleging Iturbide's violations of his oath in justification [1]

The Spanish commander at San Juan de Ulloa, delighted at the prospect of Mexican discord, lent aid But the *ejército libertador*, as Santa Anna called his four hundred men, was completely routed by Iturbide's generals Besieged in Vera Cruz, Santa Anna was ready to sail away to the United States But his cause — to oust Iturbide — was to have many supporters Guadalupe Victoria joined and encouraged him to stay and fight [2] Guerrero and Bravo had slipped out of the capital with similar intent, and when overtaken by an Iturbidist lieutenant-colonel sent in pursuit, were able with ten ounces of gold to persuade him that their escape was just, though he was not fully convinced till they threw in their saddles [3] But both these old insurgents were routed in the first encounter, Guerrero, badly wounded, disappearing and given up for dead The revolt was as good as suppressed, when the generals and officers besieging Vera Cruz rebelled in turn, made common cause with Santa Anna and in the "Plan of Casa Mata" demanded the restoration of the dissolved congress The avowed purpose of the *ejército restaurador del sistema constitucional*, as it called itself, was more moderate than that of its recent opponents, but these differences were easily composed as both military groups had the common object of removing from the throne the man whom less than a year before they had elevated to it The entire army promptly flopped [4]

Iturbide shorn of his strength attempted to abdicate [5] Congress, however, declared his elevation to the throne null, its own actions void because under compulsion and decreed his exile, at the same time voting him a handsome yearly income provided he would live abroad [6] Unable to believe that Mexico could get along without him he returned after a few months, in violation of his pledge, was arrested and shot on July 19, 1824, under a decree of congress, of which he was ignorant, declaring him a traitor and an outlaw [7] Thus ended Mexico's first lesson in self-government

[1] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 788–89
[2] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 689–695
[3] *Idem*, p 697
[4] *Idem*, p 699–723
[5] *Idem*, p 740
[6] *Idem*, p 746–8
[7] *Idem*, p 790–802

THE FIRST STEPS

The *republic* was now to have its innings The word was as denatured as *independence* had been. A militarist who had made himself dictator had been overthrown, but by the rebellion of his own soldiery, the very army that had made him The congress restored to life by the generals, named three of these generals as the provisional executive — Bravo, Victoria, Negrete, the last the butcher of the independentists While congress promulgates an *acta constitutiva* or interim program of government till the constitution is ready, revolts break out in various sections Garrisons not included in the insurrection of Casa Mata "pronounce" against the new triumvirate, demanding the return of Iturbide Still other detachments arise and attack the Spaniards who seem to be as much in control of the country as ever [1]

In Vera Cruz, Santa Anna with his troops established a "protectorate" to be maintained till the country adopts a federal system The members of the triumvirate leave the capital in person to suppress the disorders Some of the uprisers are killed, but agreements are reached with the more important generals like Bustamante and Santa Anna Meanwhile highway robbery is also rife and provokes a law giving the military the right to try highwaymen summarily This law a few years later will be widely applied in civil strife to put political opponents out of the way All this turmoil almost brings congress to the point of placing vast powers in the hand of a single member of the triumvirate with the title of *Supremo Director* The death of Iturbide at this juncture lessens the tension somewhat by removing one pretext for revolt and renders a dictatorship unnecessary [2]

In the midst of these realities congress began drawing up a constitution Mexico had known only a highly centralized government, the colonial division into provinces and *intendencias* being purely administrative Nevertheless, a strong movement for a "federation of states" set in Among the more democratically-minded this was in part a reaction against the tyranny associated with the past centralism, and personified in Iturbide The oligarchy composed of clericals, some of the military and large landholders, favored centralization as easier to control, and as a surer path to restoring monarchy [3]

[1] Bancroft, Hist of Mexico, *op cit*, vol IV, p 802, vol V, p 7, 12
[2] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol V, p 7, 8, 14 Alaman, Historia de Méjico, vol V, p 764, 766, 781–2
[3] Justin H Smith, The War with Mexico, vol I, p 36–7

But the prospect under a coalition of many "sovereign states" of far more offices, proved irresistible, so these were created, with a complete lack of persons trained or qualified to fill them, and a correspondingly greater burden to the community

To enact the federal system a copy of the Constitution of the United States served as a model [1] The government was divided into the three branches, executive, legislative, judiciary But disputes between state and federal government and between states were not left to the supreme court, but to congress, a political body Moreover in an emergency the executive might be given "extraordinary powers," that is, become a dictator, and congress promptly conferred them on President Victoria although there was less of an emergency than any time in the next fifty years [2] In other words the legislature that created the constitutional "checks and balances" had so little confidence in their workability, that it made constitutional setting them aside [3] This was a confession at the start that Mexico's was to be a government of men, not of laws Following the example given in the capital, the state legislatures voted their governors similar powers [3] In short, as Justin H Smith points out, "the government was organized as a permanent revolution " [4]

Nevertheless, there was general optimism among those who could think at all on the subject of the state, for they either had what they wanted or hoped to get it under a system which seemed infinitely elastic, and, according to report, had produced flourishing results in the republic to the north The old insurgents were pleased with the selection of one of their number as president, and the recognition by various congressional acts, such as inscribing their dead leaders' names in gold letters in the hall of congress, that they were the true fathers of independence The conservatives on the other hand, aware, as their spokesman, the historian Alaman, put it, that essentially "the government had preserved * * * its aristocratic character, persons of old family, the clergy, and the army, being influential in it," [5] rejoiced in their real control of affairs

The first independentists in 1810 had declared nearly all taxation abolished as a strategic thrust against the royal treasury The viceroy had been obliged to follow in a few instances to offset this popular move Iturbide to gain adherents annulled imposts right and left, and the succeeding administration shunned the odium of reestablishing them The national revenue had greatly diminished but no one wanted to be taxed However, the financial embarrassment appeared solved by borrowing from British bankers at an exorbitant rate The interest was met by a loan from another house, and the unpleasant balancing of the budget was happily postponed

[1] Zavala, Ensayo Histórico, vol I p 196 [2] *Idem*, vol I, p 235
[3] Suárez y Navarro, Historia de Méjico, y del General Antonio López de Santa Anna, p 75
[4] Justin H Smith, *op cit*, vol I, p 37 [5] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 823

Yet before long everyone felt himself cheated of the blessings that independence was to bestow The clergy apprehended dangerous innovations that might alter existing conditions The army's appetite had been whetted by rapid promotions And nearly every literate person (and some who were not) felt that he had had some part in one of the efforts which had netted independence and ought to be correspondingly requited Applications for offices, pensions, indemnities, and rewards fairly rained on the government [1]

Then commenced a battle which still rages It was at first wholly a scramble for personal advantage Given the political groups and their inheritance it could scarcely be otherwise But the nature of the struggle was peculiarly base For a time it smothered the flow of human progress Only toward the middle of the century, when the colonial generation was passing, were new ideas able to materialize slightly under the leadership of a few high-principled men

During the first quarter century of Mexico's national life, the forward trend is only at times, and then faintly, visible in the sordid clawing for plunder Beneath the surface the differences between the conservatives who dominated the country and the liberals, first revealed by Hidalgo, grew steadily But the inconstancy and opportunism of those who made the political history of those years, the submergence of all broad policy to the exigencies of the moment, obscured the deeper implications of the conflict which were not to emerge clearly till the second decade of the twentieth century — again to be confused and overlaid by the same national vices

The political history of Mexico from 1825 to 1850 is primarily the history of the army which noisily occupied the foreground, the church filled the background and pulled the strings of its marionettes The division of the contending political aspirants into York against Scottish rite Masons, or as Federalists vs Centralists is wholly deceptive These were ephemeral alignments for a massed assault on the treasury That was their exclusive purpose There was no loyalty to any other idea, and allegiance therefore came to be personal — to the man who at the moment appeared most likely to promote one's own fortunes The history of this period is wholly unimportant except as it reveals the extent of national weaknesses and thereby sheds light on some of the paradoxes of contemporary Mexico

[1] Suárez y Navarro, *op cit*, p 15, Zavala, *op cit*, vol I, p 137

THE ATTEMPT TO REFORM

The "Reform movement" of the middle fifties was chiefly a clash between church and state [1] The Bonaparte-Hapsburg imperial intervention which followed the clerical defeat in the three years "War of the Reform," was a continuation of the struggle between Conservatives and those who called themselves "Liberals" When Maximilian, scapegoat for the designs of others, fell, the new order was to have its opportunity to put into practice the ideas embodied in the constitution of 1857 But the chance never came Juárez described his problem (and that of Mexico to-day) years before saying

> When a society like ours has had the misfortune to pass through years of internal upheavals, it is seamed through with vices whose profound roots cannot be extirpated either in a single day nor by any single measure [2]

Integrity was Juárez's fundamental trait His most inveterate critic among historians wrote "He knew no perfidy" [3] As governor of Oaxaca, he had found his state not only bankrupt but heavily in debt At the end of his term he left a surplus of $50,000 00 pesos in the state treasury — an unprecedented achievement in state administration [4]

Not merely was he personally scrupulous Other Mexican executives like Herrera and Arista before him and others after, had been individually honest But with or without their knowledge, connivance, or consent, relatives, friends, and followers profited financially Not one of the men who surrounded Juárez achieved a fortune [5]

Under Juárez, for the first time, executive and judicial branches of government were independent No person was influential enough and no affair so vital as to induce him to tamper, in the slightest, with the machinery of justice [6]

He was the greatest democrat, in action as well as in words, in a country that had never known other than autocracy — and almost always selfish autocracy During his régime and that of Lerdo, the press was freer than it had ever been, and vigorous parliamentary opposition was tolerated [7]

[1] Its story is, therefore, told more fully in the chapter on the Church
[2] Zayas Enríquez, Benito Juárez Su Obra — Su Vida, p 47
[3] Francisco Bulnes, El Verdadero Díaz y la Revolución, p 180
[4] Zayas Enríquez *op cit*, p 36
[5] Prida, De la Dictadura á la Anarquía, p 130
[6] Prida *op cit* p 131
[7] Luis Lara Pardo, De Porfirio Díaz á Francisco Madero, p 28 Prida, *op cit*, p 99

It was utterly impossible, in the national wreckage, for him not to step occasionally outside of the sphere of strict legality [1] He was forced at times to sacrifice the previously never existent sovereignty of some state in the interests of the entire nation Where the use of electoral machinery was unknown and its misuse merely making for anarchy, he arbitrarily "imposed" governors of his own selection He had to face conditions, not theories

He had separated church and state He had destroyed in a large measure the temporal power of the hierarchy He had given impulse to general education He had abolished the legality of military privileges He had — for a brief interval — enthroned the civil power above the military He had laid a political and legal basis for a slow march to democracy, provided those entrusted with the national destiny would keep the faith

But it was not to be The body politic was still at the mercy of its chronic weaknesses Before Juárez's first relatively peaceful term had ended, militarism exacerbated through the intensely patriotic character of the war against the foreign invader, again raised its ugly head Continued civil government was rendered illusory by the return of the *cuartelazo* or barrack revolt, headed by Porfirio Díaz Juárez, the state administrator, the national reformer and the patriot, scarcely had the chance to demonstrate that he was also Juárez the constructive statesman His critics charge that, like his American contemporary, Ulysses Grant, he proved a poor national executive More just, however, is to point out that retrogression in the face of an almost unsurmountable heritage, was probably inevitable The defective constitution of 1824 and its subsequent modifications had never been more than scraps of paper The more enlightened constitution of 1857, also ready-made for a people unversed in self-government, was to be, similarly, a legislative mirage If Juárez was doomed to failure, in so far as tangible achievement was concerned, all others would have met a similar fate For he was the greatest statesman that Mexico had produced In any event, death removed him from earthly judgment after he had been forced into the field to defeat the reappearing hydra of militarism

Porfirio Díaz had been an able general in the "War of the Reform" and against the French invaders Now his military talents were to be turned against his own country, against the administration that represented the fruition of a decade of struggle

His pretext for rebellion was as follows

> The indefinite reelection * * * of the federal executive has placed in jeopardy our national institutions * * * Various states find themselves deprived of their legitimate authorities, and subjected to tyrannical governments imposed by the direct action of the executive and sustained by the federal forces Their sov-

[1] For these acts and Juárez's defense thereof see Historia de México, García Granados, vol I, p 54–5

ereignty * * * laws and the will of their people have been sacrificed to the blind caprice of personal power * * *

The army, glorious embodiment of the principles conquered since the revolution of Ayutla to the surrender of Mexico in 1867 * * * has been debased * * * by being obliged to serve as an instrument of odious violence against the freedom of popular suffrage * * *

We shall fight, therefore, for the cause of the people, and the people will be the sole master of its victory "Constitution of '57 and electoral liberty" will be our banner, "less government and more liberties," our program [1]

In a message to congress, Juárez replied as follows:

The militarism of other days again raises its hateful standard * * * Its purpose is to destroy the work consolidated in fourteen years of immense sacrifice and to cast us back into the days when a revolution signified only a change of personnel in power, leaving the way always open to another aspirant Its promises are as alluring as those of every leader of sedition For added mockery it invokes the constitution * * * No past patriotic services suffice to justify such aberration The nation will always condemn it as a crime, for if we Mexicans have learned any lesson from our long and grievous experience it is to value institutions and national interests above men * * * To sacrifice law and order to the more or less illusory plans of any man, however meritorious he may be, would be to sink ourselves into anarchy without end, to ruin completely the elementals of our prosperity, to destroy, perhaps for always, our reputation in the world, and even to endanger our future independence [2]

Was there any basis for Díaz's charges? Very little Juárez, with but four years of "peaceful" possession spent largely in pacification, was more than justified in seeking another term to materialize the ideas for which he and his followers had fought and bled for half a generation The constitution at that time did not forbid reelection But granting that his course merited criticism or disapproval, by no possible distortion of the facts could it be decently made the pretext for another armed rebellion Read in the light of Díaz's subsequent career, his military revolt against "personal power" and for "electoral liberty" is the grimmest of ironies in a country and century replete with them Juárez's death, for the time being, removed the Díaz pretext But four years later, proclaiming the "Plan of Tuxtepec," he again revolted, this time successfully, against Juárez's legitimate successor, Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada, also a civilian

With the accession of Díaz in 1876 ended the attempt at a beginning of civil, evolutionary government It might, and probably would have been doomed He made its doom certain

[1] From the Plan de la Noria proclaimed by Porfirio Díaz, November, 1871 See Fernández, México Política Experimental p 350–3

[2] Message of Dec 1, 1871 Diario de los Debates, vol I, p 627–8

PORFIRIO DIAZ

Díaz's first term (1876–1880) was devoted largely to erecting his political fences Having forced his way into office on a platform of "no reelection" he could scarcely succeed himself He, therefore, installed a place-holder Passing over men of recognized ideals and ability, he selected his old companion-in-rebellion against Juárez and Lerdo, General Manuel González, on whose removability after one term he could count

In his military days González had been accustomed to speculate with the levy, to release, for a price, the wretches seized for forced army service [1] His presidential performance, despite an announced program of "administrative morality," ran true to his earlier actions Díaz left the treasury bare, but the current of wealth from the United States, seeking investment promised an early replenishment The honest management of the secretary of hacienda, Francisco Landero, in less than two years produced a four-million peso surplus Then, for opposing a dishonest scheme for speculation in nickel currency, this rare public servant was removed [2]

The next two years were an orgy of theft with President González the chief beneficiary The nickel coinage, costing a third of its face value, was sold directly from the palace to favorites, at half its value, while the public received the money unsuspectingly as equal to silver Prompt depreciation, finally culminating in riots, afforded still further opportunities for illicit gains [3]

Federal District Governor Ramón Fernández, in an unprecedented campaign to make the capital pure, forbade liquor selling after nine, had single women on the streets at night arrested, closed gambling houses But virtue's triumph was suddenly cut short For a few pesos per hour the *cantinas* found how to propitiate the nocturnal Bacchus Prostitutes inscribed, for a price, were free to ply their trade Roulette wheels, with the governor as silent partner, once more spun [4]

"Colonization," by which deluded Italians were shipped at so much a head into pestilential or arid regions, where many perished miserably, netted fabulous profits [5] Private banks, new railroad concessions, the custom-houses, government supplies — all became perquisites of a small clique, while lesser government employees went unpaid

[1] Quevedo y Zubieta, El General González y Su Gobierno en México, vol I, p 27–8
[2] *Idem*, p 220–227
[3] *Idem*, p 214–215, vol II, p 127–158
[4] *Idem*, p 170–83
[5] *Idem*, vol II, p 48–68

The day before retiring — many times a millionaire — General González bent perhaps on leaving one spot clean — the national chest — sent his secretary of hacienda to garner nine thousand pesos in the tax collector's office not yet transferred to the treasury On his last day, the president could not resist removing, as souvenirs mayhap, furniture and fixtures from the National Palace [1]

Few governments * * * have furnished a more conspicuous example of administrative prostitution and corruption The looting of the exchequer was never more complete and shameless All the revenues went to fill the coffers of González and his favorites, new taxes were imposed to the point that business was obliged to shut its doors for two weeks, in a general strike, the wages of the civil public servants were suspended the army alone received its pay — otherwise revolution would have broken out afresh That González was able to effect this wholly cynical banditry as a direct result of his pact with Don Porfirio admits of no doubt whatever He knew that he could count on complete impunity, since Díaz himself was instigator and protector of all those crimes [2]

Thus writes a conscientious student of affairs

Díaz, back, planned indefinite self-perpetuation in power Some earlier aspects of this policy were beneficent He drew to himself members of all groups including some who had fought in the imperial camp Never before in Mexican history had there been aught but exclusion of the vanquished political party These and others he won over by giving them privileges Those he could not purchase and corrupt, he exiled or had assassinated The "Vera Cruz massacre," in which nine young men arrested for supposed anti-Porfirist political activities were instantly shot without trial, had definitely presaged a reign of "blood and iron" [3]

An initial part of his program was gagging the press Building on the liberty established under Lerdo and Juárez, newspapers had attacked the governmental corruption under González,[4] a freedom, at that time, wholly agreeable to the canny Díaz But at his initiative, congress modified the constitutional provision of jury trial for press offenses, transferring them to the judiciary [5] There was no code — anything the judge ruled objectionable brought fines or imprisonment [6]

With a curb thus firmly in one hand, with the other, Díaz brought the active support of another portion of the press, establishing a subsidized newspaper claque [7] It was not only an adulatory journalism, it was a reptile press, which sank its fangs into the reputation of anyone who would not conform to the dictator's will [8]

[1] Quevedo y Zubieta, El General González y Su Gobierno en México, vol II, p 285–6
[2] Lara Pardo, De Porfirio Díaz a Francisco Madero, p 38
[3] Prida, De La Dictadura á La Anarquía, vol 1, p 63–9 The shooting took place June 25, 1879
[4] Lara Pardo, *op cit*, p 39
[5] *Idem*, p 50–1
[6] López Portillo y Rojas Elevación y Caída de Porfirio Díaz, p 206
[7] *Idem*, p 219
[8] Bulnes, El Verdadero Díaz y la Revolución, p 24–5 Pardo, *op cit*, p 106

Díaz resumed office at the end of 1884 The following chronology makes his purpose and policy indisputably clear [1]

1885 January Ramón Fernández, ex-governor of the Federal District, brings charges against the newspaper "El Gran Galeoto" Its editors are arrested

February Victoriano Agueros, director of "El Tiempo," is jailed

July First attempt to assassinate Dr Ignacio Martínez, in Brownsville, Texas, where he is practicing medicine and editing a paper critical of Díaz's policies The would-be assassin is disarmed and turned over to the Brownsville police Newspaper printers are added to the ten journalists now imprisoned in Belén penitentiary

September In Pachuca, students are sentenced to imprisonment for denouncing the government

In Puebla, the newspaper "Reproductor Popular" is visited by armed men and threatened with extinction

October Venders of newspapers on which the government frowns are arrested

Gabriel Villanueva, editor of "El Hijo del Ahuizote," is jailed

Fifty newspapermen are now imprisoned in the country

November Luis Iza, manager and editor of "La Paparrucha," is thrown into prison

Charges are brought against "El Tiempo" on the ground that "it spoke ill of the King of Italy"

1886 March More newspapermen put in jail

General Trinidad García de la Cadena, universally respected, is assassinated by the *Jefe Político* of Zacatecas, Atenógenes Llamas He maintains his official position unmolested

1887 January All the copies of "El Correo del Lúnes" are seized by the government and its editors locked up

The editor of "El Explorador," Luis González, is assassinated in Morelia

August Sentence against various imprisoned journalists in Mexico confirmed by the Second District Judge

1888 February Second attempt to assassinate Dr Ignacio Martínez in Brownsville, by a major of artillery of the Matamoros garrison

July Manuel Díaz de la Vega, manager of "El Nacional," and other newspapermen are imprisoned

August Llamas, *Jefe Político* who assassinated General De la Cadena, imprisons the writer Rafael Cisneros y Villarreal in Zacatecas

1889 General Ramón Corona is assassinated in Guadalajara

1890 The third attempt to assassinate Dr Ignacio Martínez is successful Four men riddle him with bullets, and escape across the Río Grande into Mexico No arrests are made [2]

[1] The chronology is by no means complete [2] Paz, Porfirio Díaz, p 53–60, 69

By the end of the first reelected term,[1] 1892, Díaz was able to put through "indefinite reelection," that is, life tenure, and was ruthless enough to imprison the entire staff of newspapers whose editors opposed it Such was the fate of those who conducted "El Universal" The persecution extended even to the legal defenders of the incarcerated journalists But Díaz did not stop there Outside the capital, in Hidalgo, Puebla, and Tampico the journalists Ordoñez, Olmos y Contreras, and Rodríguez were assassinated The body of the first was burned by order of the state governor, Pedro Rodríguez, to conceal the crime One courageous journalist, Filomeno Mata, suffered imprisonment no less than forty times Freedom of the press, which had begun to blossom for the first time since independence, was to disappear completely [2]

Such suppression was the handmaiden of the new absolutism All power became concentrated in the president Díaz appointed congress — old men bent to his service, aristocratic striplings recommended by relatives Any show of initiative or independence, the breaking of unanimity against the dictator's measures, was cause for non "reelection" And to demonstrate his complete control he would name representatives unconnected with the regions which supposedly "elected" them A citizen of Mexico was designated senator from Chihuahua, a lifelong resident of Sonora appointed deputy from Yucatán [3]

The judiciary was hand-picked Under the constitution the right belonged to the deputies Díaz would forward his nominations to the chamber which approved them unhesitatingly [4]

The twenty-seven governors, 295 *jefes políticos*, 1798 municipal presidents, the 4574 justices of the peace, the members of state legislatures — the entire machinery of government, executive, legislative, judicial, federal, state, local, were dependent on the will of one man

"An arbitrary system," wrote Edmund Burke, "must always be a corrupt one There never was a man who thought he had no law but his own will, who did not find that he had no end but his own profit"

So it proved Not so much Díaz's financial profit — for it was after power that he lusted — but the profit of his friends and satellites which, in turn, made possible his continuance in power He did not amass a great fortune, but he spent untold millions keeping what he wanted — the dictatorship

For his method was to give away the national wealth in the form of privileges, monopolies, and concessions, to the potentially dangerous, and potentially serviceable In the first category came the army

To the generals and colonels were given state governorships, *jefaturas*

[1] His third term in office
[2] Prida, *op cit*, vol I p 97, 140–1 López-Portillo y Rojas, *op cit*, p 219–20, 344
[3] López-Portillo y Rojas, *op cit*, p 327–9, 349 [4] *Idem*, p 330–2 347

políticas, the next rank in the civil bureaucracy outside the capital, or military commands with ample opportunities for self-enrichment Houses of prostitution, gambling-houses, the chance to speculate with the horses, clothing and food destined for the rank and file, *haciendas* and monopolies of one sort or another [1]

The duties of a Porfirio Díaz governor, according to an adherent of his régime, were

> To falsify federal, state, and municipal elections in accordance with the word received from the Centre, distribute nocturnal clubbings to popular political troubadors, to jail and, if necessary, to kill troublesome journalists, to sentence to the army those inclined to rebellion, to apply at useful times the *ley fuga*, etc [2]

General Bernardo Reyes became the great cacique of the frontier *Jefe de Operaciones* over the vast states of Tamaulipas, Nuevo León, Coahuila, and Durango, he was also civil governor of Nuevo León, and drew both salaries In addition, he received a "gratification" of two thousand pesos monthly out of the extraordinary expenses of the war department, and had the disposal, without accounting, of eighty thousand pesos annually for a corps known as the Rurales of Tamaulipas, and of more than a hundred thousand for a similar armed force in Nuevo León So much the national treasury records show officially [3] These sums represented but a fraction of his income

In Nuevo León, under his civil governorship, civil and criminal justice passed through the hands of his son-in-law, whom one retained if one wanted to win

In Puebla, General Mucio Martínez, governor for eighteen years, owned a dozen gambling-houses — prohibited by law He likewise monopolized the state pulque supply [4] His gubernatorial office was worth $4,000,000 pesos to him [5]

General Luis Torres of Sonora, who speculated in Yaquis, selling them arms at high prices through intermediaries, cleaning up on the campaign expenses in the war upon them, and netting so much per head for each of them sold into slavery in Yucatán, likewise emerged four times a peso millionaire

Generals Carlos Pacheco, Carlos Díaz Gutiérrez, Rafael Cravioto, Manuel Mondragón, Francisco Cantón and Jerónimo Treviño, starting with nothing, emerged as multimillionaires [6]

But the civilians were not neglected There was Romero Rubio, the president's father-in-law, who had many gaming houses in the capital Gambling was forbidden, and the law was strictly enforced — as it should

[1] Bulnes, *op cit*, p 299
[2] *Idem*, p 199
[3] Prida, *op cit*, vol I, p 110, 114–5
[4] Baerlein, Mexico the Land of Unrest p 243
[5] Bulnes, *op cit*, p 166
[6] *Idem*, p 165–6

be — against all others Some daring journalists exposed the accidental oversight They were promptly thrown in jail But there had been a scandal and it seemed advisable for the wheels of justice to spin around if not to grind The judge — Olivera Toro, by name — ruled that "while the law forbids games of chance on which the outcome depends exclusively on chance, but does not specifically mention roulette, faro, baccarat, *albures*, they are hereby declared to be licit " [1]

The states became fiefs of individuals or families Chihuahua was controlled by the Terrazas clan One of the family, "so dissolute that he seduced his own niece * * * was put into the governorship to steady him " [2]

The Corral-Torres combination controlled Sonora The small states of Querétaro and Tlaxcala were governed for twenty-six years by Francisco Cosío and Próspero Cahuantzi, respectively The three Cravioto brothers took over the State of Hidalgo Occasionally death would alter the local baronial succession [3]

Fifty million pesos vanished into receptive pockets in the financing of the railways [4] Contractors received pay for miles of supposedly completed trackage that had never known a tie Along the Tehuantepec road, steel bridges purchased abroad lay in the jungle, while the lumber interests kept replacing the wooden bridges — short-lived among the tropical borers — human and insect [5]

Bank flotations and failures, land grants, port works — these greatly profited the dictator's favorites, who received concessions for nothing to sell them to foreigners [6]

The foreigners were the true bonanzistas According to a current saying, Mexico was "the mother of foreigners and the step-mother of Mexicans "

To the Spaniard, Iñigo Noriega, was given the Laguna of Xico This and other concessions, without effort on his part, netted him $8,000,000 00 pesos [7]

The paper monopoly was handed to a Spaniard, José Sánchez Ramos, in partnership with an American, Thomas Braniff A prohibitive duty — four centavos a pound — excluded foreign paper, so that the San Rafael company wholly controlled the supply Twelve per cent of the company's stock was given as a present to Porfirio Díaz [8]

To an English cotton company — El Tlahualilo — illegally was handed the water supply of the River Nazas, permitting it to deflect the stream to the dessication and ruin of the small native cotton cultivators in the Laguna section of southern Coahuila [9] This was but one instance among many [10]

[1] García Granados, Hist de México, vol II, p 229–31
[2] Baerlein, *op cit*, p 136–7
[3] Bulnes, *op cit* p 32, 356–64
[4] *Idem*, p 120–6
[5] Lara Pardo, *op cit*, p 60–1
[6] Bulnes, *op cit* p 245–6
[7] *Idem* p 121–57
[8] *Idem* p 141 Bell, The Political Shame of Mexico, p 6
[9] Bulnes, *op cit*, p 269–74
[10] López Portillo y Rojas, *op cit*, p 270–1

Millions of acres of land were given away virtually for a song, including the *ejidos* or communal ground, which had been cultivated by the native villages since before the Conquest [1]

Differences between Mexicans and foreigners were decided in favor of the latter, especially when they were powerful [2]

If a Mexican of small capital desired a concession to develop the power of a small waterfall, to cut wood, to exploit a mine or some other natural resource, he had to approach some favored intermediary and solicit his services at an exorbitant price Unable to pay this, he would see the wanted concession pass into foreign hands [3]

But if a Mexican, outside the favored clique, succeeded by hard work in developing anything, in making a little land productive, in causing two blades to grow where one or none grew before, he was at the mercy of those who systematically enriched themselves without labor

From that moment was awakened the rapacity of the *Jefe Político*, of the military commander, of the secretary of the state government, of the curate, canon or archbishop, who did not rest until they had despoiled him of his property If he defended it with the admirable tenacity with which the Indian defends his land, he was jailed, ignominiously subjected to a soldier-convict, or a group of soldiers took him out of jail and shot him in the back while on the march [4]

Of course, under the *ley fuga*, only the prisoner was to blame! Dead men refute no charges! With the pretext of ridding the country of bandits, more than ten thousand Mexicans were killed during the Díaz régime [5]

But this inexorable justice was for Mexicans only

In the Buenavista station in Mexico City, one American killed another The victim was colored When arrested the shooter attempted no justification except to insist that a Negro's life was worth nothing and was rated as little as the life of a dog in the United States The crime was committed in cold blood and, under the code, incurred the death penalty or, eliminating premeditation, life imprisonment But after a short period in jail, the American was released [6]

The United States Minister was ready to make representations to our government, whenever any American was arrested on any charge whatever, as if Americans were sacrosanct even when guilty And his representations found a response * * * which hastened to make the courts acquit even when fraud, counterfeiting, bigamy or blood-spilling were proven [7]

In the 1896 staged "campaign," which preceded each of Díaz's self-renovations of office, the leading part was taken by foreigners As their

[1] See chapter on Land
[2] López-Portillo y Rojas, *op cit*, p 332
[3] Lara Pardo, *op cit*, p 88
[4] *Idem*, p 89
[5] Bulnes, *op cit*, p 61
[6] López-Portillo y Rojas, *op cit*, p 332
[7] *Idem*

delegation "pled" with Don Porfirio to accept, one of them, the Spanish Marqués de Cervantes, forgetful, perhaps not unnaturally, of the age and environment, fell on his knees before the dictator and attempted to kiss his hand

General Díaz accepted reelection "so that Mexican and foreign business men may continue to enjoy the guaranties which enable them to increase their respective capitals" [1]

Small wonder that the chorus of adulation about Porfirio Díaz resounded throughout the world Never in our day has such lavish praise been so widely disseminated [2] Apart from the subsidized press and countless books, and the pæans of the beneficiaries, much of this enthusiasm was genuine

It rested on tangible achievement As set forth by one of his official biographers this was as follows

Díaz increased the national income from $19,776,638 to nearly $100,000,000 In this period the exchequer accumulated a surplus of $136,000,000, of which $61,000,000 was spent in public works and $75,000,000 left as a cash balance

He octupled the imports and quintupled the exports of Mexico He increased the miles of railway from 400 to 15,000, the telegraph lines from 4,420 to 20,000 miles

Harbor work was performed at Tampico, Vera Cruz, Coatzalcoalcos, and Manzanillo

The postal service in 1876 carried 4,709,750 pieces of mail at a cost of $424,708 In 1909 it carried 191,744,916 pieces of mail at a cost of $5,018,823

There was practically no manufacturing industry when Díaz's army turned Lerdo out of power To-day 146 cotton mills * * * alone make $43,370,012 of fabrics and employ 32,229 persons The 437 tobacco factories produce 505,437,551 packages of cigarettes, 81,336,415 cigars, and about 170,000 pounds of pipe tobacco, and the sugar refineries yield about 127,000 tons of refined sugar — to say nothing of the jute and silk industries, the woolen mills, iron works, smelters, paper mills, soap factories, breweries, meat packing works, and other manufacturing establishments * * * Gold and silver mining increased from $25,000,000 to $160,000,000

Mexican 4% bonds sold at 97 Mexico could borrow all the money it wanted at a little more than 4% [3]

[1] Prida, *op cit*, p 139

[2] The following dedication from one of the many books of the day is typical "To Señor General Don Porfirio Diaz, The Illustrious President Of Mexico, Whose Intrepid Moral Character Distinguished Statesmanship, And Devoted Patriotism Make Him The Pride And Glory Of His Country, Is Dedicated This Volume Describing A Beautiful And Prosperous Land Whose Free Flag Never Waved Over A Slave And Whose Importance As A Nation Is Due To The Patriot Under Whose Administration Mexico Now Flourishes And Holds Its Proud Position Among The Republics Of The World" Marie Robinson Wright, Picturesque Mexico

[3] Creelman, Díaz, Master of Mexico, p 383–86 All figures Mexican dollars

It is outside the sphere of this book to suggest that Díaz is not entitled to the entire credit generally bestowed on him Thirty-four years is a long time, and under any government, railroads and other material improvements would have been inevitable in the closing quarter of the nineteenth century in a country bordering on the United States [1] (Railroad construction began under Juárez) The genius of the Díaz régime was José Ives Limantour When he took the secretaryship of hacienda (Treasury) in 1893, Díaz had been in control seventeen years, the national treasury was bankrupt and non-payment of interest on the foreign debt projected [2] In but one year since Díaz's accession had the government expenses not exceeded national income [3] Limantour first limited the graft [4] and wastefulness In two years he had balanced the budget and thereafter raised the national credit to preeminence

But even the universally acclaimed economic success was relative Limantour himself admitted that the railways — the great Díaz achievement — followed no plan, formed no system, and, instead of being projected for development of the country, had been the product of private interest and accident In consequence, while vast regions were railroadless others had two and even three lines uselessly paralleling each other [5]

Agriculture, Mexico's basic industry, remained in the state to which the conquerors raised it by importing draft cattle to the New World Every year the country was forced to import corn and wheat [6] With the means at his disposal, Díaz could have irrigated vast stretches, could have made Mexico self-sustaining, could have banished the national hunger peril for all time

He built no highways The development of new industries suffers by comparison with other countries during the same period, given the favoring circumstances — unlimited capital and raw materials, incredibly cheap labor The exports continued to be almost wholly raw materials

Above all else, he failed to develop his *people* The foreign enterprises which sent their profits out of the country did not even leave, in return, any appreciable training for Mexicans Railroads, port-works, the opera-house, were so many exotic plants, dropped upon the surface, unrooted in the Mexican soil, representing no creative effort on Mexico's part

[1] The tremendous increase in gold and silver mining was not related to the Díaz policy, but was due to the discovery and introduction into Mexico, in the late nineties, of the cyanide method of extracting these metals

[2] Dufoo Limantour, p 53

[3] Peñafiel, Cuadro Sinóptico * * * de la Administración del Sr Gral Porfirio Díaz Hasta 1909 The table of national yearly income and expenses is found on page 94

[4] Honest men there were in the Díaz Government Ignacio Mariscal, secretary of foreign relations, was a conspicuous example So were Justo Sierra, secretary of education in the last Díaz decade, González Cosío, at one time secretary of Fomento, and Leandro Fernández, secretary of communications There were others, notable for their public conscience and probity

[5] Limantour's address to the Chamber of Deputies, December 15, 1906 Quoted in Diario Oficial of same date

[6] Bulnes, *op cit*, p 236

Turning to other aspects of the long Díaz tenure, the conclusion is unavoidable that he solved none of the nation's political, social, and economic problems On the contrary he deepened many of the national vices, stifled what vestiges of evolutionary self-development might have grown out of the labors of the Reformists, inculcated deception, hypocrisy, abasement, and the rule of force Indeed he paved the way for a tremendous reaction, suppressing natural tendencies, so as to make an explosion inevitable If Díaz's services to Mexico are to be justly appraised, one cannot exclude the ten years of chaos that followed his fall, and the incidental destruction of much that he had built

All the fault was by no means Díaz's Three hundred and fifty years of Mexico offered a complex of intricate, nearly insoluble difficulties But his responsibility is the greater in that he deliberately faced the nation back toward the past The Díaz dictatorship presents an extraordinarily close analogy to the colonial régime Except for the superficial differences that time brings, little really essential had changed since the viceroys Mexico continued a quasi-feudal state, which, beneath the exotic hum of twentieth century industrialism, maintained a sixteenth century social structure and a corresponding psychology Díaz's guilt is, first, that he stifled the best impulses that might have led the nation permanently forward and upward, and, second, that with all the power and means that mortal man could dream of as his, he left — he kept — his people, the ninety per cent , in the depths of degradation

With an absolute control for more than three decades, in an age when mechanical invention helped to work miracles, Díaz could have made his people literate , better still, he could have forged a race of enterprising, skilled, ambitious workers , he could have raised up a new generation of citizens Instead, he tightened upon a nation of serfs the shackles of political and economic servitude

While untold capital poured in, to develop Mexico's "fabulous" riches, the people wallowed in unbelievable squalor True, they had known nothing else But now, in the twentieth century, the contrast between the splendor of the few and the wretchedness of the many was the more glaring Moreover, their condition was not only relatively, but actually worse Under the new industrialism an inefficient and haphazard peonage yielded to a systematic driving in factory, *hacienda*, and mine The increased demand for labor earned for the toiler not greater rewards but greater hardships, for since he was not free to sell his labor where he listed, the law of supply and demand did not operate in his behalf [1]

While the celebrants of the centenary of Mexican independence in 1910 consumed twenty carloads of champagne,[2] the masses verged on starvation

[1] See chapters on Land and Labor
[2] Bell, *op cit.*, 2



(*Photo by the author*)

THE TORTILLERA

In front of her is the concave stone *metate*. On it the corn dough and *mitzpil* son of the *metate*) with which she grinds it. In the corner the *comal* or earthen griddle is being heated preparatory to receiving the *tortilla* which she is patting out between her hands



(Photo by the author)

IN THE MARKET-PLACE AT TEXCOCO, APRIL, 1927

A typical Aztec fruit booth. The stand — the raising of the wares above the ground medium. Note the arrangement of the fruit in neat symmetrical piles, and the awning, with its characteristic tripod support. (See p. 74.)

For them the century meant a seventy-five per cent reduction in their incredibly low living standards [1]

What profited it them that "Mexico could borrow all the money it wanted at four per cent" when they could not borrow, or earn, the few pesos necessary to release themselves from peonage? [2] Of what value to them was it that two hundred million pieces of mail flowed through the national post-office when they could neither read nor write?

It was "the safest country in the world", there was "security of life and limb" [3] For whom was it safe? For the tourist, the commercial traveler, the *hacendado*, the aristocrat — for all foreigners But not for the humble Mexican

> Díaz killed freely and out of hand One of my students, an American, returning from years in Mexico, told me of some riots in a mining town — a little drunken disorder and some shooting and threats against property Thirty-two men were arrested, put in a box-car, taken a few stations down the railroad, taken out into the bushes beside the track and shot by the *Rurales* (police) There was no pretense of trial [4]

There was no "security of life" in an Indian village when a crime whose perpetrator had been undiscovered was committed in the neighborhood The local *jefe de operaciónes* would swoop down upon the pueblo, line up its adult males and decimate them — with a warning that one in every five would be shot the next time

There was no "security of life" for the peon Sweated, underfed, beaten, if he rebelled his life was forfeit There was no "security of limb" in the whirr of unprotected textile machinery — and workers' insurance or compensation undreamt of When an operative lost his arm he was thrown out to beg — or die [5]

Such was the ephemeral Mexico of Don Porfirio Díaz It is not a question of singling out a personality for censure, or of attempting to apportion praise or blame Díaz, in many ways, was a great man He accomplished what none of his countrymen had been able to do before him — to maintain a generation of peace He towers head and shoulders above the many would-be despots in previous Mexican history, who had the desire but not the ability to intrench themselves as he did

But the overshadowing fact — to remember — is that the Mexico he left in 1911 had all its problems, the problems of four centuries, still to solve

[1] In the first decade of the nineteenth century the Indian laborer's daily wage purchased about thirty-three litres of corn against eight in 1910 Bulnes, *op cit*, p 218

[2] See chapters on Labor and Land

[3] Priestley The Mexican Nation, A Hist, p 393

[4] J Russell Smith, North America, p 677

[5] In Guanajuato, in 1923, I saw an aged beggar who, twenty-five years before, had lost both legs in a mine accident The company paid his hospital expenses and upon his discharge gave him five pesos He had been begging ever since

INDIAN HERITAGE



(Photo by the author.)

WEAVING THE FAJA, THE LONG THIN BAND SHOWN IN THE FOREGROUND WITH OTATI AND MALACATE, MEPA ALTA, FEDERAL DISTRICT, 1927 (See p. 71)





(Photos by the author.)

PRE-CONQUEST FORMS OF SILOS THAT PERSIST

(Below) Latticed *cacahuatl*, Milpa Alta Federal District, April 1927. (Above) a Tlaxcalan home. At left the pear-shaped *cuezcomatl* covered with a thatched roof. In the foreground *temazcalli* (bath) — the two mounds represent the two chambers; entrance through left-hand mound. (See p. 74.)

INDIAN HERITAGE

I

MEXICO's Indian heritage is her people At independence one fifth were white, the remainder, "red" or mixed The whites are disappearing Few Mexican families have not crossed with the ancestral Americans Not Latins but Indians dwell south of the Rio Grande The conquering Hispanic minority superposed its political structure, religion, and language on the natives But no succeeding waves of immigration fortified and revivified the imposed culture In the three colonial centuries but three hundred thousand Spaniards, few of them women, followed the path cut by the *conquistadores* into New Spain [1] Whatever else independence failed to do it shattered the racial stratification already cracked in a thousand places by ten generations of unrestricted interbreeding Mexico is an Indian land

Consider the figures In 1805 the races were divided as follows [2]

Whites	1,000,000	equal to 18 per cent of total
Mestizos	2,000,000	equal to 38 per cent of total
Indians	2,500,000	equal to 44 per cent of total

In 1910 the relationship of the races had become

Whites	1,150,000	equal to 7 5 per cent of total
Mestizos	8,000,000	equal to 53 per cent of total
Indians	6,000,000	equal to 39 per cent of total

Thus while the number of whites remained virtually stationary and in relation to the whole population diminished fifty per cent , the Indians more than doubled while holding their percentage But it is the quadrupling of the *mestizo*, which, given the original red preponderance, reveals the steady Indianization A century ago nearly one fifth of the population was white In 1910 it was less than one thirteenth In 1930 it will unquestionably have diminished further Certainly the emigration of aristocratic families during the revolutionary years, and the release and scattering over the country

[1] Hijar y Haro, La Colonización Rural en México, p 142

[2] According to D Valentín Gama quoted in Hijar y Haro, *op cit* p 142
Navarro y Noriega in his Memoria del Reino de Nueva España published in 1814 gives approximately an equal number of whites, half a million fewer *mestizos* and a million more Indians, but any country wide census at that time could be only an estimate

of natives from *hacienda* and pueblo will have accelerated this process But even these facts and figures understate the case for they cannot reckon the invariable tendency of many *mestizos* to *call* themselves white Moreover the Indian has become increasingly immunized to the white men's diseases which wrought such havoc in colonial days

The Negroes imported as slaves in colonial days, who, not counting Mulattoes, outnumbered the Spaniards in the middle of the sixteenth century,[1] have been virtually "bred out" One sees occasional suggestions of negroid types in the city of Vera Cruz and along the coasts of Guerrero and Oaxaca, but they are rare indeed throughout Mexico Over a period of four years I have not seen on the Mesa Central a Mexican Negro, Mulatto, or *lobo* (half Indian, half Negro),[2] and not over two dozen individuals who clearly revealed slighter traces of African ancestry

It is my *opinion*, based on observation in various parts of Mexico over a period of several years, that the percentage of pure whites is much smaller than generally estimated I doubt whether they exceed half a million in a population of fifteen million This diminution is less apparent in the cities, especially the capital, where the white population is concentrated Northern Mexico, sparsely inhabited before the Conquest by less advanced tribes, is *mestizo* But the more densely inhabited center and south of rural Mexico are solidly Indian

Finally the Indians have been at the bottom of the social scale A larger number of them are rising and their high mortality will diminish as their economic status improves

But leaving statistics — less than usually trustworthy in the elusive matter of Mexican racial composition — one cannot escape in Mexico's everyday life the all-pervading manifestations of the persistent native culture

How does the mass of contemporary Mexicans satisfy its primordial needs for food, clothing, and shelter?

Corn was the staple, the primal foodstuff of aboriginal America — *teocentli* the "divine maize" of the Aztecs The Mexican maid to-day steeps it in warm lime water, grinds the softened kernels by rubbing them on a concave stone *metatl* (*metate*)[3] The pat-a-pat-pat as her hands beat the dough into thin cakes is heard in nearly every household, high or low, throughout Mexico She heats them on an earthen griddle, the *comalli* (*comal*) producing the national *tortilla*[4] Or she wraps the steaming cornmeal mush into the hot husk, flavoring it at will with meat or *chilli* (*chile*)

[1] Priestley, Mexican Nation A Hist p 57

[2] The offspring of an Indian and Negress was a *lobo*, of a Negro and Indian a *jarocho*, according to Las Castas del México Colonial, Nicolás León, plates 24 and 26

[3] When two forms are given the Aztec is first, the present-day version following in parenthesis

[4] The Aztecs called them *tlaxcalli* — "bread" The Spanish word *tortilla*, meaning omelet or pancake, was readily substituted because of its similarity of sound

to make the Aztec *tamalli* (*tamales*) [1] Or the grain is brewed as *atolli* (*atole*), a thick gruel And for three fourths of the Mexicans, the *tortilla* still serves as a spoon for other foods

With it he scoops up his steaming *frijoles*, the Mexican red, brown, or black beans, now as in Montezuma's day, "the national dish" For variety he adds the red *xictomatl* (*jitomate*) or tomato, the white, yellow, or purple *camolli* (*camote*) or yam, deliciously candied, or *exotl* (*ejotes*) string beans

And on occasions — fowl, the *guajolote* or native turkey, cooked in red hot *molli* (*mole*), a sauce of red *chilis*

This burning stew he washes down with copious draughts of *pulque*, the Aztec *octli*, the whitish fermented juice of the giant *Agave Americana*, the all-providing *maguey* of the Mesa [2] Or he fires himself with the century plant's more concentrated distillates, *mescal* and *tequila*, while the rich *chocolatl*, frothed, thick, and cinnamon-flavored as of old, supplies both nourishment and stimulus [3]

His favorite fruits include the native *tzapotl* family (fruits that are round) especially the *chictzapotl*, brown-fleshed, with glistening jet-black seeds The Spanish called it *chico zapote*, "little" *zapote* because it is the smallest variety Really it was so-called because the ancient Mexicans drew from the tree a glutinous milk that condensed easily which the boys and girls chewed — *chictli* The Spaniards called it *chicle*, and it now supplies the chewing gum for Mexico and America

Pass by the smallest wayside stand where neat piles of these brown-skinned *chicos* or their larger brother, the red-fleshed *mamey*, bleedingly cut open, await your pleasure Behind the carefully arranged hillocks of three oranges supporting a fourth, painstaking tripods of purplish *aguacates*,[4] peanuts [5] meticulously counted, or crossed three-inch lengths of green sugar-cane, bespeaking infinite patience and love of symmetry, squats the Indian woman as she did five centuries ago There on the ground, be it city pavement or dusty road, she cooks and eats her midday meal *Frijoles*, stewing in a brazier, red and green *chile* and onion, and sizzling *tortilla* contribute to odors peculiarly Mexican, while the *zarape*-draped male fills his earthen *jarro* at the neighboring *pulqueria*, strips of brightly colored paper, fluttering, Aztec fashion, over its doorway

[1] "They have * * * a condiment which they call *chile* and they never eat anything without it" wrote a companion of Cortés, known as "The Anonymous Conqueror" Narrative of Some Things of New Spain, trans Marshall H Saville ch viii

[2] Clavigero derives *pulque* from the Araucanian *pulcu*, a general name for intoxicating beverages (History of Mexico vol I p 435 fn) but Bandelier disagrees and suspects a Haitian origin (Archeological Tour, vol I p 37) The origin of *magury* is dubious Riva Palacio suggests it is a combination of the Aztec *metl*, a generic name for all cultivated plants, and *huey*, meaning "great" The final *tl* is elided, leaving *mehuey* which was then corrupted to its present form (México á Través de los Siglos vol II, p 490)

[3] In Mexico to day to secure a cup of chocolate made differently one asks for *chocolate á la francesa*

[4] Aztec *ahuacatl*, the alligator pear

[5] Aztec *tlalcacahuatl*, now *cacahuates*

The *tzalapc* (*zarape*),[1] the Indian's overcoat by day, his blanket by night, is a slight modification of the Aztec *tilmatli* (*tilma*).[2] Design and color disclose its regional origin — sky-blue and white or gray, with swasticas and geometrical figures from Texcoco, gaudy pinks, yellow and greens, concentric about an "idol" from Oaxaca, rainbow hues from Saltillo, crimson and black patterns from León, dark-blue and gray from Tlaxcala, down to illegitimate factory plaids, hideous in their travesty on the native appreciation of color. The Mexican's characteristic high-crowned and broad-brimmed fiber sombrero tempered the tropical suns for ancient Toltecs and Tarascans. His *huaraches*,[3] or leather sandals, are those of his desert-crossing ancestors.

Throughout indigenous Mexico, the woman still wears the loose sleeveless *uipilli* (*huipil*), embroidered with flowers, birds, or geometrical borders which change with village or region, cochineal red in Tuxtepec, Tyrian purple in Tehuantepec. Her *cnagua*, or skirt, is the Aztec *cueitl*, a cloth tightly wound around the hips.

On the Mesa the skirt is held up by the bright colored *faja*, three yards long and three inches wide, woven in the home on an *otatl* (*otate*), the thread spun from a *malacatl* (*malacate*), a stick run through a wooden or clay whorl. The codices, the native manuscripts made before or shortly after the Conquest, picture faithfully many garments and implements I have repeatedly seen in everyday use.[4]

The universal fringed cotton *rebozo*, two and a half by six feet, usually deep blue, but also brown, green, or yellow, apparently derived from the Spanish shawl, serves rather as the pre-Conquest *ayatl* to carry babies and other burdens. In some sections the *ayate* itself, made of the *ixtli* (*ixtle*) fiber of the *maguey*, persists. And like her ancestors the Indian twines bright ribbons into her black braids.

In the cities a modified Spanish architecture prevails. Elsewhere the habitations are native adobe, sun-baked mud on the Mesa,[5] roofs thatched

[1] Originally *tzalanpepechtli*, thence modified to *tzalanpechtli*, *tzalapech*, *tzalape*. *El Zarape*, Ramón Mena, in Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Epoca 5a, Tomo I, No. 4.

[2] The *tilma* was a square blanket, when serving as a cloak it was knotted at the corners either under the throat or over one of the shoulders. The *zarape* and its smaller model, the *jorongo*, generally has a slit in the middle through which the head passes. Another variety is the *poncho*, familiar in the United States, derived from the Nahua *pochotl*, "tree cotton" of which material it was originally made. Sometimes the blanket lacks the slit and is merely wrapped around the body.

[3] A Tarascan word which has replaced the Aztec name for sandal, *cactli*. Antonio Peñafiel, Nomenclatura Geográfica de Mexico, Part II, p. 128.

[4] *Uipilli* — in Códice Florentino (Museo Nacional Ed.), Plate LXIII, No. 130, and Plate XLIX, Nos. 72 and 73. Códice Mendocino (Museo Nacional Ed.) Plate 71. Lienzo de Tlaxcala (Museo National Ed.) Plate 6. Historia de las Indias de Nueva España, Fr. Diego Durán, Atlas, Frat. 2, Plate 9. *Tilmatli* — showing its essential identity with the *zarape* of to-day. Códice Ramírez (in Crónica Mexicana), Plate XV. Códice Mendocino, Plate 65. Indumentaria Antigua Mexicana, Antonio Peñafiel, 111. Códice Kingsborough (Madrid 1912), Plate 219. *Huaraches* — Códice Baranda (Museo Nacional Ed.) Plate 4. Indumentaria Antigua Mexicana, Antonio Peñafiel, 98. *Malacatl* — Códice Florentino, Plate XLIX, No. 75. Códice Mendocino, Plate 68. *Otatl* — Códice Florentino, Plate LXV, Nos. 3 and 21. Indian carrying load on his back with strap round his head precisely as he carries his pack to-day. Códice Mendocino, Plate 64. Códice Kingsborough, Plate 220.

[5] In certain areas of the Valley of Mexico loose volcanic rock is too plentiful to be neglected



"THE FRIDAY OF SORROWS"—THE AZTEC SPRING FLOWER FESTIVAL, 1927

Left, two youthful participants; right, an Indian mother and child





Above, beyond the arch

AMONG THE BOOTHS ESTABLISHED IN THE CAPITAL AROUND THE TIME OF THE SPRING FESTIVAL

Above, *vetiver quercha*. The benzenes in the last coolers are left to right *orchata chha jamaica*. The *profusion of flowers is characteristic* of those temporary quarters on the Alameda. In those crates which serve for transportation of various kinds the Indian family sleeps at night. The long sticks leaning against the tree at the right are sugarcane brought in for sale.

with *tzacatl* (*zacate*) or shingled with broad *maguey* leaves In the hot country the hut itself is called *jacal* — lattice walls of palm, heavily roofed with a thatch of regional grass Neither window nor chimney, and the smoke from the resinous *ocotl* (*ocote*) strips floats through door and crevices Furniture is scant or lacking — low stools of *icpalli* reed (converted into *equipales* by the Spaniard) and a fiber *petatl* (*petate*) or mat serves as a bed Earthen vessels and dishes, wooden bowls painted with red and blue flowers, and calabash *xicalli* (*jícaras*), hang in neat pattern on the wall awaiting mealtime use

Food, clothing, shelter — essentially unchanged, and much else In April, 1927, in Milpa Alta, Federal District, overlooking the Valley of Mexico, where Castilian is tinged with the accent [1] of the prevailing Nahuatl, or Mexican, as the people call it, I watched a family crawling into a *temazcalli*,[2] the antique bath It consisted of stone mounds, hollow and connecting, with an outer opening in each, the larger admitting an adult A fire is built in the smaller chamber, water poured on, and the bather takes his place in the steam-filled larger cavern On this occasion three generations crowded in Nor is this a mere anachronism The *milpaltenses* are building more *temazcalli*, contrivances suited to communities where water is scarce One can see them in the more purely indigenous villages of the Mesa Central Where the native customs have been contaminated by white, one finds neither *temazcalli* nor bathtubs

On the same day I watched Aztec housewives weaving with *malacate* and *otate*, and their husbands piling ears of corn in *cincalotes*,[3] the tall square latticed pre-Cortesian silos In Tlaxcala the silos, *cuezcomates*,[4] are earthen, keeping the rounded pear-shape and name current in the ancient Tlaxcallan "republic" So persistent are the primitive native weaving and agriculture

In 1923 I saw Tarascan fishermen on Lake Pátzcuaro hunting duck with a spear-thrower almost identical with the ancient *atlatl*

While the pre-Conquest culture persists virtually *in toto* in many remote sections of Mexico, and diminishes as one moves toward the urban centers some survivals have worked through every social stratum

The most modern mansion in the capital perforce equips its kitchen with a *brasero*, a brick oven suitable only for charcoal burning In the bathrooms a wad of *ixtle* or *zacate* serves as washrag, used as such in the exotic Turkish bath of the leading hotel Many and unexpected are the native manifestations Even the Castilian of Mexico, in addition to absorbing many Nahua

[1] It is recognizable by the inability to pronounce the R, which the Nahua tongue lacked, L being substituted as by the Chinese
[2] Aztec *tema*, bath *calli*, house
[3] Aztec *cencalli* from *centli*, maize and *calli*, house
[4] Aztec *cuexcomatl*, compounded from *cuexantli*, bundle containing something, and *tecomatl*, large rounded holder

words, has adopted its practice of diminutives of endearment to the astonishment of other Hispanic-Americans [1]

Go to market — it is the Aztec *tianquitzli* (*tianguis*) — described by Cortés,[2] by his captain, Bernal Díaz,[3] by the Anonymous Conqueror,[4] and by Father Sahagun,[5] with its home-grown fruits, flowers, herbs, roots, and its home-made products of fiber, wood, and earth, wax, bone, and feather Sheltered from the sun's rays by the Aztec *toldo*, a tripod-supported awning, sit the venders

Dark green knobbed *chirimoyas*, pale green *anonas*, the Aztec *quantzapotl*, purplish red *camotes*, pink and green *tunas*, white *chilacayotes*, large as a man's head, *papayas*, *granaditas de China*, mangoes in varying shades of gold and yellow, *plátanos machos* — "male bananas," a giant size for cooking, *choconoxtli* a prickly pear for soups or sweets, *jícama*, a brown root whose crisp, white flesh is eaten raw, *chichayote* which offers both prickly green fruit and root, red, green, and purplish black *chiles* Here are many powders and grains *Ajonjolí*, seeds to make *mole* sauce, green ground *pepitas de calabaza*, powdered *chile* in conical heaps of red and green, magenta Pirú berries for birds — also tiny black seeds, *semillas* de nabo, and dead flies in great piles for these pets Specialties for the initiated — *gusanos de maguey*, the Aztec *meocuilin*, dried and wrinkled brown *maguey* caterpillars, *axaxtli*, or flies' eggs, a caviar skimmed off the lakes surrounding Tenochtitlán when Cortés was besieging it, and still gathered from swamp waters, *camarón*, ground shrimp from the coast, *charal*,[6] little fish from Lake Pátzcuaro — and corn husks instead of paper bags to wrap your purchases

Dulces, from the raw caña, cut into centavo lengths of six-foot poles, and brown *piloncillo* to candied cactus, *socoyonostre*, and every fruit that grows, *guayabate* from *guayaba*, sweetened with honey and sold in ten-inch bars, in bright blue paper with tasseled ends and gold lettering, *chirimoyate*, *pastas* of *membrillo*, a quince concoction, of *tamarindo* — *dulce de piñón*, nuts fused in a common mesh of sweetness, *jamoncillos de leche*, a burnt cream sweet, *jalea de tejocote* made of small wild fruit,[7] and many more

In every market a native herb shop, a veritable pharmacopeia "What is this?" one asks — and as in the days of the Conquest the reply is "this is good for headache, for fever" [8] Sometimes, it is! Here one finds among remedies for every organ and ailment, *manita*, whose red flower, shaped like

[1] A Mexican mother speaking of her grown-up son said 'Ya es[t]á grandecito" — "He is already a little big one" 'Straight ahead and turn" would be "Adelante y una vuelta" in Spain and Hispanic America In Mexico I have heard it, "Adelantito y una vueltecita" *Ahora* means "now" *ahorita*, "in a moment" In Mexico we have *ahoritita* And *hasta luego*, literally "until presently," our colloquial so long" has been heard as *hasta luegito*

[2] Second letter to Charles V, in Lorenzana

[3] Castillo True Hist of Conquest of New Spain, ch xcii

[4] Anonymous Conqueror, *op cit* ch xx

[5] *Op cit* Lib VIII, cap xxxvi

[6] A Tarascan word

[7] Aztec *texocotl* Bot *Crataegus Mexicanus*

[8] Gerste, Notes Sur La Medicine et la Botanique des Anciens Mexicains, p 42, fn

thumb and four fingers gives its name "the little hand" Elsewhere science has confirmed the native medicine men's judgment that *digitalis* is good for the heart

Household goods — a bristling variety of brushes and brooms, and mats and cordage, baskets which exalt weaving into an art, many *metates* and their *metapiles*,[1] *molcajetes*, three-legged crucibles of volcanic rock containing round stones to grind *chile*, *molinillos* with which to froth chocolate

Flowers in profusion and deep fragrance It was on the movable feast *Xochilhuitl*,[2] the spring flower festival to the God *Macuilxochitl*,[3] that the pagan love for flowers found one of its many expressions Now on the *Viernes de Dolores*, a week before Good Friday, the capital turns out on the waters stretching to Xochimilco,[4] the flower garden community Lake Tuxcoco was covered with *chinampas*, the floating gardens Nowadays, with the lake drained, it is along the canal of La Viga to the pueblo of Santa Anita that the *chalupas*, decorated with flowers and *maguey* leaves, carry their joyous throng of merry-makers

Everyone is adorned Wreaths of poppies, bachelor buttons, and bougainvillea crown dark Indian tresses Garlands of pink and yellow water-lilies hang from dusky throats Along with the floral display one eats enormous red radishes, six inches to a foot long, scarlet tongues of flame amid white lilies Red poppies, red radishes The first gifts of spring in Anáhuac

Oddly shaped breads, shining brown, crusted with sugar, sweetened and spiced, once offerings to the deity of the day, are sold everywhere [5] Little wax *chalupas* with ingeniously modeled Indians and their loads of flowers and vegetables are hawked All is life, color, and gaiety *Chinas poblanas*, red, blue, and green costume glittering with beads and tinsel, dash by afoot and a-horse *Charros*, their sombreros sparkling with gold embroidery, cavort along the highway Thus is the Friday of Sorrows celebrated by Mexicans to-day — an Aztec revelry in the bounty of spring

Follow the crowd city-ward to the holiday *puestos* Refresh yourself from a chromatic succession of glass coolers, ruby, white, and emerald, amber, orange, and yellow — *jamaica* crimsoned by floating blossoms, *orchata*, a sweetened barley water, *chia*,[6] dyed a cooling spring green by swelling glutinous black seeds, once an important beverage in the worship of Xilonen, goddess of growth [7] Or quaff of tamarind infusion, orange or limeade

All about, rotund hampers borne from distant villages yield a variegated craftsmanship Pottery of every shape and hue is ungrassed — metallic

[1] Aztec *metlapilli*, the stone which grinds the corn on the *metate*
[2] *Xochitl*, flowers, and *ilhuitl*, festival
[3] *Macuil*, five, *xochitl*, flowers
[4] *Xochitl*, flowers, *milli*, cultivated patch, *co* in
[5] The ancient Aztecs' methods of making the special bread for this festival as an additional offering to the flower God are described in Sahagun, *op cit*, vol I, ch xiv
[6] Nahuatl *chian* [7] Sahagun, *op cit*, Lib II, cap viii

green and black ware made in the *Once Pueblos* of Michoacán, brown jars with raised cream scrolls from Metepec in neighboring Mexico, graceful pitchers, peculiar to Tonalá, Jalisco, with panorama of forest, fern, and bounding deer, delicate yet virile in line, and restrained in its pottery red, slate-blue, and lichen gray, black Zapotec bowls with white tracery of flying birds, lines, and dots, giant red-brown *ollas* from Zacatecas, region of drought and water carrying, Oaxaca dishes splashed yellow, green, blue, and purple — a color symphony for design

Lackered chests from Uruapán, picturing green palms and pink pueblos against background of black or red, flower painted trays, *jícaras* from Quiroga and Guerrero and distant Chiapas, red, black, or pale green with blue doves and white swans, carved and painted canes from Apizaco, toys in bewildering variety, some startlingly like those unearthed near those great silent monuments in whose shadows Toltec children once played Now as then these playthings reproduced figures, human and animal, real and imaginary, in the Mexican scene *Tortilleras*, in painted clay, *charros*, gallantly courting *charras*, Indians on the march with their pottery loads, generals, *tlachiqueros*, drawing *agua miel*, the unfermented juice from the *maguey*, men on horseback of *tule*, or lake grass, flexible, compressible, indestructible, *jarabe* dancers in wax *nahuales*,[1] eerie creatures, human-faced, and bat-bodied, which fly at night and suck human blood, masks, grotesque and macabre — devils, death's-heads, drunkards, deer, rabbits, pigs, cows, horses, some utilitarian as coin-banks, articles of everyday use in clay, wood, or fiber, — toy *metates*, miniature *petates*, *comales*, and house pottery, sombreros of horse-hair, *guajes*, small calabashes brighly red and blue which rattle the seeds within, some painted as fishes *Tompiates*, flower pot covers, that are color mosaics of palm, feather work, beading

As darkness falls, flickering *ocote* torches, ardent braziers where *enchiladas*[2] sizzle and savor, and glowing cigarettes dimly reveal huddled silhouettes awaiting another day of light and warmth An ethnic, rather than an economic manifestation, this eating and sleeping on the ground — on the spot

So, likewise, is the *soldadera*, the "soldieress" who accompanies the Mexican private in peace and war, cooks for him, tends to him, carrying her latest baby slung into the *rebozo* on her back An Indian tribe, encamped, on the march — that is the rank and file of the Mexican army to-day Every attempt to substitute a modern commissariat for the squaw-squad has been, to date, unsuccessful

A race submerged, emerging, a race which in the end adopts and rejects what it will The Mexican Indian has accepted much, suffered much, but

[1] Aztec *nauallí*, Sahagun, *op cit*, Lib X cap IX

[2] *Enchiladas* are *tortillas* simmered in *chile* sauce – a mixture of chile, tomato, and lard — and served hot with a sprinkling of onion, grated cheese, or chopped meat

his soul is still his own With or without the useful Spanish burro, he sets forth on his seasonal pilgrimages for trade or worship He takes with him *pinolli* (*pinole*) ground, toasted corn, as his food On his back the *petlacatl* (*petaca*) or wicker basket, carries the products of his *milli* (*milpa*) or cultivated patch, or the pottery shaped by his own wheel On her back the infant shaped by her womb He guides by familiar landmarks — the godmates, Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl,[1] crystals in the dawn, Orizaba, the great water giver — Citlaltepetl, the Aztecs' Mountain of the Star,[2] soaring into the blue, where the black *tzopilotl* (*zopilote*), the Mexican buzzard, floats in lazy circles, along the pine-clad ridges of the cordillera, across the golden desert, shimmering with *mizquitl* (*mesquite*) and purple-shadowed *nopalli* (*nopal*) — where the dust pillar whirling silently denotes a passing soul — toward mountain horizons of jagged lavender

An ancient land, sun-scorched, wind-sculptured, where fugitive waters ages ago cut into the hiding of cañon-depths, an ancient, sun-bronzed people, reacting to deep, buried impulses, following the old trails

From arid Sonora,[3] land of the water-hole, to the tropic fertility of Chiapas,[4] from Tamaulipas [5] to Michoacán,[6] Mexico is a land, unique, unfathomed, unknown — the fatherland, and to-day the son-land, of the Amerind race

II

Obviously the implications of Mexico's Indianism are profound But what are they? On no subject is belief more diverse or more tenaciously held The history of Mexico might be rewritten on an ethnological basis, to demonstrate that racial considerations underlie all Mexico's difficulties Hostility and friction between the races has never ceased, despite a concomitant miscegenation wholly devoid of physical and personal race prejudice such as exists in the United States There is no color line in Mexico

Credence in the "superiority" of one race and in the other's responsibility for all the nation's troubles divides Mexico into two intellectual camps The Spaniards destroyed a great and promising civilization! They substituted civilization for barbarism! Innumerable citations by both sides, some

[1] "* * * They believed them to be gods, and that the volcano and the white sierra were man and wife They called the volcano Popocatepetl and the snowy sierra Ixtaccihuatl, which means 'mountain that smokes' and 'white woman' Camargo, Hist de Tlaxcala, p 131

[2] *Ahuaulizapán* was the name of the region fertilized by the mountain's melting snows — from *Ahualiztli*, "happiness" and *Apan* "in or on water" meaning, in other words 'happiness because there is irrigation" The word became *Ahaulizapa*, *Aulcaba*, *Olizaba* and *Orizaba* Arróniz, Hist de Orizaba, p 80–5 The Spaniards found this easier than *Citlaltepetl*, *citl'al* "star," and *tepetl*, "uninhabited mountain," and so named it

[3] From *Sonot*, "water-hole," or *Sonota*, "spring" in the Opatá language

[4] *Chia-pa*, river of oil-giving seeds

[5] Tamaulipas, derived from the name of one of the seventy vanished tribes of that region

[6] *Michoa can* place where they had, or dried, fish Jourdanet et Siméon Hist Générale des Choses de Nouvelle Espagne, p 48, fn

omitting embarrassing facts, some recording a purely personal reaction, prove only the fact of inter-racial rivalry At present it takes the form of violent diatribes among the whites, in place of the former violence, and among the Indians of distrust and passive resistance Pro-revolutionary *mestizos* are generally also pro-Indian, and vice-versa

In the presence of so much opinion it is safe to fall back on anthropological standards which are necessarily free from historical bias A culture is superior that has a larger content of elements, more differentiated elements, and a greater proportion of elements that tend to supersede related elements [1] On this dispassionate basis of measurement, the Spaniards, at the Conquest, were "superior" to the Mexicans in that they were further advanced in time along the road of civilization Professor Kroeber gauges the gap at four to five thousand years,[2] a very high estimate Another anthropologist holds that "the American civilizations in the middle of the fifteenth century were hardly inferior to that of Europe in the middle of the thirteenth "[3]

The development of writing supplies another index to the relative advancement of the two cultures At the Conquest, the Aztec hieroglyphs were changing into syllables, and these in turn into letters "A" was written with the symbol of water, *atl* — a drop falling into a basin with waves, "o" by the sign *olli*, road — two parallel lines with human tracks between An alphabet was imminent Maya writing had progressed somewhat farther But transformation from pictorial to phonetic script had been achieved by various Eastern invaders of the Iberian peninsula two or three thousand years earlier This disparity of time has an unescapable bearing on the present problem of racial education and assimilation, for the four hundred years that have elapsed have done nothing to enable the Indian to "catch up" On the contrary the minority that held the essence of intellectual progress in the younger culture, the priests and nobles, were for the most part exterminated, leaving the more ignorant majority to serve the Spaniards as they had served their own masters [4] Serfdom, whoever the overlords, stunts rather than develops a race Thus it may not be unjust to say that the Mexican Indian, collectively, to-day occupies, in respect to the Spaniards, no better than the position he held at the Conquest, when he was, in the view of one anthropologist, two thousand years ahead of the North American native [5] He is still, in the midst of steam and steel, largely a primitive But serfdom too had its deteriorating effect on the Spanish master Both races are worse off for their unnatural relationship That is the Mexican's racial inheritance

[1] Kroeber, Anthropology, p 112
[2] *Op cit*, p 370
[3] Means Democracy and Civilization, p 152
[4] The extent of feudalism and serfdom among the ancient Mexicans is still a matter of academic controversy, Bandelier being the chief exponent of their democratic social organization The weight of evidence would indicate that an oligarchical caste system was at least forming shortly before the Conquest
[5] Kroeber, *op cit*, p 358

The whole question is pertinent because of its bearing on contemporary Mexican thought At Independence certain publicists, notably Carlos María Bustamante, conceived the Spaniards as usurpers and Mexico a sort of Indian "irredenta" [1] The conservatives scoffed, Alaman in 1852 declaring

> The absurd idea which that writer [Bustamante] has propagated * * * and which has taken profound root among the literate, to consider the present Mexican nation as heir to the rights and wrongs of Moctezuma's subjects [2]

But though the dominance of the *criollos* at Independence coupled with the expulsion of the Spaniards kept the political aspects of the past uppermost the racial implications became increasingly popular

This concept overlooks the essential truth that the conquest of Anáhuac was made possible only through native assistance True, Cempoallans and Tlaxcallans had first to be subdued, but submission did not impose active allegiance Only because of his fifty thousand allies was Cortés finally victorious Instead of confronting a mighty empire with a handful of followers, he took advantage of the long-standing warfare against the tyranny of Tenochtitlán and placed his prestige of supernaturalism, fire-arms, horses, and superior military skill at the service of the weaker tribes Oppression existed before the Spaniards, and for that reason they were able to marshal Indian against Indian And if their descendants were to be classed as usurpers, by the same token the subsequent Tlaxcallans should have been regarded as traitors! [3]

And only by enlisting 30,000 Tlaxcallans and Aztecs with his slender force of 450 Spaniards was Viceroy Mendoza able, twenty years later, to suppress an insurrection, the so-called Mixtón War, provoked by the *encomenderos*' brutalities, which threatened to end Spanish rule [4]

But as Rippy well says, "falsehood accepted as truth is a potent factor in history," [5] and popular emotion cares little for facts [6]

When the first congress was honoring the heroes of independence the desecration of Cortés's bones by a mob was narrowly averted [7] To-day

[1] In his preface to the Tezcucan Ixtlilxochitl's Thirteenth Relation, which he published, Bustamante writes of "the barbarous conduct of the conquerors of Mexico * * * for all time they will be held as perverse invaders, who under pretext of giving us Heaven, have taken our earth and have been the cause of all evil' Memoire de Don Fernando d'Alva Ixtlilxochitl, Cruautés Horribles des Conquerants du Mexique

[2] Alaman, Hist de Mejico, vol V, p 190

[3] Cortés and his band would also unquestionably have been slaughtered at Cholula had not Malintzi, the Aztec maiden who had become his mistress and interpreter, betrayed her own people and brought about their massacre by the Spanish cannon and cavalry

[4] Priestley, Mexican Nation, A Hist, p 60

[5] Rippy, United States and Mexico, p 331

[6] Conversely the "red blood" of Indian and *mestizo* has been held responsible for the chronic political disorder since independence But the system of treason and "barrackracy" was established by the wholly white military under Iturbide See chapter on The Army

[7] Bancroft, Hist of Mexico, vol V, p 10

no statue to the conqueror may be found in all Mexico Every attempt to erect one has been defeated [1] But on the Paseo de la Reforma, the capital's leading thoroughfare, named after the first great revolt against the Hispanic dead hand, an imposing monument commemorates his victim, the last Aztec emperor, Cuauhtemoc And Fray Las Casas, stayer of the conquerors' greed, newly sculptured in enduring stone, lifts his saintly visage heavenward in the Zócalo between the great cathedral and the Palacio Nacional, seats of spiritual and temporal power for nearly four centuries

When, in 1926, the government reproduced on the 2-centavo revenue stamp, Izaguirre's famous painting of Cuauhtemoc's torture, to compel his revelation of supposedly hidden treasure, I heard indignant comments by Mexicans of pure Spanish descent The past in Mexico is not only exceedingly close — it is an integral part of the present One does not need the tangible evidence of obsidian razor blades or household idols such as I have picked up where they were left by ancient *teotihuacanos*,[2] to be impressed with the insignificance of elapsed time in Mexico [3]

On July 19, 1924, the centenary memorial exercises of Iturbide's death were clerically conducted A bishop made the address and the Knights of Columbus, *Damas Católicas*, and members of the A C J M (Catholic Young Men's Association) were in charge Official Mexico was conspicuously absent

At the independence day ceremonies on September 16, 1925, when the remains of the liberators Hidalgo, Allende, Aldama, Jiménez, Matamoros, Morelos, Mina, Guerrero, Bravo, Quintana Roo, and Leona Vicario, hitherto in the chapel of the Holy Kings in the Cathedral, were transferred to the new independence monument on the Paseo, President Calles said to me, "I left Iturbide there among his kind, where he belongs " To the Mexican conservatives and clergy to-day Iturbide is *the* liberator, the others a shabby lot, and the issue is thoroughly alive It has been presented to me with as much heat as if it dealt with contemporary figures Deep is the cleft which divides Mexico

The antagonism involves religion From a white Spanish priest who supported independence came an early *apología* of the pagan faith Putting himself in the native's place Father Servando José de Mier y Guerra wrote

[1] A typical *Protesta Contra la Erección de una Estatua á Hernán Cortés* may be found in Estudios Históricos Sociales y Literarios by Pedrueza p 241–3

[2] In and about the ancient city of Teotihuacán thirty miles from the capital, where the pyramidal temples of the sun and moon and the vast temple of Quetzalcoatl testify to the one-time architectural genius of the native race

[3] A spirited discussion of Aztec vs Spaniard appeared in a series of special articles in *Universal* in the early months of 1927 with such titles as Aztecas y Aztequizantes (Aztecs and Aztecizers) Aztecas o Hispánicos? Ni Aztequizantes ni Hispanizantes etc by the well known Mexican writers Martín Luis Guzmán Pedro de Alba and Luis Castillo Ledón, while *Excelsior* joined the intellectual affray with editorials ¡ *Seamos Mexicanos* ! (Let us be Mexicans) and others, whose forcefulness and brilliant style revealed the ablest editorial pen in Mexico, that of José Elguero

It ill befits the Spaniards to reproach us the sacrifices which were less than 300 years old, when they adored as *holy* for six centuries the Inquisition which in 40 years immolated in Spain alone four hundred thousand victims Our victims were respected as offerings made to the Gods, and reflected honor on their relatives, victims, you called infamous, and rendered their descendants infamous to the fourth generation Ours were killed with the blow of a knife, yours, thousands of times expired on the rack and under horrible tortures which your priests witnessed before frying them on the brazier [1]

A century later such a defense has become an offensive

Writing an explanation of the government's anti-clerical activities in 1926, a representative of the Mexican Chamber of Commerce in New York declared

The ancient Mexicans had their own religion * * * their gods and their temples * * * and the first step taken by the Spanish soldiers and Spanish priests upon gaining possession of the land, was to demolish the magnificent places of worship of the Mexican towns, and to erect Roman churches upon the debris The idols and the icons were destroyed * * * and the Mexicans who were not killed were baptized en masse * * * [2]

The writer is pure white, and one may be somewhat skeptical about a twentieth century enthusiasm for "idols and icons" and temples which were slaughter-houses Nevertheless, the declaration is symptomatic [3]

The Revolution against excessive foreign domination intensified nationalism Appreciation of native crafts and custom waxes, European importations in art, literature, and fashions wane Indigenous life is the new painters' favorite subject And Obregón's secretary of education, Vasconcelos, whose name indicating the earliest Iberian ancestry is also synonymous in two hemispheres with Latin-American cultural solidarity, declares

"We are Indian, blood and soul, the language and civilization are Spanish" [4]

These, however, are manifestations of which the great Indian mass is unaware In general the Indian who has remained Indian is inarticulate about it Politicians — usually *mestizos* — may boast, "Soy puro Indio" But none has dreamed of forming a pro-Indian party on the issue of righting the native's wrongs Neither is the question being faced ethnologically The revolutionary economic reforms are expected to benefit the Indian as agriculturist and as laborer Castes and classes are held to belong to overthrown social and political régimes, and all men deemed free, equal, and alike in their potentialities, given equal economic opportunity

[1] Guerra Hist de la Revolución de Nueva España, Antiguamente Anáhuac, vol II, p 723–4

[2] Bejarano, American Catholics Deceived in Mexico To-day vol IV, no 10 Dec 1926

[3] D H Lawrence's interesting novel The Plumed Serpent projects this new reverence for the old Gods to the point of a revival of their worship — a fictional fantasy, which, if not taken literally, is profoundly suggestive

[4] Vasconcelos, El Problema de México, p 349

Incorporation of the Indian as such into modern society has not been attempted Past Mexican governments have not desired it Nor was there any modern society But the revolutionary administrations have likewise as yet done nothing tangible nor even approached the problem fundamentally Yet Mexicans and foreigners are not lacking who see only calamity in the Indian emergence As a prominent *hacendado* expressed it to me

"The trouble with Mexico is that Cortés didn't kill off all the Indians the way you did in the United States with yours"

I asked how he would have maintained his *haciendas* had Cortés so acted, and he replied that his peons were an ungrateful and hopeless lot If you raised their wages they worked less,[1] if you were kind to them they merely took advantage of you He represents the position of the Mexican aristocracy

A similar view is set forth by an American who lived long in Mexico, and reflects the American colony s sentiment there, Wallace Thompson, who sees "the underlying inert yet dominant mass of Indians pulling down European culture and blood down into dark abysses,"[2] and pleads, as the only possible remedy, for the return of an enlightened white aristocracy[3]

Whatever might be the soundness or unsoundness of such attitudes — and they are not exceptional, but typical — they fail to recognize the overshadowing fact that Mexico is Indian, that her population is composed of pure and mixed Indian bloods The fact is there Of what use to dream of alternatives that have no basis in reality and are therefore unrealizable?

But is the reality so harrowing? The great majority of Mexicans, who are after all the most concerned, do not think so And that leads to the question, what is the Mexican Indian? Is he a savage, whose atavistic lusts are merely held in check by the force of organized society? Is he like "the noble red man" of our legend, with a highly moral code? Does the stable agricultural society that he built up unassisted, without the fructifying contacts that so greatly stimulated the earlier cultures of the Old World, place him on an entirely different plane from the North American hunter and fisher? Is the superior civilization of his ancestors — who erected, without iron tools or beasts of burden, great stone cities, who, as Dr Spinden says of the Mayas' art, "produced one of the few really great and coherent expressions of beauty so far given to the world,"[4] and invented a calendar based on astronomical observations more accurate than those of Europe — indicative of the present day Indian's potentialities? How significant was the decay of the Maya civilization that had, apparently, set in before the Conquest?[5]

[1] A common phenomenon and itself a revelation of the problem
[2] Thompson, The People of Mexico p 32
[3] *Idem*, p 406–9
[4] Spinden Ancient Civilizations of Mexico and Central America, p 86
[5] Spain also declined steadily from the sixteenth century Some one may yet seek to explain Mexico s history by the fact that the two important cultures that made up Mexico — the Spanish and the Aztec Maya — were both deteriorating

No definite, no authoritative answer can be given, because, first, nobody really knows, and second because one cannot generalize about the Indian He runs the gamut from neolithic to Benito Juárez, the foremost individual, of any race, that Mexico has produced To speak of "the Indian," to characterize him as such, is as inexact as to talk about "the European," and perhaps more so, as primitive man has vanished from Europe while in Mexico time operates as a third dimension From the Seris of Tiburón Island, who devour an animal raw, using teeth and nails as only implements[1] and the arrow-making Chamulas of Chiapas, Indian groups may be found which illustrate every stage of human development now extant on this planet And the tribes, the race groups, are geographically where they were at the time of the Spanish Conquest

In the North the warlike Yaquis, untamed through three centuries of conflict, compel the revolutionary governments to follow a course not unlike that with which they reproached Porfirio Díaz The neighboring Opatás, however, are distinguished by their peaceful tendencies and industry In the Southeast the pacific Mayas have maintained through four centuries of serfdom, a self-respect, a racial integrity, and cleanliness equal to that of any race on earth

Of two neighboring primitive tribes in the State of Nayarit, Lumholtz wrote, "the Coras are unusually brave, while the Huichols are cowards, preferring assassination to open war "[2]

Starr in 1898 found in the village school of San Nicolás Panotla, Tlaxcala, "some forty dark-skinned black-eyed youngsters whose mother speech is Aztec," and records he had never seen a class of the same grade and age in the United States "that would surpass them in quickness, accuracy, and clearness "[3]

In utter contrast are many Aztecs in the outskirts of the capital Ground into the lowest stratum of society, cut off from all their natural ties, they live in filth, degenerated by drink and venereal disease These were the *léperos* of colonial days, now they fill the criminal shipments to the penal colony in the Tres Marías Islands On vacant lots, within sight of Chapultepec castle I have seen families of them huddled into tumble-down *chozas* of odds and ends, straw broken boxes, and tin sheeting

In the valley of Mexico one comes into decaying villages, in which crumbling adobe, dust-whirling streets, rubbish, and dirty people fuse into a grayness of incredible squalor

But along with Indians corrupted in the off-scourings of white-urban life, are others who have grasped and appropriated the white man's civilization Ignacio M Altamirano, an outstanding figure in the Mexican literary world, was one of them General Joaquín Amaro, who twenty years ago

[1] Hernández, Las Razas Indígenas de Sonora, p 40
[2] Lumholtz, Huichol Indians of Mexico, p 4
[3] Starr, Indian Mexico, p 93

wore a red glass bead in his ear as a protecting amulet, and has achieved as secretary of war a reputation as organizer of an army of fifty thousand men, is another example of complete adaptation The most valued geologist for one of the large oil companies whose professional personnel is almost wholly American, is a full-blooded Mexican These cases though suggestive are still relatively few The white still guides the nation politically and economically Madero, Carranza, Obregón were white, Calles is a *mestizo*, but of the men who compose and composed his cabinet, eight are white,[1] three mixed,[2] and one Indian[3] Business is almost wholly controlled by whites A slight majority of state governors, however, are *mestizos*, and the generals nearly wholly so — several pure whites being counterbalanced by several full-blood Indians

In Oaxaca, in the high sierras, and on the abundant Tehuantepec Isthmus dwells a race of Zapotecs, who love beauty, and express it in their well-ordered lives In this country every village has its artisans, whose mastery of loom and potter's wheel is a daily communion with the nature about them, an affirmation of the identity of the useful and the beautiful White civilization has much to learn from these Indians Of them, more than of any others, is more nearly true to-day what Mary Austin wrote of the natives of our Southwest

> Living in such fashion, the pueblos, at the time Spain found them, had no rich, no poor, no paupers, no prisons, no red-light district, no criminal classes, no institutionalized orphans, no mothers of dependent children penalized by their widowhood, no one pining for a mate, who wished to be married All this is so much a part of their manner of living together in communities, that three centuries of Christian contact have not quite cured them of their superior achievement[4]

Thus did Lumholtz estimate the Papagos of Sonora

> They possess much force and stability of character, are quick of perception, loyal to the white man they like and, if in danger, do not cry for help Under her natural bashfulness the woman hides sterling qualities of efficiency in household work, constancy and faithful adherence to duty These Indians are industrious and have a remarkably even temper, thirty children may be seen playing harmoniously together where a similar gathering of small Caucasians would soon result in discord, fight and tears[5]

A common denominator for the Indian there doubtless is, as indeed for all mankind He has patience and endurance beyond the white man, but less initiative and dynamism The Indian is, by nature, a craftsman, and universal in his mechanical skill He builds his house, raises his food, makes his clothing, and, given an opportunity, adapts his versatility to the more

[1] Valenzuela, Tejeda Pani, Montes de Oca, Puig Casauranc Estrada, Parres, Ross
[2] Morones, León Sáenz
[3] Amaro
[4] Austin, Land of Journey's Ending, p 244
[5] Lumholtz, New Trails in Mexico, p 345–6

complex engines of modern life He can, with half a chance, "make" almost any object he sees Textile factory owners have noticed how the Indian operative invariably loves to "tinker" with the intricate machinery, often adding devices which improve it One of them, a Spaniard, is profoundly impressed with the Indian's potential superiority over the white worker, because of his resistance to monotony, and his sense of rhythm Everything that the Indian does is rhythmic, he told me, and just as the Tarahumare jogs along for days, so the Indian in front of his loom, or spindles, achieves a harmonious unity with his machine, which leaves him fresh after hours of toil

The Indian may be conservative in many ways, habit is strong within him, his mysticism opens realms which the white does not enter, but a Ford car, a tractor, or a sewing-machine do not long remain mysteries to him once convinced of their serviceability *Molinos de nixtamal*, to grind corn, are replacing the ancient *metate* wherever there is power — a spontaneous jump from the stone age to that of electricity Mexican applicants for work have startled many a machine-shop manager in the United States, accustomed to the specialized operative by announcing that they "could do anything" — and doing it

On the other hand the Indian's mental processes are the despair of one who does not comprehend them, as the following illustrates

> *Cerrados* [*i e*, those whose brains are locked up] preponderate [wrote an Englishman in Mexico] and it is maddening to work with them, as for sheer unadulterated cussedness, and pig-headed stupidity, they are beyond competition Suppose you are in camp about twenty miles from a big township, and natives carrying on their backs big loads of pottery are passing along your trail daily For some reason you need pottery, so you stop a laden native and propose to buy part or all of his stock for a much higher price than he will get in the town The Indian refuses to sell, pleading that *no es la costumbre* You can talk till you are blue in the face, pointing out the advantages of selling for a higher price, the lightened load, and the obvious soundness of the scheme, but never a pot will he sell, because he is absolutely unable to think in logical sequence * * *[1]

The Indian till after long contact with the white is not acquisitive, money means nothing to him But the journey with the pottery his hands have molded, to the market where fellow craftsman will gather, is a pilgrimage, an expression of that native religion which exalts the common acts of daily life This ceremony he has long projected, and wants to carry out He does not attempt to explain that to the white man, for one does not reveal what lies so close to the soul, nor would the stranger understand it

Understanding the Indian, the bed-rock of Mexico's people, on whom the nation must be built, would seem of transcendent importance Yet

[1] Pollard, Busy Time in Mexico, ch ix

very few have tried to know him, and to apply that knowledge to the practicalities of Mexican life Lumholtz, the Englishman, worked slowly down the western Sierra Madre and disclosed the almost unknown Pimas, Tubars, Tepehuanes, and others to their fellow Mexicans and to the world Starr, the American, performed similar service for parts of central and southern Mexico Gamio, the Mexican, upholding the tradition of scholarship of Orozco y Berra and Francisco Pimentel, for eight years directed an intensive study of the natives of the Valley of Teotihuacán and made the most significant Mexican contribution to modern ethnography [1]

These vital yet fractional investigations embody the wisdom which must precede any solution of Mexico's fundamental racial problems Men such as these alone speak with authority And the burden of their findings, if one interpret them aright, is that the blundering clash between racial cultures, and their lack of mutual adjustment, rather than the character of either have spelled failure

Why not leave the Indian alone? Because he is not left alone now, and the process had better be directed and purposeful than haphazard and vicious Hear the anthropologist's testimony thereon

> The *Tarascos* of Uruapan long ago became Mexicanized, that is they are now without land, spend all the money they earn by their labor in feasts for the saints and have acquired quite a taste for the white man's brandy The women, however, are still very industrious A nice hard-working girl of thirty told me that among her compatriots there was no one whom she could marry, for she did not like drunken people [2]

And that of another expert witness, on the Huaxteco Indians

> We were more than ever impressed with the anomalous condition of these people in their own land They were the cleanest, most industrious, best dressed and most progressive Indians whom we had seen in any part of Mexico, but in the Huaxteca, the land which bears their name, they are being crowded by the less progressive Aztecs *Mestizos* and Aztecs both speak of them with contempt, and treat them like dogs As for their language, it is neglected and despised, while many of them know both Spanish and Aztec, neither *mestizo* nor Aztec considers it worth while to know a word of Huaxtec [3]

The linguistic barrier after four centuries is still considerable, with caciquism as one of its most obvious consequences At least two million Indians know no Spanish, an equal number speak their native tongue by preference But as the indigenous languages are numerous and even those etymologically allied are mutually unintelligible, Indian Mexico is a Babel The Nahua language, covering about a third of the national area, was originally divided into sixteen languages, wholly distinct for practical purposes,

[1] Gamio, La Población del Valle de Teotihuacán, Dirección de Antropología
[2] Lumholtz, Unknown Mexico, vol II, p 443-4 [3] Starr, In IndianMexico, p 285

and each of these is in turn subdivided, the Yaqui, for instance, including three dialects Yaqui, Mayo, and Tehueco Maya is broken up into twenty-two different dialects, of which eight are spoken within the boundaries of present day Mexico Chanabal, Chicomucelteca, Chol, Chontal, Huaxtec, Maya, Tzental, Tzotzil Otomian, occupying the State of Querétaro and adjoining parts of Guanajuato, Hidalgo and San Luis Potosí, has four distinct dialects Mazahua, Otomí, Pame, and Pirinda Besides the Zapotecan group which covers Oaxaca, excepting for the islands of Chinantecan and Tequistlaltecan, are Tarascan, spoken in Michoacán, Totonacan in northern Vera Cruz, Athapascan in northern Chihuahua and Coahuila, the Yuman and Waicurian of Baja California, and various other linguistic islets [1]

The evident differences of language, physique, dress, and superficial custom imply also profound differentiation in mentality and character Until the infinitely complex, spiny, and resistant racial problem is attacked seriously, sympathetically, and scientifically there will be no synthesis of Mexico's varying epochs, races, cultures, and little progress toward "the forging of a nation" Centuries of neglect have already allowed precious legacies of virtue and skill to become befouled and destroyed through the intemperate interplay of discordant ethnic factors

Out of a knowledge of the Indian would follow inevitably knowledge of the *mestizo*, numerically and politically dominant in Mexico, a new racial type still in process of formation As numerous, and more unanimous than about Indian or white are the generalizations about the mixture of the two, the half-breed Yet here, obviously, sound information is even slighter, as one deals with a variable of unknown proportions So conjecture and prejudice and pseudo-science have been heard and naught else Yet in a scientific approach to the study of racial relations and fusions much may be found helpful to future Mexico For as one Mexican scholar said of the mixed race

The Hispano-American carries in his character the brand of the combat sustained so long between the two races which gave him his origin Duality and clash of rival natures explain much that is inexplicable in Mexican history [2]

[1] Indian Languages of Mexico and their Geographic Distribution, Cyrus Thomas, assisted by John R Swanton The practical divergence of dialects of the same language may be judged by the following comparison of the Mixtec and Zapotec dialects of the Zapotecan

	Mixtec	*Zapotec*
Brother	Ñani	Beechebiobi
Sister	Kuhua	Beelda
Father	Dzutu	Bixuce
Mother	Dzehe	Xiñaagaxana
Man	Yee	Beni
Woman	Nahadzehe	Benigonnaa
Day	Yutnaa	Chii
Bread	Dzita	Gueta
Teeth	Noho	Laya
Nose	Dzitu	Xii

These are the first ten words in Cyrus Thomas's list of fifty The remainder are as different

[2] Riva Palacio, México á Través de los Siglos, vol II, p 914

A good working hypothesis for biological investigation! For far more plausible than the unfounded catch-phrase that "the *mestizo* inherits the vices of both races," is that his inherited traits (obviously neither all "good" nor "bad") blend and coordinate in him less perfectly than in the mating of types of like racial age and experience. The four-thousand-year ethnic disparity certainly might furnish a clue to much in the Mexican nature which thus far has eluded the Mexicans themselves.

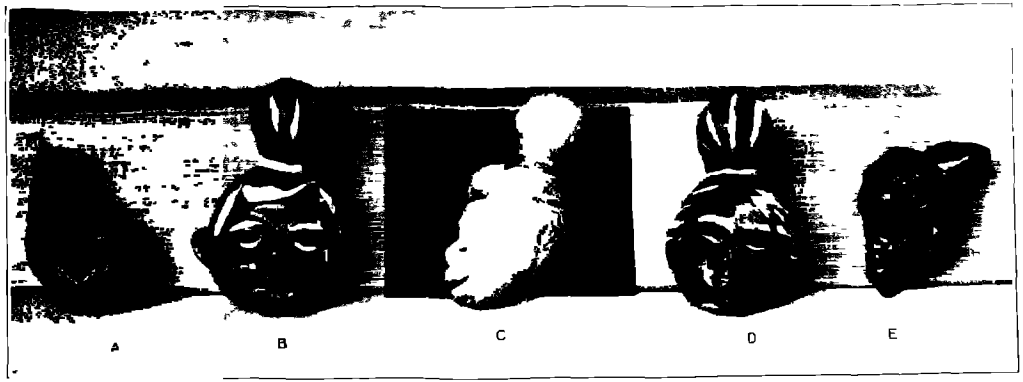
No one who follows Mexican events is other than impressed by that gigantic factor, ever operating, the unexplainable. It is man in Mexico who is unexplainable, often to himself. It is man in Mexico who precipitates the unexpected and casts the fate of the nation out of the dice-box of unreckonable chance. It is the study of man from his origins that may some day illuminate what is now a mystery, and help bring a solution.





(*Photo by the Author*)

THE BASKET CARRIER — JALAPA



TOYS LIKE THOSE UNEARTHED NEAR THE GREAT SILENT MONUMENTS IN WHOSE SHADOWS TOLTEC CHILDREN ONCE PLAYED

Five clay whistles (two ancient, three contemporary). **A** Colonial Peru. **B** found in Tzintzuntzan, Michoacan. **B**, **C**, and **D** bought in Tlaquepaque, Jalisco. **E** Pre-Hispanic, found in Tzintzuntzan

THE REVOLUTION

THE REVOLUTION

THE birth of "The Revolution" — as it is called in Mexico — dates, according to virtually every Mexican writer, from the publication, in the March, 1908, issue of "Pearson's Magazine," of an interview with President Díaz by James Creelman, in which the dictator stated

> That Mexico was now ready for democratic government, that he was resolved to leave the presidency at the end of his term, that his object was to be alive during the incumbency of his successor in order to be able to advise him, and that finally he, Díaz, would welcome the emergence of an opposition party as proof of Mexico's ability to develop a true democracy

An earthquake would have caused far less commotion Mexico was accustomed to earthquakes But such sentiments from the lips of Don Porfirio were startling, unprecedented, incredible Many Mexicans refused to believe them But no denial was forthcoming and the political ferment began

The only political activity hitherto known under a one-man rule was the intriguing between various of his satellites For years the most powerful, anticipating that he could not live forever, had been jockeying for a favorable position in a prospective race for the scepter

The most important of these aspirants was General Bernardo Reyes Varyingly civil and military governor in the northeastern states, and secretary of war, he was advantageously situated to build a political machine

In the early nineties he had broken away from the *Científicos*, an intragovernmental clique, whose head was Limantour, and organized Masonic lodges throughout the country, which were in effect political ward clubs

In the wake of Díaz's announced retirement, an organization proposing to name Reyes for the vice-presidency at the end of Díaz's term in 1910 came into being The political struggle was to center on the vice-presidency

A constitutional reform at the beginning of Díaz's six-year term in 1904 had created the office of vice-president For it Díaz had selected Ramón Corral — a characteristic piece of political astuteness Either Limantour should have been vice-president, were the country, in the event of Díaz's demise, deemed ready for a civilian, or Reyes, were continued military rule deemed necessary But Díaz, who was clearly jealous of both, availed himself of Limantour's technical ineligibility, because his father, born in

France, had been a naturalized Mexican, to shelve that extraordinary financier and statesman

In Corral, Díaz chose a man, who was not only hostile to Reyes, but decidedly unpopular Porfirian politics contemplated and achieved that Corral should remain so

The political agitation, following the Creelman interview, was chiefly motivated by antagonism to Corral, to whom Díaz managed to pass the odium for many unpopular administrative acts Few ventured at first to interpret Don Porfirio's promised retirement at its face value It was hoped, however, that he would allow a free choice of vice-president, who, with Díaz in his eightieth year, would in all probability succeed him before the expiration of the next six-year term

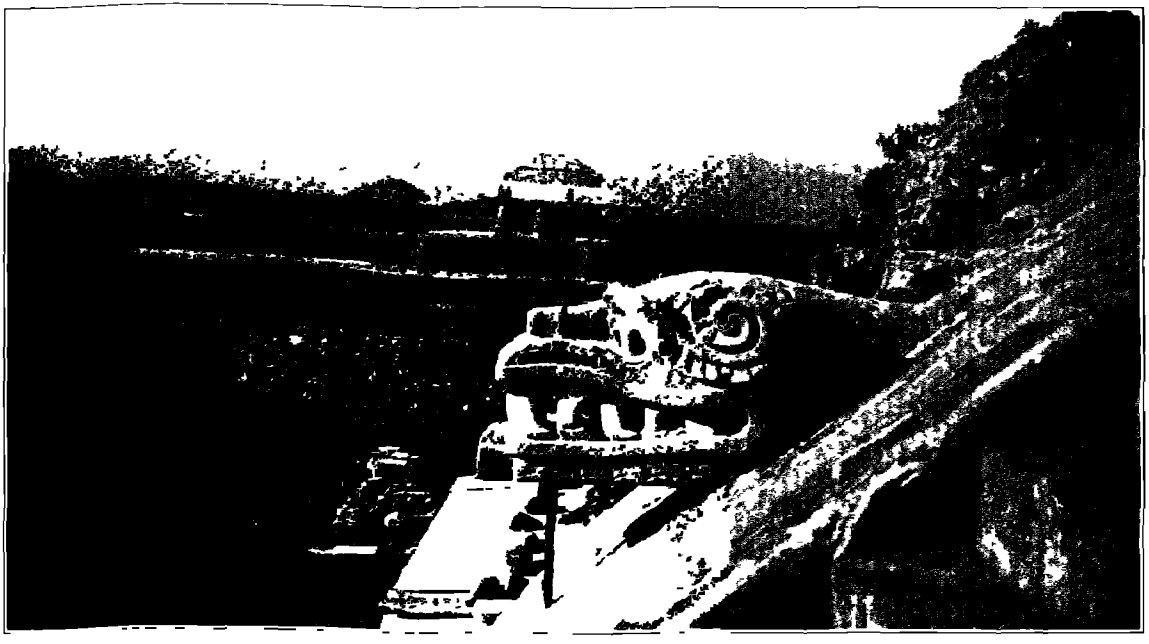
Slightly controversial has been the question as to whether there was any sincerity in Díaz's utterances to Creelman Few writers now maintain that there was In the light of subsequent events the interview appears as a typical piece of Díaz duplicity, designed to test out his entourage It was wholly in keeping with Porfirian policy that matters of such transcendent importance were revealed to an American journalist, while Mexican newspapermen were denied even a further interview on the same subject

In any event it soon became obvious that the president was determined not only to be reelected, but to impose Corral also General Reyes he disposed of by sending him abroad on the fictitious type of mission, long prevalent in Mexico, when important persons are to be painlessly exiled

Reyes might have disobeyed, launched his candidancy and perhaps started a revolution with a fair chance of success But he feared the master of Mexico and went

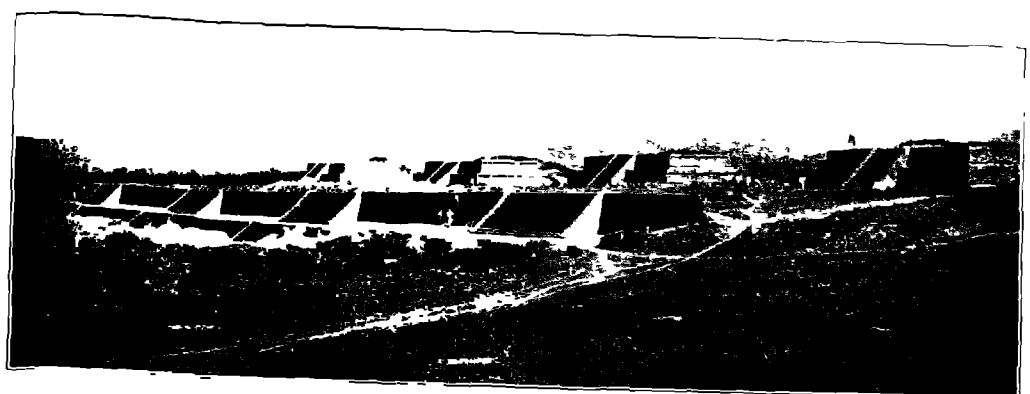
The heir to the very considerable pro-Reyes and anti-Corral sentiment — now unexpectedly become intestate — was perforce the anti-reelectionist party, a small group of youthful political idealists which had also sprung up after the Creelman interview Its intellectual leader was Francisco Madero, Jr

Madero was born on October 30, 1873, in Parras de la Fuente, Coahuila His grandfather, Evaristo Madero, had been governor of Texas and Coahuila in the early days of independence The family owned vast lands and engaged in a variety of industries Francisco, Jr , was educated in his native state, the United States, and France Kind-hearted, philanthropic, to a degree far exceeding the rare examples of benevolent paternalism among *hacendados*, he created various beneficent institutions on the family estates He personally sustained some thirty orphans until they were launched into a livelihood Education for the masses was one of his hobbies To say that he was universally and deeply loved by his tenantry is not merely to recreate the easy myth which so often attaches to the kindlier magnate In Madero's case it is undisputed



MONUMENTS TO THE ARCHITECTURAL SKILL OF MEXICANS BEFORE THE COMING OF THE SPANIARD

The ruins in San Juan Teotihuacan. Looking from the citadel over the temple of Quetzalcoatl to the pyramids of the sun (right) and the moon (left)



A PART OF THE TEMPLE OF QUETZALCOATL

He belonged to the privileged class But he was wholly exceptional in Mexico in that "noblesse oblige" was unconsciously and with little ostentation his devise Neither he nor his family had any personal grievances against the government or society

As early as 1903 his thoughts were turned to national affairs by General Reyes' shooting in Monterey of some political paraders

In the fall of 1908 appeared his "The Presidential Succession"[1] It proved an epoch-making book, analogous in its effects on the coming upheaval to Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" on the American Revolution Written in somewhat general terms, it embodied Madero's political philosophy and a program for the nation Absolutism he considered the source of all evil He reviewed the history of the Mexican people, and enumerated their grievances, all the while maintaining a sincerely friendly and admiring attitude for Díaz as an individual As an immediate issue he asked for "effective suffrage" and "no reelection," urging that Díaz should, pursuant to his pledges, relinquish power and leave the people free to elect his successor

Madero was at first little influenced by personal ambition But the inexorable logic of events soon forced him into the leadership, which other better known personalities were fearful of assuming He inherited their following — which was largely guided by personal considerations

On April 15 the anti-reelectionist party had nominated Madero and Francisco Vasquez Gómez for president and vice-president Gómez had been a "Reyista" Their platform was to restore the Constitution — to make freedom of suffrage and of the press realities, to stimulate public education, to improve the condition of labor with industrial schools, workers' accident legislation, and by combating alcoholism

But Díaz had no intention of allowing a free election While at first he looked upon the five-foot, two-inch apostle with the utmost contempt, Madero's increasingly vehement attacks in the course of his speaking tours irritated the dictator

He revived his policy of ruthless suppression, anti-reelectionist meetings were broken up, journalists were imprisoned, and on July 6 Madero was jailed at San Luis Potosí Díaz characteristically arranged that the informant responsible for this arrest was a conspicuous Corral henchman and that the vice-president got most of the blame

On October 4 the deputies, in the face of Madero demonstrations throughout the country, declared the Díaz-Corral ticket elected for another six years Three days later Madero, having broken jail, crossed the American border, disguised as a workman, and publicly declared the recent election null and void

With his "Plan of San Luis Potosí," he formally proclaimed revolution

[1] La Sucesión Presidencial

against the Díaz Government on November 20, the principle of no reelection for president, vice-president, state governors, and municipal Presidents, the return of lands taken from the natives, and assumed the provisional presidency of the Republic

The news spread like a prairie fire The Reyes element, a conglomerate of personal ambitions and thwarted designs, went over The leaven of Madero's ideas on the discontent of the masses had been working Everyone with a grievance found in the Madero movement the symbol of his desires Madero re-crossed the border into Chihuahua on February 14 The conscript troops sent to crush the Revolution deserted to it

Díaz issued a manifesto calling on the Mexican people for loyalty, and citing his promise on April 1 before congress to "enter on a path of political and administrative reforms in deference to the just and timely demands of public opinion" [1] It was too late An armistice having been broken off because of the Government s refusal to yield to the revolutionary demands for the resignation of Díaz, the *Científico* deputies, and eighteen governors, and the payment of an indemnity to the revolutionary army, Ciudad Juárez was captured by the revolutionists on May 9 Negotiations were then resumed and a treaty signed on May 21, under which Díaz agreed to resign The country now flocked aboard the Madero band-wagon A hooting mob surrounded the private house where Díaz lay suffering from a badly inflamed jaw On May 25 he resigned, and the next day left for Vera Cruz and exile

The Revolution, launched only after President Díaz's betrayal of his promise to grant a free election, had triumphed There had been only one real battle, which resulted in the capture of the unimportant border city of Ciudad Juárez A comparatively small proportion of Mexicans had taken part in the movement Yet it had overturned the superlatively vaunted Porfirian régime "Public opinion, not military success, had won," says Priestley [2] The truth is that a minority governing a majority had been dethroned by a minority assuming to speak for the majority On neither side did the majority itself figure

It had been agreed that Francisco de La Barra, secretary of foreign relations, should become interim President with a coalition cabinet, in which the Madero family, and the brothers Vázquez Gómez, figured conspicuously The latter dispensed funds with open hands to their personal advantage and that of their friends A breach developed between them and Madero, who insisted on a new vice-presidential nominee for his party His choice of José María Pino Suárez, a little known Yucatecan editor, was the first of a series of mistakes The elections in October were, of course, a foregone conclusion Reyes, who had returned to Mexico, was also a presidential candidate, but he made no showing The elections were honest No in-

[1] Rep in Prida, *op cit*, p 313–15 [2] Priestley, Mexican Nation A Hist, p 399

structions other than to fulfil legitimate functions had been given poll officials [1]

The forces against which Madero had to contend were varied There was, first, the opposition of the Vázquez Gómez element, incorrectly called "within his own camp" This revolutionary element was typical of the support which, for mercenary reasons, had joined Madero and was to function throughout the Revolution It had never been truly identified with the democratic purposes and ideals of Madero

Second, was the entire Porfirian group, *Científicos*, large landowners, clericals, who foresaw in the political change a menace to their long-established privileges

Third, and not unrelated to the preceding, were the larger business elements, especially American, which were fearful of the passing of the concessionaire system, cheap labor, and a general dislocation of their advantageous position The spearhead of this group was the American ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson

Fourth, the germ of a growing opposition by the disinherited peasantry was embodied in a rebellion which had been brewing against Díaz in the State of Morelos, and more or less synchronized with the Madero revolution Its support of Madero rested on his promise to restore despoiled lands to the Indians But Madero had no conception of the urgency, now that the restraining despotism was no more, of an effective program of action

Finally, Madero was bound to antagonize a miscellany of persons who hoped for some personal profit out of the new régime, and when unable to secure it, turned against him

It should be borne in mind that Madero's platform and promises were almost exclusively devoted to the "restoration" of never-enjoyed liberties, of what may conveniently be summed up in the word "democracy"

These promises he adhered to literally — to the detriment of his personal fortunes He gave the press freedom — and before long a yellow press was snapping at his heels, inventing scandals about him and his family, and actively serving every sinister purpose arrayed against him

Excepting the suppression of one issue of an American-owned newspaper at the crucial point of the first armed rebellion against him — the Orozco revolt in Chihuahua — he did not interfere with the press

He did not interfere with judicial processes He did not force his candidates into governorships, although consonant with the Revolution the withdrawal of the Porfirian governors had been stipulated He reversed the

[1] Striking testimony to the adherence of Madero to his principles is found in a despatch to the U S Dept of State, Sept 4, 1911 Reporting on the convention of the Progressive Constitutional Party, which had just nominated Madero and Pino Suárez, Chargé d'Affaires Fred M Dearing telegraphed

"* * * The convention * * * should be remarked especially * * * as the first untrammeled political convention ever held in this country * * * The convention really was free and open and * * * an admirable temper was displayed" For Rel 1911, File 812 00/2345

military ruthlessness of Díaz by not executing the chiefs who rebelled against him, carrying his humanitarianism to a point which was to prove fatal

Madero was not a capable executive He was not a good judge of men He was profoundly trusting And in consequence of these defects, he made numerous mistakes, administratively and politically These are often cited to explain his downfall

Nevertheless, his administration will increasingly be looked back upon as a high spot in the slow Mexican procession toward the light His good-will and kindliness, if not appreciated at the time and ill repaid in its consequences to him, left a shining mark and an example With no drastic attempt to hold his enemies in check, his administration was steadily gaining He was succeeding — when treachery, combined with other hostile elements, cut short his career

When the Madero régime was assassinated by a handful of military plotters, actively abetted by the American ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, the country had entered the path of progress It is useless to conjecture what might have happened Disturbances there were and would have been, the overwhelming problems remained, but the purpose and good-will to work them out were there Comparatively, the country was at peace — a friendly peace A year and a half later, when Huerta fled, Mexico was a shambles, a smouldering ruin of physical destruction, terror, and hate

Out of this chaos the leadership fell to Venustiano Carranza For fourteen years he had been one of Díaz's hand-picked senators In all this time he had shown no awareness of Mexico's pressing problems He obeyed the dictator's slightest indication and rubber-stamped Porfirian policies with his every vote He was carried forward and upward on the tide of circumstance — the rising and unmanageable ground-swell of revolt It swept him into power and when he failed to swim with it, it swept him out of power and to death

The seven years from the fall of Madero to the coming of Obregón into power were years of blind groping, of misdirected and undirected striving, of force, of the loosing of every passion It was a disordered and anarchic reversal of the ordered and tyrannical régime which had preceded

The Mexican Revolution, unlike the French and Russian revolutions, had no preconceived goal It developed haphazardly The mild political reforms of Madero meant nothing to the masses As the apostle passed southward toward his triumphant entry to the capital, the people flocked from near and far to acclaim him

"*¡Viva Madero!* *¡Viva la democracia!*"

"And what, *amigo*, is this *democracia* for which all are shouting?" inquired a white pyjamad peasant of another



(*Photo by the author.*)

President Calles dictating to his private secretary, Señorita Soledad Gonzalez (1935)



(Photo by the author)

PRESIDENT OBREGON 1923

"Why, it must be the lady who accompanies him," was the reply, pointing to Madero's wife [1]

"What is that you wear on your coat?" inquired an American reporter, pointing to a Madero button on the breast of a youthful revolutionist, equipped with rifle and cartridge belt

"*¿Pues, quien sabe, señor?*" he answered 'My captain told me he is a great saint [2]

"What are you fighting for?" John Reed, an American correspondent, asked the color-bearer of a troop

"Why, it is good, fighting You don't have to work in the mines * * *" [3]

The Mexican Revolution was a class struggle, but not a clean-cut class struggle Its three leaders revealed as much, Madero and Carranza were great landowners and Obregón was a *ranchero*

There was no deliberate proscription against the aristocracy, no group as such was exiled, the lives of no category of citizens were declared forfeit There was neither guillotine nor "cheka" Killing except in battle was incidental and, given the extent of the Revolution, slight Conversely there was no solid mass uprising "Pacíficos" — non-participants, over whose fortunes groups of contenders passed and repassed — were probably in the large majority The lack of revolutionary solidarity goes far to explain the frequent "betrayals" of the Revolution They were not inconsistent performances, given the heterogeneous elements which joined the fray for private advantage These inevitably became centrifugal in the moment of group victory in order to realize still greater personal profit

Yet through the chaos, while sections of the country and measures were seemingly under the will and dictation of individuals, a current of ideas was steadily moving away from the past They found expression in the various pronouncements of revolutionary leaders These ideas were more honored in the betrayal than in the execution, but the current flowed on

It is therefore well to disregard personalities — whose contributions in their respective fields will be treated elsewhere — to observe particularly the evolution of ideas beneath the surface of revolution For ideas alone, and their materialization, furnish the continuity which leads to the present The Revolutionary personnel has been repeatedly replaced and those prominent under Madero and Carranza have passed from the public scene

The ideas embodied by the Madero phase of the Revolution were political The mild suggestions about labor and land were mere incidents They would not have satisfied the needs of urban and rural workers What Madero did not see was that the complete overthrow of the existing political system was bound to work a great social and economic change Once the

[1] This story was told me by Señorita Soledad González, private secretary to President Calles
[2] Reed, Insurgent Mexico, p 79 [3] *Idem*, p 37

politico-military alliance — which perpetuated the feudal land tenure, and the equally feudal industrialism — was smashed, the economic feudalism was itself bound to fall, for the old political and the old social order represented two hands clasped in support of what had been Mexico

The agrarian purpose found its first revolutionary expression in Zapata's "Plan of Ayala," issued Nov 28, 1911,[1] which called for a distribution of a third part of the great estates among the landless Zapata never made his peace with the other revolutionary factions They followed his land policy but not his complicating personal desire to be the chief of the Revolution Agrarian reform was given shape by a Carranza decree early in 1915,[2] was further emphasized in the Constitution of 1917, and thereupon increasingly put into practice — slightly and ineffectively under Carranza, somewhat more under Obregón, and fully under Calles

A definition of the purposes of the Revolution of the early post-Madero phase is found in the agreement entered into July 8, 1914, between Carranza and Villa, in which the latter acknowledged the former as first chief of the Constitutionalist Army

> The present conflict being a struggle of the impecunious against the abuses of the powerful, and understanding that the causes of the evils that bear down the country spring from pretorianism, plutocracy, and clericalism, the Divisions of the North and of the Northeast, solemnly pledge themselves to fight until complete banishment of the ex-federal army, which shall be superseded by the Constitutional Army, to set up democratic institutions in our country, to bring welfare to labor, financial emancipation to the peasant by an equitable apportionment of land, and other means tending to solve the agrarian question, to correct, chastise, and hold to their responsibilities such members of the Roman Catholic clergy as may have lent moral or physical support to the usurper, Victoriano Huerta [3]

With Huerta ousted on July 15, 1914, and the revolutionary factions divided by personal rivalries, government for the next two years and a half was carried forward by decree The edicts of the general commanding in each region became its law, the important decrees being those of the Constitutionalists, since this group survived, became the ruling power, and the channel through which revolutionary reform was carried forward

This method of government was probably inevitable in view of the existing chaos Carranza, foreseeing the impossibility of early establishing a stable government, frankly declared the period to be "pre-constitutional," and under the Plan of Guadalupe, by which on March 26, 1913, he had refused to recognize the Huerta seizure of power, vested the supreme power in himself — with the consent of the other revolutionary leaders who were then loyal to him [4]

[1] Rep in Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, 1916, p 215
[2] Known as the "Law of Jan 6, 1915"
[3] For Rel 1914 812 00/12717
[4] Zapata never acknowledged Carranza's authority On Aug 30, 1914, he wrote from his headquarters at Cuernavaca, to the Constitutionalist General Pablo González at Puebla that he "could

In a proclamation of Dec 12, 1914, Carranza announced that as first chief of the Revolution, and in charge of the executive power, he "would put into effect * * * all laws and measures necessary to satisfy the economic, social and political needs of the nation, effecting thereby such reforms as public opinion exacted as indispensable, to establish a régime which would guarantee the equality of all Mexicans" [1]

These decrees clearly reveal the revolutionary ideology which, subject to various changes, two years later found embodiment in the Constitution of 1917

They included the establishment of the "free municipality" and the consequent abolition of the "hated institution of *jefeturas políticas*" [2]

In place of the *jefe político*, appointed by the central government to carry out its wishes in a given region, was to be substituted election of municipal officers by the townspeople [3] Madero had aspired to do this, but death intervened Neither had he formally suppressed as a prison the detested fortress of San Juan de Ulloa in Vera Cruz Harbor, although during his administration it held no political prisoners, as under Díaz, for the Madero régime made none Carranza formally abolished those gruesome dungeons with their cells below sea level, from which few in the old days had come out alive or in health

Another series of decrees legalized divorce, which had not been recognized under the old constitution [4] Peonage, which though illegal, was nevertheless widespread throughout the *haciendas*, was abolished [5]

Other decrees aimed at bettering labor's condition by fixing a minimum wage, working hours, abolishing "child labor," et cetera [6]

In September, 1916, a call for a constitutional congress was issued Delegates were to be popularly elected on the same basis of representation as the deputies in 1912, subject to taking an oath of loyalty to the Plan of Guadalupe Thus the constitutional congress was in effect a Constitutionalist Party convention It was government by the victors on the battle-field Yet excepting the Zapatista movement in Morelos, the Constitutionalists

see no affinity of ideals between the Plans of Ayala and Guadalupe * * * since the former is a program of principles and its sustainers, the men of the South, are fighting for those principles which will save the Fatherland, while the latter is a personal program and not a program of ideals, since it seeks only to seat one person in power and to enable him to benefit by the labor of the people * * *" (Letter from correspondence of General Pablo González Copy in writer's possession)

[1] This decree was published in No 1 of "El Constitucionalista," Vera Cruz Rep in Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, 1916, p 323–6

[2] Decree of Dec 26, 1914 Mem 327

[3] The *jefe político* was, under another name, the *corregidor* of colonial days

[4] Decrees of Dec 29, 1914, Feb 12, 1915, May 27, 1916, June 14, 1916, in Mem 328–9, 335 349, 351 A so-called divorce had existed but it was merely a separation, under which remarriage was not permitted (See chapter on Women)

[5] Decree of Jan 29, in Mem 329–30

[6] Viz (Among many) Decree of Sept 2, 1914 given at Puebla by General Pablo González establishing eighty centavos as a minimum wage and an eight-hour day in the textile factories (copy in the writer's possession), and decree given at Celaya April 9 1915, by General Obregón, fixing seventy-five centavos daily as a minimum wage for all classes of labor in that region Mem 338

now represented the only vocal opinion of the nation — though again, as in the case of previous régimes — a minority of the Mexican people The Constitutionalists admitted as much Speaking in the congress, one of the delegates, Machorro Narváez, said

> The present Revolution is not yet popular in Mexico The greater part of the Mexican people is still against the Revolution, the upper class, some of the old intellectual element, a part of the middle class, and some of the laboring class, are against the Revolution Clerks and office employees, who are the mainstay of the middle class, are against the Revolution We are still a minority [1]

After several weeks' discussion the delegates promulgated the famous Constitution of 1917 on February 5 It embodied, if not the crystallizing aspirations of the Mexican people, at least what the Constitutionalist group deemed necessary to satisfy popular demand

The important changes wrought by the new charter related to "land for the people" — the agrarian law of January 6, 1915, somewhat amplified, being incorporated in the constitution [2] (Art 27)

They related to labor, providing for protective legislation of a humanitarian character [3] (Arts 4, 5, 123)

They related to the church, going beyond the Reform laws which had to a large extent become a dead letter [4] (Arts 3, 5, 24, 130)

They ordered supreme court hearings to be public, reformed the administration of justice, with a view to prevent the recurrence of previous abuses (Arts 16, 19, 20, 21, 94, 98, 100–2, 107)

They abolished monopolies and exemption from taxation (Art 28)

They forbade foreigners to meddle in politics, giving the president the right to expel "any foreigner whose presence he may deem inexpedient" (Art 33)

They created a public health service (Art 73)

They provided for sealed bids, to be opened publicly, on government work (Art 134)

They made primary instruction free and strictly secular (Art 3)

They provided that the president be elected for a four-year term and could never be reelected (Art 83)

They affirmed the national ownership of subsoil deposits (Art 27)

Article 27, in which this last reform is incorporated, immediately became a bone of international contention Mining being one of the oldest Mexican industries, was virtually unaffected It was on petroleum, discovered and exploited in Mexico only shortly before the fall of Díaz, and for which no comprehensive legislation had ever been enacted, that the struggle centered

[1] Diario de los Debates 71
[2] This subject is fully treated in the subsequent chapter on Land
[3] This subject is fully treated in a subsequent chapter on Labor
[4] This subject is fully treated in a subsequent chapter on the Church

The essential passages in Article 27 are as follows

The ownership of lands and waters * * * is vested originally in the nation, which * * * has the right to transmit title thereto to private persons, thereby creating private property

Expropriation can only be made for reasons of public utility and with indemnification

The nation shall have at all times the right to impose upon private property such restrictions as the public interest may require, as well as the right to regulate the development of natural resources * * * in order to conserve and equitably distribute the public wealth * * *

In the nation is vested direct ownership of all minerals or substances (in the subsoil) solid mineral fuels, petroleum, and all hydro-carbons — solid, liquid, or gaseous * * *

The ownership of the nation is inalienable * * * Concession shall be granted to private parties or * * * corporations organized under the laws of Mexico, only on condition that said resources be regularly developed, and on the further condition that the legal provisions be observed

Legal capacity to acquire ownership shall be governed by the following provisions

Only Mexicans by birth or naturalization and Mexican companies have the right to acquire ownership in lands, waters, and their appurtenances, or to obtain concessions to develop mines, waters, or mineral fuels in the Republic of Mexico The Nation may grant the same right to foreigners, provided they agree before the Department of Foreign Relations to be considered Mexicans in respect to such property, and accordingly not to invoke the protection of their Governments in respect to the same, under penalty, in case of breach, of forfeiture to the Nation of property so acquired Within a zone of 100 kilometers from the frontiers, and of 50 kilometers from the seacoast, no foreigner shall under any conditions acquire direct ownership of lands and waters

Article 27 was rendered momentous by the great foreign stake in land and oil, seemingly to be affected These holdings had been acquired in the generation before the constitution which was now vesting subsoil ownership in the nation and limiting foreign ownership Article 27 was, therefore, *from the start denounced as radical, confiscatory, and destructive of vested property rights*

In this connection it is necessary to digress and become retrospective to emphasize a fundamental difference in the origin and concept of property rights in Hispanic and Anglo-America

In the British colonies some lands were acquired by treaty and purchase from the Indians, some by conquest Disputes might arise between two or more settler claimants But there was never any question between the settlers and the crown that the right conceded the colonists by their original charters was not inalienable Nor was there any such question between

colonists and Indians The Indians in the territory of the United States had no conception of real property such as the settlers brought The natives were only in a slight degree an agricultural people and, predominantly, hunters and fishers When a more advanced civilization invaded their hunting grounds, they were bound to fight or perish They fought and perished, and with the advancing line of white immigration were gradually driven across the continent to virtual extinction No property question arose from this process What colonists settled was theirs to have, to hold and to will to their descendants

On the other hand, the vast countries settled by Spaniards in the New World were not colonies of Spain They were patrimonies of the kings and queens of Castile and Aragón The grants made to their vassals overseas were in the nature of concessions, modifiable and revocable at royalty's will The king could, to be sure, grant in perpetuity, but not only did he rarely do this, but a subsequent king could arbitrarily undo the "perpetual" mercies of his predecessor

The Indian *encomiendas* were originally given for "two lives" — the life of the grantee and his children After that they were to revert to the crown [1] Spanish colonial history is replete with evidence of the revocability of titles at the king's pleasure *Encomenderos* were, for example, in the sixteenth century threatened with revocation if they had left wives in Spain instead of bringing them overseas [2] *Use*, proper use, in the crown's view, often determined continued possession by the grantee

Evidence of the insecurity of the *encomiendas* was that each succeeding governor or viceroy felt himself authorized to revise its title — and as some of these functionaries had no purpose other than to enrich themselves, the *encomendero* could consider himself lucky if he got off with paying a fee for the inspection of his concession At times he was despoiled of his Indians on the basis that someone else was more worthy of possessing them Generally the *encomienda* was then given to some parasite whom the new governor had brought in his train or to some great person at court whose favor was being curried

The confiscation of the enormous property of the Jesuits — *haciendas*, sugar mills, mines, monasteries, houses, et cetera — by Charles III, at the time of their expulsion, is perhaps the most conspicuous example of the alienability of property in New Spain Whatever were the reactions to the largest deportation from the Spanish domain since the expulsion of Jew and Moor, more than two and a half centuries before, they were nowise related to the taking of the Jesuits' property From the pope down through the ecclesiastical edifice, this royal right was taken for granted

In 1798 when Charles IV needed money, he merely asserted his patrimonial rights and took, what in that case seemed most easily convertible

[1] Riva Palacio, *op cit*, p 76 [2] *Idem*, p 362

into cash, the properties of the Jesuits, which had nominally returned to the crown thirty years earlier Ordered the monarch

Through the expulsion of the members of the Company of Jesus from my dominions in Spain and the Indies, returns to my crown the dominion of all its goods * * * Pursuant to this right, the king, my august father, could have immediately incorporated in the royal treasury, as a part of his royal patrimony, the houses, *haciendas* and other properties taken over But as a manifestation of his royal liberality and munificence, he applied and destined a great part of them to the foundation, under the immediate sovereign protection, of various pious establishments, considered of public usefulness Following such a sublime example, I have taken especial care not only to follow out, consolidate, and perfect this great work, but to extend it further by adding various matters of vital importance to the national prosperity But since then extraordinary and urgent needs of the monarchy have rendered necessary laying hands on such extraordinary resources — *for the usefulness of those other objects is in no wise comparable to the far greater need of having the goods which properly belong to the state serve for its defense and conservation* * * *[1]

In 1802 the king, needing still more money, laid a heavy hand on other clerical properties Not only did he overlook little, but archbishops, bishops, and clergy were charged with collecting these funds, and did so without murmuring[2] The archbishopric of Mexico alone turned over $6,202,330 pesos and other bishoprics brought the total up to $12,080,291 pesos[3]

The same flexible conception of the permanence of property rights dominated Mexican thought and practice subsequently The state — which meant the party or clique in power — merely replaced the king

In the War of Independence confiscation of enemy property was decreed reciprocally by independentists and royalists After independence, although the Plan of Iguala implied a preservation of the *status quo*, before long the creoles, irked by the Spanish monopoly of such *haciendas* and industries as were not controlled by the church, decreed their confiscation coincidently with the expulsion of their owners Plausibility was lent this procedure by the plotting, some true, some imaginary, of the Spaniards against Mexican autonomy The discovery of the so-called "Padre Arenas plot" gave this acquisitive tendency tremendous impetus But whatever the justification, alleged or real, property rights had no weight comparable to those in Anglo-Saxon countries

In the factional disputes which rent Mexico in the first quarter century of national life, seizure of the property of the politically — that is, militarily

[1] Royal order of Sept 10, 1798, to Viceroy Azanza Rep in Bol Geog, y Estad, vol I p 486–8 (1869) (Italics not in original)
[2] Royal orders of Feb 26 and April 12, 1802 Rep in *idem*, p 488–94
[3] Bol, vol I, p 495

— vanquished, was common practice Its extent varied with the intensity of the passions aroused

The Reformists felt that disamortization of the vast church property was indispensable to national progress While not confiscatory in that it proposed a cash equivalent for land, the measure was an alteration in the nature of the property without the holder's consent, and when the clericals, in opposition to this and other measures, precipitated a civil war and lost, they met the fate customarily accorded the vanquished Their property "entered into the dominion of the nation," just as the Jesuit property, less than a century before, had become the crown's when the king deemed the continued presence of that order inexpedient

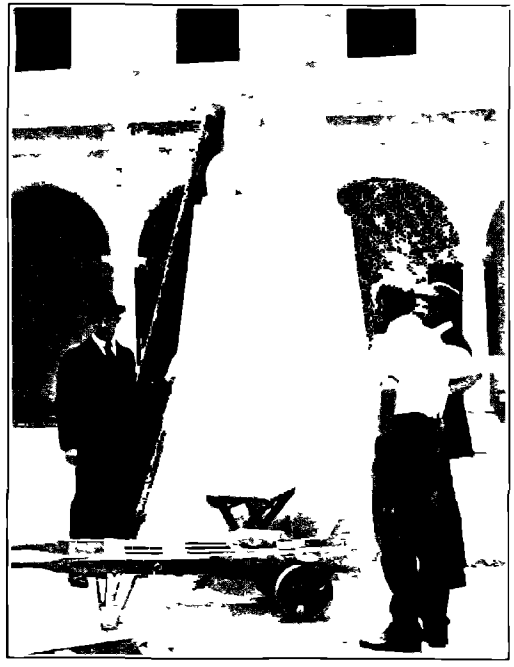
The Imperialists, supported by the clergy and sustained by French bayonets, likewise confiscated the property of the Republicans, and when, with the fall of Maximilian, Juárez again came to power, the same tactics were conversely applied

Porfirio Díaz, hailed abroad as the great champion of property rights, never hesitated to confiscate, by one means or another, *Mexican* property needed either by a favorite or for some other purpose It was always possible in those cases to give the process an aspect of legalism The courts found as the dictator ordered Indeed, given the confusion of titles and antecedent history, whatever any government decreed under laws of its own making was apparently legal The Revolution did not depart from this procedure Those who had opposed the Revolution once it proved triumphant were liable to treatment as enemies

The right of eminent domain under which property is taken by the State in the public interest is not unrelated to the Mexican ideology concerning property But the difference in the character of the original Mexican settlement, the more dictatorial disposal of life and property, the frequent changes of government policy, motivated more by the will of men than by an established reign of law, have made the alienation of property a far more arbitrary and commoner procedure than in Anglo-Saxon countries

On the other hand, wholesale confiscation — as has accompanied great social revolution elsewhere — in France, Russia, and even post-World War non-revolutionary changes in the Baltic and Balkan States, was not known in Mexico Confiscation *per se* was never a doctrine and never formally exalted into a virtue That the agrarian reform offered payment in bonds for property taken is in point That payment was not promptly forthcoming is likewise evidence, first, of the somewhat lesser Mexican awe of property rights, and, second, of the confusion and bankruptcy which were the inevitable product of the Mexican past

The emphasis on *use*, in Article 27, that "concessions shall be granted * * * only on condition that * * * resources be regularly developed" and the subsequent regulatory legislation, which looks beyond mere ownership



Vasconcelos standing next to the nearly completed statue of Las Casas by Centurion in the patio of the school of San Pedro y San Pablo, one of the many works of art which owe their existence to the encouragement of Obregon's Secretary of Education. (See p. 81 et seq.)



(*Photo by the author.*)

FELIPE CARRILLO PUERTO

Governor of Yucatan, 1922–1924. (See p. 473.)



"ALL THE GRIEF IN THE LAND"

Oil painting by Francisco Goitia (In the Secretaria de Educación Publica, Mexico City.) (See p. 637.)

at the purpose of acquisition, and at exploitation consistent with that purpose, is less a new "socialistic" phenomenon than adherence to a time-honored Hispanic attitude

To say that the agrarian reform or the subsoil reversion, was merely robbery under the appearance of legalism as is often charged by those unfavorably affected, is wholly incorrect It was in harmony with, and a natural continuation of, a four-century-old Mexican tradition, and had, besides, the undeniable justification of national necessity and public welfare Never in the past, in the many changes in the character of property, were so many people favored

Only now the situation was complicated by foreigners who, caring nothing about old Mexican custom or new Mexican law, desired to apply their own countries' property concepts, and to invoke their governments' support in behalf of them

These considerations remained for a time somewhat theoretical, first, because the constitution was not legislation It was a program to be executed The native who expected to benefit would judge it not by the promise, but by fulfilment For the property holder, generally foreign, the consequences, favorable or unfavorable — that is, undisturbed possession, or damage to his property rights as he conceived them — depended also on subsequent legislation and action thereunder Hence the issues underlying Article 27 have continued to agitate Mexico to this day

For the native the three years following the constitution spelled deep disillusion Alleged benevolent purposes went glimmering before the naked fact of governmental corruption, tyranny, and incompetence To complicate all else, had the best intentions guided the Carranza administration, was the underlying chaos The war against Huerta, the subsequent fighting between Constitutionalists and Conventionists (the Villa adherents), and when these were dispersed, between Constitutionalists and Zapatistas, widespread banditry, in which the simon-pure bandit, the bandit who posed as a revolutionist, the revolutionist who behaved like a bandit, and the poor peasant who had to maraud in order not to starve, were often indistinguishable — all this bloody devastation had left the country in ruins, industry prostrate, a people in rags, diseased, despairing, dying Every class suffered No important element was satisfied Agrarian reform was carried out so blunderingly and so dishonestly that the peasantry seldom benefited Labor, which had supposedly "broken its chains," was restive under the sky-rocketing cost of living, aggravated by the successive issues of paper money But Carranza brutally repressed labor's every move, going so far as to revive the law of Jan 25, 1862, declaring revolutionists outlaws, and applying it to strikers

Here then was a revival of dictatorship in a supposedly "liberating"

and "constitutional" government High-handed, ruthless, and corrupt, a few of its favorites profited vastly, while the masses hungered Such a government could not last

The climax came when Carranza violated still another revolutionary pledge — that of allowing a free election of his successor He sought to impose the unknown and insignificant Ignacio Bonillas, Mexican Ambassador at Washington — "Meester Bonillas," as he was quipped for his supposedly slight acquaintance with Mexico

The Carranza régime was not overthrown by events beyond its control It committed suicide The Sonora group, which has since furnished the leadership of Mexico, launched, in sheer self-defense and defense of the revolutionary principles, what Carleton Beals has aptly termed, "the Revindicating Revolution" The revolt under the Plan of Agua Prieta[1] (April 22, 1920) encountered almost no resistance Revolutionary Mexico deserted *en masse* to Obregón Obregón, the battle-scarred hero, who had given an arm to the Revolution at the battle of Trinidad in 1915 against the Villistas, and had "made" Carranza, was the idol of the hour He was obviously the leader of the nation

The six months' interim presidency of de la Huerta to fill out Carranza's term, was to satisfy the constitutional requirements by which a presidential incumbent cannot succeed himself The election followed the time-honored Mexican formula of legalizing the victory in the field, but it was wholly a popular verdict

When Obregón assumed office on December 1, 1920, the Revolution had lasted ten years The feudal structure had been shattered, the country with it Reconstruction still lay ahead

The Obregón régime will represent in history the cooling off of the lava of revolutionary passion The country was pacified less by military repression than by amnesty and an apparently sincere effort to satisfy popular desires Land distribution began Labor, no longer restrained, began to organize and to secure in practice rights theoretically acquired three years before An educational program was launched with unprecedented fervor under José Vasconcelos, a man of integrity and unbounded enthusiasm

The Obregón régime was marked by a steady return to lawfulness Railroad traffic was reestablished, plans to return the railways to their foreign ownership matured, and international debt payments resumed

The reconstructive achievements of the Obregón administration, however, were largely swept away by a recurrence of time-dishonored military and civilian treachery Within the army many generals to whom the Revolution had always spelt spoils, dissatisfied with the diminishing opportunities for plunder as the country became more stabilized, plotted rebellion and seizure of power The pretext, true to tradition, was found

[1] Copy in writer's possession

in the coming presidential campaign and the candidacy of Plutarco Elías Calles

Calles was secretary of *gobernación* — head of Obregón's cabinet He was known, rightly, as "the strong man" in the administration His repute of ability and character made him the logical candidate It was his very strength that the more corrupt revolutionary elements feared With Calles president, their opportunities for peculation would be greatly lessened A quarrel over the governorship of San Luis Potosí kindled the spark of rebellion Treason reached the very heart of the administration, capturing Adolfo de la Huerta, former provisional president, member of the Sonora triumvirate that had overthrown Carranza, and bosom friend of both Obregón and Calles

Alleging the "imposition" of Calles by Obregón, the major part of the army generals revolted on December, 1923 A section of labor and the agrarians supported Obregón The United States having recently recognized his government, acceded to his request to sell arms The rebellion was overcome by a hair-breadth after four months, but the country was prostrate Like Sisyphus, Calles, on taking office on December 1, 1924, had to begin again at the bottom

The treasury not only was bare, but $47,000,000 (pesos) borrowed in the closing Obregón days and unpaid salaries constituted a pressing deficit Calles began an administrative house cleaning with unprecedented vigor and enthusiasm Efficiency became the watchword "Moralization" of the entire administrative service, which he had promised, began Out of the economies effected in nine months, Calles was able not only to balance the budget, pay internal debts, and resume the again interrupted foreign debt installments, but to found the long discussed national bank with a gold reserve of $68,000,000 (pesos) A National Agricultural Bank and four regional agricultural banks followed

These achievements, applauded by every shade of public opinion, were accompanied by greatly increased efficiency in the execution of agrarian reform For the first time real progress was visible here Concomitantly large scale irrigation and road building were begun By the end of Calles' second year, the great Mexico-Puebla highway, skirting the shoulder of Ixtaccihuatl, was complete, permitting a former five-hour train journey in three hours by automobile

This progress, however, was interrupted by the legislation to enact the constitution which had remained an abstraction for nearly a decade Enforcing its anticlerical provisions led to the withdrawal of the clergy from the churches and subsequent armed uprising by certain Catholics At the same time, land and petroleum legislation strained relations with the United States The synchronizing of these issues appeared to threaten disaster to the Calles administration The economic depression became grievous

Business in some lines was almost at a standstill Revenues fell off, necessitating repeated retrenchment, with an interruption of the reconstructive school program, road building, and public health work

The administration, however, stood Its head was "bloody but unbowed" It put down the Catholic rebellion, which had been needlessly prolonged by the eternally corrupt military element International tension was ultimately relieved by the withdrawal of Ambassador Sheffield, the sending of Dwight W Morrow as ambassador, and a Mexican supreme court decision pointing to a non-retroactive and non-confiscatory interpretation of the petroleum legislation

Whether the principles which Calles deemed involved in his early insistence on this policy justified the prophesiable economic depression and consequent retardation of the reconstructive program, now seems dubious

As 1927 neared its close, the Calles Government was more firmly entrenched than ever It had weathered every storm, including a military flurry in the customary preelection manner, which was crushed ruthlessly before it had time to gather momentum

The Mexican Government was also on the high road to a friendlier relationship with the Government of the United States than either country had known, and was prepared to pass the administration peaceably at the end of 1928 to its successor, Obregón

All in all, the administration represented tangible achievement in increased stability, the consolidation of the revolutionary program, in progress along the path of reconstruction, and the clearing of the way for future disposal of pressing problems These long-standing problems — as they confront, and are confronted by, the governments "born of the Revolution," are the subjects of the subsequent chapters



LAND

LAND

I

THE struggle for land harks back into Mexican prehistory In forgotten ages, nomads filing from the north through parched deserts reached a mighty upland, where the cool air, tempering the tropic sun, gave health and vigor and kept sweet for days the yield of the chase In high valleys, through which mountain streams trickled, the wanderers turned to the soil Agriculture spread south from the mesa and east into the lowlands bordering the great salt waters Successive migrations halted on the plateau Cultures developed, population grew In time, settlements occupied all the fertile pockets and conflict for them began

In the two centuries before Cortés, the latest arrivals, the Aztecs, at first confined to the lake-swamps of central Anáhuac, had vanquished the earlier comers The land was now well filled Not always did it sustain its people The simple rites of an unencompassed tribe to propitiate the spirits of rain, earth, corn, and harvest no longer served A ferocious religion, bristling with auxiliary gods, sought to satisfy the stubborn earth and sky with sacrifice of subject neighbors and drenched the land in blood, so that it might yield more to those who claimed it as their own [1]

How can there be land shortage in a territory of three quarters of a million square miles,[2] always sparsely settled?

So Nature made it Desert, barren mountain, saline flat, volcanic outcrop, surface much of the Mexican plateau, which thrusting up sharply from the narrow coastal plains and rising gradually from North to South occupies three quarters of the nation's area

[1] Wrote the descendant of Tezcucan kings

"In the year Matlactli Tochtli (1450 A D) * * * the season was cold * * * In the three years following, the grains * * * of the earth were almost entirely lacking * * * The famine became so excessive that many people sold their children in the region of Totonapán, to which the scourge did not extend As the inhabitants of that province were great idolaters, they sacrificed to the Gods all the slaves they purchased, thinking thus to maintain them propitious and to keep the calamities from extending to their lands The three chiefs of the empire * * * seeing that the disaster continued, consulted with the republic of Tlaxcallan to see if a remedy could be found The priests and ministers of the temples in Mexico declared that the Gods were irritated against the empire, and that to appease them it was necessary to sacrifice a great number of human victims and to continue always thus to keep the Gods favorable Netzahualcoyotzín, who was far from this opinion * * * maintained that the prisoners of war would suffice * * * But the priests answered that wars were waged * * * only at long intervals * * * Xicotencatl, one of the Tlaxcallan chiefs, then proposed that henceforth continuous warfare be established between his country and the kingdom of Tezcuco and its allies * * * All the prisoners would be sacrificed to the Gods * * * It was agreed * * * Thus began the wars and the horrible sacrifices to the Gods * * *" Ixtlilxochitl, *Histoire des Chichimeques*, ch xli

Since Cortés's victory was made possible by the internecine warfare of the various tribes and, especially through the aid of the Tlaxcallans and others against their traditional enemies in Mexico (City), have we not here the agrarian basis of the Conquest?

[2] 765,762 sq miles is the area of the Mexican mainland Cleland, Mexican Year Book, p 86

In the damp hot lands bordering the sea, the *tierra caliente*, man has not yet been able long to hold his own [1] There, amid enervating heat and bacterial onslaught, where riotous vegetation strangles the efforts of the tropical pioneers, does rain fall in plenty, indeed, in excess — ally to all that is noxious in the jungle

In the temperate zone, the *tierra templada*, midway up the 8,000 foot plateau, where an equable temperature and ample rainfall furnish an ideal climatic combination, the precipitate slopes cannot retain top-soil or water Against the colder rock wall the heavy rain-clouds burst, gouging out the nascent sod, returning their torrential burden in tearing cascades to the sea These dark water-carriers, having lost their cargo, arrive light and empty at the cool zone, the *tierra fría*, where dampness vanishes into the thin dry air Here, where the soil is often good, rainfall is seldom sufficient, comes plentifully but a few weeks in the year [2] Here reigns the great God Sun

Throughout the vast Mesa del Norte the golden sun blazes through a quivering sea of moisture-storing cactus and shrivelled *mesquite* on yellow sand or on blinding white stretches, where alkali forbids even these resistant growths In the distance lilac mountains beckon But their cool opalescence is a mirage, for they are waterless, their jagged crests fantastically whittled by the driven sand Close to, one sees the purple shadows between ridges crimsoned by the setting sun to be the deep erosions of their soilless slopes, grooved by rare cloud-bursts that lose themselves in the debris at the foot, or channel a useless *arroyo* bed a short way into the mesa

Southward and upward, the flatness becomes undulating, the gray-green turf is punctuated to the vanishing point by crownlike *magueyes*, dwindling to dots — the dots fusing to lines A land that with more water would bloom In valley bottoms twenty, thirty miles away through the clear air, an emerald patch shouts of a spring, or accumulated rain-water, a Mexican oasis What was gray dust is rich brown loam brilliant with green growth Tall *ahuehuetes* shade the clustered habitations that too seem sprung from the quickened soil Magenta bougainvillia droops luxuriantly

[1] The Yucatán Peninsula with a moderate rainfall and swept by the cooling trade winds, is an exception

[2] In an average year (1922) the total precipitation on the plateau over a V-shaped area with Mexico City as its southern apex, including Aguascalientes and Durango on the west and San Luis Potosí on the east, and spreading to include all Northern Mexico save the Gulf State of Tamaulipas and a part of adjacent Nuevo León, was between 10 and 14 inches, excepting a central area around Torreón where it was less than 10 Moving outward from the sides of the V which would correspond to an easterly and westerly descent from the plateau the precipitation increases steadily reaching 78 inches along the east and west coasts, between the sixteenth and twenty-second parallels, in the South, in the Orizaba Córdoba region of Vera Cruz where the plateau rises most abruptly and on the Pacific coast of Chiapas attaining 80 inches (Data from Boletín del Servicio Meteorológico Mexicano Segundo Semestre de 1922, Pedro C Sánchez Director, Estudios Geográficos y Climatológicos)

In comparison with a maximum 14 inch rainfall for the Mexican plateau, in the same year the rainfall in the United States was For the Atlantic Coast States 44 inches, for the states bordering the Mississippi, 47 inches and for the Pacific Coast States, 30 inches (U S Dept of Agriculture, Yearbook, 1922, p 1044)

over pink plaster walls Scarlet geraniums line every window-sill Roses blossom at all seasons Human life, copper-brown, red-blanketed, blue-shawled, animal life, bovine, equine — teems

But fifty feet higher, the hill-side is sere, brown, prickly with nopal and vertical *pitahaya* Scarce two rods above the wonder-working water, the desert holds its own

As the great ridges of the Sierra Madre *Oriental* and *Occidental* converge about the Mesa Central, the plateau bursts into many mountains Giant peaks soar into eternal ice, as if in response to the encircling pressure of the Mother Sierra About and between them lies the enchanted Mexico that has been the goal of human ambition for centuries Here Asiatics who had forgotten their origin ceased æon-old wanderings Here the Spaniards knew they had reached their journey's end For this region Mexicans have fought for a century Here, in the national granary, half of Mexico's population is concentrated

It is for the sweep of fertile mountain-encircled plain through which sparkle the melted snows of lofty volcanoes, for the narrower, lush valleys, for every small concavity enriched by the gathering of waters, that the age-long passion for land has smouldered The luminous Puebla valley, behind which the glistening Smoke Mountain and the White Woman beckoned the awe-struck *conquistadores*, the fecund *llanos* that ring the great rock-vaulted Malintzi in Tlaxcala — Aztec "land of bread", the wide sunlit valley of Toluca, over which broods the craterous Nevado, the Morelos bowl, through whose sheltered warmth the giant Ajusco looses a hundred gushing streams, the broad basin of the Bajío in Guanajuato, the lake-watered regions of Chapala, in Jalisco, and Cuitzeo and Pátzcuaro in Michoacán Such as these are the few rich prizes, which, from time immemorial, have evoked the lust of the strong and kept alive the land hunger of the many

Where rainfall was capricious [1] the ground water came to have an im-

[1] The amount of rainfall registered at Tacubaya in the Federal District during the month of May, in which the rainy season may be said to begin has been as follows, the last quarter century

Years	*Rainfall MM*	*Years*	*Rainfall MM*	*Years*	*Rainfall MM*
1900	59 4	1909	28 0	1918	63 4
1901	24 9	1910	16 6	1919	8 1
1902	22 3	1911	53 7	1920	111 5
1903	40 6	1912	36 5	1921	32 1
1904	65 4	1913	31 5	1922	50 3
1905	33 9	1914	149 7	1923	30 1
1906	38 1	1915	10 2	1924	56 1
1907	101 6	1916	35 7	1925	49 5
1908	153 0	1917	23 9	1926	35 6

Thus we see that in 1908, the year of maximum precipitation nineteen times as much rain fell as in the dry year 1919 in which the he preceding year, 1918, and one thirteenth that of nth on which rain fell varied from the 1st — in the to the 22nd, in 1915 Similar irregularities are the by Mexican Metereological Service)

portance equal to that of the land itself The defense of those closer to the fountainhead against the attackers down stream was seasonal in the pre-Cortesian days [1]

The Aztecs had both individual and communal land ownership [2] The former provided for rulers, priests, and warriors, and was probably a late development The *atlepetlalli* [3] or *calpullali*,[4] was land belonging in common to the *calpulli*, the clan or village,[5] and could not be alienated,[6] although its *use* was directly heritable by individuals The usufruct belonged to the local inhabitants, and if one moved away he lost his right therein [7]

The Aztec communal system presented marked analogies to the Castilian practice under which each village had its own ground, the so-called *propios*, consisting of a town site or *fundo legal*, and a common or *ejido*,[8] and other lands for the joint agricultural and pastoral needs of the community

After rewarding the conquerors, the crown, solicitous for its own share in the proceeds,[9] decreed the preservation of the essential features of Aztec village land tenure [10] By confirming the *atlepetlalli*, christened *fundo legal*, each pueblo secured a town site twelve-hundred *varas* [11] square and surrounding it an *ejido* or communal land, a league square [12] More was to be given if needed [13] The Aztec code of water rights also seemed so practical that it was

[1] "In regard to irrigation * * * the Cholultecos were dependent for it upon their neighbors of Huexotzingo, since all the drainage of Ixtaccihuatl had to pass through the latter's territory * * * The use of this water was a fruitful source of dissensions, and hence arose the almost continuous quarrel between the two tribes * * * It continued the same after the Conquest The archives of Cholula contain many documents relative to this continuous strife down to the present century The drinking water of Cholula now descends from the *haciendas* of Chahuac and Buenavista Both lie on the slopes of Ixtaccihuatl in the district of Huexotzingo" Bandelier, Report of an Archeological Tour in Mexico p 216–7

[2] Bandelier, On the Distribution and Tenure of Land * * * Among the Ancient Mexicans, p 385–448

Waterman, Bandelier's Contribution to the Study of Ancient Mexican Social Organization, p 249–282

Kohler, El Derecho de los Aztecas, p 47–52 94–5

H Romero Gil, Memoria Sobre el Estado Social y Moral Que Tuvieron Los Mexicanos Bajo el Imperio Azteca, etc , in Bol de Geo y Estad , vol I, p 257–64, 313–20, 427–32, 478–86

[3] From *atl*, water, *tepetl*, uninhabited hill, *tlalli*, land "irrigated lands rising" (about a community)

[4] Land belonging to the *calpulli*

[5] Originally *calpulli* signified kinship or clan Later when the tribes had become sedentary, the word came to be associated with locality, and to mean district or village

[6] Zurita Breve y Sumaria Relación, etc p 93

[7] *Idem* p 94

[8] From the Latin *exitus*, outlet

[9] In a subsequent confirmation of the original order the king declares

"On behalf of the settlers of New Spain it has been represented to me that they * * * suffer much from the continual complaints which the Indians originate * * * resulting not merely in a menace to their exchequer but to mine * * *" From the royal *cédula* of July 12, 1605 In Leyes y Disposiciones p 7

[10] "We command that the sale, gift or confirmation of lands be made with great care so that to the Indians may remain — with good measure — both the private and communal lands the waters, and irrigation works, the ditches and whatever other improvements * * * they may have made, and that under no circumstances these may be sold or alienated * * * " Recopilación de las Leyes de Indias Lib IV, Tit xii, Ley xviii This embodies various royal orders on the subject

[11] Approximately yards At first it was a 1000 *varas* square

[12] Leyes y Disposiciones 3

[13] In a *cedula* of June 4, 1687 the king ordered that in addition to the land previously provided for the villages, whenever "the size of the population warrants * * * very much more land should be

perpetuated [1] To every community of natives, without exception, existing at the Conquest, the sovereign conceded land [2] A few individual holdings, small *mercedes* [3] sometimes confirming previous possession, usually to caciques who had rendered services during the Conquest, were also established [4]

The grants to the Spaniards consisted first of vast tracts with *encomiendas* of their native population

The *Marquesado del Valle* conceded to Cortés measured 25,000 square miles It embraced the valleys of Oaxaca, Toluca, Cuernavaca, the Pacific half of the Tehuantepec Isthmus, a third of the present State of Vera Cruz and much besides, including twenty-two towns with their surrounding land, and a total population of more than a hundred thousand souls Mines, woods, waters, the entire civil and criminal jurisdiction, and the right to the labor of the inhabitants were included in this *mayorazgo*, or entailed estate, which being indivisible, passed to the direct descendants [5]

What is now Guanajuato, ten thousand square miles, fell to one of Cortés's lieutenants, with its rich silver mines, a veritable kingdom [6] Another received the *encomienda* of Xilotepec, exceeding in vassals — 130,000 — Cortés's grant [7]

The wealth of these concessions rested on the native labor In 1588 the Dominican Father de Pravia wrote the king

> What with the plague which never leaves them, and throwing them into the mines, distributing them for farm labor and building construction * * * the Indians are perishing in increasing numbers And to exact increased tributes from them is the greatest of their afflictions which is wasting them away * * * The wealth of this land, so far, has been the great multitude of Indians rather than the silver taken out, and to the extent that they perish just so fast these provinces will become poor and desolate * * * [8]

Largely to prevent their overseas kingdom from becoming "poor and desolate," the monarchs sought to preserve the Indian lands from the rapacity of the Spaniards This measure had become a necessity, as to escape ill-treatment the native was fleeing to the sierras, preferring to live like a wild

distributed to them * * * to whatever extent appear necessary so that the Indians may live and cultivate without shortage or limitation" Rep in *El Problema Agrario*, Lucio Mendieta y Nuñez, p 45 These royal legalizations of previously existing practice and of contemporary needs are the touchstone of the modern agrarian reform

[1] *Recopilación* Lib IV, Tit xvii, Ley xi "We order that the procedure followed by the Indians in the division and distribution of waters be kept by the Spaniards among whom were distributed and assigned the lands * * *"

[2] Orozco, La Organización de la República, 10 The *reducciones* missions, and pueblos founded *after* the Conquest in less settled regions to unite and convert the scattered Indians to the Christian faith, were not included in this land apportionment

[3] *Merced*, i e mercy or gift

[4] Mendieta y Nuñez, *op cit*, p 43

[5] Puga, Cedulario, vol I, p 129

[6] Roa El Aspecto Agrario de la Revolución Mexicana, p 58

[7] McBride Land Systems of Mexico, *op cit*, p 458

[8] Letter from Father Pedro de Pravia to Philip II, dated Mexico, Dec 8, 1588, in Documentos Inéditos del Siglo XVI Para la Historia de México, Coll by Mariano Cuevas, Doc LXX, p 421–2

beast The *ejido* served to lure him back Out of it he was expected, in what time he could snatch from the tasks on his master's estate, to raise enough for his own sustenance, the king's tribute, and the contributions to the clergy[1] Hence, in the earlier days before the clericals themselves became great landholders, was in part derived their solicitude for the native and their antagonism to the *encomenderos*[2]

But whatever the motives for the attempted protection of the Indian, the land legislation was beneficent and wise With his old gods overthrown, his very name transformed by baptism, his toil at the service of others, his land remained the one link with the life he had known, a tap-root into his long evolving agricultural past Integrated in his own village among his own kind, he escaped the extremest degradation of slavery Then and there, amid new ways and strange people, in his lost country the Indian's land became his *tierra*, the *patria chica* of his affection and desire — his fatherland

Out of much conflicting evidence it seems clear that whatever the crown's shortcomings, it sought to safeguard the Indian's land from the Spaniards One of the earliest foreign visitors to New Spain, in 1572, the Englishman Henry Hawks, has left impressive testimony on that score

* * * In Mexico the Indians are favored by the judges * * * If any Spaniard does them an injury, despoiling them of anything (as is the common practice) and this happens in a pueblo in which there is a judge, the aggressor is punished, just as if he had done it to another Spaniard When a Spaniard finds himself far from Mexico, or other place where there is justice, he thinks he can do anything to the poor Indians that he pleases, knowing that the place for redress is far away, and thus, if the Indians do not obey him, he beats or maltreats them according to his pleasure[3]

In the conflict between the royal interest and that of the great vassals, the king's procedure was gradually to abolish the *encomiendas*, under one pretext or other, and to incorporate them as villages of the crown, placed under the direct charge of royal officers, *corregidores* The *hacendados*, as the *encomienda* system gradually waned, sought to substitute economic for legal coercion, by absorbing the native villages in their own estates The Indians sought protection in the king's justice How deeply they were concerned and how current was the abuse, is revealed in the observation of a contemporary of the closing colonial days

Never is there to be observed in the *Juzgado General de Indios*[4] any kind of suit but that relating to the usurpation of lands and boundaries[5]

[1] Ancona, Hist de Yucatán, vol II, p 171

[2] This does not apply to some of the earlier missionaries who were unselfishly devoted to their task of propagating their faith and whose dominating sentiment was a profound compassion for their native flock See chapter on the Church

[3] Icazbalceta, translated from Hakluyt in Obras vol VII, p 145

[4] The *Audiencia's* sub court for Indian affairs

[5] Villarroel, Mexico Por Dentro y Por Fuera, p 32

An illustrative conflict between the local community and the great estate was the defeat of the Conde del Valle de Orizaba, in the seventeen fifties, by the inhabitants of Orizaba, which, perhaps largely in consequence of maintaining its independence, has now grown to city size

The count, by gradually edging in, had worked this village into his domains The *Audiencia* asked him to show that the titles to his *Condado*, established two centuries earlier, properly included the village limits The plea of the *Fiscal* reveals the logic upon which the agrarian "restitutions" and "dotations" of to-day are in part based Said he

> Either the pueblo was founded before the count [meaning the count's ancestors] entered into this domain — or since [1]

The royal officials found that the pueblo antedated the *Condado* and decided against the count Orizaba instead of being swallowed up in his domains as a mere collection of huts, inhabitated by serfs bound to him, was confirmed as an independent pueblo with its *fundo legal*, its *ejido*, its right to waters and the privilege of its inhabitants of continuing as direct vassals on the king, subject only to his officers [2]

Not all villages fared so well "Many pueblos lack lands," wrote a chronicler in 1787, "either because they have sold them, or because those with power have usurped them, I incline more to the second" [3]

Legally the *ejidos* with their water rights were inalienable [4] Selling them was forbidden But the *hacendado* could, given the natives' helplessness and necessity, evade this provision A few Indians alleging individual ownership would conclude a sale for a trifling sum, the powerful neighbor would move in, putting the inhabitants to work on his estates Then by dint of possession, by intimidation, by bribery, and finally by long continued occupation, the lands would become his in fact if not in law

Many new-comers without any title or right whatever would possess themselves of large extensions of land [5] Surveying was non-existent A grant would extend "as far as the eye could embrace from the top of a mountain" [6] The Spaniards proved a far-sighted lot Often they developed second sight Other grants would be defined as "from mountain to mountain," with inadequate identification of these landmarks — in a land of mountains Not only were the Spaniards imbued with the *conquistador* psychology, but under the colonial legislation they continued to be the armed guardians of the new realm More than elsewhere was possession "nine points of the law" and the corrective agencies, the royal will and

[1] Arróniz, Fundación de Orizaba, Ms quoted in Hist de Orizaba, p 378
[2] Arróniz, *op cit*, p 376, 383
[3] Villarroel, *op cit*, p 17
[4] Recopilación Lib IV Tit xii, Ley xviii
[5] Mendieta y Núñez, *op cit*, p 53
[6] Roa, *op cit*, p 58

legislation, and their enforcement did not operate till long after the event, if at all [1]

The natives who managed to hold their lands were less liable to abuse, knew what it meant to sleep under a thatched roof in rainy weather and lived with their families They were also a step further from starvation in that they had a better chance, especially in the periodic famines that swept the country and precipitated uprisings,[2] to secrete, for their own use, some of the grain they had raised

These famines were in part due to natural conditions, which could have been avoided by a little providence on the part of the land owners and the authorities, but often were aggravated by monopoly and speculation [3] At such times the Spaniards were subject to slight discomfort but the Indians succumbed miserably Fr Cogolludo, a Franciscan, wrote as an eye-witness of the maize shortage in Yucatán in 1651

> The Indians suffered the most * * * Fathers had not wherewith to feed their children They combed the woods for roots and herbs and could not still their hunger It moved one to compassion to see the stomachs of the little Indian children bloated with the roots they ate, the rest of their bodies just skin and bones * * * living images of the dead They deserted their villages, falling dead on the by-ways and in the hills * * * Many * * * perished by the sea, their bones causing horror to those who saw them
>
> Within four months after there was said to be no more corn, both native and Castilian chickens were all consumed, so that in the convent of Motul, one of the richest curacies we have, to which I was elected guardian in the chapter, two or three months passed without our having them Hardly did we have any strips of dried beef * * * Fridays and our regular fast days, we were fortunate to have an omelet of three eggs for four Religious * * * Pork was not to be had at any price * * * As all the cooking is done with lard * * * and this lacking, the meals were insipid, and what with consisting of unaccustomed dishes, damaged one's health, as may well be understood [4]

But the Indians who lost their holdings were chronically on the edge of starvation What happened to them is described by a resident of Aguascalientes in 1792

[1] In the middle of the seventeenth century King Philip IV enlisted gentlemen of fortune to fight the British filibusterers by guaranteeing definite possession of land "however it might have been secured and whosesoever it might have been" Illegal seizures were thus validated for the time being An account of the loss of its lands by the pueblo of Tenamastlan Jalisco through such procedure is found in Apuntes Estadísticos de la Municipalidad de Tenamastlan in Boletin de Geog y Estad , vol III, 1871, p 280–3 This is not exceptional but typical of the many ways in which lands passed from the Indians

[2] Rivera Hist de Jalapa vol I p 101 "On June 8 1692 in consequence of the famines which were getting worse there was a riot in Mexico in which the vice regal palace was burned The shops were sacked * * * these riots repeating themselves in nearly all the towns of New Spain where there were any persons of means"

[3] Bustamante, Suplemento a la Hist de los Tres Siglos de México vol III, para 63

[4] Cogolludo, Los Tres Siglos de la Dominación Española en Yucatán, vol II p 686–7

The *hacendados* employ the agricultural peons only three months a year [1] during which time they earn so wretched a wage that it hardly suffices for a miserable existence during that period The other nine months they tramp from province to province * * * supporting themselves by the fruit and seeds of the forests [2]

With insight rare in that day the same writer comments

Their existence in this manner without household goods, without home, with scarcely a blanket as their entire wardrobe, and the consequent impossibility of becoming domesticated and living in that ordinary comfort which society should afford everyone through his labor * * * has formed in them a character of idleness, abandonment, and licentiousness responsible for all sorts of vice and disorder The wisest legislation * * * the severest punishments * * * will not serve to correct this evil in many years if it is not remedied at its root, which would be to provide employment for every idle one and to furnish him a fixed abode [2]

These disinherited, homeless, starved, and ragged outcasts flocked to Hidalgo's standard To rectify their condition he decreed the return of their lands which he considered had been stolen from them by the Spaniards [3] For the masses who integrated his forces the revolution of 1810 was an agrarian revolution That was, chiefly, why it was defeated The land-holding interests, individual and ecclesiastical, were too powerful Their political revolution of 1821 — a counter-revolution [4] — denied relief to the landless Indeed, without the check maintained on the *latifundistas* by the royal overlord, the Indians were to fare steadily worse Unescapable debt bondage had been replacing legal slavery [5]

The year after independence, Joel Poinsett, later the first American envoy to Mexico, found in the city of Querétaro "upwards of eleven thousand Indians * * * still held in * * * brutal * * * bondage by the manufacturers" [6]

[1] That is during the planting and harvest

[2] The writer is unknown He was undoubtedly an ecclesiastic as his observations form a fragment of a book which originated in the Convents of San Diego and La Merced in Aguascalientes Moreover outside the clergy few had at that time sufficient education so to write One might conjecture that this priest or religious was one of those sympathetic with the revolution which broke out eighteen years later, assuming that he was then alive But this is not an inevitable deduction Abad y Queipo subsequently bishop of Michoacán one of the severest critics of the evils of the colonial land tenure, was among the most vehement enemies of independence The authenticity of the above document, however, is beyond suspicion despite an almost *ex post facto* wisdom, for it is reprinted in the Hist de Aguascalientes, by Agustín R González, p 72–3, published in 1881, a generation before the contemporary agrarian reforms were considered

Bishop Abad y Queipo's agrarian reforms proposed in Estado Moral y Político en que se Hallaba la Población del Virreinato de N España en 1799, were Gratuitous distribution of royal lands (*realengos*) among Indians and *castas*, substitution of private for communal ownership of village lands, and the consequent parcelling out of these lands to individual villagers, the right of the people to cultivate the unused lands of the great proprietors

What could more clearly demonstrate the existence a century and a quarter ago of precisely the agrarian problem that until this day has confronted Mexico?

[3] See p 30, 32

[4] See p 36–9

[5] Already at the beginning of the seventeenth century when the crown began annulling the *encomiendas* "the custom had become prevalent of practically evading the royal decrees against slavery by advancing the native workmen sums of money which they could never pay, and which thus became a life-lien of their labor" Bancroft, Hist of Mexico, vol III, ch xvi

[6] Poinsett, Notes on Mexico (Made in the Autumn of 1822), p 182–3

These textile workers were victims of the same system as their fellows in the field, and nothing more clearly reveals the retrogression of the independence of 1821 than to recall that these very Querétaro operatives had been lifted from debt bondage by the Corregidor Domínguez, shortly before Hidalgo's "Cry of Dolores" [1]

In the village of Quelitán, San Luis Potosí, Mr Poinsett wrote of the Indian huts

> Compared with these habitations, a Calmuck or even a Tartar tent is a palace They are made of stones and mud, raised not more than five feet from the ground and thatched with leaves of the yucca, the walls all black with smoke, for they have no chimneys, and the earth floors are covered with filth I certainly never saw a negro-house in Carolina so comfortless Any master, who, in our country, should lodge his slaves in this manner, would be considered barbarous and inhuman [2]

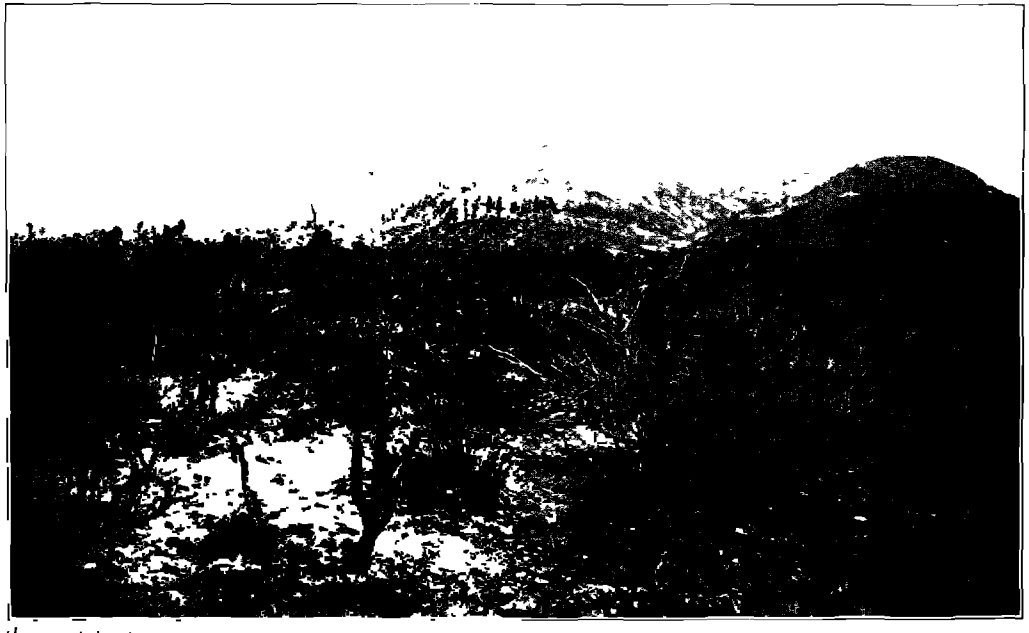
In 1823 the Mexican Congress abolished the further entailing of estates Some of these had grown, in the judgment of one of the last viceroys, vast enough for an entire kingdom [3] The Cortés heritage had swelled to include one city, 15 *villas*,[4] 157 pueblos, 89 *haciendas*, 119 *ranchos*, 5 *estancias*,[5] including 150,000 people [6]

But a far greater entailment than any of these *mayorazgos* had long been forming — the mortmain of the church No accurate figures of its size are available, but one may safely assume that the church owned "not less than one half of the real estate of the country," [7] that being the estimate of Lucas Alaman, the clerical leader It held mortgages on most of the remaining agricultural properties and had become the national money-lender

The process by which, at the close of the colonial period, many individual estates were passing to the church and the consequences to the prosperity of the region are thus revealed by a contemporary

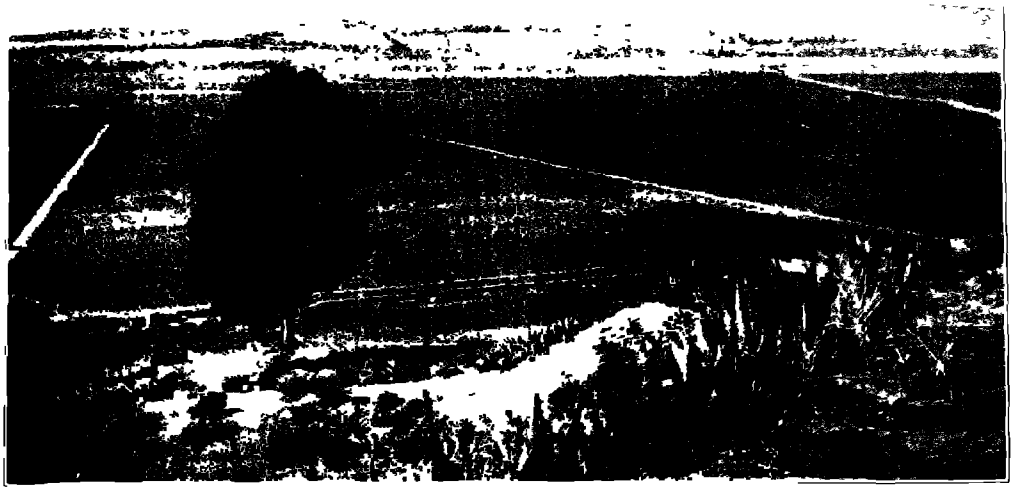
> The estates in the section [8] are mortgaged above their value in behalf of annuities and endowments for cathedrals, convents, and chaplaincies, in interest alone more than they can produce Their owners are therefore, merely administrators and the real proprietors are those who have charge of the revenues which they spend in the cities where they reside If, to be happy, a region requires that its exports exceed somewhat its imports, one cannot imagine how this province can avoid going backward more and more every day [9]

[1] Bancroft, Hist of Mexico, vol IV, p 114–15 fn
[2] Poinsett, *op cit*, p 254
[3] Revillagigedo, Instrucción Reservada para 466
[4] A *villa* was a settlement laid out and originally peopled by Spaniards and distinct from the already established Indian pueblos
[5] *Ranchos* and *estancias* were smaller *haciendas* or subdivisions thereof generally under a separate sub-management
[6] Navarro y Noriega Memoria Sobre la Población del Reino de Nueva España
[7] Alaman, Historia de Méjico, vol I, p 67, Humboldt's estimate was that the clergy owned four fifths
[8] Aguascalientes
[9] Quoted in Agustín R González, *op cit*, p 74–5



DESERT, BARREN MOUNTAIN

A typical stretch of land on the mesa Hidalgo



THE WIDE VALLEY OF TOLUCA — IN THE BACKGROUND, EL NEVADO (14,895 FT.)

Independence had removed the king's supposedly restrictive legislation,[1] and the ecclesiastical acquisition of land proceeded unhindered Owing to special clerical privileges and exemptions independent agriculture suffered a constant handicap

Agriculture (except mining, the only important national industry) was seriously impaired by the system of tithes and "first-fruits" For since these were paid in kind, and as the clergy paid no salaries, rent, interest, excises, or taxes of any kind, it sold the grain at prices below those fixed by the growers, thus lowering the market prices In Aguascalientes, for example * * * the grain center, the growers encountered such a glut that they had to sell at less than cost, since the corn of the tithes had lowered the price to four and even three *reales* a *fanega* [2]

The *hacienda* worker's life under independence, the archeologist Stephens clearly depicted in 1841

The *hacienda* of Uxmal is ten leagues or thirty miles square, but only a small portion is cultivated * * * The Indians are of two classes, *vaqueros*, or tenders of cattle and horses who receive twelve dollars per year, with five *almudes* of maize per week, and *labradores*, or laborers, who are also called *Luneros*, from their obligation in consideration of their drinking the water of the *hacienda* to work for the master without pay on *Lunes*, or Monday * * * When they marry and have families, and, of course, need more water, they are obliged to clear, sow, and gather twenty *mecates* [3] of maize for the master * * * When the bell of the church is struck five times, every Indian is obliged to go forthwith to the *hacienda*, and for a *real* [4] a day and a ration of three cents worth of maize do whatever work the master, or the majordomo, may direct The authority of the master or his delegate * * * is absolute He * * * punishes for offenses, acting both as judge and executioner If the majordomo punishes an Indian unreasonably * * * and the master refuse to give him redress * * * the [Indian] * * * is under no obligation to remain * * * unless he is in debt to the master, but practically, this binds him hand and foot The Indians are all improvident * * * and never keep any accounts A dishonest master may always bring them in debt, and generally they are really so * * * There is but little chance of [their] ever paying off the smallest debt [5]

From such conditions was spawned the "War of the *Castas*," so named because apparently just a conflict between Indian and white At bottom it was largely an agrarian revolt In the forties the Maya peons, "at the magical news that they were to be given sufficient land to work * * * rose as one man" [6] to follow their leader Santiago Iman, who had promised it

[1] Its object had been precisely to prevent the concentration of too much property in the hands of the church "The discoverers first settlers and their descendants * * * may not sell" (lands) "to church or monastery, nor other ecclesiastical person, under penalty of losing them" Recopilación, Lib IV, tit xii, Ley x

[2] Guerrero *La Genesis del Crimen en Mexico*, p 189

[3] A *mecate* is twenty-four square yards

[4] Six and a quarter cents, U S currency

[5] Stephens Central America Chiapas and Yucatán, vol II, p 414–16

[6] Baqueiro, *Ensayo Histórico Sobre las Revoluciones de Yucatán* p 22–27

And the governor felt compelled to offer that "every Yucatecan who comes to the defense of the state * * * will receive besides his pay and regular campaign rewards, a square quarter league from the vacant state lands" [1] When this uprising, like many others which received less bloody notoriety, was savagely stamped out, the survivors were lashed back to the *haciendas* They got no land

The same conditions underlay the War of the Reform in the fifties While the leaders were groping to alter them with legislation and found the country involved in a religious war, the peons turned with long seething ferocity on their oppressors *Haciendas* were sacked — their staffs murdered As some victims were Spaniards international complications which contributed to intervention ensued

General Juan Alvarez, military leader of the movement against Santa Anna, which preceded the Reform, was violently attacked in the Spanish press for the murders in his bailiwick in the *Región Suriana*, the "South," composed of the States of Morelos and Guerrero, which fifty years later was again to be the cradle of agrarian revolt Alvarez was a man of absolute probity and decency [2] In a manifesto "to the cultured people of Europe and America" he emphatically repudiated complicity in these crimes But their background he pictured revealingly

> The majority of the *hacendados* and their servitors traffic and enrich themselves with the sweated misery of the unfortunate laborer, they entrap him into slavery, and debts there are which pass to the eighth generation In proportion as the debt and labor of the one increases, the humanity, reason, and justice of the other diminishes Such is the payment of so much toil, fatigue, and tears Expropriation and outrage is the barometer which ever rises Never does the insatiable avarice of certain *hacendados* lessen Slowly they are possessing themselves, now of privately owned lands, now of the *ejidos*, or those lands owned communally, when such there are And then, utterly barefaced, they allege ownership, without showing any legal title, whereupon the pueblos clamor for justice and protection But deaf are the tribunals to their pleas — and contempt, persecution, and imprisonment are the lot of those who claim what is theirs [3]

The Comonfort Government sought a solution in disamortization [4] It aimed not to take the clergy's wealth but to change the character of its property The law ordered the sale of the clerically owned estates to the lessees at a price based on a rental value of six per cent , or should the renter not desire to buy, the property could be denounced and purchased or sold

[1] Proclamation by Governor Miguel Barbachano of Yucatán Aug 26, 1842, pub in El Siglo XIX No 182 Sept 6 1842 Rep in Historia del * * * Comercio de Indios, Menéndez, p 29
[2] Vigil México á Través de los Siglos La Reforma, vol V, p 90
[3] Quoted in *idem*, p 251
[4] By the "Law of Disamortization of Ecclesiastical Estates," of June 25, 1856 Leyes y Disposiciones, p 9–14

to the highest bidder The law, therefore, aimed to break up the *latifundios* and out of them to create many small proprietors It prohibited *civil* as well as ecclesiastical corporations from owning real estate, the former category including the pueblo The purpose was to convey to each villager his proportion of the *ejido* By substituting personal for communal ownership it was hoped to stimulate the submerged Indian to individual initiative and open the way for his economic emancipation The measure aimed, in other words, to create both from above and below, a hitherto non-existent rural middle class

As agrarian reform this well-intentioned effort proved a failure To cross off with the stroke of a pen the encrusted feudalism of three centuries was well-nigh impossible The resistance of the church to the point of civil war — in which it did lose much of its wealth — and the sequent imperialist intervention with its chaos, went far to nullify the program But the greatest disaster was in the pueblos Unprepared, the Indians either clung without legal right or protection to the only kind of ownership they knew, or soon lost the newly acquired private title to unscrupulous speculators Like many other Mexican measures before and since, these reforms were entered into without due preparation and were wrecked by faulty enactment and execution The net result was to open the way for still further despoiling of the weak and greater land monopoly

The agricultural workers remained as before Maximilian and Carlota, reared in an atmosphere of privilege, and arriving in Mexico under clerical and conservative auspices, were horrified at conditions that could not escape their notice

> I have seen men struck with switches until they bled, I have literally put my fingers in the scars, I have fed families, dying of hunger, and led to work under the whip of the majordomo, I have seen men dying of exhaustion, charged with chains, dragging themselves into the open in order to end their lives under the eye of God, then thrown into a hole like dead dogs The *hacendado* speculates even on the food of these wretched people, and on the rag which half covers them He compels them to buy from him all their provisions, and at a price higher than that of the town market, he sells them at usurious rates all the poor fabrics they need, so that, when the account is settled, the Indian does not receive a *real*, for fourteen hours of labor It is, therefore, necessary that the Indian get deeper and deeper into debt, in this the master is powerfully aided by the priests, who make all pay at exorbitant price for the formulas of religion, and exploit to the limit the superstitious credulity of the Indian The liquidation for Holy Week, in particular, is arranged always to the peon's loss, and his condition is steadily worsening Under this system, it has been fixed that not a native family but owes at least a hundred pesos

So wrote the French agronomist, Burnouf, to Maximilian [1]

[1] Aug 19, 1865 Reinach-Foussemagne, Charlotte, Impératrice du Mexique, p 222–3

In vain did emperor and empress decree that the peon was responsible only for his own debts and not his father's, in vain did they attempt to shorten his hours of toil, in vain was corporal punishment forbidden The obstinate resistance of the *hacendado* set to naught all efforts to redeem these pariahs [1]

Besides *haciendas*, *villas*, and pueblos, several other categories of rural property have persisted in Mexico — the *ranchos*, *rancherías*, and *terrenos baldíos*

The *rancho* is a farm contrasting through its smaller size with the vast *hacienda* A few *ranchos* date from early colonial days These grants, sometimes with, sometimes without, *encomiendas* of native labor were designated a *peonía*, or reward to a peon or foot-soldier, which rarely exceeded two hundred acres, mostly pasture, or a *caballería* for the more patrician *caballero* or horseman, which was usually five times larger Dubious proceedings might expand these tracts to *hacienda* size Nowadays a *rancho* is termed a *hacienda* when it exceeds two thousand acres [2] Small tracts were also bestowed on later immigrants who as settlers were deemed less deserving than the conquering soldiers Unlike the recently aristocratized *conquistadores* these later arrivals, often peasant stock, continued to till the soil, working long and hard to make it productive

The earlier *ranchero* mated with a native But his descendants, as much through the economic superiority of their individual proprietorship as their Spanish blood, did not melt into the preponderantly Indian *castas* Successive generations married other *mestizos* and came to occupy an intermediate position, socially and economically, between the landed white aristocracy and the Indian peon Occasionally the *ranchero* was the natural son of *hacendado* and Indian wench favored with a small slice of the paternal estate

Individually the *ranchero* is all that is most Mexican Swarthy, tanned, mustachioed — days of *fiesta* find him cantering in tight-fitting leather *charro* costume crowned by an enormous conical *sombrero*, heavy with gold braid and tassels, legs hanging straight from high-pummelled saddle into broad *tapaderas* Huge blue steel spurs quicken his wiry sorrel pony into a prancing steed whose silver trimmed bridle jingles and flashes in the sunlight Horse and horseman are one, moving in muscular unison, a centaur of the mesa, as indigenous as the *maguey*

As an agriculturist, the *ranchero* represents the only rural middle class Mexico has known Compared to the homesteader of the western United States and to the "poor white" farmer of the South,[3] he has been properly

[1] Gaulot, La Verité Sur l'Expédition du Mexique, vol II p 291

[2] The terms are elastic Any small rural property may be called a *rancho* and often an estate of but a few hundred hectares may be an *hacienda*

[3] McBride, *op cit*, p 84–88

stigmatized as unprogressive,[1] but he was less so than *hacendado* or peon at the two extremes of agricultural society Supporting himself and his folks by growing and marketing his crops, he was the nation's only complete farmer

The growth of this class would have been highly beneficial to Mexico Although usually situated on the poorer hillside, these *ranchos* were intensively cultivated In the wide uplands that encircle the Valley of Toluca the deep green patches and scattered white farm houses, so unlike the rambling *hacienda* or huddled pueblo, tell unmistakably of independent effort and small ownership Despite the hostility of *hacendado*, the crop-raiding of bands that dared not attack the well-fortressed *hacienda*, and the discrimination of the government tax-collector,[2] the *ranchero* increased [3] At the end of the colonial period what is now Mexico contained 6676 *ranchos* [4] One hundred years later their number was 47,939 [5] Yet this represented a small fraction territorially compared with the *hacienda* controlled land and numerically an insignificant percentage of the rural population of ten million [6] Had the small holding been successfully encouraged from the start how different might have been Mexico's history!

The *terrenos baldíos* (untilled lands) were the stretches known in the colonial period as *realengos* owned directly by the crown At independence these passed to the nation Some were disposed of by state governments, but the greater part of them, lying in the less populated desert regions of the North or the tropics of the coasts and the South, remained unsurveyed and undefined In the eighties railway construction, the influx of foreign capital and the prospect of various kinds of hitherto untried exploitation of natural resources gave real estate a new potential value "As a consequence," writes Dr McBride "there followed an era of land grabbing not so much for the exploitation of the soil as for speculation The agrarian problem thus became still more acute, particularly in the Mesa Central and its tributary districts" [7]

A succession of laws [8] gave, in return for surveying the *baldíos*, *one third of the territory surveyed* The "development" companies, well-financed, counting on government support, thus themselves determined what lands fell to them for their services

As a result of this legislation some 50,000,000 hectares [9] — about 125,000,000 million acres — were surveyed Twenty-nine individuals or companies [10] were not merely given one third but a considerable part of the re-

[1] Los Rancheros Mexicanos, El Informador No 214 May 7, 1918
[2] Molina Enríquez Los Grandes Problemas Nacionales, p 95 96, 137
[3] A group of *ranchos* forming a rural community is generally known as a *ranchería*
[4] Navarro y Noriega, *op cit*, p 290
[5] Census of 1910
[6] Covarrubias, La Trascendencia Política de la Reforma Agraria p 22
[7] McBride, *op cit*, p 72
[8] May 31, 1875, December 15 1883, March 26, 1894
[9] The hectare equals 2 4771 acres [10] Mendieta y Núñez, *op cit*, p 92

mainder at negligible prices *For the disposal of one fifth of the national area*[1] *less than eight million pesos entered the treasury*[2]

Nevertheless, had these acquisitions been unpopulated, and been made the basis of genuine colonization, the country might have benefited But no such program was even attempted The so-called "Colonization Law" of 1894 revealed the bad faith of its proponents by abolishing the previously required settling of the lands, and the previously forbidden alienation of plots larger than 2500 hectares, and retroactively annulled whatever penalties might have been incurred for violating these provisions[3] Clearly, colonization was not -- and had probably never been — intended by either of the contracting parties Speculation with the national domain for private profit was their chief if not their only underlying purpose

Taking advantage of the vagueness of many boundaries and the dubiousness of many titles, surveying companies and government officials included as *terrenos baldíos* much that legitimately belonged to others The villages were the chief victims[4]

Many that had managed to retain their *ejidos* were now despoiled of them In addition to illegal despoilments many suffered within the law

The colonization law had created certain new categories of land, *demasías* and *excedencias*[5] *Demasías* were lands held within the "established" bounds of properties but in excess of the area specified by the deeds[6] The very definition reveals the previous irregularities in the acquisition of territory — far distant boundaries had been "established," but the enclosed hectareage failed to correspond *Excedencias* were lands which had been held by the owner twenty years or more bordering on the property to which he could show a legal deed[7] — in other words "usurpations"

In its application, the law, instead of recovering from great *haciendas* for nation or communities, lands formerly absorbed, spared the *latifundistas* and fell crushingly on the persisting village communalties The basic error had lain in the Lerdo Law of 1856, but this had in part gone unenforced, because enforcement so clearly contravened its original purpose and worked such evident damage to the villagers With the new increment on all lands these scruples vanished and the reiteration of the provisions against civil corporations from holding real estate made these alienations possible

This process went on unchecked to the end of the Díaz régime A specific case, the engulfment of four pueblos and five *ranchos* by a powerful *hacendado*

[1] Mendieta y Nuñez, *op cit*, p 92
[2] 7 992 814 pesos Cossío Como y Por Quienes Se ha Monopolizado La Propiedad Rustica En Mexico, p 24
[3] McBride, *op cit*, p 74
[4] Cossío, *op cit*, p 17 Gives a full analysis and documentation of the process
[5] *Demás*, "too much", and *excedencias*, "something in excess" The terms themselves were familiar from colonial times
[6] McBride, *op cit*, p 74 [7] McBride, *op cit*, 74

and government official, without right other than that of might and desire, as reported in 1909 in the "Revista de Mérida," should prove illuminating This was two years before the fall of Díaz, he was as firmly intrenched as ever, and agrarian reform was not yet conceived The source is unimpeachable, the facts are of record Only Díaz's announcement of his coming retirement had loosened restrictions on the press somewhat

Many of the inhabitants of the pueblos of Xbohom, Sosichén, and Xpambihá of this district, adjudged as *baldíos* to Señor Esteban Rejón García, administrator of the estates of the Minister of Agriculture, Don Olegario Molina, have presented themselves at the *jefatura política* to try and obtain their rights But they got nothing, and the time limit in which they must vacate those pueblos, with the right to dismantle their houses and transport them elsewhere has been reaffirmed What is most sad is that not a few of these poor Indians used the proceeds of their past labors to dig wells in their gardens, to build houses, some of stone and palm thatch, and all these and their spring sowing they will lose

In identical circumstances are Rafael Aguilar, Laureano Briseno, Susano Planco, and Felipe Tinâ, owners respectively of the farms Xpakan, San Felipe, Xtú, Ozonot, and Xhahabat, who have received like orders, and face the fact that overnight they will lose the little they have The ranch of Señor Aguilar is worth 5,000 pesos

* * * Besides the three pueblos above named are also being taken over the lands of the pueblo Xpopepe, in the district of Espita * * * involved, therefore, are four pueblos and five *ranchos* * * *

Why have the municipal authorities, the *jefe político* and the highest authorities of the state to whom is entrusted the defence of those pueblos, done nothing to prevent this despoilment contrary to all principles and all law * * *? The Indians who have lived in those pueblos * * * must abandon their homes and move away their household goods unless they wish to stay in the miserable condition of servants of the new proprietor

The pueblos of the district of Tizimín have also been unfortunate Three years ago thirty Indians who constituted the population of the pueblo Tixcancal, peaceful and quiet people, learned that they were suspected of conspiracy and that a great peril threatened them Always fearful of the authorities they were profoundly anxious But it was suggested to them that there was a person in Mérida, who had bought an estate in that neighborhood, who enjoyed the political influence of his family and could defend them against the punishment of their *crime* These poor people, according to public information, passed to that estate, and although it was asserted at the district headquarters that not a few of them were taken to estates around Mérida as field workers just as those who stayed in the district Not one returned to Tixcancal * * *

Another case is not less painful In the district of Maxcanú, there existed up to two years ago the pueblo of Kancabachén A proprietor denounced it as vacant lands (*baldíos*)

(Always the baldíos!) which have left the people landless At the same time persons were not lacking to urge upon the inhabitants the advantages of becoming servants of the proprietor, because in this manner they would be authorized to work

the lands that had been taken from them The poor Indians encountered assistance neither in heaven nor earth Some went to live in Maxcanú, others in Halachó, and we do not know whether there were some who did not *convince themselves* that it was better for them to become servants on the estate Kancabachén is to-day an abandoned pueblo [1]

When the despoilment ordered had been carried out and the facts officially confirmed, "El País," the Catholic daily, took up the matter editorially, saying, on May 3, 1909

Our readers have already read of the unspeakable performance by the Secretary of Agriculture which consists in the adjudication to Señor Don Olegario Molina of 2179 hectares of territory, adjoining his country estates in Yucatán * * *

The business may be summarized as follows the Secretary of Agriculture Don Olegario Molina conceded to the *hacendado* Don Olegario Molina the adjudication of these thousands of hectares as vacant (*baldíos*) and the real governor of Yucatán, Don Olegario Molina, ordered possession given to the aforesaid *hacendado*, the denouncement having been made before Tomas Avila López, agent of the *Secretaría* of Agriculture, at the head of which is Don Olegario Molina

* * * In the land grab * * * were included pueblos of unfortunate Mayas, whom the *jefes políticos* had hastened to throw out of their poor earthly homes, casting them out not even as a criminal, a pernicious individual or a traitor of the country is, with passage furnished to a given destination, but as one kicks out a street cur, without caring what becomes of him, or whether he will die of hunger or thirst * * *

This expropriation, this expulsion, has been an outrage whether these pueblos did or did not hold viceregal titles, because a right which the laws of the entire civilized world recognize and guarantee has been violated * * *

Every time that a pueblo is despoiled of its lands, defects — for the most part imaginary — in its titles are alleged, or the lack of titles Thus the wiping out from our jurisprudence of great unquestionable rights which immemorial possession gives has been erected into a system

And note that in the pueblos which have just been adjudicated to Señor Molina the despoilment includes not only their *ejidos* but their very town site (*fundo*), the very ground on which they have erected their houses, and that which serves as public highway * * *

But is it true that these pueblos lack titles and that their possession is not in good faith?

It is absolutely false, because they have a supreme title, created and established by the public law in Yucatán The constitution of that state includes those pueblos in its geography, thus recognizing their legal existence and declaring them subject to its jurisdiction

So that the taking of these *fundos* and the dissolution of these pueblos has been not only an assault on property but against the sovereignty of the State of Yucatán

After comparing the actions of the Mexican Government with orders of the Spanish kings, providing that Indians be left their lands "in excess" of what formerly belonged to them, the editorial concludes

[1] Revista de Mérida, April 14, 1909



(Photo by the author.)

WATERLESS MOUNTAINS — SIERRA MADRE DURANGO

In the foreground typical desert vegetation



ONE CAN RISE IN A FEW HOURS FROM TROPICS TO SNOW LINE

Mount Orizaba, 18,...5 feet. Taken [illegible] altitude of [illegible] feet

What a contrast * * * the poor despoiled Indians who are now wandering, headed for barbarism with the dagger of ostracism sunk into their souls and the tigerish and rabid passion to bite the hand that cast them from the land of their ancestors, would fervently kiss and wet with tears of tenderness the hand of the foreigner who signed those ordinances

That is the way to sow justice! That is the way to instil love and patriotism![1]

As in the War of Independence, the *Guerra de Castas*, the War of the Reform, it is not difficult to imagine in what ranks the natives of these *former* pueblos were to be found when the Revolution broke out, and the authority that had made them homeless and landless was fighting to maintain itself

The villages did not always give up without struggle But they had no chance Government and *hacendados* were one Obstreperous villagers were sentenced to the army by the local judge or *jefe político*, and sent to remote regions as soldier-convicts Often they never saw their families again In Hidalgo, when the spokesmen for a pueblo became threatening, they were seized by order of the governing and land-owning Cravioto dynasty, and buried to their necks in the center of the *ejido* they were trying to save Then the *Rurales* galloped over them[2]

Thus a very few came to possess most of Mexico's land This condition, originating before the Conquest, intensified in colonial days, continued through independence, was accelerated under Díaz Exactly what point this process had reached at the end of that epoch it is not possible to state with complete accuracy Many *hacendados* did not know the real extent of their estates, or of what they claimed as theirs Others concealed the dimensions A scientific compilation would have necessitated surveys that were never made The following data concerning eight states, varying in size, topography, climate, and region, give a fair idea of the distribution of rural property[3]

[1] El País (Diario Católico), vol XI, No 3690, May 3 1909

[2] This incident was not, as far as I know, reported in the press But it is of common knowledge in the State of Hidalgo, where not only was no secret made of it at the time, but as a salutary lesson it was given currency

[3] The data were secured as follows The *Directorio de Agencias Minas y Haciendas*, published in 1905 by Percy G Holms lists owners and names of *haciendas* by states, based on information supplied by state governors In but eight states was the size of properties given, but as these were arranged by districts, the total individual holdings for each state had to be obtained by adding those listed under the same ownership No record could be made of totals therefore that covered more than one state, although *hacienda* ownership in several states was not uncommon The number of *ranchos* in each state is obtained from the census of 1910 The percentage of families owning no land is taken from McBride *op cit*, p 154 who based his calculation on the census of 1910 While the size of *haciendas* is for 1905 and the other figures are of 1910 no great discrepancy is involved There was, if anything, a further concentration of property in those five years Communal holdings are *not* included in the percentage of families owning no land These figures are not to be had They would probably change the percentage appreciably in few states The communal holdings were disappearing but were most persistent in mountainous states containing a large percentage of purely indigenous population Oaxaca, with the highest percentage of families owning no land, would probably show most communal holdings in 1910 This was in part due to the personal favor shown by Porfirio Díaz to the natives of his own state, in part to the inaccessibility of many sierra pueblos

AGUASCALIENTES

Thirty property holders controlled 434,000 hectares, an average of 35,733 acres apiece There were about five hundred smaller *haciendas* or *ranchos* The percentage of heads of rural families owning no property was 96 4

COLIMA

The ten largest property holdings were, respectively, 76,000, 65,000, 60,000, 35,000, 12,550, 11,300, 10,000, 10,000, 9750, and 6000 hectares The fourth largest holding was that of E O de Lamadrid, governor from 1905 to 1910 There were approximately 325 *ranchos* The percentage of rural families owning no land was 96 9

DURANGO

The ten largest holders and their estates were as follows

Owner	Haciendas	Hectares	Total
Pablo Martínez del Río	Santa Catalina	418,103	418,193
Antonio Moncada	Juan Pérez	280,500	280,500
Juan Francisco Flores	Ramos	181,380	
	Avilez	66,600	247,980
Genoveva de Rodriguez	Pelayo	170,365	170,365
Viuda de Flores	San Francisco	171,440	
	San Julian	21,100	192,540
Luciano Vaván	La Zarca	93,020	
	San Juan Bautista	87 787	180,807
Francisco Lavin	Petillas	112 090	112,090
Gurza Hermanos	Torreón de Cañas	105,450	105,450
Torres Hermanos	El Relámpago	24,125	
	San Antonio (Mapimi)	16,385	
	San Francisco	16,180	
	Colon	14,900	
	San Antonio (Nazas)	14,810	
	San Antonio de la Laguna	10,485	
	La Flor	1,850	98,735
José Dolores Nava	La Purisima	89,440	89,440

One hundred and nineteen additional *hacienda* owners are listed *Ranchos* number about 2600 The percentage of rural families who owned no land is 96 8

GUERRERO

The largest estate measured 160,000 hectares, the second, 51,000 Fourteen others range from 37,000 to 6000 Eleven more are from 3500 to 3000 hectares The *ranchos* numbered about 1700 The percentage of rural families who own no land was 98 5

JALISCO

The largest estate measured 99,556 hectares, the second, 65,850 Eight range from 49,740 to 25,365, and sixty-nine more above 5000 *Ranchos* exceed 7000 The percentage of families owning no land is 96 2

MEXICO

The largest holdings belonging to several members of the same family total 156,264, the second, 64,192 Ten more estates exceed 5000 hectares The *ranchos* number about 850 The percentage of families owning no land is 99 5, the highest but one of any state, being equalled only by Morelos, and exceeded by Oaxaca where the percentage is 99 8

MICHOACÁN

Prudencia Bocanegra is the largest landowner with three *haciendas* totalling 145,739 Carlos Hagenbeck is second with an even 100,000 Three estates follow closely with 98,963, 97,532, and 95,000 respectively The next five are 89,000, 78,536, 70,000, 69,732 and 58,142 *Ranchos* total about 4500 The percentage of rural families who own no land is 97 3

VERA CRUZ

Latifundismo is not a characteristic of this state, although one estate attains 88,516 hectares Some 2500 other properties range from moderate sized *haciendas* to small *ranchos* The state's climatic and physiographic variety probably accounts for this Within the state boundaries one can rise in a few hours from tropics to snow line and every kind of cultivation exists One hundred and one plantations, the largest, 2600 hectares, grow coffee Other products are tobacco, rubber, fine woods, lumber, rice, sugar cane, *zacatón*, fruits, cotton, *pulque*, chicle, vanilla, *yuca*, cattle, beans, chile, wheat, barley, and corn The percentage of rural population owning no land was 98 9

To understand the processes which were irresistibly concentrating more property in fewer hands and creating more peons, at lower living standards

than ever before, it is essential to analyze the *hacienda*, Mexico's dominant agricultural unit, and its relation to the Mexican political and economic complex

The *hacienda* was — had remained — a feudal estate It was not a business in the sense that it was conducted solely and purposefully for profit [1] It was a baronetcy, which vested the owner with position, prestige, and the nearest social equivalent to a title that a state assuming the forms of republicanism would admit To belong to the limited number of landed gentry give "pride of proprietorship, a minimum of toil, the leisurely oversight of an estate * * * unlimited opportunity for the exercise of authority * * * ample occasion for the display of fine horses, expensive trappings and picturesque accoutrements" [2]

Financially the *hacienda* was becoming less and less a going concern [3] But with the "unearned increment" on land it represented great capital and the possibilities of future profits As a factor for national economic progress it was a failure

In the nineteenth century, the *per hectare* corn production dropped from *seventy-five to ten hectolitres* [4] In the colonial period (lacking agricultural neighbors) the nation was self-sustaining But in the twentieth century, with modern invention knocking at its door, with the cheapest labor supply imaginable, unhampered by welfare considerations, or limited working hours, agriculture, the one really national industry [5] showed a deficit in the national balance sheet

[1] Molina Enríquez, *op cit* p 90
[2] McBride *op cit* p 30
[3] Subject to the exception of the relatively small number of plantations raising special products, usually tropical such as coffee cocoa The type *hacienda* of Mexico is devoted to growing cereals corn wheat barley, and the *maguey* The sugar industry was also profitable for the owners though, excepting certain centrals in Vera Cruz and Sinaloa it was conducted according to obsolete methods Toward the close of the century (1897) the classification by products of Mexico's *haciendas* was given as follows, in Mexico, Intl Bureau of the American Republics 1904 p 213

Cereals		3400	*haciendas*
Cattle		1560	"
Sugar cane		1395	"
Maguey			
pulque	279		
mescal	134	413	"
Hemp		395	"
Coffee		371	"
Cocoa		230	"
Cotton		135	"
Tobacco		92	"
Cabinet woods		69	"
Indigo		29	"
Fruits		6	"
Grapes		5	"
Total number of *haciendas*		8111	"

[4] This is an estimate by González Roa, *op cit* p 192, based on a variety of data Cut it in half and it still tells its story
[5] Mining, the other great industry, was in the hands of foreigners So was the growing petroleum industry

In the last two Díaz decades annual importations of basic foodstuffs were necessary In 1909–10, they reached a peak of fifteen million pesos [1]

With unlimited wealth, absolute political and economic control, and the entire cultivable area of the republic at their disposal the land owners could not support, at its incredibly low standards, the nation's scant fifteen million population This failure was the greater in view of the non-competitive nature of the industry and the special privileges it enjoyed

Taxes were virtually negligible In the State of Mexico the *hacienda* of the Riva y Cervantes family, La Gavia, 64,000 hectares of the richest land, with an estimated value in 1909 of six million pesos, was taxed on a valuation of 362,695 pesos In the same state, San Nicolás Peralta was assessed at twenty per cent of its value [2] These cases were typical

The occasional sale of a great *hacienda* would reveal the discrepancy between selling price and assessed value [3] One in Guanajuato taxed at 10,000 pesos sold for 100,000 [4]

The national credit was at the *hacendado's* disposal He could obtain a loan from any Mexico City bank on his estates, or from the government *Caja de Préstamos*, the avowed purpose of which had been to further agriculture But the *ranchero*, who cultivated his land far more intensively and paid taxes on an honest valuation, would meet with a stony refusal [5]

The *hacienda* could,and did take the entire water supply of a region — beyond the *hacienda's* necessities — to the injury of the small planters If there was litigation the *hacendado* could "stand the gaff," and in the end control the verdict Streams were actually turned aside to the detriment of entire communities,[6] sometimes deliberately to destroy small grower competition and to convert persisting agricultural communities into *hacienda* labor

The tendency of the *hacendado* was to spread out rather than cultivate intensively, to use his political power to enlarge his estate rather than to make it productive, to speculate in foodstuffs rather than to grow them, to exploit labor more and the soil less [7]

[1] The annual value of corn and wheat imports are given as follows in *El Verdadero Díaz y la Revolución*, Bulnes, p 236

Years	*Value in Pesos*	*Years*	*Value in Pesos*
1892–93	6,316 000	1902–03	129,000
1893–94	427,000	1903–04	361,000
1894–95	263,000	1904–05	398,000
1895–96	692,000	1905–06	(no data available)
1896–97	2,666 000	1906–07	439,000
1897–98	(no data available)	1907–08	2,198 000
1898–99	188,000	1908–09	4,756,000
1899–00	376,000	1909–10	15,497,000
1900–01	813 000	1910–11	12,387 000
1901–02	1,416,000	1911–12	6,300,000

[2] Molina Enríquez, *op cit*, p 85–95
[3] *Idem*, p 137–8
[4] González Roa El Aspecto Agrario de *la Revolución Mexicana, p 90*
[5] Molina Enríquez, *op cit*, p 143 [6] *Idem*, p 102 [7] *Idem*, p 223

The *hacienda* was the regulator rather than producer of the food supply and of its price Controlling the irrigated land and, therefore, certain of his crop, the *hacendado* came into the market when droughts had damaged the crops of *rancheros* and mountain pueblos, and scarcity assured large profits With his storage capacity he juggled the price at will and the high tariff on grain imported from the United States protected him wholly against its competition [1]

He used but an insignificant fraction of his arable land, nor would he allow its cultivation by the natives [2] He monopolized land that he might monopolize labor

Wrote an early student of Mexican agrarian problems in 1895

> I can personally testify that *haciendas* of from 33 to 46 *sitios de ganado mayor* [from fifty to eighty thousand hectares approximately] [3] have refused absolutely to *rent* pasture land to their weak neighbors, who have seen their cattle die of hunger in the years of prolonged drought, while before their eyes lay vast stretches of grassland hardly trod by the light foot of the deer [4]

Secure in his privileged position, the *hacendado* kept agriculture primeval Rarely were the greatest *haciendas* whose residential quarters boasted every luxury equipped with modern agricultural machinery [5] In 1923 I traveled thousands of miles through Mexico's "cereal zone" I visited some of the most famous *haciendas* On all the Cortésian innovation of oxen, dragging the wooden plow of Egypt, was the last word in Mexican agronomy, while the native often wielded machete in lieu of spade and hoe

In 1889, when the agrarian revolution was undreamt of, the historian of Yucatán, Eligio Ancona, wrote

> From the moment the *conquistadores* learned that the Peninsula was not metalliferous, they saw they would be obliged to dedicate themselves exclusively to the soil * * * Unfortunately, instead of introducing the systems then in vogue in European cultivation, they preferred to accommodate themselves to the Indian method * * * employed by all the primitive peoples * * * *It is the system in use to this day* [6]

Seldom was unprogressiveness so tenacious "The National School of Agriculture * * *" wrote Bulnes, "had produced a wealth of excellent

[1] Molina Enríquez *op cit* p 100–1

[2] "Fifteen leagues of land of which only one eighth is in use" wrote a French visitor in 1897 of the Hacienda of Temixco in the well-watered and fertile State of Morelos Sainte Croix, Onze Mois Au Mexique p 156

[3] A *sitio de ganado mayor* a colonial measure for cattle lands, was 5000 yards square or 1775 01 hectares Mendieta y Nuñez, *op cit* 2nd ed p 25–6

[4] Wistano Orozco, Legislación y Jurisprudencia Sobre Terrenos Baldíos, vol I, p 393 (Italics not in original)

[5] Molina Enríquez, *op cit* p 59

[6] Ancona, Hist de Yucatán vol III p 209–10 (Italics not in original)

agronomists, who were starving, because their science merely inspired the *hacendados* with horror "[1]

Absentee ownership perpetuated this agricultural backwardness The *hacendado* rarely lived on his *hacienda* His occasional visits were for entertainment His nearest abode was a palatial residence in the then fashionable Colonia Juárez in the capital, when he was not ensconced in a London club, boulevardiering in Paris, or gambling on the Riviera His sons were frivolous idlers, early adepts in every form of dissipation

Absenteeism had been an early colonial evil

In 1614, Alonso Suárez de Solís, a descendant of the *Adelantado* Montejo, conqueror of Yucatán, dissatisfied with his share of the estate, appealed to the Council of the Indies and was awarded Indians to the extent of 3000 ducats' worth of annual income "for three lives" Considering this insufficient he appealed and the award was increased to "four lives" Still solicitous for his descendants he appealed again and the income was increased to "six lives" In other words six generations of his descendants continued to live in Spain on the labor of Yucatecan serfs they had never seen[2]

The modern relation of landlord and peon was essentially the same and before the close of the Díaz régime had become almost universal The owner of the *haciendas* Tenango and Santa Clara, in Morelos, Joaquín García Pimentel, told me in 1923 that he and several others he named "are of the few of our class who do some work Most of them do none whatever They live abroad and enjoy life"

In 1925 when the Prince and Princess Pignatelli of Italy, heirs to a part of Cortés's estates, visited Mexico to defend their interest in the Hacienda Atlacomulco in Morelos, half of which had been distributed as *ejidos* to five villages,[3] a *hacendado* said to me

"They are the Italian branch of Cortés's descendants through the Dukes of Monteleone For four centuries the income from that *hacienda* has gone

[1] Bulnes *op cit* p 254

[2] The proceedings are reprinted in summary in Cogolludo, *op cit*, vol I, p 377–80

[3] The fate of the Hacienda Atlacomulco in 1925, according to figures supplied by the local agrarian commission of Morelos, was as follows

Name of Pueblo	Irrigated	Irrigatable	Unirrigatable	Pasture	Barren	Total	Original Area of Hacienda	Residual Area of Hacienda	Number of Families Receiving
Acapantzingo	132 00	—	176 00	—	—	308 00	All	All	88
Jiutepec	50 00	—		—	—	50 00	these	these	120
Tejalpa	217 00	—	100 00	—	—	317 00	figures	figures	125
Chapulteper	120 00	—	120 00	—	—	240 00	in	in	30
Atlacomulco	195 00	—		—	—	195 00	hectares	hectares	66
	714 00	—	396 00	—	—	1110 00	2206 00	1096 00	438

to support the Hospital de Jesús Nazareno, in Mexico City, which Cortés founded Now the *hacienda* has been so injured by the partition that the income of the hospital will probably be stopped Think of the tragedy of coming for the first time to the Mexico that your ancestors conquered to be greeted with the loss of property that had been in the family for four hundred years "

I was more impressed with an absentee landlordism that had extended through four centuries and wondered whether it was not the longest example in history [1]

The agricultural workers and their families represented in 1910 an estimated population of 9,338,483 out of a total of 15,160,369,[2] more than three fifths of the people of Mexico Their standard of living was steadily lowering Various attempts have been made to measure the extent of this regress The most conservative estimate gives the diminution of the peon's purchasing power as follows [3]

	1791	1891	1908	
Corn	35 71	42 50	23 51	(hectolitres)
Flour	23 00	9 71	5 21	(100 kilo measures)

Another estimate of a seventy per cent reduction based on a quadrupled cost of corn with but a fifty per cent wage increase has already been cited [4]

Still another economist asserts that agricultural wages remained stationary in the century preceding 1910 while food staples rose 300 per cent [5]

These studies are approximate, but they embody the only data available They lead to the irrefutable conclusion that the field laborer was decidedly worse off economically after a century of national independence

The highest published estimate of the average peon's daily wage at the close of the Díaz régime throughout Mexico is 46 centavos [6] ($0 23 U S cy) This average is raised by wages approximately twice as high in border states [7] Other studies reduce this figure in varying degrees My own impression, based on the statements of administrators and peons in ten states in 1923, on *haciendas* where wages had not changed since before the Revolution, is that the estimate is high for the central plateau, and that 25 centavos would represent the average there in 1910 In Guanajuato, Mexico, and Querétaro I found peons' wages as low as 12 centavos a day, and in two instances of women doing men's work around the *hacienda*

[1] The Hospital de Jesus Nazareno is now supported by various public spirited Mexicans of means
[2] Covarrubias, La Trascendencia Política de la Reforma Agraria, p 17, 22
[3] Esquivel Obregón, Influencia de España y los Estados Unidos sobre México, p 343
[4] Bulnes, *op cit* p 218
[5] Herzog El Salario de Nuestros Campesinos p 10
[6] Esquivel Obregón *op cit* p 343
[7] Lower California 79, Chihuahua 92, Sonora 95 (centavos)



DISTRIBUTION OF LAND

Fresco by Diego Rivera in Secretaria de Educacion Publica. In the lower right hand corner the two men each with a hand on the boy's shoulder are Felipe Carrillo Puerto and Emiliano Zapata



(*Photo by the author*)

A CLEANLY VILLAGE CULTURE HOLDING ITS OWN

Chiltepec. In the tropical region of the Valle Nacional, Oaxaca

private gardens — six centavos ($0 03 cents, U S cy) To this must be added a daily ration of about 6 centavos' worth of corn In 1923 I discovered in fourteen *haciendas* no instance of wage increases or decreases within the memory of the oldest workers

The reason for the peon's low wages is found in the nature of the *hacienda* It requires intensive labor but four months in the year The *hacendado* could, therefore, without increasing his annual pay-roll, afford to pay *seasonal* workers a daily peso But with this labor released the remaining eight months, competition between *hacendados* for free laborers at planting and harvest time would be intense, doubtless forcing wages to a peso and a half or more, and in some cases labor might not be available at all In consequence the peonage system, which at 25 centavos a day guaranteed labor year in and year out, was cheaper and sure (The non-economic considerations were also potent) The peon's free rent cost the *hacendado* nothing His land was unlimited The peon built his own house out of materials found on the spot — adobe on the mesa, palm wattle in the tropics, *maguey* leaves and *zacate* grass for the roof The debt tether and the peon's deepening inertia increasingly affirmed the system Its gravest social implication, apart from the deterioration of the peon, was the steady encroachment on free labor By the destruction of *ejidos* and the handicaps put on the small independent growers, free agriculturists were being steadily forced into peonage The more independent emigrated to the United States

The peon's penury was intensified by the *tienda de raya* or company store It existed before Díaz, but under him came into more widespread and efficient use to assure each *hacienda* its labor Wrote one of Porfirio Díaz's official biographers, after visiting Mexico in 1901

> The following facts show to what magnitude the "peon system" has grown On one ranch in San Luis where about a thousand persons are employed, the total debt of the peons amounts to one hundred and twenty thousand dollars Anyone buying a ranch of this sort is obliged to purchase the peons' debt, which practically means buying them as slaves The law while prohibiting the system, practically encourages it [1]

The *tienda de raya* was the chain that bound the peon to the *hacienda* He seldom received currency for his toil, but credits against the commodities he was obliged to purchase Even under an honest *administrador* the debt could never be paid, and at death it passed to the peon's children But cheating the peon was a common procedure A Columbia University professor learned of one way it was done

> An American once told me, as though it were smart, that on his Mexican plantation he kept the accounts of individual men The system was amazing in its

[1] Tweedie, Mexico As I Saw It, p 60

simplicity and also in its other qualities At the top of each column on each page he had written out 1899, that being the year of the accounts On every page he added up the driblets of money that had been given the men plus eighteen dollars and ninety-nine cents Every time the employer turned a page he stole $18 90, so there was no difficulty in keeping the poor devil constantly in debt, chained to his job [1]

Haciendas there were where a moderate paternalism prevailed, but these were offset by unspeakable brutalities in others Many overseers regarded the peon as an animal and often treated him worse He was beaten and tortured And if the majordomo beat an incorrigibly lazy peon to death, the local authorities understood the difficulty perfectly The peon's daughters, if comely, were the victims, willy-nilly, of the overseer's lust [2]

In Yucatán the new-found value of the sisal binder twine derived from the indigenous *henequén* plant caused the serfs to be driven as never before They were flogged often They were flogged for demanding an accounting of their nominal wages They were flogged for a variety of mental attitudes defined by their taskmaster as "insolence, sullenness, and insubordination" They were flogged for failing to kiss their master's hand They were flogged for failing to cut as many *henequén* leaves as ordered [3]

It has become habitual in certain quarters to deny that peons were ill-treated save in exceptional cases The extent of the abuses is a highly controversial matter, and perhaps the least important phase of a system of which they were but a symptom It was the whole institution of land-tenure and peonage that was degrading and an anachronism — if not in Mexico — then in the modern world

But to secure overwhelming testimony to the cruelties under the vanished serfdom, one need but chat with some of the older *campesinos*, as I have done, in a dozen states over a period of four years under a variety of circumstances Nor should one who wants to understand the human — and inhuman — aspects of the agrarian revolution fail to read John Kenneth Turner's chapters dealing with Yucatán and the Valle Nacional [4] He was an eye-witness of conditions few outsiders had then seen, printed discussion of which was suppressed in Mexico The British journalist, Baerlein, saw and heard enough to confirm Turner many times over [5] In 1923 I traveled through those regions Even the Yucatecan *hacendados* denied little, although at the time with a militantly revolutionary governor, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, in the saddle, recollections of that nature were painful It was on the other fellow's *hacienda* that those things had happened "We treated our peons very much better than the rest" The *hacendados* were unanimous on that point

[1] J Russell Smith, North America, p 678
[2] Molina Enríquez, *op cit*, p 86
[3] Baerlein, Mexico the Land of Unrest, p 162–4
[4] Turner, Barbarous Mexico, p 1–119
[5] Baerlein, *op cit*, p 80–198

Then the Valle Nacional — four hours by launch from the sizzling banana center El Hule — up the muddy Papaloapam, and fifty miles in the saddle into the Oaxaca sierra, recrossing the stream five times, twice in dugouts, while the horses swim The trail leads through a jungle paradise Sunbeams glitter on humming insect life, giant blue butterflies (sold in Fifth Avenue under glass) flutter in iridescent profusion Scarlet and indigo birds gleam from the swamp-green tangle heavy with tropical scent Whenever the foliage wall opens for an instant densely forested mountains fill the sky in receding tiers of olive, green, blue, and violet An alluring place for the swift visitor equipped against blaze of sun and miasmas of earth — but a death valley for the driven laborer from the temperate mesa

In clearings where the river bends into greater width, neatly thatched, even rowed houses reveal a cleanly village culture holding its own far from the modern civilization that once seared its way through the jungle peace In Chiltepec a handsome Indian woman in woven red *huipil* stood in a door-way through which lavender smoke drifted quietly Two bronze children clung to her at sight of a stranger I asked about the old days before the Revolution, and the clan gathered, dropping the musical *Chinanteco* for brittler Spanish

"Los Enganchados" — the contract workers — "¡Como no!" older ones answered "Many went in but few returned" At Jacatepec, the youthful school-teacher hastened to call his father, the *Secretario Municipal* He recollected one day that three had staggered to his house and could go no farther One had died that night, another the next day, the third in a week "They are buried over there" 'Pero éso ya pasó hace mucho tiempo" — "that all happened long ago"

At the head of the open valley, Albino Vega, the *Presidente Municipal* of Valle Nacional, a fine old Mixtec, revivified with much detail and circumstance the picture painted by Turner fifteen years before The next morning he handed me as a riding crop a slender rod, heavier for its size than any wood I had ever lifted, and flexible as rubber "This is *bejuco*," he said, "of the region" With it they scourged the slaves of the Valle Nacional[1]

As I cantered back through the long valley in the morning coolness, I recalled it as of fifteen years before Then the slaves would have been at work for hours, making every inch of ground productive Now much land was idle Here and there white-pyjamaed Indians were gardening — for their own use, clearly In the river Indian boys were splashing Below them, kneeling on rocks, three women were patiently scrubbing, white cotton, red skirt, and blue huipil, a wavering tricolor in the stream

In the earlier Díaz days the peaceful *Chinantecos* had been driven out of the Valle to make room for Spanish tobacco planters Tobacco was one of the industries that flourished under Díaz The *Chinantecos* are back Now, in 1928, they are, besides their own crops, growing tobacco — though

[1] Turner *op cit*, p 102–3

not so much as formerly Whatever else the agrarian revolution failed to do it has wiped out the horrors of *hacienda* slavery, which reached their culmination in the valley called "national"

What was life on a *hacienda* in the closing days of Díaz? One of the best has been pictured in friendly fashion In southern Morelos the most historically famous *hacienda* in Mexico, San Gabriel, boasts a past not unlike that of any old-world medieval castle Here, in colonial times, the convoys bound for the Philippines, in galleons waiting in Acapulco, made their second night's halt out of Mexico At San Gabriel the Spanish *hacendado*, Gabriel Yermo, then its owner, gathered his minions to depose the viceroy Iturrigaray From behind its six-foot stone walls royalist troops sallied forth repeatedly to attack the independentists, and intercepted their forces going to relieve Morelos, besieged in Cuautla Here Iturbide made his headquarters in 1820 and indicted some of his deceitful correspondence with Viceroy Apodaca Santa Anna stopped there on his way south in 1855 to fight the Reformists and to enter into permanent eclipse Prominent in Mexico's every civil war, San Gabriel occupied a similarly characteristic place in times of peace

Mrs Alec Tweedie, the English author who wrote an officially approved life of Porfirio Díaz, was entertained at San Gabriel in 1901 and left this vivid record

San Gabriel * * * belongs to the well-known family of Amor In all probability it was built for a monastery, it looks like the work of monks The enormous thickness of the walls, which keep out the heat in Summer and cold in Winter, the extraordinary solidity of everything, and the vast space it covers, bespeak a religious house At the back is a fine stone swimming bath, indeed, it is well supplied not only with necessities but with luxuries * * *

What a place for romance, what stories might be told of love, intrigue, murder, in such a house as this With its long corridors, numerous chambers, strange balconies, its church, shop, great yards and out-buildings, it forms a veritable town in itself * * *

The four Amor brothers were educated in England, and Victor Amor who looked a typical specimen of an English sportsman, rode over * * * to escort us * * * An hour's ride from San Gabriel we espied horsemen on the horizon They consisted of Joaquín Amor — the elder brother — and his attendants, such as the doctor and heads of the different departments as sugar, distillery, or rice, all dressed in spotless white Señor Amor had a black band on his arm in recognition of England's loss of her Queen * * *

What an army we made! All these smart, clean white uniforms from San Gabriel, our guard of *Rurales* in grey with silver buttons and braid, their red ties and cummerbunds, pistols, swords, guns on every side, the large hats and wondrous saddles Over seventy mounted people, and only two women among them!

As this *hacienda* of San Gabriel was typical of a high-class country house, I must give a few details of its workings

The village, containing nearly three thousand souls, belongs to the *hacienda* The people pay no rent, and the owners of the *hacienda* hold the right to turn them out The peasants are lent the ground on which they build their own houses — such as they are — merely bamboo walls roofed over with a sort of thatch They are obliged to work for the *hacienda*, in truly feudal style, whenever called upon to do so Each man, as a rule, has an allotted number of days on which he is bound to render service * * *

There is no church in the village, that, like everything else, belongs to the *hacienda* * * *

Each *hacienda* is obliged to keep its shop, and there all the purchases of the village are made, the owner of the *hacienda* taking the profit or risk of loss Everything is supplied the workers * * * A man and his family live on six or eight cents a day * * * and men earn fifty cents a week on an average at an *hacienda*, this is quite sufficient, they sit rent free, they have no fires to pay for, little clothing is required, and if so minded they can get *pulque* or *aguardiente* for a couple of cents

But alas! it allows no margin to save, not that they would save if they had it, they would only drink away the extra money, for they have not yet learnt thrift * * *

It was very picturesque, that large yard, with the mules and carts and peons flitting about * * * These *haciendas* are far away from the outside world They have to do everything for themselves * * * so at quiet seasons they make their own carts, even the wheels They employ regular carpenters, blacksmiths, coppersmiths, bricklayers and masons all the year round * * *

In the house itself a number of servants are employed, there is always one, and sometimes there are two servants allotted to each member of the family

Hacienda life resembles that of England in the time of the Barons, when feudal laws reigned and hotels were unknown

At the Amor *hacienda* I was amazed to find a regular racing stable * * * They have built good stables, where they breed polo ponies, trotters, and racing thoroughbreds Everything is up-to-date, the animals' names are painted above their boxes, and the place is well kept The Amors are devoted to their animals, and when we went into the yard out popped various horses' heads over the low door of their boxes They knew their masters' voices and came to bid them welcome and receive a friendly rub on the nose [1]

Undoubtedly this was one of the most humanely conducted *haciendas* in Mexico, for the Amors were kindly people Nevertheless it fell, with the rest of the feudal system of landholding, in Morelos — and Mexico

II

It was the contrast between the care of horses and the care of men, that is said to have kindled in Emiliano Zapata the spark of rebellion Born in the village of Anenecuilco in Morelos, he was a *mediero*, that is, a cultivator on a fifty-fifty basis, on lands belonging to the *hacienda* of Tenextepango He raised melons and made a small profit In the

[1] Tweedie, Mexico As I Saw It, p 354–9

social scale he ranked between the *hacienda* peon and the independent *ranchero* An expert horseman, a typical *charro*, he was, according to his own telling, asked by the *hacendado*, Ignacio de la Torre y Mier, to come to Mexico City and look over his paddock There Zapata was struck by the magnificent stabling, tiles and marble bath supplied the horses, while his folks lived in miserable huts, with rags to cover their nakedness Such thoughts were productive of trouble Zapata had a certain independence of mind which rendered him dangerous The *jefe político* of Yautepec sentenced him to the army The *ejido* of his village had been absorbed by Torre y Mier's *hacienda* Rankling with a personal grudge and with the cumulative injustices of his people, Zapata became the typical regional *caudillo* when Madero raised the standard of revolution against Díaz

It was the agrarian plank in the Plan de San Luis Potosí,[1] that won the landless and dispossessed to Madero's standard *Tierra y Libertad* was Zapata's cry

But Madero believed that Mexico's troubles were chiefly political and that "effective suffrage" would solve them He did not realize that voting meant nothing to the mass of Mexicans While committed to the restoration of land to the people, he did not appreciate the intensity of their land hunger — now aroused by the fall of the Díaz despotism — and the need for prompt relief Months passed without definite action Agrarian reform was entrusted to the *hacendados* themselves, who saw to it that nothing happened A few innocuous proposals emanated from the ministry of agriculture

Delegations of barefoot or *huarache*-shod Indians trudged overland to the capital, and clad in their cleanest white *calzón* and *camisa*, sombrero in hand, haunted the corridors of government offices seeking some kind of an *escritura* that to them meant "the promised land" They waited patiently but in vain, and their slender funds or stock of food exhausted, returned dejectedly whence they had come

After a year, Zapata, believing that Madero had betrayed his pledges, revolted His Plan de Ayala [2] called for immediate expropriation of one third of the land of the *haciendas*, and its division among the landless [3]

[1] "Through the abuse of the law of vacant lands [*terrenos baldíos*] numerous small proprietors, the majority of them, indigenous, have been despoiled of their lands It being entirely just that the land of which they were despoiled so arbitrarily be returned to them, such actions are declared subject to revision, and those who acquired land in so immoral a fashion, or their heirs, will be required to restore them to their original owners, paying them moreover an indemnity for the damage suffered In case these lands have passed to a third party before the promulgation of this *Plan*, the indemnity will be paid by those who profited by the despoilment" Clause 3, para 3, Plan de San Luis Potosí, rep in Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, Document 34

[2] November 28, 1911, rep in Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, Document 36

[3] Despite a great deal of subsequent revolutionary propaganda to indicate that the unusually oppressive conditions in Morelos led to its being the "cradle of agrarian revolt," I have found nothing to justify the view that peonage was different or worse there than in a dozen other Mexican states, and certainly not as barbarous as in Yucatán which remained peaceful during Madero's revolt against Díaz The statement most commonly made is that Morelos "belonged" to a dozen, or

Meanwhile the need for fundamental reform was becoming more and more widely appreciated Andrés Molina Enríquez's epoch-making book, "Los Grandes Problemas Nacionales," published in 1909, was increasingly read Pamphlets appeared In the national congress, freed from all restraint, the subject was thoroughly discussed and the imperative need of modifying existing land tenure pointed out Mild and evolutionary were the proposals Said Luis Cabrera

Hacendismo must be combated by methods which would tend to equalize the great and small landholder in the matter of taxation, since once these two are treated on the same basis the breaking up of the great estate will come automatically [1]

Meanwhile attempts to pacify Zapata and have him await results through legislation proved vain His rebellion, although confined to Morelos, Guerrero, and a part of Puebla, stimulated administrative action The Madero Government began a thoroughgoing study of the enormously complex land problem, with a view to attacking it seriously The landholders in alarm joined the anti-government plotters Before the new agrarian program could even be formulated the counter-revolution burst, inundating Mexico in blood and terror

In the nation-wide uprising against Victoriano Huerta "lands for the people" became a fact *Haciendas* were sacked Crops and any other portable plunder became the property of armed bands The administrators fled, or besieged in their *haciendas* either beat off the attackers or themselves beaten, were lucky to escape with their lives When Huerta fell many *campesinos* were in possession of lands and had begun to cultivate them Generals and temporary governors confirmed their possession by decree With the country still in anarchy, Zapata intransigeant in the South, and Villa threatening the country with a reign of brigandage, Carranza proclaimed the famous "law of January 6, 1915" [2]

The law annulled all alienations of communal lands sequent to the Lerdo law of 1856 and restored them to their pueblos It provided that other villages which could prove no title would be given land It was a gigantic effort at reform, an attempt under incredibly difficult conditions both to solve the nation's most fundamental social problem and to meet a political

seventeen, or twenty seven landowners There were in fact some twenty-seven important owning families some of them related which may account for the lower estimates of the number of owners, most of them with many children, some of the estates being divided among the numerous progeny of several generations The entire area of the State of Morelos — excepting Tlaxcala, the smallest in the republic — is less than half a million hectares (496,400) The average ownership could therefore not exceed 40,000 hectares, and making allowance for towns, railways, roads, et cetera considerably less These were large holdings but other states contained many larger In my judgment the outburst in Morelos, based on feudal conditions which to be sure existed there but were little different from those elsewhere in Mexico, was due to the accident of Zapata's personal leadership

[1] Diario de los Debates, Dec 3, 1912 [2] Rep in Leyes y Disposiciones, p 32–6

emergency[1] At no time in nearly half a century had the country sunk deeper into anarchy, with authority more diffused, and dissolvent forces more widespread There was no national government, no capital, no constitution, no law but that of force — the force of the local military, of the *hacendados* with their "white guards," of roving bands, revolutionists or bandits, melting indistinguishably one into the other The preamble to the law of January 6 disclosed this chaos in its attempted remedy of authorizing "the higher military authority in each place to effect such expropriation as may be indispensable" It was probably the only way out — but it augmented the confusion For the military chiefs, already absolute in nearly every region, were now "legally" able to dispose of land at their pleasure Thus the traditional conflict which has ever enveloped the Mexican land question, was intensified Everything that could happen, did Violence bred violence and illegality further illegality The land barons one and all refused to recognize not merely the validity of the new law but the existence of any agrarian problem They wanted a return to the Díaz feudalism To take a foot of land which they claimed as theirs was just so much robbery Bands of former peons had begun to cultivate a patch here and there — for had not the Revolution promised them land? Then the *hacendado's* minions would swoop down and dispossess the squatters bloodily These in turn would take savage revenge if they could Expropriation of land by decree of the local general was no more valid to the landowners Above all came the constant complication of cupidity and treachery "Revolutionary" generals expropriated land for the people — and kept it Or they came to private arrangements with the landholders in exchange for money or land for themselves Disappointed and hungry peasants driven from one region descended like a plague of locusts on the next, raiding crops, looting, robbing rich and poor alike

Some land was distributed during Carranza's four years in power[2] But it little benefited the recipients Rarely were they left in undisturbed possession When they had land they lacked water Or they lacked seeds, tools, and above all wherewith to live on till the harvest Some returned to the *haciendas* Sometimes they were accepted, sometimes cursed and driven forth dependent on the devices of the starving in all ages Carranza's failure to get the people land — perhaps inevitable — was a factor in his fall Starting as leader of a popular movement, he had, four years later, outside of his personal entourage, scarce a supporter in the republic

Obregón inherited this agrarian chaos intensified on the one hand by the delays, the frustrated hopes of the peasants, their implanted habits of disorder and on the other by the landholders' resistance, solidified as terrorism

[1] It was hoped that the followers of Zapata and Villa, who were chiefly rural proletarians, would be pacified thereby and enlist under the Constitutionalist — that is, Carrancista — banner

[2] A total of 202,923 hectares to the end of 1919 See table on p 167

faded into the past The Revolution's shattering power had waned and the fundamental reform remained to be achieved by legal or near-legal means Agrarianism under Obregón represented a mixture of these conflicting elements The law of 1915 had promised compensation for lands restored when villages could not clearly prove titles (this being called *dotación*) and no payment where despoilment could be proved (This was called *restitución*) Agreement was impossible The Government adopted the general policy of giving the landholder the benefit of the doubt, legally, and unless despoilment was demonstrable beyond question the land was restored as a *dotación*, which meant payment [1] But this was of little practical effect as the landholders scorned the "bonds of the agrarian debt," offered by the Government

Essentially the *hacendados'* objection was not so much to parting with a few acres of their vast estates, but to losing their serfs That was what the restoration of the communal lands inevitably spelled Moreover, there was always enough irregularity and corruption about the carrying out of the legislation to justify any kind of opinion adverse to it If there was some slight improvement during Obregón's four years the net results were not impressive The peon's economic status did not improve National production in many of the staples fell off, partly because the *hacendados* refused to work their land as a boycott against the new agrarian policies, partly because they were legitimately afraid of losing their crops to raiding agrarians or raiding militarists, partly because the villagers who received land made slight use of it

The de la Huerta rebellion in Obregón's last year had a distinct anti-agrarian and counter-revolutionary aspect, its outstanding military leaders, Enrique Estrada and Guadalupe Sánchez, being notorious for acts of violence against the peasantry and their close association with the landed gentry in their respective regions [2]

In the renewed chaos of 1923–4 nearly all reconstructive work went by the board The fruits of agrarianism after ten years were little more than hunger, spilled blood, disillusion, bitterness, and economic prostration However, this period was not wholly wasted It brought general acceptance of agrarian reform as a principle and the very illegalities which had cropped up in its execution made the legislation — if properly applied — seem tame and almost beneficent in comparison The years also taught many valuable lessons and furnished a body of experience from which the Calles administration was able to profit

Under it, in 1925, agrarian reform entered a new phase, to be carried out

[1] This is shown by the relatively small number of "restitutions" — sixty-six out of a total of 1649 *ejidos* — up to January 1, 1927 As the most flagrant cases were handled first it may be assumed that there will be few if any more 'restitutions' (Datum furnished by National Agrarian Commission)

[2] Jalisco and Vera Cruz

with increasing efficiency Land was restored on a vast scale but more intelligently, in closer conformity with the law and with greater regard for the general welfare The laws themselves were modified to diminish some flagrant abuses Agricultural cooperatives and banks which supplied credit, marketing facilities, and implements to the newly landed peasantry, helped greatly to bring order out of chaos By January 1, 1927, half a million families representing, conservatively, two million people, had received three and a half million hectares of land Of this nearly one half had been restored in the twenty-five months of the Calles administration In the opinion of the then secretary of agriculture, Luis L León, by the end of that presidential term (Nov 30, 1928), 80 per cent of the land restoration would be completed

Out of the multiplicity of regulations and decrees that followed the original law of 1915 and its incorporation into article 27 of the Constitution of 1917 the agrarian program of to-day may be summarized as follows

Only the indigent agricultural peon — the true tiller of the soil — is entitled to free land, to the extent that he can personally work it The legal beneficiary is the head of the family — widows supporting families, men and single women on reaching eighteen years being eligible [1] Their total possessions at the time of receiving land may not exceed 1000 pesos in value [2] Cities of more than 10,000 inhabitants are excluded from participation in communal lands [3] So are peons lodged immediately around plantation buildings although they may receive land elsewhere from the national domain [4]

Each peasant's quota of land varies with its character Two to three hectares of the best irrigated fields up to seven to nine of the poorer quality of tillable soil [5] This plot multiplied by the number of eligible family heads is the restored village *ejido* [6] Water rights are now bound up with land as since the pre-Aztec days [7]

The mechanics of land restoration are as follows A village petition, giving the census of agricultural workers and other data, is sent to the state agrarian commission If it approves, its surveyors mark out the land required and "provisional possession" is given upon the governor's signature The National Agrarian Commission subsequently reviews the award, and if favorably, the president of the republic's approval gives "definite possession" Subject only to an adverse decision by the courts, this land is now

[1] Ley de Dotaciones y Restituciones, Art 97, II, IV

[2] *Idem*, Art 97, V

[3] *Idem* Art 2 I II There are certain exceptions to this rule where a definitely agricultural population fulfilling all the other requisites has become included in the town

[4] To avoid their constituting themselves into a "nucleus of population" eligible to receive land, and the ensuing complications

[5] Ley de Dotaciones y Restituciones Art 99

[6] The *ejido* is of course contiguous with the village It may contain several qualities of land and the individual plots vary accordingly in size

[7] Neglect of the water question was a factor in the early failures of the *ejido*

inalienably the property of the village, not subject to lease, mortgage, or sale [1] The village committee guided by a delegate of the Ministry of Agriculture then assigns the lots to individuals Each of these has the use of the land It is his for life to work and enjoy, but may be taken from him and given to a fellow-villager should he fail without adequate excuse (such as illness) to work it [2]

For the landholders compelled to yield some land the following protective restrictions exist No farms smaller than 150 hectares of the best land may be touched, this area is always exempt The exemption grades to 2000 hectares of pasture land [3] Plantations devoted to special products such as coffee, cocoa, rubber, vanilla, or alfalfa are not subject to repartition regardless of size [4] The agricultural unity of a plantation under cultivation may not be injured [5]

Land containing buildings, waterworks, and canals which irrigate land other than communal are exempt Land must be taken in equal amounts from all *haciendas* surrounding an *ejido* so that no *hacendado* is discriminated against or favored Crops belong to the planter who may harvest them regardless of the date of village possession Finally if dissatisfied he may appeal to the courts for an *amparo* or injunction against state and federal authorities

All things considered the legislation was mild Few are the precedents in which so far reaching reform was so considerate of the old order, so little retaliatory, and so little confiscatory In the break-up of the great estates of eastern Europe after the World War, compensation to the land barons was not dreamt of A redistribution of land was a national necessity — that was all Yet the Mexican reform was fought to the last gasp The old order died hard — just as the slaveholding of the American South died hard But the Mexican agrarian revolution was complicated by two factors Its mildness — the early return to quasi-peace and relative order — and the nation's international relationships

In other violent revolutions, those who rise against what they deem oppression make short work of their opponents, and justice, fair-play, and legality play little part in individual cases The old is swept away Much later when a new régime has been established beyond cavil, readjustment may neutralize excesses and errors So without compunction the American revolutionists confiscated during our War of Independence the property of Tories whose chief offense was their loyalty to the mother land [6] The French

[1] Ley * * * del Patrimonio Ejidal, Art II
[2] The entire body of village *ejidatarios* votes on the question *Idem*, V
[3] *Idem*, Art 105, I, II
[4] *Idem*, Art 118 On henequén plantations not more than one hectare of land containing henequén plants may go to each villager the remaining four hectares having to be uncultivated *Idem*, Art 103
[5] Reglamento Agrario, 14, IV
[6] Van Tyne, The Loyalists in the American Revolution, p 268, 273, 275, 277, 278, 295

Revolution spared neither life nor property But in Mexico before a single fundamental reform had been effected, when the shattered castle of medievalism still obstructed the Mexican scene and new foundations had merely been visioned, the dynamic Revolution was over The old house remained to be built over with peace-time tools, and with due regard for the niceties of law, and property — especially international law, since any vital remodeling in Mexico could not but touch foreign interests which were so largely built into the old feudal edifice A revolutionary, a war-time psychology, and peace-time methods did not go together, and the critically applied analogies to what was good law and practice in, for instance, the United States, continued to be critically applied To understand why progress was painfully slow, and is just beginning to be visible, one must examine the manifestations of the internal struggle both between the avowedly opposed forces and against that greater hydra-headed enemy, Mexico's inherited weaknesses

The law of January 6, 1915, spoke vaguely of indemnity for expropriated lands [1] Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917 specifically declared "expropriations may only be made for reasons of public interest and on the basis of indemnification," and fixed that basis at ten per cent above the assessed value The law of January 10, 1920, provided for the issuance of twenty-year 5% bonds and two years later, January 26, 1922, this law was "regulated" [2]

However, no bonds were delivered under Obregón The Calles Government made the first payment on April 5, 1926 In the year following [3] sixty-one claims totalling $6,850,000 pesos had been settled Of these forty-two were Mexican, amounting to $1,786,400, and nineteen were foreign, for $5,063,600 [4] The land paid for totalled 33,156 hectares, an average of $206 pesos per hectare

The reason for the long delay was not so much inability to pay [5] as the landholders' unwillingness to apply for the bonds — to fill out the necessary papers — deeming such act an admission of the Government's right to expropriate The Government on the other hand was loath to enforce the provision which granted but a year after formal expropriation to apply for compensation *The Government could merely by complying with the law have avoided paying virtually the entire indemnity* But it repeatedly extended this period [6] The Calles administration also provided that the bond coupons

[1] Art 10

[2] Constitutional articles and laws are not effective until followed up by their *reglamentación* which works out in detail the general principles of the legislation An American analogy would be the 18th Constitutional Amendment — and the Volstead Act and various state laws regulating the liquor traffic

[3] To March 31, 1927

[4] Data furnished by Departamento de Indemnizaciones of Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento Francisco de P Herrera, chief

[5] During the first three years of the Obregón administration, funds, though scarce, were not lacking Moreover the amount of cash needed to make the interest payment on the agrarian debt, assuming that bonds had been issued as land was expropriated, would not have been staggering

[6] By *reglamento* of Jan 22, 1922, by decree of March 28 1923, by decree of June 10, 1925, and by *reglamento* of Feb 26, 1926

would be accepted at par in payment of all federal taxes not specifically pledged to the foreign debt. With the first interest payment, the applications increased rapidly, 670, including 120 foreign of which nine were from Americans, had been received by March 31, 1927

When one compares the fractional Mexican land expropriations with such annihilative legislation as 'Prohibition" in the United States, which at one blow wiped out, as contrary to the public interest, millions of dollars in distilleries, breweries, saloons, et cetera, and contrasts the traditional respect for property and horror at anything that may be deemed confiscatory in Anglo-Saxon United States with the somewhat different attitude in Hispanic-America, the Mexican provisions are startling in their conservatism In the United States Civil War a certain form of property long held sacred but subsequently deemed contrary to the public interest, namely, the human slave, was abolished without thought of indemnity In the Mexican civil war a certain form of property, namely land monopoly, which excluded some ninety-eight per cent of the rural population from land ownership, being deemed contrary to the public interest, was modified and in return for compensation Fortunate indeed were the *hacendados* that they were not chased out at the point of the machete when one recalls how many had come by their land, by what methods increased it, how they had treated their peons, and the ignorance and abasement of the Mexican rural masses Yet the outraged cries directed to all the world and particularly through the amplifiers of foreign embassies gave the impression that landholders were suffering deliberate and barefaced depredation without precedent "Worthless!" was their chorused reply when Mexican administrations said, "But we offer you bonds"

In the face of its default on the payment of other obligations from 1914 to 1922 the Mexican Government did not reply, as it might, "You are lucky to get anything," but pleaded "Your agitation against agrarian reform, your refusal to accept the bonds, your insistence that they are worthless, tends to make them so If you got behind the Government's program and helped make it a success, the bonds would automatically increase in value and you would profit"

An illustration of the way the *hacendados'* insistence on the inevitable ruin brought about by agrarianism damaged their own interest is the following

At Villa de Reyes, forty kilometers south of the state capital of San Luis Potosí, lies the *hacienda* of Gogorrón, property of a rich Spaniard, Pedro Zavala The townspeople had carried on an epic fight for their communal land so flagrantly absorbed that Madero in his 1910 campaign cited it as an example and pledged its return In 1915 the pre-constitutional governor, General Gavera, restored 250 hectares — an insignificant amount, less than one quarter of a hectare for each of the village's thousand families In 1924,

Governor Aurelio Manrique proposed that the *hacienda* yield 6000 hectares of its 40,000 The owner, unable any longer to stave off this repartition through bribery as he had for nine years, began through paid articles in the Mexico City press to attack Governor Manrique as a wrecker and destroyer of the state and to picture particularly the ruin that had befallen the *hacienda* The restoration, however, consisted largely of land never before cultivated Shortly afterward the owner sought a loan of 50,000 pesos from a Mexico City bank offering his *hacienda*, worth many times that amount as security But the manager turning to the inspired articles published in "El Excelsior," said "We understand that your *hacienda* has been utterly ruined and we cannot make the loan" The owner protested that it was all a mistake But in vain

The law of January 6, 1915, provided that the restored communal lands should be enjoyed in communalty by the villagers until another system was determined upon [1] Two opposed views — communal vs private ownership — were animatedly discussed by the intellectuals within the agrarian movement, modern social theory weighing far less in the arguments than Aztec atavism What system would the Indians accept, was the question? Ethnologically speaking, it was an attempt of *white* and *mestizo* to find out what the Indian really wanted The failure of the *ejido* under the communal system *as applied* was, however, amply demonstrated after a few years The human element, so dominant a factor in Mexico, complicated and upset agrarian reform In seeking to escape the exploitation of the *hacendado* the villagers fell under that of the village authorities — the *presidente municipal*, descendant of the old cacique, and the half dozen village leaders, "the principal men" of colonial days, who formed the administrative committee of the *ejido* In the upper house of congress on November 19, 1925, Senator Terrones Benítez, a man of excellent reputation and a consistently clean record as an agrarian, cited as typical the case of the committee president of the pueblo of Vicente Guerrero, Durango, who was exacting a hectoliter of corn or five pesos, thirty-five centavos in coin, and fifteen per cent of the harvest in return for granting the villagers land in their own *ejido*, and that in consequence many were abandoning it This, said the senator, was happening in fifty or sixty pueblos of his state and throughout the republic [2]

At the same session the secretary of agriculture, Luis L León, told the senators how after the neighbors of Tamasopo, San Luis Potosí, had formed a cooperative and by extraordinary efforts established a small sugar refinery, the directors had embezzled $70,000 pesos, and that when a delegate of the National Agrarian Commission visited the pueblo, the villagers dared say nothing, as these same directors were also the administrative committee of the *ejido*, and the people feared reprisal in the loss of their land

In the lower house, Deputy Zincúnegui Tercero of Michoacán declared

[1] Art II

[2] Diario de los Debates, Nov 19, 1925

that communal ownership was a notorious failure in nearly the entire republic the "nearly" being due to a few places with "serene and honorable" directors of *ejidos*, but that in general these lands had been "the object of every kind of intrigue and politics" [1]

In September, 1925, I attended the inauguration ceremonies of a small cooperative of peasants newly endowed with land in the pueblo of Santa Catalina, Vera Cruz The meeting was honored by the presence of the president of the republic The usual addresses of felicitation were heard There was talk of the glorious conquests of the Revolution, of the better days since the yoke of the old serfdom had been cast off Then an aged peasant arose in the hall and called out

"Señor Presidente de la Republica, the municipal president has been persecuting me He will not let me work my land in peace and threatens to take it away from me unless I pay him" President Calles replied, "It is for that reason that I have recommended to congress the new law of the patrimony of the *ejido*, which will protect you against just such abuses"

In his message on the law the president asserted that communal organization had failed because the tillers felt no security for the fruits of their labors and that "possible corruption of the directors of the communal enterprise, who often sacrificed the collective interest to their private advantage," was a potent factor in the lack of interest of the peasant in his *ejido* and its failure to date [2] The law created the conditions previously described, namely inalienable individual possession within the communally owned *ejido*, heritable by the head of the family,[3] a combination of the two varieties of tenure which it is deemed possesses the advantages of both

One cannot omit the personal equation, not an agrarian, but essentially a Mexican question, the *bête noire* of land and all other Mexican problems, which hinders and delays when it does not make impossible their solution [4] Misuse of the power which the execution of the agrarian program gives to those entrusted with it has been flagrant [4] This applies less to the higher officials, in the ministry of agriculture, although not a few have been guilty, than to the state officials — governors and their appointees, the local agrarian commissions — and finally as the cases cited illustrate, to those in charge in the pueblos It was a defect in the original legislation to give the states so vital a part [5] But that was inevitable at the time Indeed, complete

[1] Diario de los Debates, Sept 12, 1925

[2] Relaciones Interiores y Gobernación, No 12, p 750

[3] When the possessor of a lot dies it goes to the one who becomes "the head of the family" It might be the widow or the oldest son Other children on reaching eighteen years would become *ejidatarios* in their own right If both parents die, and the children are all minors, commissaries appointed by a *junta* of the village and under the vigilance of the National Agrarian Commission, administer the lot as a trust

[4] The subject is treated fully in the chapter on Politics

[5] In practice it proved far worse than in theory for it really gave one person — the governor — the power to dispose or not of other people s estates Land owned by a friend of the governor was sacrosanct no matter what legitimate agrarian claims against it Land owned by an enemy became everyone else's property under legalistic forms

centralization of a task so gigantic and so affected by local conditions might have resulted in even worse confusion The federal government has for some time been aware of the inherent weakness of vesting the governor with power to veto or permit agrarian reform, for he it is and his local agrarian commission who grant "provisional possession" Pressure on the state executives has been great and many have succumbed to the bribery and flattery of the landowners To take away their power is difficult because with the law of January 6, 1915, written into the constitution, an amendment needing the approval of two thirds of the state legislatures is required Constitutional amendments are by no means impossible except when they ask the states to relinquish some of their prerogatives This obstacle has been partially overcome by giving the National Agrarian Commission — that is, the federal government — the right to remove members of the local agrarian commission which means that the control of that body has been taken away from the governor [1]

The problem is extraordinarily complex and it is impossible even to begin to judge it with a few data and partial presentation of the facts Every charge that has been made against the agrarian program and its execution is true — somewhere It is true not merely in isolated cases but in many But it is nevertheless not the whole truth One cannot generalize in Mexico as elsewhere from a series of given instances They do not establish a rule Every type of person and every variety of human impulse is represented in the agrarian movement It has been unceasingly betrayed, perverted, constantly used as a cloak for designs unrelated to it, and still more often grievously misrepresented Out of thousands of incidents one may take the following

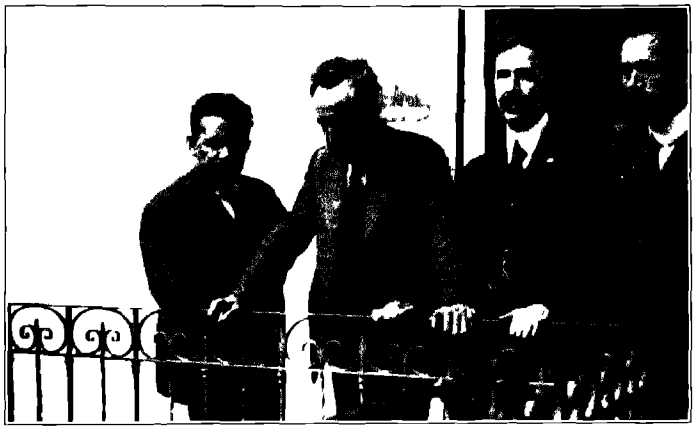
On March 16, 1926, a special despatch to the newspaper "El Democrata" from León, Guanajuato, reported that

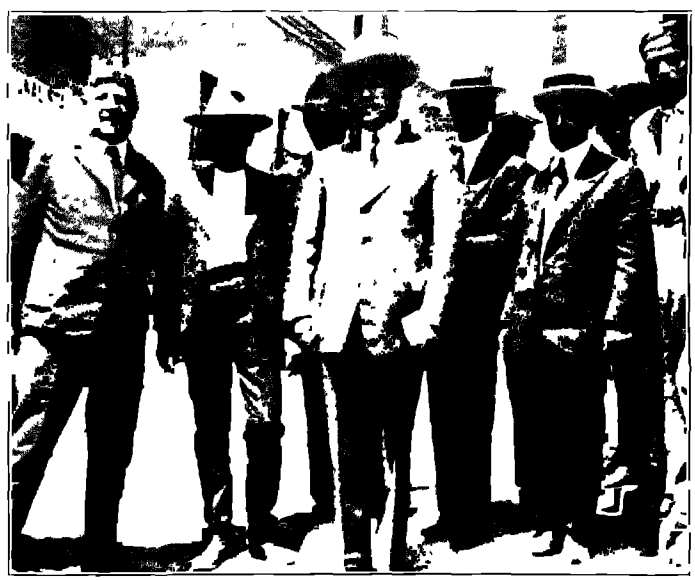
> the rural forces, likewise called the civil forces of the state, have committed horrible crimes on the *ranchos* and *haciendas* for the purpose of terrorizing the natives that they may not unite to obtain increased wages In this manner frequently the crimes which these forces commit are attributed to the so-called "agrarians" Following the murder of three peasants by the civil forces of Tarimoro headed by their chief Florentino Montoya, twelve armed individuals to-day committed an assault on the *hacienda* of San Elías close to Celaya The authorities are laying this attack to the agrarians but public opinion indicts the civil forces themselves as responsible for the crime

What does this signify? A state governed at that time by a man closely allied with the *hacendados* and hostile to the land program, [2] peons working on the *haciendas* at wages still as low as twenty-five centavos a day sought an increase in wages, the governor using his state guard (which as a rule is

[1] Ley de Dotaciones y Restituciones, Art 10

[2] Enrique Colunga





(*Photos by the author*)

INTELLECTUAL LEADERS OF THE AGRARIAN MOVEMENT

(Above) left to right: Dr. Mario G. Cabrera, Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, Rodrigo Gómez, Felipe Santibañez. (Below) The central figure is Dr. José G. Parra, physician to the Zapata forces, governor of Morelos 1923, Sub Secretary of Agriculture 1924–27, acting Secretary 1927



The distribution of land is an occasion of rejoicing in the village Temozon Yucatan celebrates the arrival of the governo Felipe Carrillo Puerto on a *tira derarta*

nothing more than a strong-arm squad to serve his private interests) to kill some peasants audacious enough to ask for higher pay, thereby terrorizing the remainder, and at the same time discrediting the agrarians by blaming them for this violence

As late as April, 1927, the head of the "department of organization and credit for *ejidos*" of the ministry of agriculture, a clean-cut young man, Daniel Ríos A., whose work brings him into the closest contact with the actual day by day needs and thoughts of the tillers of the soil, said to me "Politics is the great impediment in carrying out the agrarian program. We no longer have much difficulty with the *hacendados*." And the secretary of agriculture, León, publicly acknowledged, "We know that, unfortunately, all the agrarian laws have been transformed into a political banner, and their purpose denatured, by using them as bait for votes in the elections."[1] These responsible officials were merely voicing what everyone knows.

One of the most disturbing political manifestations relates to the "category" and resulting "legal capacity" of a nucleus of population to apply for communal lands. Political entities are classified in order of size as (1) city (*ciudad*), (2) town (*villa*), (3) village (*pueblo*), and four lesser units as (4) *ranchería*, (5) *congregación*, (6) *condueñazgo*, and (7) *comunidad* for which no precise equivalents exist among non-Hispanic nations.[2] At the upper end of the scale, cities and towns, and below the lower end, nucleuses of population not of the remaining five political categories, are excluded from receiving land as a *dotación*.[3] As state legislatures, subject to certain elastic provisions of the local constitution and laws, may "erect" any group of people into one of the favored civic categories the opportunities for political log-rolling have been unmatched.

Under the law,[4] communal land adjoins the locality receiving it.[5] It would follow that were a group of agricultural laborers who had been transported to and housed at a given spot by an employer later endowed with a "category" and subsequently given land, the territory immediately surrounding would become theirs. Incredible as such a result might seem, it

[1] Addressing the senate, Dec. 24, 1925.

[2] *Ranchería*, is a collection of *ranchos* or farms whose people have formed a community life of their own, a *congregación*, a 'gathering,' might be translated as "a settlement", *condueñazgo*, literally, "joint ownership" is usually part of an ancient estate owned and occupied by numerous heirs and descendants of the early proprietors, a *comunidad* is a hamlet. These are approximate definitions. In reality the distinction is often merely arbitrary and without any real difference in character or size.

[3] Reglamento Agrario Art. 2, Ley de Dotaciones, Art. 2, II, issued April 26, 1927, which superseded all previous legislation provides certain unimportant exceptions in which towns of more than ten thousand inhabitants are eligible.

[4] Both the law of Jan. 6, 1915 and Art. 27 of the Const. of 1917.

[5] This provision harks back to the concept that the pueblo existed before the Conquest and hence before the *hacienda*. While logical enough in the case of a true pueblo to which land is restored as a *restitución* or *dotación* it would be manifestly far fetched in the case of recently arrived workers with no traditional, sentimental, or other vital connection with the spot on which they happened to be housed.

happened Certain states, Aguascalientes, Durango, and Morelos, for a time went so far as to declare *haciendas* to be *pueblos*[1] With some few officials this may have been due to an over enthusiastic belief that the *ejido* and the small *rancho* should become the only form of landholding and the *hacienda* disappear as an institution Generally, however, it was merely an opportunity for the politician either to blackmail the landholder, or failing in this primary objective to gain a political following among the people benefited

Following was the *modus operandi* First, to implant the idea among some *hacienda* peons that not only were they entitled to land — legitimate educative revolutionary propaganda — but to the particular land surrounding their habitations, and that an application to the legislature for political category would be the first step Second, to apprise the landowner of his peril, with the intimation, through an intermediary, that the peons' claim might be defeated — for a consideration, of course If the landowner told the "coyote" to go to the devil, "agitation" among the peons continued and maybe in time their community became a *pueblo* If, on the other hand, the landowner saw the light and the legislator the lucre, the people's petition received no further encouragement — leaving a disappointed and betrayed lot of peons Or their plea would lie dormant until the next state campaign when the rival candidate would harangue them on how they had been "double-crossed" and the same process repeated A variant might be that the *hacendado*, fearing the loss of that land, would stop cultivating it and discharge the peons, who, left without sustenance and confronted by the land, which they had been promised, now, moreover, lying outrageously idle, would possess themselves of it and begin planting — the situation then being still further complicated, at times by bloodshed

Apart from the obvious immorality, injustice, and indecency of the procedure in each individual case, the general effect has been disastrous — to agrarian reform and to Mexico It went far to strengthen the cry that agrarian reform was merely organized robbery and to lend color to the belief that private property was unsafe in Mexico

El Hule was a mere flag station on the *Vera Cruz al Istmo* railroad, sizzling in damp, treeless lowlands, till banana companies made it the loading center for newly developed cultivation in southern Vera Cruz One day the greatly augmented population of collarless clerks and sweating stevedores filed an application for communal lands, which if granted would have given them a round million of bunches of bananas The plea was illegitimate on several grounds,[2] but it went all the way to the president of the republic, who rejected it — on a new count, namely, that as there had been no pop-

[1] Recopilación de las Principales Leyes p 323, 328

[2] They were not real agriculturists the land was devoted to a special cultivation, the land contained more than a hundred fruit trees — any of which would have disqualified the demand The nearness to the railroad would also have decreased the amount available for communal lands

ulation until brought there to load bananas, the community was not entitled to land The federal government has since increasingly opposed efforts within states to legalize newly formed groups of people as political categories Regulations adopted in 1927 [1] specifically debar peons housed on *haciendas* from "dotations" of land in their vicinity although they may apply for a plot from the national domain The question of category, however, still remains vague — precisely what corrupt politicians want — and will continue to be a source of disturbance until it is freed from the present possibilities of abuse

Closely related to this uncertainty is the struggle for "amplification of *ejidos*" In the Carranza days certain villages received inadequate land I found some in Tlaxcala whose plot per family averaged half a hectare — of poor land [2] They have sought enlargement of their *ejido*, a just plea based on necessity, because with the natural growth of population many individuals since the original distribution, have come of age and are land-less and without resources (These are among the thousands who annually emigrate to the United States for work)

The national policy has crystallized into giving as few "amplifications" as possible — in Calles's first two years only in cases of flagrant insufficiency The total of "definitive amplifications" in the twelve years ending December 31, 1926, was but thirty-one, for an area of 31,309 hectares [3] The latest legislation [4] provides that ten years must elapse before any pueblo which has received land or water may have an increase, and then only to create usufructs for persons (or their successors) not included in the original allotment, and that in any event no amplifications will be granted for five years [5] These limitations were inspired by the conviction that land should first go to pueblos which had none, also by the purpose to lessen agitation, restore tranquillity, and to pause for breath and concentrate on making the restored *ejido* a success

Indeed the government has moved purposefully toward adherence to legal and orderly reform and the elimination of politics and personalism As part of this program it broke up the agrarian political party,[6] and both Obregón and Calles disarmed the agrarians, to prevent as far as possible

[1] Ley de Dotaciones, passed April 26, 1927, Art 2, V

[2] One village was San Jorge Tezoquipan which in the Tlaxcalan tongue (a dialect of the Mexican or Nahua) means "land that is very hard to work" It must have been one of the later settled communities in ancient Tlaxcala when the better spots had been occupied The average plot was three fourths of a hectare

[3] Datum furnished by National Agrarian Commission

[4] Ley de Dotaciones, adopted April 26, 1927

[5] Arts 191 192, 195

[6] Partido Nacional Agrarista Although its acknowledged leader, Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, and some of those prominent in its counsels, Felipe Santibáñez Lauro G Caloca, and Aurelio Manrique, Jr , were men of unquestioned integrity and unusual devotion to Revolutionary ideals, the agitation of a political party making "land for the people" its only objective drove the government faster than it wanted or could efficiently go Moreover political hangers-on, village ne'er-do-wells, and the large tribe of Revolutionary camp-followers enlisted under the party banner, as "agrarians" and used its force for personal profit

their taking the law into their own hands [1] Improvement has been marked, especially within the federal administration, which from the acting secretary of agriculture, Dr José G Parres,[2] down through the department heads, has a high proportion of intelligent and devoted executives

The courts have on the whole also acted as a check on unbridled agrarianism and have tended to regulate its procedure A few cases typify both the nature of the justiciable problems arising out of agrarian reform and the relation of the judiciary to it

The "Colorado Land Company" of Sinaloa asked on *amparo* "against acts of the President of the Republic, the National Agrarian Commission, its delegation in said state, and the Local Agrarian Commission * * * in restitution of *ejidos* to the pueblo of San Pedro Camalote "

The plaintiff alleged, among other irregularities, violation of Article 9 of Agrarian Regulations [3] which reduces the amount of land available when the pueblo lies close to a railroad, that the "Colorado Land Company" constituted an "agricultural unity in operation" and was therefore exempt from giving land, [4] that the presidential resolution was in conflict with another executive decision, to the effect that rivers were the natural boundaries of *ejidos*, the Culiacán River now forming such a boundary between pueblo and the Colorado Company land, et cetera

The lower court denied the company's plea, but on appeal the supreme court "revoked the finding by the District Judge" and declared that "the judicial power of the Union guards and protects the Colorado Land Company, against the Presidential decision," et cetera [5]

In October, 1917, the pueblo of Tolcayuca, Hidalgo, possessing 711 hectares of *ejidal* land, was given 1044 hectares from the *hacienda* of Casa Blanca, which while adjoining the pueblo lies across the state border in Mexico The survey gave 136 more hectares than the resolution provided,[6] which raised the pueblo's possessions to 1891 hectares Within a month after this resolution the pueblo demanded a further amplification of its *ejidos* considering what it had insufficient The *hacendado* alleged "the *dotación* was sufficient, and if some of the people were left without land it was because the caciques of the pueblo gobbled up the best lots, to an extent much

[1] And both deemed it advisable to re-arm the *campesino* in certain localities when the governments were threatened respectively by the de la Huerta rebellion of 1923–4 and the Catholic rebellion of 1926–7

[2] A cultured man and a sincere public servant he sympathized with the Zapata movement and served it in his professional capacity as a physician He was appointed governor of Morelos by Obregón, and sub-secretary of agriculture by Calles until the resignation of the secretary, Luis L León, in May 1927

[3] Bolaños, Codificación Agraria V, p 179

[4] Reglamento Agrario Art 14, Para IV

[5] From an attested copy of the original dated August 19, 1926, furnished by the president of the supreme court, Manuel Padilla

[6] Faulty surveying, sometimes deliberate, has been an occasional source of trouble

in excess of what was calculated as the share of each head of a family" The local agrarian commission agreed, for it found increase of the *ejido* not justified, and that the proper procedure was an equitable redistribution of the land The governor approved this decision But the National Agrarian Commission without any new evidence awarded an additional 2631 hectares, and the president of the republic in July, 1921, so ordered [1] However, the supreme court on April 22, 1925, denied the amplification because

> The president has no authority to reconsider his decisions * * * because the new list made to secure the land showed more inhabitants than the previous one,[2] because the amplification decreed is notoriously excessive since it is much larger than the original dotation which had been considered sufficient [3] * * *

The plaintiff, Cordero Montes de Oca, is the owner of several subdivisions of the *hacienda* San José Buenavista, in the State of Mexico The neighboring pueblo, San Mateo Atenco, asked for a *dotación* of *ejidos* which was denied by the local agrarian commission because the pueblo already possessed lands, had means of income other than agricultural, and the surrounding estates were "small properties" which could not be touched The governor of the state approved this finding, but the National Agrarian Commission revoked it, and ordered the plaintiff's land given in its entirety including the *casco* (the plant, or residential portions) This decision was approved by the president of the republic The supreme court, however, on October 29, 1924, found this "resolution is illegal * * * because the right of pueblos to be given land yields to the right of the 'small property' * * * as the fundamental object of the agrarian reform is the creation and encouragement of small holdings, the District Judge in so declaring did no more than properly interpret the law" By a unanimous vote the court rejected the presidential decision conceding its constitutional protection to fifty hectares surrounding the *casco* of the *hacienda* [4]

In June, 1921, the local agrarian commission of Michoacán awarded *ejidos* to the suburb Santiaguito of the city of Morelia, taking the land from four surrounding properties, and this was confirmed by the National Agrarian Commission and the national executive The District Judge, however,

[1] The president's approval is except in cases of unusual importance such as those involving international complications, merely a formula The president generally relies on the judgment of the National Agrarian Commission and his decision is merely a passive assent thereto

[2] Probably a padded "agrarian census" — a common irregularity

[3] Semanario Judicial de la Federación, V Epoca, Tomo XVI

[4] Semanario Judicial de la Federación, V Epoca, Tomo XV, No 17, p 1077–83 According to Circular No 21 of the National Agrarian Commission (*Codificación Agraria* Bolaños, p 249–51) the *casco*, or plant of a *hacienda* is inviolable with a protecting zone of 50 hectares, but under the agrarian regulations Art 14, Para 1 and 15, the plaintiffs were entitled to retain a minimum of 150 hectares of irrigated land, or of 250 of arable land with abundant precipitation The court's decision does not violate these provisions, which would only be invoked if the pueblo again commenced proceedings for the land in question

granted an *amparo* because the *dotación* violated Article 14 of the agrarian regulations, which denies *ejidos* to nucleuses of population known as districts or suburbs (*barrios*) and are governed by the municipal authorities of any city, *villa*, or pueblo — the community of Santiaguito coming under that category The federal government appealed, but in July, 1926, the supreme court by six votes to two upheld the judge and restored the full ownership of the properties affected to the plaintiffs [1]

Elena Aguayo Viuda de Piña secured an *amparo* from the district court of Hidalgo against the *dotación* of lands from her *hacienda* to the pueblo of Almoloya, alleging violation of Articles 14 and 16 of the constitution, which respectively forbid retroactive legislation, and that "no one shall be molested in his * * * possessions except by virtue of an order in writing of the competent authority setting forth the legal ground for the action taken"

The supreme court on July 22, 1925, sustained the *amparo* finding that "the *dotación* is illegal because the pueblo possesses sufficient lands for its needs, because the census was made by the same people who solicited the land, and is inaccurate, showing a discrepancy with that made by the Municipal President, because in the presidential decision the *ejido* had not been previously defined, but was ordered to be in accord with the survey which the National Agrarian Commission would approve * * * and because the pueblo is an industrial rather than an agricultural center" [2]

The government's most constructive measure has been the founding in aid of the small farmer of a national farm credit bank and of regional banks, one being projected for each state The national bank confining its operations to states which have no local bank, in its first year [3] made loans to 412 individuals, and to sixty-five cooperatives with 3137 members, amounting to $19,215,031 pesos This federal institution purposes that no worthy effort at cultivation shall fail through lack of implements or sustenance for the farmer while his crops mature

Regional banks were established in 1926 in Hidalgo, Guanajuato, Michoacán, and Durango, and in 1927 in Chihuahua, Mexico, and Puebla in a program of simultaneous creation of cooperatives and regional agricultural schools

Each *ejido* forms a cooperative The bank advances what may be needed to sustain its members until the harvest At that time it accepts the crop at the current market price reimbursing itself for previous loans plus interest

[1] From an attested copy of proceedings dated July 2 1926, furnished by the President of the Court

[2] Semanario Judicial de la Federación, V Epoca, Tomo XVII, No 4, p 230

[3] To April 1, 1927

at five per cent per annum and for agricultural implements, draft animals, or other outlays The bank does not, however, sell the crop then but holds it for higher prices, making an additional payment to the cooperative when the sale is completed Through this procedure the peasants no longer fall into the hands of speculators who with usurious advances secured the crops at beggarly prices The middleman is eliminated, the crop being sold directly in the urban markets

The Banco Agricola in Tula, the southwestern portion of Hidalgo, may serve as an example Founded May 1, 1926, with $200,000 pesos capital, it began with contracts with three cooperatives in the pueblos of San Marcos, San Lorenzo, and Atitalaquia Ten months later the number of cooperatives working through the bank had swelled to fifty-four with seven thousand members Not less than twenty may form a cooperative but there is no upper limit beyond that of the number of village *ejidatarios* (Throughout this region all communal lands are restored) Each cooperative must make an initial purchase of at least five shares of bank stock at ten pesos a share More may be purchased if desired In ten months these cooperatives had out of their crops purchased eighty thousand pesos' of stock When they acquire a majority of the stock the cooperatives control the bank, but the federal government deems it wise to postpone this moment until they have greater experience in modern agronomy, marketing, and finance

The bank is more than an instrument of credit Its manager, Mariano Cervantes, is an agronomist who as regional organizer of the National Agrarian Commission supervised the restoration of communal lands in the state and did the educational work preparatory to the organization of these cooperatives He is, therefore, vitally interested and largely responsible for the success of agrarian reform in his state His bank serves as an educational institution, furnishing steel plows to replace the wooden ones of ancient use and stimulating the peasants as far as possible to use modern methods of cultivation Getting the land is a great event in the life and history of a pueblo The first tractor is another

The State of Hidalgo illustrates what agrarian reform may mean to all Mexico I visited it in March, 1927 Throughout the southern portion of the state acres upon acres of furrowed land, much of it formerly idle, stretched to the rolling hills The tillers were not too busy or too fearful to converse Only the youngest of them do not recall the *hacienda* serfdom [1] To-day they still work hard, but for themselves The fruit of their labor is theirs and their children's and they experience more contentment than

[1] Specifically what has happened (April, 1927) may be illustrated by the fate of the *hacienda* Tlahuelilpa, 31 926 hectares in extent, one of five great estates owned by the Iturbe family, this property having passed from the possession in colonial days of the family of the Conde de la Cortina It was a typical case of absentee ownership with sweating of the workers by a resident *administrador* In answer to my inquiry when the owner, the Princess Piedad Iturbe de Hohenlohe, living in Madrid,

they have ever known They are paying taxes[1] The storehouses of their cooperatives were piled ceiling-high with grain — "a little later the price will have risen — then we shall sell it" The region pulses with new life · Growth of the soil, growth of the people

"Have you seen our new school — no, not the agricultural school, but our own village school? Our cooperative has just finished building it" They show with pride the new stone edifice, the best in the village, erected with their own hands

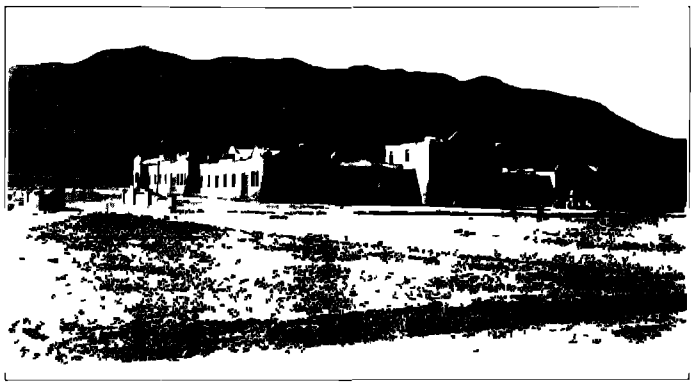
In a broad valley sloping gently toward amethyst mountains cut out against sparkling azure, stand, starkly new, the shining buildings of the regional agricultural school To it every pueblo in the state sends two boys selected on recommendation of the village teacher ratified by assembly of the villagers In a three years' practical course on the school's 1200 hectares they have started, as their fathers never started, to learn what their fathers were never taught They will emerge as expert farmers, as citizens conscious of their position in village, state, and nation This story belongs to education, but the agrarian movement is itself the subsoil from which the education of a whole people will sprout and the new agricultural school cannot be separated from the region's new life Every *campesino* in the state is proud of it On Sundays some trudge from their villages to gaze lovingly and

had last visited the *hacienda*, the manager replied that she had never visited it Lands from this *hacienda* have been distributed as follows

Name of Village	No of Hectares Restored (Fractions Omitted)	No of Heads of Families Afflicted	Bonds Paid to the Princess Iturbe de Hohenlohe (Pesos)
Tezontepec	1234	200	$208,600 00
S Francisco	697	44	102,400 00
Atayutlán	186	31	29,600 00
Doxey	604	87	70 000 00
Sta Ana Ahuehuepan	1590	265	213,600 00
Sta Ma Natividas	870	147	58,300 00
Sn Gabriel	326	70	63 700 00
El Llano	520	88	142,800 00
S Fco Bojay	600	82	37,900 00
S Pedrito Alpuyeca	293	39	22,500 00
El Cerro	337	48	3 300 00
Huerto Nantza	437	61	8,000 00
Totals	7694	1162	$901 300 00

These figures are derived from several sources The National Agrarian Commission the Dept of Indemnification of the ministry of agriculture, the Hidalgo state authorities and the Iturbe estate The corresponding figures from different sources do not check with entire accuracy but there are no important discrepancies between them

[1] Collecting taxes from the *ejidatario* has not been easy, but it was not only necessary as part of his education but to offset diminishing revenues from *haciendas* In Jalisco three *ejidos* taken from an *hacienda* and less than one sixth of its area are paying more than the entire *hacienda* did In some states the opposition on the part of the villagers to pay taxes has been due to excessively high valuation by the state authorities In other states such as Mexico, the present government is trying to collect at once the total payment for all the years since the restoration of the *ejido*, which is next to impossible







(*Photos by the author.*)

THE NEW AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS

(Above) the main building of the school El Mexhe Hidalgo (below) at left "a" before and after pictures. At the left Pompeyo Perez who gives his age as seventeen but is probably younger an orphan of the pueblo of Texcatepec who on March 8 1927 applied for admission to the agricultural school of Hidalgo. He could not read or write. At the right Gregorio Rivera age fifteen of Maravillas Hidalgo who had been in the school six months. Note the difference! At right Policarpo Garza director of the school



(*Photo by the author*)

"LA MALINZIT" (14,100 FT.) FROM TENANCINGO, TLAXCALA

with a certain reverent awe on their rapidly changing offspring, bursting with new found knowledge, and on the modern and hitherto unseen model dairies, canneries and other addenda of an up-to-date agricultural school One who sees this region of Hidalgo, which is not peculiarly endowed, but indeed is inhabited by a race proverbially the dullest in all Mexico, the Otomí, cannot but have faith in the ultimate success of Mexico's revindication of the soil for her people

True, Hidalgo is the best state (from the agrarian standpoint) in Mexico and should not therefore be considered typical But it exemplifies what can be done The combination of cooperatives, farm loan bank, and agricultural school is showing almost as good results in three other states Three more are applying the formula — others will follow Tamaulipas and Tlaxcala, without it, have done extremely well Of the former state, in which very different conditions obtain, the verbatim account of an enlightened *hacendado* tells its story [1]

Implanting the agrarian law was essential, for the greater part of the state was given over to cattle raising and though sparsely settled did not provide sufficient work for its people The landowners conducted their live stock industry in the most rudimentary manner, merely turning the cattle loose in plain and mountain to procreate, and corralling it only for branding or selling Their individual holdings, as in most the republic, were immense — fifteen, twenty, forty, and even a hundred thousand hectares Nevertheless, the majority of the owners resisted disgorging even a few hectares, an insignificant fraction of their total, which would save many families from misery and social abandonment

In consequence the state became depopulated — although had the land been available it would have sufficed to maintain all the population and more in agriculture To-day the results of agrarian reform here have been most gratifying Never has it been made a political weapon in Tamaulipas, nor been marred by a single instance of death, assault, or scandal The *hacendados* opposed to it defended their rights before the tribunals which have functioned impartially In Cecilia where land was given provisionally and the courts declared no lands are available, these were taken away from the people

On the other hand whatever lands have been given to the Indians now produce at least half as much again as before and often double Concrete examples near the capital, Ciudad Victoria, are the lands formerly belonging to the Hacienda de la Presa and the adjoining farms, El Sabino, La Garrapata, El Refugio, and La Misión Formerly these did not grow one fourth enough grain for the needs of the vicinity To-day they not only suffice but there is a great surplus to say nothing of a new horticulture which is greatly beneficial to the region

Throughout the state new entities have been created which have caused regions formerly sterile to bloom agriculturally [2]

[1] His name is withheld from publication by request The facts have, however, been confirmed from unbiased sources and his account may be considered, therefore, not as mere opinion but as an authoritative picture of agrarian reform in Tamaulipas

[2] A contrast to the perverted creation of new political entities previously described

The speaker then cited nine cases including that of

the new *congregación* of Oyama which in fourteen months has not only quadrupled the harvest on its lands but out of its own communal[1] savings, has purchased in the United States modern farm machinery worth $8000 This machinery was turned over as a solemn ceremony — as indeed the event deserved — by the governor of the state on May 1, 1926

Small loans by the governor, subsequently repaid, have helped tide these new communities over until the harvest In the time they spare from their own fields many *campesinos* work on the *haciendas* This type is to-day a new man and the change has been brought about in less than a year and a half[2]

Other states, however, present a different picture and offer specific problems that remain to be solved

Up to 1928, agrarian reform in Morelos, "cradle of agrarianism," had been disastrous Virtually complete return of the communal lands had not reconstructed the state from its ruin The *haciendas* lie abandoned, semi-tropical growth bursts from a thousand crannies, wreathing these monuments of a dead past in a wilderness of flowers Green lizards dart through the deserted chapels The bells which summoned to toil and to worship are silent The peons are free But they are not contented During Obregón's administration — the first not to treat these proletarian Morelenses, Zapatistas all, as enemies — they found the peace and freedom after ten years' struggle good As late as April, 1923, when I first visited Morelos they were not dissatisfied They were in undisputed possession of their soil beneath the ancient volcanoes — for the first time since Cortés from the continental divide looked down upon it as his As one's gaze dropped from the prisms near invisibility in a shimmering sky, to the lower ranges purpling into the heat of distant Guerrero, and the nearer bare knolls thrust from the tumultuous valley floor, one could see against the lush green bottoms tiny white flecks, the men in their fields One descends, the gray slopes deepen to pale jade where dust and moisture strive for mastery, then to cool green amid gurgling waters

"We are growing what we want to grow and for our own use," the men standing knee-deep in the ooze of the *ejido* said That was the somewhat defiant answer when one inquired into conditions Usually a leader, pyjama-clad like the rest, repeated the phrase, "what was called prosperity for the state was misery for us," which was true But two years later in May, 1925, I found them discontented Growing the staples brought no surplus Some even said that in the *hacienda* days at least you were paid regularly, now you weren't sure of anything and if the *hacienda* came back now, the

[1] This refers not to communal cultivation but to joint marketing and pooling of the profits

[2] Credit for the successful working out of the agrarian program in Tamaulipas is generally given to the governor since 1925 Emilio Portes Gil and Marte Gómez, president of the state agrarian commission, who has since become the director of the new Federal Farm Loan Bank (Banco de Crédito Agrícola)

old abuses probably would not They had succumbed to what Dr Manuel Gamio has termed "the slavery of corn," and, one might add, the slavery of beans and chile, profitless crops which should be replaced by specialized and more lucrative agriculture Such was sugar, and the *campesinos* of Morelos, "Mexico's sugar bowl," as it was called, want it back But it requires vast capital to build modern refineries The federal government has sought it unsuccessfully for a plan to permit the peasants' cooperatives to grow and sell cane, and will probably have to undertake the work itself The peasants tried growing rice Speculators had the profit before harvest time, while the waste of water which that crop entails led to violence In March, 1927, a pitched battle was fought between 250 armed villagers of Tezoyuca and Chiconcos in which six perished Federal troops established a "neutral zone" between the two pueblos It was the historic — and prehistoric — quarrel over the water supply

Ten years of revolution came close to reviving a habit in a people who still had a lot of warfare in their systems when the Conquest put a stop to it, and seizing a rifle has become as instinctive as leaning against a plow The wild life of the guerilla does not conduce to settling down to communal cooperation A former Zapatista private is still awed and exploited by the general (and ex-generals are numerous, I met seven in one day) who supposedly plants the adjacent lot, the result being that the general works little if at all Then one fine day there is trouble in the bosom of the *ejido!* Yet these problems differ only in degree and detail from those of other states and are soluble by the intelligent application of the methods used there

In Yucatán, even more a one-crop state, land distribution, largely achieved under the dashing Governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto in 1922–3, has netted the people little real economic benefit although the abstract and economic value of possessing a few acres even of the limestone that composes Yucatán's surface is unquestioned With them the coyote is kept from the door Moreover, in Yucatán the *ejido* was a symbol and a living proof that the *hacienda* horrors of Díaz days had passed forever But as labor on a *henequén* plantation at current wages (1 50–2 00 pesos daily) is far more profitable than raising foodstuffs on the peninsula's sterile soil, quite another problem, which affects the state as a unit is involved State control under Carrillo Puerto saved the sisal industry during the period of post-war deflation In 1927 demand and price fell off greatly owing to the ending of Yucatán's monopoly through the cultivation of sisal in South Africa and elsewhere The peninsula consequently entered a period of economic depression which affected the agricultural workers first Manufacturing finished products from the raw fiber in Yucatán and creating a market within Mexico will doubtless be necessary — an indication of how closely agricultural and industrial factors are bound up in agrarianism

Is the agrarian problem in Mexico solved? By no means It cannot be — either in a decade, or in two, or in anything less than a lifetime, and not wholly then It is on the children of former peons that the nation's hopes rest and the economic independence which they now have in prospect is but the first step in a larger emancipation which will require a new generation properly to work out The barest start has been made, a path has been partly cleared and now seems defined Hidalgo and Tamaulipas are only samples They must be multiplied a hundred fold before the picture they present may be said to be typical of the coming Mexico And even these states have but made the merest beginning

There are many collateral problems — still untouched State laws, some of them impractical and destructive, conflict with the federal program The inclusion of the *hacienda* — modernized and made efficient — in the national agricultural scheme remains to be worked out For inevitably not all will be "small proprietors" and it will take more than the *ejido* to increase living standards and check the steady emigration of agricultural workers [1]

[1] Mexico's emigration statistics are revealing Since 1908 (the first year that U S statistics record departures of aliens by race), the flow of Mexican workers across the border has increased steadily, approximating 400,000 in the seventeen revolutionary years this total signifying the number who have remained in the United States In one year only 1918 (year ending June 30 1918), did the Mexicans returning to Mexico exceed the number leaving, an exception clearly due to the special conditions existing in the United States in the first year of its entry into the World War, when aliens were generally liable to suspicion persecution, and attempts to draft them for military service Prior to 1908 emigration from Mexico was negligible chiefly because the Mexican worker was bound to his task in field and factory by combined debt slavery, penury, and ignorance The increased emigration from 1920 on reflects the higher wages and better opportunities in the United States due to post-war prosperity and the restriction of European immigration to the United States It is also, however, an indication that the economic improvement which the Revolution aimed to bring about for the working classes has not yet made itself sufficiently felt to hold the Mexican in his land where he would stay if he could The 1924 "high" is presumably due to the de la Huerta rebellion The Mexican emigrants are not at present satisfactorily classified by occupation but it can be safely assumed that a considerable portion is rural (A study of Mexican emigration to the United States is now being made by Dr Manuel Gamio under the auspices of the Social Science Research Council) Following are the yearly net figures (Annual Report of the Comm-Gen l of Immigration 1926, p 182–5 1927 figures from Bureau of Immigration)

NET EMIGRATION FROM MEXICO TO THE U S 1900–1927

1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907
261	350	715	486	447	227	141	91

Above, *gross figures only* The *returning Mexicans were not classified until 1908, which would* indicate that there was virtually no Mexican emigration before that time Net figures below

1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917
5,509	15 443	17 550	18 465	21,676	10,044	12,419	10,420	17 439	15,679

1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927
−7482	11,051	44,630	24,084	12 470	60 230	85,770	29,503	40 118	64 764

Nevertheless, when one recalls the chaos that existed in 1920, and still in 1924, and keeps in mind history and heritage and the disintegrating factors that persist in the nation's vitals, one cannot but pay tribute to the present status of agrarianism as a remarkable working out of a wholly Mexican problem, by Mexicans, in a Mexican way One should wonder not that this gigantic task was done so blunderingly, but that it was not done far worse, that indeed it was done at all

Restoration of land to the people — the *ejido* (and how significant is its original meaning, "the way out"!) — is unquestionably the most important aspect of Mexico's *agrarian* problem which in turn is the basic problem of the nation There remains the *agricultural* question — of production — so that the nation need no longer import foodstuffs but may raise beyond its own needs for export A violent ink and paper controversy has raged in Mexico — on the intellectual sector — over whether the nation was producing more or less under agrarian reform than before Whatever production may have been in recent years it is certainly now steadily increasing A million independent farmers will harvest more than fifty thousand, a large part of whose land was always idle

Closely associated with the agrarian and agricultural problems of Mexico is that of irrigation It is nigh impossible for a dweller in a land where water is plentiful and taken for granted much as air and sunlight to grasp the full significance of Mexican waterlessness It has modified, even determined, Mexican history, religion, health, and habits Water has been a motive for worship and combat in Mexico from time immemorial[1] One need but live briefly in one of the countless dessicated, dust-smothered pueblos of the mesa, or note the instant barrenness of every protuberance from even the most fertile valley floor, to sense the profound bearing of Mexico's meteorological and hydrographic heritage Abundant water would go far to liquidate Mexico's chronic dry rot Nor is this an unattainable desert mirage, though it calls for a project to dominate nature which would tax the resources of the most advanced civilization of our day The task is to retain on the plateau the seasonal rains that now spill uselessly through and over the great Sierra Madre rims to the sea Under proper conservation and distribution Mexico's annual water supply, scarce as it now is, could transform the static desert into a dynamic garden of nation size And the other consequences challenge the imagination That contemporary Mexico appreciates the water problem is indicated by the irrigation undertaken in the last three years — work is progressing on six great projects in Aguascalientes, Coahuila, Hidalgo, Michoacán, Nuevo León, and

[1] Carranza's first move in his attack on Sonora in 1919–20 to provoke resistance which would give him a pretext to send armed forces to the state was to remove the Sonora River from state to federal jurisdiction The documents are found in Sonora y Carranza, comp by Clodoveo Valenzuela y Amado Chavern Matamoros, p 9–55

Tamaulipas — and by the new legislation [1] which aims at an equitable distribution of the existing water supply But really it is an engineering problem of national scope, which depends on finance, which in turn depends on other factors that are treated elsewhere

Land is the oldest problem in Mexico The contemporary *ejido* is little other than the *calpulli* of the Aztecs inalienable communal ownership combined with personal usufruct Its restoration is therefore conservative — of one of the oldest patrimonies of the race It is radical in that it goes to the root of Mexican tradition — to the ethnic heritage that will not down, to the primitive yearning of the race, unsatisfied until now Thus again the strange timelessness of Mexico presents its paradoxical intermingling of progress and atavism — progress because land is what the people want and need If its tenure is a reversion in form, it is progressive also because to-day it in no wise limits individual growth Adjoining the *ejido*, that village club to which virtual indigence is a requisite for charter membership, are already flourishing fields purchased by individual *ejidatarios* out of the profits of their third, fourth, and fifth years' labor [2] Therein lies the philosophy of the *ejido* An equal opportunity to start and protection in a fair subsistence in exchange for hard work, an initial paternalism — an early tutelage to be grown out of by directed self-help, individual and common effort What could be sounder for a people with a majority mentally still in its infancy, with adult responsibilities which it wants to fulfil adequately?

The agrarian reform has implications far beyond the economic, supremely important as these are As the former pariahs who composed Mexico's people receive their land — its benefits and its responsibilities — the foundations of a citizenry are being laid Out of this will in time emerge a democracy, not precisely like the varyingly imperfect democracies of the world, but one increasingly shaped by and adapted to the needs of the Mexican people It will be a long, long process but no beginning would have been possible without something approximating equal economic opportunities Democracy is unthinkable when its units are illiterates, once yearly herded to or kept from the polls, without stake or participation in the national life, truly peons, or pawns, for the powerful few to manipulate As long as honest toil (mental and physical) gains no rewards, as long as labor is stigmatized as folly, so long will parasitism — political, professional, and proprietary — endure in Mexico The failures of its self-government are attributable to many causes, but they rest basically on the economic inequality at which land reform has struck the mightiest blow

[1] The Ley de Irrigación, adopted Jan 8, 1926 and the Ley de Aguas de Jurisdicción Federal (as revised and amended) They end water monopoly and seek to stimulate private irrigation enterprise through government aid in return for some of the improved land The irrigation law, Deputy Lombardo Toledano declared, when it was debated in congress, was "largely inspired by the theories of Henry George" (Diario de los Debates, Dec 7, 1925)

[2] I encountered three instances of this in Hidalgo in March, 1927 Isolated cases are occurring in other states

AREA OF LANDS DISTRIBUTED BY MEANS OF DOTATION AND RESTITUTION BETWEEN THE PERIODS OF JAN 6, 1915, AND DEC 31, 1926

States	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	Totals
Aguascalientes		456				2,703		5,849	8,103	15,720	5,167	37,998
Baja California				5,265	1,755			12,000	5,066	1,755		25,841
Campeche		2,308	8,365	6,299		1,520	18,137	28,580	20,535	42,519	1,830	130,093
Coahuila		3,511				9,344			28,026	21,206	30,743	92,830
Colima		1,755	4,158			4,080	1,000			3,332	250	14,575
Chiapas		1,755		1,000	466	4,235	2,321	5,059		5,912	11,896	33,244
Chihuahua					6,034	1,744	42,658	55,352	16,512	48,287	297,679	468,266
Federal District	1,241	605	1,377	54		289	4,070	4,317	4,681	98		16,732
Durango		3,511	5 266	4,255		101,919	9,486	768	14,530	37,195	82,541	259,471
Guanajuato		877	4,273	2,426		10,647	4,305		18,829	3,940	5,218	50,515
Guerrero					5,857	4 356	10,540	36 715	30,024	16,780	540	104,818
Hidalgo	4,072	4,021	4 365	0,300	24,135	40 161	5,753	6,687	24,011	19,776	11,876	154,159
Jalisco			4,185	8,028	9,735	12,566	17,638	16 039	30,376	26,058	23,117	147,742
Mexico		2,438	500	3,515	827	12 434	10,416	15 466	17,929	26,136	39,753	129,414
Michoacan		6,131	4,759	917	1,083	15,866		21,258	12,337	7,855	12,655	82,861
Morelos							16,187	8,865	9,601	7,247	23,494	65,394
Nayarit			1,696	1,755	19,262	16 576			1,409	4,242		44,940
Nuevo León										12,468	7,231	19,699
Oaxaca		1,276	900	777	834	4,785	294	2,858	3,562	3,828	7,672	26,786
Puebla		9,751	14,188	5,845	15,418	32,043	3,899	6,518	21,029	37,299	50,355	196,345
Queretaro			1,755	1,377	700				2,343	8,938		15,113
San Luis Potosí		18,434	1,755	275		22,925	12,996	47,244	84,140	90,827	9,840	288,436
Sinaloa					34,678	64,287	1,026		23,673		1,108	124,772
Sonora				7,022	35 474	14,392		10,000	14,406	4,201	1,473	86,968
Tabasco					474	557			2,176		4 819	8,026
Tamaulipas										15,191	20,892	36,083
Tlaxcala		2,092	3,747	2,679	7,119	7,937	6,044	5,029	5,725	1,427	2,421	44,220
Vera Cruz		2,255	7,458	3,082	25,098	3,739	905	22,357	4,339	34,712	30,148	134,093
Yucatan		510		1,551	3,000	31,768	3,100	116,184	38,344	250,640	1,320	446,417
Zacatecas		1,755			5,266	17,128		28,637	92,551	146,657	10,952	302,946
Totals for the republic	5,313	63,441	68,747	65,422	197,215	438,001	170,783	456,382	534,257	894,246	694,990	3,588,797
Cumulative totals	5 313	68,754	137 501	202,923	400,138	838,139	1,008,922	1,465,304	1,999,561	2,893,807	3,588,797	

THE CHURCH

I COLONIAL PERIOD

PROPAGATION of the faith was the ostensible purpose of Spanish conquest in the New World In a day when the pope as vicar of Christ asserted, and Catholic monarchs acknowledged, his right of dominion over all earthly kingdoms, Pope Alexander's celebrated bull was in effect a charter and title to the Americas [1] Under it the Catholic kings of Spain received the sovereignty over the territories discovered by Columbus so that their inhabitants might be converted

Two centuries later King Ferdinand VI wrote

> The preaching of the gospel, the uprooting of idolatry and the drawing of the Indians from the darkness and error in which they live into the light of grace, being the principal motive which led our Catholic predecessors to their conquest and pacification * * *[2]

That was the official version — sincerely believed at the time, and in retrospect It was an age of intense faith, rendered fanatical through centuries of warfare against the infidel Moors

But no allusion to the faith appears in the articles drawn up between Columbus and the crown, although he was presumably headed for the pagan East They treat only of the division of spoils [3]

"Oh, Lord," prayed Columbus on his first voyage, "direct me where I may find the gold mine " [4]

A red cross with the device "let us follow the cross and under this sign if we have faith we shall conquer," was emblazoned on Cortés's banner,[5] but it was riches that he and his followers had come to win

In pursuance of the two aims — planting the cross, and finding gold — the natives of New Spain were en masse converted to the new faith and subverted to the economic desires of their new masters The two aspects of the Conquest, proselyting and exploitation, would appear to have been antagonistic But conversion once accomplished, not only was the power of the faith increasingly perverted to the more practical purpose of material subjugation, but the spiritual program, viewed as an apparently accom-

[1] Bull, "Inter Coetera," May 4 1493
[2] El Rey Fernando VI, Instrucción para el Virey Marqués de Amarillas, 1 (In Instrucciones Reservadas, imp ed)
[3] Herrera, Historia General de los Hechos de los Castellanos Dec I, Lib I, cap IX
[4] Columbus Journal of First Voyage to America (Sunday, December 23, 1492)
[5] Gomara Crónica General de las Indias

plished fact, gradually ceased to evoke the disinterested fervor which had at first characterized it

Under the system of *encomiendas*, originated by Columbus and adopted by Cortés,[1] the natives were distributed as slaves among the expeditionary forces and subsequent arrivals from Spain Most of the earlier missionaries, humble men filled with apostolic devotion, their bare feet and coarse vestments contrasting with the splendor of the soldiery, made every effort to check the cruelties of the *encomenderos* The Franciscan fathers, Juan de Tecto, Pedro de Gante, and the Dominican Antonio de Montesino, Pedro de Córdoba and others, both in their preachments and in their lives, carried out the teachings of the Master

Fray Juan de Zumárraga whose religious zeal as first bishop of Mexico led him without compunction to burn a cacique from Texcoco at the stake for idolatry,[2] was so deeply moved by the enslavement of the Indians in the Province of Pánuco and elsewhere that he called the king's attention to their wholesale destruction, saying

> If it is true that your Majesty has granted permission, you should, out of reverence to God, do humble penitence for it [3]

An act of singular moral courage in those days

Vasco de Quiroga, first bishop of Michoacán, with rare understanding, maintained and stimulated the native crafts — weaving, wood carving, gold and silver smithing, painting, pottery He created a uniquely happy, self-sufficient community in his diocese, won to the new existence and religion by faith and works, and by the shining example of his own immaculate life [4]

Fray Julian Garcés, of the order of Preachers, first bishop of Tlaxcala, wrote Pope Paul III a letter memorable for eloquence and beauty of spirit, saying

> The false doctrine that the Indians are incapable of absorbing our religion * * * is the voice of Satan * * * which issues from the avaricious throats of Christians who * * * to satisfy their greed, insist that rational creatures made in the image of God are beasts of burden [5]

"All the fault," concluded this courageous apostle, then past his eightieth year, "would be the Holy Father's if he did not take proper measures" And the pontiff, in a bull which reechoes the bishop's ringing plea, commanded that "the Indians should not be enslaved, and be brought into the faith by preaching and good example" [6]

But most indefatigable of all was Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, the

[1] Solórzano y Pereyra Política Indiana, Lib III, cap 1, Para III
[2] Suárez de Peralta Noticias Históricas de la Nueva España, p 279
[3] Letter of August 27, 1529 Icazbalceta rep in Don Fray Juan de Zumárraga, App 24–5
[4] Alegre, Hist de la Compañía, vol I, p 93–4
[5] García, ed rep in El Clero de México Durante la Dominación Española Según el Archivo Inédito Archiepiscopal Metropolitano p 238–258
[6] Bull Veritas Ipsa, June 9, 1537 Rep in *idem*, p 258–260

"apostle of the Indians," who went so far as to refuse absolution to Spaniards who held Indian slaves and repeatedly crossed the ocean to plead before the court in person for his native charges

In no small degree was the early faith and trustfulness of the Indians in the Catholic clergy due to the devotion of these saintly men They wrote the most luminous page in the story of the Spanish Conquest of America

Priests of this stamp were but a handful, however, an ineffective minority with whose death the brave voice of protest was stilled When Father Alonzo de Soria, one of the seven of the first group of Augustinians who landed in New Spain in 1533, preached against the injustice of making slaves of the Indians, he was expelled from the pulpit [1] Las Casas was under the constant fire, not only of the colonial government and those who profited by the expoliation of the natives, but of other clerics One reason why he failed in his attacks on the *encomienda* system was that the bishop of Burgos, Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, a member of the Council of the Indies, had an *encomienda* in the Antilles, from which he derived much revenue [2] Fray Toribio de Benavente Motolinía demanded of the king that las Casas be recalled to Spain and confined in a monastery [3]

Motolinía represented a commoner type of cleric [4] While aware of the horrors of the slavery which he fully described, his mild efforts to mitigate it were intended, as he himself points out, to increase the productiveness of that institution

> If we (the priests) did not defend the Indians you (the Spaniards) would have no one to serve you If we favor them it is to conserve them, so that you may have servants * * * If you exterminate them, who then will serve you? [5]

Before long the zeal for conversion flagged, and priests of a different mold replaced the pioneers [6]

With remarkable foresight Cortés less than three years after the Conquest had urged the sending to New Spain of clergy of "exemplary and virtuous life," saying that the propagation of the faith would be injured and little serviceable to the natives if

> the bishops and other prelates do not abandon the custom that on account of our sinfulness they pursue to-day of disposing of the goods of the church, spending them in pomp and other vices and leaving inheritances to their *sons* and relatives, [7] and

[1] Mendieta, Hist Eclesiastica Indiana, Lib IV, cap II

[2] Riva Palacio Mexico á Través de los Siglos El Virreinato vol II, p 65

[3] Letter dated Tlaxcala, Jan 2, 1555, in Colección de Documentos Para la Hist de México, Pub by Icazbalceta, vol I, p 253

[4] Despite a reputation for saintliness which has become nearly traditional

[5] Motolinía, Hist de los Indios de la Nueva España, Trat III, cap IV

[6] Rivera, Principios Críticos Sobre el Virreinato de la Nueva España, vol III, p 8

[7] In his edition of Cortés's letters published in 1770, Archbishop Lorenzana of Mexico, admitting the truth of Cortés's indictment of the clergy of his day says "This is now remedied * * * for it is a most scandalous thing for bishops and ecclesiastics to have sons and to entail their estates to them, the evil example and license of that century in all the states brought about more stringent laws *to make natural sons hated and to deprive them of their inheritances*" Hist de Nueva España, p 392, fn (italics not in the original)

this would be the worse because the natives' own priests versed in their rites and ceremonies were chosen both for their honesty and chastity, deviation from which was punished by death, and if the natives saw church matters and the service of God in the hands of canons and other dignitaries and knew these to be engaged in the vices and profanities which have been their wont in our times and kingdom, it would not only mock our faith and greatly damage it, but cause scant attention to be paid to its preachments [1]

Before long not only had the burdens imposed on the Indians by the *encomenderos* increased, but the clergy itself rivaled the laity as taskmaster [2] Churches and convents sprouted like mushrooms and the Indian did the work The manner of erection of the temples to glorify the new faith was graphically painted by the second archbishop of Mexico, one of the pioneer apostles in spirit and in deed

Some check should be put upon the extravagant expenditures, excessive personal services, and sumptuous and superfluous works for which the monastic brotherhoods are responsible in the villages of these Indians, entirely at the cost of the latter Some of the monasteries in places where there are not more than two or three monks would be inordinately superb even in Valladolid * * * The Indians are driven there like beasts of burden, five or six hundred of them, without pay or even a mouthful of food, and compelled to come four, six, and twelve leagues to work * * * I have seen two monasteries, one of which must have cost eight or ten thousand ducats, the other a little less, both were finished inside of a year, by the money, sweat, and personal labor of the poor Some Indians die of the scant food and of this work to which they are not accustomed * * * and if the Indians do not come they are thrown into jail and whipped Moreover it is entirely common to see richer ornamentation * * * than may be found in the chapel of Your Majesty The personal service of these Indians in the monasteries is excessive, they serve as gardeners, porters, sweepers, cooks, sextons, and messengers without receiving a penny * * * And the cost of all these edifices and of the rich and superfluous adornment is secured by assessments levied upon these wretched people [3] * * *

At the end of the sixteenth century, seventy-five years after the Conquest, New Spain was dotted with four hundred convents belonging to the regular brotherhoods in New Spain The Franciscans had 166 monasteries, the Dominicans ninety, the Augustinians had seventy-six and Carmelites, Jesuits, and other orders made up the remainder As for the churches, the Franciscan historian Father Mendieta himself confessed:

"It would be impossible for me or any other to count them" [4]

[1] From a letter written from Mexico by Hernán Cortés to Emperor Charles V, October 15, 1524 (The so-called 4th letter) Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, vol XXII, p 115 (Italics not in the original)

[2] Ancona Hist de Yucatán, vol II, p 71 Obregón, Los Precursores de la Independencia, p 113, 194, Rivera Cambas, Los Gobernantes de México, vol I, p 159

[3] From a letter written in 1556 by Archbishop Alonso de Montufar of Mexico City to the Council of the Indies Documentos Inéditos de Indias, vol IV, p 519

[4] Mendieta, Hist Eclesiástica Indiana, vol IV, cap xxxiii

Meanwhile the luxury and magnificence of the clergy grew apace induced no doubt by the extraordinary conditions of unlimited servitude and boundless wealth of New Spain The asceticism of the pioneers was forgotten A new spirit of arrogant debauchery infected the ruling minority, lay and cleric alike

A Dominican, of simple life and habits, García Guerra, was sent from Spain to assume the archbishopric in Mexico Three years later the additional honor of the viceroyalty was conferred upon him Already gone was the humility that had led him to desire to enter Mexico City on foot and barefoot Instead he ordered that every Friday for a year, to signalize his appointment on that day of the week, "bull-fights should take place in the plaza of his palace "[1]

Within two decades after the Conquest the clergy had already become so extortionate that the queen learning of the "excessive charges which the clerics and priests of New Spain collect for burials, masses, nuptial masses, marriages, and all other things related to holy worship," they were ordered "to adhere to the schedule practiced in the archbishopric of Seville *tripled* "[2]

An eloquent picture of the corruption into which the clergy had sunk within a century is given by Fr Thomas Gage, an English Dominican, who in company with some of his brotherhood came to New Spain in 1625

> We could not fail to note [he writes] that the life and customs of both the secular and regular clergy were most dissolute and that their conduct completely belied their vows and calling[3]

After contrasting the Franciscans' vows of poverty, their traditional garb of coarse cloth and rope girdle, their obligation to go afoot and shod only with sandals, with the picture of "a Franciscan father from Jalapa mounted on a handsome mule with a servant riding behind when merely on his way to the village to confess a sick man, and his garments tucked up revealing rich orange colored socks, shoes of morocco leather, and linen breeches with laces and braid four inches wide," he describes an evening in a Franciscan convent

> After dinner some suggested cards and dice * * * All of us excused ourselves, some for want of money and others for want of knowledge of the game * * * The game arranged they began to shuffle with admirable dexterity, bets were made and doubled The losses irritated some, the winnings warmed others to the game At the end of a quarter of an hour the convent of our seraphic Father Saint Francis was converted into a gambling-house and religious poverty into worldly profanation * * * As the game waxed more quarrelsome the scandal grew, the cups passed with more frequency, tongues became loosed and oaths mingled with jests

[1] Rangel, Hist del Toreo en México, p 54 Sosa, El Episcopado Mexicano, p 237
[2] *Cédula* signed in Valladolid, 1538 García ed, document XXII, in El Clero de Méjico Durante La Dominación Española (Italics not in the original)
[3] Los Viages de Tomás Gage en la Nueva España, vol I, cap IX (retranslated from the Spanish)

and ribald laughter till the rafters shook One of the Franciscans desiring to amuse the gathering, although he had already handled the money and placed it on the table with his fingers, would, whenever he won any considerable sum after his frequent wagers of more than twenty doubloons, open one of his sleeves, and with the bottom of the other sweep his winnings into it saying at the same time "Keep it for me, thou that mayest, I have taken the vow not to touch it!"[1]

Far more serious than this picture of the jolly friars is the indictment drawn by the same cleric, after he had lived and worked for some time in New Spain, of the practice in that day to exploit the ignorant faith of the honest and simple-minded Indians for the clergy's financial benefit

The Indians are very faithful and never has a theft of any importance been demonstrated against them, so that the Spaniards do not hesitate to spend the night with them in a desert, even if carrying bags filled with gold

As for the worship of God, they apparently profess the same religion as the Spaniards, but in their inner consciousness they have great difficulty in believing what surpasses their reason and nature, and that which is not visible to the eyes

There are still many of them who worship idols of wood and stone, and they are superstitious in connection with meeting animals which cross their path, the flight of birds * * * They believe that their life depends on some beast * * * and fancy that if the creature dies, they will also * * *

They believe this the more because they see that various saints are pictured with animals — such as Saint Jerome with a lion, St Anthony with a boar and other wild beasts, St Mark with a bull, St Dominic with a dog and St John with an eagle — and they imagine that those saints are of the same opinion as they and those animals are the saints' other spirits * * *

This is one of the reasons why they venerate those saints so profoundly and why in accordance with their limited means do everything in their power to buy such a painting and have it placed in the church The churches are filled with these pictures which are carried in procession as we do at home with banners on holy days

The priests extract no small benefit therefrom for on the day of the feast of the saint whose image has been carried in procession, the owner of the painting gives a great festival in the village and gives the priest three or four *escudos* for the mass and sermon, with a turkey, three or four hens and cacao sufficient for the following week So that in certain churches where there are not less than forty of those images and paintings of saints, the priest makes at least four or five hundred pounds a year For this reason he also takes great care of those paintings and notifies the Indians in good season of the day of their saint, that they may be prepared properly to celebrate * * *

If they do not contribute amply the priest scolds them and threatens them with not preaching, and if some Indian for want of means cannot contribute, the priest threatens to throw the painting out of church, saying that the church should not be full of saints useless to both body and soul, and that that painting is displacing some other whose feast would be celebrated * * *

[1] Gage, *op cit*, vol I, cap IX (retranslated from the Spanish)

The ecclesiastics of this country who know the simplicity of the Indians do not overlook the means of profiting by the occasion, and this is not one of the least for extracting money * * *

Some of the natives bring a dozen candles worth a *real* each * * * and are apt, if not prevented, to light them all themselves and let them burn, so that at the conclusion of mass the priest finds only the ends To remedy this the verger is ordered both to watch the offerings and not to permit the Indians to light more than one candle before the image of the saint, leaving the others unlit, telling them that the saints prefer being offered the unlit candles In this manner the rest of the candles remain and may be sold The mass said, the priest and the vergers take up all the offerings and the candles in front of each saint, collecting often up to twenty *reales* in silver and a hundred candles which are worth not less than four pesos * * *

Although at times the clergy sell these candles wholesale to the Spaniards in order to receive the money all at once, they are not particularly anxious to dispose of them in this manner, because when the Indians want to make any sort of celebration, a baptism or a wedding, they go to buy candles from the priest who in that way manages to sell the same candles as many as five or six times to the same persons who offer them, and as the clergy see that the Indians are greatly inclined to that sort of offering which is so profitable, they recommend it highly, particularly in their sermons, as a proof of piety and devotion [1]

Small wonder that with such acquisitiveness, the venerable Father Mendieta, commissioned to write the colony's history, found at the close of the sixteenth century

There have been villages where the alms for the masses which the Indians offer their dead and a few other varieties of alms given by individuals, have sustained ten, twenty, and even more than thirty priests and do so to-day * * * A convent with so great a number of friars as San Francisco in Mexico, reaching a hundred, is supported by the gifts which the Indians give in their chapel of San José [2]

At the same time Father Mendieta deplores the daily life of the Indian contrasting it with what he had seen half a century before

and over and above the burdens which those poor wretches carry on their backs, they must in spite of themselves go to the slaughter-house of forced labor, worse off than slaves and captives, though they may suffer and die, as they are dying and being buried by multitudes every day and there is no one to call a halt The ministers of the church, who formerly were zealous to speak for them, are now turned cowards If the servants of God to-day carry out their duties, it appears to be more to get through them so that the service of the church may go on rather than for the fruits they may gather for Heaven Great evils there are, wrongs without number which cannot even be told And all of them come from having given entrance to the savage beast of avarice [3]

Wrote Viceroy Villa-Manrique to the king in 1587

When churches and monasteries were founded * * * both of clerics and mendicant friars, to catechize and indoctrinate the Indians, each minister was assigned

[1] Gage, *op cit*, vol II, ch xiv [2] Mendieta, *op cit*, vol IV, cap xvii [3] *Idem*, vol IV, cap xlvi

a salary thought adequate, to be paid by Your Royal Highness's treasury, according to the village and number of Indians therein, and so, likewise, was done in the *encomenderos'* pueblos Things have changed decidedly since then and the brothers of St Augustine and St Dominic, in and around the villages in their charge for teaching the gospel, have founded many profitable *haciendas*, through the sweat, labor, and savings of the natives whom they are indoctrinating and who are so overworked in the cultivation of these properties that they are nearing extinction day by day [1]

The competition between laity and clergy in the exploitation of the Indians became acrimonious In 1644 the *Ayuntamiento*, that is, the city administration, of Mexico City, complained formally to the king, Philip IV, of the increasing number of monasteries, the excess of clerics "without any occupation," the many servants employed by each, and the clergy's acquisition of the greater part of the estates, warning that "if this is not remedied they will soon be masters of everything " There was also a strong plea for the limitation of the "excessive number of feast days, because in them idleness is nurtured " [2]

Holy days were days of profit for the clergy, lost work days for the laity The laity's plea, however, went unheeded

The strife for the usufructs of the system invaded the church itself The regular clergy fought with the secular over the spoils, and the various religious brotherhoods quarreled with each other The Dominicans accused the Franciscans of preventing the Indians from working in their houses and pointed out that the followers of Saint Francis had a far greater number of edifices The Franciscans in turn charged the brothers of Saint Dominic with envy [3]

Bishop Juan de Palafox y Mendoza of Puebla wrote to Pope Innocent X in 1647 complaining that the Jesuits had acquired most of the wealth in the colony, saying

They own the best *haciendas*, and just two of their seminaries to-day possess three hundred thousand sheep with many head of larger cattle And while all the rest of the orders and the cathedrals own between them only three sugar mills, the Company of Jesus has six of the best, and, most Holy Father, such a mill may be worth a million and a half pesos * * * There are *haciendas* which yield one hundred thousand pesos annually, and of this type of *hacienda* this Province of the

[1] From a letter of Marqués de Villa-Manrique to Philip II, dated Mexico, February 4, 1587 Document LXVII in Documentos Inéditos del Siglo XVI para la Hist de México, Coll by Cuevas, S J

[2] Dávila, Teatro Eclesiástico vol I, p 16–7

[3] García, ed, El Clero de Mexico Durante la Dominación Española, p 126–7, 134, 145–58, 196–7, Alegre Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en Nueva España, vol I, p 97–8 Bancroft, History of Mexico, vol III, p 704–5, Riva Palacio *op cit*, p 367, Ancona, Historia de Yucatán vol II p 173–6, Ramírez, Noticias de la Vida y Escritos de Fray Toribio de Benavente, p 85–6 Remesal, Historia de la Provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa, Lib X, cap II, Cogolludo, Los Tres Siglos de la Dominación Española en Yucatán, vol II, p 105–136, Documentos Ineditos de Indias, vol XI, p 190

Company alone has six * * * Besides these are *haciendas* of wheat and grain four to six leagues across and very rich silver mines * * *[1]

In conclusion the bishop calculated that the income of each Jesuit was more than sixteen times the amount necessary for his sustenance

A dispute having arisen over a *hacienda* which was claimed by both the Company of Jesus and the Puebla diocese, Bishop Palafox on Ash Wednesday, 1647, revoked the Jesuits' license to preach The Jesuit fathers denied and disregarded the bishop's authority whereupon he forbade them to preach, teach, confess, or carry on any other sacerdotal function under penalty of excommunication, the same penalty to apply to any of the faithful who either confessed to a Jesuit or listened to a sermon preached by one Scurrilous abuse issued from the rival camps The ceremony of excommunication was solemnly carried out in the Cathedral of Puebla The bishop's accompanying denunciation of the Jesuits so roused the congregation that it was with difficulty restrained from burning the Jesuits' edifices But the Jesuits on the other hand became so threatening that the bishop deemed it advisable to flee and hide in the neighboring country-side [2]

At the Spanish court, however, the Jesuits managed to undermine Bishop Palafox He was recalled, and though officially vindicated was not allowed to return to New Spain After his death twelve years later the Jesuits thwarted repeated attempts to secure his canonization But they in turn were expelled from all the Spanish dominions a century later, and their vast properties taken over [3]

The Inquisition had been established in New Spain in 1571 [4] Though it worked with the utmost effectiveness,[5] the rigid exclusion of immigrants tainted even with ancestral heresy, and the relatively small number of whites,[6] limited the material for the more gruesome manifestations of inquisitorial power In over two centuries and a half not more than fifty

[1] Carta del Illmo Palafox y Mendoza á su S S el Papa Inocente X

[2] García ed Don Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, p 90–149 Alegre *op cit*, vol II p 231–376 Medina Hist del Tribunal del Santo Oficio en México, p 242–60 Guijo, Diario d Sucesos Notables, p 79, Rivera Cambas, *op cit* vol I p 144–152 Rivera, Hist de Jalapa, vol I, p 82–89

[3] Riva Palacio *op cit*, vol II, p 825–848

[4] Cavo, Los Tres Siglos de México, Lib V, Para 1

[5] "The men who founded the Mexican Inquisition knew their duty and were resolute in its performance They were kept busy, for between 1574 and 1600, they despatched no less than 879 cases or an average of 34 per annum Considering the complex character of the inquisitorial procedure, with its inevitable delays and consumption of time, this represents a creditable degree of industry, equal to that of the great tribunal of Toledo, which at the same period was averaging 35 cases per annum" Lea, The Inquisition of the Spanish Dependencies, p 208–9

[6] The Indians' exemption from persecution by the Inquisition cannot be attributed to kindliness on the part of a church that stamped out every form of dissent with unrelenting cruelty, spared neither sex, and visited the ancestral heresy upon the fourth generation of descendants The refusal in the political sphere to allow the native to work for himself, to make contracts, to be, in short, more than a hewer of wood and drawer of water, had its equivalent disqualification in the church's attitude that he was incapable of inventing a heresy The Indian had nought to give but his labor — nothing was to interfere with his giving it — and if he fell short he could be arbitrarily whipped or otherwise punished without the formalities of a trial

persons were burned,[1] a number exceeded in the mother country in a single *auto*[2]

In consequence the economic aspects of the Holy Office stand out more sharply Seizures of property were numerous and provided vast revenue

The accused could far more easily save his life and regain his liberty than his goods Confiscation * * * was almost always inevitable, in this both the laws and the inquisitors proved inexorable * * * The sequestration was based on the principle that heretics were not masters of their property, for this reason great care was taken to fix the precise period when the accused had begun to commit the crime of heresy In actions against the deceased * * * the proceeds of his property were exacted from the heirs from the date of his lapse[3]

The property thus acquired was enormous The *Auto de Fe* of 1649 alone yielded three million pesos[4] Legally all this belonged to the crown but the inquisitors kept it, refused even to give an accounting, and grew rich — personally — in consequence[5]

The inquisitors took full advantage of their special powers One of the tribunal's first acts — in 1572 — was to prosecute Diego de Molina, a *repartidor* of Indians, because twelve natives assigned to the Holy Office were boys, while able-bodied adults who could be worked profitably had been given in return for bribes to others The inquisitors got the able-bodied workers without bribery[6]

"The prostitution of religion to the service of greed was exploited to the utmost"[7] This characterization by Lea, the foremost historical authority on the Inquisition in Spain, applies equally to its offshoot in New Spain It became, writes Medina, "una casa de comercio"[8]

As the wealth and temporal power of church and hierarchy grew, their pomp and outer show were splendidly maintained At times even the Indians' tributes to the state were turned over to the clergy, as in the case of the church of the Augustinians completed in 1692 in Mexico City which proved so costly that the king of Spain, hearing of it, exclaimed, "Tell me, are the walls made of silver?"[9]

Potent indeed was the hierarchy in New Spain At its head was the archbishop of Mexico No less than ten of these prelates, one third of their

[1] Icazbalceta, Autos de Fe Celebrados en México, Obras, I, 316 While admitting this list is not complete this authority cites forty-one burned in person and ninety-nine — who had escaped — in effigy

[2] Llorente, Hist Critique de l'Inquisition d'Espagne vol I, p 279–80, vol IV, p 271 According to this historian the Inquisition in Spain burned, from 1481 to 1808, 31,912 persons, and 17,659 — who had either died or escaped — in effigy During the eighteen year Inquisitor-Generalcy of Tomás de Torquemada, 8800 were burned at the stake, and 87,321 suffered the penalty of infamy, confiscation of goods, and life imprisonment Llorente adduces evidence to show that these totals are highly conservative

[3] Riva Palacio, *op cit*, II cap xxxvii

[4] Medina, Hist del Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en México, p 209

[5] Lea *op cit*, p 216–22

[6] *Idem*, 215

[7] Lea, Hist of the Spanish Inquisition, vol II, p 322

[8] Medina, *op cit*, p 212

[9] Obregón, México Viejo, ch xv

number, became viceroys, eloquent testimony to the close union of spiritual and military power [1] Despite an occasional fracas in which more than one viceroy learned to his cost not to antagonize the primate,[2] collaboration was the rule [3]

After Pope Alexander VI had partitioned the New World between the Spanish and Portuguese kings in 1493,[4] Pope Julius II in the early sixteenth century conceded to their Catholic majesties in Spain the patronage over the ecclesiastical domain in the Americas [5] — "for having discovered and acquired that New World, and erected and endowed in it the churches and monasteries at our expense," as Philip II summarized it [6]

The arrangement proved mutually satisfactory though it is unlikely that the popes would have conceded it had they understood the extent and subsequent importance of the overseas domain And while successive monarchs made propagation of the faith their earnest endeavor and maintained the clerical dignities, privileges, and stipends, they jealously guarded their right to nominate bishops and curates (though subject in this respect to the pope's veto),[7] to decide where churches and monasteries should be built, to permit or withhold the publication of papal bulls, to suspend the *fueros* and confiscate ecclesiastical property Yet although the power of the Vatican was limited thereby, paradoxically that of the American hierarchy was augmented Depending upon the royal will, they came to use their spiritual influence increasingly in behalf of their earthly master's interest, and by an easy transition in behalf of other earthly interests

"Rather by missionaries than by arms" [8] were the native Mexicans kept in subjection Colonial churches and convents were built as fortresses and were intended to serve in a dual capacity [9] So were their guardians [10] Wrote Archbishop Lorenzana of Mexico in 1770

[1] Sosa, El Episcopado Mexicano Moya de Contreras, 1584, García Guerra, 1611–12, Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, 1642, Diego Osorio de Escobar y Llamas, 1661 Payo Enríquez de Rivera, 1673–80 Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz (appointed but never served), Juan de Ortega Montañez, 1696 (served twice), Juan Antonio de Vizarron y Eguarreta, 1734–40, Alonzo Nuñez de Haro y Peralta, 1787 Francisco Javier Lizana y Beaumont, 1809 In addition Bucareli, 1771–79, though never archbishop, belonged to the religious order of San Juan

[2] Viceroy Gelves was badly worsted by Archbishop Serna in the second decade of the seventeenth century Cavo, Los Tres Siglos de México, vol VI paras 23–26 Diego Lopez Pacheco Cabrera y Bobadilla, Duque de Escalona and Marqués de Villena, the seventeenth viceroy, despite his exalted rank, was driven from office by Bishop Palafox who replaced him in 1642 Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 98–108

[3] Viceroy Revillagigedo the elder wrote his successor that he always approved the first of three candidates for canonries, curacies, et cetera presented by the archbishop and bishops *Instrucciones Reservadas*, p 144 This was the habit of virtually every viceroy, though as vice patron he could have imposed his own choice

[4] Herrera, Hist General de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas i Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano, Dec I, Lib II, cap IV

[5] *Idem*, Dec I, Lib VI, cap XIX

[6] Declaración del Patronazgo Real, 1574, García, ed, El Clero Durante la Dominación Española, Doc LXXXIX, p 185–194

[7] Banegas Galván, Hist de Méjico, vol II p 14

[8] Alaman, Hist de Méjico vol I, p 5 [9] *Idem*, vol II, p 163–4

[10] The king to the viceroy, Marqués de Villa-Manrique, June 19, 1566
"I am informed that the rebel Chichimecas of that country are waging more formidable warfare

* * * In America the word of the gospel has won as much as the sword of the soldier, or at least has maintained and assured what was won by the latter * * * The faith and the gospel make them (men) obedient to the sovereign, and to his ministers, and to that end all those against whom Cortés fought have been persuaded [1]

The church sanctified the king's divine right,[2] the Inquisition punished doubts as heresy [3] After American independence the Holy Office turned its spiritual and temporal arsenal against books and pamphlets which discussed the Constitution of the United States favorably or pictured the happiness of its citizens [4] For internal defense a diocesan clergy was worth an army corps at far less cost, for it was not merely self-sustaining but revenue-producing

Neither church nor state alone could have made the common sources of income — tithes, alms, first-fruits, tribute, the sale of "bulls of the crusade" — so productive [5] But as part of the fiscal machinery, the clergy was no more trusted than any other part and as closely scrutinized

Thus we find the king instructing the viceroy to see that priests keep an accurate register of births, baptisms, and deaths, as well as additional lists compiled from confessions, and to have these lists checked by the royal financial officers, for

experience has shown that the clergy do not give this register and these lists complete, but (with a pious falsehood) certify that some have died — in which they are in collusion with the governors and principal Indians — pocketing the tribute themselves, and benefiting to the prejudice of the royal treasury [6]

A viceregal decree of 1784 illustrates the clerical service in the economic field

than ever before, expenditures of combating them are increasing, and the present order to effect their reduction and pacification * * * by *presidios* of soldiers is not considered suitable, as all the men who have been pursuing the Indians are tired out, and that it would therefore be necessary to adopt some other course It has seemed fitting to very expert men to establish three or four towns on a *cordillera* which encloses the pass into the Chichimeca lands from the said towns to keep the pass closed, and make war on the Indians in their own lands * * * It is also suggested that together with the towns, three or four monasteries of friars should be founded, for the purpose of attracting the Indians with gentle methods after harassing them by use of the towns These methods it was considered would be the best means of doing away with the Indians I the King" Rep in Historical Documents Relating to New Mexico, Nueva Vizcaya and Approaches Thereto to 1773 Collected by Adolphe F A Bandelier and Fanny R Bandelier

[1] Lorenzana, ed Hist de Nueva España, p 390, fn

[2] Guerra, Hist de la Revolución de Nueva España, Antiguamente Anáhuac, vol I, p 184

[3] Alaman *op cit*, vol I, p 148

"For being * * * seditious contrary to the monarchical state," was the wording of an edict of the Mexican Inquisition of 1797 condemning *in totum* a general history by a French priest Eléments d'Histoire Générale, par M l'Abbé Millot Medina, *op cit*, p 438–9

[4] Alaman *op cit* vol I, p 128

[5] Eight ninths of the tithes went for ecclesiastical use, and the king's ninth was also often returned in part, alms and first-fruits were wholly the clergy's the tribute was a civil revenue, but occasionally it was assigned to the church and the clergy were often useful in helping to collect it The priests were also the salesmen of the "bulls of the crusade" (indulgences) but the proceeds went wholly to the royal treasury Fonseca y Urrutia, Hist de Real Hacienda, vol I, p 12, 32, vol III, p 273, 274, 286, 310, 316, 321

[6] Instrucción Para el Virey * * * Marqués de Amarillas, 1755, Para 44 In Instrucciones Reservadas, p 81

Considering the inclination of the natives toward a prejudicial indolence * * * I emphatically urge the governors, *corregidores*, *alcaldes mayores* and the rest of the justices that they watch with particular zeal that no Indian live in idleness, that all work * * * without excuse on all days that it is not forbidden I charge the parish priests and other ecclesiastics to cooperate in this important matter, letting the natives know that the lazy, idle, incorrigible * * * will be punished with the greatest severity [1]

The punishment which the clergy threatened — and with great effectiveness — was not merely of this world Anathemas were hurled at those who cultivated plants forbidden in the colony [2] On a single day Archbishop Sagade Bugueiro uttered three sets of major excommunications — against contrabandists, against those who delayed the transmission of the king's orders, and against the adulterators of pulque [3]

One additional source of great wealth for church and clergy was testamentary Abuse of death-bed confession to the destitution of legitimate heirs was notorious both in Spain and New Spain, and the kings legislated repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, against it [4]

In 1790, out of 3387 houses on the Mexico City register, 1935 belonged to the church Out of this number 223, twelve per cent numerically, but with an income of less than eight per cent of the total, were assigned to educational and charitable purposes The brotherhoods owned 538 houses, the sisterhoods 875, and the cathedral, Inquisition, ecclesiastical court and other entities, the remainder [5]

At the end of the eighteenth century the archbishop of Mexico was receiving from property alone an annual income of $130,000 (Mex), the bishop of Puebla, $110,000, the bishop of Valladolid, $100,000, and the bishop of Guadalajara $90,000 [6]

Yet within the ranks of the clergy there were amazing disparities — material and spiritual Despite the great wealth concentrated in monastic orders and in the secular hierarchy of the cities, in remote pueblos, country curates, chief heirs to the tradition of the earlier missionaries, unwilling to extort from their wretched parishioners, lived in abject poverty Wrote Baron Humboldt early in the nineteenth century

What is really distressing is to find in a diocese whose bishop enjoys an annual income of 650,000 francs, priests of Indian villages who have not five or six hundred francs a year [7]

[1] Decree of Viceroy Malfas de Gálvez, June 3, 1784 Printed in Méjico Desde 1808 Hasta 1867 Francisco de Paula Arrangoiz, vol I, App Doc 1
[2] Guerra, *op cit*, vol II, p 228
[3] Sosa, *op cit*, p 111
[4] García, ed, El Clero de México Durante la Dominación Española, p 231 Chapman, Hist of Spain, p 322–3 Bancroft, *op cit*, vol III, p 704 Guijo, *op cit* p 137
[5] The *padrón* for that year, giving ownership, value and income of the capital's privately owned real estate is reprinted in *Noticias de México* (compiled by Francisco Sedano), vol II, p 35–7
[6] Von Humboldt, Essai Politique Sur le Royaume de la Nouvelle Espagne, vol I, ch vii
[7] Humboldt, *op cit*, vol I, ch vii

II THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Officially the church declared war to the death on the Independence movement Yet in the patriot rank and file were humble priests and religious The clergy itself split on the rock of earthly possessions Throughout, the Mexican clergy were the brains and spirit of the struggle for and against Mexican national liberty

The hierarchy endorsed the plot, in 1808, to remove viceroy Iturrigaray — a sort of inverted Boston tea-party Inquisitor Alfaro was an active participant [1] Archbishop Lizana blessed the conspirators [2] Before undertaking the leadership, the *hacendado* Yermo spent several days in retreat with his confessor, a Mercedarian, at the latter s monastery [3] After his seizure the viceroy was lodged in the Inquisition [4] The vice-queen was carried away in the archbishop's litter [5] The proclamation announcing the "coup d'état" was signed by the archbishop [6]

But among those arrested was the Mercedarian Father Talamantes, native of Peru, who under the pen name of "true patriot" outlined twelve instances in which a colony may justly free itself from the mother country [7] He was cast into the dungeons of San Juan de Ulloa and placed in irons, which were not removed until after his death from yellow fever [8] He was the first martyr from the clerical ranks to the cause of Mexican political nationalism

Two years later — on September 15, 1810 — the village priest, Hidalgo, openly raised the standard of revolution But the hierarchy promptly brought to bear upon him the full force of its tremendous spiritual power Asserting that "religion condemns rebellion," the bishop of Michoacán, Manuel Abad y Queipo, within a week launched a fulminating edict against the infant independentist movement

By virtue of my authority as bishop * * * I declare said Miguel Hidalgo and his three subordinates, the aforementioned captains (Allende, Aldama, Abasolo), to be disturbers of the public order, seducers of the people, sacrilegious, perjurers,

[1] Guerra, Hist de la Revolución de Nueva España, Antíguamente Anáhuac vol I, p 186
[2] Carlos María Bustamante, Los Tres Siglos de México, vol III, p 237 (ed of 1836)
[3] Alaman, Hist de Méjico, vol I, p 239
[4] *Idem* vol I, p 249
[5] Guerra, *op cit*, vol I, p 185
[6] *Idem*, vol I p 188
[7] Talamantes, Biografía y Escritos Póstumos, p 53–68 Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, App 36
[8] Rivera, Hist de Jalapa, vol I p 234

and liable to major excommunication under the canon *Siquis suadente Diabolo* * * * I declare them excommunicate, to be shunned, forbidding anyone to give them aid, comfort, or favor, under penalty of major excommunication * * * Likewise I exhort and command that portion of the people whom he has seduced as his soldiers and companions in arms, to return to their homes and disavow him within three days * * * under the same penalty of major excommunication * * *[1]

Moreover, against Hidalgo's Indian *Virgen de Guadalupe*, the nationalist standard, the royalist forces opposed the white *Virgen de los Remedios*, which having been brought over by Cortés was considered particularly a Spanish patroness[2]

Typical of the church's opposition was the resolution forwarded to the viceroy by the congregation of ecclesiastics of the church of St Peter and St Paul in Mexico City on October 5

> Unanimously and joyfully to dedicate the greatest effort in the confessionals, in the pulpits and in public and private conversations, to inspire and maintain in the faithful people of this capital, horror of the diabolic undertaking and purposes of the delinquent groups, to instil the loyalty with which should be respected and obeyed the legitimate authorities which rule us in the name of our august King Ferdinand VII, and the confidence and tranquillity with which one ought to rest in the arms of the just, proper, and benign government of Your Excellency, in the firm hope of obtaining through an honorable and pacific conduct, earthly and eternal happiness[3]

And so they did The clergy not only made full use of the confessional, but did not hesitate to betray it[4] Absolution was actually refused certain royalist penitents for refusing to report revolutionary sympathizers[5] Even the gold and silver of the churches was offered to prosecute the extermination of the rebels[6]

The archbishop of Mexico, Francisco Javier de Lizana y Beaumont, declared the purpose to free America "not only anti-Catholic, but chimerical, fantastic, and ridiculous"[7]

The bishop of Oaxaca, Antonio Bergosa y Jordán, in a pastoral pronounced the Independence movement to be "erroneous doctrine, contrary to the fourth precept of the decalogue, in which under the name of father and mother, God commands obedience, honor, and reverence to kings as well as to his viceroys and magistrates"[8]

The bishop of Puebla, Manuel Ignacio González del Campillo, took an

[1] Hernández y Dávalos, Colección de Documentos para la Hist de la Guerra de Independencia vol II, p 106
[2] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 487
[3] Hernández y Dávalos, *op cit*, vol II, p 124
[4] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, p 284–5 459, Bancroft, History of Mexico, vol IV, p 331–2
[5] Alaman, *op cit*, vol III, p 395
[6] Zárate, México á Través de los Siglos La Independencia, p 341
[7] Edict of Archbishop Oct 18, 1810, Hernández y Dávalos, *op cit*, vol II, p 168
[8] Pastoral of June 30, 1811, Hernández y Davalos, *op cit*, vol III, p 320

active part in recruiting volunteers and on October 27 issued, together with 289 members of the clergy of his diocese, the following proclamation

Animated by the sentiments peculiar to our character and ministry, and considering that we are angels of peace, destined to establish it between heaven and earth, and among men, that as ministers of the holy religion that we profess, which imposes as one of the first duties, obedience, respect, and submission to the kings, we should be the firmest columns supporting the throne of the monarch whom we have sworn to recognize and obey, and seeing that a revolution has been started in the bishopric of Valladolid by a few infamous and unnatural subjects, who aspire to shake off the gentle yoke under which we have lived contentedly for three centuries * * * all of those who sign below, duly swear that we shall never deviate from the just cause of preaching and teaching in the exercise of our ministry as well as in private conversations the sane doctrine of obedience and respect to our legitimate sovereign Ferdinand VII, and to his legitimate successors according to the constitution of the kingdom, as well as to those who govern in his royal name * * *[1]

"Angels of peace," the clergy certainly were not The bishop of Oaxaca, Antonio Bergosa y Jordán, in addition to giving spiritual aid to the royalist cause, organized a corps of ecclesiastics[2] which later participated actively in physical warfare[3] Machete as well as cross was wielded by ecclesiastical hands[4]

The bishop of Linares, Primo Feliciano Marín, is credited with having persuaded Lieutenant-Colonel Elizondo to betray his commander Hidalgo[5]

Being a priest, the captured leader had first to be degraded to render him subject to secular jurisdiction The ecclesiastical court did its part On July 30, 1811, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla met death calmly before a firing squad

Notwithstanding the denunciation by the church of Hidalgo as a heretic, atheist, apostate, and "follower of Martin Luther,"[6] he was always and to the end a fervent Catholic Replying to the charges formulated by the Inquisition he said

Neither by force of arms nor man-power can our oppressors continue to hold us enslaved What recourse then is left them? To use every unjust, illicit, and base means * * * Even the most illustrious issue excommunications * * * to terrify the ignorant with the word "anathema" * * *

Who would believe * * * that the shamelessness of the Spaniards would go so far as to profane the most sacred things in order to perpetuate their intolerable domination? * * * to make use of excommunications against the very spirit of the church, to launch them when there is no religious issue whatever involved?

Open your eyes, Americans! Do not let our enemies deceive you They are Catholics for political purposes only Their God is money Their threats have

[1] Hernández y Dávalos *op cit* vol II, p 192–3
[2] Alaman, *op cit*, vol III, p 240
[3] *Idem* p 121–2, 469 vol IV, p 411
[4] *Idem*, vol IV, p 109
[5] Zárate, La Guerra de Independencia, p 209
[6] *Idem*, vol II p 131

oppression as their sole aim Shall we believe that he cannot be a true Catholic who does not subject himself to the Spanish despot? Whence comes to us this new dogma, this new article of faith? * * * Do not listen to the seductive voices which beneath the cloak of religion desire to make you victims of their insatiable greed [1]

No less insistent on his Catholicism was Father Morelos, Hidalgo's successor He it was who formally declared Mexico's independence from Spain and convoked the embryonic nation's first congress Under his guidance the Constitution of Apatzingán was drawn up More striking even than its democratic provisions — popular sovereignty, freedom of speech and press — was its religious emphasis

The first clause declared the Roman Catholic religion alone was permitted Public officials were obliged to swear to defend that faith with their blood and to admit no other Heresy and apostasy constituted two of the three offenses for which naturalized citizens could lose their citizenship (the third being *lèse* nation) In the indirect systems of election for congress, the parish was the primary voting unit, the electors there chosen by the voters were obliged to pass into the principal church "where a solemn mass to the Holy Ghost will be celebrated and an address appropriate to the circumstances delivered by the priest or some other ecclesiastic" [2] When these electors had named a representative for congress, they were again to attend church for a solemn Te Deum [3]

No sooner was the constitution adopted, however, than the church vied with the civil authorities in attacking it

The cathedral chapter of Mexico City imposed the penalty of major excommunication not only on whosoever read it, but on those who failed to denounce others whom they knew to possess copies of the document [4]

The Inquisition, which had from the earliest days of rebellion condemned "the manifest heresy of the people's sovereignty," [5] now issued a similar anathema [6] placing in a difficult position the clergy in territory controlled by the revolutionists who had ordered the new constitution to be read by every priest to his congregation [7] Not a few curates — though a small minority — [8] were sympathetic with the insurgent cause "Almost alone they sustained it," wrote Alaman [9]

Indeed, besides the two great figures, Hidalgo and Morelos, more than one hundred parish priests, including the leaders, Matamoros and Mercado,

[1] Proclamation issued by Hidalgo, Dec 15, 1810, in Valladolid García, ed , El Clero de México y la Guerra de Independencia Documentos del Arzobispado, p 45–7
[2] Art 69
[3] *Idem*, 76
[4] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV p 176
[5] Notably in an edict published August 7, 1808 Obregón, México Viejo, p 393
[6] Alaman *op cit*, vol IV, p 177–8
[7] *Idem*, p 179
[8] García, ed , El Clero de México y la Guerra de Independencia, p 7
[9] Alaman, *op cit*, vol III, p 213

and some fifty members of the religious brotherhoods, took the field Their presence in the revolutionary ranks testified to the social ingredients of the movement, and refuted the allegations of its "heretical" character More in contact with the masses than the higher hierarchy, many of them risen from the ranks of the dispossessed, they knew and felt keenly the oppressions and discriminations of the colonial system Like their leaders, many of them died on the battle-field or before the firing squad

When Morelos was captured toward the end of 1815, the Inquisition was to sentence to death its last heretic [1]

This, like all royalist victories, was solemnized in the churches When the gallant Mina was captured, Bishop Pérez of Puebla, notorious for his volte-face upon the king's return to power in 1814,[2] himself chanted the pontifical high mass of thanksgiving [3] The rattle of musketry which dispatched captured prisoners often mingled with the music of the Te Deum from within the sanctuary [4]

With the country virtually pacified the hierarchy in 1821 staged a complete right-about and secured the independence which for ten years they had helped suppress [5] The motive was detestation of the reestablished Spanish Constitution of 1812 with its democratic provisions and curtailment of clerical immunities [6] For the new charter put an end to all privileged tribunals [7]

> Our dauntless leaders * * * could not allow that an immunity (*fuero*) conceded by both laws (civil and ecclesiastical) be taken from them * * * Iguala! Iguala! Your name will be great among the peoples of America In your bosom was sown the seed of independence, in order to defend our holy religion * * * The war for our independence is a war of religion all of us should be soldiers — ecclesiastic and layman, noble and plebeian, rich and poor, young and old — should take up arms, range ourselves with our military chiefs, and all resolve to die on the field of honor and religion [8]

Thus did Father San Martín, preaching in Guadalajara cathedral, expound the new ecclesiastical orientation

Religion no longer "condemned rebellion" when it was in the clerical interest Forgotten were the solemn oaths of loyalty to king and constitution,[9] and the ever-pledged support of constituted authority

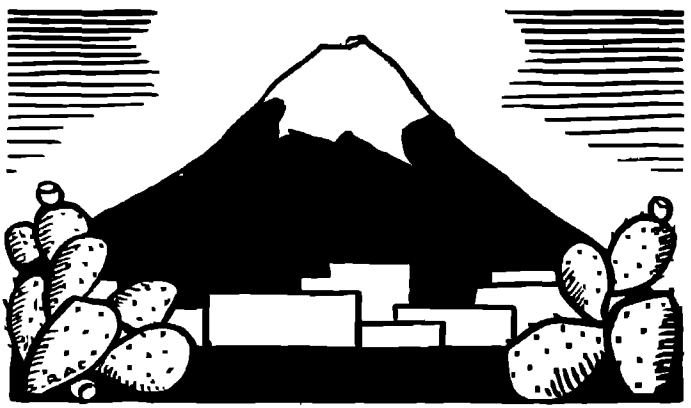
Bishop Pérez of Puebla, who shortly before had held that the people's love for their king should become a "rational delirium," and their fidelity

[1] For the Inquisition s finding see p 34
[2] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, p 139
[3] *Idem*, p 624
[4] *Idem*, p 84
[5] See chapter, How Independence Was Achieved, p 34–7
[6] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, p 725, vol V, p 14
[7] *Idem*, vol V, p 19
[8] Quoted in *Idem*, vol V, p 211
[9] *Idem*, vol V, p 19–20

"a dominant passion," [1] was the ecclesiastical leader in the new movement [2] The clergy conceived the plan,[3] selected its military leader,[4] supplied funds,[5] furnished the printing press to disseminate the new idea [6] and worked actively in persuading the royalist soldiers to desert their banners [7]

Te Deums in every temple celebrated the new order [8] which seated an emperor on the Mexican throne with unusual pomp and glitter,[9] established "exclusion and intolerance of any religion but the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman," [10] and ranked blasphemy with "atrocious murder" as the only unpardonable crimes [11]

[1] *Idem*, vol IV, p 444
[2] *Idem*, vol V, p 257, 261
[3] *Idem*, vol V, p 50
[4] *Idem*, vol V, p 51
[5] *Idem*, vol V, p 74
[6] *Idem*, vol V, p 94, 107
[7] *Idem*, vol V, p 243-4
[8] *Idem*, vol V, p 207, 333, 491
[9] *Idem*, vol V, p 605, 624, 638
[10] *Idem*, vol V, p 492, 602
[11] *Idem*, vol V, p 513



III THE CHURCH AFTER INDEPENDENCE

"The Independence of 1821 had for its true cause not love of liberty," wrote the clerical historian Arrangoiz * * * "and certainly not hatred for Spain * * * but hatred against the decrees of the *Cortes* against the Jesuits, monks, and their properties * * *"[1]

So, indeed, did the Mexican hierarchy regard independent Mexico An episcopal edict having ruled "that all the penalties, excommunications, reservations, censures, and edicts of the extinguished Inquisition are in full vigor,"[2] among them the prohibition "to have and read heretical books,"[3] an edict by the vicar-general of the Mexico archdiocese, on November 13, 1822, declared that to these "spiritual penalties" would be added "the civil, which at our interpellation the corresponding authority will impose"[4] This intellectual suppression by the joint church and state judicial and police power was to continue until past the middle of the century,[5] when the Reform abolished it

After Iturbide's fall, the first rift between church and state came over the "patronage" The Mexican hierarchy held that this privilege exercised until independence by "their most Catholic majesties" of Spain, now devolved to the Holy See[6] This position would have been more defensible had not the clergy insisted on retaining the corresponding privileges The state was to function in behalf of the church as formerly, but the church was to be independent of civil authority The net result of this position, if successfully maintained, would have been greatly to increase the Mexican church's power

The *mesada* and *media anata*, a part of the clerical stipend formerly paid to the king, was now refused to the republic, the clergy holding that it was a grace conceded by Pope Urban VIII to King Philip IV[7]

The differences between clergy and government were intensified by the papal hostility, reflecting the attitude of the Holy Alliance toward the newly established nations of the Western hemisphere Disregarding the fact of

[1] Apuntes Para La Historia Del Segundo Imperio Mexicano, p 201
[2] Edict by Antonio Bergosa y Jordán, bishop of Oaxaca Documentos Eclesiásticos, vol III, p 41 *z*
[3] *Idem*
[4] *Idem* vol III, p 48
[5] *Idem* p 70–1
[6] Vigil México á Traves de los Siglos, La Reforma vol V, ch XXII
[7] Colección Eclesiastica Mexicana, vol IV, p 278–89

Mexican independence, Pope Leo XII, in 1824, in an encyclical urged the American archbishops and bishops "to clarify before your flock the august and distinguished qualities of our beloved son Ferdinand VII * * *"[1] an invitation to return to Spanish rule, which the Government respectfully though firmly rejected But the archbishop of Mexico, and the bishop of Michoacán, abandoned Mexico for Spain[2] in deference to the king's wishes, and the pope declined to declare the metropolitan see vacant[3]

As the Vatican would neither receive the Mexican representative, Francisco Pablo Vásquez,[4] nor fill the vacancies, and the clergy would not recognize the right of any other power to do so, three years later seven of the ten bishoprics in the country and seventy-nine of the benefices attached to the cathedral lacked incumbents Of the three remaining bishops one was in his dotage, and the other two, in Puebla and Oaxaca, were so far south that Northerners to be ordained had to travel more than a thousand miles[5] The clergy's numerical insufficiency and consequent inability to attend to its duties created general dissatisfaction Yet official protests against the papal intromission into state affairs reiterated the nation's intense Catholicism adverting that the Constitution of 1824 and all state constitutions had "taken pains to fix as fundamental and irrevocable the establishment of the Catholic, Roman and Apostolic religion and the exclusion of any other"[6]

To understand the bitter and still enduring struggle begun in the early thirties, culminating in bloody civil war twenty years later, followed by foreign intervention, one must consider briefly the position and character of the Mexican church as the century entered its second quarter The missionary spirit of the early sixteenth century had long since faded The Jesuits who had kept it alive in the northern provinces had been expelled by Charles III Friars, living in luxury and ease, now filled the city convents Contributing less than their share to the nation's spiritual needs, inadequate both in quantity[7] and quality, they were a heavy drain on the country's economic resources

The clergy's preoccupation was the maintenance of its privileges or *fueros* Among these was the right to have all criminal and civil actions tried before ecclesiastical tribunals The layman who sued or was sued

[1] In Archivo Histórico Diplomático Mexicano, No 9, p 5–8
[2] Arias, Mexico a Través de los Siglos, México Independiente, vol IV, p 149
[3] Bancroft, Hist of Mexico, vol VI, p 580
[4] Vigil *op cit*, XXVII
[5] Ward, Mexico in 1827, vol I, p 327
[6] Letter of Miguel Ramos Arizpe, minister of justice and ecclesiastical affairs, to Francisco Pablo Vásquez, chargé d'affaires of the Mexican Republic at the Holy See, July 23, 1825 In Archivo Histórico Diplomático Mexicano, No 9, p 14–19
[7] The diminution was

	Monks	*Nuns*	
1810	3112	2098	(Navarro y Noriega, Memoria)
1829	1726	1905	
1834	1411	1448	

The number of secular clergy in six dioceses had fallen from 2455 to 1898 in the years 1829 to 1834

before such a court was, naturally, at a disadvantage The Tribunal de Hacedurıa, which decided all matters connected with the collection of tithes, was presided over by canons, who were thus both interested parties and judges [1]

Despite their small numbers the clericals were the real ruling force in the community To the tremendous control through religion of the minds of the people was added the economic strangle-hold The church had become the national money-lender [2] Owning, at least, half the national real estate it held mortgages on much other property Besides its income from investments were the first fruits, the multiple revenues from every kind of religious ceremony and the tithes which the state helped collect

The two authorities concurred in ordering the payment of the tithes, the ecclesiastical binding the conscience and fulminating censures against the disobedient, and the civil compelling by means of the force which is at its disposal, those who did not fulfil this duty through fear of God [3]

Police and army were at the clergy's beck and call A dissenter was subject to arrest and prosecution by the civil authorities, to social ostracism, and to the vivid presentation of the torments of hell-fire to his trembling family Monastic vows were a civil obligation and the church could call on the state to enforce them Municipal authorities issued orders that private houses should be decorated on religious holidays [4]

The Government excluded and suppressed at the instance of the clergy "impious" books and writings,[5] which included literature that was remaking the world toward the beginning of the nineteenth century The federal tariffs of 1821, 1827, and 1837, specifically excluded books that were "contrary to religion" [6] In 1851, "The Education of Woman" having been condemned by the ecclesiastical authorities, Government agents seized the copies at the book-store in the capital [7]

Freedom of thought not merely in religion but in social matters was strictly taboo, and the priests, who dominated education, were the vigilant guardians of the minutest mental heresy The aristocracy rigidly conformed to their slightest indications And the populace viewed mitre, cassock, and cowl with superstitious awe, prostrating itself in the presence of

[1] Ward *op cit*, vol I, p 145

[2] Although the rate of its loans 5 per cent, never subsequently offered by banking institutions, government or private should not have aroused antagonism, but rather appreciation

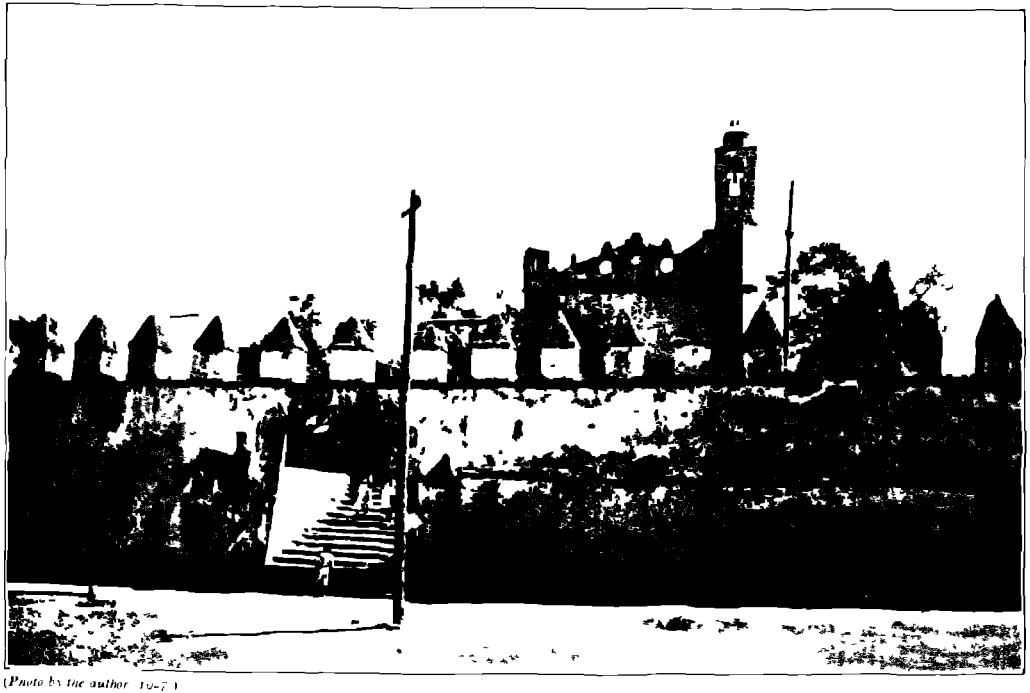
[3] From edict of Florencio Castillo, canon of the cathedral of Oaxaca and governor of the see (in the absence of the bishop) April 21, 1834 Colección Eclesiástica Mejicana, vol IV, p 237

[4] For the official decrees in the city of Campeche concerning the celebration of Guadalupe Day in 1827 of St Francis Day in 1831 and the participation of the civil and military authorities in the celebration of the Promulgation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX in 1855, see Anales Históricos de Campeche Álvarez, vol I, p 196, 233 498

[5] Circular of Archbishop Lázaro de la Garza y Ballesteros January 29 1854, concerning the exclusion of publications of the American Bible Society Documentos Eclesiásticos, vol I, p 138–41, 162–4, vol III p 48, 70–1

[6] Lerdo de Tejada, Comercio Exterior de México, p 32, 35 42

[7] Rivera, Hist de Jalapa, vol IV, p 230



(*Photo by the author 1927*)

"COLONIAL CHURCHES WERE BUILT AS FORTRESSES

Cathedral at Tula the ancient Tollan) (See p 181)



(*Photo by the author* '04.)

Holy altar in Merida Cathedral showing destruction by Revolutionists headed by General Salvador Alvarado in 1915

religious manifestations and fervently kissing the ground on which the bishop had trod One stood at one's peril when the host passed, persons failing to kneel even from ignorance were imprisoned,[1] and for not doing it an American was murdered in his shop [2]

Secure and arrogant in its wealth and strength, in its true function the church was atrophied The conspicuous note in the earlier protests of such Reformists as Melchor Ocampo and Guillermo Prieto, is to call the church back to its prescribed service These men were devout Catholics, and for that very reason viewed with profound sorrow the discrepancy between the actual conditions of clerical life and the clergy's traditional duty

H G Ward, British chargé d'affaires, was struck by the exorbitant fees for marriages, baptisms, burials, masses, and other church ceremonies which, in his judgment, produced "a most demoralizing effect among the Indian population"

For instance, in States, where the daily wages of the labourer do not exceed two *reales* [3] and where a cottage can be built for four dollars, its unfortunate inhabitants are forced to pay twenty-two dollars for their marriage fees, a sum which exceeds half their yearly earnings, in a country where Feast and Fast days reduce the number of *dias útiles* (on which labour is permitted) to about one hundred and seventy-five The consequence is, that the Indian either cohabits with his future wife until she becomes pregnant (when the priest is compelled to marry them with, or without fees), or, if more religiously disposed, contracts debts and even commits thefts, rather than not satisfy the demands of the ministers of that religion, the spirit of which appears to be so little understood

Throughout the Bishopric of Valladolid the marriage fees vary from seventeen to twenty-two dollars In La Puebla, Durango and Mexico, they are from fourteen to eighteen dollars, according to the supposed means of the parties, and these enormous sums are extorted from the meanest parishioners

The fees on baptisms and burials, are likewise very high In the mining districts, each miner pays weekly to the Church, half a *real* (a *medio*) in order to provide for expenses of his funeral, and on the day of the *raya* (the weekly payment), an agent of the *Cura* is always present to receive it Thus twenty-six *reales*, or three dollars and two *reales* (thirteen shillings English money), are paid annually, by each mining labourer in full health and employment, in order to secure the privilege of a mass being read over his body upon his decease An Indian, who lives ten years under such a system, would pay six pounds ten shillings for the honour of a funeral, and yet would not be exempt from continuing his contributions, although the amount paid in one year, ought more than to cover any fees that could reasonably be claimed by the Church [4]

Many of the investments held in mortmain had ceased to serve their original functions In the convent of the Filipinas, founded to send missionaries to the Philippine Islands, dwelt but three monks, who divided its large income

[1] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol VI, p 595
[2] Thompson, Recollections of Mexico
[3] Twelve and a half cents, U S cy
[4] Ward, *op cit*, vol I, p 336–7

Madame Calderón de la Barca, the devout Catholic wife of Spain's first minister in Mexico, thus described her visit to the convent of the Encarnación in 1842

> This convent is in fact a palace * * * each nun has a servant, and some have two * * * the convent is rich, each novice at her entrance pays five thousand dollars into the common stock There are about thirty nuns and ten novices * * *
>
> Having visited the whole building and admired one virgin's blue satin and pearls, and another's black velvet and diamonds, sleeping holy infants, saints, paintings, shrines and confessionals * * * we came at length to a large hall, decorated with paintings and furnished with antique highbacked arm-chairs, where a very elegant supper, lighted up and ornamented, greeted our astonished eyes, cakes, chocolate, ices, creams, custards, tarts, jellies, blancmanges, orange and lemonade, and other profane dainties, ornamented with gilt paper cut into little flags, etc I was placed in a chair that might have served for a pope under a holy family * * *[1]

Apart from other funds, the real estate held by each convent usually exceeded fifty properties, an average of more than one per nun The number of properties owned, and the number of nuns and servants in each of the ten more prosperous convents in Mexico City shortly before the Reform,[2] was as follows [3]

Convent	Nuns	Servants	Properties
Encarnación	44	71	79
Concepción	36	79	132
Regina Coeli	30	68	62
San Lorenzo	30	29	60
Jesús María	29	55	83
Balvanera	27	44	63
San Gerónimo	26	42	60
Santa Catalina de Sena	25	33	60
San José de Gracia	22	32	52
Santa Clara	22	30	44

Among the brotherhoods the discrepancy between their wealth and the number of friars in each monastery was even more striking, thirty-nine of these being inhabited by less than five monks [4]

[1] Barca Life in Mexico, Letter 15

[2] The year is not given

[3] García Cubas El Libro de mis Recuerdos p 21–38 José María Luis Mora in México y Sus Revoluciones vol I p 498–9, gives somewhat different figures for the year 1833, but they show a similar proportion of nuns, servants and properties

[4] Ward, *op cit*, vol I, p 318

Madame de la Barca never wearies of commenting on the wealth and splendor of the church ceremonials

On Holy Thursday in the church of San Francisco "the bishops and priests were in a blaze of gold and jewels" In the cathedral "its magnificence struck us with amazement Its gold and silver and jewels, its innumerable ornaments of holy vessels, the rich dresses of the priests all seemed burning in almost intolerable brightness" In the Church of Santa Clara "the magnificence of jewels and crimson velvet and silver and gold, dazzling"

In contrast with this, on Palm Sunday,

* * * the whole Cathedral presented the appearance of a forest of palm-trees * * * and under each tree a half-naked Indian, his rags clinging together with wonderful pertinacity, long, matted, dirty black hair both in men and women [1]

The consecration of the archbishop of Mexico is thus described

* * * the ceremony * * * was very superb * * * the quantity of jewels on the dresses of the bishops and priests, and on the holy vessels, etc, enormous The bishops were arrayed in the white velvet and gold, and their mitres were literally covered with diamonds The gold candlesticks and golden basins for holy water, and golden incensories, reminded me of the description of the ornaments of the Jewish tabernacle in the days of Moses, of the "candlesticks of pure gold, with golden branches", and "the tongs and snuff-dishes of pure gold" or of the temple of Solomon, where the altar was of gold, and the table of gold, and the candlesticks and the snuffers, and the basins and the spoons, and the censors were of pure gold [2]

Madame de la Barca makes certain to add that in the crowded cathedral there was not a single beggar, "as they are always excluded on such occasions" [3]

Almost unconsciously this gifted word-painter notes the contrast between the ecclesiastical splendor and the poverty of the masses Thus, writing of the Church of San Cristóbal near the village of Sopayuca

The magnificence of these places of worship is extraordinary Here was the country church crowded with *léperos* (beggars) * * * Indians with bare feet, yet the building large and rich * * * and lighted with great tapers which threw their gloomy rays on * * * the rich gilding that encrusted the walls * * * [4]

Class lines on a sartorial basis were drawn in the church

We received a few days since an invitation to attend the sumptuous mass, annually given by the Asturian Brotherhood, in honour of the Virgin of Covadonga, in the church of Santo Domingo The invitation being printed on blue satin, with gold lace and tassels, seems worthy of a place in a box of wax figures * * * The church was superbly decorated, and only well-dressed people were admitted [5]

[1] *Op cit* Letter 14
[2] *Idem*, Letter 18
[3] *Idem*, Letter 14
[4] *Idem*, Letter 28
[5] *Idem* Letter 29

On the morality of the clergy in those times and of their position in the social fabric, Justo Sierra, for many years minister of education in the Porfirio Díaz cabinet, wrote

The social leader was the bishop, the head of the clergy, the canons were next in order * * * indulgent toward all corruption, abuses, sins * * * toward the illegitimate family, spawned from concubinage, which swarmed in the city and in the parishes Ecclesiastical celibacy was almost a myth * * * This intervention of the clergy in the family adulterated its racial composition and gave to the population a lighter complexion The houses were fragrant with incense but not with moral health, the homes were shrines of images * * * Continual church celebrations, all designed to earn little, to spend little, to exist in little comfort * * * the Indian lived and vegetated as his father before him, a little agriculture * * * insignificant crafts conserved without a single variation from father to son, and much drunkenness on all feast days (half the days of the year) * * * such was the woof of small community life [1]

The case of curate Agustín Dueñas, while extreme, reflected the low state to which had sunk a clergy which tolerated such a man in its fold Coarse and ruthlessly extortionate in his demands upon the faithful of his parish, the episode which shook the entire community and reechoed throughout Mexico was the following

A servant named Campos requested the free burial of the body of one of his sons, and as the curate refused because these fees constituted his living, the poor man in his affliction asked

"But what shall I do with the body?"

To which the curate replied "Salt it and eat it"

These words have already become traditional in Michoacán [2]

The functions and rites of baptism, marriage, and sepulture were wholly invested in the church It owned every cemetery, and refused interment to Catholics who were anticlerical Burial on consecrated ground was denied former President Gómez Pedraza, though he had been a friend of the church during his life and had been attended by priests on his death-bed, since he had failed to confess before expiring [3]

The episode of Father Dueñas reflected a condition in the State of Michoacán signalized in the newspaper 'El Siglo" in January, 1852

In this capital (Morelia) many corpses have been put out that the police may collect them, because the families have not had the means to bury them [4]

The *campo santo* or burial ground in San Juan Bautista in the State of Tabasco is thus described by a visitor in the eighteen thirties

* * * Cows and pigs were grazing on this sanctified ground, placidly furrowing the earth which covered the remains of Christians * * * My companion called

[1] Sierra Juarez Su Obra y Su Tiempo p 32–3
[2] Obras Completas de Melchor Ocampo vol I p 3–4 fn
[3] Bancroft *op cit*, vol V p 129
[4] Quoted in Mexico a Través de los Siglos, México Independiente Olavarría y Ferrari, p 770

my attention to the fact that * * * only the very poor were condemned to be the playthings, if not the actual fodder, of filthy animals, that those who can pay an impost, masquerading under the name of alms, to the church authorities, alone enjoy the privilege of having their relatives and friends buried in the house of the Lord, and that the more money was paid the closer to the tabernacle were the remains interred [1]

Such were the conditions that gave birth to the belief in Mexico that clerical reform was essential as a preliminary to national progress

Under the guidance of Valentín Gómez Farías, the first figure in Mexican public life after independence to be dominated by motives other than political, the liberal congress of 1833 declared that the *patronato* resided in the nation, a move inspired both by the nationalistic desire to assert independence of the Vatican and the religious motive of remedying "the supreme shortage of ecclesiastics" [2] Congress likewise abolished the civil enforcement of monastic vows, and decreed that the tithes, hitherto obligatory contributions from every individual to the church, be voluntary [3]

The bishop of Puebla, Francisco Pablo Vásquez, declared this congressional action to be "a sacrilegious pronouncement against the divine authority of the pope" [4] Farías was labelled "a little Judas" [5] The entire hierarchy refused to obey the new legislation [6]

So rebellious continued the clergy that the Government felt obliged to issue a circular against the "abuse made of the pulpit and the secrecy of the confessional for political purposes," and concluding with the admonition to the priests not to forget their duties as subjects of the Government [7]

They had already forgotten A *cuartelazo* was engineered by the Morelia garrison, the first announced proviso of which was "to protect at all costs the holy religion of Jesus Christ and the exemptions and privileges of the clergy and army threatened by intrusive authority" [8]

The struggle was on The clergy uniting with the army whose special privileges were likewise menaced, selected as its standard-bearer General Antonio López de Santa Anna, who promptly grasped the opportunity to satisfy his insatiable lust for power and spoils [9] The church acclaimed him as "the restorer of its liberties" and mobilized in his support with an enthusiasm which the following edict reveals

A thousand times blessed the man who with so skilful a hand has known to return to God His legitimate inheritance His memory will be held in eternal thankfulness throughout the ages and his crown will be precious and unforgettable for all eternity His name will be hailed by all generations, young and old, vir-

[1] Mestre Ghighazza, Documentos y Datos para la Historia de Tabasco vol II, p 341
[2] In the words of Dr Pedro Espinosa representative of the Ecclesiastical Chapter of Guadalajara Colección Eclesiástica Mejicana, vol III, p 301
[3] Dublán y Lozano, Legislación Mexicana, No 1274
[4] Olavarría y Ferrari, *op cit*, p 336
[5] *Idem*, p 319
[6] *Idem*, p 336
[7] Olavarría y Ferrari, *op cit*, p 333–4
[8] From Plan de Morelia in *Idem*, p 324
[9] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol VI, p 584

gins and children will praise him because all of us, not only through the might of his sword, always victorious in battle, but because of his religious piety and his true Catholicism, have secured the peace and liberty of our Church * * * We were already perishing But God compassionately threw a benign glance upon us and was compassionate with our misfortunes At the end of last April He caused unexpectedly to appear a brilliant star whose beauty, brightness, and splendor announced to us, as in the day of the three happy magi, that justice and peace were approaching and indeed already were on earth This was * * * the sudden arrival of His Excellency Don Antonio López de Santa Anna at this Capital, returning to reassume command of our Republic [1]

The union of church and army was successful "The holiest revolution our republic has ever seen," declared Bishop Vásquez, proclaiming a *triduo* of masses for the "conservation, prosperity, and righteous government" of Santa Anna, and offered "in conjunction with the other bishops, 200 days of indulgence for each *Salve* or *Ave Maria* * * * uttered within the seventy-two hours of the triduum" [2]

From then on, with a few intermissions, Mexico was fated for some twenty years through the combined forces of clericalism and militarism to be bedeviled by the domination of that unscrupulous and unprincipled adventurer

But Santa Anna himself was to reduce the church's economic power Even during the viceroyalty it had been the monarch's habit to expropriate (which meant appropriate) clerical wealth in time of financial stringency The later kings grew more and more rapacious The episcopate itself indulged the confiscatory habit When funds were needed overseas in 1809 in the war against Napoleon, Archbishop Lizana of Mexico caused $400,000 pesos to be taken by force from the house of the Duke of Terranova, Marquis of the Valley of Oaxaca, descendant of Hernán Cortés, although in the list they appeared as a voluntary loan [3]

After independence, the waning popularity of the church increasingly drew attention to its great wealth and to the relatively small benefit the community derived therefrom Administrations were successively bankrupt, funds to pay public employees were lacking Not unnaturally the Government turned, as in colonial times, to its associate, the church, first asking, then taking The nibbling, however, was insignificant until the country was plunged, largely through the perverseness of Santa Anna,[4] into war with the United States With the treasury empty and Mexicans perishing in the field, appeals were made to the patriotism of the church In vain [5]

[1] Edict issued by the president and Ecclesiastical Chapter of the Holy Metropolitan Church of Mexico governing the archbishopric addressed to the diocese June 28, 1834 Reprinted in Colección Eclesiástica Mejicana vol IV p 202–4

[2] Edict of Oct 15 1834 in Coleccion Eclesiástica Mejicana, vol IV, p 303–7

[3] Alaman Hist de Méjico, vol I p 305–6

[4] See p 555, fn

[5] Olavarría y Ferrari, *op cit*, p 605

Indeed, seeing its coffers threatened, the church had, in the presence of invading armies, sought to incite discord behind the Mexican lines [1] Under these circumstances and in the face of the national emergency, congress on January 13, 1847, approved a law "to provide fifteen million pesos from the hypothecation of public sale of properties held in mortmain" but specifically exempting all charitable, religious, and educational institutions [2] The measure, therefore, touched merely a small fraction of the clerical riches — riches which the law's sponsors asserted had always been freely used to foment revolts and civil strife in the interest of clerical privileges (Among these revolts were that of Bravo against Victoria in 1826,[3] those under the Plans of Orizaba and Cuernavaca in 1834 [4] for "religion and immunities," that of Huejotzingo in 1842 [5] The clergy supported Bustamante who had rebelled against President Guerrero,[6] and overthrew the Liberal Farías who left office "without a stain on his character," [7] and as one historian records, "with his hands clean of blood or money" [8])

The clergy ascribed Mexico's misfortune to divine castigation The bishop of Durango reviewing the legislation against clerical privileges declared his conviction that in consequence "the Supreme Being has not granted his powerful protection to our governments" [9] But in the wake of the disaster of war and the temporary eclipse of Santa Anna new ideas made great headway in Mexico

Along with a growing belief that in clerical dominance were rooted many of Mexico's troubles, the idea of religious tolerance, the permission for sects other than the Catholic to exist in the republic was gaining As early as 1831 Vicente Rocafuerte published an "Essay on Religious Tolerance" The pamphlet was denounced as seditious and the author arrested, but the trial, held amid great public excitement, resulted in his acquittal [10] The clergy violently combated the idea

"Sedition, disorder, cruelty, blood, and death are the terrible effects of Protestantism," [11] maintained a clerical pamphleteer

"Liberty of cults, liberty of conscience — two programs as impious as they are disastrous," said Clemente de Jesús Munguía, bishop of Michoacán [12]

"The country should close its doors to Protestants as the father would close the doors of his house to those who injure his children, or as a city would exclude persons with contagious diseases" This represented the clerical view as expressed in 1848 [13]

[1] *Idem*, p 604, 633
[2] *Idem*, p 630
[3] Suárez y Navarro, Hist de Mejico, p 92
[4] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol V p 137
[5] *Idem*, p 255
[6] Suárez y Navarro, *op cit*, p 241
[7] Bancroft *op cit* vol V, p 137
[8] Rivera Hist de Jalapa vol III, p 227
[9] Olavarría y Ferrari *op cit*, p 721
[10] *Idem*, p 286
[11] Guerrero, Dictamen Teológico Contra El Ensayo Sobre Tolerancia Religiosa de Vicente Rocafuerte
[12] Carta Pastoral, Nov 15 1854
[13] Quoted in Callcott, Church and State in Mexico, p 214

Bishop Labastida declared religious tolerance a "detestable and horrible pestilence" and that to introduce it "is to deny the truth of our religion, to persecute it openly, to carry war into its very bosom" [1]

Yet the liberals who were seeking to introduce tolerance never conceived themselves other than devout Catholics When word was received of the flight and exile of Pope Pius IX following the upheavals of 1848 in Italy, President Joaquín de Herrera invited His Holiness to transfer his See to Mexico where he would find "seven million faithful sons to console you in your anguish" [2] And the chambers voted a gift of twenty-five thousand pesos from the bankrupt treasury which were promptly remitted to the Pontiff

Whatever hope Mexico might have had for evolution was frustrated by Santa Anna's return to power The invitation extended to him by Lucas Alaman, the leader of the clericals in the political arena,[3] reveals their purposes

> The first [of our principles] is to preserve the Catholic religion * * * it is necessary to sustain the cult with splendor, to maintain the ecclesiastical properties, and to arrange everything related to ecclesiastical administration with the Pope, but it is not true * * * that we desire the Inquisition nor to persecute, although it does appear to us that the public authorities should prevent the circulation of impious and immoral books * * * We are opposed to the federal form of Government, against the representative system through election * * * against elective municipalities and everything that may be called popular election * * * We are convinced that nothing can be accomplished by a Congress and desire you to do it aided by councils few in number * * *
>
> To achieve these purposes we can count on public opinion * * * which we direct through the principal newspapers of the capital and the states which are all ours We also count on the moral force given by the unanimous support of the clergy, of the proprietors and of the sensible people, who are all of the same mind * * * In your hands, *señor General*, lies the happiness of your country, and the opportunity to cover yourself with glory and benedictions [4]

Emerging from the retirement to which he had been relegated by his disastrous conduct of the war with the United States, Santa Anna entered Mexico City amid heavily staged rejoicing His first act was to abolish freedom of the press and to suspend all newspapers that did not join the fulsome chorus of adulation His political opponents he exiled, imprisoned, and murdered under a decree which gave military commanders the right to summary execution He then recreated around himself the pomp of Iturbide's court, and assumed the title of "Most Serene Highness" To maintain his power, conscripts were ruthlessly seized and impressed into his

[1] Sexta Carta Pastoral, p 13–14
[2] Olavarría y Ferrari *op cit* p 722
[3] Bulnes Las Grandes Mentiras de Nuestra Hist , p 185
[4] From a letter dated March 24, 1853, from Lucas Alaman to Antonio López de Santa Anna, rep in Mexico Desde 1808 Hasta 1867, Arrangoiz vol II, p 337–39

army To silence protests he decreed imprisonment for all who "repeated false or alarming news," or who "criticize the acts of the Supreme Government or any of the other authorities of the nation "

It was not even his will which determined his conduct during his dictatorship, but his caprice, and this caprice attaining the fantastic His Government was guilty of tyranny, persecutions, and intolerance without precedent More than ever he had as his ally the conservative party, which in Mexico signifies the party of the church He played it in the last throw of the dice on which he staked his fate Chance went against him together they went down, and together they perished [1]

The inevitable explosion came with the Plan de Ayutla which opened the way for the first serious *effort* in Mexican history to create a democratic and constitutional government

The Santa Anna régime had collapsed from its own rottenness and the force of the accumulated hatreds it had engendered Offering little resistance the dictator fled abroad His supporters remained — but leaderless The Liberals promptly undertook a series of fundamental reforms The Ley Juárez suppressed the ecclesiastical — and military — courts for civil cases, giving clerics the right to renounce their exemption from trial in a lay court in criminal cases [2] The law was promulgated on November 24, 1855 On November 27, Archbishop Lázaro de la Garza y Ballesteros issued a pastoral in which he declared the legislation "contrary to what the church has provided, and whatever renunciation any individual of the clergy may make of the *fuero*, either in civil or in criminal cases, is null and of no value even though he swear it " [3] Despite the moderation of the law it aroused the clergy to open rebellion under the battle cry of "Religión y Fueros " [4] The first uprising in the Puebla diocese was soon put down [5]

The Government's next move proved fundamental In struggling to free itself from debt it projected the disamortization of the church's vast estates The motives for this were doubtless mixed Chief was the hope of stirring the stagnant pool of the national economy Second was the political belief that the social and economic inequalities of Mexican society would be lessened by a rearrangement of the country's immobile wealth The Ley Lerdo provided that the estates owned by the clergy, formerly inalienable, were purchasable by the lessees at a price based on the assumption of a six per cent rental It forbade civil and religious corporations from holding real estate not used for religious or charitable purposes The law was not confiscatory The properties were to be sold and the proceeds turned back to the church It was hoped that this measure would subdivide the great

[1] Rabasa, La Evolución Histórica de México, vol III
[2] Vigil *op cit*, p 86, 131–2
[3] Documentos Eclesiásticos, vol III, p 90–93
[4] Vigil, *op cit*, p 99
[5] *Idem*, p 117–18

land tenures, bring them into new and more numerous hands, and stimulate agriculture, commerce, and individual initiative [1]

Says Priestley, voicing what appears the opinion of unbiased historians

These laws were beneficent in their purpose, and * * * ought to have had the warm cooperation of the Mexican church Its opportunity to minister to the spiritual and moral needs of the people, a service in which it has often been negligent when it was not hostile, would have been measurably increased It chose, however, to consider that the normal aspiration of the liberal party to win self-expression, that is, the attack upon the church as a political and economic organization, was an attack upon its proper spiritual functions It resisted with envenomed fierceness, bringing on the movement which really did assault its spiritual dominion and lose it the support of the very large proportion of Mexican men The church must answer for a large measure of responsibility for the havoc which its mistaken policy has wrought in Mexico [2]

In consequence of clerical activity, revolts were breaking out in different sections of the country The Government retaliated by taking over the property of the Puebla diocese outright, stating

With a part of said property, and without neglecting the pious purposes to which it is dedicated, the Republic will indemnify itself for the cost of suppressing the uprising * * * will indemnify the inhabitants of that city [Puebla] for the damages which they have suffered in consequence of the warfare * * * and will pension the widows, orphans, and crippled, made so by said rebellion [3]

Meanwhile the rampant hostility of the clergy gave impetus to the anti-clerical program Cemeteries were placed under civil control The Ley Iglesias excluded the clergy from the exercise of their civil rights This law was clearly retaliatory as well as reformist It was a reaction to the increasing perversion of pulpit, confessional, and entire church machinery to political ends The refusal of Santos Degollado, the governor of Jalisco, of the bishop of Guadalajara's request for the suppression of pamphlets criticising the clergy, voiced the feeling of the Liberal leadership Referring to the Santa Anna administration, Degollado wrote

The clergy witnessed without protest the murders, burnings, robberies, confiscation, and the sacrifice of thousands of innocent victims whose blood inundated Mexican soil, things all contrary to the law of God and to natural and divine right Often the priests witnessed the dragging to the scaffold of the sons of Jesus Christ without permitting them the sacrament of confession Often they saw the corpses of Christians unburied and obviously destined to be devoured by beasts, contrary to the rites of the church And neither from the pulpits nor in councils was heard a single authoritative voice pleading for humanity, for religious service for the condemned, nor any suggestion to the government that it was doing ill * * * [4]

[1] *Idem*, p 150–1
[2] Priestley Mexican Nation A Hist , p 325–6
[3] Art 2 of decree of President Comonfort, March 31, 1856 Rep in Vigil, *op cit*, p 123–4
[4] Rep in Vigil, *op cit*, p 71

Alluding to the past rebellions and the incipient civil war incited by the clergy, the writer uttered a prophecy which not long after was fulfilled

It should not be hidden from the wisdom of Your Grace that the springs of the human heart and conscience become drained by calling upon them too much * * * and who knows whether with one more civil war provoked in our midst under the pretext of impiety, Mexico will not lapse into a lamentable indifference in matters of religion or into a schism from which it will not be possible to recall it [1]

Meanwhile the framers of the new constitution had gathered The project to establish freedom of worship aroused a storm Favoring it Delegate José Mata said

* * * The Hispanic race is the only one which presents to-day to the civilized world the shameful spectacle of enshrining in its bosom men who desire to tyrannize over the human conscience, the only people in whose midst is still discussed the right to worship God according to one's own conscience [2]

Meanwhile Pope Pius IX condemned the new legislation and the pending constitution, saying in part

Having torn away the church properties, the Mexican Government has published other decrees in one of which it has abolished one of the religious orders, and in the other declares itself ready to give its efficient aid to individuals of either sex who having entered an order desire to retire from religious life, abandon the cloister, and withdraw from the obedience due to their superior

And as if this were not enough, that chamber of deputies * * * proposed a new constitution, composed of many articles not a few of which are in opposition to our divine religion * * * Among other things, this proposed constitution proscribes the privilege of ecclesiastical immunity * * * and more easily to corrupt customs * * * admits the free exercise of all cults and gives permission to emit publicly any kind of opinion and thought * * *

Thus in order that the faithful who live there may know and the Catholic world may understand that we reprove energetically all that the Mexican Government has done against the Catholic religion, against the church and its sacred ministers and pastors, against its laws, rights, and properties, as well as against the authority of this Holy See, we lift our pontifical voice with apostolic freedom, in this full assembly to condemn, reprove, and declare null and void the said decrees, and whatever else the civil authority has put into effect with such contempt of ecclesiastical authority and this Apostolic See [3]

No sooner was the constitution promulgated on February 5, 1857, than the archbishop of Mexico, Lázaro de la Garza y Ballesteros, announced that every official who swore allegiance to it would be denied the sacraments unless he first publicly retracted his oath [4]

[1] Quoted in Vigil, *op cit*, p 72
[2] Zarco, Hist del Congreso Constituyente, vol I, p 779
[3] Alocution of Pope Pius IX at secret consistory, December 15, 1856 Rep in Colección de Documentos Eclesiásticos, vol I, p 585–9
[4] Vigil, *op cit*, p 228

The bishop of Michoacán, Clemente de Jesús Munguía, declared it impossible for any Catholic to accept articles 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 27, 36, 39, 72, and 123 of the new constitution [1] Analysis of these articles is revealing.

Article 3 established free instruction

Article 5 forbade irrevocable contracts for personal service against the will of the contractant — a provision aiming both at peonage and the irrevocability of monastic vows

Article 6 declared that the expression of ideas should not be subject to judicial investigation

Article 7 established freedom of the press

Article 9 provided for the right of assembly

Article 12 did away with titles of nobility, hereditary honors, and perquisites

Article 13 abolished the legal exemptions of the clergy

Article 27 incorporated the law forbidding civil or religious corporations from acquiring real estate

Article 36 prescribed the duties of the citizen — to vote, to enlist in the national guard, to serve in federal and state offices to which he was chosen, to do jury duty

Article 39 in full was as follows

The national sovereignty is vested essentially and originally in the people All public power emanates from the people, and is instituted for their benefit The people have at all times the inalienable right to modify the form of their government

Article 72 fixed the powers of congress

Article 123 which dealt with religion provided

The federal authorities shall have exclusive power to exercise in matters of religious worship and outward ecclesiastical forms, such intervention as by law is authorized [2]

The dilemma of officials confronted by loss of employment and consequent starvation, or denial of the sacraments of their religion, can with difficulty be imagined in this day Frenzy reigned

Civil war was not long in breaking out with all-consuming fury.

The clergy made it a holy war Their coffers were open to it early and long Their soldiers marched to battle wearing crosses and scapularies, bearing the pictures of saints and other symbols of religion The liberals were the Philistines and they were the Chosen People The population went to war with religious fervor on each side Non-combatants wore the chosen *distintivos* or badges of the cause of their predilection Prisoners had short shrift The spirit of extermination animated everyone * * *

[1] García Granados La Constitución de 1857 p 51–2

[2] Constitution of 1857 as adopted (without subsequent amendments) in Zarco, *op cit*, vol II, p. 993–1016

On the liberal side it was a struggle for freedom of thought and speech, for the extinction of clerical participation in affairs of state, for the nationalization of great areas of land held by the church, for the normal participation of laymen in government, for complete equality of all citizens before the law, for intellectual progress and modernity On the conservative side the ideal was church and army control with a foreign constitutional monarchy in the background All the old Spanish abuses based on the colonial conception of political society were to be perpetuated especial privileges, absence of liberty of conscience, class denomination [1]

In the ranks of the clergy, however, not a few refused to preach war, and administered the sacraments without question For this some were suspended by their ecclesiastical superiors [2] One, Father Rodrigo Victoria, was shot by the Conservative General Tomás Mejía [3] Father Ignacio Hernández in Tampico thus printed his dissent in a leaflet

We do not know why the clergy views the Constitution as a terrifying schism, when there is nothing whatever in it contrary to the religious doctrines inherited from our fathers The clergy seems to have mistaken persons for things, abuse for liberty, its interests for those of the people, its privileges for equality before the law, and its riches for the holy poverty in which it should live * * * The Constitution is the expression of a free country which no one has the right to oppose, for in that expression the people is exercising the most sublime of its rights on earth — liberty The clergy has been wrong in resisting openly and with forbidden weapons — through the pulpit and pastoral and in other ways — profaning the church of Jesus Christ, defeating the purposes of His supreme authority, causing incalculable harm to the country, and while proclaiming defense of the church, in reality injuring and ruining it The church does not need treasures to fulfil its pious obligations, nor do the faithful seek in its sacred bosom pomp and mundane riches [4]

After three years of devastating struggle, the Liberals triumphed The bitterness against the Conservatives was increased by the murder of Melchor Ocampo, a man of peace, taken from retirement on his *hacienda* under orders from the Conservative leader, General Leonardo Márquez, and shot [5] Santos Degollado met a similar fate And while the Liberals held the capital and most of the country, the rebel leaders still carried on guerrilla warfare

Benito Juárez, soul and brain of the reform movement, elected president — an election which, in accordance with Mexican custom, merely ratified the victory in the field — now adopted the famous "Reform Laws" After reciting the clergy's refusal to recognize the civil authority, and the use of its wealth to sustain civil war, the decree nationalized all church property, made contributions for religious service optional, suppressed all monastic orders, forbade the wearing of their vestments, turned over the religious

[1] Priestley, *op cit*, p 337–8
[2] Vigil, *op cit*, p 242
[3] *Idem*, p 243
[4] *Idem*
[5] Agustín Rivera, La Reforma y el Secundo Imperio, p 65–6

paraphernalia used in the convents to the bishops in each diocese, ordered the return to each nun of her entrance fee and set aside a sum of money for the personal use of the secularized monastics, as well as for the celebration of religious festivals on the various holy days State and church were declared entirely independent of each other The state would protect worship in the Catholic and in any other faith Civil marriage was legalized [1]

The Juárez Government asserted that these measures were in no sense inspired by hostility toward the religion which the great majority of Mexicans professed, that on the contrary these reforms secured for the church the fullest liberty, left it independent for its work in the realm of spirit and conscience, "separated it from the corrupting influence of politics, and put an end to the fatal collusion of the two powers" [2]

As an attempt to bolster up the hopelessly bankrupt national finances, the reform laws were a failure A scant two million dollars found their way into the treasury The anarchy in the country, the utter disruption of the social fabric, the complete lack of administrative efficiency, dishonesty, the want of purchasers both for lack of money and because the anathema of the church [3] against the government program weighed with many, explain the discrepancy between the value of the church's real estate and the amount secured by its conversion [4]

[1] Vigil, *op cit*, p 381
[2] García Granados *op cit* p 68
[3] Documentos Eclesiásticos vol II p 516–17
[4] The Mexican hierarchy's view is set forth in a "manifestation to the venerable clergy and faithful of their respective dioceses, and to the whole Catholic world,' by the archbishop of Mexico, the bishops of Michoacán, Linares Guadalajara, Potosí, and a representative of the mitre of Puebla, on August 30 1850 which reviews the conflict between church and state since independence It occupies thirty five closely printed pages in the Documentos Eclesiásticos The essential points are quoted herewith

"Although the social struggle soon took on an apparently political character, it was at bottom a religious struggle, in which every epoch in the history of our civil revolutions added a page to the persecutions of the Mexican church The idea of the [state] patronage began in 1822 * * * The fight between church and state in consequence of the attacks in the political constitutions began in Jalisco with that constitution which provided that the state would fix and defray the expenses of worship and nevertheless required of Catholic citizens an oath of obedience but the church then * * * raised its voice against that kind of assault and succeeded in repelling it with great success * * *" [p 361] "Later having taken away civil coercion both for the collection of tithes and the enforcement of monastic vows, an[other] attempt was made to establish the patronage * * * The clergy conjured this tempest and * * * that administration succumbed having succeeded only in revealing in a new high light the resplendent dignity of the church This blow caused the enemies of the church to change their tactics * * * By a delusion common to those not inspired by the faith and not understanding the spirit and efficacy of its doctrine, they came to believe that the irresistible force which has always brought the church victory was physical rather than moral, and consisted less in its doctrine and ministry than in the treasures of the Tabernacle and in the copious revenues with which the church takes care of its many great pious institutions Believing that in robbing the church * * * they could extinguish it * * * [they passed] "* * * the law of 1847 [p 464]" * * * Hardly had the revolution of Ayutla triumphed than it [the Liberal Party] revealed its horrible purpose which filled all true Catholics with consternation * * * The suppression of the legation in Rome as useless, revealed that the government was at least indifferent to every religious principle The law abolishing, the *fuero* and the despoiling of the clergy's political rights disclosed clearly its aversion to the priesthood Its protection of a most impious and unrestrained press left no doubt of the proximity for the church of a persecution more terrible still * * * The church's incontestable property rights were violated by the law of June 25 [disamortization] * * * under

The clergy remained thoroughly intransigeant Defeated at home, it now actively abetted the foreign intervention [1] looming in consequence of Mexico's failure to pay its external debts and to compensate foreigners for damages sustained in the civil wars England, France, and Spain united in the common design of enforcing indemnity Napoleon III, dreaming of empire, wanted to put a satellite in control A treaty between the three powers was signed Archduke Maximilian of Hapsburg was persuaded against his will — chiefly by means of a fake plebiscite which showed that 6,445,564 out of Mexico's 8,620,982 wanted him — to accept the title of "Emperor of Mexico" [2] The pope blessed the archducal couple — Maximilian and Carlota — and their enterprise saying, "Great are the rights of people, and it is necessary to satisfy them, but still greater and more sacred are the rights of the church" [3] The trained French armies, despite their initial defeat at Puebla, were able to impose the Austrian on the Mexican people

the pretext of giving movement to the copious riches monopolized by the clergy, the parochial revenues are attacked by a tyrannical and criminal law, under the plea of protecting the alms against clerical avarice * * *" [p 466]

"Meanwhile * * * Congress discussed a constitution the very outlines of which could not but profoundly stir the people in all the republic * * * The decree ordering civil employees to take an oath to support it, under penalty of losing their positions * * * was a blow so terrible, freighted with such consequences, that it involved even the executive who had ordered it in its havoc " [Comonfort] "And as such an oath carried with it a constant insult to Divinity, since it sought to establish * * * the government as the exclusive authority in matters of religion and * * * discipline, freedom of instruction with the abolition of the Catholic preceptorate and consequent recognition as a right of the propagation of error and heresy * * * the facilitating of the entry of new sects * * * the destruction of the * * * personal immunity of the clergy * * * the episcopate could not keep silent in a crisis so perilous to conscience * * * and therefore, unanimously declared the oath illicit, and required of everyone who had given it, a retraction * * *" [p 467] "This sufficed for new diatribes and calumnies against the clergy, presenting it as a force risen against the sovereign power, and as a class fighting with blood and fire against society * * *"

"The episcopate with its clergy has defended its cause with the firmness that its sense of duty the grace of God, and the desire to save itself demanded, but without leaving the moral or canonical orbit, and without converting its defense as has been calumniously asserted into insurrection to overthrow the government by armed force If * * * there was a constant revolution against the government, if the agents of that revolution promoted it among other things with *Religión* and *Fueros*, that never shall serve as a proof to justify the accusation made against us, but rather will it show that despite the resignation, pacific character, and desire of the shepherds and ministers to suppress armed uprisings, the people could not remain impassive nor indifferent when religion, the church, and the priesthood were attacked in every way The clergy cannot be held responsible for that, nor can its voice in defense of its doctrines be qualified as a stirring up of war" [p 471] "* * * The question is whether we ecclesiastics had the obligation not to resist passively the irreligious measures against the holy immunities of the church, to show ourselves indifferent to the outrages against God and the Law, in order to prevent the people from rising against governments that tyrannize over their consciences and to prevent the public power from de-Catholicising them" [p 472]

"Now we have seen the culmination of this destruction of our country with the *manifiesto* of Señor Juárez * * * taking over the ecclesiastical properties, establishing the liberty of cults * * * and finally * * * changing the moral basis of the family by the introduction of the so-called civil marriage which replaces the Christian marriage * * * with an instituted concubinage * * * [p 470]

"Signed Lázaro, Archbishop of Mexico, Clemente de Jesus, Bishop of Michoacán, Francisco de Paula, Bishop of Linares, Pedro, Bishop of Guadalajara, Pedro Bishop of Potosí, Dr Francisco Serrano" Vera, Colección de Documentos Eclesiásticos, vol II, p 460-495

[1] "The restoration of 1863 was the work of Catholic aspirations, as was the proclamation of the independence in 1821 * * * The sons and descendants of those who in 1821 called to Ferdinand VII to take the throne of Mexico, are those who brought Maximilian to the throne" Arrangoiz, *op cit*, p 4

[2] Gaulot, La Vérité sur l'Expédition du Mexique, vol I, p 257

[3] *Idem*, vol II, p 4

The guardian of the Puebla diocese declared that the French were the allies of the clergy, that all who opposed them were *ipso facto* excommunicated, and confessions would not avail them Accordingly, he prohibited spiritual ministrations to the wounded Liberal soldiers [1] The cathedral was in gala dress, and greeted the invaders with a *Te Deum* [2]

The clericals seemed about to achieve their purpose of reestablishing the full powers of the church The Papal nuncio, Mgr Meglia, who arrived toward the end of 1864, carried instructions

> to restore * * * the happy days of the church, to provide before all else that the Catholic religion, with the exclusion of all other cults, continue to be the glory and support of the Mexican nation * * * that all the religious orders be reestablished * * * that the patrimony of the church and the rights that go with it be protected, that no one be authorized to teach, nor to publish false and subversive doctrines, that instruction, public as well as private, be directed and watched by the ecclesiastical authority, and that, finally, the chains which have until now held the church dependent upon and under the despotism of the civil government be broken [3]

Even Maximilian, most Catholic prince that he was, reared in a religious and royalist tradition, was stupefied at this attempt to turn back the hands of time He countered with a proposal reuniting church and state, with special protection and financial support for the Catholic church, while tolerating other forms of worship [4] This the nuncio promptly rejected as "contrary to the sacred rights of the church" [5] Nor could Maximilian see the wisdom or practicability of restoring the vast estates which had passed into other hands

"It is not a question of the property of the clergy to be exact," wrote the Empress, "but of the *bishops*, who were swimming in abundance, while the mere priests were dying of hunger" [6]

"His Holiness," Monsignor Meglia notified Maximilian, "could scarcely suppose that the imperial government would propose and consummate the work begun by Juárez" [7]

The emperor might have reached an agreement with the apostolic delegate had not clerical machinations prevented it [8] In despair he turned over to his consort the task of trying to win the nuncio In vain "It was the clergy which made the empire," Monsignor Meglia told Carlota, refusing the slightest concession [9]

[1] Lefevre, Documentos Oficiales Recogidos en la Secretaría Privada de Maximiliano, vol I, p 245-6
[2] Bancroft *op cit* vol VI p 69
[3] Arrangoiz *op cit*, p 206
[4] Vigil La Intervencion y El Imperio, p 674-5
[5] Lefevre, *op cit* vol II, p 16
[6] Reinach-Foussemagne Charlotte de Belgique, Impératrice du Mexique p 218
[7] Domenech, Histoire du Mexique, vol II p 208
[8] Vigil, *op cit*, p 674
[9] Reinach Foussemagne, *op cit*, p 215

But now, disappointed with its choice, uncompromising as ever, the Mexican hierarchy turned on Maximilian "with incredible venom, malice, and underhandedness" [1] Apparently it had learned nothing In 1864 it refused absolution to the Baron de Graux in the hour of death, because seven years previously he had sworn allegiance to the constitution, and had legitimately acquired lands formerly belonging to the church The family called in a French abbé, but the archbishop of Mexico forbade him to minister, unless the dying man retracted his oath and restored the land [2] This was not an isolated instance [3]

Nor could the clergy forgive Maximilian his "tolerance," although, as he pointed out, it was recognized by the Vatican in Catholic France His opening of the cemeteries to persons of any creed was also deemed particularly offensive [4]

"The desire to offend the Catholics and the country," wrote Arrangoiz, "was such that in the street of San José el Real, one of the principal streets of the capital, in a store established by permission of Maximilian, was announced the sale of *bibles without commentaries*" (*i e* Protestant bibles) * * * "but we are sure that the merchant, Jew, or Protestant, did not get rich on the sale of his merchandise" [5]

So violent became the clerical intrigues and protests that the emperor felt obliged, after setting forth his views, to utter the following rebuke

> You say that the Mexican church has never taken part in politics Would to God it were true! But unfortunately we have unimpeachable witnesses, and in great numbers, who can testify to the sad but evident truth that the very dignitaries of the church have thrown themselves into revolutions and that a considerable portion of the clergy has maintained an obstinate and active resistance against the legitimate authority of the state
>
> Admit, my worthy bishops, that the Mexican church has with a lamentable fatality mixed up in politics and in matters of earthly wealth, forgetting thereby and neglecting the true maxims of the Gospel Yes the Mexicans are a pious and a good people, but they are not Catholics in the true sense of the Word of God, and certainly the fault is not theirs They have needed to be taught, to have the sacraments administered to them gratuitously as the Gospel orders, and Mexico, I promise you, shall be Catholic Doubt if you will my Catholicism Europe has long known my sentiments and my beliefs, the Holy Father knows my thoughts, the churches of Germany and Jerusalem which the Archbishop of Mexico knows as well as I, testify to my conduct on this question But good Catholic that I am, I shall, likewise be a liberal and just prince [6]

The breach between the ruler and those who had called him to power was complete Utterly disrespecting the only constituted authority which it was willing to recognize at all, the hierarchy left no stone unturned to thwart

[1] Gaulot, *op cit* vol II p 135
[2] *Idem*, vol II, p 102
[3] *Idem*, vol II, p 103
[4] Bancroft *op cit* vol VI p 159
[5] Arrangoiz, *op cit*, p 223–4
[6] Quoted in Vigil, *op cit*, p 675–6

Maximilian's well-meant efforts at compromise and conciliation Wrote his consort, the Empress Carlota

We are not lacking in perseverance and energy, but I wonder if things continue as they are whether it will ever be possible to escape our difficulties The clergy, wounded to death by the letter of the 27th of December, is not easy to control, all the old abuses are being reestablished in elusion of the Emperor's efforts In this it is not so much fanaticism, as dogged and untiring tenacity, to such an extent that I believe that the men who to-day compose the clergy will never be different What can be done with them? [1]

"One cannot hide to oneself," wrote the French commander-in-chief, Marshal Bazaine, "that the energy and intelligence are on the side of the liberals" [2]

There remained for the ill-fated monarch but the support of the French troops When they withdrew, he paid with his life the penalty of that imperialist venture, in which he was, both in his brief reign and in the manner of his death, the noblest figure

Juárez, again in power, showed much magnanimity General amnesty was decreed and the gigantic task of reconstruction begun The president's untimely death in 1872 doubtless changed subsequent Mexican history, for his leadership was wanting to see his reforms carried out in purpose and spirit The congress of 1874 made them the law of the land

Men were now free to worship as they pleased, and to be educated as they chose Apparently the church's economic domination had been broken, and its participation in politics finished But the issue was not settled Even in 1874 the incorporation of the reform laws into the constitution was signalled by Indian uprisings instigated by the clergy [3]

"Excommunication was again fulminated against public functionaries who took the oath of office In the State of Mexico, fanatical mobs murdered the chief of police and the federal revenue collector at Tejupilco, and at Zinacantepec assaulted the municipal buildings and put three employees to death" [4]

In 1876 the clergy gave financial support to Porfirio Díaz's uprising which carried him into office [5]

[1] Arrangoiz, *op cit* p 224 (letter of Jan 26, 1865)
[2] Gaulot, *op cit*, vol II, p 134
[3] Priestley *op cit*, p 372
[4] Bancroft, *op cit* vol VI, p 406
[5] Bulnes, El Verdadero Díaz y La Revolución, p 90

IV THE CHURCH AND THE REVOLUTION (1911–1925)

I

During the generation of Porfirian dictatorship, the Mexican church, unchanged in spirit and purpose, merely altered its tactics Curbed somewhat by the Reform laws, which, however, were never fully enforced, it made "no *open* attempt * * * to dominate politics * * * only with the tacit consent of Díaz did it continue its economic dominance, providing fuel for the flames of revolt which broke out in 1910 "[1]

The church proved an essential ally in nullifying the democratic provisions of the constitution of 1857 Under the industrial invasion of the late nineteenth century facilitated by the Porfirian peace, the oppression of the workers became aggravated The great physical improvements in the Mexican plant — railroads, port works, textile mills, factories, the adaptation of the raw products of the *haciendas* to the commercial needs of the outside world — were made possible by the negligible cost of labor Foreign capital, asking no questions but those related to its security and profits, poured in lavishly The Mexican mass, existing under conditions which varied from absolute slavery as in Yucatán and in the Valle Nacional in Oaxaca, to milder conditions of peonage, carried the load It was held in this serfdom by physical force and mental control, by the army, and by the clergy

The church became active and indispensable in the maintenance of industrial feudalism On the *haciendas* the priests, less the servants of God than of the owner, preached meekness and submission to the victims of the overseers' brutality, consoling the bleeding Indian by portrayal of the happiness that would be his in the next world From the pittances which these wretches received from their heart-breaking toil, the curate extracted his tithe, the money passing in many cases directly from employer to priest The consolations of religion were an essential part of the successful administration of the plantations If priests there were who inwardly rebelled at the parts assigned them, they were helpless before the discipline of their superiors, the social companions of the landowners, and the participants in their profits

[1] Priestley, Mexican Nation A Hist , ch xxii (Italics not in original)

Despite the law, the church again accumulated real estate Monastic orders prospered Religious processions were held when they suited the purposes of the system The written law served as a potential menace, should the clergy "get out of hand" Occasionally the Government rattled its saber slightly But the hierarchy, essentially a partner in the Díaz system, had little occasion to exhibit its former rebelliousness [1]

II

The Madero revolution had one declared aim — to establish the franchise It was only after Díaz had broken his promise to permit a free choice of his successor, had jailed Madero and other anti-reelectionists, had caused himself to be re-"elected" for the seventh time at the age of eighty, that the revolt began In Madero's 2500-word "Plan of San Luis Potosí," but two brief references, calling for the return to the Indians of their communal lands taken illegally, and an allusion to the Díaz Government having "brought the people to * * * the most absolute misery," touch on other than political abuses

For the rest the proclamation attacked the illegal absorption by Díaz of the legislative and judicial functions of the Federal Government, his violation of the basic rights of the citizenry — in other words, his complete flouting of the constitution and the laws

The Mexican church opposed the Madero movement [2] When Porfirio Díaz, bowing to the inevitable, had consented to resign and had gone into exile, the hierarchy, increasingly hostile to Madero, formed a Catholic party in allegiance with the great landholders [3] Wrote Jorge Vera-Estañol

> All [of the clergy] from the highest to the lowest, availed themselves of religious offices, the confessional, the pulpit, doctrine, dogma, faith, superstition, and all the instruments at hand to gain proselytes They worked on the consciences of the people, their friends and their servants, using the formidable argument of eternal salvation, and when the ballot boxes were installed they placed about them standards bearing significant legends On many of them, for example, were inscribed the words "Here you vote for God" The Catholic church thus attempted in this way to convert itself into a temporal power in rivalry to the State, it endeavored to reestablish the theocratic régime of the middle ages [4]

[1] Bishop Plancarte y Navarrete, bishop of Campeche in a pastoral of April 18, 1897, annulled the previously existent retraction required of public servants for swearing adherence to the constitution Printed in Rectificaciones Históricas Calderón p 222–4

[2] "* * * the Roman Catholic Church and the party which takes its name have become violently antagonistic to Madero and are busily engaged throughout the Republic in aspersing his motives, decrying his policies and censuring the weakness and vacillation which is supposed to characterize his direction of affairs," wrote Ambassador Wilson to the secretary of state, July 11, 1911 Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1911 509 File No 812 00/2140

[3] The position Catholics should take in politics is outlined in a pastoral issued February 20, 1912, by Archbishop Leopoldo Ruiz y Flores of Michoacán Fernandez, México — Política Experimental, Appendix

[4] Vera Estañol Carranza and His Bolshevik Régime p 24–25

Nevertheless, the clerical-conservative alliance was defeated in what was as close an approach to a popular verdict as Mexico had ever seen Few deny that Madero was the popular idol of the moment

Yet against him Bishop Francisco Orozco y Jiménez attempted to stir up revolt among the Indians of his diocese, the State of Chiapas [1] And when, a year and a half later, Madero fell, a victim of the treachery of Victoriano Huerta, and was foully murdered, the clergy enthusiastically flocked to the usurper's side [2]

Up to that time the revolutionary movement had exhibited no marked anticlerical trend But when the clergy, as of old, supported the coup d'état against the elected government and its survivors gathering to recapture control, it sowed the wind When Huerta, despite his ruthless butchery of political opponents, was overthrown, it reaped the whirlwind

Some of the clergy suffered atrociously An impressive account documented with the statements of victims and other witnesses, is given in "The Book of the Red and Yellow," by Fr Francis Clement Kelley, at that time head of the Catholic Church Extension Society, and later bishop of Oklahoma The outrages described took the form of violence against priests and nuns,[3] robbery of church property, desecration of churches [4] Some of these acts were those of bandits and drunken rabble ever springing

[1] Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, July 1 1911–February 20, 1913 Cap II Espinosa, Rastros de Sangre Historia de la Revolución en Chiapas p 53–5

Bishop Orozco denied this some years later saying "I am charged with the rising of the Indians! What gave rise to this charge against me was that several young men asked me to recommend them to the Indians so that under their direction they could exercise the rights due to their citizenship Later on the inhabitants of Las Casas tried to get back to their town the government which had been taken to Tuxtla Gutierrez by Governor Rabasa against the wishes of the first named These young men organized a band of volunteers for the conflict between the town and incorporated the Indians with them" Memoir of the Most Rev P Orozco y Jimenez, p 8 This refutation is something of a confirmation of the charge

[2] "El Pais" the Catholic daily, on Feb 26, 1913 four days after the murder of Madero, carried the following item "A manifestation by the women took place yesterday in Oaxaca * * * in the Church of the Soledad was celebrated a solemn religious function to give thanks to the august patroness for having conceded the salvation of the republic The Temple was filled with the faithful belonging to different social classes All the streets were adorned"

[3] The outrages against nuns are denied by some prominent members of the Constitutionalist forces An American observer writes as follows "Before reaching Guadalajara on my return trip last August, I heard many rumors of terrible outrages said to have been perpetrated on the persons of Catholic nuns and sisters by Carranzista officers and soldiers * * * I was so horrified that I made a personal investigation * * * and found there was absolutely no truth in these rumors All nuns, sisters, and foreign born priests had been banished and that was all Having heard worse reports regarding the ravishing of nuns and sisters at Guanajuato, and meeting * * * an English gentleman who lives in Guanajuato and was there through the recent revolutionary changes, I asked him especially about this, and he answered that the reports were absolutely false, both in the main and in detail Mr Cunningham * * * is an exceptionally well-balanced gentleman and I feel sure he told the truth While I am not a Catholic myself * * * I am not prejudiced * * * yet I feel there must be some design back of these reports that have been reaching Washington The unvarnished truth would make a bad enough showing — or ought to suffice — even for the most ultra prejudiced" (Davis, Experiences and Observations of an American Consular Officer during the Recent Mexican Revolutions p 117)

[4] The closest approximation to an impartial and reliable record on these matters by persons in a position to secure first-hand information is in the U S consuls' reports in reply to Secretary Bryan's telegrams to all of them requesting the facts "in view of published reports of outrages upon nuns and priests and desecrations of church property"

Eight consuls, Hostetter at Hermosillo, Guyant at Ensenada, Simpich at Nogales, Bevan at

up in Mexico in the wake of civil commotion The imprisonment and deportation of priests were in part reprisals for active hostility in the pulpit and confessional as well as in the field Some of the Constitutionalist leaders burning with wrath against the manipulation of the ignorant masses through their faith, alleged a definite purpose in the destruction of images and altars General Salvador Alvarado thus explained their point of view to me

"It was for the deliberate purpose of showing the Indians that the lightning would not strike — that the Constitutionalists were not the enemies of God as the priests had told them, that generals rode their horses into churches and publicly smashed the statues of venerated saints"

In Yucatán where the alliance of church and *hacendados* had been most open — there the chapel bells had summoned the peons to their toil — the Indians' revenge had a markedly atavistic tinge In 1915 a group of workers marched on the cathedral where one of them, reciting their sufferings, harangued the crowd

Diego de Landa [the second bishop of Yucatán], Spanish conqueror, blinded with ferocious medieval fanaticism and by right of might destroyed the idols of our Indians to substitute others of foreign origin, which were neither better nor worse than their predecessors And now I, another Diego, desire that we, not in fulfilment of the precept of an eye for an eye, but in response to common sense, enter the cathedral, and throw down the images which until now have served only to keep in the most abject servitude the descendants of our ancestors [1]

Some of the bolder spirits followed The images of the saints were dashed from their niches When those timorous of divine wrath saw that nothing happened to the perpetrators of the sacrilege, they too joined in the destruction, heaping onto a bonfire in the cathedral plaza, images, scapulars, missals, and religious vestments Those who participated in this orgy were supposedly Catholics, descendants of converts of four centuries ago, whose attendance at chapel on the *haciendas* had been compulsory

By the time the Constitutionalists had achieved victory they were rampantly anticlerical and wrote their convictions into the Constitution of 1917 [2] It established that

Tampico, Edwards at Ciudad Juárez, Johnson at Matamoros, Silliman at Mexico City, and Bonney at San Luis Potosí reported no outrages of any kind

Consuls Stadden at Manzanillo, Blocker at Piedras Negras, Schmutz at Aguascalientes reported outrages in the form of arrests, desecration of churches, confiscation, insults, threats Consul Davis, Guadalajara reported the brutal murder of a priest by the forces of General Diéguez (Constitutionalist) while in the act of administering extreme unction Letcher at Chihuahua reported as fact arrests of priests for ransom confiscation, desecration, and as "based only on rumor" the seizure of a nun by Villa's associate, Rodolfo Fierro

This last was the only reference to the violation of nuns except a statement from Mgr Antonio J Paredes, vicar general of Mexico, forwarded by Consul Silliman, which declared

"As to violations of nuns, I am certain that none within the archbishopric has suffered an attack upon her modesty and I have been unable to confirm the rumor that violated nuns have arrived at this capital from other places Inasmuch as all religious affairs come to this office, of which I am in charge, I consider the above rumors entirely false" (Foreign Relations, 1915, p 1004–1019)

[1] Lovera, El Obrerismo Yucateco y La Revolución Mexicana, p 40–42

[2] Diario de los Debates del Congreso Constituyente, Romero García (pub) contains the public discussions of the Constitutional Convention at Querétaro

Primary instruction shall be secular and no religious corporation shall direct primary schools (Art 3)

Monastic orders are forbidden (Art 5)

Everyone is free to embrace the religion of his choice and to practise all ceremonies of his creed in places of public worship or at home, but every act of public worship shall be performed only within the places of public worship (Art 24)

Churches, rectories, seminaries, convents, and all buildings designed to teach a religious creed, are the property of the nation Charitable institutions may not be under religious supervision Churches and religious institutions cannot acquire or administer real estate or loans made on it directly or through third parties (Art 27)

State legislatures have the right to determine the number of ministers of each creed according to the needs of the locality Only Mexicans by birth may be ministers They shall not be entitled to vote, nor hold public office, nor assemble for political purposes They shall not in public or private meetings, in religious propaganda or acts of worship criticise the nation's fundamental laws, the authorities, or the government (Art 130)

Publications of a religious character shall not comment on political matters Political associations shall not bear a name relating to a religious belief Political assemblies in churches are forbidden (Art 130)

Before dedicating new temples of worship permission shall be obtained from the Department of Gobernación (Art 130)

No ministers shall inherit from other ministers of the same creed nor from private individuals to whom they are not related by blood within the fourth degree (Art 130)

These provisions, largely re-affirmations and elaborations of the amended 1857 Constitution's anticlerical features, aimed to drive the church out of politics, to destroy its social influence, and to confine it, as far as legislation could, to the field of religion They went farther than their professed purpose They put the church under the dominance of the state

III

Officially the Mexican church has always denied any participation in politics even in the face of irrefutable proof It has disclaimed active partisanship in the Victoriano Huerta coup d'état in 1913, in the de la Huerta rebellion in 1923 When General Obregón's forces were moving down the west coast of Mexico in May, 1914, he charged that in Guadalajara the clergy advised their faithful in public office not to swear allegiance to the new government, and to retract their oaths if they had given them [1]

In the attack on Irapuato, the Huertistas lost sixteen killed, many wounded, and sixty prisoners

[1] *Obregón*, Ocho Mil Kilómetros en Campaña, p 223

Among the dead were * * * the curate of Irapuato, and among the prisoners two clerics of the Carmelite order who also had taken up arms to combat our forces [1]

More important than *ex parte* testimony furnished in the heat of conflict is that supplied by the clergy's attitude since toward an established government In the years 1923 to 1925 I talked with two archbishops and five bishops All were avowedly opposed not merely to the articles in the constitution relative to religion, but to its provisions on agrarian reform, labor, and education, and frank to admit their active hostility to the corresponding governmental policies

The bishop [2] of a central state, a tall, austere, scholarly type with a mixture of Indian blood, said to me

"Yes, it is quite true that the church preaches against the agrarian policies of the government — most emphatically, in fact In our judgment it is nothing but theft Yes, we tell the individual *campesino* so, and order one who has accepted land to return it Here in the State of ——— there is no desire on the part of the *campesino* to receive land His wages are fifty centavos a day and two litres of corn This is plenty for his present needs It is a great mistake to think that he is underpaid — a mistake that all Americans make If you pay him more he will simply stop working until he has eaten up his surplus The fact is that the *hacendados* cannot afford to increase wages in the least All are in deep financial trouble due to heavy taxes and the uncertainty of the agrarian movement I know of one case where merely increasing the ration of corn to his peons cost one *hacendado* twenty-five thousand pesos annually The peon is worse off than he was before the Revolution — because the *hacendado* is worse off, and cannot afford to do the things for the peons that he used to do

"There has been one case which I personally settled in consequence of which the *campesinos* got some land — in the Hacienda of Santa R ——— A delegation of them came to see me and said, 'We are good Catholics, and do not wish to take anything you say we shouldn't, but we need this land in order to subsist ' I made an investigation and was convinced that they should have the land Then I called the *hacendado* and said to him, 'As a good Catholic I would like you to make a gift of that land to the peasants ' He replied that if I, his bishop, said so, he would comply I then said that if the Government did not pay him for the land, I would see to it that the peasants considered this a debt which they would pay on the instalment plan, and that the papers would be drawn up indicating his ownership until all had been paid "

The bishop of another central state, a good-natured man of the people, said to me

[1] Obregón Ocho Mil Kilómetros en Campaña p 237
[2] Here and subsequently when the names of the prelates are omitted it is at their request

"There would be no difficulties in the agrarian program if the Government would invest thirty million pesos in buying land from the *hacendados* The *ejidos* which have been taken wrongfully should, of course, be restored The *campesinos* should also have land whenever they want it, but it should be paid for When I was bishop in ——— I arranged the distribution of a *hacienda*, by arranging that the *campesinos* should pay ten per cent down and nine per cent per annum for ten years Most of them have already paid for their lands, the lady who owns the *hacienda* has made a handsome profit, and everyone is happy"

"The clergy is in the employ of the *hacendados* as it was before the Revolution," an official of the department of agriculture replied, when I sought his reaction to the above conversation "It is actuated by sordid motives But the evil thing is the manner of its interference, by invoking, as it always has, divine castigation and terrifying the poor peon That is, as you say in the United States, 'hitting below the belt'"

The bishop of a small central state at that time governed by a devout Catholic, himself a large landholder, said to me

"Here we have no agrarian problem We don't permit it"

In September, 1922, the Union of Campesinos of the State of Durango addressed a memorial to the archbishop, Monseñor Mendoza y Herrera, complaining of the anti-agrarian activities of various priests in the archdiocese and asking the prelate to use his authority "to put an end to the activity of your subordinates which is on the point of producing serious conflicts"

The following facts are of public knowledge and notorious in each of the villages affected

1 Fr Margarito Barraza, formerly on the Hacienda of Dolores * * * and now on El Rodeo has preached incessantly against agrarianism, and has publicly declared that all members of the Agrarian Committee of El Rodeo shall be without benefit of clergy even in the hour of death

2 Anastasio Arellano, curate of Peñón Blanco, through his preachments against agrarianism has brought about a sort of schism between the villagers In the confessional he threatened the Secretary of the Agrarian Committee, telling him that upon all who touched the lands of Pablo Martínez del Rio would fall the "curse of God" * * * Fr Arellano is sold body and soul to the owners of the Hacienda de Catalina which has resulted in his possessing an automobile and other properties which do not harmonize with the humility and poverty which Jesus preached

3 The parish priest of Canatlan is a rabid protector of the *hacendados*, and calls all the *campesinos* who desire land "bandits" and has threatened them with excommunication * * *

4 Francisco Vásquez, curate of Pánuco, has uttered terrible sermons calling *campesinos* who desire land "bandits" and threatening them with excommunication A worker of Tapona confessed to him, and was told he would not be con-

demned if he paid his tithe It would appear that for this priest it is all a matter of business

5 The curate of Juan de Dios Prado was the administrator of the *haciendas* of San Diego and of Ochoa, in consequence of which the pulpit and confessional have served him to declare all agrarians condemned

6 Fr Reyes of Gómez Palacio is so violently anti-agrarian that he refused to administer the last rites to Eulalio Martinez merely because in life he had been agrarian

7 Fr Santiago Zamora of Mapimí sustains on every occasion that possession of idle lands is theft, and that the government which authorizes it as well as the *campesinos* and their families who benefit by it, are bandits

8 Juan Sarmiento, parish priest of El Oro, is openly engaged in politics We have seen him take part in every election He carries on his propaganda undisguisedly and recommends his candidates He attacks agrarianism harshly and takes every opportunity to asperse the Constitution of 1917 * * *

9 The priest of Nazas, Manuel Gallegos, is an avowed protector of the *hacendados* of that region, whom he serves unreservedly, attacking Article 27 of the Constitution within and without the church

10 The priest of Hahualilo * * * affirms that the government is a thief because it robs the *hacendados* of lands which in his view it has no right to touch [1]

The archbishop made no reply

On the *hacienda* "Jalpa," one of the richest in Guanajuato, the daily wage in 1923 was twenty-five centavos and a measure of corn, not merely for unskilled laborers but for its carpenters and mechanics In the luxurious private gardens of the estate women doing men's work received half that wage Two priests were attached to the *hacienda*

"Have these workers been offered their communal lands?" I asked one of them

"They have not, they do not want them," replied the priest

"Why do they not want them?" I asked "It seems strange that anyone should not want something that is given for nothing In the United States every man desires independence, to be his own boss"

"They would not know how to take care of the lands if they got them," said the priest

"Why not, aren't they working the land now?" I inquired

"They could work the land, but they wouldn't know anything about buying and selling, and they would lose the money they had put in for seed and tools if they could ever get enough together to buy these"

A few minutes later I approached one of the peons and the following conversation took place

[1] Memorial addressed to His Grace the Archbishop of Durango by the Sindicato de Campesinos del Estado de Durango September, 1922 at Villa Guadalupe Victoria Estación Tapona, Durango, signed by six members of the Comité Directivo and three of the Comité Ejecutivo Copy in writer's possession

"You people haven't received any *ejidos* in this region?"

"No, señor, we haven't."

"Is it because you don't want them?"

"Yes, we want them, but —"

"But what?"

"If we got them, we wouldn't be able to take care of them."

"How is that? Aren't you working the land now? How would it be any different if you were working your own plot?"

"Oh, working the land would be the same, but we poor people wouldn't know anything about selling our product, and we would lose whatever we had paid for seed and tools."

"Who told you that?"

"The boss."

"Anyone else?"

"The *padre*."

How illuminating as to the part of the clergy in molding the minds of the *campesinos* and what a revelation of the plasticity of that human clay!

Contradictions are not lacking. Plenty of priests, especially those of humble origin, support the agrarian movement as far as they can. Fr. Espinosa in Morelos was a well-known Zapatista. Another Morelos priest, Amado Ramírez, was shot by orders of Victoriano Huerta because of his active affiliation with Zapata. At Telpancingo, at Xochimilco, and at Joquiztingo in the State of Mexico, between the valleys of Toluca and Cuernavaca, the cradle of the agrarian movement, the priests are *agraristas*. So is the curate of Xitopontla in Guerrero. And there is evidence that however hostilely the episcopate may view agrarianism it does not subscribe uniformly to all methods of combating it. Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, recognized leader of the Agrarian party, told me this story.

A complaint was received at the headquarters of the Agrarian party from the people of Cocoyoc in the State of Mexico that the local priest had said that all villagers who wanted land were *chivos* (an opprobrious epithet). Soto y Gama went to call on the archbishop of Mexico, Mgr. Mora y del Río, introduced himself politely, told the archbishop that his mother had been a good Catholic, and made his complaint. Three days later the priest was removed.

From the same authority I received the following:

"The bishop of Cuernavaca, arriving at a certain town in Morelos (his diocese) was elaborately welcomed by the villagers with delegations, processions, and feasting. Two days later he was seen in company of one of the *hacendados* considered most oppressive in the pre-Revolutionary days, and therefore profoundly hated. All cordiality to the bishop ceased at once, and when he left town not a single villager came to say farewell."

IV

The church fights lay education Although the Constitution of 1917 forbids ecclesiastical primary schools, a great number were—until 1926—operating more or less clandestinely as private schools In some sections their being parochial was open and undisguised The Government closed its eyes

"Why, if you consider every minute technical violation of law by the clergy so reprehensible, do you tolerate it in many instances, as in the schools?" I asked President Obregón in 1923 "Is there any reason why the clergy should be more respectful of the laws than the authorities sworn to enforce them?"

"Yes, it is illegal," President Obregón admitted, "and we are not unaware of the menace of these Catholic schools whose aim is to inculcate anti-government and anti-revolutionary propaganda But at present there is not money enough nor facilities for the Government to teach all Mexican children It is preferable that they receive any instruction rather than grow up illiterate "

The bishop of a western state said to me

"We are opposed to the so-called lay instruction because it is irreligious The Catholic faith must be the basis of all education "

Another bishop said

"What is taught in the government schools, is atheistic, Protestant, socialistic "

In my conversations with members of the Mexican clergy they commonly applied the terms "socialist," "Protestant," "atheistic," "Bolshevik," and "Masonic" indiscriminately to individuals or doctrines not endorsed by the church

Professor Ignacio Ramírez, in 1923 delegate of the federal ministry of education in Guanajuato, told me that in that year in the town of Dolores-Hidalgo, with a population of nine thousand, a local priest, Fr Medina, had preached the destruction of a new school built with funds subscribed by Mexicans living in the United States The preacher urged his congregation not to "leave one stone on another," cited the "Protestant" origin of the school, and declared that its presence constituted a curse on the community For several nights the teachers slept in the school armed Then in answer to a complaint made by the secretary of education, Vasconcelos, to the *Procurador General* of the republic, a detachment of troops was sent both to protect the school and to arrest the priest The priest fled Professor Ramírez conjectured that he was hiding in the house of the bishop in León

Another effect of the founding of new federal and state schools has been to stimulate competition by the church When the Government established

a night-school for working-men in Guanajuato in 1922, the clergy immediately followed suit This has happened all over Mexico — the church may legally, of course, conduct schools other than primary

The town of Pátzcuaro, an important center in Michoacán, had when I visited it in 1923, four state, one federal night-school, and three religious *primary* schools On Corpus Christi Day one of the state schools attended normally by two hundred children had but three The head teacher, Salvador M Corona, told me that one of the priests had visited all parents, forbidding their sending the children One of the priests of the church of La Colegiata confirmed this, saying that the visit had come as a reminder to all parents of their religious duties on that day On six other religious holidays (outside Christmas vacation) not recognized by state or nation, the clergy caused similar withdrawals — Epiphany, St Joseph, Ascension, Corpus Christi, St Peter and St Paul, Assumption

The teacher in one of the state schools for girls told me of a steady propaganda against the state schools, and that not a few children had left to enter the parochial schools In Pátzcuaro, likewise, a new school founded by a delegate from the Federal Ministry of Education had been entirely abandoned as the result of a rumor that she was a "Protestant"

Secretary Vasconcelos told me that he not only had no objection to parochial schools, but that, given the great shortage of education facilities, he welcomed them What he did object to, he said, was the use of a parochial school to destroy a federal school On several occasions, he said, when the Government had founded a school in a community, a clerical school would follow By means of the influence which the clergy had over the people, they would cause the withdrawal of practically all the pupils from the public school, and this would then close for lack of attendance Shortly afterward the clerical school would also close, leaving the children wholly schoolless A bishop of a central state, whom I questioned on this point, asserted that while it was true that a parochial school had at times been deliberately founded in a village after a public school, to prevent the children from receiving "godless" teaching, that if such a school had been subsequently closed it was due to lack of funds, and not to any desire to leave the children without schooling

Sub-secretary Sáenz told me that in all his experience he had known of only two priests who had been friendly to the village public school "Experience has taught us simply to take this hostility for granted," he said

V

The church has countered the development of labor unions by the formation of *Sindicatos Católicos* that reject the labor provisions of the constitution The regular labor groups regard them as "strike-breaking"

unions, fake organizations under clerical control to serve only the interests of the employer and to cause divisions in the workers' ranks

In 1923 I questioned the bishop of Aguascalientes concerning the Catholic unions in his diocese

"We established them," he said, "to offset the bolshevik labor organizations in Mexico, and have been wholly successful"

"How is one of these *Sindicatos Católicos* organized?" I asked

"A group of workers desires to organize, they ask permission of their bishop" — pointing to himself — "who grants it and sends a priest to organize them My secretary here, Father ——— is the head of the entire organization of Catholic Labor Unions for the State of Aguascalientes"

"After they are organized, what are the activities of these Catholic unions?" I inquired

"Well, mutual cooperation, mutual aid," answered the bishop

"What do they do if they have grievances against the employer?"

The bishop dismissed the question with an emphatic wave of his hand "Here we do not have grievances," he stated

"But assuming an unjust and brutal employer — suppose there were real cause for complaint?"

The bishop evidently considered the possibility remote He shrugged his shoulders wearily "Oh, in that case we should try to resolve the problem along just and Catholic lines"

As a reaction from labor conditions under Díaz, the present Constitution aims to give the workers protection which differs little from that afforded by the legislation in some of our northern states The Government considers the church's formation of Catholic unions obedient to the priest and not to the law, as one of the Protean forms of the church's subtly subversive opposition

Evidence exists that in its obstruction of various phases of the revolutionary social program, the clergy has not hesitated here and there to incite to violence, sometimes with fatal results Such were the disturbances in the mining center, Santa María de la Paz, in San Luis Potosí in July, 1922 After addresses by two Spanish priests, the congregation, shouting "Long live the Virgin of Guadalupe!" rushed from the church and stoned and beat to death two representatives of the Mexican Federation of Labor, crying "Death to the Protestants!" A store owned by a labor sympathizer was sacked by the mob composed four fifths of women, and several other labor representatives sought as "Protestants" escaped serious consequences because they could not be located The priests fled to the capital of the state in an automobile and disappeared [1]

[1] The official reports of the event were shown me in 1923 by Governor Rafael Nieto of San Luis Potosí, and are in the state's archives They were reproduced in the local newspaper "Acción" July 11, 12, 13, 1923

VI

The Mexican clergy complains bitterly not merely against the recent restrictions laid on their cult but harks back to the Reform Laws Said a bishop of a Central state in 1923

"We regard the Reform Laws which deprived us of our property as nothing but robbery The church cannot accept their provisions, no matter if three quarters of a century have passed "

More striking was the same prelate's attitude on freedom of worship, the lack of which is the church's chief grievance, said he

"I do not believe in freedom of worship here In a country like the United States where there are several religions, I believe in freedom for each of them Here there should be but one religion and that should be the state religion as in Spain "

The clause which most offends the church is that permitting state legislatures to determine the number of ministers of each creed Up to the end of 1925 it had been applied in very few cases In Yucatán the limit was sixteen, this number being arbitrarily chosen to equal the number of deputies In Durango in 1923 in consequence of the clergy's anti-agrarian activities, the local congress fixed the number at twenty-five There was much protest, some spontaneous, some fomented, and the law was never enacted This performance was typical of the alternate blinking and fist-shaking practiced by the authorities

The bishop of a large eastern state outlined the religious situation there in June 1923 as follows

" In this state there is virtually no persecution There have been two cases in which a municipal president interfered with priests One was a Spaniard and was ordered to leave on the ground that he had interfered in politics, but I have arranged to have him restored to that parish In another case where a priest was interfered with, I knew he was very much beloved and ordered him withdrawn The people then made such a protest that he was restored Another case was when an attempt was made to drive out the nuns who are the nurses at the hospital here, but the Damas Católicas got busy and had the nuns put back

"We have only a hundred and one priests in forty-two parishes, and as twenty-five of these are rather old and infirm, and half of the remainder are needed in the capital for the work of the bishopric, it leaves very few when you consider that there are six hundred thousand in the state and diocese That is why we have to have foreigners Of these, we now have six, one Italian, and five Spaniards This is forbidden by the constitution, but is nevertheless not illegal because that article of the constitution has not yet been 'reglamented '

"There is little danger that it will be here, or that there will be any per-

secution of the clergy, or any limitation or licensing of the priests as was attempted in Durango The reason is that we have a referendum law which allows the people to vote on any act of the legislature, and I should go out and tell my faithful to vote against such a law, and as they are in a majority it would never pass

"The explanation for our having so few priests is that during the Revolution the seminaries were closed We reopened one two years ago which now has seventy-eight students The difficulty is that the course is eleven years, and although in an emergency we shorten it to ten years, the new priests will not be available for some time

"As for Catholic instruction, we have about eight hundred and seventy children actually in Catholic schools, and several hundred in schools which while technically private really give Catholic instruction

"Our great difficulty is that the sword of Damocles is constantly hanging over our heads We never know what is going to happen next, and it is the constitution and the fundamental law which creates this situation Both are bad and should be abolished "

The bishop of a Gulf diocese told me in the spring of 1925 that there were nuns in his bishopric disguised in civilian garb, and that he had obtained special permission from the pope to have them so clad in view of the conditions in Mexico

VII

The noisiest incident in the impasse between church and state between the violence and exiles of 1914–17 and the events of 1926 was the expulsion of the apostolic delegate, Archbishop Filippi, by the Obregón Government On January 13, 1923, the Mexican public was astounded by the news that Article 33 would be applied to the Vatican s representative

Two days previous, after weeks of preparation, the cornerstone of a monument to "Christ, King of Mexico," had been laid on the summit of a lofty peak, the Cerro del Cubilete, in Guanajuato, approximately the geographical center of the country The ceremonies were conducted with great pomp An elaborate procession bearing banners, images of saints, crucifixes, and lighted candles wound up the mountain On its slopes the way of the cross was reenacted, a cross being erected for each station Four archbishops and eight bishops clad in their episcopal robes approached the summit on palfreys The papal delegate presided

"Not even when the Virgin of Guadalupe, patron saint of the Mexicans, was crowned," declared "Excelsior," generally considered the clerical organ, "has the republic witnessed more solemn and imposing ceremonies "

Fifty thousand attended, mostly humble folk, many of whom made the pilgrimage from distant parts of the republic, spending the night before

around camp-fires in the neighboring hills As the procession filed up the mountain

* * * old men, women, and children, knelt and kissed the ground over which it had passed * * *

After the cornerstone had been laid and blessed, the apostolic delegate announced that His Holiness, the Pope, granted indulgences to all the faithful who had attended the ceremony The multitude then burst forth in jubilant cheers for Christ, King, the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Supreme Pontiff, the apostolic delegate, and the bishop of León [in whose diocese the ceremonies were held]

Meanwhile, in the surrounding hills, the believers entoned sacred chants, threw firecrackers into the air, while native instruments played joyful tunes

At eleven o'clock * * * the bishop of San Luis Potosí made an address explaining the far-reaching importance of the ceremony crowning Christ as King of Mexico * * * announcing * * * that the image of Christ on one of the highest mountains in Mexico would guard and watch over all Mexicans, and touching as He did the clouds, would defy the tempest and the lightning even as he defied the Jews who condemned him to death [1]

In decreeing Monseñor Filippi's expulsion the authorities charged violation of the constitutional prohibition against acts of public worship outside of churches — *i e*, religious processions

The incident disclosed the strategy beneath the contemporary ecclesiastico-civil struggle In the Government's view the Cubilete was the culmination of an elaborate campaign to dominate the minds of the people Instead of being merely symbolic, "Christ, King of Mexico," was to be erected in the popular psychology as the supreme power in the land Armed with this tremendous sanction, the clergy, His representatives, could more effectively combat the state's policies

For months the adobe huts in every Central Mexican village where the *gente está muy fanátizada*, had been plastered with "Viva Cristo Rey!" and "Viva el Papa!" placards When the expulsion was announced, yellow and white bunting, the papal colors, blossomed on Mexico City homes — obviously not a spontaneous gesture Its purpose was to display the strength of the clerical support The conflict frequently skirts the psychological fourth dimension

VIII

In July, 1923, the newspapers published an acrimonious exchange of letters between Governor Zuno of Jalisco and Archbishop Orozco y Jiménez of Guadalajara The governor had summoned several priests to a conference In replying to an inquiry from me he gave his motives as follows

"The curate of San Francisco de Asís, Francisco Angulo, is fond of mixing in politics and has at his disposal a group of retainers armed with carbines

[1] José V Soriano, special correspondent in "Excelsior," January 12, 1923

and pistols Such groups are prejudicial to public order, because with their politico-religious concepts, they are extremely hot-headed, and frequently something happens — as happened with this group — when the owner of a small farm near that village was riddled with bullets So I called the priest in conference to show him what damage he was doing He ignored my first and second requests, but at last he came He left our interview convinced by my reasoning, and thanked me for the entirely correct manner in which I dealt with him

"Another priest, called Sedano, from the hamlet of Santa María de Guadalupe * * * came and agreed with me that he should abstain from insulting the authorities from the pulpit as he has been He too was won over — and promised to behave

"The priests of Tepatitlán and Pegueros were summoned because they had been working against the government schools They answered my call and promised to obey me

"The priest of Jocotepec, who treats the natives as did the Spanish conquerors, was disposing of certain gold and silver objects of the church, and was summoned to get him to restore these objects and to see if he could not be induced to treat the people more kindly This priest is called José María Araiza He did not respond to my call, and at present is in hiding, his parish being abandoned The federal judicial authorities have been notified of his offense

"I consider attacks on religion as utterly inexcusable I hold that every citizen has the right to worship in whatever faith he desires I called these various priests not because of anti-Catholic bias, but because they were disturbers of the public order, and were injuring the most important functions of our government — such as public education The very fact of my discussing their acts with them instead of prosecuting them and having them arrested as I could have in conformity with the law, indicates the friendliness of my attitude"

On July 18 the archbishop wrote the governor denying the latter's right to interfere in clerical matters, saying that any attempt by the state government to enforce compliance

> would endanger the public order, because the slightest indication on the part of the priest would suffice to bring about an uprising against the unwarranted order [1]

The governor replied to this threat that he would hold the archbishop

> responsible for any "armed religious uprising" and shall continue to call those individuals who violate the law * * * as I have done in the case of those priests who obstruct the educational work of the Government, mix in politics, insult the

[1] Published in "Excelsior," July 24, 1923

civil authorities, interfere in the agrarian question or provoke differences among the people of Jalisco on social questions [1]

The case of La Piedad, a stock company formed in 1902 under the auspices of the archbishop of Puebla clandestinely to acquire property for the church, indicates that the hierarchy feel justified in deliberately violating the laws of the land Porfirio Díaz connived at it But in 1921, the property of this organization, consisting of ninety-two houses in the city of Puebla, nine *haciendas* in the state, and fifty-nine mortgages for a total of $616,282, passed into the possession of the nation [2]

What it regarded as the persistent obstructionism of the Roman Catholic Church led the Government to view with a friendly eye a feeble attempt to establish in 1925 a schismatic "Mexican Catholic Church" The distinguishing features of this cult, besides independence from Rome, aimed at certain obvious clerical abuses They were

The holy sacraments should be administered without compensation * * * The faithful are exempt from the payment of tithes and first-fruits

Ecclesiastical celibacy is suppressed as immoral and contrary to nature, the priest should establish his own home, which will be respected, as he will respect the hearth of others

The clergy of the Mexican Church does not aspire to temporal and spiritual dominion over its communicants

Our God is a perfect being, without anger and revengefulness Thus He is incapable of condemning for all eternity the man made in his image Punishment is proportionate to the sin committed

The *cismáticos* secured several churches from the Government and are now functioning in them But there is no future whatever for the sect The cultured Catholic with whom the social aspects of his religious affiliation weigh, rejects the schism with horror The Indian mass is unmoved and keeps on with its present worship A few of those who are religiously inclined but have been repelled by the contemplation of abuses within the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico, have drifted into the schism But most of those who have left the mother church are wholly indifferent The offspring, never vigorous or important, is destined for an early demise

In the Eucharistic Congress in Mexico in 1924 the bishop of Huejutla, José de Jesús Manrique y Zárate, denounced the Constitution of 1857, the Reform Laws, and the recent social movement as "national sins" In April, 1925, in a pastoral letter, after affirming that the Reform Laws clashed with the divine law which says "thou shalt not steal," he ordered that

No priest of my diocese shall give the Government any plans, inventories, or any data concerning the church in his charge

[1] *Idem*
[2] Semanario Judicial de la Federación, V Epoca, Tomo VIII, No 12, 1096–1131

No priest shall submit to the laws, orders or dispositions of the civil government, either those now in effect, or which may be promulgated in future, which deal with ecclesiastical matters, or contravene the Divine Right, or the positive or natural holy laws of the church [1]

The letter concluded with an exhortation to the faithful and the clergy to "fight the battle of the Lord by ordinary as well as extraordinary means" [2]

[1] Published in "Excelsior," May 6, 1925
[2] *Idem*



V THE MEXICAN RELIGION

I

Protest against the limitations imposed on the church in Mexico is usually coupled with the assertion that 99 per cent of the Mexican people are Catholics The census of 1910 confirms it 15,115,343 against 82,167 professing all other creeds

This naturally raises the question why this overwhelming majority has permitted what the clergy decries as persecution and, unquestionably, at times is so

The answer to this apparent paradox is simple

The Mexican people are not Catholics

Of the fifteen million *nominal* Catholics who inhabit Mexico, at most two millions are Catholics in the sense accepted in the United States, an equal or larger number are agnostic or indifferent, and the remainder while observing in their worship some of the outward form of Roman Catholicism are in reality pagans

Here again the explanation lies in the past

Cortés's conquest was greatly facilitated by the Aztecs' belief that the Spaniards were Gods According to the tradition, the Aztec deity, Quetzalcoatl, upon setting out to sea long before, had foretold that his brothers, men with white skins and beards, would return to rule the land The newcomers were regarded as divine embodiments of that prophecy [1]

Victory achieved, baptism was carried out wholesale Father Motolinía thus described the process

* * * in the five days that I was in that monastery another priest and I baptized by count fourteen thousand two hundred and some odd, anointing all with holy oils, which was no small task for us [2]

In that period a single priest would in one day baptize four, five, and six thousand, and in Xochimilco in one day two priests more than fifteen thousand [3]

Motolinía was not the only great baptizer In the church of Santa María Atlihuitzian, in Tlaxcala, the legend under the portrait of Father Juan

[1] Torquemada, Monarquía Indiana, Lib IV, cap vi Lorenzana, Hist de Nueva España * * * *por* * * * Hernán Cortés, p 81, 97 Sahagun, Hist de las Cosas de Nueva España, Lib XII, caps ii, iv

[2] Benavente Motolinía, Hist de los Indios de la Nueva España, Trat II, cap iii

[3] *Idem*, Trat III, cap iii

Díaz, records that he was "first curate of Athihuitzian, first pastor of the Señoría of Tlaxcala, first apostle of the Mexican empire * * * confessor of Hernán Cortés * * * celebrated the first mass in these parts * * * baptizing, with two others of the clergy, one million one hundred thousand souls "[1]

Fray Motolinía estimated in 1536 that there had been baptized "in fifteen years, more than nine million souls "[2]

Needless to say, the Indians understood nothing of the religion to which they were thus converted Cortés, whose ruthless arm they had learned to fear, commanded them to obey the monks The first preachments to indoctrinate the natives consisted solely of gestures — "pointing to the sky to show there was God, and dropping the eyes to the ground to indicate Hell "[3] After that, according to Fr Torquemada, they were "converted and received baptism "[4] The Indians viewed this painless and diverting ceremony as a necessary consequence of defeat The old Gods had been vanquished — obviously one had to bow to the new Furthermore, the Indians found in the earlier missionaries their sole shield against the *encomenderos* That baptism — the protection of the new deities — would gain them some relief from cruelty, was the natives' hope

Or it was fear Wrote Father Alegre, the historiographer of the Company of Jesus in Mexico

> Fear of punishment rather than desire that their children shall be Christians makes the Indians bring them to baptism * * * It is common practice for a woman, no sooner out of the church in which her child has been baptized to rush at all speed to her hut, and there placing her mouth against that of the infant, to suck with all diligence, to extract the salt put there in the baptism Then she washes the child's head changing the water six or seven times, with which she feels she has removed every trace and virtue of Christianity[5]

Another reason for the ease of conversion on so great a scale lay in the many analogies between the old and new creeds The Aztecs had been submissive to their hierarchy They were imbued with a superstitious fear of these representatives of some supernatural power that could do great harm if not sufficiently propitiated The organization of the clergies was not dissimilar According to the Jesuit historian, Clavigero, below the two supreme priests who were the oracles the kings consulted, was the high priest, Mexicoteohuatzin

> His duty was to watch over the observance of rites and ceremonies and the conduct of priests who were at the head of seminaries, and to punish delinquent ministers To execute such extensive functions he had two assistants or vicars * * *

[1] Copied personally from the painting in 1927
[2] Benavente Motolinía, *op cit* Frat III cap III
[3] Torquemada, *op cit* Lib XV, cap XIII
[4] *Idem*
[5] Alegre, Hist de la Compañía en Nueva España vol I, p 335-6

In each quarter of the city, and the same may be said of the other cities, there was a prominent priest, who was, as it were, the parish priest of that district, upon whom devolved the direction of all the feasts and other religious ceremonies

The income of the great temple in Mexico, as of the others * * * was considerable Each had its own properties and even workers to cultivate them From these estates came everything for the maintenance of the priests * * * Those who labored on these *haciendas* considered themselves very fortunate to be able to contribute their toil to the worship of the Gods and the support of their ministers [1]

The same chronicler comments on "the infinite number of contributions which the people brought spontaneously [to the priests] composed in most part of victuals — the first-fruits which they offered for timely rains and for other celestial benefits " [2]

Many details of the old and new faith were curiously alike The native rituals included the use of incense, sacred ointments, holy water, fasting, self-castigation for sins, confession, and charms

INCENSE Writes Father Sahagun

The poor offered an incense which they called *copalxalli* * * * and the very poor a ground herb called *yauhtli* [3]

HOLY OILS AND HOLY WATER Writes Father Clavijero

Besides the ordinary ointments they used another extraordinary one * * * They offered this diabolic confection to their Gods in small vases and thereupon anointed their whole body with it * * * They called this unguent *teopatli* which means, divine medicament, and they believed it efficacious against all kinds of illnesses * * * They used the *teopatli* also for incantations and in other superstitious and ridiculous ceremonies, together with a certain water which they blessed in their own way [4]

PENITENCE AND FASTING

They were lavish with their own blood, shedding not a little to appease the infernal thirst of their Gods One cannot hear without blenching of the penitences which they inflicted on themselves, either in expiation of their sins, or to carry out worthily their religious festivals They maltreated their flesh as if insensible to pain * * * Some priests called *tlamacazqui* drew their own blood almost daily They punctured their bodies with the sharp spines of the *maguey* * * *

Besides these and other acts of rigor, fasting and watching were common among the Mexicans * * * The fasting consisted of abstention from meat and wine, and of eating but once daily [5]

CONFESSION Writes Father José Antonio Gay

In Cajonos, a village of the Sierra, the Indians were surprised in the act of carrying out a ceremony of ancient use, which they called "expiatory of sins" although it should better be called "expiatory sacrifice for sins" * * * The

[1] Clavigero Hist Antigua de Mexico, Libro VI
[2] *Idem*
[3] Sahagun, *op cit*, Lib IV cap xxv
[4] Clavigero, *op cit* Libro VI
[5] *Idem*

people presented themselves on a given day before their priests Prostrate at the feet of their ministers, they declared that they came to beseech their God's pity and forgiveness for the sins committed during the year, presenting to the priest a platter made of herbs and branches, wet with blood drawn from their veins The priest took the platter in his hands and offered it to the idol asking forgiveness for the sins of his servants Then turning to the people said "Your sins are wiped out and you may rejoice and give yourselves over to pleasure" [1]

Father Sahagun gives a very full account of the Aztec confessional [2] The penitent burned some *copalli*, agreed to tell the whole truth, confessed his sins, and implored forgiveness The priest thereupon imposed certain penitences — chiefly mortification of the flesh and fasting — "having done which things," he concluded to the penitent, "your sins will be forgiven" Under the Aztec code, the remission included temporal punishment as well, which Father Sahagun relates, accounts for the eagerness with which the Indians unburdened themselves to their new confessors

CHARMS, AMULETS, SCAPULARIES Writes Father Durán

They wore talismans around their necks, generally small idols as a security against evil [3]

There were many other resemblances

The Aztecs used bells during certain religious ceremonies [4] Ashes were rubbed onto a part of the body on occasions, but instead of being Ash Wednesday and on the forehead, it was on the knee of the child shortly after birth [5] At certain religious ceremonies a group of elderly attendants, *quaquacuiltin*, wore their hair shaved except for a round spot on the center of the head, where they allowed hair to grow long — an inverted tonsure [6]

Wrote the Franciscan, Father Vetancurt, the chronicler of the province of the holy gospel in Mexico

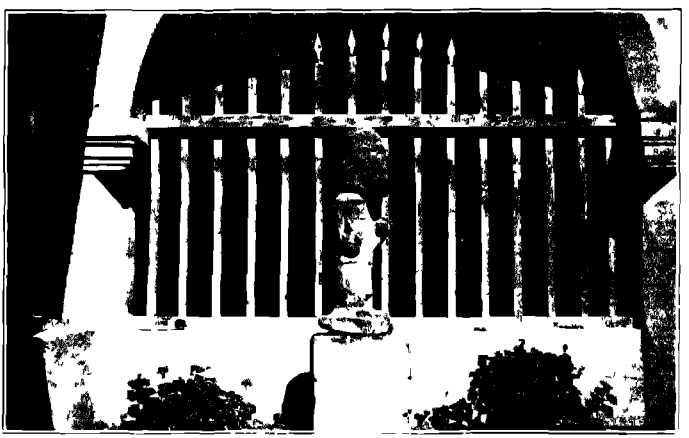
The Indians practice many ceremonies similar to those ordered by the evangelic law of Christ The conversion of the natives was facilitated because the devil introduced things which he stole from our evangelic law such as their method of communion, baptism, confession and adoration, which despite the enemy served that they received in truth what they had formerly received in falsehood [7]

The analogies were not confined to ceremonials but extended to the creed Wrote Torquemada, provincial of the Order of St Francis

Much of the new doctrine these idolatrous Indians already believed * * * so that in the first conversations which our priests had with their priests these did not make much objection [8]

[1] Gay Hist de Oaxaca, vol I cap vi [2] Sahagun *op cit* Lib I cap xii
[3] Durán Hist de las Indias de Nueva España vol II, cap lxxxii Bancroft, Native Races, vol II p 317
[4] Sahagun *op cit* vol II cap xxv xxxv
[5] Vetancurt, Teatro Mexicano, vol I trat 3, cap viii
[6] Sahagun *op cit* vol II cap xv
[7] Vetancurt, *op cit*, vol I, 3, cap viii [8] Torquemada, *op cit*, vol XV cap xiii





(Photos by the author—Fox.)

Idol procured by Hale, the rain god in the cloister of the Church of the Virgin of the Assumption of Malacatepec in the village of Milpa Alta in the Federal District twenty miles from the capital. (Above) the church. (Below) corner of the cloister showing the idol and geranium plants at its base.



(*Photo by the author, Dec. 12, 1967.*)

FEATHERED HEAD-DRESSES AND STANDARDS OF SAINTS

One of the dances at Villa de Guadalupe Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe performed annually on Guadalupe Day, the festival of Mexico's Virgin

And according to Father Diego Durán, one of the earlier chroniclers, the celebration "and mixture" by the natives at one and the same time "of the festivals of our God and the saints * * * with those of their idols," was due to the fact that "our movable feasts and their oldest and most important feasts often fall on the same day and at other times very close to one another" [1]

The Aztecs believed in three states in the life hereafter, corresponding to hell, purgatory, and heaven, reserved respectively for the wicked, for those who died of (certain) diseases, and those who perished at the hands of the enemy [2]

The native mythology of the creation and virgin birth were closely analogous to the new-comers'

Their greatest God Tonacatecotle * * * when it appeared good to him breathed and divided the waters of the heavens and the earth which were at first all confused together and disposed them as they are now [3]

Their supreme deity * * * Tonacatecotle * * * breathed and begot Quetzalcoatl, not by connection with a woman, but by his breath alone [4] * * *

The Aztecs had a species of canonization — women who died in childbirth were *ipso facto* sainted [5] The Holy Ghost represented as a dove was identified with the sacred eagle of the Aztecs [6] Feasts in honor of Huitzilopochtli, the war god, and of Tlaloc, the rain god, were preceded by a fast of forty days,[7] an Aztec Lent

Writes Frazer

Thus at the festival called Texcatl, the greatest festival of the Mexican year, a young man was annually sacrificed in the character of Tezcatlipoca, "the God of Gods," after having been maintained and worshipped as that great deity in person for a whole year According to the old Franciscan monk, Sahagun, our best authority on the Aztec religion, the sacrifice of the human God fell at Easter or a few days later, so that, if he is right, it would correspond in date as well as in character to the Christian festival of the death and resurrection of the Redeemer [8]

In the religions of the Old World vicarious sacrifice had fifteen hundred years before replaced tangible offerings Finally the pomp and glitter, music [9] and warmth of the Catholic ceremonies appealed to the color-loving Indian They were free, also, from the horrors of human sacrifice

[1] Durán *op cit*, vol II, cap lxxx
[2] Sahagun, *op cit*, vol III App cap i ii iii
[3] Kingsborough, Codex Vaticanus Explanation of, in Antiquities of Mexico vol VI, plate XVII
[4] *Idem*, plate XLI
[5] Sahagun, *op cit*, vol I, cap x, vol II, cap xiv
[6] Chevalier, Le Mexique Ancien et Moderne p 280
[7] Sahagun, *op cit*, vol II, cap xv, II, App
[8] Frazer, The Golden Bough, Part VI ch vii, p 276
[9] "The natives are much given to music and the religious who hear their confessions tell us that they are converted more by the music than by the preachments" wrote the first bishop of Mexico to Emperor Charles V in 1540 Icazbalceta, Don Fray Juan de Zumarraga, App 137

The tenets of the new faith were presented to the Indians either in Spanish, a language foreign to them, or in their own tongue inadequately acquired by the missionaries, which lacked, moreover, many words to express the abstract ideas of Catholicism It was natural that the Indians should absorb the forms of that faith and little else Their own creed had been based on propitiation In return for a great variety of ceremonies, sacrifices, offerings, and penances, they sought to secure the favor and to appease the wrath of a multitude of deities who presided over the important factors in their daily life — rain for the crops, disease or death, invasion by the enemy All these possibilities of good or ill fortune were embodied in manifestations of nature, the sun, the rain, the stars, the volcanoes, animals, and materialized also in idols of stone, clay, or obsidian To the Indians the Catholic saints were merely a new set of divinities — more powerful than their own — whom they must now worship and propitiate Christianity to them was, as their own religion had been, a species of polytheism It has been so ever since

The image of the warrior Santiago borne by the Spaniards in battle, the Indians assumed to be the deity, or one of the deities, who had demonstrated his superiority to their own They adopted and worshiped him Wrote Fr Motolinía

> The offerings to the idols were by a change of address brought to the Catholic temples, and the Franciscan missionaries took them for manifestations of Christian fervor, when they were merely following the trail of their old superstitions, for even as the Indians impoverished themselves to lay offerings before their idols in the days of their idolatry, so afterward in the religious ceremonies with Catholic priests, they followed the same custom [1]

The early chroniclers comment vigorously on the fervor of the native idolatry Father Motolinía noted that

> In each village they had an idol or demon whom they considered and prayed to as their advocate, and this they honored and bedecked with many jewels and clothes, and everything good they offered to it [2]

And Bernal Díaz, in his chapter entitled, "How the Indians had many sacrifices and infamies and how we took them away and imposed holy things of sound doctrine," relates

> Their shrines were so many — cursed be they! — that they appeared to me like ours in Castile, and just as in each of our cities we have our holy churches, chapels, hermitages, and road-shrines, so in New Spain they had their houses of idols, filled with demons and diabolic figures, and besides these each Indian man and woman had two altars * * * [3]

The Catholic brothers destroyed these images wherever they could lay hands on them They pulled down the *teocallis*, the Aztec "houses of God"

[1] Benavente Motolinía, *op cit*, Trat I cap xiv [2] *Idem*, Trat III cap xi
[3] Díaz del Castillo, La Conquista de Nueva España, vol IV, cap ccvii

To facilitate the construction of churches as well as to symbolize the fact that the religion of Christ was erected on the ruin of idolatry, they used the stones of the ancient temples as foundations of the new

But the old faith was deep-rooted In Tlaxcala, when the priests began to throw down idols and to erect crucifixes in their stead, they found

> the image of Christ crucified and his blessed mother placed between idols * * * the fact being that as they had a hundred idols they were willing to have a hundred and one * * * Then it became clear that they had some images on their altars together with their demons and idols, and elsewhere with the image showing and the idol hidden — behind hangings, or on the other side of the wall, or inside the altar * * *[1]

II

In 1531, a decade after the Conquest, and three years after the creation of the bishopric of Mexico City, the Virgin of Guadalupe, an *Indian* virgin, came into being According to the legend, a humble native, christened Juan Diego, on his way to receive instruction in Christian doctrine, was passing a rocky hill, when the Holy Virgin suddenly appeared before him She bade him go at once to tell the bishop, Juan Zumárraga, that she desired a place of worship erected there in her honor The next day at the same spot the Virgin again appeared to Diego, and asking the result of her commission, learned that he had been unable to secure an audience with the bishop

"Return," commanded the apparition, "and say that it is the Virgin Mary, mother of God, who sends thee"

But the prelate bade the Indian secure some token of the divine will And for the third time — on the twelfth of December — the Virgin appeared and hearing of the bishop's doubts, commanded Diego to climb the rocky hill of Tepeyac and pluck the roses growing there He obeyed, though well knowing that the hilltop was barren, and found the roses, which he plucked and brought to the Virgin Mary She threw them into his cloak telling him to bear them as credentials of his mission When the Indian returned to the presence of the bishop and unfolded his cloak, lo and behold! There was the image of the Virgin miraculously stamped upon it

The bishop promptly caused the image to be conveyed in solemn procession, and housed it in the beautiful Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe which he built on the scene of the miracle The image above the high altar, visible to all since that day, is of a gentle-faced Indian maiden from whom radiate rays of golden light The Catholic Church officially endorses the story of the Virgin of Guadalupe She has become Mexico's patron saint[2] December twelfth is a holy day throughout Mexico and thousands of Indians

[1] Motolinía, *op cit*, Trat I, cap II

[2] By decree of Pope Benedict XIV Catholic Encyclopedia, vol VII, p 44

from all parts make an annual pilgrimage to the shrine The waters of an adjacent well which burst from the ground where the Virgin stood, are also credited with miraculous healing powers

Before the Conquest stood on the site of this church the temple of Tonantzin, patron of the tribe of Totonoqui Indians, and their Goddess of the Earth and Corn This was an important deity worshiped elsewhere by the Aztecs under the names of Centeotl, Tzinteotl, Xilonen [1]

One cannot but admire the genius of the first bishop of Mexico — if the idea was his — in thus bringing to his work of conversion the psychological appeal produced by a native deity [2]

Wrote Father Sahagun nearly fifty years later

> One [of their places of worship] is on a little hill they called Tepeyac, and now named Our Lady of Guadalupe In that place they had a temple dedicated to the mother of the Gods, whom they called Tonantzin, which means "our mother" * * * Thither they came from far distant regions * * * men women, boys, and girls and brought many offerings * * * There were great gatherings and all said, "Let us go to the festival of Tonantzin" Now the church of Our Lady of Guadalupe is built there * * * and they still come to visit that Tonantzin from afar, as of old, a devotion which is suspicious because in all parts of the country there are many churches of Our Lady, and they do not go to them, but continue to come from afar to their Tonantzin as formerly [3]

As it was then, so it is to-day, four centuries after the Conquest I have often asked Indians in the Mesa Central who Tonantzin is, and received the answer, "Es la virgen" Not only were the Christian churches built over the ruins of the *teocallis*, or as at Tizatlán and Cholula, directly on top of the ancient pyramids, but every shrine to an Aztec God became the shrine not to the Father of Mankind, not to the Son of Man, but to a particular Christ or to a particular saint, who was merely substituted for the deity of the chase, of fishing, of fire, of trade

In Morelos the Señor de Chalma replaced Ostotocteotl, the "God of the Caves," and the crucifix erected in the grotto where the Augustinian fathers shattered the idol, is worshiped as of old [4] Yearly, as the rainy season is due and the Indians eagerly await the planting time, a metamorphosed "Tlaloc," the rain God, is again invoked, but the saint that is borne every May in solemn procession from its shrine at San Bartolo Naucálpam, near

[1] Clavigero Hist Antigua de México, vol I Libro VI

[2] The Catholic scholar Joaquín García Icazbalceta, in a careful study prepared at the request of Archbishop Labastida of Mexico City in 1883, reached the conclusion that "the apparition of the most sainted virgin in 1531 and the miraculous painting on the cloak of Juan Diego is an invention born much later" Carta Acerca del Origen de la Imagen de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de México Para 32

[3] Sahagun *op cit*, Lib XI, cap xii

[4] The crucifix is supposed to have erected itself casting down the idol Sardo, Relación Histórica * * * de la Portentosa Imagen de Nuestro Señor * * * Aparecida en una de las Cuevas de Miguel de Chalma p 19

the capital, to the cathedral of Mexico City is the eighteen-inch Virgen de los Remedios, a Spanish patroness [1]

The favorite shrines and saints to-day are those descended from the pre-Catholic favorites, whose history or present depiction link them most closely with indigenous concepts The profusion of churches in the village of Cholula, and the fervor of its inhabitants, "whose devotion and almsgiving" Mendieta recorded seventy-five years after their conversion, "cannot be exaggerated," [2] logically follows Cholula's being, before the Conquest, "what Mecca is to the Mahometans or Jerusalem among Christians * * * the Holy City of Anáhuac" [3] The popular Virgin of the Angels, "after the Virgin of Guadalupe one of the most venerated" by the Mexican people, has "the physiognomy of an essentially Mexican maiden" [4] The image of Santiago of Tlaltelolco in the federal district,

> * * * the true Indian God, is of markedly indigenous type, dark, slight beard, prominent cheek bones, nose aquiline and broad, black eyes slightly oblique, straight and disordered hair, a sarcastic and arrogant mouth, coarse cotton cloth shirt fastened with a string at the throat * * * white wide trousers pulled high, native sandals, broad-brimmed palm sombrero turned up in front with a leather band * * * He is mounted on a spirited horse, of the breed of our Southland, and carries a horn-handled machete, likewise characteristic of that region In short, he is the type of native guerrilla warrior of my mountains * * * [5]

Not merely the virgin and saints, but Christ himself, became Indianized In the Gulf region around southern Vera Cruz and Tabasco the Aztecs worshiped a god named *Tatlilton*, which meant "the black one" In Vera Cruz and in Tabasco several noted images of Christ are dark One, known as the Señor del Buen Viaje, I have seen in the church of that name in the port of Vera Cruz Another is worshiped in San Juan Bautista as El Señor de Esquipulas [6] Tabasco also has a famous brown Santo Cristo de Astapa in the village of that name, whom the popular legend credits with suddenly appearing in the midst of a fight between pirates and *tabasqueños*, and putting the invaders to headlong flight [7] The recumbent Señor de la Misericordia in St Francis's in Tlaxcala, the first church constructed on the American continent, is coffee-colored

In Tlacotepec, in Puebla, the local black Christ is deemed especially miraculous Three quarters of a century after the first conversions, according to the accepted legend, the devil tempted the Indians, who on the pretext

[1] See Mexico City newspapers any May prior to 1926
[2] Mendieta, Historia Eclesiástica Indiana Lib IV, cap xvii
[3] Prescott, Conquest of Mexico Book III ch vi
Bandelier thinks that Cholula was not "a specially sacred city" (The Gilded Man, p 261) but Saville refers to "the sacerdotal city of Cholula" (Anonymous Conqueror p 89)
[4] Obregón Mexico Viejo cap xviii
[5] Altamirano, Paisajes y Leyendas, Tradiciones y Costumbres de México, cap iii
[6] Mestre Ghigliazza Documentos y Datos Para la Hist de Tabasco, vol II, p 97
[7] Santa-Anna, Tradiciones y Leyendas Tabasqueñas, p 32–5

that Christ was white and not like them began to return to their ancient practices Then one Sunday at the benediction, "the faithful clearly saw the Holy Christ of Tlacotepec had darkened in color although at the beginning of the mass He had been white" [1]

In Mexico, Nuestro Señor del Veneno in the church of Porta Coeli is supposed to have turned jet black to warn an archbishop, who was in the habit of kissing the crucifix's feet daily, when some of his enemies had placed poison there Many are the dark Christs and virgins scattered throughout Mexico and each has its tale.

III

The reason for these somber images and similar manifestations is that the Indian is to-day idolatrous and desires the idol-saint he prays to made either in his own image or what he conceives to be the proper form "Horrible, ugly, deformed," were the adjectives applied to the pre-Catholic idols by an early clerical chronicler [2] "The crucifixes in the Indian churches are repulsive," says the Catholic Encyclopedia, "and only in rare instances have the priests succeeded in improving or changing these images" [3]

In the village of San Antonio Calpulalpam, on the outskirts of Mexico City, there is a Saint Anthony, a patron of the village, of whom the historian Fernández del Castillo relates the following

It is so badly made as to be monstrous, one of those saints which inspire laughter or loathing, never respect or devotion A virtuous lady, owner of an *hacienda* on the edge of the pueblo, attempted to remove this blot and thought of donating a good sculpture in its place She was rich enough to do this, but thought the gift would be more successful if made jointly by all the *hacendados* of the neighborhood Her plan was accepted The image was installed with a big celebration, and, in order that the Indians might come to love it more, a big feast was given for all the near-by *hacienda* workers, with barbecue, *pulque*, etc

When St Anthony's day came, in order to make the celebration more successful, all the *hacendados* and their families came, but hardly any Indians They asked for permission to have their celebration on the eighth day after and then scarce an Indian was missing Later it was learned that they had not gone to the celebration of the first St Anthony because he was rich, a dude, and a snob, and paid no attention to the Indians nor worked miracles for them, whereas the other saint, whose celebration they did attend, was like them and on equal terms

Since then, the difference between the rich and the poor St Anthony has been maintained, to the first, the Indians pay little attention while for their old image they light candles and cover him with ex-votos [4]

Mr Carleton Beals, who has wandered far and wide in Mexico, recounted to me that when crossing the lonely sierra of Durango on foot he passed an

[1] La Verdadera Relación de los Milagros * * * de Nuestro Señor de Tlacotepec, Anon, p 12
[2] Villavicencio Luz y Método de Confesar Idólatras cap vii
[3] Article on Mexico, Camillus Crivelli, S J vol X p 255
[4] Fernández del Castillo, Apuntes Para la Historia de San Angel, p 187–8

Indian kneeling before a wayside crucifix Presently the native overtook the traveler and related that he had come from his village five miles away to pray

"Have you then no *Cristos* in your pueblo?" asked Mr Beals.

"We have several," replied the Indian "But as there are many people there, those *Cristos* are kept very busy, and I felt my chances of being attended to out here were very much better, for this Christ has almost nothing to do"

Carl Lumholtz thus describes the religious customs of the natives in the town of Tuxpan, Jalisco, in the late nineties

If saint or idol does not answer the prayers of the people they sometimes give him a whipping Once when rain was badly needed they took out of the church the very heavy picture of Jesus, and carried it over the fields for at least eight miles distance, presumably to convince him that they had good reasons for the urgency with which they demanded rain Still no rain came Then they carried the picture of the Virgin Mary around and this time they were rewarded with copious downpours Therefore, they made a feast, serenaded her picture, and did her all possible honor, beautiful offerings were hung around her and the principal men expressed their satisfaction to her But Jesus was considered "no good" [1]

Similarly, the Tulane University expedition into southern Mexico, in 1925, found in the village of Huistan, Chiapas, that the Indians "are accustomed to beat their saint [St Martin] when they have a bad year, and to caress him and anoint him with oil when things go well We were told that he had lost his nose and both ears due to this practice" [2]

IV

Four features conspicuously characterized the old pagan ritual offerings — of human beings, animals, and earth-grown products, flowers, fruits, vegetables, prepared food, the lavish use of flowers, dancing, eating and drinking The missionaries fortunately put an end to the bloody sacrifices of war captives and of the chosen within the tribe The Aztecs would have outgrown this expression of barbarism in time, but every life thus saved should be credited on the scroll of history to the planting of the cross in the New World But the other customs, in varying form and degrees, from pure idolatry to an adaptation of Catholic forms, persist, essentially unchanged

On the Day of the Dead, November 2, all Indian Mexico, besides adorning the crosses in the graveyards with flowers, especially the yellow "death-flower," the Aztec *cempoalxochitl*, places *guajolotes*, the native turkeys cooked in red *mole*, *tamales*, *frijolitos*, hard-boiled eggs, honey in the comb — the favorite food of the departed — on their graves Later, after the dead are supposed to have partaken, the mourners, turned picnickers, consume the

[1] Lumholtz, Unknown Mexico, vol II, p 342 [2] Tribes and Temples, vol II, p 365

provisions "Buy your food for the dead here," sing out the venders who do a thriving business in sizzlingly aromatic staples around every cemetery Traffic in toy skulls, skeletons, coffins, and other lugubrious insignia, is also brisk All Saints' Day in Mexico is a continuation of the ancient worship of Teoyaomiqui or Teomique, Goddess of Death

Dancing, performed *for* each saint and to please him, is to the Indian the important feature of nearly every religious festival These dancers, in the old feather and tinsel adornment, usually with a curious mingling of Christian legend, step to the old rhythmic music, often with reed-grass flute or armadillo conch-shell mandolin among thoroughly modern instruments "It is the command we bring," say the Indians Into the Catholic ritual the natives read their own meanings After a mass at Chalma, Morelos, in 1926, an old Indian told one of the visitors that "the real saint is buried under the altar — the one hanging on the cross is a pilgrim "

On the Friday of Sorrows, amid its paradoxically joyful pagan riot of flowers, the multi-colored beverages, anciently significant in the Aztec spring festival, are supposed to represent the Virgin's tears

The Indians' relation to their deity is wholly material They dance for him and make offerings to him, and expect value in return Instinctively the Indian feels that the Christian God is less interested in him, and his petty troubles In some parts of Mexico, the Catholic white man's God is considered to have a higher rank than the other deities, but to be something of a foreigner [1] Therefore, when rain is delayed, when crops are damaged by drought, hail, or vermin, it is to the particular specialist in the required exorcism that the native turns

Dr Manuel Gamio, internationally known ethnologist, thus describes a ceremony he witnessed in the Sierra of Zongolica in the State of Vera Cruz, inhabited by Popoloca, Mixtec, and Zapoteco Indians, all professing Catholics

> When their maize-fields begin to sprout and give forth young shoots, they consider it indispensable for some aged Indian, possessor of mysterious incantations, to protect the crop from destructive animals, especially the deer, which in the silent moon-lit nights come down from the mountain * * * The lowly native, true priest of his race, hums in the Aztec tongue and in tearful and supplicant tone entreats the Deer God not to graze his children, the deer of the forest, in the sacred corn-field A little later under a great silk-cotton tree which intercepts the light of the moon, a fire is burning, on the live coals are sacrificed birds, scrapings from the horns and hoofs of deer, strips from the plantain tree, and amber-colored grains of copalli (resin) which the dark brown hand of the sorcerer throws on the fire, enveloping himself in fleeting white smoke clouds This at bottom is naught else but the old prayer to the God of the chase, the "heart of the mountain," as the Aztecs called it [2]

[1] Sapper quoted in Tribes and Temples vol II, p 362 [2] Gamio, Forjando Patria, p 160

Of the persistence of idolatry in which even the Catholic substitutions are rejected, Archbishop Gillow of Oaxaca wrote in 1889, as follows

Idolatry is far from disappearing among the inhabitants of Caxonos and surroundings, on the contrary, one can see that it has sustained itself * * * in a concealed and underhand manner avoiding always that the curates, and other truly Catholic people, shall perceive its practices

In the village of Santa María Mixistlán * * * Fr Ortiz coming into the church * * * upon directing his gaze at the high altar saw with great surprise and displeasure an idol at the right hand of an image of Christ crucified, at its left being a sculpture of the Most Holy Virgin, Mother of God He, thereupon, scolded those who accompanied him, charging them with idolatrous acts in the holy house of the Lord But his questions about the idol they answered evasively He ordered it carried without loss of time to the parish house, but as they made no move to obey, transported it in his own arms Seeing that many people gathered at his house, and remained contemplating the idol with profound sorrow and even tenderness, he covered it with a cloth to hide it from their view Among those who visited the house was an old-timer of the place, who approached the idol with much devotion, looked at it with intense sadness, and before the curate could prevent, kissed it almost tearfully, and dashed out at full speed Observing that the parish house had been transformed into a kind of shrine, he judged it necessary to dispose of the idol In order to avoid unpleasant scenes, and fearing that he would be prevented from carrying away the idol, and his person possibly the object of violence, by the natives, he ordered that very night that a servant in strict secrecy should carry the idol to the village of Yalalag The following day many visited the parish house looking about dissimulatingly, though the object of their search was very plain * * * After several days the justices and principal men of Mixistlán came to see the priest, most urgently pleading for their idol, and offering whatever he might ask for its return He reproached them with their idolatry and other abominations, but did not succeed in convincing them They returned again for the same purpose a little later, complaining that the sky was denying them rain, and that sickness was decimating them, because, according to them, they had permitted the saint to be taken away from the village He tried again but failed to make any impression upon them, and they continued to send envoys to buy back their idol He sought fuller information about the idol, but could only learn that the people of Mixistlán worshiped it most highly, lighting candles for it, and making it offerings [1]

The archbishop goes on to relate other evidence of idolatry It could be multiplied indefinitely [2] I can adduce some of my own

In the cloister of the Church of the Virgen de la Asunción de Malacatepec in Milpa Alta, twenty miles from the capital, a stone idol has stood on its pedestal for years At its base flowers bloom In the cloister *patio* is a well, one of the sources of water supply for an arid village The idol pre-

[1] Gillow Apuntes Históricos, p 203–5

[2] Archbishop Orozco y Jiménez of Guadalajara relates of the natives of Chamula, in Chiapas, when he was bishop of that state "They had a live Indian woman in a cave and worshiped her as Santa Rosa" Memoir, p 23

sumably is Tlaloc, the Rain God — but it is impossible to get aught but noncommittal answers from the villagers or parish priest "It has always been there," — "¿Quién sabe qué será?" But the flowers — squash plants in 1925, geraniums in 1927 — tell the story of a watchful tenderness which belies the universal assertion of ignorance No flowers are planted in the other three corners of the cloister

On the feast of San Juan in June, which in addition to the special floral, gastronomic, and terpsichorean accompaniments, is celebrated by bathing, the villagers take their saints in procession to the nearest pool, disrobe them if they are robed, and float them at the end of a cord Then they are taken out, cleaned, dried, and returned to their niche or altar I have seen this in the village of Ziricuaritiro in Michoacán in 1923

Each village has its special ceremonies on the day of its patron saint Those of the village of Amozoc near the capital are famous because each Indian brings his own personal Christ, every near-by hamlet contributing one

> After the *fiesta*, they begin to tell the miracles worked by their images, and each one praises his own property It begins with discussion and ends in blows with the sacred images, to prove which is the most miraculous This is the origin of the saying "It ended like the vespers of Amozoc, *a cristazos*," [with blows struck with a Christ] [1] and also that other saying, "When Christ fights Christ the most worm-eaten loses" [2]

At the Mexican church door gold and silver miniature representations, not merely of hearts, limbs, and eyes, are sold as votives for the saints who have relieved ailments of those parts of the human anatomy, but minute cattle, *burros*, sheep, goats, and chickens, important in the Indian economy, are offered, bought, and affixed to the wonder-working image for corresponding veterinary services And often I have seen the steed which the image of the warrior Santiago rides decorated with small horses, mute evidence of equine image worship This habit was discussed at the Mexican Eucharistic Congress in 1924, a committee reporting that "there exist thousands and thousands of individuals almost unredeemed * * * whom the gospel has reached in such a form that it * * * conserves superstition to the degree of their adoring a horse, depreciating and indifferent to the image of the horseman who represents the Holy Apostle" [3]

V

The Indian's superstition has been a bone of contention, the basis of recrimination between civil and ecclesiastical partizans The church has

[1] A *machetazo* is a blow struck with a machete, a *martillazo* is a blow struck with a *martillo* or hammer a *puñetazo* is a blow struck with a *puño*, or fist, a *cristazo* is a blow struck with an image of Christ or a crucifix

[2] 'Que de Cristo a Cristo el más apolillado se rompe Fernández del Castillo *op cit*, p 187

[3] As reported in Excelsior Oct 7, 1924

kept him in ignorance, charge the anticlericals (which includes all those in government circles since 1915), and this mental enslavement prevents his political and social emancipation As José Vasconcelos, minister of education in the Obregón cabinet, expressed it to me

"As long as the Indian continues to believe that natural phenomena result from supernatural agencies, that drought and rain, insect plagues, and disease are consequences of divine whim and affected only by his piety with the priest as intermediary, it will be almost impossible to rouse him from his apathy, to make him self-reliant, dependent on his own initiative, to secure his cooperation to lessen the terrible infant mortality, to make him, in short, a civilized member of a modern community"

The church on the other hand holds that by destroying or lessening its power to teach, the governments since the Reform are responsible for ignorance and illiteracy Asked how it happened that a country practically all Catholic could come to be subject to the conditions existing in Mexico to-day, Bishop Pascual Díaz of Tabasco replied, "from the administration of Porfirio Díaz the teaching has been in the hands of the laity and has been Godless" [1] Which suggests a consideration of conditions before the incorporation of the reform laws in 1874, when teaching was still in the hands of the clergy

With rare and honorable exceptions the church was from the beginning interested in teaching the mass of the natives just enough to convert them to a superficial form of Catholicism, and no more Wrote Fr Mendieta

> In all the monasteries * * * at one side of the church * * * is a school * * * where they teach reading and writing *to the children of the principal persons*, after they have learned the Christian doctrine, *which alone is taught the plebeian folk*, outside in the courtyard, *after which they are sent away to help their parents with their labor* [2]

Sometimes the plebeians were wholly omitted Wrote Diego de Landa, the second bishop of Yucatán

> The manner adopted to teach the doctrine to the Indians was to gather the little children of the chiefs and principal men of the region [3]

The children of the chiefs and "principal persons" were of course expected to succeed to the management of the plebeians in behalf of the *encomenderos* Teaching which might jeopardize the subjection of the Indian was no more dreamt of in New Spain than under any system of serfdom Popular instruction existed neither in Spain nor elsewhere on the European Continent at that time It came into general acceptance in the United States only in the nineteenth century It did not apply to American

[1] Catholic News, March 12 1927, reporting a meeting at the Catholic Club of New York on March 8

[2] Mendieta Hist Eclesiástica Indiana Lib IV, cap xvi (Italics not in original)

[3] Landa, Relación de las Cosas de Yucatán, p 101

Negro slaves before 1865 and in but a limited degree to their descendants since To hold the church responsible, as many have, for not installing general education in Mexico in the sixteenth century is to be guilty of an anachronism in judgment Moreover, had the clergy desired it could probably have not done otherwise Its royal masters commanded the teaching of the caciques' children, "in order that when they were grown they could communicate with the Spaniards * * * would be more loyal * * * and better able to teach, persuade, and order their subjects " [1]

The mission of the clergy, however, *was* to implant religion This it never did effectively or thoroughly Instructing the Indians "in the things of our Holy Catholic faith," consisted of teaching them "how to cross themselves and to repeat in Latin, the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, Credo, and Salve Regina " [2] More than two and a half centuries later the younger Revillagigedo, most enlightened of all the viceroys, deplored the Indians' ignorance in matters of religion [3] In 1794 there were but ten primary schools in New Spain [4] Of this period Alaman writes

The people, little instructed in the essence of religion, made up for this in the pomp of their religious ceremonies The church festivals which should all be spiritual were thus converted into vanity, with fire-crackers, dances, plays, bull-fights and cock-fights, and even inclosures for playing cards and other diversions, to celebrate at great expense the solemnities of the patron saints of their villages, to which end the Indians invested the greater part of the fruits of their toil This profane and little pious pomp is what caused the oft-quoted viceroy to say, "In this kingdom all is external show and most of the people living in vice think that wearing a rosary and kissing the hand of a priest makes them Catholics " [5]

The Indians who joined in the Revolution for Independence believed that Spaniards as well as Jews had tails [6] "Such was the ignorance of the mass," comments Alaman [7] Indeed, the clergy in the great current of nineteenth century progress was steadily growing less interested in education, expending its energy, rather, in opposing non-clerical efforts at enlightenment

Bequests for education were not used according to the testators' wishes and merely helped swell the church's coffers

In Durango, copies of the original wills of two individuals, who bequeathed to the Church funds for the express purpose of endowing schools, having been procured, the State Congress has demanded the restitution of a capital which has been allowed to remain thirty years unemployed, or, at least, unappropriated in the manner prescribed * * *

In Guadalajara, the Canons, to avoid being called to a similar account, have

[1] Solórzano Pereyra Política Indiana vol II, cap xxvii, Para 39
[2] Mendieta *op cit*, Lib III cap xv
[3] Revillagigedo Instrucción Reservada Para 27
[4] García Granados La Constitución de 1857, p 110–3
[5] Alaman, Hist de México vol I p 65 The viceroy quoted is Linares
[6] The belief about Jews is still current See Beals, Mexico, An Interpretation, p 172–3
[7] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 435

commenced very extensive repairs in the Cathedral, all of which the fund of *Obras Ptas* is destined to defray In other states various other precautions have been taken * * *[1]

Clerical instruction even for the upper classes was defective In 1852, four years before the first of the Reform laws, Alaman called attention to the custom of Catholic families of sending their children to Jesuit schools in England and the United States, "presenting thus the curious phenomenon that Mexican youths, in order to be educated in wholly religious principles, go to learn to be Catholics in Protestant countries "[2]

And in 1864, when the attempted Reform laws had been apparently swept away by the coming of empire, the Catholic scholar, Francisco Pimentel, wrote as follows

The Mexican Indian is still idolatrous Far from knowing a sole and spiritual God there is for him no God without head, arms, and legs, for him all the Catholic saints are equally strong and powerful except the one worshipped in his pueblo or one which, by some chance, has won his sympathy The Indians decidedly prefer misshapen images, and the ugliest saint is the most worshipped in village and field It seems that they still remember those idols of their antiquity, overloaded with emblems and designs But why should this cause astonishment when in some Indian villages they worship idols, either unalloyed or with some attributes of Catholic saints? I have held in my hands some sort of a Huitzilopochtli on horseback, something like Santiago, worshipped within three leagues of the capital * * * But as before the Conquest, a noisy rite is what attracts the Indians, they present themselves in the churches adorned with feathers to dance before the Virgin and the saints, and in the processions they want everything as in life So, during Holy Week, they go through all the steps of the Passion, the three falls under the cross, the flagellation, crucifixion, etc , all of this generally in a ridiculous, comic way, which inspires not devotion but pity and contempt We have seen, in Michoacán, Simon the Cyrenean with wings and, *à la Verónica*, with skirt and *mantilla*, St John the Baptist with overalls The rockets, fireworks, and bell-ringing are what most of all attract the Indians They care nothing about expense in their religious festivities, as well as in weddings, births, and funerals, always abundant with *pulque* In these they spend their savings

The Indian has lacked an enlightened religion, and hence morality, that quality so essential for the well-being of nations The first step should be, therefore, for the Indians to learn the Catholic religion, free from error and preconceptions, in its purity and truth

This matter relates principally to our clergy, and in verity the prelates should choose for the ministry men of more morality, more learning, and more abnegation[3]

This was at the end of the more than three-century period in which the clergy had been the educational force in Mexico and was insisting on its exclusive right to control education

[1] Ward, Mexico in 1827, p 346-7 [2] Alaman, *op cit* vol V, p 913
[3] *Pimentel, Memoria Sobre La Situación de la Raza Indígena, p 197, 199, 220*

At that time an Austrian Catholic bore this testimony to the character of Mexican Catholicism

Nowhere have I seen so little true piety as in Mexico, high and low are very much under the influence of the clergy, kiss the hands of the priests with humility, observe the outward practices with the greatest faithfulness, but nothing is less uplifting than the worship of God in Mexico [1]

Wrote the Empress Carlota in 1865

We are working to make this country Catholic, for it was not and has never been so [2]

Twenty-five years earlier, in 1840, when the church was almost at the apex of its power, the devout Madame Calderón de la Barca thus summed up the faith of the humble Mexicans

The cross was planted here in a congenial soil, and as in the Pagan East the statues of the divinities frequently did no more than change their names from those of heathen Gods to those of Christian saints, and image-worship apparently continued, though the mind of the Christian was directed from the being represented to the true and only God who inhabits eternity, so here the poor Indian still bows before visible representations of saints and virgins, as he did in former days before the monstrous shapes representing the unseen powers of the air, the earth, and the water, but he, it is to be feared, lifts his thoughts no higher than the rude image which a rude hand has carved The mysteries of Christianity, to affect his untutored mind, must be visibly represented to his eyes He kneels before the bleeding image of the Savior who died for him, before the gracious form of the Virgin who intercedes for him, but he believes that there are many Virgins, of various gifts, and possessing various degrees of miraculous power and different degrees of wealth, according to the quality and number of the diamonds and pearls with which they are endowed — one even who is the rival of the other — one who will bring rain when there is drought, and one to whom it is well to pray in seasons of inundation [3]

VI

What are the reasons for the Indian's "untutored mind" and his belief "that there are many Virgins, of various gifts * * * one even who is the rival of the other — one who will bring rain when there is drought, and one to whom it is well to pray in seasons of inundation"? Was this merely the unsurmountable native obstinacy in the retention of aboriginal beliefs, and resistance to new ones? In part, yes, but it was also the clergy which so taught him, and confirmed those beliefs

The rain-bringing powers of the Virgen de los Remedios, during the

[1] Kollonitz Eine Reise nach Mexiko
[2] Letter to the Comtesse de Grünne, March 14 1865, in Charlotte de Belgique, Impératrice du Mexique, Reinach-Foussemagne, p 218
[3] Barca, Life in Mexico, Letter 38

years 1808, 1809, and 1810, were thus elucidated by Father Bautista Díaz Calvillo, prefect of Christian doctrine in the Oratory of St Philip Neri

In 1808 the waters became very scarce in Mexico and continued thus to the middle of June, a period in which the rains should be abundant * * * The animals were dying from excessive heat * * * On Monday, the 20th, the holy image of the Remedies had been brought into the Parish Church of the Holy Cross, and from there carried to the Cathedral the next afternoon, when suddenly burst the most copious shower yet seen * * * The cloud from which this shower came was so dark that it appeared black, but at its highest point another cone-shaped cloud, white and beautiful, suddenly changed its shape into a white and beautiful cross [1]

When the revolution broke out and Hidalgo had made the Indian Virgin of Guadalupe the *patrona* of the Independentists, the hierarchy promptly countered with the white Virgin of the Remedies She was carried from her shrine to the cathedral, a marshal's baton was laid at her feet, and she was declared *Generala* of the royalist forces [2] This example was followed in the cities and villages of the provinces "and soon the images of most fervent adoration in each one were proclaimed *Generalas* with the sash and baton of that rank " [3]

Thus the Mexican church officially arrayed virgin against virgin "Inevitably there arose," wrote Genaro García, "an open antagonism between the two, who were protecting such contrary interests and they were seen on opposing fronts * * * Our Lady of the Remedies as the *Capitana General* of the royalists * * * and Our Lady of Guadalupe * * * as the comrade of the insurgents * * * It came to pass that while the Mexicans always respected our Lady of the Remedies, although they could not forget the tremendous harm that she caused them during the Conquest, the Spaniards, who had not suffered any damage from Our Lady of Guadalupe, made her the target of their hates and even went so far as to shoot her several times " [4]

The white virgin beat the Indian virgin just as she had beaten Huitzilopochtli, the Aztec war god, three centuries earlier "It would be sacrilegious temerity to deny that our holy Virgin secured for us this and the other victories, which have been won over the rebels," wrote the clerical biographer of the Virgen de los Remedios, in 1812, "since on the 7th day of November, 1810, on which they suffered their first severe defeat, several clouds in the form of palms unfolded above the Mexico City Cathedral, where the miracle-working image of the Remedies was being venerated " [5]

We have seen the general substitution of Catholic saints *simpáticos* to the native taste In some instances the clergy went further and connived at the deposal of those who proved, after trial, to lack sufficient popularity

[1] Díaz Calvillo, Noticias Para La Historia de Nuestra Señora de los Remedios desde el año de 1808 hasta el corriente, paras 4–7, in Hernández y Dávalos Documentos Para La Historia de la Guerra de Independencia *op cit*, p 586–8

[2] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 486

[3] *Idem*, p 487

[4] García, Leona Vicario, p 43

[5] Díaz Calvillo, *op cit*, Para, 75

In Tlaxcala the parish church at Ocotlán was originally dedicated to San Lorenzo Paintings within depict the legend of its becoming the church of Santa María An Indian, also a Juan Diego, was chopping an *ocote*, when suddenly, from the heart of the tree, the virgin stepped forth As she alighted a miraculous spring burst from the ground, and she ordered a chapel be built on the spot This was done Her image was also reverently carried to the near-by Church of San Lorenzo and placed at one side of the image of that patron saint One night, according to the picturization, angels switched the positions of virgin and patron saint The next morning the sacristan, indignant at the patron's relegation to a place of secondary importance, carried the virgin into the sacristy, locked her into a large wooden chest and, to make doubly sure, that night slept upon it Despite these precautions, the next morning the chest was empty, the virgin back in the center of the high altar, and San Lorenzo at one side

When I visited the church, in May, 1927, San Lorenzo did not even occupy this place It was empty, and no one present at the time could shed any light on the reasons for his original deposal In a small side chapel, however, I found his image properly placed in a glass case, but without a single offering of flowers, ex-votos, or other tokens If ever a saint had been abandoned by his people, it was he The reason was plain the moment one looked at his face His features were characteristic of the Spanish *hidulgo* — round face, stubborn nose, square head, firm jaw, *patillas* (burnsides) running half way down his cheek, the incarnation of the Spanish *encomendero*, the very type from which the Indians would seek protection in their saints

From the earliest days the clergy itself instituted the competitive miraculousness of images The Dominican Father Ojea wrote of a woman who, tormented by a demon, had "masses, orisons, and other services" said in her behalf without effect She had "visited hermitages, churches, and monasteries" in vain Only in the Church of Santo Domingo was the demon chased away

> This [wrote the chronicler of the Dominican order] cannot be attributed merely to the many relics of saints found there * * * since all the other churches and monasteries of Mexico are enriched and adorned with many important relics, but because the church is consecrated to St Dominic * * * on account of whose great sanctity * * * the devil feared to molest her or anyone else[1]

Another Dominican chronicler, relating the many miracles performed by a painting of his patron saint, wrote

> Many people who had been cured were carrying the Santo Domingo scapularies For all kinds of business, works, and sickness people with devotion and faith appealed fervently to such a marvelous performer * * *[2]

[1] Ojea, Hist Religiosa de la Provincia de México de la Orden de Santo Domingo, cap III
[2] Franco, Hist de la Provincia de Santiago de México, vol III, cap XXXIV, p 551



Photos by the author

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A "JUDAS"

Two snapshots taken in rapid succession on Good Friday, April 7, in the town of Tuxtepec. Left: The firecrackers with which the Judas is filled, have begun to explode. Right: the crowd gathering to pull apart the tattered corpse



The Capture of Warbuca

Incised Stone in St. Jame[illegible] the Church of Tur[illegible] Michoacan, small Indian village. The relief is [illegible] chiefly of miniature cattle, the lariat around the neck of the horse rather than the [illegible]

When a plague of locusts affected Yucatán, according to the Franciscan Cogolludo, "the bishop drew lots with the names of various saints to see which one should be invoked The name of St John the Baptist came out and * * * instantly the earth was free of these pests "[1] In Campeche a similar drawing elected St Roman, Martyr, to overcome the plague [2]

Wholly analogous with much pre-Christian practice was the performance of Catholic priests In the "diabolic religion of the Mexicans," Father Gomara found Aztec priests ' exorcising pain with a stone or bone * * * which the women keep on hand as so many relics in order to give birth well "[3] But according to Father Alegre, a bone of St Ignatius was used by a Jesuit father to bring about parturition [4] And according to Father Cogolludo, a piece of stone from the vicinity in which the Virgin of Jampolol had been found under a tree by a couple of fishermen in 1649, was used by Father Antonio Garzin, provincial of the Franciscans, to cure pains [5]

When on November 16, 1658, a fire in the capital threatened the Mexico City cathedral, it was, according to Father Guijo, combated as follows

> * * * the order of St Dominic attended with its patriarch, that of St Francis with St Anthony of Padua that of St Augustine with St Nicholas, that of La Merced with the Virgin, that of San Diego with its patron, that of San Juan de Dios with said saint, the Company of Jesus with a letter of St Ignatius, the devotees of the Virgin of Anguish * * * with her image, and all surrounded the fire, throwing into it relics of the saints * * *[6]

Similar practices are contemporary Starr in the eighteen-nineties found that "the priests of Rome have in some villages usurped the functions of the old rain-givers In place of the * * * formulas of the old rain-bringer * * * the priest * * * goes about with the bottles of holy water which he places at the limits of the field, at the same time repeating the formula of exorcism This he does to secure rains "[7]

To protect his crops against insects the Aztec would gather a quantity, steeping them in an *olla* or jar of water This infusion, accompanied by an incantation, would be poured over the field to guard it against the pests The priests have likewise taken over this function They "receive the *ollas* full of insects, which they bless and exorcise, they then prepare the brew in the same way as the old rain-bringers with the same happy result "[8]

Father Pascual Luciano García, curate of Tenancingo, Tlaxcala, told me that in 1918, when an epidemic of grippe was sweeping Mexico, he telegraphed to the governor of the state, General Rafael Rojas, for permission

[1] Cogolludo, Los Tres Siglos de la Dominación Española, vol I, p 280–1
[2] *Idem* p 284
[3] Gomara, Hist de las Indias, cap XXVII
[4] Alegre Hist de la Compañía de Jesus en Nueva España, vol II, p 8
[5] Cogolludo, *op cit*, vol I, p 678
[6] Guijo, Diario de Sucesos Notables p 412
[7] Starr, Notes upon the Ethnography of Southern Mexico
[8] *Idem*

to carry the patron saint of the village, San Gabriel, in procession The governor granted this permission — just by what right is not clear since the constitutions, both of 1857 and 1917, expressly forbid religious processions San Gabriel was carried around the country-side, and "the *peste* disappeared instantly like a wave of the hand," according to Father García

VII

Of the moral code which the church should have instilled and does instil in the United States, or in Catholic France there are few vestiges in Mexico Male conjugal fidelity among the Mexican upper classes is rare Infidelity is flagrant and reputable [1] Mexicans speak without restraint of their children and their "natural children" The glimpse given us by Fr Gage of Mexican manners and morals is as true to-day as it was when written three centuries ago

A devout benefactor of the church, named Alonso Cuellar, was widely known for his prodigality * * * He caused a convent to be built for the nuns of San Francisco, spent thirty thousand ducats on the construction, and then gave an annuity of two thousand ducats more for the maintenance of the sisters, and so that a certain number of masses should be said for the repose of his soul

Now this so pious man, this so generous benefactor of the church, lived about as scandalous a life as a reprobate without shame or conscience can give himself up to Nearly every night he went with two of his retainers to visit women of easy virtue At last he met with misfortune and his exploits were published widely One night he met a cavalier who was jealous They drew swords, and Cuellar was badly wounded * * *

So that we are beginning to see in that populous city, that the benefactions and extraordinarily liberal gifts made to churches and convents come from persons whose lives are as loose as they are scandalous Its inhabitants, intoxicated with pleasures of every kind, believe that their sins are hidden and disappear, when they compete in giving these largesses to the churches, which are so opulent and built so magnificently that it is hard to imagine anything grander and more sumptuous [2]

This has with few exceptions been the attitude of the Mexican aristocracy ever since Among the masses drunkenness and sexual debauchery form the aftermath of many religious festivals, and always have

[1] This statement is confirmed by numerous Mexicans Three persons socially prominent in the capital have stated to me that throughout their wide acquaintance they knew not a single married couple where the husband was faithful to his wife One Mexican a native of Coahuila, contradicts this testimony to the extent of saying that conditions were now different in the northern states, where he took pains to point out people were 'relatively less religious It is significant however that the constitution of Coahuila formally recognizes the widespread character of illegitimacy Art 10 in listing the categories of those who may claim to be citizens of Coahuila includes 'sons of Coahuilan mothers and unknown fathers" Mexico is not different in this respect from other Hispanic American nations

[2] Viages en la Nueva España, vol I, cap xxi

Replying to the city authorities in explanation of the closing of the cathedral in Mexico City in 1847, the archdeacon, Félix Osores, wrote

The church has always used this precaution when there have been disturbances in this city and even in certain solemn church festivals such as those of Christmas, in which generally many of the mass of the people gather, who animated by unwarranted and punishable joy, and above all by intoxication, commit fearful abuses and lamentable excesses [1]

Intoxication is an invariable feature of Guadalupe Day, December 12, as anyone who has witnessed the ceremonies, as I have, can testify One of Mexico's best known writers thus describes them

After the twelve o'clock mass, a most solemn ceremony with music, at times celebrated as pontifical, and with the presence of course of the canons of the basilica and the reverend abbot of Guadalupe, the Indians * * * clad in the bizarre raiment of ancient days, that is, with feather plumes and fantastic garments of shrieking colors, perform their dances After communion and the other ceremonies of the cult, the crowd * * * climbs the Tepeyac hills to eat, according to the custom of that day, goat's meat, *chito*, as they call it, with a red *chile* and *pulque* sauce, commonly called "drunken sauce," and washed down with copious draughts of *pulque*

By six in the evening all these pilgrims are in the same state as the sauce, and the Holy Virgin witnesses the abominable acts and crimes which are common in the religious festivals of Mexico [2]

Even the metropolitan cathedral was profaned with lay habits Wrote a French priest who had lived for two decades in Mexico, sixty years ago

Religious ceremonies are carried on with a regrettable want of decorum and *laisser-aller* * * * The Indians go to mass with the chickens and merchandise they are carrying to market I had to desert the Mexico Cathedral, where I went every morning, because I could not collect my thoughts The gobbling of turkeys, the crowing of roosters, the barking of dogs, the meowing of cats, the flapping of birds who lodge in the vaulting, the biting of fleas — make it impossible for one, unaccustomed to live in such a menagerie, to compose oneself [3]

Of the clerical sanction for the bizarreries of Mexican Catholicism he further wrote

The mysteries of the Middle Ages are at times exceeded by the burlesque Mexican ceremonies The *accouchement* of the Virgin on Christmas night strikes me as indecent, in France the police would forbid this ceremony as offensive to public morality But public morality being unknown in Mexico, the custom of presenting in many churches the delivery of the virgin offends no one No father of a family considers it improper to take his daughter where one sees Mary, with an enormous abdomen, paraded around the church After the procession, a priest

[1] Letter of Jan 14 Quoted in Olavarría y Ferrari *México á Través de los Siglos*, *México Independiente*, p 605

[2] Altamirano *op cit*, cap x

[3] Domenech, *Le Mexique Tel Qu'il Est*, p 133–4

pulls from under the skirts of the Virgin a swaddled Child Jesus who is placed on the altar and then carried around the church [1]

Among the customs tolerated by the church was the ghastly practice now, fortunately, disappearing, of suspending dead babies — a part of the Mexican "wake" among poorer families — for the edification of the neighbors, for twenty-four hours or more Thus did the aforequoted priest view these sepultural customs

I have spoken of the custom of dressing up deceased children, of decorating them with silk wings, paper crowns, flowers and ribbons, of displaying them seated on a chair or stretched on a table, of burying them to the noise of petards, or of instruments playing polkas and quadrilles In Mexico City, and in the interior, I have seen even more revolting things *Pulque* merchants hired these corpses called *angelitos* (little angels) to attract trade First there were prayers, then one drank, young girls made these occasions for rendezvous with their beaux The corpse would serve several merchants and be buried only when putrefaction was well advanced [2]

The resemblance to the Aztec practice of decorating the dead with all kinds of papers is unmistakeable [3] Likewise all manner of profane *divertissements*, not of native, but of imported, of Hispanic origin, have characterized the celebration of holy days "Bull-fights in honor of the Virgin," [4] were part of the *official* ecclesiastical program until the Reform Laws At a cock-fight incidental to the celebration of St Augustine's Day in the forties, at which President Santa Anna was present, the master of ceremonies opened the event by calling, "Ave María Purísima, los gallos vienen" (Hail, Most Holy Mary, the cocks are coming) [5] Battles between "the Christians and the Moors," in which the zeal of the villagers who impersonate the contenders sometimes results bloodily, fire-crackers and a profusion of noise-producing devices, are integral parts of contemporary fiestas [6]

Throughout Mexico Judas is burned in effigy every Holy Week [7] On Holy Saturday grotesque figures, often horned, loaded with fire-crackers are set off by the crowd on leaving the Mass of Glory, amid cries of "Mueran Los Judíos" (Down with the Jews) In some villages persists the practice of a native impersonating Judas on this day and permitting the villagers to

[1] Domenech, Le Mexique Tel Qu'il Est, p 137
[2] Domenech, *op cit*, ch vi
[3] Sahagun *op cit*, Lib III App caps 1, 11
[4] Mestre Ghigliazza Documentos y Datos Para La Hist de Tabasco, vol II
[5] Thompson, Recollections of Mexico, p 132
[6] For an account of the extravagances in the celebration of the day of San Felipe de Jesus, as well as the origin of his worship as patron saint in Colima see Apuntes Para La Historia de Colima, Galindo, vol I p 276–86
[7] The Judas custom is, of course, a transplantation of Spanish Catholicism
"In Majorca, toward 1820, the preacher expounded on Good Friday what a traitor and scoundrel was Judas Iscariot A mannequin represented Judas and every faithful, roused to fury, went from the sermon to plant his knife in the mannequin" Taine, Derniers Essais de Critique et d'Histoire, p 30, fn

spit upon him for a fee In other communities, as an aftermath to the Passion Play Judas is pursued and beaten

The fact is that the Mexican clergy has rarely taught anything but the externals of the cult The ethics, the essence and spirit of the religion of Jesus have been lost in the process The responsibility to family and neighbor, the duties of citizenship, as they are inculcated by the Catholic clergy in the United States, have never reached the Mexican people Wrote a traveler a century ago

> The highways are often infested with thieves, who despite their scapulars and chaplets do not hesitate to lay a sacrilegious hand even on the ministers of the altar [1]

In the opinion of Alaman the extensive robbery in colonial times was encouraged "not a little by the asylum which the thieves encountered in all churches" [2] Probably, the sale until Independence of the *Bulas de la Santa Cruzada*, also, as Bancroft says, "perverted public morals and fostered crime" [3] These bulls, originating at the time of the crusades, were later extended in favor of the kings of Spain only, in recognition of their services in the warfare against the Moors The *bulas de vivos* granted certain indulgences to the living The *bulas de difuntos* enabled friends and relatives of the deceased to shorten their time in purgatory The *bulas de composición* issued for the benefit of pilferers, freed one for each twelve *reales'* worth of bull from the necessity of restoring thirty ducats' worth of stolen goods but not more than thirty of these bulls could be purchased by one person in any two-year period, the total exemption therefore being nine hundred ducats The balance had to be restored if possible [4] The price varied with the position and rank of the buyer, but few escaped, state and church combining to enforce purchase In 1803 the sale in New Spain brought in $270,000,[5] in 1809, $301,760 [6] Iturbide sought to have the bulls continued [7] but they ended with monarchy, and the regency which succeeded him converted the bulls that had been left over into paper money, printing on their reverse side to avoid counterfeiting [8]

Traveling in the State of Mexico in 1897, Frederick Starr wrote

> In the olden time Huixquilucan had a bad reputation for highway robberies A great hill overlooking the town is called the hill of crosses, and here a cross by the way-side usually signifies a place of murder * * * We were told that the church here * * * is called "the church of the thieves" and that it was even lately a favorite resort for *ladrones*, who prayed for a blessing upon their thieving expeditions

[1] Linati, Costumes Civils, Militaires et Religieux du Mexique, planche 18
[2] Alaman, *op cit*, vol I, p 53
[3] Bancroft, Hist of Mexico vol III, p 665
[4] Fonseca y Urrutia, Hist de la Real Hacienda, vol III, p 261 337, Lea, Hist of Auricular Confession and Indulgences, vol II, p 62–4, Bancroft *op cit*, vol III, p 665–6
[5] Poinsett Notes on Mexico p 145
[6] Telégrafo Mexicano, No 5
[7] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 504
[8] *Idem*, p 761

and for release in case they should be taken captive And not so long ago, among the little silver votive offerings — eyes, legs, arms, hands — all given in fulfilment of promises for the cure of ailing members, one might see little chains and manacles, visible evidence that saint or Virgin had kindly released some fellow, taken in his misdeeds, from a well deserved punishment, in answer to his pious prayers [1]

Mexican bandits invoke the favorite saint's blessing on their knife — or pistol Mexican prostitutes hang the Virgin of the Soledad around their neck to protect themselves from venereal disease In the church of that Virgin in Mexico City, familiarly known there as "The Harlots' Church," I have seen a *retablo* (a painting left as a votive for the miraculous intervention of a given saint) recording the gratitude of a second-story worker to that patroness, because he fell uninjured after the alarmed householders had cut the rope by which he was climbing, on robbery bent The painting depicts the episode with entire ingenuousness

VIII

The Mexican clergy, abusing the credulity and ignorance of the faithful, has converted wholly natural phenomena to its own ends Of the worship of the Virgen de los Angeles, generally considered the madonna of the poor in Mexico, Luis González Obregón, writes

> An incident gave the cult a tremendous impetus * * * a terrific earthquake * * * Thousands threw themselves at the feet of our Lady of the Angels In that sad night was born the great increase in the cult of that sanctuary, and of devotion to its image From then on came visitors and pilgrimages, from then on people were seen prostrated before the image with such continuity and fervor that entire villages, including the women and children, came to adore her and leave at her feet the plentiful alms * * * [2]

The clergy has not hesitated to use trickery and deception In May, 1912, the "miracle" of the swaying virgin in the heart of Mexico City, roused the faithful to a delirium of excitement till a carefully laid plant of wires under the church floor connected with the machinery of a neighboring mill was uncovered [3] In Yucatán a "sweating Christ" turned out to be equipped with a bag of deliquescent salt which produced the miracle [4] The "Christ of the Blisters" who "miraculously" survived the burning of a church, intact but for a few blisters, was found by the authorities to be made of painted plaster, and consequently non-combustible

Mexican ecclesiastical history is consistently sprinkled with such phenomena "A perspiring image of a Virgin" in Yucatán, [5] "a child Jesus who

[1] Starr, Indian Mexico p 63–4.
[2] México Viejo, cap xviii
[3] El Imparcial May 8, 9, and ff 1912 Butler, Historic Churches of Mexico, p 104–8
[4] Bolio, Cuentos Cívicos, p 71–74
[5] Cogolludo, *op cit*, vol I, p 268

wept blood," in Toluca,[1] a Saint Veronica in the Capilla de los Naturales in Mexico City who "for four months sweated profuse drops,"[2] a crucifix that opened its eyes,[3] an image of St Anthony that bowed and raised its eyes when the image of Christ was located beside it "and remains so to-day as proof of the miracle,"[4] a moving cross in Zayula,[5] a wooden cross in Autlan that did not burn in a fire[6]

In May, 1924, Bishop Valdespino of Aguascalientes discovered "an image of the head of Juan Diego on the shoulder of the Virgin of Guadalupe," the account of which filled columns in the Mexican press The bishop refused to declare the apparition a miracle, but insisted that it was at least "a prodigy, marvel and sign"[7]

On November 18, 1925, "El Universal," Mexico's leading newspaper, published the story of a ten-year-old orphan boy, J Guadalupe Hernández, inmate of the reform school at León, Guanajuato, and the miracle which transpired while he was being given breakfast by some ladies of the parish, preparatory to his being commended to the Sacred Heart of Jesus In reaching out for a cup of *atole* (a mixture of corn, milk, and sugar) and *cascarilla* (the shell of the cocoa-bean) the boy upset the beverage which formed a heart-shaped stain on the table cloth The *cascarilla* gave the stain a red color

"El Universal"[8] quotes the superior of the Jesuits, Father Antonio Repiso, as saying

> They brought me the table-cloth and, strange to relate, the stain did not spread but kept perfectly the outline of the heart As may be supposed the news spread with lightning rapidity, and before the ladies had even left the correctional school, a great multitude of persons was gathered outside awaiting the opportunity to see the miracle with its own eyes I cannot tell you more, because they will say the last word in Rome, and we do not yet know what that word will be

The Father Superior is further quoted as follows

> When Monseñor Valverde y Téllez (the bishop of León) saw the stain of *atole* forming the heart he exclaimed before a numerous group of priests and other persons "Undoubtedly we are dealing with a coincidence in which can be noted the hand of God, for if I throw a handful of letters on a table, and these letters form the words 'Long live Christ the King!' who but God could have formed them?"[9]

Whatever may be the official status of this "miracle" it was so acclaimed in Guanajuato, thousands flocking to see it, "a living strand that never ends"[9]

[1] Vetancurt, *op cit*, vol III, Trat V, cap IV, Para 94
[2] *Idem*, Para 91
[3] Beltrami, Le Mexique vol I p 33–4
[4] Vetancurt *op cit* vol III Trat V, cap IV, Para 94
[5] Mota Padilla, Hist de la Conquista de * * * Nueva Galicia, p 393
[6] *Idem*, p 394
[7] El Universal Mexico City, May 17, 1924, and following
[8] El Universal, Nov 18, 19, 1925
[9] *Idem*

who left their offerings "Below the framed heart are many little hearts of silver and gold "[1]

On January 6, 1927, when relations between church and state were more than usually tense, enormous crowds gathered following the report that the Virgin of Guadalupe had left her sanctuary and had been seen on a tree near-by Tumult and rioting was averted only by the arrival of firemen who turned their hoses on the mob[2]

I have been told by Indians in widely scattered parts of the republic that their priest had warned them that if they accepted land as part of the Government's agrarian reform, their crops would wither and their cattle die The consuming plague of locusts in 1925 in the southeastern states, was similarly capitalized by the clergy to point the lesson to those who had received their *ejidos*

The clerical control over the Indians is based on their superstition Instead of propagating the religion of love, the clergy has inculcated or permitted the retention of a religion of fear, a survival of both the gloomy theology of sixteenth century Spain and the somber Aztec terror of the unknown The persistence of the Anáhuac spirit is visible in the extreme bloodiness of the Mexican images of the Savior It is revealed in the intensity of the penitence witnessed in the church of St Agustín by Madame de la Barca in 1840.

About one hundred and fifty men * * * were assembled in the body of the church A monk had just entered the pulpit, and the church was dimly lighted * * * His discourse was a rude but very forcible and eloquent description of the torments prepared in hell for impenitent sinners The effect of the whole was very solemn It appeared like a preparation for the execution of a multitude of condemned criminals When the discourse was finished, they all joined in prayer with much fervor and enthusiasm, beating their breasts and falling upon their faces Then the monk stood up, and in a very distinct voice read several passages of scripture descriptive of the sufferings of Christ The organ then struck up the *Miserere*, and all of a sudden the church was plunged in profound darkness * * * Suddenly a terrible voice in the dark cried, "My brothers! When Christ was fastened to the pillar by the Jews, he was *scourged!*" * * * Suddenly we heard the sounds of hundreds of scourges descending upon the bare flesh I cannot conceive of anything more horrible Before ten minutes the sound became more horrible Before ten minutes the sound became *splashing*, from the flood that was flowing * * * Incredible as it may seem this awful penance continued without intermission for half an hour! * * * Now and then * * * a suppressed groan was heard, and occasionally the voice of the monk encouraging them by ejaculations, or by short passages from scripture * * * At the end of half an hour a little bell was rung, and the voice of the monk was heard, calling upon them to desist, but such was their enthusiasm that the horrible lashing continued louder and fiercer than ever

[1] El Universal, Nov 18, 19, 1925 [2] *Idem*, Jan 7 and 8, 1927

In vain he entreated them not to kill themselves and assured them that heaven would be satisfied, and that human nature could not endure beyond a certain point No answer, but the loud sound of the scourges, which are many of them of iron, with sharp points that enter the flesh At length, as if they were perfectly exhausted, the sounds grew fainter, and little by little ceased altogether * * * They say that the church-floor is frequently covered with blood after one of these penances, and that a man died the other day in consequence of his wounds [1]

Bloody penitence persists In Tzintzuntzán, Michoacán, during Holy Week, 1925, a father, mother, and son crawled the entire length of the atrium path to the church, wearing crowns of cutting cactus Other *penitentes*, barefoot with wounds gory from the iron grills binding their ankles, hopped about for hours in the sun Others with enormous iron weights shackled around their ankles, ran naked through the streets, over rocks, through brambles and thorny bushes, until they fell fainting Sometimes they were taken up and bathed, at other times they lay in the dust until they could crawl home In the evening the *penitentes* dressed in white through which the blood oozed, as through a butcher's apron, tottered around begging alms for candles and masses [2]

Writes an eye-witness of flagellation on the same occasion

There were still other penitents who were going to pay their "mandas" at night * * * Just as the moon rises * * * I hear a bumping and scraping of a heavy object, coming from the direction of the church It is the first penitent He, like those of the morning, is half naked, and is running with a huge unhewn cross over his bare right shoulder He stops at the first cross * * * I hear the sound of lashes It is the penitent beating himself, first over one shoulder then the other, with the *disciplinas*, a stinging little whip, intended to cut and bleed * * * I am told this is his seventh year, and that to-night he fulfills his promise made in gratitude to the saint for recovery from illness [3]

One of my first impressions in Mexico was of a miserable twisted travesty of a human being whining for alms at the door of a church I gave him a copper He writhed his way into the edifice and groaning with the effort reached up to a box marked "For Blessed Souls' and dropped in the wherewithal to keep his own soul and wretched body together

And yet the blind faith which leads those who lack the veriest elementals of life to contribute their coppers as alms, tithes, and through numerous other channels, to the church, and children to buy candles and holy wafers with pennies they have begged, which enables the clergy at times to arouse mob violence against Protestant missionaries, or other objects of clerical antipathy — this intense and perverted fanaticism has netted the church no real support, no bulwarks for its own protection

[1] De la Barca, *op cit*, Letter 26
[2] Information furnished by Miss Anita Brenner who was present
[3] Toor, Passion Play at Tzintzuntzán, in Mexican Folkways, June–July, 1925

A very charming priest of the Michoacán archdiocese, Father Luis Madrigal, told me

"When my bishop and I were arrested during the Revolution, the soldiers who guarded us wore Virgins of Guadalupe and Sacred Hearts of Jesus I asked them why they were treating us in that way They answered that they were good Catholics but that they had to obey their superior's orders Had they been good Catholics they would have refused to obey such orders In other places some of the peasant soldiery were under the impression that they were seeking a mythical figure by the name of *Don Clero* (John Clergy, Esquire) If they had been properly taught the faith they could not have been so deluded "

The explanation for the church's paradoxical failure to safeguard itself in a supposedly ninety-nine per cent Catholic state is found not in its allegation that armed minorities have overruled the popular will Rather is it that there has been no popular will of appreciable strength because the Mexican faith resting on no moral foundation has established no firm standards of right and wrong, and for the meaning of "right" and "wrong" — terms which need redefinition in every place and age — one may take as an approximate standard the morality and ethics preached and practised by Catholic churchmen in the United States, and by them inculcated upon their flock

One reason for this lies in the evident degeneration in Mexico of the ministry from a noble calling into a sordid business Clergymen have the same right to emoluments for their services as have members of other professions But it is difficult to escape the conviction that acquisitiveness has been and is the dominant motive with a large section of the Mexican clergy That detached and cultured observer, Charles Macomb Flandrau, thus described a village confirmation ceremony which he witnessed in 1908

The bishop's advent had if not quite the importance of a *fiesta*, at least the enlivening qualities of a *fiestita* There was so much movement and talk and color in the drowsy town, and so many drunken Indians shook hands with me and patted me on the back that if it had not been Thursday I should have known it was Sunday The bishop had not been to Mixtla for some said, five and others eight years But in either period it seems that unconfirmed children pile up amazingly Grouped about the weed-grown open space on the church's shade side there were almost four hundred of them, not including parents and god-parents, and this was the second of three days' opportunity * * *

When I returned the bishop, with three priests behind him was standing at the top of the altar steps He was wearing his mitre and the tips of his fingers lightly touched one another, as a bishop's fingers should, on the apex of his stomach It was a thrilling moment

Then combining, in a quite wonderful fashion, extreme rapidity with an air of ecclesiastical calm, he made his confirmatory way down one side of the nave, across

the end and up the other, preceded by one priest and followed by two The first gathered up the certificates (no laying on of hands unless one has paid one's twenty-five centavos) and read the name of the child next in line to the bishop, who murmured the appropriate formula, made a tiny sign of the cross on a tiny forehead with the end of a dirty thumb and moved on The second, with a bit of absorbent cotton, dipped in oil, swabbed the spot on which the cross had been signed, while the third, taking advantage of the general rapture, gently relieved everyone of his blessed candle (it had never been lighted) and carried it away to be sold again But by the time the first priest reached my family party he had grown tired and careless Instead of collecting the certificates singly, he began to take them in twos and threes with the result that they became mixed, and Gerónimo was confirmed, not as Gerónimo, but as "Saturnina," which happened to be the name of the little snub-nosed Totonac girl standing next to him When I realized this had happened, I protested Whereupon his grace and I proceeded to have "words" With exceeding bitterness he then reperformed the rite, and if the eyes of the first priest could have killed, I should have withered on my slender stalk The priest with the cotton sought to annihilate me with an undertoned remark to the effect that my conduct was a *barbaridad*, but the third was not only *simpático* — he was farther away from the bishop As, with much tenderness, he disengaged Gerónimo's reluctant fingers from the candle, he severely looked at me and winked [1]

The reselling of candles recurs through Mexican ecclesiastical practice with the monotonous constancy of a tolling church bell The bibliography of visitors to Mexico who have observed and written of it in every age and region would be extensive Clerical commercialism was seldom lacking As far back as 1520 "there arrived a Dominican friar from Seville named Pedro Melgarejo de Urrea who brought with him a Bull of St Peter, by which we obtained absolution," wrote Bernal Díaz, "for all the sins we may have been guilty of during these wars By means of this Bull, Urrea amassed a large fortune in the space of a few months, with which he returned to Spain, whither he was accompanied by Gerónimo López, as a commissary of His Holiness" [2]

As early as January 27, 1538, the queen commanded Don Antonio de Mendoza, the first viceroy

> I am informed that certain clerics * * * who lead neither a good life nor set a good example, such as are needed for the conversion of the natives * * * to our holy Catholic faith, have passed to those shores * * * and I order that * * * such as have gone there without our license * * * you cause to leave [3]

The command was evidently "obeyed but not carried out," for it was repeated in 1552,[4] and subsequently And before long such clerics imparted their character and morality to the whole clerical institution, overwhelming the few individuals who throughout Mexican history stood out in contrast,

[1] Flandrau Viva México! p 56
[2] Bernal Díaz, *op cit*, cap cxlix
[3] Puga, Cedulario, vol I, p 408–9
[4] *Idem*, vol II, 157–8

protesting by word and by the example of their own lives One of the most conspicuous of these was Father Mendieta

Thus did he view the deterioration of the clergy, a little more than a half century after the first conversion

As an eye-witness for thirty-three years which I have served * * * as a minister * * * I know that the Christianity of the Indians has fallen away while the evils and offenses to God and his children have increased, and things have reached such a pass that it is time for Your Majesty, despite all your other cares, to give thought principally to order the proper teaching of Christianity and to the preservation of the Indians * * * so that we may not evoke the indignation of our most just God * * * because His worship and service have been replaced by the base interests of this earth It cannot be doubted, Oh, Very Christian King, that if those who have governed this region of the Indies had worked as much, or even a little less, to bring souls to the knowledge and service of God instead of to acquire silver and money our God would, through the hand of Your Majesty, have done away with all the heresies which are cropping out against His church in this time [1]

But the kings, despite repeated orders, could not stop clerical extortion In 1755 King Ferdinand VI, having heard "that the Indians receive serious molestation from the teachers of doctrine since these make them work without pay, imprison them, and charge them excessively for marrying them and burying them," he specifically instructed the viceroy to see to it that the priests should not exceed the established *arancel* or tariff [2]

Captain Basil Hall of the British Navy, who visited Mexico in 1822, the first year after Independence, reported the following incident in the city of Tepic

Some days after this dinner, I went to the Convent of La Cruz to visit a friend who was doing penance, not for a sin he had committed, but for one he was preparing to commit The case was this Don N had recently lost his wife and not choosing to live in solitude, looked about for another helpmate, and being of a disposition to take little trouble in such a research, or probably, thinking that no labour could procure for him any one so suitable as what his own house afforded, he proposed the matter to his lately lamented wife's sister, who had lived in his house for several years, and who, as he told me himself, was not only a very good sort of person but one well acquainted with all the details of his household, known and esteemed by his children, and accustomed to his society

The church, however looked exceedingly grave upon the occasion, not, however, as I at first supposed, from the nearness of the connection, or the shortness of the interval since the first wife's death but because the intended lady had stood godmother to four of Don N 's children This the church said, was a serious bar to the new alliance which nothing could surmount but protracted penances and extensive charity

[1] From a letter of Fray Gerónimo de Mendieta to King Philip II, dated at Puebla, April 15, 1587 Documentos Inéditos del Siglo XVI para la Hist de Mexico Doc LXVIII Collected by Mariano Cuevas S J p 416–17

[2] Instruccion para el Virey Marqués de Amarillas dada para el Rey Fernando VI, Para 8 In Instrucciones Reservadas

Don N was urgent, and a council was assembled to deliberate on the matter The learned body declared, after some discussion, the case to be a very knotty one, and that, as the lady had been four times godmother to Don N 's children, it was impossible she could marry him Nevertheless, the Fathers, compassionate persons, wished to give the unhappy couple another chance, and agreed to refer the question to a learned doctor in the neighbourhood, skilled in all difficult questions of casuistry This sage person, decided that according to the canons of the church, the marriage might take place, on payment of a fine of four hundred dollars two for the poor in pocket, and two for the poor in spirit, namely, the priests But to expiate the crime of marrying a quadruple godmother, a slight penance must also be submitted to in the following manner Don N was to place himself on his knees before the altar, with a long wax candle burning in his hand, while his intended lady stood by his side, also holding a candle, and this was to be repeated in the face of the congregation for one hour, during every Sunday and fast-day throughout a whole year, after which purifying exposure, the parties to be held eligible to proceed with the marriage

Don N , who had no mind to put conscience or his knees to any such discipline, took his own measures on the occasion What these were, the idle public took the liberty of guessing broadly enough, but no one could say positively At the end of a week, however, it was announced, that the case had undergone a careful examination, and that it had been deemed proper to commute the penance into one week's retirement from the world that is to say, Don N was to shut himself up in the Convent of La Cruz, there to fast and pray in solitude and silence for seven days The manner in which this penance was performed is an appropriate commentary on the whole transaction The penitent, aided and assisted by two or three of the jovial friars of the convent, passed the evening in discussing some capital wine, sent out for the occasion by Don N himself, after eating a dinner prepared by the cook of the convent, the best in New Galicia As for silence and solitude, his romping boys and girls were with him during all the morning, besides a score of visitors, who strolled daily out of town as far as the convent, to keep up the poor man's spirits, by relating all the gossip which was afloat about his marriage, his penitence, and the wonderful kindness of the church [1]

A peculiar mingling of religion, commercialism, and the Mexican propensity for games of chance (exhibited previously in the drawing of lots to see which saint should be invoked) found an even more extreme exemplification in lotteries conducted by the Mexican church to determine what souls should be drawn out of purgatory This custom existed during the Díaz régime [2]

As late as 1921 Wallace Thompson touched on the financial key to salvation

By refusing to recognize the civil ceremony and by continuing to make the religious service an expense to the Indian the forming of illicit relations became a

[1] Hall, *Extracts from a Journal* vol II p 123–4

[2] Guerrero, La Génesis Del Crimen en México, p 41 This author reprints verbatim a printed notice of 1890 advertising a "raffle of souls" in the Church of St Hippolytus on Nov 21, 1890 The price for each lottery ticket was one *real* (6¼ cents U S cy) The winning numbers were entitled to various masses

commonplace until it is probably true to-day that in the lower classes at least, marriage, whether civil or religious, has practically no significance By adopting this attitude the Church undoubtedly weakened the moral tone of its people [1]

Dr Gamio in 1922 at the conclusion of eight years intensive study of the Valley of Teotihuacán, forty miles from the capital, thus summed up the service of its clergy

The economic situation of the inhabitants is most distressing, but they are charged excessive fees for services the Church should render, if not wholly gratuitously, at least for a nominal sum Burials, baptisms, masses and marriages, all command such a heavy tariff that many do without * * * an illustration of which is the frequent concubinage, where poverty is so extreme that the couples are unable to cover the Church marriage fees * * *

The conclusive proof, however, of the essentially mercenary character of the priesthood is that, though many villages are so poor that they cannot support a priest, and a visit to one would reveal that inhabitants rarely practise Catholicism or guide themselves by its precepts, that is, are involuntarily bad or faulty Catholics – judged by church standards, the priests are quite indifferent to their needs Suffer for their calling serve wretched villages that can give nothing in return? Hardly They merely ignore these thin-fleeced sheep, and don't give a rap for their spiritual welfare [2]

Frank Hopkinson Smith, who journeyed from Mexico City to Michoacán and across Lake Pátzcuaro to see the "Entombment" credited to Titian in the parish church in the village of Tzintzuntzán, thus describes his experience

We found the padre seated at a rude table in the darkest corner of a low-ceiled room on the left of the corridor, surrounded by half a dozen Indian women He was at dinner, and the women were serving him * * * When he turned at our intrusion, we saw a short thickset man, wearing a greasy black frock, a beard a week old, and a smile so treacherous that I involuntarily tapped my inside pocket to make sure of its contents He arose lazily, gathered upon his coat cuff the few stray crumbs clinging to his lips and with a searching, cunning air, asked our business

Moon * * * replied obsequiously, "To see the famous picture, holy father This, my companion, is a distinguished painter from the far East He has heard of the glory of this great work of the master of which you are the sacred custodian, and has come these many thousand miles to see it I hope your reverence will not turn us away"

I saw instantly from his face that he had anticipated this * * * I learned afterwards that a canoe had left Patzcuaro ahead of the catamaran, and that the object of our visit had already been known in Tzintzuntzan some hours before we arrived

"It is a holy day," replied the padre curtly, "and the sacristy is closed The picture will not be uncovered" With this he turned his back upon us and resumed his seat

[1] Thompson, People of Mexico Part II, ch iii
[2] Gamio, La Población del Valle de Teotihuacán, vol I, ch xlvii

I looked at Moon * * * "Leave him to me," he whispered, * * * noticing my disappointment * * * In the hamper which Moon had instructed Griddles, the *chef*, to pack * * * was a small glass vessel, flat in shape, its contents repressed by a cork covered with tinfoil When Moon landed from the catamaran this vessel was concealed among some boxes of *dulces* and fruits * * * enclosed in a wicker basket, and intrusted to an Indian, who now stood within three feet of the table

"You are right, holy father," said Moon, bowing low "We must respect these holy days I have brought your reverence some delicacies, and when the fast is over, you can enjoy them" Then he piled up * * * some bunches of grapes, squares of *dulces*, and a small bag of coffee The flat vessel came last, this Moon handled lovingly with the greatest care, resting it finally against a *pulque* pot which the padre had just emptied

The priest leaned forward, held the flat vessel between his nose and the window, ran his eyes along the flow line, and glancing at the women turned a dish over it bottom side up

"When do you return?" he asked

"To-day, your reverence"

There was a pause, during which the padre buried his face in his hands * * * "How much will the painter give to the poor of the parish?" said the padre lifting his head

After an exposition of the dismal poverty into which the painter was plunged by reason of his calling, it was agreed that upon the payment to the padre of *cinco pesos* in silver the painter might see the picture * * * the padre adding, —

"There is presently a service In an hour it will be over, then the sacristan can open the door"

Moon counted out the money on the table, piece by piece The padre weighed each coin on his palm, bit one of them and with a satisfied air swept the whole into his pocket

The tolling of a bell hurried the women from the room The padre followed slowly, bowing his head upon his breast * * *

"Señor, the padre says come to him"

The messenger was a shrivelled sun-dried Mexican half-breed, with a wicked eye and a beak-like nose About his head was twisted a red handkerchief, over which was flattened a heavy felt sombrero He was barefooted, and his trousers were held up by a leather strap

"Who are you?" said Moon

"I am the sacristan"

"I thought so Lead on A lovely pair of cherubs, are they not?"

The padre met us at the door He had sad news for us, his mortification was extreme The man who cleaned the sacristy had locked the door that morning and started for Quiroga on a donkey No one else had a key

I suggested an immediate chartering of another, and somewhat livelier donkey with instructions to overtake and bring back the man with the key, dead or alive The padre shrugged his shoulders, and said there was but one donkey in the village — he was underneath the man with the key Moon closed one eye and turned the other incredulously on the priest

"When will the man return?"

"In three days"

"Your reverence," said Moon slowly," do not send for him It might annoy him to be hurried We will break in the door and pay for a new lock"

Then followed a series of protests beginning with the sacrilege of mutilating so sacred a door and ending with a suggestion from the saffron-colored sacristan that an additional *cinco pesos* would about cover the mutilation, provided every centavo of it were given to the poor of the parish, and that the further insignificant sum of five pesetas, if donated to the especial use of his sun-dried excellency, might induce him to revive one of his lost arts, and operate on the lock with a rusty nail

Moon counted out the money * * * Then we followed the padre and the sacristan down the winding steps leading to the cloister * * * and halted at an arch closed by two swinging doors His yellowness fumbled among some refuse in one corner, picked up a bit of debris, applied his eyes to an imaginary keyhole, and pushed open a pair of wooden doors entirely bare of lock, hasp, or latch They had doubtless swung loose for half a century[1]

IX

The problem has lain and lies in the character of the clergy Abbé Domenech, almoner of the French expeditionary forces in the sixties and attached to Maximilian's court, observed that in the Mexican priesthood there were "rascals worthy of the gibbet, individuals who make of religion an ignoble traffic," and he answers his question, "Where lies the fault?" as follows

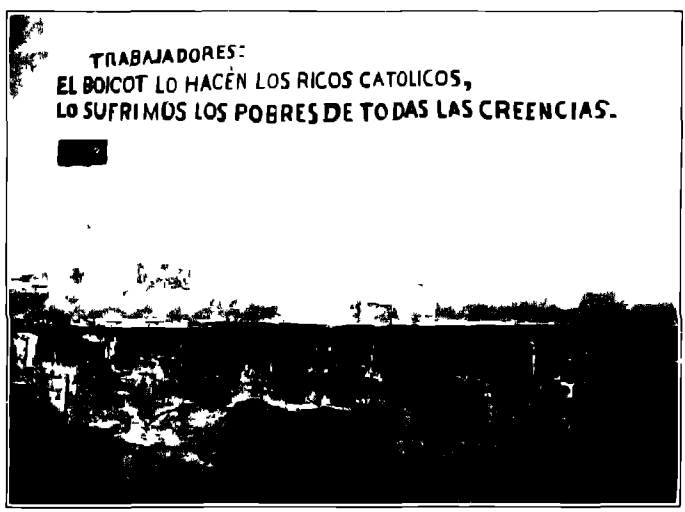
In the past in the customs of the Spaniards, in the present, in the episcopate If the bishops had good seminaries in which their pupils would receive a sound and serious education, if the bishops had more energy if they were more particular in their choice of candidates for the priesthood and if they themselves observed the canonical laws of the church more scrupulously they would not witness the irregularities of which they are the first to complain Despite the decrees of the Council of Trent pastoral visits are almost unknown in Mexico I know that they have been difficult and dangerous since Independence but if the episcopate does not give the example of devotion and abnegation who will give it? * * *

Even the most honorable bishops think more of their privileges and prerogatives than of the care of the flock entrusted to them In those few institutions which have but the name and form of "seminary," they permit the teaching of a bastard theology which falsifies the spirit and conscience of the future preacher The ecclesiastical spirit, that is, the love of one's neighbor, poverty, and humility, the zeal for saving souls self-abnegation — these are virtues not taught the Mexican clergy Also the priests come out of these seminaries with the most erroneous and absurd ideas of Catholic morals and dogma They permit the first communion and give confirmation to children of five and six, who have received no instruction whatever and have no notion of what they are doing They traffic with the sacraments make money out of every religious ceremony, and render

[1] Smith, A White Umbrella in Mexico, p 199–211



Photos: the author



THE RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

(Above) the doorway of the house of a militant Catholic Irapuato June 1975. The placards respectively read: "Long live the most Holy Virgin of Guadalupe." "Long live the Pope." "The Sacred Heart of Jesus reign in the home." "Long Live Christ King." (Below) lettering on the wall of Guadalajara Cathedral. "Worker it is the rich Catholic who make the boycott it is we the poor of all creed who suffer." September 1976.



Drawing from popular legend by Diego Rivera entitled the poor and that their receiving land was not an violation of divine law. The poster was used effectively to combat the clerical hierarchy's resistance reform. The words of the poster were: "The Distribution of Land to the Poor is not Contrary to the Teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Mother Church." The Mexican people fought and suffered ten years [illegible] and the words [illegible] Jesus Christ.

themselves guilty of simony * * * If the law of Rome were in effect in Mexico, half the Mexican clergy would be excommunicated

Learned disinterested preachers, animated by a truly apostolic spirit * * * are an unimportant minority The Mexican faith is a dead faith The abuse of external practices, the ease with which the Devil and God are reconciled, the absence of internal exercises of piety which develop the Christian spirit, these have killed the faith in Mexico In vain will one seek good fruit on this hybrid tree which has made the Mexican religion a singular assemblage of impotent prayers, shameful ignorance, unhealthful superstitions, and hideous vices [1]

The ultimate responsibility rests with the higher ecclesiastical authorities Throughout Mexican history they have tolerated, and by indifference and trifling discipline connived at, corruption among the clergy which not only unfitted it for its calling but at times rendered it a menace to society — the wolf in shepherd's clothing [2]

"Solicitation in the confessional," a euphemism for the seduction of women by their confessors, was common practice in colonial days Rarely, and only in the most flagrant cases, was it punished — and then lightly Virtual immunity for clerical venery could generally be secured by self-denunciation, after detection One of the severer penalties was imposed in 1721 on Fr Francisco Diego de Zárate, the prior of the Franciscan Mission of Santa María de los Angeles at Río Blanco He had violated fifty-six women a total of 126 times when they came to confess His proclivities were common knowledge But only when he banished from his parish a woman and her family, because she had resisted him, did the resulting scandal render action necessary The Holy Office sentenced him to a perpetual deprivation of confessing, and of active and passive voice in his Order, the last place in choir and refectory, six months' suspension from celebrating mass and two years reclusion in a convent, of which the first was to be passed in a cell with fasting on bread and water Fridays and Saturdays [3]

Yet merely "for having said that simple fornication [between unmarried persons] is not a mortal sin," five *laymen* were given two hundred lashes and other penalties by the Inquisition, and another for *saying* "that it was better to live in concubinage than marriage," was sentenced to a hundred lashes, perpetual banishment and other penalties [4]

[1] Domenech *op cit*, ch vi

[2] "Likewise, we beg Your Majesty to provide regarding the bishops and clericals, that the former not like in Spain be for pomp but for the benefit and conversion of the people and the sustenance of the church * * * And that the clergy be examined visited and corrected, because one of the greatest pestilences suffered by the doctrine of Christ is in the character of the greater part of the clericals, who live so loosely that not only do they obstruct but scandalize and undo what has been done and oppress the Religious and the bishops and the vicars general support them" From letter of Fathers Valencia Rosas Segovia, Armellones and Dacia to the Emperor dated Guadalajara, May 20 1552, published in the Códice Franciscano Icazbalceta, Nueva Colección de Documentos para la Hist de México p 217

[3] Lea, The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies, p 241–245

[4] Medina, Hist del Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en México, p 36–7

It was two centuries after the Conquest (1716) that the viceroy, the Duke of Linares, wrote in his memorable "instrucción" to his successor, the Marquis of Valero

It is my duty also to inform you about the ecclesiastical body, both regular and irregular, whose members generally live in such a manner that although I am forced to mention their vices I draw the line at details, yet my forbearance is not justified by their actions, for they are the stumbling blocks of justice, with their scandalous licentiousness, which they flaunt, going so far as to point out their offspring Not content with frequenting gambling-houses they have some of their own, where they also manufacture prohibited liquors and make the headquarters of scoundrels and criminals To unburden my conscience and discharge my duty to the King, I have adopted the custom of calling their prelates and informing them of these excesses, but I have accomplished very little since the ecclesiastics of both missions and parishes are absolutely self-willed For the sake of meekness and humility I do not mention names, but my heart aches with horror and discouragement because of the vices and the neglect of Christian education and care for the growth of our Religion

Experience and information in the matter Your Excellency will acquire easily for yourself, but to one case I will refer Having called an important prelate of those who are in charge of parishes, I asked him if he were not scandalized at what had occurred in one of them, where the priest confessed an Indian while he was in bed, and lying on the other side certain company that was with him * * * The Indian kneeled to confess and then arose, and said in the ear of the priest

"Father Cura, why don t you hear me in the confessional? '

"This is a confessional with a mattress, for the benefit of American natives like you "

"But, Father Cura I am ashamed to have this woman hear my sins "

"You are afraid that the secrets of the confessional may be revealed, eh? Don't worry, she won't hear anything, and, anyway, it is all right for her to hear your sins because she is the Samaritan "

[After some further discussion in a Decameronesque style which is better not reprinted —]

* * * the Indian kneeled and confessed but told only a fifth of his sins, and they say even less, that is only those which he was not ashamed to repeat nor were of the kind for which the priest could demand anything The priest said

"Your penitence is to bring me three hens "

The Indian asked him to have mercy and lessen the penitence because he was very poor, that he would bring one chicken, since for the sins he had confessed, one chicken was enough The priest was not willing, there was bargaining and finally, through the mediation of the Samaritan, the penitence was fixed at one setting hen

Having recounted this incident and similar excesses to the prelate, said prelate asked if he might tell me a story, which was that once an ecclesiastic went to his superior complaining of the scandals in the missions, whereupon his superior pointed to a Holy Crucifix and said

"'Does Your Reverence know why the Lord is in such a situation? He is

there because he told the truth, and said what was right If Your Reverence wants to live, let yourself be governed and go with God ' "

And the prelate went on to say to me

"Apply this advice to yourself, Your Excellency, because if you try to rule the friars they will crucify you, too " [1]

Despite the presence among the hierarchy of men of undoubted purity and devotion, the sequence of clerical dissipation and immorality is continuous and unbroken An edict of the Inquisition, in 1783, "for the extirpation of abuses of confessors against morality," provided that

> women are not to be confessed except in closed confessionals with separate doors, so that the confessor cannot by any chance, inadvertence, or intent touch or be touched by her feet, that the grating * * * be arranged so that there is no room to put the fingers, much less the hands, through the opening [2]

The edict also forbade the use of "hand gratings, veils, netting, bouquets, sieves, fans, or other makeshifts," and further provided that "when confession takes place in the private oratories of the ladies in their house, or their servants, the door should be left open giving free access to the family or any other person while confessing " [3]

But as the penalties for disobedience were either non-existent or negligible the abuses went on

Celibacy, among the clergy, was at all times at least as much honored in the breach as in the observance Hidalgo, when so charged, declared the vow of chastity contrary to nature [4] Morelos had children [4] But only when he came into conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities for offenses to them more serious, was his paternity touched on, and then with little emphasis In the twenty-three charges formulated against him by the Inquisition in 1815, No XIX referred to "licentious habits" none dealt directly with the concubinage that preceded his fatherhood, though his children were, curiously, mentioned in charge No XIV, that "he sent the eldest of his three sons to study in the United States, desirous that he learn the maxims of Protestantism so that he might return and carry on the work of his father " Among the other charges were that he "used a package of edicts of the Inquisition to make cartridge wads" (No III), "that he did not have a Bull of the Holy Crusade, scorning the apostolic graces and indulgences" (No VI), "that he had spoken ill of all the bishops" (No XII), "that he had read the errors of Voltaire, Rousseau, and others" (No XVI) The rest dealt with offenses against doctrine and his rebellion against the king

[1] Instrucción Por El Duque de Linares á Su Sucesor el Marqués de Valero, Rep in Principios Criticos Sobre El Virreinato, Rivera vol III p 251 2

[2] Edict of Holy Office for the Extirpation of Abuses of Confessors against Morality, rep in La Inquisición de México García, ed Doc XXIV, p 215–22

[3] Zárate, México á Través de los Siglos, vol III La Guerra de Independencia, p 20

[4] One of these, Almonte so named because during the revolutionary troubles the child was often hidden in the mountains, became one of the leading Mexican interventionists in the sixties

Morelos's reply to No XIV was that "he had sent his son to the United States, because there was no school (in Mexico) where he felt his son would be safe" To No XIX he answered "that if his habits had not been edifying, neither had they been scandalous, because in the army his sons were not known to be his" [1]

The testimony of unbiased and responsible observers, of French, Belgian, German, Austrian, and American Catholics, who viewed Mexican life at close quarters is irrefutable on the matter of clerical venery Wrote Baron Waldeck, in 1834

What can be expected of a clergy so profoundly immoral as that of this country? If I traced the picture of its indecencies people would refuse to credit my assertions Some concrete examples will suffice to make clear the extent of the incurable ulcer * * *

The priest of San Juan Bautista (Tabasco) carries on trade like a layman, has a store, and lives openly with a prostitute It is admitted, no one sees anything unusual in it If one remarks that these libertine priests have taken the vow of chastity, those of both sexes reply 'Didn't we make a similar vow of fidelity when we married? Is there one of us who has not violated it?" Unanswerable argument which gives the measure of morality of both the pastors and the flock [2]

"The scandals of the clergy," wrote the Empress Carlota to her grandmother, Queen Marie Amélie of France, "were such that our holy religion must indeed be divine not to have succumbed, although its disappearance would not have been long delayed were it not for the reforms which will be undertaken" [3]

"If the Pope barred out all those guilty of simony * * * and all the priests having concubines, the Mexican clergy would be reduced to very few * * *" wrote Abbé Domenech, in 1867, adding

The clergy carries love for a family to the point of paternity In my voyages in the interior several curates have refused me hospitality in order to prevent my glimpsing their "cousins," their "nieces," and their children It is difficult to verify the nature of these relationships Priests recognized as fathers of a family are not rare The people find that natural enough and do not jest concerning the conduct of their pastors except when they are not content with one woman One of my friends said to the mistress of a priest

"Do you not fear going to Hell, and have you no compunctions about living in matrimony with a man who says mass every day?"

"Sir," she answered in anger, 'I know that I am a decent woman, and that I would not live with the *Señor Cura* if we were not legitimately married"

In effect, in the State of Oaxaca there are priests who marry in order that no one may be scandalized With the celibacy of the priest an ecclesiastical institu-

[1] The Inquisition's charges against Morelos and his defense are reprinted in Colección de Documentos Hernandez y Dávalos vol VI, Doc 95, p 74–77

[2] Waldeck, Voyage Pittoresque et Archeologique dans la Province de Yucatan, p 153

[3] Letter of Dec 11, 1864 Quoted in Reinach-Loussmagne *op cit*, p 209

tion, I do not know how these men can arrange to contract these so-called legitimate marriages

An Oaxaca woman whom I was questioning about these strange unions said to me one day "My countrywomen prefer to live with priests rather than with laymen because they are better cared for, these poor creatures are so miserable that they seek a household where they are always sure of good clothing and food * * *"

A merchant having come one day to collect from the woman of a priest of the diocese of X, the price of a dress which she owed him, she said to him "I have no money, wait a bit longer"

"I won't wait," replied the merchant, "and if you don't pay me now, I'll have you called before the judge"

"Just you try it," said the woman, "you don't seem to know that I belong to the sacred mitre"

Everything that belongs to the bishop's establishment is held worthy of special consideration

Some bishops groan at this state of affairs, but little can they do to change it Others encourage it, unconsciously, by their remarkable good nature I recall that when one of these prelates passed through a village near the episcopal see, the priest there said to him

"Monseñor, have the goodness to bless my children and their mother"

The good bishop blessed them, they were a room-full

Another did even better — he baptized the child of one of his priests [1]

Of a *fiesta* in the town of Milta, Oaxaca, in the heart of the Mixtec country in 1899, Professor Starr wrote as follows

As we rode into town these sports (bull-riding and lassoing, known as *jaripeo*) were in full blast, everyone, save the bull-fighters, was drunk Now and then a tube of iron filled with powder was exploded A band in front of the municipal house was supplying music Much selling was in progress in the booths, the chief articles offered being intoxicating drinks A cluster of drunken vocalists, sitting flat upon the ground, but almost unable to hold themselves upright, were singing horribly to untuned guitars In front of the town-house a bench had been dragged out by the authorities for the benefit of the *cura*, who seated thereon, was watching the sports with maudlin gravity The *presidente* and other officials were standing by the *padre*, and all were drinking at frequent intervals Thinking the moment opportune, I approached the party and handed them my documents, but both *presidente* and *priest* were far too drunk to realize my needs Surveying the drunken town, I felt that it was necessary to act promptly * * * The only member of the government who was not extremely drunk was the *sindico* Calling him to me, I addressed him scorning both priest and *presidente* I refused to drink with them, saying that they were already too drunk to know their duties, and that both should be ashamed of their condition At this time the *cura* asked me if I were a clergyman On my replying no, he remarked that I looked like one I told him yes, that I was frequently mistaken for one that a priest in the Mixteca had even thought I was a bishop He then drunkenly inquired whether I was married, on my replying no, made the astonishing observation that then it was certain that I

[1] Domenech, *op cit*, chap vi

could not be a priest — that every priest had one wife, bishops two, and archbishops three [1]

Wrote Flandrau in 1908

It is discomposing * * * to learn of a powerful bishop whose "wife" and large family of sons and daughters are complacently taken for granted by the entire diocese — to be warned by a devout Catholic never under any circumstance to allow one's American maid servants to converse with a priest or to enter his home on any pretext whatever [2]

Henry Baerlein, the British author who visited Yucatán in 1912, specifies the various parish and *hacienda* priests who had concubines and children

Mendoza, priest of Tizimín, had four children, Aguilar, who succeeded him, misled the fourteen year old daughter of his cousin, living with her very openly " [3]

It was in Tizimín that the church was closed on Easter Sunday, 1923, when I was there An old Indian whom I questioned told me, "We are glad it is closed, the *curas* are bad men, they have never been the friends of us poor people "

Of one hundred and eighty priests who protested on the ground of ill-health against removal from Mexico City, which had been ordered for alleged non-compliance with the orders of the Constitutionalist government in 1915, forty-nine proved on medical examination to be suffering from venereal disease [4]

Concubinage exists unabated Dr Nicolas León, the anthropologist, told one of his University classes of arriving in a Michoacán parish with a curate newly assigned there They were met by a delegation of villagers who, on finding the priest had come without a woman, insisted that he either get one or choose one at once from the village, as they felt that otherwise their wives and daughters would not be safe

Dr Gamio likewise found in his aforementioned survey that "generally priests lead conjugal lives,' adding "the harm this irregularity works on the people is undeniable First the increased expenses of this mode of living are met by the parishioners Then there is the constant danger to the wives and daughters of the trusting peasants, especially when it is remembered that to them a divine quality is vested in the curate Finally the bastard offspring of these censurable unions can never rid themselves of the stigma society places on their birth " [5]

One of the ablest editorial writers in Mexico, conspicuously active in Catholic circles, whose pen has vigorously denounced anticlericalism, told me

[1] Starr In Indian Mexico p 143–4
[2] Flandrau, *op cit*, p 27
[3] Baerlein Mexico The Land of Unrest, p 48–50
[4] The report of the examining physician Dr Gilberto de la Fuente, is reproduced in facsimile in Ocho Mil Kilómetros en Campaña Obregón, p 437
[5] Gamio *op cit* vol I ch xlvii–xlviii

in 1925 that clerical venery was unfortunately almost the rule in the tropical regions of Mexico On the plateau he thought it was less common This condition underlay the grotesque legislation in 1925 in the State of Tabasco providing that priests must marry "It was merely an effort to legitimatize the existing children," Governor Tomás Garrido told me [1] The sincerity of this legislation in a country that is otherwise little moved by illegitimacy may be doubted, but not the facts behind it

The governor of a southeastern state during Obregón's presidency, an important figure in that state's politics, is the son of a priest Everyone knows it Nor is the profligacy confined to the rank and file of the priesthood, although "solicitation in the confessional" is still common practice which escapes punishment other than nominal [2] While some of the episcopate lead exemplary private lives, others are notorious for their amorous proclivities But they remain bishops

In the spring of 1925 I traveled from Laredo to Mexico City On the train were two Mexican bishops Likewise there were two Catholic laymen, one an American, the other a Frenchman of distinguished family One of the bishops spoke of the difficulties of the church in Mexico

"There across the border, religion is properly treated I never weary of pointing out that over there are automobiles, churches, and money for everyone Your churches do not lack support While the faith here is bound down, in your country religion is flourishing, flourishing"

Continually while painting the contrast his thumbs and forefingers were rubbing together, the gesture that in Latin countries signifies counting money Neither he nor his fellow bishop appeared to realize that they would never have been promoted to the episcopate of the Catholic church in the United States I have seen archbishops and bishops in Mexico of a very different type, kindly, dignified, spiritual That is one of the Mexican paradoxes — the extremes within the ranks of its hierarchy [3] These two were unshaved, the speaker with a week's growth of beard, their black cassocks filthy with accumulated grease spots, their finger nails black gross, carnal types both, without an atom of spirituality in their appearance or address

[1] On November 13, 1925

[2] Substantiation for this statement is to be found in the publication of the episcopal records seized during the Revolution They do not make pleasant reading See Recopilación de Datos de Procesos Eclesiásticos Por Delitos Carnales del Archivo del Arzobispado de Guadalajara, which lists forty-five cases

[3] For instance

"An example of that class of priests, synthesis of all the shortcomings mentioned, is the one stationed in the Villa of San Juan Teotihuacán * * *

"On the other hand in the village of San Martín de las Pirámides, there is a priest of mixed race, fully representative of those rare ministers who are beneficent to their community This exceptional pastor indeed watches with utmost care over the spiritual welfare of his flock, further lightens their economic burdens, teaches them the rudiments of personal and community hygiene and even manages to give them at his own expense entertainment such as circuses, traveling theaters, and like products of nomadic talent" Gamio, *op cit*, ch xlvii

"They would never be bishops in France," the Frenchman said afterward The American Catholic expressed himself even more vigorously on the contrast between the American and Mexican hierarchy

The historical rôle of the clergy and a growing realization of its character has changed the majority of literate male Mexicans into agnostics How, specifically, were they made so? According to the testimony of scores of witnesses, not merely by the personal behavior of the priests but by abuse of the credulousness of their faithful The following story is typical of a great number that I have listened to, from such a variety of sources that the aggregate weight of the evidence is incontrovertible Said a school-teacher, now in his thirties

"In 1905, when I was a little boy, I suffered from an ailment which physicians diagnosed as enuresis I was not improving rapidly under medical treatment, and our priest, saying it was foolish to waste time with the doctors, advised my mother to take me on a pilgrimage to Oaxaca to the *Señor de Mixtepec*, who possessed great curative powers My mother was very devout and we went Many other people had come to the fiesta, which took place the first week in Lent The *Señor* was carried out from the church and around the country-side, when the state authorities hearing of it, sent some *rurales* to remind the priest that he was violating the law and must stop the procession The officer in charge argued with the *cura* at some length and finally peremptorily ordered him to return the image to the church which the priest, after much protesting, did On the way back a tremendous thunder-storm came up, the sky was dark, lightning flashed and the rain came down in torrents When the procession arrived at the church the priest placed the image just inside the door, took his place in front of it and, keeping the crowd out in the rain, addressed it saying that the storm was the evidence of the *Señor*'s displeasure at being so treated, and that His curse had fallen on the Constitution and on the authorities Before the priest had finished, his auditors set out to mob the *rurales*, but as these had withdrawn trouble was fortunately averted When we returned home from the pilgrimage, my mother and father discussed the incident at length, and I remember that my father, who, although a devout Catholic, was less believing than my mother, made some unfavorable comments upon the priest's taking advantage of the incident of the thunder-storm This and many like occurrences gradually confirmed my disbelief in the faith of my fathers"

Similar causes have operated to make those who have controlled Mexico's political destiny for two generations free-thinkers, although professing varying degrees of nominal allegiance Apart from a sprinkling of select families, remnants of the colonial and Iturbide aristocracies, it is the women of the cultured class who form the nucleus of believing Catholics — who make up the active organization of the *Damas Católicas* It is they who preserve among their husbands and sons a certain outward conformism, who keep

the family life technically within the church As pronounced an anti-clerical as General Obregón was married in the church in 1916 a few days after expelling a number of priests from the capital for hostile political activity, a paradox which provoked comment the following year in the Constitutional Convention at Querétaro when the religious issue was discussed [1] It is a common anomaly that the wives of men conspicuously hostile to the clergy may be among the devoutest communicants That their beliefs may also be tinted with idolatry was suggested to me when a member of an old Yucatán family said

"I am a devout Catholic, but I can get along without the priest, if I must St Anthony really means more to me than everything else I pray to *San Antonio* morning and night, whenever I am in need of comfort, and whenever I really want something very much "

And she designated the object of her worship — a statuette about ten inches in height — on a mantel in her home

Thus the faith of the Mexicans, nominally Catholic, lacks the spirit, the ethical content, the uniformity, and solidarity that characterize the faith elsewhere The Mexican's religion is his individual reaction to Catholicism Instead of conquering Mexico, with an exclusive opportunity to do so for three centuries, the Catholic church has been conquered by it Politically the church has been chained, economically its power has been nullified, ritualistically it has become adulterated by the paganism it found, morally it has succumbed to the vices of the laity Its greatest defeat has been on its own ground in the kingdom of the spirit Writes Carleton Beals

> Through the centuries the Roman-Aztec Church has been jealous of its right to rule, its wealth, and its luxuries For this right to rule, it has returned majestic temples that tower above the plains throughout the length and breadth of the land, but it has returned very little toward the material, mental, or moral elevation of the people
>
> The Church has had it in its power to create a new Mexican, an educated Mexican, a clean Mexican It has had it in its power to raise economic standards If it could teach the Indian to build monumental, airy, and clean temples, it could have taught him how to build a decent home in which to live In short it had in its power to create a free people [2]

The church has done none of these things Its failure is closely identified with Mexico's failure It is the conviction of a scholarly Mexican priest, Father Rivera, who has made his mark as a historian and student of public affairs, that the "laxity of the priesthood, the education of Mexico by the priesthood, the ideas and customs of the priesthood," are the principal cause of the "backwardness and ill-being of Mexico " [3] He would doubtless

[1] Diario de los Debates del Congreso Constituyente, p 462
[2] Beals, *op cit* p 175
[3] Rivera, Principios Críticos Sobre el Virreinato * * * vol III, p 5

agree with St John Chrysostom in that great preacher's belief — which he quotes

Si autem ipsi sacerdotes fuerint in peccatis totus populus convertitur ad peccandum * * * Sicut de templo omne bonum egreditur, sicut de templo omne malum procedit Vidit studiosus agricola arborem pallentibus foliis marcidum, et intellexit quia laesuram in radicibus haberet Nam vere, quemquia aliquam culpam habet circa radices, ita cum videris populum indisciplinatum et irreligiosum, sine dubio cognosce quia in sacerdotibus culpa sit

(If the clergy be demoralized, the entire people will become demoralized * * * As all good issueth from the temple, so likewise doth all evil The watchful horticulturist who sees a tree withered and with yellow leaves, knows that it has been injured at the roots For as truly as you understand that a tree with sere leaves has some defect close to the root, so when you see a chaotic people without a true religion, know without question that the guilt lies with the priests)



THE EVENTS OF 1926–1927

In 1926 the long smouldering antagonism between church and state flamed into open warfare The recrudescence was precipitated by the Episcopate's announced repudiation of the constitution [1] This opening gun was followed a week later by Archbishop Mora y del Río's declaration that "the protest of the Mexican prelates * * * against the Constitution of 1917 * * * has not been modified but fortified," that a campaign against "laws that were [are] unjust and against Natural Right" would begin and that "the Episcopate, clergy, and Catholics did [do] not recognize and would [will] combat Articles 3, 5, 27, and 130 of the existing constitution This position" said the statement, "we cannot modify under any consideration without committing treason against our faith and our religion" [2] After a third announcement in similar vein the government took notice of this campaign and hastened the adoption of laws regulating the articles in question

This enabling legislation which had already been under consideration by the Government was analogous to that regulating other constitutional provisions — on land, labor, subsoil rights, foreign ownership While adding nothing to the constitution it provided definite penalties in the shape of fines and imprisonment for violations [3] The Government also met what it considered a challenge by the clergy by enforcing the constitutional articles in controversy which had hitherto remained unenforced It deported foreign priests It closed Catholic primary schools and nunneries The Government's position was expressed in an authorized interview by President Calles as follows

> The Federal Government, totally absorbed as it was in the tremendous administrative problems and the resolution of serious matters affecting the development of Mexico and the fulfilment of its internal and external obligations, did not take note of the eternal enemy — the bad Mexican and foreign clergy in Mexico and the politicians and agitators who have always thrived under its auspices — when the head of the Catholic church on the last anniversary of the promulgation of the

[1] Published in Universal Jan 27 1926 It was signed by all the archbishops and bishops Its tenor is found in the opening and closing sentences 'The Code of 1917 wounds the most sacred rights of the Catholic Church * * * we therefore protest against similar transgressions against religious liberty and the rights of the church and we declare that we disavow any act or manifesto * * * if contrary to * * * this protest"

[2] Published in Universal, Feb 4, 1926

[3] Ley Reformando el Codigo Penal * * * Sobre Delitos * * * en Materia de Culto Religioso

Federal Constitution which governs our country caused to be reproduced * * * in "Universal," an old screed in which the leaders of the Mexican clergy disavowed and repudiated the Constitution of the Republic [1]

The president then stated that the Government had not believed that the Mexican clergy would again attack the fundamental laws until a third announcement over the archbishop's signature made him realize that a new attack was impending

What [continued the president] can and should the government of a country do in which any group of its society, religious or not religious, publicly repudiates the fundamental charter and announces its purpose to combat it (without expressing that it will combat it by the only legal means which is a struggle in Congress to modify the existing laws * * *) and which incites the public to disavow the same Constitution? [2]

On March 10 Bishop José de Jesús Manrique y Zárate of Huejutla issued a flaming pastoral entitled, "¡Viva Cristo Rey!" in which he declared

We reprove, condemn, and anathematize each and every one of the crimes and assaults committed by the Mexican Government against the Catholic church * * * We do not confine ourselves solely to rejecting indignantly Articles 3, 5, 27, and 130 of the so-called Queretan Constitution,[3] but to extend our reprobation and anathema to each and every one of the laws, to each and every one of the precepts, violative of Divine Right, Natural Right, and the Sacrosanct Dispositions of the Church

For us it means nothing that these laws be fundamental, organic, or of whatever other nature, present, past, and future, which violate in any manner the aforementioned rights * * *

By expelling the foreign priests the Mexican Government not only assaults the Mexican church but the Catholic church spread all over the world This church, unlike the heretical Protestant churches * * * is distinguishable by its unconquerable unity * * * Therefore Article 130 of the Mexican Constitution, in providing that ministers of religion * * * must be Mexicans by birth, wounds the constitution of the [Catholic] church and attacks the faith of the majority of the nation [4]

The Episcopate in a pastoral letter on April 21, set forth specifically twenty-four objections to the constitution adding, "in all times and especially the present, the church * * * temporizes for love of peace in conflicts of minor importance It does not seek the struggle, but if it is obliged either to renounce its liberties * * * or to defend them legally but virilely, it will never betray its cause which is that of God and country * * * Thus

[1] Reproduced in La Cuestión Religiosa en México, Lugo, p 382–386

[2] *Idem*

[3] Queretan refers pertaining to Querétaro the city in which the Constitutional Congress met and drew up the Constitution of 1917

[4] Sexta Carta Pastoral que el * * * Obispo de Huejutla Dirije á sus Diocesanos * * * (Copy in writer's possession)

let us make ourselves worthy of the protection of Heaven and let us stop complaining that Divine Providence does not help us if we in a cowardly manner abandon the field of battle * * *"[1]

To enforce the legislation forbidding the ministration of foreigners the Government required all priests to register The Episcopate thereupon ordered them not to comply and to withdraw from the churches on the day that the new legislation was to become effective, July 31, 1926 Meanwhile an organization of Catholic laymen, "The National League of Defense of Religious Liberty," announced a campaign "to create in the entire nation an intense economic crisis to compel the Government" to yield It declared its intent "to paralyze the social and economic life of the nation," and specifically recommended

A "Boycott on papers which either oppose this campaign or do not lend its support Silence will be considered lack of support * * *"

B Purchase only of necessaries

C D E F Abstention from the use of vehicles, electric current, lottery tickets, attendance at theaters

G "Complete non-attendance in lay schools"

An endorsement of this boycott as "worthy of all praise" by the Episcopate's committee, signed by the archbishop of Mexico and the bishop of Tabasco, accompanied the proclamation[2] In a meeting on July 7 this committee resolved "to recommend efficaciously to our clergy and faithful the most effective participation possible in so laudable an enterprise"[3]

On July 31, the clergy following the Episcopate's orders withdrew from the churches These remained open Parishioners' committees were placed in charge Some rioting took place and in a number of localities persons stationed on the roofs and in the belfries of churches fired on the municipal authorities and soldiery The disturbances, however, were unexpectedly slight The fatalities at this time and those that had occurred previously were chiefly on the side of the Government

On September 24 the Chamber of Deputies rejected the Episcopate's demand for amendment of the constitutional articles aforementioned

Meanwhile, small armed bands under the banner of "Long live Christ King," rose in various sections of the country Some were led by priests Others not All carried standards with religious devises The Episcopate steadily affirmed its purpose to use only peaceable means but it never disavowed, officially protested against, or forbade, armed rebellion Its attitude was analogous in that respect to that in the Reform war seventy years before The character of the warfare, which was wholly of a guerrilla nature, may be gathered from the following typical *communiqué* rendered to

[1] Carta Pastoral * * * of April 21 Signed by the eight archbishops and twenty-nine bishops (Copy in writer's possession)

[2] Liga Nacional Defensora de la Libertad Religiosa, Circular 2 A (Copy in writer's possession)

[3] *Idem*

the War Department early in February, 1927, by General Eugenio Martínez, chief of the First *Jefatura*, which includes Mexico

In August past in Exatzingo, Chalco, appeared a group of eight men, headed by the brothers Yañez, and with the cry, "Viva la Religión," committed various assaults * * * In September, in Amecameca, an organized group of eighteen captained by the so-called General Panfilo Palacios, with the cry of "Viva la Religión y el Señor del Sacro Monte,"[1] sacked the villages of Xoyatzingo, Huehupulco, and San Pedro * * * The first of the current year the so-called General Luis Castro, in the village of Tetomitl, rose with various fanatics * * * among them, a priest Just at that time the de la Huertista ex-general, Joaquín Romero, escaped from Mexico City and joined scattered rebels from La Comalera, but in the last skirmish with them in Cruz del Morillo, was captured and sentenced to death by summary court-martial Captured from the enemy were sixty-two horses, stolen in villages through which the rebels had passed and which were returned to their owners Also were captured six banners with the images of the Virgin of Guadalupe and the Heart of Jesus, with the devise "For Religion and Country," one hundred and eighty rosaries, two thousand and twenty-five "reliquias" of various sizes with images, two boxes with scapularies, medallions, religious order pins, two Knights of Columbus bands, twenty-five manifestos signed by René Capistran Garza, eight pistols of different makes, fourteen Mauser 7-millimeter rifles, four carbines of the same kind, a Mauser cannon-rifle-gun, two carbines 30–30, two 44, fourteen shot-guns, a Remington rifle and six swords, three hundred and twenty-five 7-millimeter cartridges and sixty-five 30–30[2]

This report was in response to a telegraphic request from the president to the thirty-three *jefes de operaciones* for a summing up of the military situation in their respective jurisdictions

Fifteen reported complete peace Eighteen wired that there had been rebellious movements of armed bands The commanders in Mexico City, Chihuahua, Saltillo, Vera Cruz, Oaxaca, Durango, Guadalajara, Colima, Zacatecas, Torreón, Aguascalientes, Irapuato, Querétaro, Toluca, Cuernavaca, Tampico, Mazatlán, and Morelia reported that they had definite evidence of instigation or participation in the uprisings of clericals and members of religious organizations such as the Knights of Columbus, the "Unión Popular" and the "Liga de Defensa Católica" The chiefs of operations of Guadalajara Colima, Zacatecas, and Toluca gave the names of the priests who actually went into battle, leading or haranguing the rebels

Early in January, 1927, when the new Mexican oil legislation, which had gone into effect January 1, had created a tense situation between the governments of the United States and Mexico, and a rupture of diplomatic relations seemed imminent, René Capistran Garza, vice-president and active

[1] "Lord of the Sacred Mount," worshiped in that village
[2] From the files of the Secretaría de Guerra

head of the League of Defense, "pronounced" from the American side of the border at El Paso for a new revolutionary government of which he declared himself provisional president [1]

The proclamation was in the classic Mexican military manner After indicting the Government on seven counts, it announced ten basic principles of the new "National Government of Freedom," called the Mexican people to arms "under the true banner of liberty," decreed amendments to the religious provisions of the constitution and withdrew recognition of the present executive, legislative, and judicial authorities of nation and state, and of the municipal governments [2]

The military struggle waxed more and more savage Atrocities were committed on both sides, innocent people were victims [3]

Shouting "Long live Christ the King," fifty Catholics on January 4, mounted and armed, raided the town of Parras de la Fuente in Coahuila They captured a labor leader, named Rafael Delgado, and executed him [4] In Colima, which together with a part of Jalisco was the region of greatest rebel strength, the rebels systematically burned government and state, village and rural schools [5]

On March 20 Catholic rebels, with shouts of "Viva Cristo Rey!" attacked the Laredo-Mexico City train, killed the conductor and train guard and took $100,000 pesos of government funds The passengers were not molested [6] One month later, on April 20, the Guadalajara-Mexico City train was attacked by about four hundred men shouting the battle-cry of "Long live Christ the King," headed — the Government charged — by three priests [7] The participation of the priests was asserted by members of the Episcopate to have been in the capacity of chaplains Various survivors testified that the priests were actively directing the assault The entire train guard and passengers, including women and twenty children, fifty-four in all,[8] were killed A number of the wounded passengers were burned alive when the attackers poured kerosene on the cars and set fire to them One man traveling with his mother, wife, and three children lost them all — and his reason When dawn broke on the charred wreckage he was wandering around, gibbering, with a burnt baby's corpse in his arms All this in the name of Christ King!

Two days later the Mexican Government ordered the expulsion of the

[1] Associated Press despatch, January 9
[2] Copy in writer's possession
[3] For the excesses by the military see chapter on the Army p 325–6
[4] Mexico City papers Jan 5 1927 Also New York Herald Tribune of same date
[5] *Schools were destroyed in Montitlán, Rancho Viejo, El Carrizal, Suchitlán (2) El Remudadero* El Trapiche, Chiapa, La Capacha From the report, dated April 5 1927 of the director of federal education in the State of Colima, to the ministry of education *(Copy in writer's possession)*
[6] Associated Press and United Press despatches, March 21, Excelsior March 21
[7] They were, according to the government *communiqué* sent by General Jaime Carrillo, Presbyters Vega, Pedraza, and Angulo
[8] This is the most conservative figure available Press despatches placed the deaths at more than a hundred

archbishops and bishops remaining in the country They left at once for the American border The Episcopate denied all responsibility for the Guadalajara shambles with which it was charged by the Government The Government asserted that, whatever the bishops' declarations, the rebellion had their implicit support This, various members of the Episcopate, also denied [1]

However, a pastoral letter issued in Rome on February 11, 1927, by Archbishop José María González y Valencia, of Durango, gave implicit encouragement to the rebellion as the following extracts would indicate

God well knows, venerable brothers and beloved sons, with what sentiment of veneration we address ourselves on this occasion to you, who find yourselves on the field of battle front to front with the enemies of Christ * * *

Now that in our archdiocese many Catholics have resorted to arms and ask a word of their prelate *** we believe it to be our pastoral duty to face the issue squarely and assuming with entire conscience the responsibility before God and before history to dedicate to them these words We never provoked this armed movement But once that, all pacific means exhausted this movement exists TO OUR CATHOLIC SONS RISEN IN ARMS FOR THE DEFENSE OF THEIR SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS RIGHTS, AFTER HAVING THOUGHT AT GREAT LENGTH BEFORE GOD AND HAVING CONSULTED THE SAGEST THEOLOGIANS OF THE CITY OF ROME, WE SHOULD SAY TO YOU BE TRANQUIL IN YOUR CONSCIENCES AND RECEIVE OUR BENEDICTIONS [2]

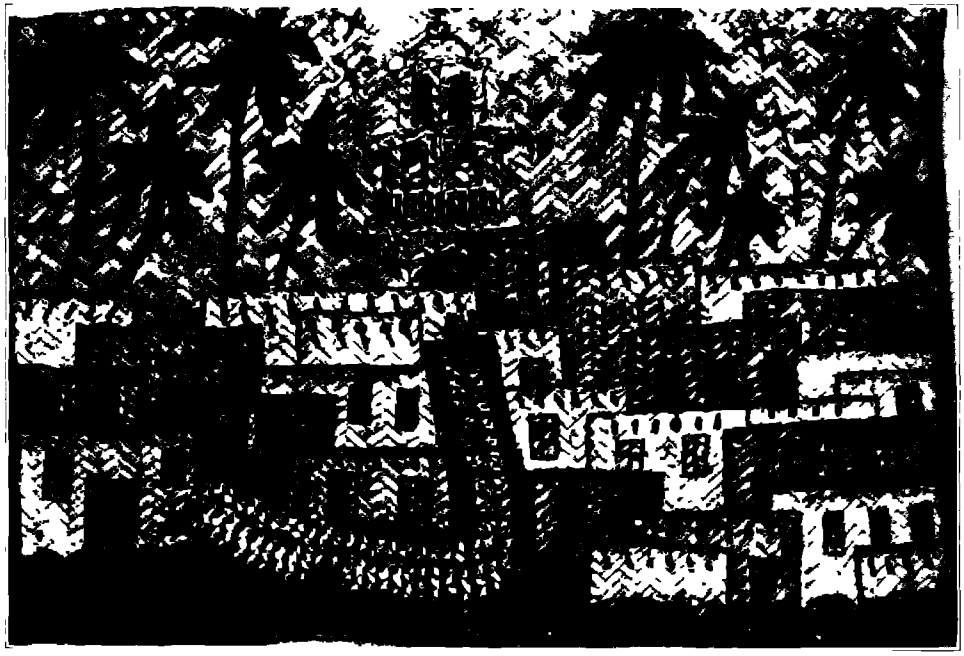
The same pastoral also indicates the papal approval of the rebellion when it states "What great consolation filled our prelate's heart hearing with our own ears the words of holy praise, blessing, and most especial love which you have merited from the supreme head of the church We have seen him moved on hearing the story of your struggle, we have seen him bless your admirable resistance, *approve all your acts*,[3] and admire all your heroisms "

The pastoral concluded with

Meanwhile you faithful and beloved sons maintain the post which belongs to you * * * do not dismay for a moment! Christ, King * * * is with you! For Him we fight, for Him we are disposed to die, for Him we shall never tolerate that Mexico be deprived of its eternal treasures, for Him we repudiate the anti-Christian arrangements called laws, and for Him we shall continue resisting all iniquitous efforts until we may guarantee through justice and charity an era of true Christian liberty and a happy republic in which under the cloak of the immaculate

[1] Statement by Archbishop Leopoldo Ruíz y Flores of Michoacán in San Antonio, Texas, April 30, as spokesman for the exiled archbishops and bishops

[2] Capitals in original [3] Italics not in original



REVOLUTIONISTS ENTERING A TOWN

A study example of [illegible] Artist unknown [illegible]



"LAS SOLDADERAS"

The "Soldieresses" — Scene of the Revolution — Fresco by José Clemente Orozco in the patio of the Escuela Preparatoria, Mexico City

Virgin of Guadalupe, the same who smashed the head of the serpent, we can live loving each other like brothers, enjoying all our rights of Christians, of citizens, and of men [1]

By July, 1927, the Catholic rebellion was suppressed Various persons active in it who had been imprisoned in the penal colony of the Tres Marías Islands were pardoned by President Calles and released The boycott had been a flat failure

The merits of this controversy — not its methods — it is impossible to judge by the standards of other countries Certainly the existing anti-clerical legislation in Mexico is uniquely oppressive of the clergy and discriminatory against it The clergy is entirely right in protesting against its disfranchisement — its members are forbidden to vote or to hold office The local legislature's power to fix the number of priests within the state gives that body the power to cripple or even destroy This is not mere theory In the federal districts which include lower California and Quintana Roo the national legislature fixed the quota at one priest for every six thousand inhabitants [2] The prohibition of clerical primary schools, of the church to own property and various other restrictions which do not, for instance, exist in the United States, cannot be measured by its standards Americans would not tolerate such restrictions But neither would Americans tolerate a clergy of the character of the Mexican The entire history and the entire picture are different The repression which is now visited upon the church, however unjust it may seem, and be, is the fruit of the Mexican church's own past and present performance

At the very moment when the church was pleading before the world for the religious freedom, which throughout its history it had so persistently denied, it was still far from practicing a correlative attitude The same fanatical bigotry which has incited villagers to the killing of Protestants for the sole crime of being Protestants, throughout the last seventy years, since the Reform Laws permitted their entry to the country, still persists [3]

On the authority of the Episcopal Bishop of Mexico, the Right Rev Frank W Creighton, are reproduced the following excerpts from letters to him from one of the clergy, the Rev Efrain Salinas, a Mexican, minister of the Protestant Episcopal Mission in Guadalajara, for the truth of which Bishop Creighton vouches [4]

[1] Pub by the League of National Defense of Religious Liberty (Copy in writer's possession)

[2] In the United States there is one priest for every 801 Catholics In Europe the average is one for 760, according to figures presented to the Puebla Legislature in April, 1926, by Archbishop Pedro Vera y Zuria of Puebla

[3] Foster Diplomatic Memoir vol I p 56 Carl Lumholtz the anthropologist, had the misfortune to be suspected of being a Protestant missionary by the Curate of Santa Teresa in Tepic (now Navarit) in 1897 who warned his parishioners to 'not give him anything not even a glass of water' Unknown Mexico, vol I p 505 Withholding drinking water in arid Mexico may be the equivalent of a death sentence

[4] The excerpts are unedited

May 21, 1926

The persecution of the work of our church is suffering in Tlajomulco is due to a mistaken idea the people have and the Roman priest of that village encourages, that the Government of Mexico is Protestant, and that it is trying to change the religion of our people into Protestantism * * * As they cannot harm the government, they [to] check the work of the Protestants in the way they have done in Tlajomulco According to fresh information Mr Díaz had from his home, the Roman priest and other fanatics from the vicinity paid money to the assassins to perform another "St Bartholomew's Night" Mr Cruz Gómez, our churchman who was killed came on Friday, 7th night, to receive the religious instruction Mr Diaz used to impart his congregation After reading the Bible, singing hymns and saying some prayers, he went home about nine in the night His wife and four sons were with him The murderers were waiting for him near his home and there, in the presence of his whole family, defenceless, he was killed, the baby he was carrying in his arms being wounded also That same night they tried to kill Rev Diaz and other members of the church I have with me Rev Diaz, he and the rest of the flock could escape and are now scattered abroad As soon as they are back in their home and things are safe, I will start services anew in Tlajomulco

August 6, 1926

Our work in this region is passing through a very hard time due to the attitude the Roman Church has adopted respecting the new regulations the government put into effect dealing with religious matters In Tlajomulco it has not been possible to continue our work as our people were compelled by the fanatics to abandon their homes and to flee to the mountains It happened that on the second of this month, the civil authorities went to make an inventory and to get the keys of the church buildings, as the Roman priest closed the church to any religious ceremonies and offices But the people opposed the authorities and the crowd tried to kill the sheriff who could hardly escape finding protection in the municipal building The crowd sieged the place, cut the telegraph wires, posted men on the roads to stop all travelers going to Guadalajara in order to keep the village without communication and started a series of attacks on the municipal building and against the homes of our church people We lost a man, Mr Celedonio Chitica who was discovered when jumping the fence of his house to escape, and was murdered by the mob Five of our men could escape bringing the news to the city But our church women had to stay in their houses and it was [were] three days, three terrible days of uncertainty and terror as fanatics stoned the roofs and were shooting at the doors and several times tried to set fire to the buildings and houses of our Church people At last the Federal troops reached the town just in time to save Mr Diaz's family from being killed and his house from being burned I went on Sunday and had the Holy Communion, but there was very little attendance I sent Mr Robredo the next Sunday and he reported our church people as having not returned to their homes On the 10th Mr Diaz's family left the village for the city because the garrison was moved to another place and there was no safety in Tlajomulco They are now in Guadalajara Therefore we have suspended the services of the Church temporarily in that village As soon as I know things are better and our congrega-

tion is back in the village, I will start our religious services I am now trying to locate my people to see what help I can offer them * * *

It has not been the same in the school The boycott is against all non-Roman corporations of any kind The School was included in the "black list," the League of Religious Defense is [are] issuing from time to time to let the people know "Who is Who" The results have been that the parents of three boys took them out of the school and two other boys asked permission to stay in their homes for a time because their parents are afraid of an attack on the School by fanatics from Zapopan Rumors have indeed come to me that there is [are] in this [such] village great excitement and talking of burning the school We are in the hands of God and have confidence in His Protection We are now busy printing a selection of 100 hymns

September 24, 1926

I am sorry to tell you that our work in San Sebastián has to be stopped Our congregation there have had their share in these difficulties On September 12th, Mr Robredo escaped from being murdered That same week some of our congregation discovered a plot to kill any minister of the "Protestants" going to the village the following Sunday They wrote me a letter asking me not to go for at least two Sundays until they have some friendly explanations with the Roman Catholics of the village I hope by that time the fanatics will be appeased and we will be safe going on with our work

Guadalajara

All safe in the School Some difficulties, to get servants as nobody wants to work for "heretics" Yet we are on the job

Feb 1, 1927

I was waiting for things to be in better shape to give you some nice information of the work in this region Unfortunately conditions are not pleasant Our poor people from San Sebastián were persecuted since December the 26th, when fanatics from the same village and from Sta Anita started the rebellion against the government Rebels were looking for them, to kill them, for several days God protected them and no one was harmed Almost all of them fled to this city and were with me and Mr Díaz for a few days They have returned to their homes, but I know they do not sleep in their houses by night but go to the hill [s] to hide themselves We have stopped our work for a time in that place

Tlajomulco is lost for us, at least for some time Our people could not live there and are scattered [1]

The clerical issue in Mexico rests to-day but partially on a plane of reason Prejudice, bitterness, passion, denunciation, violence animate both camps The blame does not rest wholly with one side It is quite true that from the Government's standpoint the Mexican church has been persistently obstruc-

[1] These excerpts supplied by Bishop Creighton

tionist, blocking lay education, blocking agrarian reform, and misusing its power by invoking supernaturalism The revolutionists are convinced that the Mexican Church is responsible for much of their country's plight That the church bears a large measure of responsibility no dispassionate student can possibly deny Its long record of avarice, materialism, and obscurantism has overshadowed the faithful and disinterested service of individual unselfish and devoted priests It is not surprising therefore that the pendulum of repression has swung far the other way

For, certainly, the blame assigned to the church by the anticlericals is exaggerated The clergy is far from being, as they assert, the only retarding, noxious influence in Mexican life, even were one to grant that all that is charged against it, be true The revolutionists emphasize the exploitation of the poor by the priesthood Let them clean their own house, and cast out the grafting generals and politicians Where in recent years the priests have harvested centavos, the *políticos* have stolen pesos — often by the thousands and tens of thousands Whatever may have been the influence of the church in the past it is clearly but a shadow of its former self Granted that the law should be strictly enforced, the Government's case is weak in its inconsistency There is swift and dire punishment for the offending priest There is none for the offending *político* Moreover, while the Revolutionists proclaim the sanctity of the constitution against the clerical assaults upon it, they themselves practice and connive at other violations of that charter

On the other hand what consideration ought to be accorded a clergy which, unable to secure its demands, again takes the sword — again precipitates an armed conflict with its ghastly wake of death, misery, and anguish? The Mexican clergy has learned nothing and forgotten nothing It is still medieval The restrictions imposed upon the church by the Constitution of 1917 were excessive, irksome, discriminatory, unjust Within the revolutionist ranks many have believed so — including Carranza — and believe so[1] When the church so asserts, it asserts an undeniable fact But its own actions have been largely responsible for its plight Its present position would have been infinitely stronger if, while recording its protest, it had submitted to the law of the land — as it has never done — and adhered to the principles of the Prince of Peace The other denominations have managed to conform with the law although all its provisions were not to their liking[2] The way for the church to strengthen itself in Mexico is not

[1] Upon the initiative of President Carranza a reform of Article 3 of the constitution permitting Catholic primary instruction was presented to Congress in Nov 1918 The following month he submitted a draft of further amendments which struck out Para VII of Art 130 (the legislature's right to fix the number of priests in states) and Para VIII (which excluded from the ministry all not Mexicans by birth) Congress however failed to act

[2] Miss Hewitt head of the Methodist Girls School (Hijas de Allende) in Pachuca told me in March 1927 "The new regulations of Article 130 of the constitution mean that we no longer teach religion in the school Formerly we had Bible classes and a branch of the Epworth League We

by stooping to battle but by rising above the battle The way to intrench itself is by service If the field of that service now appears unduly circumscribed let it at least deeply plow and harrow that field The opportunities there are still immeasurable

Certainly events have proved that the Mexican church in "going on strike" and in conniving at armed rebellion, committed a colossal blunder How much the Mexican hierarchy counted on and expected aid from without when it launched its campaign against the constitution and Government it is difficult to say At the beginning of its drive pressure from Catholic sources in the United States for withdrawal of American recognition and a lifting of the embargo on arms was considerable The pastoral letter of the American episcopate on Dec 12, 1926, however, put a definite quietus on these moves If the Mexican hierarchy misjudged the possibilities of outside aid it misjudged its internal strength in Mexico still more It expected that the boycott would bring the Mexican Government to its knees Nothing of the kind happened Indeed the rebellion merely further exposed the character of Mexican Catholicism and the weakness of the clergy's hold on its people It is idle to say that a popular movement was put down by armed force On the contrary the army did much to keep alive rebellion [1] Except in relatively few regions the clergy passed out of the lives of the supposedly Catholic people without a ripple The reason is simple As long as the Mexican could go to church and worship his idol in the shape of a saint's image he was content The loss of his priest meant little to him Indeed in more than a dozen different villages in the states of Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, and Puebla, villagers expressed to me in the spring of 1927 their preference for the new order of things because, as they said, they could now worship without paying for the privilege Out of several score with whom I conversed in those three states, one only, an old man, in the village of Ecatepec, Tlaxcala, expressed a regret that a priest was not available for the baptism of new-born children This of course is not typical of all Mexico In other sections, particularly in Jalisco, Guanajuato, Querétaro, and Michoacán, unquestionably some villagers miss their priests There seems to be a definite relation between the peasants' concern in the clerical controversy and the benefit they have derived from agrarian reform Where they have received land they apparently care little, or less, about the absence of a priest and his services Land fills their lives

As for the well-to-do urban population, its spiritual needs have been attended to by priests acting privately in homes One might imagine that

have abolished both, because we are entirely willing and determined to obey the laws of the country The children however, may go voluntarily to church on Sundays and to Sunday school Our Boys' School (Julian Villagran) which is situated next to our church and is in charge of a Mexican teacher, had a door connecting church and school The authorities requested us to plaster it up and we did so Our relations with the authorities are entirely friendly"

[1] See p 328–9

at this supreme crisis in church affairs its ministers would exhibit an unusual compassion and devotion for the flock deprived of the normal ministrations of its faith Many doubtless have But evidence is also plentiful that the priests who remained in Mexico have taken undue advantage of their shortage

A middle class couple desiring strictly to observe the tenets of the church approached a Catholic priest in Gómez Palacio and informed him of their desire to be married by him at the home of the girl's parents He agreed but fixed the cost at five hundred pesos This exorbitant and unheard of rate, the priest told them frankly, was due to the times Priests were not officiating in the churches, they were scarce in any event The economic law of supply and demand naturally raised prices Two families of Catholics who have had masses regularly in their houses in Mexico City since August 1, 1926, have complained in my presence of the excessive price they had to pay

What will happen?

I asked this question of President Calles in May, 1927 He answered, "When the priests decide to obey the law they can come back "

On the other hand, Bishop Díaz of Tabasco, on returning from Rome, is quoted by "The New York Times" as saying

> The Pope is confident that eventually the Church will win her battle in Mexico I went to Rome chiefly to obtain confidence and support for my faith, and I obtained it in an audience with the Pope I told him of affairs as I viewed them, and he expressed the opinion that the Calles Government must fall and that with its fall the Catholic Church will regain her old standing [1]

The fall of the Calles Government, were it to happen, would not be related to the clerical conflict, nor would his fall cause the Catholic church to regain its old standing, and the question may well be asked whether the regaining of that standing would, even were it possible, be desirable for Mexico, its people, and for the church itself What the church really needs is not to regain its old standing but to gain an entirely new one in which it can through service and by example win the love and confidence of the Mexicans To do this the Mexican church itself needs first to be redeemed

[1] July 9, 1927

THE ARMY

THE ARMY

MILITARILY, the Mexican state was conceived in treason Independent Mexico's first army, the *trigarante*,[1] was composed of traitors to the Spanish army[2] Excepting only Guerrero's band and a few individuals,[3] commander-in-chief, generals, officers, and men were wearing the king's uniform, drawing pay from the royal treasury, and had for ten years been systematically suppressing independence For "turning" they were offered and received promotion, treason being remunerated in proportion to its extent The number of grades which the Spanish officer jumped in the Mexican army depended on the number of privates he had induced to desert with him[4] Ascensions of four ranks were common and captains became generals[5] A lesser motive, but also of self-interest, was the abolition in the reestablished constitution[6] — to which the officers had also sworn fidelity[7] — of the *fuero militar*, the privilege which exempted the military from submission to civil authority, and allowed them to answer for any misdeeds before special courts of fellow soldiers[8]

Not all the Spanish officers and men serving in Mexico betrayed their sworn allegiance Those who did not returned to Spain But the disloyal and unprincipled remained to form the first army of the Mexican nation and to become its military and political leaders

The standard of military honor had been negligible in the closing colonial days A privileged and dissolute caste that accepted the perquisites and shunned the responsibilities of the career of arms, had been created by the wholesaling of the *fuero*[9] A contemporary writer thus characterized the royal soldiery

[1] A coined word, meaning "the army of the three guaranties" See p 37

[2] Alaman, Hist de Méjico, vol V, p 86–7, 100–5, 151–3, 205–12, 242

[3] The most conspicuous of these were Guadalupe Victoria, Nicolas Bravo, and Manuel Mier y Terán

[4] Alaman, *op cit*, vol V, p 453

[5] Alaman, *op cit* vol V, 341, 455, Mémoires Autographes de Iturbide, p 84, fn

[6] Alaman, *op cit* vol V, p 19–20

[7] *Idem* p 19, 456

[8] The Constitution of 1812, abolished by Ferdinand VII in 1814, reestablished by a military uprising in 1820 See p 34

[9] *Idem*, vol I, 77, Revillagigedo, Instrucción Reservada Paras 98, 117–119 By royal orders of 1606, and subsequently, commanders of forts were clothed with judicial power over all civil and criminal causes of the troops and people within their commands Appeals were allowed to the captain general and the rare appeals from his decision went to the Junta de Guerra de Indias in Spain The civil authorities had no voice whatever Bancroft, Hist of Mexico, vol III, ch XXII

Without exaggeration, the king has more officers than privates, it being evident that most of the former purchased their places to mock justice, to escape paying their debts, to indulge in gaming and live a life of libertinage under the protection of their epaulettes But if there is occasion to march to Vera Cruz to repel an enemy or for any other urgent reason, they feign illness and make all pretexts imaginable to avoid service [1]

Viceroy Iturrigaray's deposal was made possible by the bribe of eight thousand pesos to the captain of the palace artillery guard [2]

The original independence movement never recovered from the treachery of an insurgent lieutenant-colonel, Elizondo, who, angered at Allende's refusal to make him a general, arranged to deliver his chiefs to the enemy [3] The capture, at one fell swoop, and the death of Hidalgo, Allende, Aldama, Jiménez, and sixty-one insurgent leaders, followed

Morelos was captured by a former lieutenant who had joined the royalists [4]

Thus treason — betrayal of a soldier's trust and an officer's honor — played a decisive part in every important event related to Mexico's birth

When Viceroy Apodaca, more humane than his predecessor, Calleja, offered amnesty to the insurgents if they would agree not to take up arms again, thousands accepted [5] This was not surprising, as their cause appeared lost But some went further They enlisted under the royal banner, officers losing but one grade, and fought against their recent comrades-in-arms [6] From the royalist standpoint the measure was sound strategy — but it rewarded and glorified treason The insurgents who fought on could expect only death even if captured alive Those who had joined the royal forces were thenceforth no longer "murderers, heretics, bandits," but received the honorific title of "Don" and the treatment accorded other army officers [7] Some of these, too, were to occupy important posts in the governments after independence

Treason thus exalted soon came to possess the military body like a habit-forming drug, each succeeding dose more eagerly swallowed to relieve current ills Just as Iturbide had tricked his superiors so his own generals turned on him But the second volte-face, creating the republic, came more easily than the first, which had won independence An allegiance a few months old could be shed more readily than the loyalty of centuries that was cast off at Iguala Moreover, Iturbide, grossly violating his own solemn pledges by the dissolution of congress, had given ample justification for the "Plan of Casa Mata" It was a revolt against his tyranny However,

[1] Villaroel, México Por Dentro y Fuera Bajo el Gobierno de los Vireyes, ó Sea Enfermedades Políticas, p 170
[2] Cavo, Los Tres Siglos de Méjico Sup by C M Bustamante, vol III, p 236
[3] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 272–5, Negrete, México en el Siglo XIX, vol III, p 123–146
[4] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, p 312–13
[5] *Idem*, vol IV, p 403–5
[6] *Idem*, vol IV, p 422, 541, 649
[7] *Idem*, vol IV, p 404

these revolters had supported Iturbide's illegalities, and the first impulse to mutiny had come solely because he had removed Santa Anna from his command — a step wholly within the rights of the commander-in-chief

Then Santa Anna, routed in the field, had taken refuge with four hundred men in Vera Cruz where he was surrounded by three thousand under General Echávarri, a former royalist captain whom Iturbide had made general After a few days besiegers made common cause with besieged What caused the switching? Victory appeared difficult to the besiegers whose forces were mostly cavalry and field artillery Lifting the siege seemed inevitable to the commander But as this would "compromise his military honor" and leave a "stain on his reputation," he and his officers were persuaded to join the enemy [1]

Thus true military standards were reversed, and what should really have compromised a soldier's honor and leave an indelible stain on his reputation, was by a little phraseology converted into a righteous deed

Now that the military had created the new nation, had made and unmade its first government, and set up the second, they became *de facto* Mexico's rulers As there were no longer any established governmental forms to command respect and no one to compel adherence to them if there had been, the traditional view of public office as an opportunity was more than ever materialized Under such circumstances republican principles had no chance to take root, and the constitution in nation and state had no more validity than the dominant military clique gave it But as externals had long been supremely important in the Hispanic ideology [2] — more than the substance — the shell of democratic form was generally preserved, and the most sordid designs were executed in the name of "independence," "liberty," "the constitution," "the abolition of tyranny," or some popular ideal That the cause invoked was invariably there, trampled, bleeding, and in dire need of a champion, was undeniable

In the colony the career of arms had implied social position and legal privileges, and the inevitable distinction accorded the soldier in a society that rests mainly on force The war against independence added opportunities for self-enrichment Virtually every royalist commander was a grafter, using his unlimited power in the field to line his pockets [3] Viceroy Calleja set the example so flagrantly that Bishop Abad y Queipo of Michoacán wrote the king of Spain requesting the substitution of "an honest viceroy who will not come for the purpose of enriching himself" [4]

[1] This is the version of Alaman who describes the event sympathetically Hist de Méjico, vol V, p 705–709

[2] For instance, Emperor Charles V declared that the word "conquest" should no longer be applied to Spanish feats of arms in the new world, and that the terms "pacification" and "settlement" be used instead (Guerra, Hist de las Revoluciones de Nueva España, vol I, p 144) Twentieth century imperialism, other than Hispanic employs these euphemisms, however!

[3] Alaman, *op cit*, vol IV, p 42, 445–8

[4] Letter dated July 20, 1815 Rep in Alaman, Hist de Méjico, as Doc 10, App vol IV

Iturbide was removed from his command in 1816 because his rapacity passed all bounds and affected influential royalists The solidarity of the army clique prevented the prosecution from going further [1] After independence one of the obstacles to internal peace was the financial limitation it imposed on the military

In the insurgent ranks had been many bandits Often they were victims of a colonial system which for the great majority limited livelihood to the harshest and meanest sort From outcast to outlaw, from serfdom or beggary to the free life of the road agent was not a difficult step The difference between official butchery and high-class pilfering of the king's officers, the reprisals and commandeering by the independentists, and the retail crimes of the lesser fry, was but of degree Then and subsequently such guerrilla leaders ran the gamut from devotion to a cause, to the extremes of savage bestiality To the royalists, all, including Hidalgo, Morelos, and Guerrero, leaders of unquestionable idealism and of purpose transcending personal interest, were "bandits" There were intermediate types, rough fellows with a rough notion of class injustice who easily identified their cause — directed at a nationality, group, or class — with attacks on the persons and property of individuals Therein the practices of leaders of both sides were merely followed Such men usually dominated a given locality, and were figuratively the heirs of the pre-colonial caciques Military success might sweep them to political importance, failure reduce them to precarious pillage and a hunted existence Finally there were monsters such as Vicente Gómez, "the gelder of Spaniards," so named from the mutilations he inflicted, who operated, appropriately enough, in the brimstone region around the volcanoes of the Valley of Mexico Defeated, he sought a pardon, and becoming a royalist captain turned his energies upon the insurgents [2]

Criminality and baseness were not peculiarly attributes of the disinherited Among those royalist officers who lived "to serve the republic," as various historians put it, were Esquivel, who would bury alive in quicklime independentist suspects,[3] Regules, who cut off prisoners' ears before killing them,[4] Estevan Moctezuma, who ran a lance through women lying wounded by the roadside after the siege of Cuautla,[5] and Anastasio Bustamante, later president, who under no circumstances spared insurgents, and whose official reports monotonously repeated that "having made twenty, thirty, or more prisoners, these were immediately shot" [6]

Juan Nepucemeno Rosains was a lawyer who in 1812 espoused independence at its flood, attributing his previous hesitancy to the evil characters in the movement Morelos welcomed this accession from "the better people,"

[1] Fr Labarrieta's testimony against Iturbide is given in Bosquejo Ligerísimo de la Revolución de Méjico, Vicente Rocafuerte, p 22–59

[2] Alaman *op cit*, vol II p 568 vol IV, p 487–8 [3] *Idem*, vol III, p 190

[4] *Idem* vol III, p 243 [5] *Idem*, vol II, p 524, fn [6] *Idem*, vol IV, p 397

and gave Rosains an important command He lacked military ability and when relegated after Morelos's death to a lesser position made war atrociously on his associates within the insurgent camp A woman who made an insignificant protest he sentenced to be slapped in the face by the two hundred men of a garrison, and to be exhibited for several hours with a gag that decency forbids detailing Unable to defeat the other insurgent leaders he sought and obtained a pardon through Archbishop Fonte of Mexico to whose house he came to live There he turned over his information of independentists' plans to the viceroy and did all in his power to destroy them He became a senator of the republic from Puebla in 1824 During his public career he killed with a stick his coachman and stabbed to death an officer who had testified against him before a commission rewarding meritorious service in behalf of independence, for which Rosains had put in a claim[1] Subsequently he took part in various revolutionary movements and finally captured, while on the losing side of one of them, was shot[1] Such loathsome types have always been found on the Mexican politico-military roll

In contrast was Colonel Manuel Mier y Terán, brave independentist fighter In 1817 when his force was surrounded by four times its number he surrendered on condition that all lives be spared He scorned the proffered service in the royalist army, and nearly starved on a clerkship until independence Unfortunately Terán's type has been the rare exception, that of a high-minded patriot, suffering penury for a principle, placing personal honor above profit, and loyalty to country above his own interest His suicide, ten years later, is attributed to his despair at the corruption and chaos into which Mexico had sunk and his helplessness to redeem it[2] What few others in public life at that time may have been actuated by similar ideals were swept aside by the looting mob, or hopeless of resisting, joined it The choice between an apparently useless sacrifice of self and family or sacrifice of principle confronted every well-intentioned official If he was not cast aside or corrupted he was forced in self-defense to adopt the color of his environment

This dilemma was evident from the start President Guadalupe Victoria was able to finish his term only by suppressing a revolt headed by Vice-President Nicolás Bravo[3] Victoria was morally as well qualified as any man in Mexico for the honor of being the nation's first president He had been wholly consistent throughout the War of Independence, preferring to be a lone fugitive and risk death a hundred times rather than surrender

[1] Alaman, Hist de Méjico vol IV, p 224–237, Bancroft, *op cit*, vol IV, p 381–3, 585–7, 628–30, Zamacois, Hist de México, vol IX, p 843–53, Negrete, México en el Siglo XIX, vol VII, p 21–27

[2] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol V, p 111 Suárez y Navarro, Hist de Méjico, p 286 A fine picture of General Terán by an American citizen who knew him well and had seen him in action is given by William Davis Robinson in his Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution, p 124–134

[3] Bancroft *op cit*, vol V, p 37–39

He was scrupulously honest and died poor [1] Bravo had accepted amnesty from the royalists but had an unusual record of humanity and decency [2] As *antiguos patriotas* no two men would have seemed more likely to work in harmony Victoria had been the Federalist, Bravo, the Centralist, candidate Victoria won Personal ambitions had clashed and instead of contenting himself with second honors, and looking to the future, Bravo aligned himself with the conservatives Though they had lost Iturbide they were still determined to overthrow republicanism and adopted a political strategy, since followed with considerable success, of invading the opposing camp and seducing the less offensive of two candidates Violence was the only method they knew, and as in order to function the president could not but go out somewhat of the orbit of his prescribed duties,[3] a technical pretext for revolt was at hand Beneath the conflict of personalities was that of conservatism against democratic principles The significant thing is that a man in Bravo's position and with his antecedents could have lent himself But he did and led an armed uprising in the name of "observance of the law," [4] and for a dismissal of the cabinet whose offices his partizans coveted

Guerrero leading the government forces speedily defeated Bravo The rebel leaders were tried and sentenced to expatriation — not death — an indication of the relative mildness of Victoria's rule

In the second presidential election in 1828 Victoria's minister of war, Gómez Pedraza, and Guerrero were candidates Guerrero was a truly popular figure and his candidacy was acclaimed by the masses, but his humble birth and pure Indian blood made him odious to the classes, which lined up solidly behind Pedraza Under the indirect system of voting the popular desire could register but slightly and Pedraza, who had made effective use of his ministry to assure victory, was elected Thereupon Guerrero, feeling he had been cheated, "rose in arms" to maintain his right to the office Pedraza knowing numbers were against him then resigned and left Guerrero in undisputed possession [5]

Chiefly owing to Guerrero's friendship, the former royalist General

[1] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol V, p 28–9

[2] Leonardo Bravo and his son Nicolás held important commands in the insurgent forces When the father was captured in 1812 Viceroy Venegas offered to spare his life if he could bring his son to sue for pardon Morelos esteemed both highly and consented, at the same time offering the viceroy eight hundred prisoners in exchange This offer the viceroy rejected While Nicolás Bravo was seeking to assure himself that the viceroy's proposal was in good faith and not merely a trick to get two members of the family and kill both a piece of villainy which the royalists had shortly before perpetrated on two brothers the father was garroted in the capital Morelos then ordered the retaliatory execution of three hundred Spanish prisoners held by Bravo Bravo bade them prepare for death the following morning But his conscience troubled him After a sleepless night he resolved to disobey his commander and not stain the insurgent cause with this bloodshed When the Spaniards were led forth at dawn he addressed them The viceroy he said, had sacrificed them by declining to exchange one life, his father's for theirs but that he, Bravo, could not bring himself to carry out the sentence Not only were their lives spared, but they were free to go as they listed An act of rare humanity in those times, paralleled by none on the royalist side! Alaman, Hist de Méjico, vol III p 259–61, App Doc 5

[3] Suárez y Navarro, *op cit*, p 74

[4] *Idem*, p 89–92

[5] Suárez y Navarro, *op cit*, p 93–105

Anastasio Bustamante had become vice-president [1] Of course never would he, upon his sacred honor, repeat the performance of the previous vice-president and draw his sword against his chief Yet a year later he had done it, proclaiming the "Plan of Jalapa," — object "The enforcement of the constitution and laws" [2] Another more practical clause provided that officials against whom "public opinion had declared itself," would be removed from office, meaning thereby Bustamante's private opinion [3]

Guerrero, heading his troops to fight the rebellion, convoked congress so that the interim president, Bocanegra, a member of his cabinet, might in accordance with the constitution take the oath of office before both chambers The senate being in sympathy with the revolters refused to convene, and in the emergency President Guerrero, using his extraordinary powers, had his substitute sworn in before the Chamber of Deputies alone [4]

No sooner had Guerrero left the capital than its garrison "pronounced" in sympathy with the Jalapa rebels on the ground that the interim president's oath was unconstitutional! Among the signers of the *acta* were the Rayón brothers, Ramón and Ignacio, former independentists, and Quintanar, former royalist [5] Guerrero, deserted by nearly all his forces, retired to his bailiwick in the South, where he was pursued by General Bravo,[6] now pardoned and returned from exile Captured by treachery for a price, Guerrero was put through a farcical court-martial and executed [7] Thus perished the outstanding survivor of the Independence movement He had been decent, kindly, and trusting — fatal weaknesses in that time and place

With the first two vice-presidents "rising in arms" against the presidents, in the latter instance, successfully, things were apparently as bad as they could be But they now went from worse to still worse "Pronouncement" and "Plan" followed each other with increasing rapidity Following the example of the larger pronouncers aiming to seize the National Government, *cuartelazos*, or barracks revolts, sought control of state or city Custom-house ports were favorite objectives because of their assured revenue [8] Even

[1] Zavala, Ensayo Histórico * * * vol II, p 106
[2] *Idem*, vol II, p 161
[3] Suárez y Navarro, *op cit*, p 173–4
[4] *Idem*, p 177–8
[5] *Idem*, p 180–1
[6] *Idem*, p 213–16
[7] *Idem*, p 226–236

[8] A typical *cuartelazo* was that of the Sixth and Thirteenth Batallions stationed in Campeche, in 1829 Its *acta* declared that the garrison had "pronounced in favor of a central form of government * * * for the good of independence and the safety of the nation, constantly menaced by the perilous oscillations with which the federal system is being * * * fought by the disorganization of the army and treasury * * * by the general discontent with which its dearest sons see it headed for nullity weakening the glorious elements which should lead it to the summit of greatness" Art I declared that the garrison would defend centralism "at all costs" Art II recognized "the authority of the president of the republic in everything not contrary to this pronouncement and assuming that he adopts it for the good of the nation" Art III calls for an assembly of (the national) congress "to arrange for the fusion of the civil and military authority in what are now called states" Art IV "In consequence of the preceding article *the commander* [of the garrison] *will henceforth unite in his person both authorities as well as everything relative to the administration of finance, both of National Government and of state*" * Art V "The legislature and governor of the state are

* This — seizure of the revenue — is the meat in the cocoanut (Italics not in original)

before the news of an election could reach the whole country, *cabecillas* (little chieftains) declared against the new government And as every election was accomplished by force and fraud the pretext to overthrow it by more force and fraud was always available If the "outs" were able to unite sufficiently they became the "ins" till they in turn fell out over division of the spoils And the national government would not hesitate to connive at or even actively aid in the overthrow of a state government for the benefit of local partisans With each overturn not only were existing office-holders removed but often imprisoned and exiled lest, ousted, they return to oust Meanwhile new legislatures would solemnly and unblushingly "legalize" the coup d'état, declare the political past officially dead, and proscribe those who said nay Of course aforemade high-sounding professions were obsolete once possession achieved, and none was so simple-minded as to expect them to be carried out Indeed good faith, merit, constancy, and hard work were not only unappreciated but even detrimental to an ambitious young man Chicanery brought greater and quicker rewards A lieutenant who participated in half a dozen *cuartelazos* almost certainly emerged a general A successful *levantamiento* (uprising) erased a previous defalcation The risks were not great — at least they were concentrated into a few thrilling hours — and far preferable to years of patient drudgery Thus was the atmosphere of public life further vitiated Honorable men had no chance in it, for the successful tricksters wanted men of like stamp to further their common base ends Even civilians were given high army commissions So the officer caste grew, exempt from and above the civil law, an arrogant coterie of debauchees, reveling by night and conspiring by day

declared to be no longer functioning since they find themselves in contradiction with the system pronounced for ' Art VI "The magistracies of all kinds will continue functioning subject to an oath to support the newly adopted system ' Art VII The commander is given the right * * * "to arrange provisionally the internal government of the villages, in a manner most suitable to the general welfare" Art VIII 'The signers of this pronouncement cannot be transferred from this garrison until the form of government proclaimed has been organized" Art IX 'All employees will be required to swear to sustain this new form of government and whosoever does not do so will cease to exercise his functions" The signers swear "not to lay down their arms till they have secured the object proposed" *

The "object proposed," namely, the seizure of the state government and of both state and national funds, was duly carried out and was followed by a similar "pronouncement ' of the Merida garrison, and capture of the neighboring state of Yucatán Ninety-odd officers signed each of the manifestos and about eight hundred soldiers figured in each of the *cuartelazos* which subjected the half million people of the Yucatán peninsula to a purely military rule for three years A representative of the Federal Government dispatched to reason with the soldiery and to try and recall them to their duty was met at landing and told if he again set foot on that shore he would be shot immediately That emissary, the historian Lorenzo de Zavala, thus "reflects" on the situation

"How could an inhabitant of the United States where the military are nothing and the citizenry everything where liberty is deeply rooted, and the rights and existence of everyone inseparable, conceive of so shameful an overturn and such ignominious degradation? It is because of 400,000 degraded Indians are experiencing no change in their mode of life * * * and those of a class but slightly less crude have not been able to absorb new ideas * * * that a few brazen men can demand the control of affairs and the fruit of the useful labor of the producing classes" †

* Printed in Hist de Méjico Suárez y Navarro p 170–1
† Lorenzo de Zavala *op cit* vol II p 155–60

In 1821, for the 8308 soldiers stationed in the capital there were 1802 commissioned and 3161 non-commissioned officers, a total of 4963, *or less than two men for each officer* [1] In 1838 there were 160 generals for a theoretical army of 30,000 men [2] In one of his various seizures of power from 1841 to 1844, Santa Anna, the arch-product of Mexican militarism, issued 12,000 commissions [3] The history of Mexico during its first twenty-five years, says the historian Alaman, "could properly be called the history of the revolutions of Santa Anna," who took an active part in every one of them until as "His Serene Highness" he established a dictatorship so absolute and brutal that a revolt of different and deeper character swept him away, along with his clerical supporters [4]

In 1823, when the officer clique took over the national reins, the budget for the army (and navy) was $9,430,790 while the total national income was but $5,409,722 Until 1845 — with no foreign wars — the annual military appropriations exceeded the total national revenue in sixteen out of twenty-three years [5]

Yet to blame the "army" for all this is unjustly to discredit a great number of "unknown soldiers" in the ranks The private shared in no spoils Tattered, ill fed, kicked, and buffeted about by drunken and sober officers, his chief ambition was to desert and to return to the family from which he had been dragged by the iniquitous levy [6] Even his wretched hovel was preferable to serving as "cannon-fodder" of the barrack warfare in which he had neither interest nor stake and for which he rarely received pay — his normal stipend being generally embezzled by the commanders [7] It was the officer clique, "educated," privileged by law, gorgeously uniformed, and prating of its *honor y dignidad*, which, sworn to defend the nation, instead assaulted, raped, robbed, and befouled it [8]

Such a soldiery was, needless to say, found wanting in its legitimate mission, defence of the country against a foreign enemy The rapid success

[1] Alaman *op cit*, vol V, p 449
[2] Lowenstern, Le Mexique, p 95
[3] Rivera Cambas, Los Gobernantes de México, vol II, p 282
[4] Rabasa, La Evolución Histórica de México cap III
[5] Bulnes Las Grandes Mentiras de Nuestra Historia, p 210–11
[6] Mora México y Sus Revoluciones, vol I, p 415–16
[7] *Idem*, p 419 435–6
[8] Wrote the Mexican historian Francisco Bulnes in 1904 of this earlier period
"It was Mexico's misfortune that its public power originated in an armed mob, corrupt and without honor * * * It imposed a Pretorean system * * * This Preturean army kills in the night the *caudillo* or hero it hailed in the morning, to-day demolishes the institutions it swore to defend yesterday, ceaselessly disturbs the public peace, and devours the national wealth, morality, honor and patriotism, because it instils as guiding principles all that is vicious and ignoble * * *
"It grants the executive power not by the ballot box but by sale to the highest bidder * * * The soldiery asks as its price that the bidder shall satiate all its rapacious and brutal appetites, exempting it from all law, discipline probity, and patriotism Being indefinite, the price of 'the purple' is very high and though the bidding *caudillo* offers the public treasury the national honor, the people's rights, energies, and wealth, no nation is rich enough to stand these unlimited exactions * * *
"The hammer blow which opens the auction * * * is the *cuartelazo* * * * the auction rooms all the barracks of the nation * * * The ambitious bidder made his first bid offering to a few com-

of the American forces in 1847 against the stubborn heroism of the Mexican rank and file was due in a large measure to the rottenness of the officers They were insubordinate [1] — their peace time norm — and of course they were grossly incompetent The men's lack of confidence in their command, and the fear that they would be betrayed — as they had often been in their domestic warfare — led to defeat in the first important encounter with the Americans, the Battle of Palo Alto [2] Traitors also greatly aided General Winfield Scott in his march to Mexico City [3]

If the Mexican nation was, militarily, conceived in treason, it was suckled on theft Its initial financing came from the half million pesos which Iturbide, charged to convoy, instead conveyed — to himself Except during the interruption of foreign wars the Mexican army has been a means to a livelihood with "no questions asked," and the line between commandeering for a "cause" and common stealing often indistinguishable Records the historian of Independence, Bustamante, in 1822

Toward the end of October, Deputy Rafael Leandro Echenique was robbed in his house, No 11, Calle de la Enseñanza Several colonels and officers who had been in a carriage assaulted it * * * They took over a thousand pesos in gold and all his clothing, leaving him not a change of shirt [4]

manders * * * advances of pay, battalions exempt from accounts quashing of criminal indictments, contracts for uniforms, arms, supplies — and if possible a little cash In short, there were offered impunity, wealth, and promotions

"The first bid is the first *pronunciamento* If the *caudillo presidente* entering the bidding offered more promotions, more money, more impunity, and more treasure so that the rest of the leaders should not 'pronounce' these commanders remained faithful united 'to combat the hydra of revolution,' but when it was no longer possible to exploit the chieftain president because they had drained him, they would desert to the 'hydra' and declare their recent benefactor a traitor to the country * * *

"The bidder's offer was 'I shall take care of the deserving military class better than anyone else,' and to close the bidding he would say 'Everything for my friends! Everything for the army!'

"These auctions could not take place without incidental music for the audience — the nation The words of the sonatas expressed the idea that the revolution had as its object to free the country from tyranny or anarchy, to regenerate it to make it great to make it happy to free it from the clergy or to immerse it in religion, to obey the popular will — yesterday monarchical, to-day democratic, to-morrow theocratic two hours later oligarchic, a little later something else * * *

"A few days after his triumph, the new president understood that it was impossible to fulfil his innumerable and onerous promises All wanted to be cavalry colonels (with voracious horses) or at least infantry colonels generals with special allowances to pursue Indians (wild or tame) or imaginary bands to dispose of the income of the maritime customs, and of tax collecting offices All wanted to carry away as quickly as possible the money of the Government or of private citizens, to build a house, buy *haciendas*, titles of nobility, palaces or set up gaming-houses, for cock, bull or man fights All maintained that the *fueros* covered all their crimes, past, present, and future * * *

"The victorious *caudillo* soon understood that he was no more than the low slave of the *canaille* instead of the all powerful chief of the army For its part the Pretorian officer class, seeing that it was not being paid punctually the unlimited price bid for the presidential chair opened a new auction Then matters got worse for to the existing numerous military was added the famished throng of civilians who from hunger or desire threw themselves into the fray to obtain the posts of the *caudillo's* original friends in the moments of greatest peril and doubt, entitling themselves thereby to a mortgage on the goods and chattels of the nation" Bulnes, *op cit*, p 204–10

[1] Alcáraz, Barreiro, etc, Apuntes Para la Hist de la Guerra entre México y los Estados Unidos, p 475

[2] *Idem*, p 46

[3] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol V p 473 In 1924, General Calles, then President-Elect, remarked to me "The tragedy of Mexico has been that whenever a traitor was needed, ten presented themselves"

[4] Bustamante, Diario Histórico, p 53

In that year following the entry of the "army of the three guaranties" into the capital, robberies were frequent, assassinations numbered not less than twelve hundred,[1] and these crimes went unpunished because largely committed by the force which had made the nation

In the first years of independence [wrote one of Mexico's most distinguished sociologists] the greater part of those who robbed, killed, and burned within the cities were of the soldiery who issued armed from their barracks When they were captured, their officers stepped in, claiming for them the special jurisdiction of a military tribunal granted by the laws of the *fuero de guerra*, in other words, impunity [2]

Why not? The officers had shown the way Wrote Madame de la Barca, in 1840

Talking of robbers and robberies * * * a certain gentleman went to take his leave at the palace, previous to setting off for Vera Cruz He was received by the president, who was alone with his aide-de-camp, General———, and mentioned to him in confidence that he was about to take a considerable sum of money with him, but that it was so well concealed in the lining of a trunk, which he described, that even if attacked by robbers, it was impossible they should discover it, and that therefore he did not think it necessary to take an escort with him The next day this confidential gentleman left Mexico, in the diligence Not far from the gates the coach was attacked, and, strange to say, the robbers singled out the very trunk which contained the money, opened it, ripped up the lining, and having possessed themselves of the sum therein concealed, peaceably departed It was a singular coincidence that the captain of the robbers, though somewhat disguised, bore a striking general resemblance to the president's aide-de-camp! These coincidences will happen * * *[3]

And from clandestine robbery to such international scandals as the open assault on the British Legation by the conservative General Miguel Miramón in 1860 — who took therefrom 600,000 pesos — the levying of fines, confiscations, forced loans, and imposts which took the fruits of the labor of others, were almost invaryingly the military objective Industry could not prosper, honest toil and enterprise earned no rewards, savings could not accumulate because they were systematically tapped by the military oligarchy from the emperors, Serene Highnesses, generals, *jefes políticos*, and officers down The gangsters gorged on disorder, and its greater opportunities A visitor to Mexico in the thirties thus correctly summed up its revolutions

An ambitious individual foments a disturbance against the established authorities with a hundred warped and witless persons, who have nothing to lose and chafe at the thought of order, a few imbeciles invested with pompous titles such as

[1] Poinsett, Notes on Mexico (Made in the Autumn of 1822), p 108
[2] Guerrero, La Génesis del Crimen en México, p 200–1
[3] Barca, Life in Mexico Letter 10

Governor and Commander of the Plaza, who allow the law to be imposed upon them by this handful of thieves, an hour's fight, personal vengeances cruelly carried out, to sum up, a detestable farce which is renewed a month later — this is what in the republics of South and Central America is called a revolution [1]

It was a group of civilians, Benito Juárez, Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, Melchor Ocampo, Guillermo Prieto, that were to attempt a change They belonged to a new generation, were Republican to the core and believed in the abolition of hereditary exemptions Twenty-five years of observation had made them bitterly hostile to the regular army [2] Juárez epitomized the rôle of the military as follows

The general headquarters enjoy absolute independence of local civil authorities and command physical force, which given the lack of public spirit and education of the masses, has till now controlled the nation's destinies With it the commanding generals have constituted a fourth estate so effective that it has entirely nullified the sovereignty of the states If at any time the state officials, acting within their province, have attempted to assert their legitimate authority under the federal system a struggle between the military and the political authorities has ensued which has paralyzed business to the injury of the public interest, the dispute ending with a *pronunciamento* by the military [3]

Above all the new leadership was honest and unselfish "The irreproachable probity that was the hall-mark of the men of the Reform," a conservative Mexican writer puts it [4] But long-standing privilege was not to be uprooted so easily Neither army nor clergy would relinquish their *fueros*, and to save them precipitated a civil war — far bloodier than the interbarrack skirmishing of the preceding decades — and when defeated, called on foreign imperialists for aid When the smoke of twelve years' conflict lifted, political class distinctions had been legally abolished, economic privilege had been jolted, and by the establishment of toleration in religion, a step toward spiritual liberty had been made

Apparently it was a great victory, an inevitable step in the march of progress A new type of soldier — generals like Santos Degollado, Ignacio Zaragosa, who defeated the French at Puebla, Mariano Escobedo, the victor at Querétaro where Maximilian surrendered, Vicente Riva Palacio, the historian, Ramón Corona, good soldiers and good citizens — had sprung up from civilian ranks when their country was menaced from without But the change had been abrupt The nation lay prostrate The reformists had been obliged to fight fire with fire Part of the army was with them Treason and desertion were not wanting Many had joined them as victory dawned Their military technique had not varied greatly, whatever the

[1] Waldeck, Voyage Pittoresque et Archéologique dans la Province de Yucatán (1834–36)
[2] Bancroft, *op cit* vol V, p 668
[3] Quoted in Zayas Enríquez, Benito Juárez, Su Vida, Su Obra, p 38
[4] Rabasa, *op cit*, cap V

principles that animated the civilian leadership Though a new era was hailed, time was to show that the spirit of the Reform had not penetrated far below the leaders, and that the people marked with the impress of past centuries, were unprepared to hold and enjoy the advantages that permanent civilian rule might have won for them When the handful of patriotic leaders died a steady reversion to the old ways took place

The imperialists and conservatives had been completely routed Only good Republicans, supposedly, held military and civil office Nevertheless, various revolts disturbed President Juárez's administration A governor "rose," and a $70,000 convoy that happened to be passing through his state, fell, in the capital some generals seized the always prized *ciudadela*, several legislatures "declared" against the central government, the garrison at Guaymas mutinied, killing its officers, and 'took charge of" the custom-house, and General Porfirio Díaz, who had distinguished himself against the French so greatly that he could now scarcely be expected to admit any authority higher than his own, declined to recognize Juárez's election and raised the battle cry of "the Constitution of 1857 and electoral freedom" The same old army game![1]

Beaten, Díaz took refuge with the bandit Lozada[2] in the sierra of Tepic Then Juárez died in office Chief Justice Sebastián Lerdo, who according to the constitution filled the vacancy temporarily, was elected When it became evident, three years later, that he would seek reelection — and being in office, get it — Porfirio Díaz "pronounced" under the "Plan of Tuxtepec reformed in Palo Alto," which deposed Lerdo and declared for non-reelection of president and governors It was the classic *cuartelazo* Although there were legitimate grievances against Lerdo, and no peaceable way of preventing his self-reelection, none of the Porfiristas had any thought of effecting the reforms they proposed once in power Most of the army went over to Díaz who ratified his victory in the barracks by an election, not a difficult feat since by his "Plan" all officials hostile to it were automatically deposed[3]

During the next thirty-five years the character of the army underwent no intrinsic change although Díaz was strong and astute enough to keep it under control — no mean achievement, regardless of the method employed He was able to do it because with foreign capital pouring into the country he could keep the military, formerly picking the bones of a bankrupt treasury, better supplied with their traditional perquisites than they had ever been *Haciendas*, concessions for gaming and disorderly houses, lotteries, monopolies of various traffics, and *jefaturas políticas* Nowhere was the class and caste system of Díaz in Mexico more evident than in the army The officers waxed fat Resplendent in gold braid on state occasions in the capital,

[1] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol VI, p 371–383

[2] He had risen in 1857 in behalf of *religión y fueros* — Rivera, La Reforma y el Segundo Imperio, p 29

[3] Bancroft, *op cit*, vol VI, p 385–433

throughout the land they speculated with the conscripts' allowances for food and equipment and drew pay for regimental complements where there were but corporal's guards The rank and file, herded from the jails or innocent victims of some *jefe's* displeasure, served as menials between sorties for suppressing crime or political dissent As a despot's police force it was effective for a generation Till 1911

But in the defense of the Government and its system against a popular uprising, the army literally was not there The padded muster-rolls could not mobilize The flesh and blood conscripts deserted in droves, tearing off their insignia as they jumped from troop trains and fled into the *chaparral* But the generals trafficked to the end They did not take the rebellion seriously and wanted to prolong it General Mondragón, lean and wolfish, his black moustaches thin as a rat's tail, was buying large quantities of worthless ammunition and charging it at twice its cost The pretext of rebellion served admirably to satisfy private grudges Personal enemies were pursued as damnable *Maderistas*, and in consequence became so, further swelling the opposition [1]

Within a few weeks the rotten army edifice had crumbled but its component materials remained Subsequent military history ran true to its tradition Treason to leaders to whom loyalty had been sworn, violation of solemn pledges, repudiation of espoused causes, unfaithfulness to avowed principles, in short, betrayal of the country — that, by and large, has been Mexico's military record to date

From Paris the white-bearded and pompous General Bernardo Reyes announced that he was hurrying back to crush the Revolution By the time he reached Havana its progress led him instead to offer it his services He was admitted to Mexico on pledging his loyalty to the Madero régime Four months later when he found his presidential prospects unpromising he revolted against it

Next General Pascual Orozco, piqued because Madero refused to reward his services to the Revolution against Díaz with a hundred thousand pesos, headed a rebellion financed by the Terrazas family, the landlords of Chihuahua General Victoriano Huerta crushed it Clearly this relieved him from accounting for funds sent him "I am no bookkeeper," he replied tersely From that moment kindled his hatred for the ingrate government that did not "understand" the ways and means of a victorious general

[1] Baerlein tells the following "In the state of Puebla * * * dwelt an idle *jefe* who made over his administration to a lady friend She mulcted people, put them into prison just as if she were *jefe* One day after listening to a husband's story, she commanded that the lover of his wandering wife should be imprisoned She did not inquire the name, but when that gentleman was in the lock-up he sent word to her that he was grieved and then she knew that she had dealt with a dear friend 'Yes, yes' he said, when he was talking with her after his release 'but now the husband is at large and it is inconvenient' So forthwith she gave orders that the husband should be taken to the cell from which the lover had been rescued 'God, above me! What have I done? Why should I be here?' exclaimed the husband And the lady answered, 'You are a Maderist'" The Land of Unrest, p 238

Meanwhile General Félix Díaz, the stocky and swarthy nephew of Don Porfirio, rebelled in Vera Cruz with its old favorite attraction of the custom-house Only parts of two federal battalions supported him Other units remained loyal and his attempt, after fighting in which several lost their lives, failed [1]

It should be understood that this revolt was against a government now constituted as legally as any in Mexican history, and more so than most Porfirio Díaz had abdicated and left the country He had signed his resignation under the pressure of popular opinion and of a congress made up, not of Maderists, but of his former creatures In an election which recorded the popular will Madero had been chosen president If there were technical irregularities in the voting in view of the long disuse and previous misuse of electoral machinery, they were minor, evoked no protest, and defrauded no rival of the presidential seat When the *Felixista* revolt was put down, Madero, against all advice, decided against a drumhead execution of its leader By the practice of civilized nations, and certainly by Mexican precedent, General Félix Díaz, having openly rebelled against his government, *should have been summarily shot* But Madero, who incarnated a reaction against Porfirian ruthlessness and past Mexican bloodiness, opposed more killing In the revolutionary weeks he had personally interceded, at great risk to his prestige, to save the unworthy federal general, Juan Navarro, who shortly before had ordered not only every prisoner, but non-combatant revolutionary sympathizers, shot after the federal victory at Cerro Prieto Madero had permitted General Reyes to be imprisoned and treated with all courtesy Now he allowed the transfer of Félix Díaz to Mexico City for a trial by the courts and his confinement in the citadel For this humane course Madero was to pay with his life Like Guerrero, eighty years before, he was decent, kindly, and trusting, fatal weaknesses in his time and place, as much then as before

The epoch-making events that followed belong to all Mexico's history, but they are peculiarly the products of Mexican militarism Various forces hastened Madero's downfall But the guilty were the remnant of the Díaz military clique, bitter over the loss of perquisites Every barracks housed an intrigue The chief conspirators were General Manuel Mondragón, now retired, and therefore a conspicuous "out", Generals Félix Díaz and Bernardo Reyes, imprisoned under suspended sentences of death for treason, and in active service the suave General Aureliano Blanquete, commander in the State of Mexico, General Gregorio Ruíz of the cavalry, General Beltrán of the infantry, and General Navarette of the artillery Victoriano Huerta was counted on but with less certainty The plot was to depose the Govern-

[1] Zapata's rebellion was of a wholly different character He had never been part of the regular military organization He supported Madero on the basis of the agrarian plank in the "Plan de San Luis Potosí" When after a year the Madero Government had taken no action to restore land to the people, Zapata felt that pledges had been violated He was wholly consistent in his attitude

ment, and to set themselves up in its stead General Reyes was to be president *ad interim* who would turn over the presidency to Díaz after an "election" Mondragón was to be minister of war, Huerta, commander-in-chief of the army, and the rest who "adhered" were to get promotions and "opportunities" Madero's unwillingness to credit the reports of the conspiracy because in them figured individuals deeply indebted to him, enabled it to gain headway

The night of February 8, 1913, small bodies of disloyal troops moved into the city and released Generals Díaz and Reyes from their respective prisons In the former's prison — the *ciudadela* (citadel or arsenal), the commander, Colonel Mayol, unwilling to join the conspirators, had been imprisoned by his subordinates At Santiago Prison, the last minute substitution for the corrupted commander, General Dávila, of General Villareal, who was loyal, caused but a momentary hitch As he gave orders to resist, his aide shot him in the back

The national palace guard, whose commander was in the conspiracy, had been won back to its duty by the audacity and eloquence of Gustavo Madero,[1] and the defense was entrusted to the Comandante of the Plaza, General Lauro Villar, a brave and faithful officer, risen from a sick-bed to assume this important duty When the rebels shortly after day-break paraded into the Zócalo, the great plaza fronting the palace, they encountered, instead of the expected fanfare of welcome, a sharp "Alto!" General Villar himself came out to warn them that they advanced at their peril Believing the guard was with them, they pressed forward There was a volley, and General Reyes fell dead His men returned the fire A sortie from the palace took several prisoners including General Ruíz, who was too obese to run quickly Then the palace machine-guns began to sweep the great square The conspiracy had failed The rebels fell back leaving many dead and wounded, and retired to the safety of the arsenal Two hours later President Madero rode down from his residence in Chapultepec castle on horseback and serenely entered the palace Then for the first time the wheels of justice moved swiftly A cabinet meeting passed sentence of death on General Ruíz who was immediately executed

In the firing a bullet had shattered General Villar's collar-bone That shot altered the history of Mexico It compelled the retirement of a loyal and devoted soldier Against Madero's intuitive judgment, General Victoriano Huerta, whom he distrusted, was on the advice of General García Peña, the secretary of war, called to the palace, given charge of its future defense and of the campaign to put down the rebellion

[1] This is the version of Edward I Bell, a trained and unbiased observer, who was especially close to the events of the time The Political Shame of Mexico, p 272–275 Other accounts give the credit to General Villar

Then began "the tragic ten days," *la decena trágica* In secret conference Huerta and Díaz had agreed on Madero's downfall Only the basest treachery could have accomplished it Four fifths of the army were loyal Huerta commanded four times the rebel strength with more for the asking For ten days the apparently hostile forces staged a sham warfare destructive of life and property other than their own From the citadel the rebels kept up a constant bombardment and were answered by artillery carefully placed all over the capital so as not to hit them A single battery could have demolished their stronghold Instead, loyal cavalry was ordered to certain slaughter against its masonry walls The purpose of this wanton destruction was to create the picture of an irreconcilable civil war, of Madero's inability to end chaos, and to predispose the suffering public, totally in the dark concerning the inwardness of the fake conflict, toward the solution which the generals would offer The ten days enabled the relatively obscure Huerta to lay his own plans so that in the dénouement, he and not Díaz would be the power Thus, even while conspiring to betray his chief, he was scheming to cheat his fellow-conspirators On February 18, General Blanquete, of the "government" troops, entered the presidential room at the palace and upon President Madero's refusal to resign, in order, as Blanquete put it, "to stop the bloodshed," he arrested the president and Vice-President Pino Suárez

Gustavo Madero was lunching with Huerta in a central restaurant A messenger came to call the general away 'I have no revolver," said Huerta to Gustavo "Will you lend me yours?" "Certainly," replied Gustavo Thus disarmed he was arrested a few minutes later

The next night the officers in the citadel, inflamed with *tequila* and victory, called for the blood of victims They wanted the deposed executives But Huerta, who had not yet extracted a formal resignation from his prisoners, refused "At least give us Gustavo" Huerta consented The unfortunate brother, who held no office in the Madero Government but as the most vivid intelligence in the family received the concentrated odium of its enemies, was taken to the citadel [1] There he was insulted and cuffed by drunken officers in uniform While they pushed him toward the door to finish him, he pleaded his innocence of any crime As he reminded them of his wife and three small children, one pressed a revolver against his head and fired But the officer's unsteady hand slipped in the act and the shot tore away Gustavo Madero's jaw In his agony he covered his face and a dozen revolvers were emptied into his body The date February 19, 1913, bears but a statistical relation to the event To what remote epoch of savagery it belongs lies in the realm of opinion A few hours later, Adolfo Basso, the superintendent

[1] "* * * The motives which actuated those who clamored for Gustavo's death" were that he "had stood in the way of men who had been making money through graft in army supplies and in other dealings with the government This was not the sole cause of animosity against him, but it was the principal one" Bell, *op cit*, p 294

of the palace, was shot with slightly more formality outside of the citadel His only offense was his known devotion to Madero [1]

It was apparent that the lives of Madero and Suárez were in imminent danger, and various were the efforts to save them The new powers strenuously denied that the prisoners would be harmed, asserting that once their resignations signed,[2] they could depart in peace The special train that was to take them to Vera Cruz and into exile was ready From ten o'clock on the night of the nineteenth their families waited at the Buena Vista station for the two who never came At two in the morning came the heart-breaking news that the permit to depart had been countermanded

The signed resignations were entrusted to Pedro Lascuraín, prominent in Catholic circles, who as minister of foreign affairs was to hold the presidency just long enough to swear Huerta into power With them he went to see Mexico's new dictator

"I beg of you," said he, "to give effective guarantees that the lives of Madero and Suárez will be spared"

"Whatever you ask," replied Huerta graciously Then with a sudden gesture he pulled from under his shirt a scapulary, a medal of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and one of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, hanging together on a gold chain "This," he said, "was hung around my neck by my mother By her memory, before these sacred images, I swear to you that I shall permit no one to make an attempt against the life of Señor Madero," and he kissed the images reverently [3] Lascuraín, devout and honorable, was greatly relieved and handed over the resignations

The next night, February 22, Madero and Suárez were taken from the palace on the pretext of transferring them to the penitentiary and in a vacant lot adjoining it forced to descend from their automobiles, and shot to death A variant of the *ley fuga* was officially given out the next morning An attempted rescue, in which the prisoners had been shot by the assailants [4]

The Huerta régime, initiated by treason and murder for the purpose of robbery, proved a saturnalia of blood and loot General Mondragón, archgrafter under Díaz, active head of the conspiracy, and counsellor of the killing of the Maderos, was especially busy Contracts to equip the army for a generation passed over his desk and their commissions into his pocket The ministry of education profited enormously in its paper purchases, and books worth two and a half pesos a dozen were charged to the Government at twenty Other ministries did almost as well [4]

To entrench itself the Government staged a reign of terror, which sur-

[1] The pretext for murdering him was that as superintendent of the palace he was responsible for the deaths in the assault upon it on Feb 8

[2] To give the "coup d'état" the always desired appearance of legality

[3] Prida, De La Dictadura A La Anarquía, p 555–6

[4] Details of the thievery by Huerta and his officials are found in Prida, *op cit*, p 579, 594–5, 685

passed the bloodiest days of Santa Anna Governor Abraham González of Chihuahua was arrested and thrown under a moving train In the capital, those suspected of unfriendliness were either taken from their homes and shot within prison walls or murdered in the street Thus perished deputies Edmundo Pastelín and Serapio Rendón, the last, shot in the back of the head, as he was writing a farewell letter to his wife "He was the one-hundred and fourth we had shot, under orders of *Gobernación*," the second in command of the firing squad informed the victim's brother subsequently [1] A mere suspicion, a denunciation, sufficed, and victims other than those intended were executed [2]

The murder fraught with the greatest consequences was that of Dr Belisario Domínguez From studying in Paris he returned to practice in his native state, Chiapas, where in the obscure town of Comitán he became widely known for his professional skill, and the many poor he treated gratuitously His fame caused him to be consulted on his occasional visits to the capital and he finally established himself there He also published a small review in which he attacked bull-fighting, urged public health measures and in general espoused ideas that were liberal and needful in Mexico He declined a nomination for the senatorship saying that he would not occupy his seat if elected — that his field was not in politics He was then elected substitute senator, a title apparently destined to be only honorary But the "proprietary" senator [3] was killed in the "*decena tragica*" and in that crisis Dr Domínguez felt it his duty to sit His philippic on September 23 against Victoriana Huerta from the floor of the senate, calling on that body to depose the murderer of Madero and Suárez, deserves immortality in the annals of Mexican courage and nobility He was inviting his own doom The senators listened terrified, and the official "Diario de los Debates" omitted this and a subsequent address on the same theme Dr Domínguez had his speech printed on fliers and distributed through the city [4] A few nights thereafter four police officers arrested him at his residence He was never again seen alive His body was found in a ditch several days later The action of congress in denouncing General Huerta for this murder and the disappearance of several other deputies caused its prompt dissolution and the arrest of 110 members on October 10

From end to end the country was now aflame To combat the general uprising Huerta resorted increasingly to the levy On October 25 he decreed an army of 150,000 Mrs Nelson O'Shaughnessy recorded that

[1] Prida, *op cit*, 613

[2] In a confidential report the police recorded the execution of two deputies, Luis T Navarro and Bordes Mangel, "as ordered," but these men were not slain, others mistakenly identified had taken their places See Prida *op cit*, p 615 and fn

[3] At congressional elections each candidacy is dual, with the senator or deputy who is known as *propietario* is chosen also a *suplente* or substitute, who has no functions unless the seat becomes vacant through death resignation, long absence, or prolonged illness

[4] This speech (in English translation) may be found in Foreign Relations, 1913, 844–6

After the bull-fight on Sunday seven hundred unfortunates were seized, doubtless never to see their families again * * * At a big fire a few days ago nearly a thousand were taken * * * They scarcely dare any of them go out after dark Posting a letter may mean, literally, going to the cannon's mouth [1]

Huerta maintained himself in power nearly seventeen months [2] At the time of his treachery the country had made definite progress toward peace and stability He drenched it in blood, and from its smoldering ruins kindled hatreds, passions, and lusts that were to blaze for long years to come

The revolutionary forces that sprang up against him included those that had come out with Madero, and originated in similar fashion The case of Gabriel Hernández in 1910 is fairly typical of what had happened in the first uprising and what was now repeated on a larger scale

Starting with three followers in his town, Chignahuapan, Puebla, this Indian in his early twenties found little difficulty in recruiting a score of men near-by Village life was misery The revolution offered a release A good cause! Freedom! New things to see! Opportunities! ¡*A ver que sale!* Neighbors produced an old rifle here, a horse there With twenty-five men the band entered the next village Its numbers swelled A hundred strong they occupied Zacatlán and finally took Huauchinango, the county seat, where arms were secured Its jail was chiefly filled with political prisoners They were released One, a cold-blooded murderer, was shot Possibly others, also criminals, escaped their just fate and joined Revolutions do not pick and choose in the hour of attack Now numbering several hundred Hernández's forces were able to take a garrison town, Tulancingo, and to advance on Pachuca, capital of Hidalgo

It was the typical revolutionary band Predominantly pure Indians, mostly in the white *calzón* and *camisa* of peasantry, shod in *huaraches* or barefoot The three or four uniforms were worn by the officers A few horses, more burros Machetes outnumbering rifles (at first) Moving silently in the gigantic dust-cloud was the commissariat of patient women with babies slung in blue *rebosos* on the back, others heavy in the womb, and still others, incredibly tiny, trotting alongside Yet this was a well-controlled lot, for Hernández was a born leader and a decent human being who took his responsibilities seriously and maintained discipline

Meanwhile the revolution had gained such headway that many governors to avoid bloodshed gave up resistance and disbanded their troops, leaving no power to enforce authority This gave the lawless a free hand [3] In Pachuca the trouble started innocently with juvenile "¡Viva Madero!" demonstrations till then forbidden Amid the unrestrained enthusiasm vicious ele-

[1] O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, p 67
[2] Until July 15, 1914
[3] Precisely this happened in the famous police strike in Boston in 1919 Within a few hours after the police had left their posts the city was in the hands of looters

ments began pillaging Shops were looted Then the *cantinas* — pouring out their inflammatory contents Presently the jails were opened and the prisoners turned loose Several buildings were set afire The mob was in control Word, however, reached Hernández, who rushed into the city and restored order He commanded that all spoils be brought to the plaza to be returned to their owners and that anyone caught with loot after a given hour would be shot *Pelados* [1] from surrounding towns bent on pillage found the city strictly policed They offered to enlist Disbanded government troops, now without pay, also joined the Maderistas Revolutionists had suppressed looters, and looters had become revolutionists Federals switched without a quaver Such was the patchwork of revolution Hernández, four weeks before an unknown village lad, now headed three thousand men, many well equipped, and controlled the entire State of Hidalgo

He was a self-made general — like most revolutionary leaders [2] Not all were of his stamp nor earned the rank as he had Nor did many exhibit the abnegation of the Maderist leader, Agustín del Pozo, who issued a statement saying

* * * I see that several newspapers have awarded me the rank of "general" * * * I feel it inappropriate that anyone bear this title except the soldier who by study and through many campaigns * * * has become renowned for heroism and military genius * * * I have undertaken to help the Revolution headed by the liberator, Francisco I Madero, who named me chief of the revolutionary forces in the State of Puebla, I accepted this responsible and high commission because patriotic duty demanded my unselfish interest Since it is cruel irony to call a man a general who has no right to that distinction I beg that this title be not applied to me for I am merely an honest citizen who tries as far as he can to serve his country now that he is called upon to do so The Revolution has been made to conquer freedom and not military rank * * * [3]

In the uprising against Huerta in the spring of 1913, as two years previously in the revolt against Porfirio Díaz, small groups grew into bands which later fused into companies and regiments and became incorporated in one of several armies Or they continued to act semi-independently in certain regions In Sonora, which as a state declined to recognize [4] the "usurpation," as Huerta's seizure of power came to be called, a well-organized column of the three branches became "the Army of the Northwest" Growing steadily it moved down the west coast taking town after town from the federals Swinging east after the capture of Guadalajara, it entered Mexico City in August, 1914, after Huerta had fled the country [5] In the

[1] Literally "skinned ones"

[2] His promising career was cut short Arrested as a Maderist by Huerta he was murdered in prison by Huerta's nephew, General Cepeda, on March 27, 1913

[3] Printed in La Voz del Pueblo, Puebla June 22, 1911

[4] *Desconocer*, the Spanish word which is used on such occasions is not merely a passive non-recognition but an active repudiation

[5] The record of that campaign is Obregón's Ocho Mil Kilómetros en Campaña

northeast an army of that name developed under the leadership of General Pablo González In the center, in Chihuahua and Durango, sprang up the "army of the North" under General "Pancho" Villa For a few months these armies, united in the purpose of unseating Huerta, the "usurper," acknowledged the supreme leadership of Venustiano Carranza, and he it was who officially bestowed the higher military ranks and promotions In a call to the nation in April, 1913, he invited all to enlist under the Constitutionalist — that is, the anti-Huerta banner — *promising the permanence of their posts in the national army when the cause triumphed*[1] And naturally everyone ready to fight was accepted

The command of these three armies illustrates the varied types of revolutionists Obregón and Calles in the "Army of the Northwest" were men of the middle class, of the group who were to furnish the intellectual as well as the military leadership of the Revolution They were "self-made" men, brought up in poverty though not in dire want, and had always been sufficiently close to the toilers in field, factory, and mine to understand how incurably the discriminations of the old Mexican social system weighed on the masses These men entered the Revolution because they hated Porfirism and the bloodier relapse into it, Huertism, and above all were outraged by the treacherous murder of Madero Supporting Obregón the *ranchero*, and Calles the school-teacher, were representatives of such varied walks in life as Francisco Elías, the *hacendado*, Alberto Mascareñas, the banker, Roberto Pesqueira, the business man These were men activated chiefly by a principle and prepared to make sacrifices for it

To the leader of the "Army of the Northeast," General Pablo González, the Revolution was a private bonanza Cupidity was his dominating trait He, not the Zapatistas, achieved the complete ruin of Morelos Zapata's warfare had halted the agricultural industry under the old *hacienda* system But it was Pablo González, sent by Carranza to put down Zapata, who systematically rifled every sugar *hacienda* Dynamos, the copper lining of the vats, anything convertible into cash, he removed and sold for his own account The killing of Zapata in 1918 further reveals him and his type His reputation as "the general who never won a victory," was well deserved Commanding thousands he had no chance in a fair fight against Zapata's hundreds on their own terrain So he resorted to the classic Mexican military method — treachery

His subordinate, Colonel Jesús M Guajardo, with eight hundred men sought inclusion in Zapata's forces Zapata, suspicious, ordered the applicant to prove his alleged conversion to the cause by capturing Jonacatepec, held by Carranza troops Guajardo did so, attacking Carrancistas with Carrancistas As further proof of his new devotion *he ordered the prisoners*

[1] Those who had taken part in the Félix Diaz rebellion in Vera Cruz and in the Huerta coup d'état were excluded

taken shot Zapata, lulled into security, accepted his invitation to dine at the *hacienda* of San Juan Chinameca, where Guajuardo was encamped As Zapata, accompanied by only ten men, passed the gates, bugles sounded the *marcha de honor* Guajuardo's troops were drawn up At the command "present arms," they fired, riddling Zapata with bullets Guajardo and his men immediately decamped to escape the vengeance of the Zapatistas He was promoted to a brigadier-generalcy and given $50,000 pesos for killing Zapata

Zapata was still another variant in the gallery of revolutionary types It was long customary to refer to him as bandit, and still is *Las chusmas zapatistas* (the Zapatista rabble), Carranza called it [1] Zapata's methods in attacking the organized society around him often verged on banditry, and bandits there were who joined him But had the Zapatistas been bandits their objective would merely have been loot, which it was not They wanted land and in their fight for it they took what they needed Despite occasional terrible excesses — some in reprisal — train hold-ups and killing of passengers by Zapatista elements, they were on the whole unusually single in their purpose When they occupied Mexico City in the winter of 1914–15, and many residents, fearing the worst, had fled in terror, the fiercely mustachioed *Surianos* (men of the South) proved singularly mild Their belts bristling with cartridges they would humbly approach the domestic entrance of large mansions, and giant sombreros in hand respectfully ask for a bite to eat Horses and government property they regarded as legitimate spoils of war But there was no invasion of shops or private houses while the Zapatistas twice controlled Mexico's capital [2]

Another agrarian revolutionary, similar in type, was Saturnino Cedillo, full-blooded Indian, who fought in San Luis Potosí and has remained as the *jefe de operaciones* in that state in the Obregón and Calles administrations — a correct and law enforcing citizen once the causes that led him onto the war-path had been removed He, too, was labeled a "bandit"

The real bandit was typified in the leader of the "Army of the North" Early in his career he exchanged his name, Doroteo Arango, for that of a bandit once notorious in his region, Francisco Villa This twentieth century compound of Attila, Robin Hood, and Jesse James, with a flavoring of red-hot *chile* sauce, has already become a legend in the North country of Mexico His daredeviltry made him an idol of the masses He was reputed to be their friend and the "Pancho" Villa myth is perpetuated in the popular *corridos*, sung in the humblest huts It is true that at times he worked a rough justice Far oftener he was guilty of unspeakable bestiality, of wanton killings without number which spared neither sex, age, nor class, generally

[1] In his report to congress, April 15, 1917

[2] Out of the ranks of *Zapatismo* have come such sterling types as General Fortino Ayaquica, now the benevolent cacique of the Atlixco region, who has done so much to stimulate schools in his region and to keep it free from disorder

performed as the current phrase has it, *con lujo de crueldad* Pulling Chinese apart with horses was one of his diversions He was a brute, a creature of low instincts and unbridled passions, with all the ferocity, cunning, and relentlessness of a beast of prey He was fearless His daring carried him to military success His consciousness of being *muy hombre* and his readiness to shoot to kill at any time enabled him for a while to maintain his ascendancy Despite the frills which adorn his picturesque career he was the perennial Mexican arch-bandit Such there were in the War of Independence, the Reform, and the Revolution

His birth is shrouded in obscurity His father is said to have been a stable cleaner Doubtless the boy was spawned in the prevailing illegitimacy of the lowest stratum of Mexican life, the peon quarters of a *hacienda* To say that he was the product of his environment is to lessen the onus of the charges on his scroll As a mere boy he was "on his own" — working, peddling, begging, thieving, roaming The legend has it that a beautiful sister became the prey of the wicked *hacendado* and that young "Pancho" avenged her honor, slew the villain, and became an outlaw with a price on his head It is a good legend But it is unlikely that Villa, who was a mighty satyr and violated hundreds of women, willy-nilly, would have established a vendetta to punish the abstraction alleged More likely he was cuffed or whipped at some time, for a supposed or real insolence, or for petty stealing, and nursed his revenge Be that as it may, he rose briefly to extraordinary heights When his forces grew to dimensions in which the leader's individual prowess no longer counted, he was fortunate in having at his side General Felipe Angeles, a soldier schooled abroad and, excepting Obregón, probably the ablest tactician of the Revolution For a time the groping policy of the United States looked benignly upon Villa as the "hope" of Mexico! It was in pique at his failure to receive American recognition that he took from a southward bound train near Santa Ysabel in January, 1916, seventeen American engineers whom he shot in cold blood,[1] and followed with his murderous raid on Columbus, New Mexico, where men, women, and children were victims Only those completely deluded could fancy him as "a rough diamond"

When Villa's forces were in possession of Mexico City in December, 1914, two of his officers were dining in Sylvain's restaurant

"We do not pay," they announced as they finished — a custom of their kind

"It is I who will have to pay, not the restaurant," protested the waiter "A fine bunch of revolutionaries, you," he continued bitterly, as they laughed at him, "who call yourselves friends of the working people"

[1] Villa's presence in person at the "Santa Ysabel massacre," has not been proved The band was admittedly commanded by one of his men, a "Colonel" Pablo López

"That shirt front of yours would make an excellent target," drawled one of the officers

From another table a man arose, and tossing a bill on the table, said, "I will pay"

"Who are you?" inquired the Villistas in astonishment

"I," replied the stranger, "am a revolutionary who does not want to see the uniform that you wear dishonored"

With a sneer the officers went out They returned twenty minutes later with a squad of men The stranger was still dining He was taken before General Villa, who had already heard of his "offense," and sentenced him to be shot forthwith The sentence was carried out

Villa, whose retirement had been bought by Adolfo de la Huerta with the gift of a vast estate,[1] met a many times merited end, when his automobile was swept by a shower of bullets on July 20, 1923 The killers escaped, but several days later Deputy Jesús Salas B of the Durango Legislature, announced himself as the ringleader, stating that it was a belated act of justice for Villa's countless unpunished crimes After a brief arrest Salas was released It was widely assumed that the assassination was political — to remove the redoubtable "Pancho" on the eve of the presidential campaign when it was feared he would abandon his pastoral existence on the Hacienda de Canutillo and again take the war-path

It is essential to keep in mind these different types, their rise to power and their consequent position in the Mexican social fabric to see the military problem as it is Under the legalization by decree of the First Chief, Carranza, the general in each region became an absolute monarch He was authorized to raise funds to maintain his forces The means at his disposal (also authorized) were the "occupation" of enemy properties, levying imposts, commandeering and issuing paper money As the revolutionaries did not recognize the Federal Judiciary, and had no time to organize their own, courts-martial replaced the civil justice When with Huerta's fall, the slight bond that held the scattered forces was loosened, the independence and the power of the military increased Villa had already repudiated the "Constitutionalist" leadership The revolutionists were split into two main camps — the Carranza, Obregón, and González forces against the Villistas, who were temporarily thrown with the Zapatistas There were innumerable lesser bands, revolutionists behaving like bandits and bandits calling themselves revolutionists With the break-up of authority, the local *jefe's* whim became law Where he happened to be a decent fellow matters might not be so bad But when he was chased out by a rival faction, the process of "raising funds" and punishing the "enemies of the cause" — the cause of the latest conqueror — loosed the terror "They were all alike" is the frequent comment (from humble village folk, not *hacendados*) made to me

[1] Under an agreement signed July 28, 1920

in regions successively passed over by federals and several varieties of revolutionists

But the chaos gave the vilest scoundrels their opportunity and they were sufficiently plentiful to merit consideration Let us lift the curtain on a village drama

Place Mexico, *Time* The Revolution

"Do you realize, Colonel," the general said to me, "that not a *centavito* remains in the regimental chest?"

"Yes, my General, so I understand"

"That is no cause for alarm That little pueblo over the hill will restore our exchequer Here I shall put into effect an infallible method"

With this he handed me a paper on which he had written five names, continuing

"Those are the five richest men of the place Some have lands, some stores, but all are *cientificos*, Huertistas, reactionaries They shall present themselves immediately under penalty of being shot for complicity with the enemy"

I took an escort of ten men Without difficulty I found four of the five citizens Everyone knew them But when I asked for the fifth, Carlos Valdés, I met puzzled looks

"Carlos Valdés? It must be Don Vicente Valdés you are after"

"Why?" I inquired

"Because," was the reply, "the others that you seek are heads of the leading families here Don Vicente Valdés is also prominent, but Carlos Valdés is poor and little known"

But as my slip specifically called for Carlos Valdés I insisted, and finally found him, indeed in a most humble abode at one end of the village whereas the others dwelt in the best houses

The five I marched into my general's presence After identifying each by name he spoke

"Gentlemen, the Revolution needs resources which we, its honorable servants, its supporters without stain, cannot improvise Nothing could be more just than that you, the classes and individuals responsible for the present state of affairs, pay the cost of the war of which you are the sole cause You are, therefore, called on to fill the vacuum in my regimental chest For this purpose I have invited you to this interview to which you have so kindly come The forces under my command which this day have liberated your pueblo from the ignominy of continuing under the yoke of the reactionary forces, expects from you without procrastination or excuse of any kind the modest sum of thirty-five thousand pesos in cash These you will hand over not as a punishment for your support of the enemies of liberty in the republic, but merely as a forced loan for which I shall give you a receipt and for which you will be reimbursed when our cause triumphs The only detail remaining to be fixed is the amount for which each one of you shall be liable and the time that it shall be due Neither shall be changed by either a *centavo* or a minute"

The veins in the foreheads of four of the men bulged They moistened their lips and shifted uneasily Only Carlos Valdés seemed unperturbed, a faint smile of irony and melancholy playing about his lips Glancing at his list and then up again my general resumed

"Señor Don Carlos Valdés, the forces under my command concede to you a period of twelve hours from this instant It is," glancing at his wrist-watch, "seven forty-seven P M — for you to hand over to the regimental fund, five thousand pesos In case you fail to do this you will be hanged without further formalities of any kind to-morrow morning at seven forty-seven"

The five men hearing these words turned pale and began to tremble violently Valdés tried to speak and opened his mouth, but the general continued in the same even tone

"Señor Don Ciriaco Diaz González," said he to the second, "you are granted a period of fifteen hours from this instant to produce the sum of six thousand pesos In case of non-compliance you will be hanged at ten forty-seven to-morrow morning Señor Don Pedro Duarte, you are allowed eighteen hours to secure seven thousand pesos It is now seven fifty-one If you do not accede you will be hanged without further ado to-morrow at one fifty-one Señor Don Marciano de la Garza, you are given twenty-one hours in order to contribute eight thousand pesos And to you," turning to the last, "are granted twenty-four hours to raise nine thousand pesos One more word While the orders to which you have listened are being carried out, or not, as the case may be — the latter alternative being one I should most sincerely regret — you will remain prisoners in this headquarters and at my disposition You will, of course, be given full facilities to communicate with your relatives and friends"

The general finished speaking and gave his mustaches a careful twirl The five citizens, especially Carlos Valdés, whom everyone had said to be absolutely without means, tried to recover their calm and finally burst into speech together but my general cut them short

"It's no use, gentlemen, whatever you may say has not the slightest effect The orders are given The minutes are fleeting Either you will hand over the money or adorn the gallows Could anything be clearer?"

There was a prolonged and anxious silence With a prodigious effort Valdés controlled his gasping for air and quickened by the imminence of danger burst out

"I shall be silent in just a moment, General, but not before telling you something which unquestionably you do not know As all these honorable persons who are prisoners with me can testify and whose fate grieves me as much as mine, I am very poor I am poor individually All my relatives are poor, and all my friends Do not think I am lying I am telling the truth I own no house, no lands, no money, no business, no securities, no bank account Twelve hours to gather five thousand pesos! Hearing you I think I must be dreaming A year would be as little and as hopeless for me as twelve hours, so I beg you as far as I am concerned do not weary your hangmen by delay Have me hanged now and do not wait for to-morrow"

"The Revolution does not need hangmen," said the general drily, and rose, ending the interview A little later in the evening I related to him what the people had told me, namely that Carlos Valdés, from all accounts, was incapable of collecting, let alone five thousand pesos, even five hundred or a hundred

"You are easily fooled, my boy," observed the general "Take my word for it that of these five subjects Carlos Valdés is worth most to us You will see"

The news spread like lightning Friends and relatives came to the headquarters

and pled and wept Several committees approached the general and tried to convince him that in the case of Carlos Valdés he was wholly mistaken, that Valdés was not and never had been anything but a poor man The general became angry "The Revolution makes no mistakes," he roared, and threatened them with exemplary punishment if they dared repeat their plea

"Consider," they said, weeping, "that this pueblo is small that even yesterday before you came the federals plucked us clean Thirty-five thousand pesos is a sum beyond our means We haven't got them, and cannot get them in a few hours At least give us time to go to other villages, give us four days, three days, two — accept our word of honor that we will pay if it is humanly possible We are honorable people and — "

But the general, interrupting, replied crisply "The orders have been given You are traitors and cowards You will learn that you cannot trifle with the Revolution nor with me who represents it with the dignity appropriate to its loyal idealism and heroic impulses If at the hour fixed Carlos Valdés does not pay the five thousand pesos that are his quota, you will see him swinging from a tree and the rest in their turn Señores, you are losing your time "

At ten o'clock my general retired All night long there was coming and going to the prisoners' room Memoranda were jotted down, letters were written The captives, highly tense, glanced at the clock every five minutes Only Carlos Valdés seemed alien to all this anxiety He appeared tranquil and resigned Despite all efforts seven o'clock struck and no money was in sight

On awakening my general called me and said, "Is the money of Don Carlos Valdés at hand?"

"No, my General, neither his nor that of any other but as far as Valdés is concerned I'm sure he cannot — "

"Quite so," interrupted the general, "let us hurry Listen In the patio of this house is an ash tree Have a rope with a noose on the end tied to the strongest branch You must hasten, for it is now seven seven We have only half an hour Ah, on your way out, kindly tell Juan to bring my breakfast "

I transmitted the general's orders Estimating the height of Carlos Valdés they arranged the noose and placed under it a chair which when withdrawn would leave him hanging at its height from the ground At seven forty the general sent to ask if Carlos Valdés were ready to hand over the sum assigned to him Valdés replied that he was ready enough but had no money nor hope of getting it Then my general ordered the five prisoners brought to the patio under escort and had all the officers summoned

It was seven forty-five The five prisoners, deathly pale, were lined up in a semicircle in front of the noose On either side was a file of soldiers My general took from his pocket the list of the night before and read in sonorous tones

"Don Carlos Valdés " Valdés responded "Are you ready to comply with the orders which through me the Revolution has given?"

"I have already told you, sir, and do not understand how you can have the slightest doubt, that disposed as I am to obey I have no money and no means of getting it "

"Very well, Señor Valdés, the consequences will be the exclusive result of your resistance to an order, the justification of which is beyond discussion You have

two minutes to decide, but as the Revolution never disobeys its own orders we shall go ahead with certain preparations Sergeant, proceed!"

The sergeant and two soldiers approached, tied Valdés's hands behind his back and moving him toward the noose caused him to mount the chair One of the soldiers adjusted the noose around his neck The other four citizens were livid Valdés, white, kept his eyes on the general

Several seconds passed The general lifted his face from his watch!

"Don Carlos Valdés, the hour is seven forty-seven Your period of grace has expired Do you hand over the five thousand pesos, yes or no?"

Valdés made no reply

"Sergeant, carry out your instructions," snapped the general

The sergeant jerked away the chair on which Valdes stood, the limb swayed under the sudden weight, as his body danced in mid-air in horrible contortions

The other four uttered a cry of terror My general never blinked * * *

Don Ciriaco Díaz González handed over his 6000 pesos at nine in the morning Don Pedro Duarte had his 7000 before eleven The other two paid their quotas before noon

A little later the general was contemplating all that money arranged in neat piles on his camp table

"As you see," he said to me, "the procedure is infallible, they all paid"

"All except Valdés," I replied

"Valdés? Of course, but I knew he had nothing to pay with He didn't own enough to buy his coffin"

"But," I said in astonishment, "why then did we hang him?"

"Why? What a simpleton you are! Because by hanging him we made certain that the others would pay!" [1]

A region passed over successively by contending forces was stripped as by a locust plague Every general was imposing some kind of paper money in his jurisdiction — worthless outside of it, worthless when he passed on and soon worthless if he stayed When the Villistas entered Mexico City they captured the Carrancistas' dies and continued printing with them and their own Paper may have been essential to finance the Revolution but it really financed a limited number of revolutionary leaders and the poor for whom the Revolution was ostensibly fought paid the price Of those days, the First Chief of the Revolution etched the following

The factions which since the defeat of Huertism have combated the Constitutionalist Government, have distinguished themselves for their lack of order of law, and by their total lack of respect for the rights of others They war to kill, they fight for booty, their only norm is the caprice of each one in the measure that he can satisfy it, their justice is vengeance, their motive for an assault on the rights of others is personal antipathy, when not the simple desire to do damage They strike, they wound, they assassinate, they destroy solely to show their strength, it is the wild beast putting his brute strength to work, the instincts of

[1] As related by Martín Luis Guzmán, Rep in El Universal, June 26 and July 3 1927

the savage who thirsts for blood, and feels the imperious urge to destroy, in order to occupy his errant life [1]

This description was applied to about one half the anti-Huerta forces, the Villistas It accurately described some of the remainder, the Constitutionalists "The most corrupt administration in the annals of Mexico," General Calles labelled Carranza's in a letter to Adolfo de la Huerta, less than three years later [2]

He was quite right In his brief sojourn in the Carranza cabinet, from which he resigned in disgust, he observed

a corrupt camarilla headed by the chief of the presidential staff, General Juan Barragán * * * They speculate with everything, they sell offices and concessions, they authorize thefts from the national treasury, they traffic * * * even with pensions of the widows and orphans of the soldiers of the revolution who in order to secure their instalments have to allow a commission to "Juanito Barragán" * * * this coterie has a working arrangement like the old *científicos* in regard to whatever dirty piece of business may be carried on with the official favor to divide up the profits * * * and commits truly scandalous robberies * * * such as * * * in the administration of the national railways where the director-general, Paulino Fontes, speculates with the ties, the purchase of rolling stock, etc * * * having established a system by which business men to get transportation for their merchandise must pay gratifications of seventy-five to a hundred pesos a car to Fontes's agents and employees * * * [3]

Under the title, "A defile of thieves and assassins," the volume "Sonora y Carranza," which furnished a full documentation of the revindicating revolution against Carranza, gives a short biographical indictment of the leading eleven Carranza generals with corroborative facts [4]

In the public eye of the capital, the flaunting of *demi-mondaines*, whom they loaded with diamonds, acquisition of sumptuous mansions, sporting of high-powered motor-cars, a trail of revelry continuous from office to brothel — with these did the Carranza military redeem their revolutionary oratory

However justified the revolt against Carranza, only a few were honestly outraged by his crass betrayal of his pledges The rest merely clambered on the Sonora bandwagon, when the popularity of the uprising insured its success Calles had long striven by friendly advice to show Carranza his error Finding reform from within impossible, he publicly resigned to show his disapproval He was then under no obligation to the administration and free from official ties Obregón had been out of the service since 1917

[1] Message to congress, April 10 1917
[2] Feb 1, 1920 In Sonora y Carranza, comp C Valenzuela y Chaverri Matamoros, p 77
[3] Interview given in Agua Prieta, Sonora, April 24, 1920 Rep in *Idem*, p 307
[4] P 372–6

But others who retained their position in the army and were marching under a soldier's commission to put down the insurrection, switched with their troops — the time-honored Mexican treachery When General Francisco Urbalejo, for instance, heading a detachment to invade Sonora, learned "that all the garrisons of Chihuahua had adhered to the revolutionary movement, he decided to do the same "[1]

With similar flopping all over the Mexican map, Carranza was doomed He decided to evacuate Mexico City for Vera Cruz either to make a last stand or walk the customary plank into exile But first he telegraphed to General Guadalupe Sánchez, the *jefe de operaciones*, asking where he stood "President and Father," telegraphed back Sánchez, whom Carranza had indeed treated as a son, "though everyone else betray you, I shall not If but one man remain loyal to you, I am that man " Thus encouraged, Carranza went With his eight thousand men Guadalupe Sánchez attacked the presidential train and drove Carranza with a tiny detachment into the mountains where he was shot to death

One more elimination from the revolutionary forces had taken place The ablest soldier the Revolution had produced was now president of the republic His election in 1920 not only satisfied the legal requisites as perfectly as they could be but his choice was really popular No one could at that time advance a comparable claim to the supreme magistracy The principals of the new administration, instead of being the variegated and accidentally combined elements that in the emergency had formed around Carranza, had long worked together This was the first orderly constituted government emerging from the Revolution It offered the first opportunity to put in practice gradually developed theories, to fulfil long deferred pledges, to satisfy the basic aspirations that all agreed — verbally, at least — they had been fighting for

But it was not a national army It was a collection of chieftains, if one wishes to speak in terms of their Indian lineage, or of robber barons, if one prefers the Spanish analogy Certainly it had no relation to that modern institution, the state Not Mexico, but where the pesos were — that was their fatherland A little less unruly than in the heyday of civil war, the officialdom was still corrupt, dissolute, disorderly The house I lived in on my arrival in Mexico City in 1923 was made available by the death of its occupant, an Englishman, who chanced to walk into the trajectory of two Mexican generals who were disputing a check in a café Exceptional was the *jefe de operaciones* who did not carry several side-lines — usually the exclusive gambling-house concession, forbidden by law, the proceeds of a *hacienda* or two, to which his soldiers would carry the manure of the *jefatura's* horses, or the lucrative task of "protecting" other *hacendados* from agrarians

[1] As reported by the correspondent of Orientación, the Sonora newspaper supporting the movement

The fault, in part at least, was Obregón's Granting the difficulty of demobilizing the many generals who felt that their services should be requited, he was unnecessarily a "good fellow" — at the expense of the nation — another survival of personal rule His secretary of war, General Francisco Serrano, was the most notorious gambler in the republic and rated almost as high in the other vices Losing $80,000 pesos in one night — about four times his annual salary — he gave a voucher on the national treasury, which Obregón ordered paid That set a high standard of reward, it displeased other generals, and naturally there wasn't enough, at that rate, to go around Indeed the increasing stability and order made the years seem lean by comparison with the good old days of unrestrained loot That was why in 1923, thirty-six generals in active service (and still more, retired) and a variety of lesser officers "rose in arms" As in the days of Santa Anna, theirs was avowedly a lofty purpose Obregón was trying to "impose" Calles and trample "free suffrage" underfoot

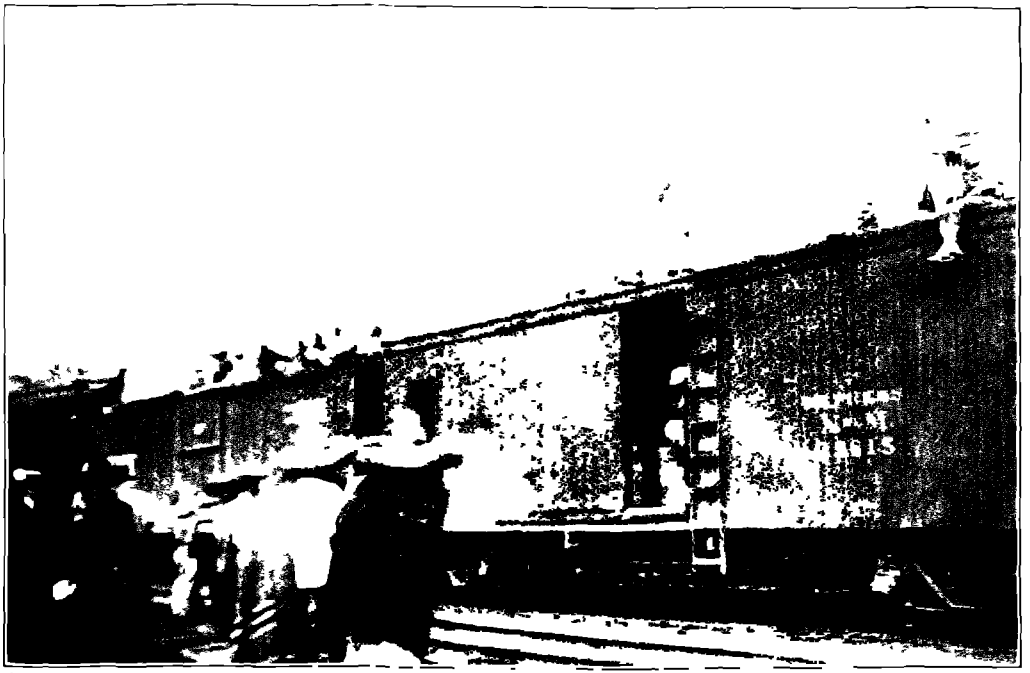
The first to rebel was the same Guadalupe Sánchez, *jefe de operaciones* in Vera Cruz For several years he had been killing agrarians who had gathered the idea that the Revolution was for land Rebellion, however, gave to this beardless and blood-thirsty Indian, with hands soft as a woman's, far greater opportunities Forced loans on Vera Cruz business men, "to be repaid when the cause triumphs," followed instanter Such of his own men as refused to rebel, and peaceful citizens suspected of being loyal to the established government, were arrested, tortured, and murdered [1]

Next "rose" General Enrique Estrada of the neatly waxed mustaches and manicured finger-nails, *jefe* in Jalisco In the weeks before the rebellion, Obregón, who had been ill, was convalescing on a ranch at El Fuerte, Jalisco Thither came General Estrada, breaking bread with his chief, occupying the seat of honor at his right hand In the last days, he asked the president to be best man at his wedding When multiple reports of Estrada's purposed treachery reached Obregón he naturally did not credit them

General Fortunato Maycotte, *jefe* in Oaxaca, like Sánchez and Estrada, a *divisionario*, the highest rank in the army, declaring himself horrified at their baseness, rushed to Mexico City There he gave his old, one-armed comrade and commander a long *abrazo* (embrace), and asked only that he be given $200,000 pesos and more war material that he might go forth and crush the scoundrels Having got what he asked, no sooner safely away, he joined them, and issued a "pronouncement" [2]

[1] The disappearance of a number of Vera Cruzans remained a mystery until in March, 1926, repair work on the *jefatura de operaciones* uncovered a room carefully sealed and plastered over In it were found the decomposed remains of those who had been done to death there Demócrata, April 2, and 8, 1926

[2] His Plan Revolucionario of Dec 14, 1923, withdrew recognition from President Obregón, the members of congress and the supreme court, and appointed Sanchez, Estrada and himself as a trium



(*Photo by the author 1923*)

MEXICAN ARMY ENTRAINED

A troop train — soldiers in and on freight cars in the foreground two characteristic manners in which the blanket is worn)



(*Photo by the Author.*)

COMPETITIVE SPORTS HAVE BEEN ADOPTED IN THE ARMY

President Calles kicking off in an association football game at the playing field newly established at the headquarters in Perote, Vera Cruz (Sept. 1928)

Five more *jefes de operaciones* — eight out of thirty-five and twenty-eight other generals in active service — turned And what was their motive? Greed — tinctured here and there with vanity or a personal grievance Generals Salvador Alvarado and Antonio Villareal, whose guilt was only slightly less because they were not in active service, besides the invariable presidential ambitions, which so many Mexicans in the army or politics harbor, were both angered because they had been dropped from the cabinet [1] Yet Villareal had been a revolutionist long before the fall of *Díaz*, risking his neck in what then seemed a hopeless cause, and Alvarado had been with Obregón from the start of his 8000-kilometer anabasis from Sonora to Mexico

But loot was now the immediate objective — the presidency would come later Public property was government property and therefore to be taken over at once and the private goods of those opposed to the new liberation were obviously also forfeit The first maneuver was always to seize the funds in the government offices Had Colonel Arnáiz, who "rose" in Aguascalientes, to use him merely as a type, rendered a *parte oficial* — a military report — of his first victory, it would, instead of recording gains in territory, captured material, and casualties, have read like a ledger, to wit

Monetary Commission	$42,000 00
Telegraph Office	1,100 00
Railroad Station	3,000 00
Post-Office	600 00
National Bank	12,000 00
Federal Revenue Stamp Office	800 00
Assay Office	300 00
Total	$59,800 00 [2]

Arnáiz promptly became a general in the rebel forces

The rebels could have won had they been capable of loyalty to each other for even a few weeks But hardly in the field each general began knifing the next, fearful that a victory might give a rival the pole in the presidential scramble Most of them did not care to fight They expected that, following precedent, the entire army would soon flop When they found success dubious they began to desert the ship Those in charge of funds were especially agile One Francisco del Río, who had joined Guadalupe Sánchez, was commissioned to buy $200,000 pesos' worth of arms in Ger-

virate, to name a provisional president, who in turn would call for national elections to choose a "constitutional" president

[1] Alvarado had been secretary of the treasury in the provisional cabinet of de la Huerta and Villareal, secretary of agriculture in Obregón's

[2] Figures found in report of Governor Rafael Arellano Valle of Aguascalientes to Secretaría of Gobernación Relaciones Interiores Exp 17 3 47

many He did not return — that is, not until three years later, when the money was spent, and the Federal Government had perhaps forgotten He was one of many Others formed marauding bands When the Guadalajara to Mexico train was assaulted in January, 1926, its escort of seven soldiers hacked to death, and the passengers robbed, authorities and press were concerned with the question, "Were the assailants bandits or de la Huertistas?"[1] Verily a distinction without a difference! They had been headed by "ex-Colonel" Manuel Núñez, commander of the Guadalajara garrison under Estrada

The only compensation for the loss of life and the profound havoc of the de la Huerta rebellion was the elimination of so many treacherous officers. Was this a net gain?

Presumably, but it remains to be shown Of the generals who stayed loyal not a few were ready to "turn" Others marked time, until sure the Government would win Some who had even seduced fellow officers to revolt, on finding that not enough had been seduced, failed to join them Such as these and others, who were honestly faithful, were inordinately rewarded — for merely doing their duty Obregón created *fifty-four new generals* and promoted thirty-three for "meritorious conduct in the field"[2] In addition he bestowed gratifications of from twenty-five to fifty thousand pesos (while school-teachers were going unpaid), automobiles, and other bounties Most of the loyalty he — and the nation — got, he paid for

President Calles, coming into office and into this legacy, made a valiant effort to "moralize" the army He appointed as secretary of war, General Joaquín Amaro, whose loyalty was unquestioned and ability as organizer and disciplinarian universally recognized The sub-secretary, General Miguel Piña, Jr, is everything that an "officer and a gentleman" should be So is General Jaime Carrillo, the youthful chief of staff of the war minister Likewise General Rafael Aguirre, fourth in line Under their administration, purchases have been centralized and contracts made strictly competitive The padded muster roll is gone In so far as the war office is concerned it has become an honest, hard-working, efficient institution, unquestionably above any in previous Mexican history

President Calles has sought to make discipline and economy the watchword He has granted almost no promotions I heard him persuading General Eugenio Martínez that his 2000-peso estimate of what a certain trip would cost should be reduced to 500 They compromised at 700 Trifling as was this incident it was significant of a change from the open hand which previously greeted every general

[1] The Mexico City newspapers of Jan 10 and following discussed the pro and con fully

[2] The fifty-four were advanced from colonelcies Twenty-five *brigadieres* were made *generales de brigada*, and eight of this rank made *divisionarios*

The annual budget for national defense shows a steady decrease [1]

1920	$124,083,235 (pesos)	1924	$107,299,244 (pesos)
1921	141,023,365	1925	84,778,589
1922	135,607,075	1926	84,093,700
1923	114,705,332	1927	76,061,638

Important reform has been effected among the rank and file The *cuartelazo* while invariably the work of officers, has been made possible by the common soldier's ignorantly slavish submission to his immediate chiefs The private is a better man to-day Conscript and convict no longer replenish the ranks Many barracks have become schools, and illiteracy among the troops is disappearing Competitive sports, especially baseball, have been enthusiastically adopted To the extent that externals — the bearing, deportment, and dress of the soldiery — reflect an inward change, improvement in the last three years has been marked A different spirit too is tangible in the new military school at San Jacinto where under the direction of Generals Miguel M Acosta and Francisco del Arco, the officers of the next generation are being trained A fine appearing lot of boys they are, selected from every walk of life

The intent to reform is there "All those generals and officers who behave scandalously in public places, or without the decorum that their profession demands, will be cashiered regardless of the height of the rank which they occupy," reads a war office order [2] That it is not mere verbiage is shown by the considerable number of dismissals from the army, and in the unpopularity of General Amaro with many officers — the highest compliment that could be paid him He enforces discipline Serrano was their idol — the handsome and dashing Serrano who ladled out funds to them and was ready for an all-night *parranda* (spree) at any time

Nevertheless, the reform remains to be made Men cannot change their habits and character at a command, and the army is still largely led by men of the type who for a century have assaulted, not defended, the nation What is done at the war office in Mexico City is nullified out in the *jefaturas* Some fine and unexceptionable soldiers there are. Lázaro Cardenas, modest and unassuming, who quietly helps the school-teachers and every civic project in his *jefatura*, Juan Andreu Almazán, excellent soldier and cultured gentleman, there are others, J Gonzalo Escobár has a good reputation

But they do not make an army How would one qualify a dozen oysters of which but three or even six were good? Would one not, on tasting the first putrid bi-valve, reject the whole plate?

The fatal defect in this attempted reform is that it exempts the powerful

[1] Figures furnished by the Ministry of *Hacienda*
[2] From a war ministry *acuerdo*, Feb 2, 1925

Captains, majors, and colonels have been cashiered But a *jefe de operaciones?* Not yet

Scandalous conduct and public debauchery still exist in the army — among the highest

A drunken brawl on February 19, 1927, in which two generals, an adjutant, and the police were the principals, resulted fatally General Guillermo Nelson, *jefe de operaciones* in Tamaulipas, in company with his adjutant, Remigio Fajardo, and General Manuel Salazar were drinking in a low saloon in the capital Fajardo, particularly obstreperous, picked a fight with a policeman named Gómez Lezama, who was making his rounds He called in several fellow policemen Between them they subdued Fajardo, when General Nelson drew his pistol, and compelling the policemen to hold up their hands ordered them disarmed by his two companions When the police were thus disarmed General Nelson fired three shots into Lezama and then strode out to enter his automobile The dying policeman, staggering to his feet grabbed a pistol from the adjutant and fired at General Nelson Both expired a few hours later

Illegal violence and collusion to thwart the law still exist in the army

In Aguascalientes in 1925, the *jefe de operaciones* was General Rodrigo Talamantes In connivance with the large landholders he used his forces to drive peasants off their *ejidos* More than one head of a village committee he strung to a convenient *pirú* tree The Mexican Federation of Labor sent one of its organizers, Miguel Ricardo, to investigate Finding conditions as reported he presented himself to General Talamantes, saying that if these killings were without the general's knowledge it was time he knew about them, and that in any event he, Ricardo, had come to demand protection for the *ejidatarios* The general called in his chief of staff, Colonel Estrada It was agreed that with him Ricardo should go out to the villages and there prove his charges Ricardo arranged that the *campesinos* in one of the most flagrantly robbed pueblos should assemble to meet them As Ricardo got off the train, the colonel lined up a file of soldiers and had him shot Several of the assembled villagers were also killed, the rest fled Nothing whatever was done by the War Ministry General Talamantes is still a *jefe de operaciones* Colonel Estrada, however, was waylaid by a group of *campesinos* a year later when he tried the same tactics in the State of Nayarit and killed

A year later another general, Eulogio Ortiz, presided over the *jefatura* which included Aguascalientes and Zacatecas Thither came Juan Silveti, the bull-fighter, a personal friend To arrange a *corrida de toros* he went for his bulls to the *hacendado* Ochoa Gordoa, owner of the best cattle in the region "Certainly," Gordoa told the toreador, "if you pay cash for them" Juan "*sin miedo*" (John "without fear") as he is popularly known, demanded the wherefore of so outrageous a demand A year previous, he was re-

minded, he had secured bulls promising to pay out of the receipts of the *corrida* and the owner was still waiting for his money Silveti went straight to his friend General Ortiz Within a few hours a squad of soldiers arrived at the *hacienda*, arrested Gordoa, Jr , who was in charge, and took six of the best blooded bulls After spending two weeks in jail he was released He came to Mexico City to try and collect for his bulls, but got no satisfaction [1]

The Catholic rebellion in 1926 afforded General Ortiz, and other military, new opportunities In the state capital, Aguascalientes, one by one, a score of wealthy citizens — prominent Catholics — were arrested Though no charges were preferred each would learn that he was accused of plotting against the Government Under a military régime there is no justice (not merely in Mexico) The prisoner well knew he had no chance if the *jefe* so determined After several days in a filthy cell a "coyote" visited the captive His case looked dark the general was determined to stamp out sedition and so forth However, if the prisoner were really innocent, as he affirmed, a certain lawyer might be able to convince the general The visitor would try

The lawyer who never appeared would get from 500 to 2500 pesos — whatever "the traffic would bear" (in cash, of course) Before release the victim was warned to tell nothing Sometimes he was obliged to compose a letter that he had been arrested on a justified suspicion, but having been able to make a satisfactory explanation had been promptly released, after extremely courteous treatment, and had nothing to complain of

Suppose he complained to the "Center," to authorities who do not know him, but are old "companions-in arms" of the general If they did not ignore the complaint entirely they would send an inspector The general would indignantly deny knowing anything about payment — and it would be impossible to prove it The go-between and lawyer would lie masterfully The general would, however, produce somebody's charge of plotting — enough to justify the arrest The general would be vindicated and the plaintiff subject to further persecution Lucky, if he did not lose his life

In Jalisco in April, 1927, in the wake of armed rebel raids on villages and train hold-ups, several civilians, prominent Catholics, were taken from their homes to the *cuartel general* and shot for complicity in the rebellion They may have been guilty Secrecy, speed, and an arbitrary procedure justify strong doubt But that the Mexican military authorities were guilty of violating their national constitution admits of none [2] The victims

[1] He had not as late as May 1, 1927

[2] Article 13 of the Constitution of 1917 provides "No case shall be tried according to special laws or by special tribunals * * * In no case nor for any reason whatever shall military tribunals extend their jurisdiction over persons not belonging to the army Whenever a civilian shall be implicated in any military crime or offense, the case shall be heard by the corresponding civil authorities"

Article 14 provides "No persons shall be deprived of life, liberty, property possessions, or rights without due process of law, instituted before a duly created court, in which the essential elements of procedure are observed and in accordance with existing laws"

were deprived of life without due process of law Similarly in Morelia a prominent citizen, Alfonso Arce, was arrested and despite assurances to his relatives that he was in no danger, shot thirty-six hours later [1] In Guanajuato, where, on the other hand, state and military authorities were not unsympathetic to the rebellion, although avowedly loyal to the Government, at least one such murder by command of General José Amarillas took place in the barracks at Silao The death of that victim, José Santibáñez, and of others, killed when soldiers fired on a carriage, was called to the president's attention by seven of the state's deputies [2] In Tuxpan, Vera Cruz, four men who had secured an *amparo* — a stay — from the federal judge, were nevertheless executed by General Gabriel Barrios After telegraphing the facts to President Calles, the judge, Miguel Mendoza López y Schwertfeger, expressed himself as follows

> It is my personal conviction that the truly civilized peoples are those which show the greatest respect for human life, and that the abyss which always exists between governing and governed cannot be closed by filling it with blood But apart from my private opinions the law orders that judicial findings be respected, and a circular letter from the presidency likewise reminds the military authorities that civilians accused of an offense shall be consigned to the proper tribunal Notwithstanding — the aforementioned murders were put through without formalities of any kind They create the presumption that the orders of the presidency have not come to the notice of all the military, or that they, failing in their duty, have disregarded them and the mandates of the law, nullifying in either case the protection of the federal justice [3]

The fact is, the Mexican general is — with exceptions — a killer Partly he reflects a racial and traditional contempt for death in an environment where life has offered so little But beyond this he throws back to the dark ages of mankind when force ruled and human life was lightly taken Or rather Mexico is the anachronism with periodic civil strife the norm, and the personal and indirect processes of an organized society not yet developed into use

Thus the extra-legal *ley fuga* of Díaz has yielded to the extra-legal "*ley de suicidio*," introduced in the capital's jails by General Roberto Cruz, inspector-general of police (who also profiteered in Catholics during the rebellion) A notorious criminal is caught The next morning he is found dead in his cell, revolver in hand, bullet hole in head How careless the searchers who overlooked that gun! This method is widely applauded — especially by the loudest devotees of "law and order" But how easily it can apply to others whose presence is, in the Mexican idiom, "inconvenient"! I know of a police official's asking a friend whose wife's paramour

[1] April 14, 1927 He left a widow and three small children
[2] April 19, 1927 [3] Telegram dated March 7, 1927

had been arrested, whether he wanted to have the wrecker of his home "commit suicide"[1] (Fortunately the husband did not.)

As a matter of fact the *ley fuga*, denounced by all revolutionists as one of the iniquities of Porfirio Díaz and Victoriano Huerta, has not disappeared although its use is probably less common. No more perfect specimen of said iniquity may be found than the following, reported in "Universal" of June 27, 1927:

(Special Dispatch to El Universal)

Apizaco, Tlax., June 26.—Last night by order of the *Jefatura* of the Military Operations in the State of Puebla, Major Bartolo Rodriguez, commanding the Tlaxcala sector, ordered the arrest of Señor Eduardo Fernández de Lara, on the basis of documents which proved his complicity with the rebels.

On being arrested, I was informed, Señor Fernández de Lara confessed his guilt of the offense of which he was accused, declaring, moreover, that he had arms and ammunition in Acocotla and other places.

When Señor Fernández de Lara was being taken to Acocotla, in order to have him hand over said munitions, he tried to flee, on account of which his custodians fired, killing him, according to what was told me officially.

The commander of the sector gave orders that the necessary certificate be drawn up to be sent to the *Jefatura* of Military Operations in Puebla, and, further, ordered an inquest to clear up the facts.

The Correspondent[1]

The casualness and inconsistency with which life is taken in the Mexican politico-military conflicts furnish constant paradoxes. The Mérida garrison which rebelled with de la Huerta cold-bloodedly put to death after the farce-formality of a trial, Governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto, three of his brothers, and nine other civilians, whose crime was that they had been on the other side.[2] How the rebel (or any other) cause was served by not either imprisoning these men, or sending them out of the country, is impossible to explain—except by synchronizing these butcheries with the mentality of Ghengiz Khan or Ahuitzotl. The Federal Government, quite correctly, shot de la

[1] It is obvious that the correspondent carefully shifts the responsibility for his dispatch to his informants. The "confession" is also open to grave doubt—"dead men tell no tales"! The order for an inquest is a classic part of the performance which always confirms "the attempt to escape." The Government could very easily stop the further application of the *ley fuga*—if it wanted to—by cashiering the major in question and every other officer connected with the incident, especially his superiors who are most probably responsible, and making the fact public. Prisoners would then be so guarded that they could not make the attempt to escape, or doing so, would be recaptured uninjured.

[2] According to the private secretary of Jorge Prieto Laurens, one of the conspicuous civilian rebels, the killing was ordered by de la Huerta—a civilian—who on hearing of the capture of Carrillo Puerto, and his brothers, wired congratulating the commander, Colonel Juan Ricardez Broca, urging that he "proceed with all energy," a cryptic command which was perfectly understood, for on receiving news of the murders de la Huerta promoted Broca to a brigadier generalcy and made him governor of Yucatan. (Capetillo, La Rebelión Sin Cabeza, p. 266-7.) The actual perpetrator of this crime, the second in command, Colonel Hermenegildo Rodríguez, afterward told with keen delight how he had ordered the verdict under penalty of executing the members of the court-martial if they declined to act.

Huerta officers above the rank of major (and sometimes below) who were captured during the rebellion But a year later it acquitted the chiefs of staff of General Maycotte, colonels and lieutenant-colonels, in a court-martial, on their plea that they had "been deceived"! The lapse of a few months had apparently liquidated their treason The Revolution is replete with incidents in which the merest trifle condemned or snatched a man from death A chance remark often saved — or lost — a life

Apart from their criminal illegality, these so-called executions, particularly in the recent Catholic conflict, were not only wholly unnecessary but directly contrary to the interest they supposedly served Certainly a government's prime duty is to put down rebellion Punishing treason, which in most of the world is still a capital offense, is a necessary corollary to the idea of a state, and indispensable to the survival of the state Men caught in arms or in the act of killing or arson or looting may justly be shot But seizing civilians in their homes, condemning them by a procedure, or lack of it, in which some general — a single individual — functions as prosecutor, jury, judge, and executioner, is a totally different matter It merely makes possible incalculable abuse It did so in Mexico

The Calles Government properly made light of the Catholic rebellion It had no popular following It lacked leadership Its only prominent soldier, General Rodolfo L Gallegos, former *jefe de operaciones* in Guanajuato, was soon hunted down As an armed movement it was guerrilla warfare confined to rural parts of three states, Colima, Guanajuato, and Jalisco Against the simplest defensive tactics it would have died a natural death

It was the Mexican military who would not let it die They profiteered and patrioteered on its continuance They accepted the opportunity with a whoop Under it anyone could be denounced — and robbed In conservative Jalisco, where greater sympathy with the rebels did not necessarily imply overt aid, merchants, *hacendados*, and *rancheros* of known Catholic affiliations were systematically arrested and their property confiscated Or while they were struggling to clear themselves their crops would be taken If a man so abused escaped with his life, burning with indignation, he fled to the hills He might have been a neutral or a passive sympathizer, he became an active rebel, with the passionate intransigeance of a wronged man So as the dying embers of rebellion flamed up, the entire rebel field of operations, some six thousand square miles of northern Jalisco, was decreed a "neutral zone" Under penalty of being declared rebels its sixty thousand people, rural and village folk, were obliged to concentrate in one of a dozen named towns Everything not portable had to be abandoned Of transportation facilities there were none — the few automobiles, horses, burros were commandeered by the military Over night a relatively prospering region was converted into a vast refugee camp, an agricultural populace



"EL FUSILAMIENTO"

Oil painting by Leopoldo Mendez



EL TREN MILITAR" (THE TROOP TRAIN)

Drawing by Ramon Alva

torn up by its roots and cast adrift The landowner lost heavily While he was trying for agonizing days in the *ante-sala* of the *cuartel general* to reach General Jesús M Ferreira, the *jefe de operaciones* in Guadalajara, his unprotected *hacienda* was looted Impossible to prove who did it — rebels or national army At best the victim could "arrange" for a price to go back to what was left of his property [1]

But the lower middle-class — and the poor — who had through heartbreaking toil acquired a cow, a pig, and a few chickens, suffered most They were swept into the flood of human jetsam, wearied in body, anguished in soul, staggering under their household goods, their pathetic children dragged along — exiles and fugitives in their own country, a prey to misery, disease, and death Recruits for banditry or the next revolt! All this in the name of putting down the enemies of the Revolution! True, the Catholics who started the rebellion were to blame But what would one think of a doctor who kept open and deliberately infected an easily healable wound so that he might profit?

It was so obvious that the revolt was being nursed along that I mentioned the matter to General José Alvarez, chief of the presidential staff [2] "Why do they not," I asked, "shift a *jefe de operaciones* who does not put down rebellion in a given time, and put someone else in his place?"

General Alvarez cocked his head on one side in a manner which indicated clearly that such things were easier said than done "It is very delicate," said he "Several months ago President Calles ordered General Ferreira moved But General Obregón said Ferreira was a good friend, and please to let him stay So he is still there"

And there we have one key to the Mexican military disaster — personal favor, friendship, or fear They may be lumped together Guadalajara, second largest city in Mexico, is the prize *jefatura* It has enriched General Ferreira and his predecessors there Remove him — that is the fear — and he becomes disgruntled, a potential rebel Withal, the Mexican Government still maintains a relationship of bribery, cajolery, and blindness with the military chiefs The belief is current that a drastic interference with the present system would spell the immediate downfall of the government that attempted it

In my judgment, this is an utter delusion On the contrary, it is the present cowardly policy that spells ruin, for once the plunder appetite is whetted the military rapacity knows no bounds A sincere and strong president could cast off the incubus overnight Obregón tolerated it, and his government would have been swept under but for the fortuitous aid of the United States Calles could have done it in his first year — when he held

[1] See also the informative article "Civil War in Mexico" by Carleton Beals in the New Republic, vol LI, No 657

[2] On April 19, 1927

the country in the hollow of his hand He wanted to, started to, pruned and trimmed, preached and pleaded — all of which, while good, was entirely inadequate Then came the Catholic rebellion, the international difficulties, the looming presidential election — and it was too late Of course the president who takes this step — indispensable if Mexico is ever to progress — must know what he is doing He cannot be guilty of the innocence and inexperience of Madero, nor the falseness of Carranza But if he played his cards correctly, he would be able to count not only on public opinion and the enthusiastic support of labor and the agrarians, but on a nucleus of generals who could be roused to real patriotism once convinced that they were no longer dealing with empty phrases and a reform that exempted a chosen few For as long as generals who are notoriously corrupt can bask in the presidential favor and continue their malefactions with impunity, it is useless to talk of "moralizing" the army, and vicious militarism will continue to bedevil and destroy Mexico as it has for more than a century

Apart from corruption, treachery, and murderousness which have been the conspicuous traits of the Mexican military from first to last, the country needs also to be mentally demilitarized The general with his pomp and prestige, his private car and his cortège, occupies far too prominent a place in the Mexican complex In the common eye he cuts the imposing figure of a German general under Kaiserism *Los generales* still form a caste, awe-inspiring and popularly exalted above the civilian no matter what his achievements It is the natural product of pretorianism, but is entirely inconsistent with the socialist ideology to which the Revolution lays claim

There are also too many generals in active service — as there have always been Mexico has one general to every 335 men, compared with Italy's 1157, France's 1662, and 1755 in the army of the United States [1] A nation that is cutting down expenses, discharging five-peso-a-day clerks in the interest of economy and has by law reduced the priests to a handful on the ground that an excess beyond that number constituted a needless charge on the community, can ill afford to continue this useless burden

This regeneration must be undertaken by men who command the respect of the best army elements Its logical directors are of the civilian-soldier type of Calles and Obregón, or General Celestino Gasca, the laborite — men who were something else before they were soldiers, who abandoned civil life temporarily to serve the revolutionary cause and returned to serve the state in important civil capacities But they need first to reform the

	Army		*Generals*
[1] Mexico	53 000	May 1927	158 *
Italy	220,000		190 †
France	694,905		418 †
U S	119 353		68 †

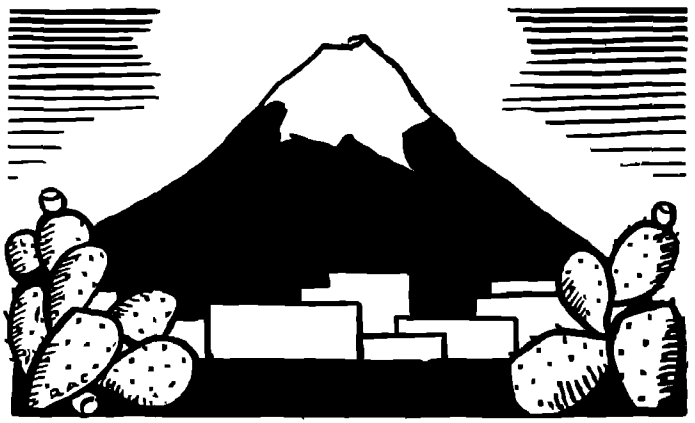
* Data furnished by Mexican War Ministry

† Data furnished by U S War Dept.

psychology of their immediate entourage — and possibly their own I have far oftener heard civilian cabinet members address their chief executive as "mi general' than as "Señor Presidente" — the fact that Calles is a *divisionario* inspires as much respect in a multitude as his being president — and telegrams from the *presidencia* are signed "*General* Plutarco Elías Calles, Presidente de la Republica," an undue emphasis on the military title which certainly adds nothing to the dignity of the supreme magistracy

Militarism — and its twin brother, politics[1] — involve the gravest problems facing Mexico to-day This was not the case fifteen, ten, or even five years ago, when land and labor were overshadowing In both of these revolutionary Mexico has broken with the past, and is building anew But militarism, which only in the later years of the Revolution has reappeared clearly as a haunting specter of the past, remains To extirpate it is the radicalism that Mexico needs to add to other efforts to uproot its heritage

[1] Treated in a subsequent chapter



LABOR

LABOR

THE most palpable product of the Mexican Revolution is the labor movement The industrial worker was only little less a serf than the agricultural Referring to the peon's debt slavery, Pimentel in 1864 wrote

> In the capital the same system is used in the bakeries, whose workers never leave the shop except to hear mass on feast days, and then always accompanied by an overseer who never lets them out of sight [1]

Under modern industrialism the oppressive conditions were extended and intensified Hours ranged from nine to fourteen Wages averaged from twenty-five to seventy-five centavos a day [2] and were diminished by fines, the obligation to buy from the company store and by exorbitant rents charged for the company-owned hovels in which the worker was compelled to live If he lost a limb in the unprotected machinery, he was turned out to beg If he lost his life, his family lost its hovel The penal code prevented any effective attempt at improvement [3] In 1907 textile operatives toiling for thirteen hours in the damp, hot, lint-filled rooms, humbly petitioning for better conditions were "locked out" — to be starved into submission When at Río Blanco, in Vera Cruz, a group maddened by hunger raided the company store, troops massacred two hundred men, women, and children Some who escaped immediate slaughter were hunted down in the hills Others were sent to the dungeons of San Juan de Ulloa

Over these theoretically free workers hung the constant menace of downright slavery A word from the foreman, and a troublesome workman found himself under arrest, to swell the next labor consignment to the hot lands Many a *jefe político* dealt directly with "Pancha" Robles, a notorious woman of Tuxtepec, who brought the *enganchado* at $40 pesos a head and sold him for $65 pesos delivered at the plantation A contract apparently engaged him for but six months at so much a day But when he sought to collect

[1] Pimentel, Memoria Sobre la Situación de la Raza Indígena, p 202–3

[2] Half that number of cents in U S cy

[3] Art 925 of the Penal Code of 1872 punished with arrest and fine "those who make a tumult or riot, or employ any other method of physical or moral violence for the purpose of raising or lowering the wages of the workers, or who impede the free exercise of industry and labor"

wages he was told of his debt for transportation or clothes If he protested he was whipped If he ran, the police who hunted him down were charged to his account His entrapment was symbolic of the plight of all labor The peon spawn was predestined Caught for life — toiling, sweating, diseased, half-starved, swarming in rubbish-huts or in *casas de vecindad*, tenements that would shame a self-respecting pig — his only solace lay in the lethe of the *copita* and in the promise of a better existence in the next world

Even for those in direct contact with the aristocracy life was a bitter grind An American visitor to Monterrey in the last Díaz decade noted that the cook of the household who came at seven in the morning and left at eleven at night, was paid ten pesos monthly, while "faithful sewing girls work twelve hours a day for twenty-five cents, Mexican money" [1]

Madero, little understanding the urgency of labor's needs, believed a really free electoral system would ultimately solve all the nation's problems Under him the industrial system remained unchanged — with one transcendent difference The Díaz ruthlessness was gone Workers could meet, talk of organizing, and dream of striking successfully [2] Business, national and foreign, deemed this ominous and supported Huerta, as the man who would "save the country" Though labor under Madero got nothing tangible, new ideas germinated Huerta with an iron-handed return to Porfirism closed the *Casa del Obrero Mundial*, the working-man's center which foreshadowed the coming unionism, and not a few of the victims of his ruthlessness were labor organizers

With his fall and the loosening of all restraint, every social panacea had its day A long abased proletariat, unversed in arbitral procedure of any kind, excited by theories imported by Spanish anarchists, proposed seizure of factories as a direct means of emancipating the working class The employer was the villain, and as capital in Mexico was largely foreign, the foreign industrialist became particularly the object of suspicion and hatred The first workers' convention in Vera Cruz in 1916 declared openly for class warfare, "until complete socialization has been accomplished," and for direct instead of political action In view of their past oppression, and the obvious inefficacy of political action in Mexico, such reasoning appeared logical To the Mexican worker, his *sindicato* [3] or union was a battalion on the front against the capitalist enemy

The labor provisions of the Constitution of 1917 perfectly reflect past grievances Article 123 established an eight-hour day, a seven-hour

[1] McGary An American Girl in Mexico p 21–2

[2] Various labor organizations mutualistic in character existed before the fall of Díaz An organization of mechanics was formed in Puebla in 1900 The railway workers were partly organized but when in 1908 they sought to strike the Government sent them back with the threat of shooting the leaders In 1903 the textile workers of Orizaba formed a benevolent society There were other groups but to all intents organized labor was non-existent

[3] *Sindicato* is the term for "labor union," although *unión* is also used

"night," one day's rest in seven, equal pay for equal work, regardless of sex or nationality, and abolished labor for children under twelve

Wages must be paid in currency, with "double time" for overtime which is limited to three hours for men and forbidden for women and children

Debts contracted by a worker may be collected only from him (not his children)

The amount of rental chargeable by employers is limited to six per cent per annum on the value of the houses and these must be sanitary

The employer is liable for accidents and occupational diseases, and working conditions must meet legal requirements of safety and hygiene

Factories outside of urban centers employing more than a hundred are obliged to maintain a dispensary and a school for the workers' children

"Workmen and employers shall have the right to unite for the defense of their respective interests, by forming syndicates, unions, etc"

Strikes are lawful "when they aim to bring about a balance between the various factors of production and to harmonize the rights of capital and labor" They are unlawful when the majority of the strikers resort to acts of violence *Employees of military manufacturing establishments are denied* the right to strike, and employees of public services must give ten days' notice

"Lockouts are lawful when the excess of production shall render it necessary to maintain prices reasonably above the cost of production"

When an employer discharges a worker "without proper cause or for having joined a union * * * or for having taken part in a lawful strike, he shall at the option of the workman perform the contract (that is, continue to employ the worker) or indemnify him with three months' wages He shall incur the same liability if the workman leaves his service on account of lack of good faith on the part of the employer or of maltreatment * * *"

Differences between employers and employees shall be submitted to a Board of Conciliation and Arbitration with an equal number of representatives of each and one from the Government

Humane provisions shield motherhood Three months before pregnancy the mother shall not perform work requiring considerable physical effort, she shall enjoy a month's rest after parturition without loss of pay or employment and during lactation two half-hour periods in which to nurse her children

A minimum wage- and profit-sharing are provided, to be based on studies under the auspices of the Central Board of Conciliation and Arbitration in each state

These provisions of the constitution did not *per se* have the full force of law The first clause of Article 123 provides that congress and the state legislatures shall enact laws in conformity with the principles outlined and with regard for local conditions

Ten years after the adoption of the constitution, its labor provisions had not yet been "regulated", that is, no national labor law had been passed, although several states had adopted local codes based on Article 123 The intervening period therefore became a struggle between labor and capital in which putting Article 123 into practice was one goal, and "things as they are" the other

Much of the past went by the board automatically in the Revolutionary years 1914-16 Physical abuse of workers, peonage, the obligation to buy from the company store ceased, and the right to organize was combated less openly, but none the less bitterly for it was recognized by both sides as the preliminary to further demands by the workers

Labor first became conscious in the Carranza régime In the fight to dislodge Huerta, workers had formed themselves into "red battalions" When the Constitutionalist cause triumphed in 1915 the toilers expected Utopian changes Not only did these fail to materialize, but with soaring costs due to paper money inflation, the worker found his economic condition worse than ever And when labor sought to declare a general strike, Carranza pronounced it an act of aggression against his government and by decree [1] made a half century old law against highwaymen [2] applicable to strikers

Again was the Casa del Obrero Mundial, which a few months previous Carranza had endowed with sumptuous quarters, closed Several of the strike leaders were jailed, one, Luis N Morones, was sentenced to death, though he escaped the penalty after imprisonment, several were forced to flee the country, and the following year at Tampico one of the ablest labor leaders, José Barragán Hernández, was killed by a group of government bravos

Nevertheless, the new constitution was a labor charter Less than six months after its promulgation, workers representing many crafts met a second time in national convention, adopted "the common front" (*el frente unico*, equivalent to the "One Big Union" of radical labor in English-speaking countries) as labor's slogan, and prepared to organize the workers on a national scale The following year, 1918, in Saltillo they formed the Mexican Federation of Labor, the Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana It grew steadily, though slowly at first, in the face of bitter opposition by employers, and the Carranza Government, in the fall of which it proved a factor, though a minor one But under Obregón the C R O M was given a free hand and under Calles militant governmental support, so that it occupies to-day a position of about the same relative importance in the Mexican labor world as the American Federation of Labor in the American The C R O M declares its growth to be

[1] August 1 1916, in the "pre constitutional" period
[2] The law of Jan 25, 1862, promulgated by Juárez

1918	7000
1919	10,000
1920	50,000
1921	150,000
1922	400,000
1923	800,000
1924	1,200,000
1925	1,500,000
1926	2,000,000
1927	2,250,000

Other labor groups are

I The railway workers On railroads built by foreign capital and at first under foreign management were formed the first labor organizations in Mexico, resembling the brotherhoods in the United States Their membership exceeds forty thousand, one of the component unions — of conductors, engineers, brakemen, and firemen — contains what is generally referred to as "the aristocracy of labor," the best paid workers in the republic

II The Confederación General de Trabajadores (C G T) eight or nine years ago was a formidable competitor to the nascent C R O M It does not believe in political action Its philosophy might be termed "syndicalist" and its members call themselves "Los Rojos" (the reds) in contrast to the C R O M who in Mexico are denominated as "Los Amarillos" (the yellows) In back of the formation and continuance of this organization are personal and political rivalries Political candidates have sought its support to offset the power of the C R O M, but in the face of administration unfriendliness for several years and lack of effective leadership, it has dwindled to about twenty thousand members It is strongest in the textile factories in and about the Federal District

III The four thousand electricians of the republic are compactly organized into a union of their own, because, its members state frankly, they do not want to be involved in political combinations, and have united solely to promote their mutual welfare

IV The port workers of Tampico in 1922 formed as a cooperative guild (Gremio Unido de Alijadores de Tampico) and with it the previous disorganization in the loading and unloading of vessels ceased Strikes had been continuous Crates broken, and their contents stolen This new organization, with eight hundred workers, all shareholders, furnished efficient lightering at lower cost In consequence Tampico has gained markedly at the expense of other Gulf ports where very different labor conditions exist The cooperative has been able to earn handsome dividends, distributed annually in proportion to the number of hours worked, has invested half a million pesos, owns commodious quarters, and is a model of effective and enlightened organization

V Communist influence has been dominant among the port workers of Vera Cruz and Progreso They are unruly and violent Strikes are called on the slightest pretext A merited rebuke to a stevedore by a ship's officer in 1923 tied up traffic for a week Robbery on the docks by union workers has been condoned by their organizations Under their rule — a virtual dictatorship of the proletariat — Vera Cruz has suffered seven years of anarchy, repeatedly without light, water, ice, transportation, while perishable freight piled high on the wharves, a damage not merely to the Vera Crucians, but to the entire nation When there was nothing else to strike about an ancient grievance served The jurisdiction over the railway station porters, jointly claimed by port workers and railroad federation

On top of all other strikes the rent payers', begun in 1922, lasted three years Incredibly foul tenements, two or three stories around a patio, without light, air, water, or drainage, rented at exorbitant rates In one, forty-eight families lodged in as many rooms Each was a fourteen-foot cube with the doorway its only aperture Two toilets filthy beyond imagination and two wells were the unhygienic equipment for 250 tenants Their grievance was legitimate But the strike extended to less horrible dwellings, until 25,000 persons, virtually the entire tenant population, including Mayor Rafael García and twelve out of the thirteen *regidores* of the municipality, were rent strikers At the same time they were seeking to collect the landlords' taxes in full A subsequent administration, more law-abiding after a rebuke from President Calles, found the strikers completely out of hand When the police came to eject tenants who refused to pay even a reduced rental, their fellow strikers overwhelmed the law officers by sheer numbers Calles then arrested their one-eyed leader, Herón Proál who, with a red silk handkerchief around his head, appeared a survival of the buccaneers who in bygone centuries likewise found Vera Cruz profitable [1] The rent strike then gradually petered out But Vera Cruz, the continent's oldest seaport, under the constant scourging of anarchic labor and an occasional military rebellion, lies in decay — without hope or health

One obvious difficulty growing out of the port workers' ignorance is that they are far too numerous for the traffic When their occasional ship comes in they light upon it like famished wolves, with charges that are ruinously extortionate, slowly strangling the goose with the golden eggs [2]

In Progreso, Yucatán's only seaport, the longshoremen's work was divided among many specialists One union raised and lowered the freight from the ship's hold onto a lighter, another transported it between ship and dock, a third raised or lowered it onto or from the dock, a fourth moved it on the long dock, still others took charge of it on land A union

[1] He was brought to Mexico City and released but forbidden to return to Vera Cruz

[2] For having three trunks taken from ship through the customs and to railway station a distance of about 300 yards a passenger in 1923 was charged sixty pesos In 1924 one trunk following the same route cost another twenty Freight charges are similarly excessive

reglamento also forbade one to carry one's own hand baggage, or doing so, to pay the usual fee, in 1923, five pesos per bag So disastrous did the port workers' stranglehold prove to the entire state of Yucatán that Governor Carrillo Puerto began building a road from the capital, Mérida, to Telchak, where he purposed to set up a rival port, manned by Indians from the interior, to bring the Progreso longshoremen to terms His death put an end to this plan

VI Local unions, some, "company unions," and others entirely independent, exist in various industries In certain states the political party in control, often hostile to the C R O M , has created an independent federation of workers, who in return for administration support are expected to support it This occurred in Jalisco in 1923-26 during the governorship of José G Zuno Such alliances are generally ephemeral, and the unions realign themselves after the political exigency which created them has passed

VII Catholic unions, numbering 310 at the beginning of 1927 with 100,000 members, according to their own figures, integrated a national Catholic federation [1] following a national convention held in Guadalajara in April, 1922 The majority of these unions were in the States of Jalisco and Michoacán [2] Directed by the clergy under the leadership of Father Alfredo Méndez Medina, S J , they were formed frankly in opposition to the other varieties of unionism growing out of the Revolution They sought to establish St Joseph's Day, March 19, as Labor Day Obedience and humility were urged upon its members as their correct attitude This was expounded in a pastoral by Archbishop Orozco y Jiménez of Guadalajara as follows

* * * as all authority is derived from God, the Christian workman should sanctify and make sublime his obedience by serving God in the person of his bosses In this way obedience is neither humiliating nor difficult We do not serve the man , we serve God , and he who serves God will not remain unrewarded * * *

Poor, love your humble state and your work , turn your gaze toward Heaven , there is the true wealth Only one thing I ask of the rich, love, of the poor, resignation [3]

The influence of the Catholic labor movement has been negligible

VIII Unorganized workers are many Their number cannot be stated with any degree of accuracy Some have always been *libres* Others who at one time belonged to a labor organization have dropped out, though it may still claim them in its membership statements The most conspicuously unorganized group are the building trades of Mexico City The reason lies

[1] Confederación Nacional Católica del Trabajo

[2] There were 103 unions in the archdiocesan federation of Guadalajara (Jalisco) 71 in the archdiocesan federation of Michoacán 18 in the diocesan federation of Zamora (Michoacán) The remainder were scattered in the States of Aguascalientes Colima, Durango Guanajuato, Mexico, etc

[3] Quoted in La Libertad Sindical en Mexico Lombardo Toledano p 114-5

in the steady growth of the metropolis throughout the chaotic revolutionary years Its real estate has at all times been considered a wholly safe investment Buildings have sprouted Masons, carpenters, and plumbers have been in demand and have never desired the artificial restrictions on the free sale of their services which labor unionism imposes or the compensating benefits which it may bring Meanwhile the general gains of the Revolution, such as the eight-hour day, have been theirs

Since 1921 the C R O M has been dominant, increasing its ascendency year by year Political action which it at first rejected now supplements its social activity So rapid has been its development, which is nevertheless still in its early stages, that generalizations about it cannot convey an accurate picture Its manifestations have been different in different industries, and even within one industry In labor, also, as in all else Mexican, things are often not what they seem or what they are declared to be So various industries, and the relation of labor to each, merit separate examination



INDUSTRIES

MINING

Mining is the oldest industry in Mexico, and still the most important Excepting only the Yucatán Peninsula every state has valuable mineral deposits The ownership of the mines is almost wholly foreign and preponderantly American, with British capital second and French third About 250 units, counting smelters, were operating in 1927, employing approximately 100,000 men — more than in any other industry

The mining industry is at peace and prospering No important labor conflicts have arisen in three years Minor difficulties have been adjusted Incident to Revolution many mines closed and production fell almost to nothing Since Obregón's administration production has steadily increased, and has reached a point never before attained [1]

In the great silver center, Pachuca, capital of the State of Hidalgo, the last strike occurred in December, 1922, when the leading company, the Real

[1] The following statistics supplied by the department of mines of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Labor tell the story The diminution in gold is due to the exhaustion of a number of silver deposits rich in gold, for the two are generally mined together Copper has not reached the peak caused by the great demand during the World War in 1918 The other metals show marked and continuing increases

MEXICAN PRODUCTION IN KILOGRAMS

YEAR	GOLD	SILVER	LEAD	COPPER	ZINC
1910	41,420	2 416,669	124 291 705	48,160,365	1 833,804
1911	37,120	2,518 202	116,758 007	56 072,071	1 592,606
1912	32,431	2 526,715	105 159,621	57 244 504	1 265,564
1913	25 810	1 725 861	68 343,000	52,591,779	959,904
1914	8635	856 787	5 703,200	26,621,581	792,563
1915	7358	1,230 750	19,970,952	22 205,976	5 806,028
1916	11,748	925 993	10 970,786	28 411,248	37 449,226
1917	23,542	1 306,988	64 124 752	50 945 923	45 180,778
1918	25,313	1,944,542	98 837 154	70 200,330	20,698,996
1919	23,586	2,049,898	71 375,938	52 272,215	11 559,685
1920	22,864	2 068,938	82 517,598	49 102,401	15 650,590
1921	21,275	2 005 143	60 513 232	15 228 085	1 256,986
1922	23,276	2 521,832	110 455,912	20 977,786	6,140,806
1923	24 162	2,824,599	155 720,342	53 371,582	18 481,279
1924	24,647	2 884 104	165 062,786	50,061,513	24 659,198
1925	24,541	2,889 962	178 661,677	54,596,160	51,794,554
1926	24,033	3 057,268	210 794 304	57 023,197	105,366,568
1927	22,556	3,252,688	243,346,147	58,733,724	136,477,888

del Monte, declared a lockout of its entire personnel following a strike of its mechanics for a wage increase In answer to the miners' protest, the company declared that it could not operate without mechanics, and that if the miners did not want to die of hunger they should persuade their comrades to resume work Efforts to show the company that the miners were not the mechanics' keepers were unavailing The C R O M sent its organizers to the scene and appealed to the president of the republic who interceded with the result that not only were the mechanics' grievances settled in their favor, but they and the miners received full pay for the period of unemployment The miners' union with a membership of seven thousand was for the first time recognized by the company The presidential action was based on the illegality of the lockout, which the constitution declared "shall only be lawful when the excess of production shall render it necessary to shut down in order to maintain prices reasonably above the cost of production, subject to the approval of the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration" [1]

Apparently the miners were not deeply appreciative of the value of being unionized as the proportion of organized workers in the four large mining companies of Pachuca in 1927 would indicate

Company	Total Workers	Number Organized (C R O M)	Per Cent
Real del Monte	8000	2500	30
San Gertrudis	3500	1200	34
San Rafael	1600	200	12½
Maravillas	500	50	10
Total	13,600	3050	20

The reason for this relatively small number of organized workers was given by one of them, a local C R O M official, as follows "The company has satisfied all the demands of the C R O M , and as long as this is the case we are not trying to extend our organization"

An unorganized miner thus expressed it

There is no need of our joining the C R O M We can usually settle any complaints satisfactorily with the management Should there be any difficulty the state government would handle the matter All indemnifications are paid promptly We have an eight-hour day counting from the moment we enter the mine until we leave it, which means about seven hours of actual labor

That the Revolution has produced a decided betterment in the condition of the workers without detriment to the enterprise is evidenced in the state-

[1] Art 123, Para XIX



THE MINER

Fresco by Diego Rivera on the Secretaria de Education Publica



(*Photo by the Author*

OCOTE — PITCH-PINE STRIPS FOR SALE

The boy heaps in front of the native represents his entire stock for the day. Curiously to

ment of one of the officials of Las Camelias mine belonging to the American-owned Real del Monte company Said he

"Formerly when a man was killed in the mine we bought a wooden box to bury him in Now we have to pay his family a fine of $3000 pesos and half-pay for three or four years according to the number of dependents he leaves So we have to be very careful now We spend a great deal in safety appliances, and both our inspectors and the Government s are going through the mines at all times We are glad of it It saves us a lot of money We also have a system of paying each of our foremen five pesos every time a thousand men have passed through their shifts without getting hurt This has also proved a great money saver, for accident indemnity runs high"

"What was the procedure when workers were injured twenty years ago?" was asked

"Not so good! We generally paid the hospital expenses, and the man might get ten or fifteen pesos besides if badly crippled — if he had lost an arm or leg, for instance"

"Was nothing more done for him?"

"Nothing — although whenever possible the company would try to find him a job as watchman or porter But if there was no such job he was out of luck"

In the Pachuca mines three months' wages have never been paid when men were discharged In 1926 a reduction of the force became necessary owing to the fall in the price of silver Each man was given two weeks' pay

In Guanajuato where the quality of the ore is steadily deteriorating and, as one mine official expressed it, "we have to fight to get 200 grams, where twenty-five years ago we got twenty-five kilograms," conditions are not so favorable to either employer or employee

In June, 1923, a meeting of twenty-five miners of the Guanajuato Reduction Company, presided over by a C R O M organizer, was the first attempt at unionization At that time many worked twelve hours A few highly skilled miners earned four pesos daily, the majority from one to two pesos, carpenters 1 35, and peons[1] in and around the mines seventy-five centavos The motormen on the mine railway got 2 50, and the brakeman 1 00[2]

A number of begrimed youngsters emerged from the shafts One of fourteen had been at work five years, twelve hours a day for seventy-five centavos Another apparently as young, although he did not know his age, had been working six years at the same rate Neither could read nor write

One man of twenty-seven, with one eye gone, hobbling on a wooden leg,

[1] The word *peon* is applied in industry to an entirely unskilled laborer

[2] It should be borne in mind that Mexican money has one half the value of its U S equivalent The Mexican peso denoted by the $ sign is 50 cents U S cy, and the centavo is worth half a cent

had suffered a mine accident eleven years before The company had paid his hospital expenses and a peso a week during eight weeks' convalescence It allowed him to continue work He earns a peso and a quarter a day, which, he said, was half what he could earn had he not been injured

At death from a mine accident the company was accustomed to pay for burial, and was expected to pay half wages to the family for two years, though this was rarely carried out

In May, 1927, an official of one of the larger Guanajuato mines which had gradually reduced its force from eight to six hundred over two years to eliminate the less efficient workers, informed me that he had been forced to pay the three months' compensation for the first time, the week previous

"The state labor law, making it obligatory," he said, "was passed in 1924, but we have always fought it successfully Other companies bribe, but we do not However, the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration is getting nastier every day We have a case right now of a seventeen-year-old boy who lost his leg in the mill — a piece of shafting fell on it The Board of Conciliation wanted a settlement of four hundred pesos But the boy had signed an agreement waiving the indemnity, if we paid his hospital expenses and the price of an artificial leg, and kept him on Another boy lost a leg just before the law went into effect Legally he had nothing coming to him But as we treat the workers better than they've ever been treated before we agreed to give the boy a first-class cork leg But he fought it and fought it, trying to get the indemnity Finally he accepted his cork leg which cost us a hundred and fifty pesos "

The Guanajuato Board of Arbitration had established a minimum wage of $1 25 pesos a day [1] The company in question decided to close, but before doing so appealed to the governor of the state (Colunga) to permit a ten per cent reduction He assented [2] The matter was then taken up with the men — and excepting about thirty, all agreed

The eight-hour day is in effect in Guanajuato The workers have won that and little else A few are affiliated with the C R O M , the majority unorganized [3]

The manager of the Peñoles Company, subsidiary of the American Metal Company one of the three great mining concerns of Mexico, owning important units in Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, Durango, Zacatecas, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Guerrero, and Oaxaca, from which are mined gold, silver, lead, zinc, and coal, stated to me in 1927 that he had never had any

[1] Secs VI and IX of Article 123 of the constitution gives to commissions appointed by the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration in each state the right to establish a minimum wage which "shall be that considered sufficient according to the conditions prevailing in the respective region of the country to satisfy the normal needs of the life of the workman his education and his lawful pleasures considering him as the head of a family " This was incorporated in the Guanajuato Labor Law

[2] As the State Boards of Conciliation and Arbitration are formed by an equal number of representatives of capital and labor, with one man appointed by the governor, he at all times has the final decision

[3] May, 1927

labor trouble excepting the minor incidents that inevitably come up in the daily rub with nine thousand men, the number employed

"Economically," said he, "the workers are no better off than before the Revolution We pay them a peso and a quarter to a peso fifty a day, which is what they got then We take somewhat better care of them The houses we build them are better They now get indemnities in case of accident or death as provided by law, which they did not before The regular workers get three months' wages when they are discharged This does not apply, of course, to the considerable number who come in for a short time and work by the *tarea* or job We are paying much more attention to 'safety first,' which works both ways, being an advantage both to the men and to the company We now have a department devoted to 'safety first' But to-day Mexico is far behind the United States in that respect"

A similar picture was drawn by an independent labor organizer, an intelligent youngster named Roberto Rafael Pérez, of the situation in Jalisco The three important mining companies in that state in 1927, all American-owned, were the Amparo, employing 3000, the Cinco Minas, 1200, and the Espada, 500 Their men are now organized in a state federation not affiliated with any national body [1]

The Amparo Company opposed the formation of this union in 1925 with an attempt to form a company union but without success, as only the lesser company officials would join The peon gets from $1 50 to $1 75 a day, and the skilled worker $2 50 (Mex cy) Working hours are eight, but as time is counted from the actual beginning of work in the mine, one must add another hour In the time of Díaz the miners worked an hour longer and were paid about half as much Actually they are not better off economically as the cost of living has doubled or more The state mining law provides for an indemnity when a man is injured, provided it is not through his own negligence But it is impossible for the men to get a favorable decision, as in the local Board of Conciliation and Arbitration,[2] which rules on the matter, the third member is appointed by the *presidente municipal*, who is bought by the company The only way in which the men are better off than in the time of Díaz is that they are allowed to organize This is a spiritual gain, but nothing else

In the North wages are higher The Cananea Copper Company employing 2000 men pays its unskilled workers three to four pesos daily as compared with 2 50 to 3 before the Revolution, while its skilled workers who in 1907 earned from 5 to 8 pesos now earn from 6 to 10 Hours were eight then, and are now Indemnities under the Sonora Labor Law have replaced indemnities at the company's pleasure There has been no labor trouble of any kind for a decade The miners are not organized

[1] Federación de Sindicatos Mineros del Estado de Jalisco is its name
[2] Beneath the state board are local boards in towns with important industries

The unescapable variation that characterizes Mexico and the bearing of the personal factor is revealed in the report in 1927 of an American-owned company in Zacatecas, operating two mines and a power plant to serve both, with a total of 800 men, that

labor conditions here are pretty bad, and we have had almost a constant struggle to protect ourselves The writer's opinion is that the laws are spoiling the workmen It is only the worst that take advantage of the law We rarely have any trouble with the better class of men — the former using it as a means of collecting pay for not working On the whole we have been fortunate in avoiding strikes, etc , but have had many individual cases, and our success in settling them has depended largely upon the person who happens to be in charge for the labor department at the time [1] Some of them have been rather rabid, and in such cases a perfect defense has been flagrantly ignored, and we have been forced to fall back on our only hope, *i e* "amparo" [2] Our policy is to settle all labor complaints fairly if we are given a chance, rather than have them go to the "juntas" for adjustment [3]

The men in this Zacatecas company belong to the C R O M Their wages range from a minimum of one peso daily for unskilled workers to three pesos for the skilled miners Technically skilled workers, in the power plant, receive more, boiler makers earning as high as four and electricians an eight-peso maximum

Governmental and labor cooperation with a company in financial difficulty is illustrated by the experience of "Dos Estrellas," a French-owned silver mine on the border of Mexico and Michoacán Its ore is petering out The yield per ton had diminished so that in 1926 the company was headed for a loss of $95,000 pesos So it proposed a wage cut to its 2000 workers in the mine and to the 200 in the mill The Ministries of Hacienda (Treasury) and of Industry, Commerce and Labor sent representatives, who agreed The men themselves were more than willing, as the "El Oro" silver mine near-by in the State of Mexico had closed down because of the exhausting of its veins, throwing several thousand men out of work and the "Dos Estrellas" miners realized that they faced the same catastrophe An approximately 15 per cent cut was therefore made in December, 1926, saving $20,000 pesos monthly The resulting average wage was $2 20 pesos daily and the minimum $1 25 Previous to that there had been no labor problem since 1921 when a portion of the higher paid mechanics struck for a wage increase and lost The state labor law providing an eight-hour day and compensation for injuries is strictly obeyed

[1] The state's labor department which sends its inspectors to the mine
[2] An injunction
[3] The governor of Zacatecas is (1925–) Fernando Rodarte, one of the C R O M leaders It follows that the Junta de Conciliación y Arbitraje in which he appoints the government representative with the deciding vote, is strongly pro labor

TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Textiles are Mexico's leading manufactures One hundred and thirty-five cotton mills employ 44,250 workers, of whom 33,412 are men, 7424 women, and 3414, minors [1] Some 60 per cent of the industry is French-owned, 35 per cent Spanish, and British, American, and Mexican capital have one or two mills each

Under Díaz the working day was twelve hours, and in some factories, thirteen In 1912 during the Madero régime, it was shortened to ten hours and the wage of $1 25 (Mex cy) established for regular operatives Workers in a number of categories received less In 1917 the adoption of the constitution generally reduced the day to eight hours The succeeding years were turbulent owing to strikes for wage increases and to better working conditions, which had been dangerous to limb and health In the autumn of 1925 under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Labor, employers' and workers' delegates met and after nearly a year's sessions adopted a "convención textil " It provides for compensation in case of injury or death and more healthful factory environment It established two slightly different wage scales reflecting the cost of living in different parts of Mexico, with minimum daily wages of $2 20 and $2 00 pesos Under the piece system highly skilled operatives may earn as high as twenty-five pesos daily Since then there has been relative peace in the industry to date

Previous profits were enormous, sometimes 100 per cent One small mill in Guadalajara erected in 1924 with a total outlay of $100,000 (U S cy) netted $102,000 the first year Ten new mills have been erected in the last six years The "convention" was a victory for labor, in that it secured a 25 to 35 per cent wage increase and better working conditions and a victory for capital in its elimination of continual conflict It will reduce profits The more optimistic managements believe that a 30 to 40 per cent profit is still possible Others expect difficulty in making ends meet

The industry is conducted inefficiently This is the unvarying testimony of textile experts from other countries The workers frequently know far more about the machinery than the management Most companies have no cost accounting system worthy of the name While the high protective tariff gives them a virtual monopoly on the Mexican market, they cannot compete abroad with manufacturers in the United States These can place the coarse cotton cloth known as *manta*, out of which are made the *camisas* and *calzones*, the white pyjama costume worn by the native south of the Río Grande, in Guatemala for 40 cents a pound (U S cy) which is less than neighboring Mexico can do

[1] Estadística de Hilados y Tejidos de Algodón y Lana, Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público, Depto de Impuestos Especiales, 1925–6, p 4

On the other hand, the managements complain with justice of the relative inefficiency of the Mexican worker Judged by output the Mexican is higher paid than the American mill hand In the United States a girl runs 1200 spindles A spinner in Mexico takes care of but 400, and often has an assistant to boot In Alabama, with cotton products equivalent in value to Mexico, 18,275 wage earners produced goods to a value of $51,149,736 (U S cy),[1] while Mexico with 44,250 workers — two and a half times as many — produced $51,338,639 worth

An obstacle to progress has been the refusal of Secretary of Industry, Commerce and Labor Morones to permit the importation of automatic machinery, except in the case of new mills, on the ground that this would create unemployment Citing the experience in the United States that labor-saving machinery had increased production and wages, benefiting both the country as a whole and textile labor specifically, has not availed to change this attitude, which is that of American organized labor in its earlier days[2]

The textile workers are a hundred per cent organized Those in the Federal District, numbering about 7500, are members of the C G T In Jalisco the force in five factories belongs to an independent state organization, the Federación Textil Some 12,000 in Puebla, more than 2000 in Tlaxcala, and 7500 in the State of Vera Cruz in Jalapa and Orizaba belong to the C R O M

In these last mills labor is ruinously undisciplined The Convención Textil has not served because labor does not do its part The abuse is worst in the four mills of the French-owned Compañía Industrial de Orizaba, employing 5000 workers, one of which at Río Blanco was the shambles of 1907 From the ill treatment of the workers twenty years ago the pendulum has swung far the other way The men often refuse to do as they are told, and it is not possible to discharge a man without the union's consent Not infrequently weavers, when the spirit moves them, quit their machines for the street, to sip a locally brewed *cerveceta*, leaving their looms unattended If while they are away a thread breaks and no one is there to tie it, the resulting defect spoils the cloth The fines which formerly would have resulted are now forbidden under the Vera Cruz labor law The management has no redress In 1926 the company's steadily dwindling dividend was cut from six to four per cent It faces further reduction unless its labor begins sensing its responsibilities

[1] The Mexican figures are for 1925 The Alabama figures are 1921 See Report of Special Investigation into Conditions in the Textile Industry in Massachusetts and the Southern States, made by the Department of Labor and Industries of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts 1923, p 10

[2] The American Federation of Labor's present attitude may be found in the report of the Trade Union Conference on Elimination of Waste in Industry held in Philadelphia, April, 1927 Am Federationist, June, 1927

TOBACCO INDUSTRY

Eight hundred and fifty establishments manufacture cigarettes and cigars from tobacco grown in Mexico Of these 286 are registered as factories The largest is El Buen Tono with a production of fourteen million cigarettes daily, paying 70 per cent of the taxes on manufactured tobacco in the republic The factory in Mexico City is thoroughly up-to-date, a model of efficiency and cleanliness, with modern machinery on some of which it holds the patents The company also designs and prints its own advertising material, a few of its posters having high artistic value It employs 1300 men and women They have been organized for eight years being among the earliest unions to join the C R O M There has been no labor trouble of any kind The employees are well paid and well treated The minimum wage for women is $2 25 pesos a day, and some earn as high as $8 00 The minimum wage for men is $3 00 pesos and a few skilled mechanics attain $25 00 pesos These wages are more than double what they were before the Revolution Then the working day was twelve hours It was ten hours from 1912 to 1917, when it became eight Each worker also at the end of the year gets a bonus of one month's salary which is the equivalent of profit-sharing to the extent of 8⅓ per cent The company pays dividends on its stock which vary between 13 and 20 per cent The ownership is about evenly divided between Mexican, French, and Swiss stockholders, but the management is Mexican — the manager for some years having been J J Reynoso, one of the senators from the State of Mexico The business is an example of what may be achieved industrially in Mexico, and of a wholly satisfactory relation between capital, labor, government, and community

Competition in the industry is keen Not all have done well In 1919 there were but three large [1] and eight medium-sized factories in Mexico The balance has come in since, including the second largest, El Aguila, belonging to the British-American Tobacco Company As there is no exportation in view of the prohibitive tariffs in the United States and other countries, the tremendous increase is divided among the same number of smokers, which is estimated at not over three million out of a total population of fourteen The third largest company, La Tabacalera, has suffered From six million cigarettes daily eight years before, its production dropped to one million in 1926

Having "gone into the red" that year, the management felt it necessary to cut down its working force This consisted of 362 factory hands and 42 office employees, about half being organized in the C R O M since 1924 The remainder, the *libres*, were chiefly the older workers, and the C R O M organizers, while eager to unionize the whole shop, did not insist upon it

[1] Buen Tono, Tabacalera, and Compañía Cigarera Mexicana

The company's financial difficulty being demonstrable, the reduction in personnel was approved, and the 362 factory workers were reduced to 169 and the 42 office employees to 20 The company was obliged to pay every discharged employee three months' wages, amounting to more than $150,000 pesos There was some difference of opinion as to what workers should be released, the C R O M crowd wanting only "free" workers discharged while these wanted the retention based on seniority which would have kept all of them The matter was finally settled by letting go an equal number of each based on seniority within each group The management expresses appreciation in the way this painful process was rendered easier by the cooperation of the C R O M delegates, the brothers José and Salvador Alvarez

The workers are well treated The minimum salary for men is $3 00 pesos and $2 00 for women, but the women do lighter work Full payment is made during illness no matter what the cause but the workers must present a physician's certificate that they have been ill There is, according to the management, a limited amount of malingering In addition the employees get with pay, as holidays, January 1, February 5 (Constitution Day), Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Holy Week, May 1 (Labor Day), May 5 (Anniversary of the Battle of Puebla),[1] September 16 (Independence Day), November 1 and 2 (the Day of the Dead), December 12 (Guadalupe Day), and Christmas — which total the equivalent of two working weeks

It is not possible to shift a worker from one class of work if in the opinion of the management he would be more satisfactory elsewhere, without the permission of the shop committee While the relations with the workers are most friendly, it is the management's impression that there has been a distinct lessening of production per individual since unionization, the decrease being estimated at 30 per cent and applying equally to union and non-union workers The management considers this a world-wide phenomenon,[2] found equally among its competitors, and attributes the diminution of profits chiefly to the increased competition

SOFT BEVERAGE INDUSTRY

Where unionization is definitely blamed for damage without compensating benefit to the workers is in the soft drink industry where comparisons are available since out of forty factories engaged in making "tonics," mineral water, and other non-alcoholic beverages, only eight are unionized [3] — all in the C R O M

The plaint of the largest, Sidral Mundet, is echoed by the others [4] and is

[1] When the French troops were defeated in 1862

[2] For a confirmation of this view in American industry see statistics in Waste in Industry by the Committee * * * of the Federated American Engineering Societies, p 196

[3] May, 1927

[4] El Gallo, La Purísima, Electropura, Higiénica, Chapultepec, Excelsior, Veracruzana



(Photo by [illegible])

WHEN MEXICAN LABOR STRIKES

Reuban Ulibarri flips Patsy Cline's the Closest and out of the Restaurant El Globo January 19 6



(*Photos by the author*)

Luis N. Morones



Celestino Gasca

TWO LABOR LEADERS

answered by the labor leaders only in general terms This was established in 1903 and is owned by Señor Arturo Mundet, a Spaniard Its chief product is "Sidral," a bottled cider In 1917 the working day was reduced from nine to eight hours Wages had also been rising so that $2 00 pesos was the daily minimum as against $1 00 peso in Díaz's time, but some got a great deal more, salesmen on commission averaging ten pesos

In 1925 the workers were unionized The management did not oppose, though it feared this move, and its fear was realized, for a strike followed immediately in which double wages, and "double time" instead of "time" for overtime, were sought The latter was granted, and the wage increase compromised at 20 per cent , so that the minimum wage became $2 40 pesos a day

However, the men actually earn no more and in many cases less than before, for whereas, formerly, they would average one or two hours overtime, now there is none Moreover, collectively they are much worse off, because their number has been gradually reduced from 275 to 150 In 1925 the larger number produced 24,000 bottles daily In 1927 the smaller number produced about 10,000 daily, a 23 per cent decline in worker efficiency This the management asserts is due to a change in the spirit of the men The management can no longer discharge anyone The shop committee, the real boss, passes on everything It forbade the discharge of one salesman who did not attend to business at all, and about whom twenty-two complaints came in from various customers To the union, the Sindicato de Fabricantes de Aguas Gaseosas, twenty-six delegates go from the Mundet factory

The falling off in production, which has caused a drop in the payment of production taxes from $14,000 pesos in 1925, to $4,500 in 1927, the management attributes 90 per cent to the union, and but 10 per cent to the country's economic crisis The owner, Señor Mundet, reasons, that having got what they wanted the men should work at least as efficiently as before He has spoken to several of the C R O M leaders, Alfredo Pérez Medina, secretary of the Federation of Unions in the Federal District, to José Hurtado, who is a national deputy, and Salvador Alvarez to see whether it is not possible to improve conditions The three leaders above referred to have always been very pleasant, but say they cannot do anything — that it is up to the *sindicato* Señor Mundet also once secured an interview with the C R O M leader, Morones, after he had become secretary of industry, who promised to do something about it, but did nothing

FIBER INDUSTRY

Unionization by the C R O M on other occasions has been helpful The Atlas Company of San Luis Potosí, manufacturers of cordage and other

fiber products, told me in 1925 of continual labor trouble until six months previous, when following the advice of the then governor of the state, Aurelio Manrique, they had presented no further obstacles to their men's organizing in the C R O M Difficulties ceased at once

The question of lessened per worker production and of a changed spirit is a moot one, agitating Mexican industry Employer opinion is far from uniform thereon, industries differ and one employer's experience has varied greatly from the next in the same industry One element, which eludes statistics and the written account, is the personal equation The personality and attitude of an employer has often determined pleasant or unpleasant relations with his labor — to a far greater degree than would occur in the United States On the other hand, the personality of the labor leaders who have handled a given difficulty, and a difference in the line of conduct of even the same leader at various times, supply inconsistencies which are difficult to understand for one unacquainted with the Mexican scene

STEEL INDUSTRY

Thus the American owned Consolidated Rolling Mills in the capital, one of Mexico's three steel companies, long had constant difficulties with its workers It lost a strike precipitated by its attempt to prevent their unionizing and while subsequent relations have been pleasant, the owners complain of the men's lack of interest, and their diminished production On the other hand, the great Compañía Fundidora of Monterrey,[1] making more than 90 per cent of Mexico's manufactured steel with an annual production of 60,000 tons to its two competitors' 5000, has had no trouble whatever with its 2500 workers in Monterrey, 300 in the manganese mines north of that city, and 500 in the Cerro del Mercado, the famous iron mountain in Durango True, it has done everything for its workers — gardens, and agricultural land besides, schools, a sports field, a stadium, a model dairy, et cetera — but in other cases benevolence alone has proved far from successful

The Fundidora's employees are organized in a union of their own, neither company union nor affiliated with any national organization The workers are fully satisfied with conditions If the company wishes to discharge an employee it is obliged to consult the Junta de Conciliación y Arbitraje of Monterrey which, according to the testimony of both labor and capital, is fair and without definite bias in favor of one or the other

BREWING INDUSTRY, CEMENT INDUSTRY

Other examples of independent unions working satisfactorily to both men and management, are found in the great Moctezuma brewery at Orizaba,

[1] Of its capital 60 per cent is Mexican, 25 per cent American, 15 per cent Spanish

employing 4500 men, organized since 1918, working eight hours at an average of $2 50 a day as against ten hours for 1 peso a day in Díaz's time, [1] and the Tolteca Cement Company at San Marcos, Hidalgo, which supplies half the cement used in the republic It has had no labor trouble in four years, its men having organized a local union in 1924 Discharge, unless for some grave offense such as violence or theft, is accompanied by payment of three months' wages, and injuries are compensated for under the state labor law

SHOE INDUSTRY

But benevolent paternalism *per se* apparently does not, in all cases, satisfy the Mexican workers of to-day, as the experience of Señor Carlos Zetina illustrates He is a public-spirited "gentleman of the old school" He conducted a model shoe factory, the "Excelsior," largest among ten Mexican factories, which together with some forty smaller shops supply the 50,000 pair daily output, which cares for Mexico's needs — importation, in consequence of the protective tariff, being negligible

Señor Zetina's factory with its school, gymnasium, swimming-pool, and other comforts, far exceeded the requirements of revolutionary legislation Nevertheless, as he himself states with some bitterness, not one of his 1100 unorganized employees hesitated to join the union at the instigation of C R O M organizers Not a few, however, he said, assured him privately that they had been perfectly contented as they had been In indignation at what he termed their ingratitude and in his distaste for dividing his authority with workers' committees, he withdrew from business

I could find no "Excelsior" employees who would admit that fear played a part in their attitude and there was no evidence of pressure and of the artificial imposition of a C R O M union as occurred in other instances, such as the "Universal" strike

THE "UNIVERSAL" STRIKE

Félix F Palavicini, one of the intellectuals of the Revolution, had founded this metropolitan daily in 1916 He had signed individual contracts with all its workers, editorial and mechanical In point of hours, working conditions, sick benefits, insurance, etc , this newspaper had gone far ahead of the constitution A spirit of camaraderie prevailed throughout the shop

One man, Moreno Irrazabal, through oversight had no contract At least, a search for it in the files produced none when he presented himself to Señor Palavicini, saying that he represented an organization called the Liga de Redactores de la Prensa (league of newspaper editors), affiliated

[1] Similar conditions prevail in the other breweries

with the C R O M and wanted recognition for it He admitted frankly that he was the only member at the time but that there would be more It was explained to him that all the rest of "El Universal's" staff were entirely satisfied with the conditions of employment and the individual contract, and that there was no reason why a special and different one should be made in this case He insisted, however, and as he was obviously looking for trouble was asked to leave, being given three months' wages

On the night of Sept 7, 1922, a group of armed men, members of the C R O M from *Fabriles*, the military factories then under the direction of Luis N Morones, the C R O M leader, was stationed about the "El Universal" office waiting for the responsible editors to go home Editor Palavicini, who was accustomed to wait until the last form was closed, left at 2 A M The date was significant, as the day's issue, of September 8, was a special number in connection with the annual festival of the Virgin of Covadonga, which is observed by the Spanish colony in the capital The number carried extra pages and some nine thousand pesos' worth of advertising At 2 45 A M , armed men led by Señor Irrazabal, pistol in hand, invaded the plant, told the pressmen that a strike had been declared, compelled them, at the point of the pistol, to go out, planted the red and black C R O M flag in the doorway, and stationed workmen and members of the Federal District police on guard The day's issue did not appear, although a large part of it had already been printed

At nine in the morning about 250 "El Universal" editors, reporters, linotypers, pressmen, and advertising men presented themselves at Palavicini's house to protest against this assault Two of them had already been to see General Calles, then secretary of Gobernación, and he had informed them that the strike was due to the management's refusal to recognize the union Then and there all those present, the entire force of "El Universal," organized themselves into a union, the Unión de Redactores y Empleados de la Cia Periodística, and Señor Palavicini instantly recognized this Its being a non-C R O M union, however, was not satisfactory to the C R O M authorities Despite appeals to President Obregón and promises of relief the shop remained closed Señor Palavicini then declared his intention of keeping closed in protest In that case, he was told, the C R O M would seize the plant and run it To avoid this he had his property attached by his largest creditor, the National Paper and Type Company, to the amount of his indebtedness — $185,000 pesos This effectively put a damper on any schemes of seizure, as the seizer would have had to pay that sum first Meanwhile a few linotypers and *mozos* were also persuaded to join new C R O M unions[1] At the end of a week, owner Palavicini was permitted to reopen his plant on agreeing to pay the wages of all his men during that week and the paper reappeared on September 14,

[1] The Unión de Linotipistas and the Unión de Obreros de Periodicos

1922 The paper's non-appearance for one week had cost him $100,000 pesos

The purpose of this alleged strike, which Señor Palavicini and five of his staff [1] declared was not a strike at all but a "hold-up," was to achieve control of the newspapers, so that nothing critical of the C R O M might appear Previously the paper on occasion had attacked C R O M methods and leadership In consequence Señor Palavicini decided to sell his paper at the earliest moment, and did so the following April, 1923

The "Universal" strike reveals a C R O M policy which does not appear on the surface The C R O M 's declared purpose is the betterment of the working class Unionization is the immediate method and realization of the provisions of Article 123 the first objective But concomitant with this social program has been a frank participation in politics which has carried Mexican labor into political combinations and intrigues which are sufficiently questionable to cause their presentation to the world in a rosier guise than the facts warrant Thus the "Universal" strike was alleged to be to maintain the principle of the collective contract [2]

The C R O M 's political wing, the Partido Laborista Mexicano, founded in 1919, won its spurs when it supported Obregón the next year against Carranza Prompt recognition of its services came in the extremely friendly attitude of interim president Adolfo de la Huerta In his six months' term he settled forty-three strikes, all in favor of labor Analysis of these conflicts reveals that virtually all sought to materialize rights granted by the new constitution A further recognition came in Obregón's appointing of Luis N Morones as head of the federal military factories (Fabriles), ranking just below a cabinet position, and General Celestino Gasca to the Federal District governorship The government print shops also went to C R O M workers Beyond this was steady support of the C R O M in most of its strikes

The technique of these strikes is important, for it should be understood that government backing and not labor strength has been the real deciding factor in virtually every one of them When a strike is declared the strikers plant labor's red and black flag — *la bandera rojinegra* — in the doorway of shop or factory The flag acts not merely as announcement but as an

[1] These five separately interviewed in 1927, had not for several years been employees of Señor Palavicini

[2] The constitution says nothing about collective contracts, and the pretext for the "strike" was found in the clause giving workers the right to organize The C R O M 's position, as set forth by Morones was as follows "In the formidable struggle unfolding in * * * Mexico it is fundamental that the individual labor contract be abolished and be replaced by the collective contract as the workers' only safeguard in their relations with capital * * * Otherwise they would individually be at its mercy Had it not been for the labor's policy of abolishing the individual contract the labor movement in Mexico would not exist to day" (Speech in Chamber of Deputies, quoted in broadside to Partido Laborista Mexicano, issued by its officers Sept 1922)

However, the imposition of a union on workers wholly satisfied with individual contracts and the imposition of a C R O M union when they formed one of their own, disclosed ulterior purposes

effective padlock None may come or go, striker or non-striker Federal troops enforce this labor fiat That these forces are to preserve order and prevent sabotage or other damage to the owner's property incidental to the strike is the allegation Their truer purpose is to support the strikers

While under Díaz the Government invariably sided with capital, now in the majority of cases the shoe is on the other foot And whereas in the United States a foreign labor agitator is deported for activities deemed against "our form of government," in Mexico it is the foreign capital agitator, the superintendent who violates constitutional provisions and refuses to comply with the labor laws, who may have Article 33 applied to him [1] — a policy both nationalistic and popular Of course the ill-fated foreign manager or foreman who "gets thirty-three-ed," may be no more guilty of any real offense than many a luckless alien worker in the United States whom a chance remark or reputation for "radicalism" has made an object of suspicion and persecution In many strikes not only is the factory embargoed, but the company s private offices situated elsewhere are likewise beflagged — even when there may not be a single striking employee within The courts alone through an *amparo* may give relief Prevented from hiring strike-breakers and also deprived of access to files, mail, telephone, the manager has little choice but to yield, and as the constitution provides that he must pay the strikers' wages when the strike has been "lawful," which it can almost always be declared to be, the mounting indemnity makes quick yielding desirable It is the employer not the worker who is "starved out" in a long drawn-out strike By this method labor during the Obregón administration steadily strengthened its position

But not *all* labor Political maneuvering within the labor movement had made the C R O M the governmental favorite child as against C G T , railroad, independent, and company unions Within the administration preparatory to his rebellion, de la Huerta clandestinely subsidized railroad and C G T leaders Obregón, and Calles even more favored the C R O M In the rebellion a section of the railroad workers supported de la Huerta The C R O M was militantly pro-Government and pro-Calles and in the Government's hairbreadth victory figured decisively It organized battalions, held the undefended capital by vendetta and other tactics when Obregón was fighting on the Jalisco and Vera Cruz west and east fronts, and furnished the most obvious body of Obregonist public opinion Its close and friendly relations with the American Federation of Labor established some years

[1] The constitutional article which gives the president the power "to expel from the republic forthwith, and without judicial process, any foreigner whose presence he may deem inexpedient " A case is reported in the C R O M bulletin of March 31 1927, as follows "The federation of workers groups of Jalisco sent us an ample report on the bad conduct of the Peruvian, Juan L Morales, foreman of the textile factory La Experiencia, who took advantage of his post solely to vex his workers, and to utter slurs on the present Government, which in their judgement merited his expulsion from the country The central committee esteeming the petition of our comrades * * * to be just immediately made the necessary representations to the Secretaría of Gobernación, and obtained the president's signature to the decree of expulsion on December 20 "

before threw that body's influence behind the Coolidge policy of shipping arms to Obregón while embargoing them to the rebels, and American union labor on its own account worked effectively to prevent arms' smuggling across the border Perhaps never before was international labor cooperation more effectively demonstrated than on that occasion Gompers, Johnston of the Machinists, Furuseth of the Seamen, and many other American union leaders virtually made the Mexican Government's cause their own and that of their organizations, because they considered its success or failure inseparable from that of Mexican trade-unionism

Calles entered office completely identified with the C R O M and called Morones to the cabinet to the important Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Labor Apart from the political utilities involved, appointing labor's outstanding leader to this post was replete with possibilities for good Thus to centralize the responsibility for a harmonious development of the relations of capital and labor was far-sighted It lifted labor into a partnership of responsibility It offered labor the chance to demonstrate that its aspirations were not ruinous, but consistent with national prosperity From his new position the C R O M leader could dictate, direct, and determine labor policy and shape a *modus vivendi* between capital and labor He had an absolutely free hand Calles supported him unfailingly, and the withdrawal of two cabinet ministers, Valenzuela and Pani,[1] was, in part at least, due to their hostility to Morones So dominant was his influence

Since then the relation of government and the C R O M wing of Mexican labor has been that of one hand washing the other Under the protection and stimulus of the administration the C R O M grew In moments of national crisis the C R O M mustered its strength for the administration The labor parade in the capital at the time of the incipient Catholic rebellion in August, 1926, was such a show of support

This government backing was for the C R O M Rival labor organizations did not secure it in their conflicts with capital, and in a contest with the C R O M were invariably worsted The C G T was given a virtual death blow in the carmen's strike of 1923 — although its violence at that time more than justified such a governmental course An independent union among the street-car workers subsequently formed met a similar fate in 1925 Beneath the railroad workers' strike in 1926–7, which was defeated, lay the rivalry of the two great organizations, the railroad workers desiring to maintain their autonomy, the C R O M aspiring to control them

When speaking of "desire to control," one must distinguish between the organizations and their leaders While elected delegates from each union acting in assemblies give the workers an apparently democratic control of themselves, internal politics, as in most labor movements, or one

[1] Valenzuela, Secretary of Gobernación, resigned in 1925, and Pani, Secretary of Hacienda, in 1927

might as well say in most so-called democracies, achieves, instead, rulership, rather than representation, by leaders The masses who ostensibly "rule" are merely manipulated, sometimes for their benefit, but invariably for the leaders' The Mexican labor movement is no exception The C R O M and Labor Party are managed by a small inner clique, the so-called *Grupo Acción* Its eighteen members have "fought and bled" together for more than a decade, since the days when one was a labor agitator at the risk of one's life All have narrowly escaped death, have variously been imprisoned or exiled for the Mexican labor movement, and have been among its pioneers So now they feel entitled to direct it To-day they have earned the reward of their struggles in positions of power and profit in the organization and in politics The party had, in 1927, one cabinet member out of seven,[1] eleven out of fifty-eight senators, forty deputies out of 272, two governors out of twenty-eight,[2] the Mexico City municipal government, and that of a number of surrounding towns in the Federal District In states where they cannot elect one of their own number they support the friendliest candidate and expect favorable treatment after election These leaders who determine C R O M policy are in turn dominated by Morones, whose great political power added to his previous prestige makes him their boss Excepting one or two more independent-minded, such as Gasca and Ezequiel Salcedo, who have distinctive personalities, all are Morones lieutenants Beneath the insistent assertion that principles and not persons guide the C R O M the Hispanic tradition of "personalism" has only in a measure been shaken off At present what is called *laborismo* by a large section of Mexican workers has in it far more *Moronismo* than many of them perhaps realize This *liderismo* (leaderism) prevails in the other labor organizations but in none of them have the leaders achieved the dominance either in their own organization or in the community comparable to that of the C R O M directors

STREET-CAR WORKERS

The relations of labor leader to worker, of one labor organization to another, of government, labor, and capital — in short, a cross-section of the labor movement — are illustrated in the history of the Mexico City street-car employees

Under Porfirio Díaz conductors received ten centavos an hour and motormen fifteen They worked seven days a week (there was no Sunday off) and twelve hours a day — as a minimum, for sometimes the hours were much longer, as men, not relieved at the end of a run, had to keep on For overtime the regular rate was paid One man whose hours began at four in the morning was not relieved until midnight Following this twenty-hour

[1] Morones [2] Matías Rodríguez in Hidalgo and Fernando Rodarte in Zacatecas

stretch, his home being half an hour from the car barns at Indianilla, he overslept, not reporting till five that morning, after three hours' sleep He was suspended without pay for a week In 1905, after pleading vainly for better conditions, the men attempted to strike, but the Government broke the strike, and the leaders were discharged

In 1911, under Madero, the same conditions still obtained, and another strike was also broken by the governor of the Federal District, Alberto García Granados More leaders were fired Nothing was changed till after Huerta's fall, when the men struck under Carranza whom they had supported, some having formed part of the *batallones rojos*, after the Villa-Carranza split This time they achieved an eight-hour day, a six-day week, and double pay for overtime In 1915 they struck briefly out of sympathy for the school-teachers — who were striking for unpaid salaries — many other labor organizations likewise striking in sympathy

The company was opposed to the changed conditions and to the union This had been formed in 1911 as the Federación de Tranvías which in 1915 joined a new national organization the Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores (C G T) whose mainstay in fact the street-car workers were Difficulties between men and management were continuous In consequence of this and other revolutionary troubles the company was taken over and run by the Government[1] When it was handed back to the management in 1919, the workers were an unruly lot They came to work when they pleased, and no one could be discharged, no matter what his offense

After the fall of Carranza a split developed among the workers The majority felt that they were being exploited by their leaders who were calling strikes on every pretext, and not permitting the men to work who wanted to The leaders profited by these strikes, because then other unions would make contributions — which the leaders kept Wearied of such performances, finally, early in 1923, the men discharged their strike committee Nevertheless, a strike was called with which perhaps only twenty per cent of the men sympathized, this minority threatening the others with violence With government soldiers on the cars, and the majority of the workers, service was maintained but slightly impaired Then strikers fired on a car from the C G T headquarters on the Avenida Uruguay, killing and wounding a number of persons That broke the strike The company discharged no one, but gave the strikers a period in which to return to work A number who did not, automatically cut themselves off

The company employees now consisting of those who had opposed the destructive leadership of the C G T and had stayed at work formed another organization, the Unión, unrelated to any national body, believing such independence better for them Before long they numbered 3000 out of the

[1] The company has a claim before the International Claims Commission for damage and losses during that period

4000 employees, the remaining 1000 being indifferent This was not a company's union, however The company would not recognize it, although willing to deal with its committees In December, 1924, certain new employees, members of the C R O M , sought to have a new organization, the Alianza,[1] recognized They represented a very insignificant fraction of the workers

On December 24, 1924, under the letter-head of this Alianza at 64 Belisario Domínguez (St), the C R O M headquarters, an official who signed himself "G S Guillén, Secretary of the Interior," wrote to the company manager, complaining that certain drivers had worked overtime The management replied that those matters were always handled by the committee of the existing organization — the Unión — and that the company could not recognize the intromission of individuals not employed by the company The Unión also made the fight its own and issued a *boletín*,[2] on December 28, and a *manifiesto*[2] on January 3, 1925, protesting against the attempt of "five outside individuals who knew nothing whatever of the needs of the workers to interfere " It asserted that its members were entirely satisfied with the treatment they had received for two years, since the formation of their Unión

The C R O M organization, the Alianza, on February 14 made a demand on the company for exclusive recognition, claiming a majority of the workers, and giving the company ten days to comply That it did not have a majority is indicated by a letter written by said organization to the governor of the Federal District, and published in the press on February 17, asserting its membership in the street-car company to be 1208 (The personnel of the company numbered 4000) However, even that figure appears exaggerated The actual membership of the Alianza certainly did not exceed 300, and in its demonstrations, in order to appear numerous, enlisted many persons not connected with the street-car company

The company replied that it could not recognize the Alianza exclusively, that it was already treating with an organization, the Unión, which represented the majority of its employees, but that it was willing to treat with the Alianza in addition as it was then treating with certain groups and individuals who were not members of the Unión [3] This being unsatisfactory, the Alianza declared a strike, although its membership was less than 10 per cent of the total The secretary of the government of the Federal District, Enrique Delhumeau, was an active member of the C R O M at that time, and the Government refused to allow the cars to run although both the company and the Unión insisted they could maintain full service The

[1] Alianza de Obreros y Empleados de la Compañía de Omnibus y Tranvías de México, was its full name

[2] In the writer's possession

[3] Al Público Declaración de la Cía de Tranvías Signed C R G Conway, Mgr Published in Mexico City press, March 5, 1920

strike lasted eleven days, at the end of which the Government gave the company an ultimatum, which obliged it to recognize the Alianza exclusively with the alternative of having the company seized The company was forced to accept, and, likewise to its regret, *to discharge at the behest of the C R O M leadership* thirteen of the most prominent Unión men

The question of indemnity was put up to the president of the republic as arbitrator who decided that the wages of the men for two weeks, amounting to $150,000 pesos, should be paid, one half by the company, one half by the Government The company paid its half to a C R O M official It is generally asserted that not more than $14,000 pesos were distributed Three members of the former Unión have affirmed that they know of none in their organization who got any of the money but that some of the C R O M workers did I have personally talked with eight of the Unión workers who gave me their word that they never received a cent (Of course I may have been unfortunate, perhaps the other 2992 did!) C R O M officials aver that all the men should have got something, but that a committee (of the C R O M) decided that some of the money should go into the organization's treasury Their justification for such a decision, they said, was that the forming of the Alianza was a benefit to all concerned and that the beneficiaries should be glad to contribute to the organization for the sake of "solidarity"

Thus the street-car men became affiliated with the C R O M The C R O M at once took charge, but not for long At the second election of officers, old Unión men were voted back into office One of the officers told me that on Labor Day, 1927, orders were received from C R O M headquarters that the roll should be called to see which members of the organization were absent from the parade, thereby incurring a penalty

"Did we call the roll? We did not They can go to ——— " this officer said And that accurately sums up the feeling of the street-car company workers toward the leadership of the national organization in which they are perforce enrolled

It is pertinent to record, that after all these vicissitudes the relations of men and company and likewise of Government and company, were better than ever The street-car company is under the same ownership — Canadian — as the capital light and power company, which is developing for the Government an important hydro-electric project on the Lerma River, in Michoacán For three years there has been no labor trouble whatever, and both management and men report themselves as wholly satisfied The men deal with the management through three committees representing track, traffic, and shop workers, respectively Under the collective contract of September, 1925, they receive compensation for injury and in case of death two years' salary goes to the survivors The company has the right to "hire and fire," paying three months' wages if the discharge is to reduce

the number of workers One hundred men were released from the car shops on that basis in 1926 The wages are now For motormen, 56 centavos an hour in the first year, rising to 63 in the fifth, for conductors from 51 to 54 centavos This scale has been in effect since 1920 and represents a 400 to 500 per cent increase since the pre-revolutionary days All manner of mutual aid and insurance plans provide for savings and old age

The street-car workers' story is in a sense the Mexican labor epic to date Oppression, strivings, repression, conflict, defeat, conflict, victory, setbacks, failure through inexperience, betrayals, internal squabbles, personalism, and finally success — the achievement of dignified, body and soul sustaining employment, in which labor and capital can meet on a basis of mutual obligation, respect, and service

AGUILA STRIKE (OIL REFINERY WORKERS)

Of interunion relations the strike of British oil company's workers begun on September 5, 1925, furnishes another example It was called by the "Unión de Obreros de Minatitlán" affiliated with the C R O M , at that time a majority, though not an overwhelming one, of the refinery workers in the southern Vera Cruz town A contract with them made a year previous of the exclusive or "closed shop" type stipulated that the "Unión" was to provide workers, but allowing members of other unions previously employed to retain their positions A year later the "Unión" demanded the discharge of several, not members, though the company declared that they had been employed previously Nevertheless, it complied, whereupon the other non-C R O M workers protested, and on order of the state governor the men were reinstated, the governor declaring the contract excluding any group of workers from privileges enjoyed by another contrary to state law

Shortly after in the face of a diminished production, the company discharged 140 workers The non-C R O M workers discharged claimed unfair discrimination on the basis of the governor's decision The company, however, refused to grant them inclusion in the C R O M union's terms, thereby discriminating between two sets of workers The men struck, the C R O M workers now making common cause with the others, seeing an opportunity to unite all of them in their organization Other unions in Vera Cruz and Puerto México also struck in sympathy

The matter, decided in favor of the strikers by the Board of Arbitration at Jalapa,[1] was appealed to the state courts which reversed the finding and went to the Supreme Court Meanwhile the C R O M ordered a boycott of the company, its gasolene stations in the capital were "picketed," and acts of sabotage occurred there and in other centers where the Aguila had

[1] Government and labor representatives were in accord The employers' representatives filed a dissenting report

property A workers' manifestation took place in front of the supreme court at the time the verdict was to be rendered, and the court found in their favor condemning the company to pay wages for the six months that the men had been on strike — including the sympathetic strikers — some $400,000 pesos Getting this sum seemed to have become the only "principle" involved, as after the strike C R O M , other union and non-union men were hired at the company's pleasure, the C R O M indeed having lost its majority among the employees Company officials state that the whole affair was a frame-up, the sole object of which was to get money This would seem to be confirmed by the fact that the workers who "won" secured nothing else — not even what they had struck for However, it has been not an uncommon phenomenon for Mexican workers to strike lightly Once having struck, the original motive is often overshadowed by the need of financial sustenance A study of all the documents and findings reveals only the flimsiest bases for the penalties to which the Aguila company was subjected

PRINTING TRADES

In two industries is C R O M organized labor unqualifiedly condemned by employers as arbitrary, tyrannical, and ruinous In no others is a similarly severe condemnation expressed or so warranted by the facts One is the printing trades in the capital

With business declining and not enough work "to go 'round," the powerful Sindicato de Artes Gráficas has insisted on full compliance by the employing printers of the agreement which it forced on them in 1925 Strikes without end were threatened by union heads at that time as the alternative

Under that agreement skilled printers and engravers are paid $1\frac{1}{2}$ pesos an hour and more [1] More troublesome, however, is the prohibition to lay off men when work is slack while a rush job necessitates payment of "overtime," [2] for then the workers soldier to secure the extra time at higher rates and also to compel the employer to call additional help The union supplies the men and the employer has no choice but to accept at least for a day an inefficient workman provided for him [3] Moreover, the employer may not in practice discharge an employee even by paying three months' salary [4] The worker is his for life And as the printer knows that no matter how sloppy his work he cannot be discharged, he has no incentive to do better

[1] The chief compositor gets $12 50 daily chief lithographer $12 00, the first offset pressman $24 00 the second, $16 50 etc (Clasificación de Categorías y Tarifas de Sueldos * * * de la Unión de Obreros de Artes Gráficas de los Talleres Comerciales) These wages must be judged in their relation to other wages paid skilled labor in Mexico

[2] "Time and a half" for the first two hours "double time" thereafter Art 10, Reglamento Interior de los Talleres Gráficos Comerciales del Distrito Federal

[3] Under the agreement (Art 4) the union presents a trio of candidates to the employer who must choose one of them If he prove unsatisfactory the employer may choose again and there is no limit to the number of times he may choose

[4] A clear violation of the constitution but which the strength of the union can impose

Absence with an unsubstantiated plea of illness is common, the owner being compelled to pay the absentee's wages [1]

Mexico City has some 400 printing establishments, large and small, employing about 5000 Sixty-five are unionized Of these four larger and twelve smaller establishments have failed since the union agreement [2] Their former employees walk the streets or "wait their turn," at the union Being union men they cannot apply for work in the open shops The entire industry — such of it as is organized — is on the verge of ruin [3]

A distorted unionism is responsible The union officials reply that there are too many in the printing business and that all cannot make a living They also charge the employers with having old-fashioned machinery so that they cannot compete with printing in the United States where some of the job work from Mexico is now sent, customers finding it cheaper despite the double transportation cost The union answer is beside the point The master printers can scarcely afford new installations Not a little printing is going to other Mexican cities where the machinery is as obsolete as in the capital but the unionism is not [4] It is the unionism that needs first to be modernized and to acquire a working familiarity with economic principles [5] Non-union shops in the capital pay 50 per cent lower wages, allow the supply of work to determine freely the hiring and discharge of their help, and therefore not only underbid the union shop but guarantee delivery at the time promised, which the unionized establishment cannot They are prospering and doing more for labor in that they give more than five times the number of workers a livelihood — thus beating union labor at its own game Meanwhile, the printing trades federation is responsible for a condition not only ruinous to the employer but increasingly so to the worker and to the repute of union labor [6]

[1] The agreement provides (Art 14) that those who have worked from six months to a year may collect half pay during forty five days of illness from one to three years three quarter pay and over three years, full pay Absence due to alcoholism or venereal diseases is excluded but this part of the agreement has in not a few cases been a dead letter

[2] When the large shops closed the workers thrown out of employment were able to secure their three months' wages by impounding the machines but as these usually belonged not to the print shop but to the company which originally sold them much confusion resulted In one case so many conflicting claims arose that presses were taken apart, and their parts held in widely scattered places When one of the print shops, the Franco Mexicana failed a linotype was seized to cover wages of $1500 pesos due the men The machine was sold at more than twice that figure, but the two union officers who had charge of the transaction presented the union a receipted bill for the smaller amount, having pocketed the difference

[3] One printing house with a unique reputation for typographic craftsmanship employing seventy men one of the few which has managed to keep its head above water, made a profit of $19 000 pesos in 1926 a new "low" over previous years because many of its orders come from large American concerns which care more about quality than price and therefore demand no estimate, allowing the printer subsequently to figure up his costs and charge a percentage of profit

[4] In the unionized print shops of Tampico, for instance, men can be laid off with thirty days' notice

[5] Those familiar with printing trades organizations in the United States will recognize that while Mexican conditions differ considerably, it is chiefly in degree, and that in principle the union restrictions are the same in both countries

[6] Only one out of eight employers interviewed, head of a photo-engraving establishment, did not concur in the others' condemnation of the union Special conditions seem to have affected his

THE STAGE

The other branch of the industry which marks the climax of extravagant unionism is that related to public entertainment — stage, screen, and music, organized in various C R O M unions in the Federación de Sindicatos Teatrales

In 1921 the Olympia Theater, said to seat more people than any show-house in Latin-America, was built at a cost of more than $900,000 pesos by an American citizen named Randolph P Jennings It was equipped for screen or drama It opened with motion-pictures, followed with vaudeville, but for the most part showed "movies"

In 1925 an opera troupe which had come to Mexico playing in a small house at high prices, had failed, and was about to close when its manager sought Mr Jennings's Olympia at a reasonable rental, hoping that with its large seating capacity and by charging low prices he might be able to continue A lease was signed

The day before the operatic opening in the Olympia and just as a dress rehearsal in the new setting had begun Mr Jennings was summoned to the Federación's headquarters There he was told that he must declare in writing, that at the end of the opera engagement the Olympia Theater would be used either as a theater (for operatic or theatrical performances) or as a motion-picture house The union had just adopted new rules that it could not be used for both purposes The owner protested that no law justified such arbitrary procedure, that no such conditions had ever existed, but he was obliged, in order to be allowed to carry out his contract with the opera company, to sign the agreement committing himself to show only theatrical performances in his playhouse He immediately, however, notified the government of the Federal District that his decision had been made under compulsion He also pleaded his case before the C R O M leader, the secretary of industry, Luis N Morones, but to no result

The theater owner was helpless, for although the union's proceeding was wholly illegal and the courts would so affirm it, should he desire to reopen as a motion-picture house, the motion-picture operators' union, one of the

relationship to it, his statement being "I have never had any trouble with my men possibly because many of them were my comrades when I was a workman myself I have done many of them a good turn and they have stood by me Sometimes they even protect me from the union which often adopts the policy of pulling one man down who is doing well in order to help another who may not be doing so well but with whom the union officials are friendly So when they have wanted to take away my best workmen and send them to other shops, which, since good workmen are scarce, would ruin me my workmen refuse to move

"I employ about thirty-five to forty men on an average My business is neither making nor losing money We are just living Production has decreased 50 per cent

"No new union shops have been opened since the workers have been organized but not a few open shops have and they are making profits

"The union can do nothing about them because they are opened *en familie* that is, they are so small that usually one family can run them Sometimes, however, they expand become large shops and their workers do not care to be organized because they know that while unionists get a steady job, they are not sure of it, and that the union shop itself is likely to go out of business"

component unions of the Federación de Sindicatos Teatrales, would refuse to supply operators Should he then secure independent operators, the union could, as on a former occasion, "plant" the red and black strike flag across the entrance, effectively closing the theater or, should the Government not lend the troops necessary to the successful execution of this program, place "stink bombs" to drive out anyone who had ventured into the playhouse This had happened before

In consequence, when the opera company finished its run, no other theatrical spectacle being available, the theater automatically closed, the union having forbidden its use as a motion-picture house Mr Jennings, however, did not escape the burden of paying three months' wages to the scene-shifters, ushers, and other union employees for whom the closing of the theater constituted a discharge, as he already paid the motion-picture operators when the operatic troops came in

Fortunately for Mr Jennings, he was able to lease the Olympia Theater to the Fox Film Company for one year, the union having consented to allow motion-pictures in case of a lease to another party, and when that lease expired the theater was rented by a Mexican named Raúl Núñez

It was now Señor Núñez's turn for trouble It began with the Musicians' Union, the Sindicato de Filarmónicos, also belonging to the aforenamed federation This union was in the habit of making contracts with theaters or motion-picture houses for periods of three, six, nine months, or a year A clause provides that if written notice is not given by the impresario thirty days before the expiration of the contract, it renews itself automatically for a similar period (One moving-picture house lessee in 1925 paid an orchestra for nine months because his notification of cancellation was two days late)

Señor Núñez was having a hard time financially Receipts had not been what he expected He decided to dispense with his orchestras, for in addition to the Olympia he had a chain of twelve houses of different sizes He therefore notified all the orchestras in due form that their services would no longer be required upon the expiration of their contract

The Sindicato de Filarmónicos, however, declared that they were not dischargeable and that Señor Núñez would have to continue to listen to their music and pay the piper He called attention to their contracts They were unmoved They purposed to continue and that was all there was to it

Señor Núñez thereupon gave instructions in all his theaters that on November 1, 1926, when the musicians' contracts expired, they should not be admitted except as spectators on payment of the customary admission fee Thereupon the motion-picture operators' union composed of operators, ticket takers, ticket sellers, and *mozos* struck compelling the closure of the thirteen motion-picture houses

Righteously aggrieved, Señor Núñez went before the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration of the Federal District It decided wholly in his favor

A contract was a contract, he was under no obligation to rehire the musicians, the motion-picture operators' strike was illicit, and they should all go back to work Justice had apparently been secured

But no! The motion-picture operators' union declared that the verdict had been bought! Hence they were under no obligation to abide by it One cannot compel a man to go to work, can one? Meanwhile, they notified Señor Núñez that as he would be held responsible for their wages while his theaters were closed it would prove expensive for him in the end It was already expensive for him with his other overhead charges continuing but as he had a scrap of paper deciding in his favor from the tribunal that supposedly settled such disputes he felt secure against wage payments to the illicit strikers

Weeks sped by There was great discontent among the working motion-picture operators, musicians, and other members of the Federation of Theatrical Unions who were being taxed two pesos a week apiece to support their idle comrades The rest were not enthusiastic about the strike but "labor discipline" is potent in the C R O M The only happy persons were the owners of the rival motion-picture circuit, the brothers Granat Bankruptcy had stared them in the face in October, 1926 On and after November 2 their business picked up wonderfully

By January the wages bill for the thirteen houses reached the considerable sum of $60,000 pesos At this time the *ayuntamiento*, the city administration, composed a hundred per cent of C R O M laborites, notified Señor Núñez that the tax on admissions (approximately 10 per cent of the estimated gross receipts) [1] was due since the municipality had never been officially notified of the theaters' closing Señor Núñez asked pointedly how one could pay the admission tax when there had been no admissions To this question the C R O M *ayuntamiento* countered by telling Señor Nuñez that if he paid those taxes which approximated the amount claimed by the C R O M strikers as wages, the sum would be turned over to them, and he would be released from that obligation In other words he could pay the wages that he did not owe as taxes that he did not owe

At this time Señor Núñez's lease of the Olympia was drawing to a close and Mr Jennings had a chance to rent it to Famous Players provided the union would let it open The matter was broached to Alfredo Pérez Medina, secretary of the Federación and likewise *oficial mayor* of the *ayuntamiento* [2]

He decided that if the owner (Jennings) would pay the men's wages for the Olympia, which alone now amounted to $17,000 pesos, he would compromise for 50 per cent of that sum, but if the ownership would not pay, he and the union would hold Núñez, the wicked man who had bribed the honor-

[1] Originally the tax was computed after a daily count of receipts, later an average was fixed
[2] The real working executive of the city's administration

able *junta*, and, moreover, had "mixed in politics" (which apparently only certain privileged Mexicans may do), responsible for the full amount The ownership could see no reason whatever why anyone should pay the men anything — least of all, the lessor The offer was reduced to 30 per cent The owners wanted to lease their theater which was causing them a heavy loss every day The money was paid It went into the treasury of the union The men did not get it — at least so three of them assured me The Olympia then reopened

A new entrepreneur, after Señor Núñez's failure, reopened the other twelve theaters, and hopefully attempted to conduct them against the invincible odds of labor union leader stupidity and corruption As long as there are good "angels" who will come in to take the places of the fallen, well and good, for all except those who have been ruined But the procession is not likely to be eternal

For such burlesque tyranny is not the exception but the rule with the Sindicato in question It has since established a new principle in the stage world which it dominates With every motion-picture house goes a set of employees — operators, ticket takers, ushers, and musicians — who are as much part of the building as seats or stage, and whose wages are as inescapable as death and taxes If the lessee of a theater, unable to make ends meet, suspends operations, the lessor is liable and if he, for some reason, escapes, then the charge is made against the owner of the land on which the theater stands! Is it legal? Of course not Did not Señor Núñez have the law on his side?

At present each motion-picture house is required to have three orchestras, each working two and one half hours, for whose players the union scale calls for payments of ten or five pesos each, per two and one half-hour "day"[1] The union, moreover, fixes the size of the orchestra The motion-picture house owner may think that five pieces are enough — but he is mistaken The union says he requires ten And he may not even select the musicians he wants The union does that

A French theatrical company arrived in Mexico The prompters' union, the Unión Mexicana de Apuntadores, sent two of their number Anxious to please, the manager accepted them, and gave them the libretto

"But this is French," said the prompters

"Certainly, this is a French company and our plays are in French"

"We know no French," said the prompters

"But then you will be of no use," said the manager

"That is unfortunate," said the Mexican prompters, "because you will have to pay us just the same"

"But, you don't expect to be paid when you render no service," protested the manager

[1] Motion picture theaters in the capital are open from 4 P M to 11 30 — seven and a half hours.

"No le hace," [it makes no difference] was the reply, "those are the union rules" And he had to pay them

This oppression is not reserved for the capitalistic owners or lessees It bears heavily on the unionized wage earners Their union, designed to protect them, has become in the hands of its leaders a terrifying creature of these Frankensteins of flute and fiddle So, not less than sixteen musicians, orchestra players, and others have assured me, with the most fearsome injunctions not to quote their names "We should lose our livelihood, they would never let us play again" All this in the name of liberating them from "capitalist tyranny"!

Every Sunday in beautiful Chapultepec Park, in the shadow of century-old cypresses, the Orquesta Típica, led by the white-haired artist, Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, lifts its rich and mellow harmonies into the perfumed breeze, an outpouring of the Mexican soul, beneath the ancient Ahuehuetes deep-rooted in the soil of Anáhuac Once (in 1927) when a song of Fernández Esperón was on the program, the leader espied that most popular of contemporary composers in the audience, and with a few graceful words of which Mexicans are so capable, invited him to conduct his own composition He did so amid great enthusiasm But the Federación fined Señor Lerdo thirty pesos and every member of his orchestra five That Esperón was a member of another C R O M union, the Union of Authors, made no difference

In 1924 two companies were trying to furnish opera to the Mexicans A Mexican girl, Porfiria Gómez, after years of study was elated when she received a contract from one of them She was to make her début in "Il Trovatore" One further formality remained — to join the Opera Singers' Union, the Sindicato de Cantantes de Opera, without which neither prima donna nor chorus-girl may sing even *do* on a Mexico City stage She joined and paid her quota The union, however, some of whose members were "interested" in the rival company, thereupon passed a *reglamento* that the right to sing did not become effective for one month after joining the union The Mexican girl lost her opportunity to sing and her contract The retroactivity of the ruling did not worry the *sindicato* composed chiefly of members of the chorus Besides, one of the chorus-girls got the leading part

Such arbitrary acts while far from characteristic of all C R O M activities have created a deep resentment among those affected Dissenters within the organization ranks are held in line by a stern "labor discipline" The weekly meeting on May 18, 1927, of the Federación de Sindicatos del Distrito Federal, composed of delegates of the various unions in the Federal District, was wholly given up to a discussion of what penalty should be inflicted on the members of the news writers' union, the Sindicato de Redactores, for failing to march in the May Day parade The fact that these journalists had not desired to march made no difference The meeting

lasted four hours There was not the slightest attempt at "steam-rollering," and everyone had his eloquent say as often as he wished Nevertheless, the result was a foregone conclusion With the administration backing the C R O M , labor leaders hold the whip hand

Beneath this episode lies the C R O M control of the press, which is increasingly resented by the editors and writers — who have to be members of the organization in order to work — although they appreciate the security of their tenure which unionism guarantees (In this respect they are far better off than the majority of newspapermen in the United States) However, they are better educated, less proletarian, and far more individualistic than the rest of the "comrades," and keenly alive to the importance of maintaining freedom of the press, especially in a country where books and magazines are scarce, and the daily paper largely fills their place It is therefore despite the journalists, and through the mechanics, that the newspapers are trammeled

From 1920 when Obregón took office, until 1927 when, during the height of the Catholic rebellion, the Government began censoring the press somewhat, the Mexican capital's press was, with one important exception, free, freer than it had ever been in its history for such a period of time [1] That important exception was and is the C R O M 's censorship Through it, nothing that its leaders deem objectionable is permitted to appear Censure of other public officials and of organizations is printed But never in the metropolitan press does a criticism, no matter how judiciously worded, of Morones, labor leader and cabinet member, nor of the C R O M , get into type

The control is exercised directly through the mechanical departments, which hold up any article, news item, or editorial which the linotyper to whom it comes deems objectionable, until it is passed upon by Eduardo Moneda, head of the Unión de Linotipistas, head of the Federación de Artes Gráficas, previously described, head of the Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, the government print shops, a national deputy, a *regidor* in the Mexico city municipality and one of the leading personages in the C R O M , in which he has held and holds important executive positions

The C R O M pressure began in 1923, after completing its control of the metropolitan press, with the imposition of its union on "El Universal " In that year it deleted news of the street-car strike, which was conducted by the rival labor organization, the C G T On orders from C R O M headquarters the linotypers merely refused to set the "stories" which the reporters brought in

An article in a semi-editorial column in "Excelsior," attacking Rafael Martínez, editor of the C R O M paper, "El Sol," was similarly held out by a proof-reader after it had been passed by the linotyper The unionists

[1] It had also been uncensored in the year and a half of Madero s presidency

were not in agreement, however, and the article was printed the next day

In 1925, a magazine, "Vida Moderna," was to carry an article, "Sindicalismo y Cooperación," written by Querido Moheno, a well-known criminal lawyer, which presented the thesis that unionism was the precursor of hunger The linotyper refused to set it, and the Federación de Artes Gráficas decreed that "Modern Life" should come to an end [1]

A lockout in the newspaper "Gil Blas," in Puebla, was precipitated by the refusal of linotypers to set an article, but this action was later repudiated by the C R O M authorities on the ground that the article was not hostile to labor, and that the workers had been misled by a local labor leader who had desired the suppression for personal reasons

The C R O M 's position and activities in the matter of press censorship were thus set forth to me by Eduardo Moneda [2]

"The C R O M adopted a resolution that no member of the union could attack the organization or any member of it and could not permit such attacks when in a position to prevent them It follows that no employee of a newspaper who belongs to the C R O M can permit any attack to be printed, and if an editorial writer or a reporter should write or bring in such an attack it would be the duty of the linotyper not to set it, and if he did so, of the compositor not to make it up, of the stereotyper not to cast it, of the pressman not to print it, and of the newsboy not to sell the paper containing it

"We also go further than this in doing patriotic work to prevent attacks on the nation, and as we know that in the recent difficulty with the oil men they paid the newspapers to print editorials and articles favorable to them and against the nation, we feel it our duty to prevent these from appearing

"A recent example of how I stopped an article was the following One night one of the linotypers telephoned me that there was a special article by Rafael Zubáran Capmany [3] attacking the Government and the C R O M We were at the height of the religious controversy with rebellion in the air and anything possible It was early in the morning shortly before press time I looked at the article, took a proof of it to the editor in charge, saying

[1] But let no one believe that this episode is peculiarly Mexican In 1919 during a printers' strike in New York the weekly "Life" was printed in Boston During this time the police strike occurred in that city A cartoon was drawn for publication in "Life" depicting a husband beating his wife in answer to whose cries policemen have burst into their room The foremost of them turns to a fellow officer in the hall and motioning him back, says, in effect, "It is all right, Bill, he is a member of the Union" The Boston pressmen refused to print the issue containing the offending cartoon The American union, however, did not attempt to go further

[2] On May 23 1927

[3] Rafael Zubáran Capmany secretary of industry in the first part of Obregón's administration, was one of the leading civilians in the de la Huerta rebellion After its collapse he fled the country locating in New York where he wrote articles which were published in "El Universal" The newspaper's taste in publishing them under the circumstances was highly questionable, but its right to do so, incontrovertible

"'Comrade, this is a pretty bad article I think we should cooperate with the Government by not letting it appear'

"He read the article and said 'It is pretty strong I really had not noticed it'

"'It is agreed then that it will not appear,' said I

"He protested that he had nothing to put in its place, that as the editor-in-chief had gone home he had no authority to hold it out, and finally convinced of his bad faith I said to him

"'This article will not appear and if it does there will be no paper to-morrow'

"I then had several proofs pulled and called the head make-up man, the head stereotyper, and the head pressman and said to each respectively

"'You will not make up this article, you will not stereotype it, and you will not print it And if you do you will all be punished, and there will be no paper to-morrow'

"They agreed

"The next day I got a very vicious letter from Señor Miguel Lanz Duret (the owner and editor) threatening me with court action I took the letter and the article down to President Calles When he read the article he colored and when I told him what I had done he said, 'Very good' Then I showed him Lanz Duret's letter and he said 'Speak to the Procurador General (attorney-general) and get him to assign a lawyer for your defence' Then he added 'Moreover, we may handle this in a revolutionary manner on the basis that this article is subversive and incendiary'[1]

"We have also served warning on Licenciado Pallares[2] who writes articles vigorously attacking the labor movement The first two of his articles we answered in our paper "El Sol" but now he has been warned and if he does not soften his tone we shall have to suppress him

"We do not object to fair and reasonable criticism but we do object to biased and deliberate attacks"

When have those with the power to suppress been able to distinguish between "fair criticism" and "biased attack"?

Nevertheless, while the C R O M has been the chief agency of suppression in Mexico it should be noted first that this policy has had at least the passive approval of the Calles administration and, second, that given its power the suppressions have been relatively few Fear of suppression, however, decidedly tempers the comment of a press not sympathetic with revolutionary governments Also the C R O M 's moderation has been

[1] The article in question was virtually a call to rebellion

[2] Eduardo Pallares a distinguished lawyer, formerly professor at the University Law School from which he was removed for his strictures on the Revolution The Ministry of Education's justification lay in the fact that he was drawing pay from the régime he was attacking His newspaper articles are highly intelligent, if bitter, criticisms of contemporary Mexican administration by an intense individualist

in a measure due to the resistance of the unionized news writers who more imbued with the ideals of newspaper craftsmanship resent the censorship of the linotyper In consequence, their standing with the C R O M leadership is not the best and they have been on the verge of expulsion from the C R O M Their failure to march in the May Day parade was an evidence of this attitude

What are the C R O M 's objectives? Whither is Mexican labor heading? What is the current of thought underlying its activities? Interest among Americans is as to the degree of Mexican labor's "redness" Is it "red," "pink," or "white"? This is not determinable by any color scale or other method of measurement, and the answer depends as much on the subjectivity of the questioner as on the objective facts What are the indisputable facts from which each may draw his own conclusion?

From the beginning the C R O M has believed in "class warfare" It does to-day, though somewhat less virulently It was not deeply moved by the political aspects of the Revolution as such — and quite naturally Madero's "effective suffrage and no reelection" got the workers nothing "Salud y Revolución Social" has been the C R O M 's slogan, and its red and black flag has meant more to the toilers and has been far more conspicuous in their demonstrations than the tri-colored national ensign, the "flag of the three guarantees" Quite naturally, too The national flag, conspicuously associated with government and military display, had come to symbolize repression to the workers To them it was not the flag of *their* country — they had no country It was not a glorious banner of freedom — they had no freedom To them it was a class flag — to guarantee the rights of the idle Mexican aristocrat and of the foreign capitalist who in Mexico appeared combined to maintain the *status quo* of worker serfdom With the governing plutocracy international, labor likewise responded at first with internationalist leanings Its adoption of the ideology and vocabulary of the class struggle grew out of the fact that in Mexico until the Revolution were just two classes, privileged and disinherited, and that legitimate individual effort could not — as it may in the United States — lift one from the lower into the upper Thus when the C R O M defines "bourgeoisie" as "a social conglomeration of drones who live by exploiting the working classes, directing their political destinies and imposing their criterion,"[1] it pictures not inaccurately the Mexican "upper class" as it was under Díaz, and the "political class" which to a certain extent has taken its place So despite its imported and adapted nomenclature, the C R O M 's avowed philosophy is a form of Socialism adapted to Mexican needs as it sees them It divides society into two classes "exploited and exploiters," and labels such organization of society unjust "since it permits abundance to the point

[1] From Léxico Sindical, in Memoria de los Trabajos * * * de la C R O M * * * 1924–1926

of superfluity to a few and condemns others to want to the point of beggary The exploited class largely made up of manual workers has the right to declare a class war in order to secure economic and spiritual betterment, and in the end its complete liberation from capitalist tyranny In order to oppose its exploiters * * * the exploited class should organize itself as such, making the basis of its organization the labor union " [1]

But "in the end" may be millennially distant, and the trade-union path appears conservatively straight and narrow, suggesting that perhaps not a little of Mexican labor radicalism is verbal froth, a by-product of Hispanic effervescence and a kind of exuberance which comes with a new sense of freedom and power Even this is tempering down steadily in the face of practical realities

On May 1, 1923, I witnessed the labor parade The marchers hoisted the red and black flag on the cathedral and their placards were rabidly class conscious "¡Mueran los Burguéses!" (Down with the bourgeois!) [2] Red banners waved above the white shirts and blue overalls moving to the steady tramp of marching feet and the strains of the "Internationale" Red roses adorned the black tresses of the girls, in home-made dresses of red and black calico The day's ceremonies were officially dedicated by the C R O M as memorial exercises for "the martyrs of Chicago" — the eight anarchists convicted after the Haymarket riots in 1886, following an attempted general strike for the eight-hour day of whom four were executed Their names are unknown to Americans, but familiar to nearly every Mexican trade-unionist Tens of thousands of cards with their portraits printed in red were distributed by the C R O M A special sixty-four page memorial number recording their lives and deaths was issued under its auspices To them also the government print-shop workers devoted the entire issue of their weekly "Vida Gráfica" under the heading, "Let us honor the memory of the victims, let us curse their foolish assassins This is our mission on every first of May "

In the labor controlled municipality, Tacuba, a monument erected by the workers to the "Chicago martyrs" was unveiled, while the plaza in which it stood was renamed May First Square It had been Juárez Square!

But in 1925 the demonstrations were much tamer No crimson bunting fluttered between the spires of the Metropolitan Church in the Zócalo And two years later I had to search through the literature of the day to find the reference to the Chicago victims "By united effort we shall advance" was one of the placards sign-posting Mexican labor's progress toward a less passionate proletarianism "Let us make and consume more Mexican products" was an affirmation of the newer nationalism Mexican labor had identified itself with country Why not? In that country it had found, it

[1] Toledano La Libertad Sindical en México p 124-8 This may be taken as an official contemporary statement of the C R O M 's creed

[2] Literally "death to the bourgeois," but the Spanish has a less ferocious connotation

had won, a place for itself On May 1, 1927, too, one could without a special C R O M permit drive anywhere in public or private conveyance if the chauffeur was willing Four years and two years before transportation paralysis had been absolute and compulsory Having achieved strength and solidarity it was no longer necessary to flaunt it

A corresponding change has come in C R O M policy, whatever may be its abstract pronouncements "It is time to declare a truce in the class war," was the way Morones, when he became secretary of industry, put it His new responsibilities had the invariably sobering effect that comes after the transition from agitator to administrator A new campaign of labor education — of self-education — was launched Workers were shown that strikes, even if won, were wasteful, that the strike was a measure to be used only as a last resort when all other attempts at settlement had failed

Result A steady diminution of strikes [1]

Year	No of Strikes	No of Strikers	Days Lost	Loss
1922	197	71,736	692,339	$5,349,370
1923	146	62,070	601,406	4,462,665
1924	138	33,085	395 401	6,432,576
1925	51	9861	96,039	504,365
1926	24	2077	41,222	265,212

Concomitantly, a less intransigeant policy toward capital was adopted Up to that time, the employer often could not get a hearing Now there was talk of cooperation The obvious truth that the welfare of industry was the welfare of the worker rose from earth The textile industry staged the spectacle of labor and capital meeting to resolve their problems It was the first gathering of its kind in the history of Mexico

Nevertheless, the hopefully expressed generalities fall far short of tangible realization Unionized Mexican labor bent on achieving a few elementary human rights has had little time to learn about its reciprocal responsibilities It does not yet know what they are It is still in a fighting mood, and deeply suspicious, an inevitable consequence of its bitter past Yet labor's responsibilities in Mexico are relatively greater to-day than in the United States — because its power is greater

This power, due to labor's close and friendly association with government, is disclosed in the workings of the various Boards of Arbitration and Conciliation With labor and capital equally represented, government, state or local, has the deciding voice The character of these *juntas* differs

[1] Data furnished by department of labor Ministry of Industry Commerce and Labor They are doubtless far from complete as not all labor conflicts necessarily come to its attention But they indicate a definite tendency away from the strike

in different sections, and varies in the same section with administration changes, but it seldom is unfriendly to labor for long In 1925, 96 5 per cent of these arbitral findings were in favor of the worker, 3 5 per cent in favor of the employer, as the following table shows

Cases settled by Central *Juntas* of Arbitration and Conciliation in 1925 in 17 states, Federal District, and Territory of Lower California [1]

(Data furnished by Department of Labor, Secretaría of Industry, Commerce and Labor)

Nature of Grievance	Number of Cases	Settled in Favor of Labor	Settled in Favor of Capital	Number of Workers Affected
Industrial accidents	213	209	4	400
Violation of labor contract	176	159	17	5715
Reduction of wages	72	70	2	645
Refusal to increase or readjust wages	54	52	2	1473
Non-payment of wages	1514	1501	13	3884
Unjustified discharge	3144	3011	133	7496
Failure to recognize union	33	33	0	1410
Failure to establish legal working day	30	30	0	330
Miscellaneous	250	235	24	6261
	5495	5300	195	27,614

In twenty-five cases the awards were not accepted and were followed by thirteen strikes and twelve lockouts

Granting that these decisions merely reflect the onward march of the worker toward living standards which still fall far short of those of the average American wage earner, such a percentage cannot but indicate that the administrative dice are heavily loaded in favor of labor So they are [2] Labor's coercive power is great State administrations fear it if they are not already labor controlled and the *juntas* are susceptible to the same weaknesses that honeycomb the whole Mexican political edifice The following cases before the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration of the Federal District may be cited as typical of a vast number

[1] Data from the States of Colima, Chiapas Durango Guanajuato Guerrero, Hidalgo, Michoacán Morelos Querétaro, Tabasco and Tlaxcala not obtainable and the table is therefore far from complete But there is no reason to believe that the missing data would materially alter the percentage of cases decided in favor of the workers, which is the significant fact

[2] Corresponding data for 1926 received after this chapter was concluded show 3276 cases decided in favor of labor and 196 in favor of the employer a change in the 96 5 per cent–3 5 per cent ratio of 1925, to one of 89 2 per cent–10 8 per cent This would correspond with the changing attitude of labor toward capital although the one-sidedness of the decisions is still indisputable

A printing establishment hired a carpenter to move partitions A few days later it received notification from the *junta* that having discharged him it owed him three months' pay The manager explained that this contract job called for no payment beyond the amount agreed A week later the police embargoed his shop to the extent of three months' wages for the carpenter The printer had to pay it

A factory owner's stenographer resigned, to undergo, she said, an operation A week later a strike, caused by the men's antagonism to their foreman, was declared, lasted seven weeks and was won by the strikers Seven weeks thereafter the girl returned demanding her former place She was told regretfully that it had been filled She then demanded her pay for the fifteen intervening weeks, and three months' wages besides The employer considered the demand outrageous and refused it The *junta* awarded her the full amount, $1600 pesos The employer wrote the board his version and, hearing nothing, thought the matter settled in accordance with his facts Two and one half months later, however, police drove up, gave him thirty minutes to pay, and as he did not have $1600 pesos there at the time carted away an equivalent amount of his manufactures He appealed to Governor Serrano of the Federal District, who, calling in his representative on the board, protested against the injustice of the verdict It was reduced to $900 pesos, but that sum had to be paid

A young man approached an establishment conducted by foreigners, suggesting its need for a brass sign which he offered to make The owner told him no sign was wanted Nevertheless, a few days later the worker in brass returned with one

"I told you I didn't want the sign," said the owner "Besides, you've spelled my name wrong Take it away"

But the young man told the owner that he was a member of the C R O M and entitled to fifty pesos The owner declined to pay it

The Junta de Conciliación found for the brazier When payment was not forthcoming a police squad came to make the necessary impoundage A determined partner threatened an appeal to her ambassador if the squad did not leave empty-handed After much argument it retired

The next day the owner slipped quietly to the *junta* and deposited fifty pesos "It's better to avoid trouble," he said

Two partners had trouble and separated, one of them then unjustly trying to extort a sum not due him, which, if collected, would have spelt the bankruptcy of this retail business He took his claim to the Junta de Conciliación y Arbitraje, which though supposed only to resolve differences between employer and worker, nevertheless handled the case

As paying the claim would have closed the store and left forty workers without employment, labor's representative on the board was interested, and sided with the defendant Capital's representative and the Government's seemed to favor the plaintiff

One afternoon, capital's representative dropped into the store in question, the bearer of ill tidings "The case has been decided against you," he told the partner defendant "I've come to see how you want to pay it — in cash or instalments"

"Decided against me," exclaimed the manager, flabbergasted, "I haven't even been heard Has it been voted and signed?"

"Well, it's been voted but not signed," said capital's representative, significantly Before he left the store, he represented 2000 pesos more capital than he had previously It cost the plaintiff a total of 6000 to get justice — to avoid paying a sum many times larger

The Chamber of Commerce officers admitted they had heard that their appointee was *muy sin vergüenza* (much without shame), but as he had been engaged for a year what could one do about it? He will be a representative of capital in his own right when his brief term ends

An Italian workman, dropped after one year's work, demanded not only three months' pay, but his passage to Italy, although the firm had hired him in Mexico and had not brought him from Italy Nevertheless the *junta* granted his claim

In many cases no such flagrant injustices take place But the possibility is there, and the odor of such decisions is not easily wafted away They are often a kind of belated and vicarious compensation, unjustly imposed on innocent parties, for the former employer ruthlessness which still persists where it can

An American youth engaged in the United States and brought to Mexico by an American firm worked at wages so low that saving was an impossibility, especially since he had meanwhile acquired a family His work was satisfactory Often he worked nights without extra pay, and in seven years received as vacation his wedding day After seven years he was discharged because a Mexican would do his work more cheaply When the American asked for his passage back to the United States, he was told that anything he received would be mere kindness The employee murmured something about the law entitling him to three months' wages, whereat the manager in a towering rage threatened to blacklist him with every firm in his line in the United States should he invoke Mexican law Indignant at such treatment this non-unionized American asked one of the C R O M officials what his rights were The C R O M official listened sympathetically

"Let me get this straight," he said "You've worked for seven years You are discharged, and are entitled to three months' wages The firm brought you here at its expense, it must pay your way back You have worked nights without extra pay, that's a two-fold violation of the constitution, you were entitled not only to extra pay but to 'double time' You say that you are being discharged because the firm has gotten a Mexican to do the same work for lower wages, that's another violation of the constitution, which requires equal pay for equal work, regardless of nationality The manager threatened to blacklist you if you sought what you are legally entitled to, that's the worst of all Let me handle him We're familiar with that type"

But the handling proved unnecessary When the young man mentioned the discussion of his rights with the "C R O M," his employer paled and perspiration started from his forehead Then he became sweeter than sugar It had all been a misunderstanding He could not do enough for his departing employee Warm letters of recommendation replaced the threatened blacklisting The return passage with an allowance for baggage was paid without question The magic letters C R O M had worked the change

In the emergence from a chaotic social order perhaps the individual injustices, which are many, are outweighed by the rough balancing of a long standing account of a far greater number of people

Mexican labor's policies and conduct are of more than national interest because Mexico's capital is chiefly foreign and upon its ability to get along with labor, the industrial development and the national material progress in the next generation will largely depend Mexico is the first of the so-called backward countries whose labor has organized itself A "backward" country may be defined in this connection as one whose resources are being developed by foreign capital and management, and whose contribution is — in addition to its resources — a cheap labor supply When and as that labor supply ceases to be cheap and docile, the country s attractiveness to the foreign investor diminishes proportionately

Among Mexican revolutionaries differences of opinion exist as to the desirability of attracting outside capital Some consider it a "menace," a part viewing economic penetration as a precursor to political intervention, others emphasizing somewhat more the cultural disadvantages of dominant foreign influences in Mexican life These objectives they deem scarcely offset by the wages and taxes left in Mexico which they consider as foreign capital's only benefaction there While admitting that without capital the country will develop more slowly, they deem this alternative preferable Such a development, they believe, would be more natural, more in conso-

nance with racial character, and consequently more truly beneficial and enduring Under a national policy shaped by such considerations Mexico would try to make the best of what abilities were to be found within her borders, frown on foreign concessions, live simply and humbly, and seek gradually to work out its destiny from within This interesting perspective, which need not be viewed as an attempt "to erect a Chinese wall" around the nation, but rather as an effort to allow Mexico to find herself by the well recognized method of self-help, is deemed by many foreign capitalists to be precisely Mexico's present policy They point to recent legislation as confiscatory, contrast the protection given capital against labor in other undeveloped countries and have about concluded that foreign capital has little chance in Mexico[1] Now whatever the justification for that belief, the fact is that Mexican labor and government to-day stoutly affirm the opposite Obviously they would prefer that such capital as there is be Mexican, keeping its profits within the country, and avoiding the constant friction with other governments which foreign capital implies Neither Mexico nor any other country, they realize, can become a modern nation as long as its industries are foreign-owned But Mexican labor has begun to grasp the painful truth that, for the present, achieving national control of industry is an idle dream, that some half million workers are directly dependent on foreign capital for employment, and that their immediate condition can only be improved by the prospering of the capital now there, by the coming of more capital, and the creation of a labor shortage — instead of the present capital shortage And so Mexican organized labor now frequently announces, "We desire that foreign capital shall exploit Mexico's natural resources but not Mexico's people," and President Calles repeatedly asserts, "Capital that is willing to obey the country's laws will be welcome and will be given every protection" And yet capital continues shy, has in recent years, as the Mexican revolutionaries say, "boycotted" Mexico, with the result that "hard times" have become harder, forcing the Government to drastic economies and retrenchment of its vital reconstructive program Secretary Morones told me in 1925 that the real difficulty in his Ministry of Industry was the "iron ring" of capitalist hostility against Mexican enterprises So it would seem that a hiatus remains between Mexican desire and achievement in the reassuring of capital How far is Mexican labor responsible?

Its frightening of capital may be grouped under three heads

First, its purely surface expressions such as the red and black flag and the jargon of class warfare These *per se* might be dismissed as unworthy of consideration by the intelligent business man who is more interested in

[1] A notable exception is the investment in telephone communication by a subsidiary of the American Telephone & Telegraph Co which in 1927 concluded the extension of its lines from Mexico City to the border, connecting the Mexican capital and intervening points with the U S telephone system

production charts, balance sheets, and exact data about markets, especially if he understood that Mexican labor's class consciousness is the logical outgrowth of its former debasement That these external symptoms will abate as their cause is removed is clear A change is already visible Add the C R O M 's hostility to Communists, their expulsion from the country at its behest, the coolness between Russian and Mexican labor — and the notion that the Mexican movement is maneuvred from Moscow becomes absurd If "nationalization of industry" is mentioned in Mexican labor circles to-day it is rather as a distant hope, than as a contemplated program Contrasting with the patter of Marxism is the practice of a trade-unionism more nearly patterned on that of the American Federation of Labor than on any Old World radicalism

Second, are the occasional previously described excesses of organized labor, particularly in certain industries, such as the theatrical, and specific injustices and persecutions, often due to personal, political, or special reasons? They resound far and wide, and are taken, unjustly, but not unnaturally, as typical of the whole labor movement One episode such as that of the Olympia Theater offsets the wholly different picture in the entire mining industry or among the well organized electricians, or among the capital's street-car employees Such abuses also are probably inevitable in a young, inexperienced, and rapidly growing movement Their worst aspect is that they have the sanction of those high up Then all Mexican labor gets "a black eye"

Under the third head belong some of union labor's most cherished policies not merely at present in Mexico, but for a long time in the United States — the artificial restriction of labor and the artificial creation of work This refers not to shortened hours, which experience, the world over, has shown to be excellent, but to confining workers into rigid categories to do only special kinds of work American labor is outgrowing this limitation which seems particularly inappropriate in a people as mechanically versatile as the Mexicans They will, soon or late, learn that efficiency and increased production, when not at the expense of health, are beneficial to labor and community

Evidence that some of the measures which revolutionary Mexico upholds as sacred aspirations and rights of the workers in their struggle with capital may not be so inviolably sacred, is that the Government, the greatest employer of labor in Mexico, exempts itself from them

Discharged government employees never get three months' wages Short shrift is given them if they strike If they object to an unpopular superior, and he stands well with the powers above, they, not he, are discharged Except in the military factories which are under the direct management of the C R O M , government employees receive no medical aid and sickness compensation This immunity applies not merely to the

federal but to state governments, including those which, like Vera Cruz, have adopted the most drastic labor codes, and to municipal administrations, such as that of Mexico City, controlled by laborites

The Government goes even further, at times extending immunity to commercial enterprises with which it is connected but are not officially governmental When the Mexico City newspaper, "El Globo," ceased publication in 1925, the owner, Félix F Palavicini, was obliged, on direct orders from the Ministry of Industry, to pay all his force three months' wages, the required sum, $140,000 pesos, being secured by the forced sale of the newspaper's mechanical equipment When "El Demócrata," subsidized by several cabinet officers, and to that extent, though not avowedly, an administration organ, ceased publication, no such payment to its employees was required or made [1]

Likewise in its contract for road construction with a Chicago firm in 1925, the Federal Government saw fit to waive irksome constitutional labor requirements in behalf of that private company [2]

These governmental omissions tally with the labor provisions found uniquely in the Constitution of 1917, and likewise held most burdensome by industry

The three months' wages to the discharged worker, excellent in its intent to tide him over the difficult time when he is seeking other employment and often a "live saver" at such periods, falls crushingly on an employer who through a reduced market finds himself in financial straits and is forced to cut down his force In reality this benevolent provision results in the hiring of less labor, many employers refusing to take on employees for temporary or seasonal work because of the financial penalty involved True, the three months' clause is not supposed to apply to temporary employment, but in practice frequently does, sufficiently often, at any rate, to warrant the worker's making a fight for it, producing rancor, ill feeling, and loss of time whatever the outcome On the other hand some employers avoid this payment by hiring on ostensibly short time contracts which they renew at regular intervals Here again are evasion, subterfuge, and potential strife

Physical injuries should not be a matter of controversy between employer and employee Compensation in case of accident or death is perhaps the

[1] The two cases were parallel with the one difference that Señor Palavicini in starting "El Globo" had assured the employees he hired away from other newspapers that he had sufficient funds to conduct his enterprise for one year regardless of advertising He suspended operations after four months charging that the Secretary of Hacienda Alberto J Pani, against whom he had been conducting a vigorous editorial campaign had bulldozed his advertisers into withdrawing their advertising The charge was founded Pani's method being to threaten to send to any firm which failed to comply an 'Inspector del Timbre' a federal revenue stamp collector the stamp tax legislation being so complicated that it was almost impossible not to commit some technical violation and expose oneself to fines This circumstance did not, however, constitute a moral waiver of Señor Palavicini's assurances to his employees

[2] Toledano, La Libertad Sindical en México, p 55, fn

workers' most notable gain from the Revolution [1] But at present, attempts to secure it may lead to such pathetic struggles as those of the crippled Guanajuato boy for more than the bounty of an artificial leg,[2] and of men physically wrecked for life and helpless before the fact of their own responsibility, in Jalisco,[3] or, on the other hand, the flagrant abuse of the illness compensation laws of Vera Cruz In Orizaba the employer must pay workers in full during an occupational illness and half wages during other illness, no matter what its duration He must supply free treatment and medicines Incredible abuse in the nature of faked sickness has resulted, for it is not the attending physician but the patient who determines whether he is ill! In some concerns, absences "on account of illness" have reached 25 per cent of the working force on San Lunes (Holy Monday), so called because of the traditional incapacity and consequent holiday of the Mexican worker the day after his Sabbath debauch In Orizaba the cost of sickness to the employers has risen from an average of $1 00 per employee in 1919 to $48 86 in 1924, a 2572 per cent increase [4] Yet, ironically, the health of the workers has deteriorated, due to excessive drugging, for under the law the company is obliged to give them whatever medicaments they demand, and requests for patent medicine formulas and subsequent overdosing are frequent

The remedy for these abuses lies in some variety of obligatory workers' compensation, accident or health insurance, such as has come into vogue in other socially enlightened countries,[5] and medical supervision which being neither of employer nor worker lacks partisan bias — a program indeed which the constitution recommends [6] Otherwise the workers' health — and the nation's — will continue an apple of discord

The answer to many a legitimate criticism of some phase of present industrial relations such as the three months' wage quittance, is that the constitution requires it But nothing can be so elastic or so easily forgotten

[1] In 1926 out of 1 486 766 industrial workers (the total concerning whom statistics were available in the department of labor), 387 were killed through industrial accidents, 145 were permanently partially incapacitated, 4740 were temporarily totally incapacitated 24,048 were temporarily partially incapacitated For the deaths $445 495 pesos were paid, an average of $1151, and for the injuries $39 648 or $1 45 per injury These compensations are slight yet they represent a net gain over the pre revolutionary days

[2] See p 346

[3] If the worker is held responsible for an accident to himself in that state no compensation is due him

[4] La Legislación Veracruzana Sobre Responsabilidad Patronal en Las Enfermedades de los Trabajadores published by the Cámara de Industriales de Orizaba gives a detailed and statistical record of the effect of the Vera Cruz legislation

[5] Says the U S Dept of Labor Bulletin on this subject "At the present time some form of workmen's compensation for industrial accidents is practically universal, and while the various enactments show considerable variations * * * all recognize the principles of compensation as distinguished from the older idea of employer's liability previously accepted in the civil law of continental Europe, as well as the English and American law" No 423, I, Dec 1926

[6] Para XXIX of Art 123 "Institutions of popular insurance established for old age, sickness, life unemployment accident, and others of a similar character are considered of social utility, the federal and state governments shall therefore encourage the organization of institutions of this character in order to instill and inculcate popular habits of thrift"

as that same Magna Charta when necessary[1] The outstanding revolutionary aspiration, supposedly, was the non-reeligibility of presidents, in order to guarantee rotation in office and prevent dictatorial self-perpetuation, à la Díaz Yet in 1926, Article 83 which provided that a president shall serve four years and never be reelected, was amended to permit Obregón to run again, and it was amended to make the presidential term six years

Moreover, insisting on some of the obviously unworkable constitutional labor provisions merely prolongs conflict To maintain that never under any circumstances may men labor more than three hours overtime nor women any overtime, results only in evasion, and gives the unscrupulous an opportunity to "hold up" an employer[1]

The legality or illegality of strikes is another no man's land of strife In practice it places the power of deciding whether wages during a strike shall or shall not subsequently be paid, in the hands of one individual, often biased The railroad shopmen's strike was ruled legal by the Federal judge of the third district, in 1927, but Morones, the Secretary of Industry, subsequently declared it illegal The men chose to abide by the judge's finding but the C R O M leader's decision prevailed

Various strikes in June, 1926, in sympathy with the British coal miners were declared licit The strike in sympathy with the Mexican railway men in April, 1927, was declared illicit

A group of women shirt makers in the factory, La Britania, struck as a protest against the expulsion of the papal delegate, Archbishop Caruana on May 18, 1926, but the Federal District Board of Arbitration declared the strike illicit on the ground that it had no social objective, that is, betterment of the workers[2]

The impracticability of some provisions of Article 123 is admitted in conversation by many labor leaders who on the platform appear to hold every comma therein holy In 1923, Juan Rico, prominent member of the Grupo Acción, editor of the C R O M publications and reputed labor's historian, gave me as his opinion that these clauses had been written in bad faith by two lawyers, José Natividad Macías and Luis Manuel Rojas, who knew that they were unworkable, and placed them in the constitution to secure labor's support Whatever the origin of the labor provisions, and many are excellent, twelve years' experience with them should outweigh the few hours of discussion that preceded their framing by the congress of Querétaro

The weakest and sorest spot, however, in the relations of labor and capital in Mexico, is that in certain industries management does not control As long as management cannot have full responsibility to select, promote,

[1] Art 123, Sec XI Under this provision no stenographer could take a line of dictation after her eight hours I have seen it violated in the 100% C R O M stronghold, the Ministry of Industry Commerce and Labor

[2] Art 123, Sec 18, says 'strikes shall be lawful when they aim to bring about a balance between the various factors of production, and to harmonize the rights of capital and labor"

move, and discharge its personnel, industry is unlikely to prosper — at least not until Mexican labor attains greater knowledge Far better would be for the workers who aspire to management control to form their own cooperatives in industry following the example of their agrarian brothers, and while seeking the full profits of industry, accept at the same time its responsibilities and risks With the C R O M bank able to supply credit, and advance capital, and with the organization's leader, Morones, as the guiding angel of the nation's industry, Mexican labor should have an unprecedented opportunity to try its wings An enlightened and a truly radical industrial and labor policy would bend every effort to emancipate the worker by creating such industries — industries that would be purely national, purely profit-sharing, and invaluable as training-schools The present policy merely perpetuates proletarianism Attempts to impose a partial workers' control without corresponding responsibility have proved disastrous The printing trades, pointed to as trade-unionism's finest achievement, are facing disaster — not because of the high wage scale, which might be payable, and is surely desirable, but because it has not been correlated with equivalent efficiency and service When incompetent workers can earn as much as competent, and union leaders, with a political necessity for keeping a following, select the candidates for work, craftsmanship, efficiency, and sound economy go a-glimmering

That Mexican labor will before long realize that abdicating arbitrary control and artificial standards in the interest of waste elimination, is not defeat but victory, is shown by recent reforms made by that outstanding C R O M laborite, General Celestino Gasca, as head of the military equipment factories (Fabriles) One may select from a report prepared by him (in 1927) such passages as the following

> In the tannery new mechanical and automatic devices were introduced for the various tanning processes achieving thereby a 50 per cent reduction in personnel, and a 50 per cent increased production and of better quality [1]

This is a milestone in the march of Mexican labor putting within its reach economic gains far beyond any hitherto attained

Nor would this be difficult, for from amid all the tumult and the shouting emerges the rocky truth that the Mexican worker has won very little Stroll through the wretched suburbs of Santa Julia and Peralvillo in the capital, or look upon the incredibly foul habitations lining the Atoyac River where the Puebla textile workers live, compare the average wage increase throughout the republic with the increased cost of living since the time of Díaz, and it will be more than apparent that the tangible conquests of the workers have been largely illusory

[1] Gasca, Plan de Organización Técnica Industrial, Departamento de Establecimiento Fabriles y Aprovisionamentos Militares

That is, of the workers as a whole The illusion, due to the importance and prestige of a handful of leaders, gives at first blush the impression that the entire urban proletariat has been correspondingly benefited Not only is that not the case, but the preeminence of the few has had a definitely unfavorable reaction on the many Within the revolutionary movement the C R O M is isolated, largely because of the "exclusivism" of its leadership, its domineering ways, and its attempts to break up rival organizations, in order to control their members The strike in sympathy with the striking railway men called by the C G T , in April, 1927, involving telephone operators, textile operatives, and others, was a strike not against any employer, but against the C R O M hegemony, which in the person of Luis Morones, secretary of industry, had not only ruled the railway men's strike illegal, but had substituted for the striking car shop men, C R O M "strike-breakers" [1]

The agrarians, until 1924 friends and allies of the C R O M , are now hostile, resenting its invasion of their field, when its task in industry had been scarcely begun The psychology of the urban labor leader, usually mestizo, is alien to that of the Indian countryman, who cares nothing about social theory, but has strong instincts about land and live-stock

The C R O M 's attempted organization of the *campesinos* was a political move — to swell its numbers , the peasants' economic needs and development are taken care of by their cooperatives, which are non-political, however politicians try to make them otherwise Personal rivalries, as usual, also induced the *agrarista-laborista* split, which weakened both groups to the detriment of the two important social reforms which they represent

In other directions, the C R O M 's organizing zeal has aroused needless enmities — among other revolutionaries In 1925 it attempted to unionize the bank employees The proposals included selection of employees by the union, the union's right to discharge, et cetera The banks, nearly all foreign-owned, vowed they would close first, declaring the obvious truth that a bank was not a factory At this time I asked Alberto Mascareñas, director of the Banco de Mexico, what his attitude would be toward allowing the C R O M , which was so friendly with the administration of which he, too, was a part, to organize his employees in the new government bank He fairly exploded

'Let *them* in here?" And waving his hand toward the long line of busy tellers, "Why, I'm trying to make *men* of these workers Those scoundrels who are trying to organize the union, are fellows I fired out of here for stealing" Meanwhile the president of the republic had decided that banks were institutions not susceptible of unionization

The whole C R O M has paid the price for its plunge into politics, whatever the compensating advantages of controlling here and there the machin-

[1] The story of the strike is too long and complex to detail here It involved about 8000 men belonging to several railway unions

ery of government It has played the electoral game as sordidly and corruptly as its opponents, while decrying "the eternal electoral fraud"

In office, the *laboristas* have acquitted themselves fairly Their congressional bloc has been consistent and loyal to its policies Of the three constitutional governors who have been out-and-out C R O M men, one, Rodríguez of Hidalgo, is far and away the best governor of his time, another, Rodarte of Zacatecas, above the average, while the third, Elizalde of Aguascalientes, was everything a public official should not be Toledano in Puebla and de la Peña in Querétaro have been excellent interim executives The C R O M *ayuntamiento* of Mexico City has undoubtedly been the best revolutionary administration of what had been notoriously the worst cesspool of corruption in the country Under the *laboristas* there has been graft, but less than before More paved streets, including some in the previously forgotten poorer quarters, testify to the improvement

Yet political exigencies have committed the C R O M to policies of coercion, previously described, by which groups of wage earners, indifferent or definitely unfriendly, were willy-nilly enrolled under its banners, whose swelling of its ranks has given, rather than the strength of great size, the weakness of a bloated body Highly discreditable has been the interference with press freedom, and damaging to the C R O M in the resentment created Its leaders should have known better, after berating Díaz for a decade (Of course that was different Díaz was a dictator This is a great libertarian movement! The reactionary press cannot be allowed et cetera It always is different!) What will happen within the C R O M should the next national administration not give it the unqualified support that Calles has, and self-interest and loyalty rather than fear serve as the cement for its solidarity, remains to be seen My own judgment is that the C R O M would fare infinitely better lacking such support, which has widened the gap between leaders and followers, to the weakening of the whole movement For the rank and file are increasingly resentful that the benefits of government patronage have gone to a few leaders, some of whom draw half a dozen salaries from political and labor organization jobs Not a few C R O M workers have told me that on the backs of the mass of laborers a few have been lifted to affluence If this complaint is wholly unjust to a number of the C R O M leaders, who live simply and use their leadership to help their fellow workers, it does nevertheless reflect a condition patent to the naked eye In no other labor movement on earth is there so wide a disparity between the style of living of those on top and those beneath

In the United States the late Samuel Gompers, one of the most conspicuous leaders in any labor movement since the beginning of the industrial age, and incidentally the idol of the C R O M for his consistent friendliness to Mexico and Mexican labor, lived much as he always had It would never have occurred to him or to the majority of the leaders in the American

Federation of Labor that he or they live beyond the income their salaries afforded

The head of the Mexican labor movement, Luis N Morones, has become a man of wealth He owns many properties including a textile factory — though not in his own name He lives lavishly He sports not less than a half dozen automobiles His *parrandas* staged every week-end in the suburb of Tlalpam are notorious for their orgiastic extravagance In a retreat, intended not for any considerable group of workers but for the inner clique — the Grupo Acción — a great steel-girdered *frontón* court, swimming pool, bowling alleys, tennis-court, and three dwellings with a retinue of servants lift this club to a plane of luxury unequalled except by millionaires' country clubs in the United States Comrade Morones's diamonds have become famous and while neither as large nor as numerous as cartoon and satire present them, were deemed worthy of a defence in the C R O M 's official publication[1] Harmless in themselves, they have become a symbol of contrast with the hundreds of thousands who still wear *huaraches*, and of dissatisfaction within the movement

Yet with all its errors, shortcomings, failures, and internal weaknesses, the labor movement is the most vital, the most dynamic and the most hopeful force in Mexico to-day Its possibilities for good are incalculable Given its antecedents it has, despite occasional extravagances, proved, in a country where all else was chaotic, singularly self-controlled In an ethnic evolution whose tempo has been slow the rapidity of the C R O M 's growth — with all allowance for forced inclusions — has been phenomenal In a race that in a hundred years of independent self-government had never organized anything, it presents an organization, that in numbers — however exaggerated may be the official figures — in ideology, and cohesiveness marks an unprecedented achievement Six years ago it was largely integrated in the personality of one leader, Morones, and the credit for its growth more than to anyone else, belongs to him To-day it would, without its leaders, weather the most unfriendly administration — the last word in survival in Mexico In bringing the workers together to discuss their problems and to take their first exercises in citizenship, the labor movement has served as an educative force of inestimable value It is the first and only bulwark against Mexican militarism since Independence It is still in its swaddling clothes, and has much to learn But given the right leadership — conscientious, disinterested, and intelligent — the Mexican labor movement can in the next decade shape the destiny of Mexico and shape it for a more promising future than that unhappy land has envisaged in five centuries

[1] Under the heading "Los Brillantes de Morones," in Memoria de los Trabajos * * * de la C.R O M * * *, 1924–1926, p 243–4

POLITICS

POLITICS

I

MEXICO, as its history shows, has never enjoyed even a semblance of democracy Self-government could not exist in the colonial period Thrust suddenly into independence Mexicans never acquired the habit of respecting their own constitutions and laws And Porfirio Díaz, by suppressing, as a part of his fixed policy, all political expression, checked whatever normal evolutionary development might have come to his people during thirty-five years of peace The practice, not the desire, was stifled It was under the banner of electoral liberty that the varied discontents could coalesce sufficiently to upset the dictatorship And whatever new national aspirations emerged, the watchword of "effective suffrage and no reelection" continued as a common factor of all successive revolutionary administrations It has remained unchanged as a principle — to be achieved "Effective Suffrage" is as much a hope deferred as at any time in Mexican history Since the fall of Díaz, as with rare exceptions previously, no president has come into office except through an election which ratified a previous victory in the field But it is the state elections — laboratory tests to determine whether the expressed desire for popular rule has met with any corresponding reality — which reveal irrefutably the utter failure to date of any growth of democratic practice

Following is a survey of the political history for the last six years (January 1, 1921–June 1, 1927) of fourteen out of the twenty-eight states of the Mexican Federation, taken alphabetically Only one half the states are fully analyzed as these suffice to reveal Mexican politics, their story including every aspect of local and regional political activity

The data are taken from the archives of the Secretaría de Gobernación, except for certain newspaper quotations, indicated by references, and a few other items based on personal knowledge No extraneous comment appears except in footnotes so that the record of political administration as it appears to Mexicans and is reported by Mexicans may appear undiluted and unmodified Direct quotation is indicated, and all other text is a résumé of the documents

Translation has been kept as literal as possible even at the expense of idiomatic English in order to follow the records as closely as they will allow, and to preserve their spirit If considerable detail has been preserved both

in summary and direct quotation, it is in the belief that the resulting picture furnishes an invaluable documentation of what Mexican politics is and how it touches and affects the lives of the Mexican people

The Secretaría de Gobernación is usually translated as department of the interior But its functions differ wholly from those connoted by the United States department of that name The Secretary of Gobernación is, first, chief of the cabinet He is the ranking minister and, in the president's absence, functions as president, since Mexico has no vice-president

The Secretaría de Gobernación is the link between federal and state governments Complaints against state governments are addressed to Gobernación, or referred to it by the president, if the complaint comes directly to him In case of intra-state conflict, the legal counsel of Gobernación submits a dictum to settle the conflict, unless it falls under the jurisdiction of the national congress, which occurs in the following cases

(1) When two branches of the state government are in conflict, that is, when executive and legislative, executive and judicial, or judicial and legislative powers clash Under these circumstances, the national senate investigates and decides [1]

(2) When by reason of conflict of any sort within the state, the constitutional powers of that state are said to have "disappeared," that is, when anarchy exists This occurs when two rival legislatures function and there is doubt as to which is the legitimate one

Then, likewise, the senate rules whether or not the constitutional powers have "disappeared," and, if so, solves the difficulty usually by appointing a provisional governor from three names submitted by the president This provisional governor in due time holds new elections [2]

(3) Whenever a clash of arms interrupts the constitutional order, the senate decides in accordance with the Federal Constitution and the constitution of the state involved [3]

(4) When a functionary of a state government is charged with official offenses — that is, exceeding his political prerogatives — the senate tries him, but the accusation comes from the chamber of deputies If he is accused of common offenses, the chamber of deputies decides whether there is ground for proceeding against him, and, if so, the trial is handled by the ordinary courts [4]

(5) If the houses of congress are not in session when a conflict arises in a state, the permanent committee of the body within whose jurisdiction it may fall, renders a decision Gobernación, however, is always in direct contact with the state governments It receives reports, petitions, complaints, and memorials from officials, political parties, political candidates, and private citizens Furthermore, it has an organization of confidential

[1] Const of 1917 Art 75, Para. V
[2] *Idem*
[3] *Idem*, 75, VIII
[4] *Idem*, 74, V

agents who report on the activities of the state governments, investigate the records of the functionaries and candidates for office, watch over elections, et cetera These agents function sometimes as official inspectors representing Gobernación, and sometimes appear as newspaper correspondents, their official affiliation being unknown to everybody except the head of the confidential department of Gobernación In nearly all cases, two or more agents report on the same subject or person, thus eliminating bias as much as possible

Due to this system, Gobernación has a complete record of the political histories of the states This has been in constant operation since 1921, that is, since the beginning of President Obregón's administration The records before 1921 are fragmentary and not wholly complete until 1925

The records themselves consist of the correspondence exchanged between Gobernación and the state authorities, of letters, petitions, complaints, memorials, telegrams addressed by candidates, parties, or private citizens, referring to state politics, to the Federal Government, of reports of the military authorities in the state whenever for some special reason these are made, in reference to state politics, of reports of the agents or special investigators sent by Gobernación or the president to investigate any conflict or situation in state politics, and of résumés and dicta made by the legal counsel of Gobernación, from the data in its possession, for the president or one of the houses of the national congress Therefore these records give as nearly authentic a picture of the political histories of the states as can be procured

The electoral machinery of the states while differing in detail is similar Parties or candidates have a *distintivo* or color mark, the form and combination of which is registered at Gobernación and with the state and municipal authorities This color mark must be exclusively that of the candidate or party registering it, others being forbidden its use Voting is done by a cross usually within or at the side of the color mark The ballots generally differ for each candidate or party, the voter asks for a ballot of some candidate or party, and therefore the vote is not secret The ballots are printed by state or municipal authorities, except in extraordinary cases, when each party or candidate has the right to print his or its own ballots The mechanics vary but in no case is the voting secret, in itself an impairment of democratic procedure as it is conceived in theory, and executed in practice, in countries long versed in popular government

The polls are supervised by the authorities, and by representatives of each candidate or party competing Voters must be registered at a given time before elections The candidate elected is given credentials by the municipal authorities in the district wherein the voting was held These credentials are approved or disqualified by the state legislature, and, in the case of members of the national congress, also by the house to which the

member is supposedly elected This procedure varies according to the states But in all cases the state or municipal authorities give the legal documents which candidates must have to prove themselves elected

The usual term of a state governor is four years, of state representatives, two years, of national deputies, two years, and senators, four years All elected senators and deputies are *propietarios*, and have an alternate or *suplente* who runs on the same ticket

Some of the state constitutions admit the reelection of representatives and others do not All forbid the reelection of governors Hence, if a governor wants to continue in power after his term is over, he must resort to illegitimate means The most frequent is the so-called "imposition" The retiring administration chooses a candidate, and more or less openly supports him, placing the state machinery at his disposal Due to the manner of conducting elections, if the state government is strong enough, has not the hostility of the army and has the favor of the Federal Government, an "imposition" can be carried through with relative ease Obstacles to it, besides hostility of the local army commander (the *jefe de operaciones*) or of the Federal Government, may be the opposition of some unusually strong political party, such as the "Laborista," political wing of the C R O M, the "Cooperatista," led by de la Huerta and automatically extinguished with his elimination, of the "Agrarista," a peasant organization not entirely unified, or of politicians seeking to capitalize the agrarian support By means of "impositions," the creation of so-called "dynasties," that is, the continuation of members of the same family in power, has occurred in several states All this is illustrated by the records

A method resorted to by parties or candidates willing to use violence, whether for "imposition" or against it, is the armed organized mob called a *porra*, which attacks and takes polls, stealing the documents and ballots in order to commit fraud or prevent it, or, possessing the polls, conducts the elections so that the result favors its candidate and ticket, which installs other polls whose returns are fraudulently made favorable to its candidate and ticket Sometimes a *porra* attempts merely to guarantee the rights of a candidate running against an "impositionist", at other times the *porra* intimidates the voters into casting ballots its way or not at all, a proceeding facilitated by the non-secret character of the balloting All elections are not accompanied by *porras*, but they appear frequently

Due to the recency of a nationally recognized administration, the military authorities often retain the power in a state which they ruled frankly by right of might during the Revolution, and although forbidden to do so by the National Constitution, the local *jefe de operaciones* and his *estado mayor* or staff, sometimes participate actively in state political issues The principal factors in all the state elections examined are

The Federal Government

The retiring state administration, usually with the state guards and police, the municipal authorities and state treasury at its disposal

The army

The labor element, sometimes organized and sometimes not In this category the only strong political national machine at present is the "Laborista"

The "Agrarista," more or less organized Sometimes parties or mobs calling themselves "Agrarista" organize for the elections only

The Catholic element and the clergy The action of this political element is more or less "underground"

These factors shape into different combinations with different results The strongest factor is always the Federal Government Sometimes the branches of the Federal Government within whose jurisdiction the conflicts in state politics fall, are not agreed as to the nature of the conflict and the solution to be given, and back of these disagreements are often political differences within the administration — rivalries between members of the cabinet, who are maneuvering for more political power The president's decision is usually final The following summaries indicate how these factors work out

(1) Aguascalientes An attempted "imposition" by the state government with the aid of the local bishop is averted through recognition of the opposition party by the president, although the electoral results gave the victory to the retiring state administration's candidate

(2) Campeche The invasion of one state by the controlling political party of the adjoining state, Yucatán, with the sympathy of the Federal Government, and victory of the invaders, running against the retiring governor's "imposition" candidate

(3) Chiapas Attempted "imposition" by the retiring governor with the army in sympathy with the opposition Triumph of the opposition

(4) Chihuahua Peaceful transfer of office by retiring governor to his candidate, in other words an unopposed "imposition" This successor is subsequently deposed by a *camarazo* (a blow from a *camara* or chamber), that is, a removal of the governor by a majority of the local chamber of deputies In this case there were also some elements of a *cuartelazo* (a blow by or from a *cuartel* or barracks) by the local federal military

(5) Coahuila Candidate supported by the governor running against several All candidates members of the army Victory of one not supported by the governor, hostility of the state legislature shortly afterward causing a conflict in which a new legislature is created by the dissenters, the minority, recognition of the minority and their provisional governor, due to insistence of the national senate Instance of federal executive yielding to senate

(6) Colima Attempted "imposition" encountering hostility of Federal Government Recognition of opposition party, though illegitimate

(7) Durango Passing of the government from the hands of one man into those of another and back into the hands of the first, due to previous agreement

(8) Guanajuato Legitimate election of more popular and stronger candidate

(9) Guerrero The candidate of the governor triumphs A clear case of "imposition"

(10) Hidalgo A corrupt "dynasty" broken up by influence of the "Agraristas" and "Laboristas" and sympathy of Federal Government, in an election in which the honest and popular candidate won

(11) Jalisco Overthrow of state authorities by local political maneuvers and recognition of the overthrowers by the Federal Government Second, unsuccessful "imposition" attempted by the party so recognized Third, return of this party to power by ousting through a *camarazo*, aided by the local military, of the candidate previously elected and recognized by the Federal Government

(12) Mexico Candidate of the state authorities, supported by the Federal Government and the "Laborista" party declared elected in spite of evidence to the contrary — a federal and state "imposition"

(13) Michoacán A successful "imposition" The last word in how to conduct an electoral fraud

(14) Morelos An economically prostrate state owing to revolutionary havoc from 1910 to 1920 in which the establishing of local constitutional government has apparently proved impossible In consequence no "elected" state officials except for a brief period, and a series of federally appointed governors



AGUASCALIENTES

The governor of Aguascalientes on January 1, 1921, was Rafael Arellano Valle[1] He served his term out In August, 1924, elections fell due for members of the state legislature and for governor The candidates were

Victoriano Medina, said to be the candidate of the retiring governor, Rafael Arellano Valle

Adolfo Torres, the candidate of the Conservatives Having been provisional governor during a furlough of the retiring governor, he was, according to the state constitution, ineligible Nevertheless, he ran

José María Elizalde, candidate of the "Agraristas" and of various labor organizations[2]

These elections were described in a memorial submitted by the national senate to the sub-secretary of Gobernación, on December 16, 1924

> The federal executive has been fully informed that * * * the government of Sr Arellano Valle was indeed transformed into a real political party whose object was to obtain the "imposition" of a successor who would follow the instructions of said governor and of Bishop Valdespino y Díaz who with his moral influence efficiently helped the official party, made up of all the state authorities This electoral preparation, made carefully and in all detail, its purpose being * * * to flout the people's suffrage,[3] gave that result * * * The legal formalities * * * were filled to superfluity, and it was natural that this would be so, because from the governor to the least judicial or administrative authority all gave careful attention to filling the requirements * * *[4]

The party supporting Adolfo Torres, the Conservatives, went over to Medina, as Medina himself wrote on December 16, after the elections "I obtained 4500 votes and my chief opponent, nominated by the Conservative Party, obtained 1744 He was Adolfo Torres, betrayed by said party ten days before the election, for it was afraid of failure, and its members joined my candidacy * * *"[5]

[1] Relaciones Interiores Exp 13 2 55 01

[2] *Idem* Exp E 2 74 3

[3] The votes are counted by the state and municipal authorities, which makes it easy for a biased state or municipal verdict to be given

[4] Relaciones Interiores Exp F 2 33 1

[5] *Idem*, Exp E 2 74 3 (In other words, its supporters switched in order to be with a probable winner)

Throughout the elections, both sides complained, the "Elizaldistas" of illegality and the interference of armed men authorized by the governor, while the "Medinistas," that is, the governor's party, of groups of armed "Agraristas" coming in from the adjoining state, Zacatecas Federal troops clashed with the "Elizaldistas" several times The "Elizaldistas," claiming that the whole election had been manufactured, refused to recognize the acts of a legislature which they said was engaging in illegal acts and would declare the election won by whatever party it chose, and therefore they, led by Benjamín Azpeitia, set up a rival legislature in a private house This legislature was made up of the candidates who had run for deputies to the state legislature in that same election [1]

This situation the national senate considered beyond its power to remedy, and gave the president power to handle on August 24, immediately after both legislatures had begun to function One was the body of deputies retiring, and controlled by the retiring governor, Rafael Arellano Valle The other was the "Elizaldista" or "Independent" legislature The senate declared "Since the branches of the state government have not disappeared [2] and the elections for the legislative and executive powers have been consummated in that state, the National Executive can initiate relations with the local powers * * *" [3]

The president did nothing at the time,[4] and the two legislatures continued to function The police kept on fighting with the armed "Agraristas," and these in turn complained of violence to their persons and asked the Federal Government for protection On September 16, 1924, the retiring legislature declared Victoriano Medina elected, and inaugurated him as governor of the state, turning over the state house to the deputies who had run on the Medina ticket At the same time, the "Independent" legislature declared José María Elizalde governor of the state [5] Medina was recognized by most of the municipal presidents of the state, and Elizalde was recognized by various labor organizations, among them the "Agrupación Partido Ferrocarrilero Talleres," affiliated with the " Partido Nacional Ferrocarrilero," and by the "Federación de Sindicatos Locales," the "Partido Laborista Mexicano," and the "Federación de Obreros y Comunidades Agrarias" The "Elizaldistas" were charged with having attacked and robbed the city stock-yards and market [6] On December 16, in its memorial to the subsecretary of Gobernación, the national senate expressed the following views on the double legislatures

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 74 3

[2] The state and national constitution provide for interference of the Federal Government when a state of anarchy exists, or when there is an armed conflict, or when there is a conflict between two branches of the state government

[3] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 74 3

[4] Presumably because he (Álvaro Obregón) was leaving office on November 30, and preferred to leave the matter to his successor, Calles

[5] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 51 125

[6] *Idem*, Exp E 2 74 3

This body, basing its opinion on its full information, is firmly convinced that the legislative and executive powers that installed themselves in the official locale of the Congress * * * were not created by the will of the people, that the voters were not given sufficient guarantees for the free exercise of their right of suffrage, and far less did they have the security that their votes were duly respected and legally counted, and because of all this * * * considers * * * that it should not recognize said powers as constitutional * * *

It * * * says as much in respect to the political group formed by thirteen supposed deputies [the Elizaldista deputies] who installed themselves, first in the house * * * on Allende Street * * * which also claims that it is the XXXth Constitutional Legislature of that federal entity * * *

Finally, this body considers that the decree declaring José María Elizalde governor * * * is not legitimate * * * that it should not be recognized as constitutional * * * that the legislative and executive powers do not exist in Aguascalientes * * * and that it is a case in which the senate should name a provisional governor who will call new elections * * * [1]

On December 24, 1924, four months after the elections, José María Elizalde was recognized as the legal governor by President Calles [2]

On August 18, 1925, the two senators from Aguascalientes, M Ugarte and R Quevedo, and one national deputy, Isaac Díaz de León, complained to the Secretaría de Gobernación as follows

In view of the anomalous situation in that state * * * created by the governor, José María Elizalde * * * the warders of the peace far from doing their duty * * * molest the peaceful citizens, not respecting even the deputies * * * representatives of the people * * * the majority of whom are hostile to Governor Elizalde * * * [The undersigned] fearing other crimes like that whose victim was Senator Vidal Roldán y Avila * * * committed by * * * individuals of the political party * * * of Governor Elizalde * * * and since the representatives of the state legislature have not sufficient guarantees * * * being threatened in anonymous messages if they do not abandon their attitude of opposition * * *

asked that federal troops be ordered to protect the deputies Soldiers were sent to the legislature, but this body protested, saying that it had not requested them, therefore they were removed [3]

The crime of which the petition speaks is reported by an Aguascalientes deputy as follows

* * * One of several * * * horrible crimes committed by the special police of * * * José María Elizalde * * * On the 14th of February, 1925 * * * upon reaching his house * * * Senator Vidal Roldán y Avila * * * was stabbed in the stomach, by an individual afterward identified as a member of the special police of Elizalde The Senator * * * died * * * on the morning after * * * nobody was arrested [4]

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp F 2 33 1 (In other words there had been sufficient illegality on both sides to warrant calling the election null and disqualifying both sets of contenders)
[2] *Idem*, Exp E 2 74 5
[3] Relaciones Interiores, Exp F 2 33 1
[4] Universal, Oct 29, 1925

On October 21, Governor Elizalde threw the entire supreme court of the state into jail He defended his action on technicalities relating to the appointing of two members of this court The Secretary of Gobernación, Tejeda, went to Aguascalientes and himself freed the court At the same time, Elizalde fled taking with him sixty thousand pesos from the state treasury, and the government books The state and municipal treasurers both went with him, taking all the documents in their departments [1]

Benjamin Azpeitia was appointed provisional governor on October 24, by the state legislature On January 1, 1926, he was replaced by Francisco Reyes Barrientos [2] In October, 1926, while Reyes Barrientos was temporarily absent from the capital of the state, the provisional governor, also temporary, Isaac Díaz de León, intrigued in the legislature and when Reyes Barrientos came back, Díaz de León refused to resign the governorship, as is customary Reyes Barrientos, after two months, during which he was "on furlough," definitely gave up the governorship and on December 1, 1926, the legislature repealed the appointment of Reyes Barrientos as provisional governor and appointed Díaz de León definitely in his place On June 1, 1927, Díaz de León was governor of Aguascalientes [3]

The records of all these men, before and after they were members of the "Elizaldista" or "Independent" legislature recognized by Calles in 1924, are to be found in the report of an agent of Gobernación It reads as follows

First District Deputy Benjamin Azpeitia When Elizalde fell as state governor, Azpeitia was appointed in his place, from October 24, 1925, to January 1, 1926, on which date he was expelled, for having refused to recognize the acts of the legislature and for having disposed of $1,000 00 pesos which a *hacendado* had donated to the state treasury because Azpeitia had revoked a decision on the distribution of an *ejido* in Jilotepec * * * and made it * * * contrary to the people of that pueblo and in favor of the *hacendado* * * *

Second District Deputy Tomás Regalado, * * * privilege of representation taken from him since * * * the time of * * * Governor Elizalde for wounds inflicted on Deputy Romualdo Garcia * * * His substitute, Juan López, has also been * * * expelled * * * for refusing to recognize the legislature * * * and installing himself in a place which was not the official residence of the chamber [4]

Third District Deputy José Quezada This deputy, besides having the vice of drink, uses drugs immoderately and has been * * * expelled * * * for drug commerce and for destroying others' property His substitute * * * Juan Márquez * * * is a good element [worthy person]

Fourth District Deputy Alberto Díaz de León seeks personal benefit out of his position, although at present he works honorably for the government His substitute, Arturo Buck, is a man excessively full of vices

[1] Universal, Oct 27, 1925 Excelsior, Oct 29, 1925
[2] Relaciones Interiores, Exp I 2 33 1 [3] *Idem*
[4] An attempt to rebel and set up another "Independent" legislature was made by several deputies in December, 1925 led by Benjamin Azpeitia, who had led the "Independent" legislature which was afterward recognized

Fifth District Deputy J del Refugio Camacho This individual is the most unmoral [1] of all the members of the legislature * * * He has several bawdy houses * * * owns a saloon where liquor is sold at all hours [2] of the day and night and had, managed by an intermediary, a gambling-house which was closed [3]

Sixth District Deputy Delfino Nájera Has been expelled for threatening * * * arms in hand * * * the supreme court * * * and for usurpation of legislative rights * * * The substitute was expelled for the same offense * * * for which reason the * * * representation of * * * the district is now vacant

Seventh District Deputy J Dávila Guerrero This gentleman has been one of the least to be depended on * * * in the state legislature and has * * * taken advantage of * * * any incident to awaken the desires * * * of the representatives * * * and divide the congress * * * as has been occurring * * * His substitute is his brother-in-law, of whom nothing is known

Eighth District Deputy Joaquín de Lara Is considered a good member, as is also his substitute, Salvador Ruíz

Ninth District Deputy Alberto Hermosillo Is considered an average member, with a magnificent substitute, Benjamín Martínez

Tenth District Deputy Manuel P Macías This person was * * * expelled * * * for wounds inflicted while in a state of intoxication, on a poor man Also he * * * made money * * * out of some maize which was loaned to the peasants of the state, and disposed of some burros * * * which he said he would give to the peasants, but never did, for he sold the burros and kept the money His substitute is Gilberto C Marin, of the same record as Refugio Camacho, of the fifth district

Eleventh District Deputy Sotero Macías, * * * expelled as an accomplice of Najera and Emeterio Chávez in the offenses against the supreme court During his terms of office * * * distinguished himself by his unruliness and his intemperance * * * Substitute José Rendón is a man of bad behaviour, a drunkard

Twelfth District Deputy Adalberto Villalpando * * * given to drink * * * frequently * * * The record of his substitute, J Merced Muñoz, is not known

Thirteenth District Deputy Gabriel R Carmona Is considered fairly good, and his substitute, Francisco López, better

Fourteenth District Deputy Romualdo García Was expelled * * * for taking * * * in violation of the state constitution * * * two salaries * * * and for his conduct * * * was considered one of the worst * * * in the congress * * * and to be blamed * * * for the divisions His substitute, Exiquio Ramírez, of little intellectual capacity, is, nevertheless, much better

Fifteenth District Deputy Raymundo de Luna, given to drink * * * Was wounded in the month of January by his substitute Benigno Chávez * * * of terrible record * * * who in turn was killed * * * by the federal troops * * * in the station of Las Animas when a coup d'état was attempted * * * on the third of January * * * by de la Huertistas * * * [4]

[1] *Amoral*
[2] Liquor can be sold until certain hours of the night, and not on Sundays or holidays
[3] Presumably closed by the state authorities The record does not make this clear
[4] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 51 125 This report was made on July 5, 1926

CAMPECHE

When elections for governor and state legislature of Campeche fell due, at the end of 1920, apparently the retiring governor, Sales Guerrero, who had been appointed provisional governor by the national senate, was planning to "impose" a candidate for governor and ticket of deputies for the state legislature and thus continue as the state "power behind the throne" [1]

His plans were interfered with by a political invasion of Yucatecans, from the adjoining state, who organized 'Ligas de Resistencia," [2] split the biggest political party, the "Pro-Campeche," in two, and began whooping up the candidacies supported by this newly created party, the "Socialista Agrario" The leading spirit back of this invasion was Felipe Carrillo Puerto, then governor of the neighboring State of Yucatán General Calles, at that time at the head of Gobernación, was in sympathy with Carrillo Puerto

This "Socialista Agrario" organized too late for the legal requirements of candidates' registration, but a special order came from President Obregón to postpone the elections from November to the third Sunday in December, at the same time that the state authorities were ordered by Gobernación to give full recognition and all guarantees [3] to the candidates of the "Socialista Agrario" The retiring governor, Sales Guerrero, protested, on the ground that the president had no right to interfere with the state's affairs especially as the situation gave no legal warrant to do so, and resigned, but his resignation was refused by the national senate, which had appointed him Therefore he submitted, and remained in office, decreeing the elections postponed according to Obregón's wishes [4]

The electoral machinery was much encumbered by conflict between the civil authorities and the "Socialista Agrario," firmly supported by federal

[1] Relaciones Interiores Exp 2 73 24 I and II

[2] Peasants' and workers' organizations with some of the features of political club agrarian cooperative trade-union, and social club which originated in Yucatán led by Carrillo Puerto

[3] 'To give guarantees' (*dar garantías*) is an important phrase in the Mexican historico-political lexicon When authorities "give guarantees' they offer protection from all sorts of political, military, quasi-legal, or illegal abuses, and insure the beneficiary the enjoyment of his civil, social, and economic rights Letters of safe conduct from high officials usually request the military and civil functionaries to furnish "all classes of guarantees" In the case in point the central government's order that the state authorities give all guarantees to a political group to which they were hostile was equivalent to estopping them from interfering with that group's campaigning or otherwise molesting its adherents and candidates

[4] Relaciones Interiores, Exp 2 73 24 I and II

troops under General Alejandro Mange, who was following Secretary Calles's telegraphic orders to this effect [1]

The day upon which the deputies' credentials were to be examined and approved, fifteen hundred armed Yucatecans swarmed into the capital of Campeche, and stationed themselves in front of the state-house, filling the streets in the vicinity General Mange wired Calles acquainting him with this fact, to which Calles replied acknowledging receipt, but without other comment, thereby tacitly approving The retiring governor also wired Calles, protesting against the invasion and saying that the federal troops refused to take any action against the invading Yucatecans

Credentials were approved by the retiring state legislature for six candidates of the "Socialista Agrario," and nine others not members or candidates of this party While the work of the legislature was going on, the Yucatecan mob moved close to the state-house and into it, and, Governor Sales Guerrero reported, interrupted the legislature's proceedings to demand that several of the leaders of this mob be recognized as deputies, although they had no documents of any sort to justify their claim Upon being refused they, with the six whose credentials had been approved, set up a legislature of their own in a private house This legislature was given full guarantees and all protection by the federal troops, in obedience to orders from Gobernación

This legislature, refusing to recognize the acts of the retiring assembly, appointed, as provisional governor, Dr Eduardo Arceo y Z

Shortly after, the head of staff of Gobernación came to Campeche, and together with General Mange declared the "Socialista Agrario" legislature legal and established it in the state-house, the declaration having been made by General Mange from the platform in the chamber of deputies of the state The conflict had lasted from November to the end of January, 1921 [2]

Dr Arceo y Z called new elections, and the successful candidate was Enrique Gómez B , who for some reason [3] turned the post over to Ramón S Flores in the year 1922 Flores had been the president of the "Socialista Agrario" when it was first organized and it is therefore quite evident that the same party continued in control

When elections were held for governor on June 3, 1923, which marked the end of the term during which Sales Guerrero had been provisional governor, the same party continued to control, electing for the four year term, Angel Castillo Lanz, who on June 1, 1927, still held that position,[4] with every prospect of completing his full term

[1] Relaciones Interiores Exp 2 73 14, I and II
[2] Relaciones Interiores, Exp 2 73 14, I and II, *Idem*, Exp 2 73 24, I and II
[3] The records for the year 1922 are missing from the Gobernación archives
[4] Relaciones Interiores, Exp 2 73 14, II

CHIAPAS

At the end of 1920, General Tiburcio Fernández Ruíz, provisional governor and also military commander of the State of Chiapas, informed the Federal Government that since 1914 Chiapas had lacked the legislative branch of government, having functioned with executive and judicial branches only The executive himself had marched into the state and taken it He had been recognized as provisional governor by Adolfo de la Huerta, when de la Huerta was provisional president The Federal Government, in answer to Ruíz's communication, authorized him to call for elections to the state legislature, and that legislature was duly installed, Ruíz remaining as governor [1]

Ruíz was accused of appropriating a part of a fifteen thousand pesos monthly subsidy granted by Obregón for the upkeep of the Pan-American Railroad, Chiapas's only means of shipping its products to its coast The charge, in the records is not fully substantiated nor is it denied

Ruíz having served out his term, at the end of 1924, elections for both governor and members of the state legislature fell due Three months before the date set for elections — September 7, 1924 — Ruíz asked for a furlough and obtained it, and left the government in the hands of his nephew, Félix García, to devote himself to campaigning for the following ticket

President of the republic, General Plutarco Elías Calles, governor of Chiapas, Lic [2] Luis Ramírez Corzo, senator from Chiapas, General T Fernández Ruíz

For the state legislature, several Corzos were on the Ruíz ticket Opposing Ramírez Corzo as candidates to the governorship were General Carlos Vidal and General Fausto Ruíz [3]

An agent of Gobernación reports that the government of General T Fernández Ruíz, the retiring governor, openly used its power to further the Ramírez Corzo candidacy, and that when it was unable to do so peacefully it used force, going to extreme measures But the "Vidalistas," he says, also went to extremes The chief struggle consisted in getting the municipal governments to take one side or another, and when such a government

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp B 2 51 24
[2] Lic, abbreviation for *licenciado*, attorney
[3] Not a relative of Fernández Ruíz, the governor

refused to do so it was deposed and a more sympathetic personnel put in The governor, says the agent, did this in many cases, but the Vidalistas did it also, and one case wherein the Vidalistas were active he cites as notorious The Vidalistas, led by a Captain Vizcaino, fell upon a municipality in the district of Tuxtla Chico, which was well known to be in sympathy with Ramírez Corzo The soldiers captured the entire municipal government and four delegates of the electoral college [1] sent out by the governor The entire party was accused of rebellion and two of them were shot by the military authorities When the case was more closely investigated the military authorities decided that the prisoners had not been rebels, but had been misrepresented by Vizcaino, and set the survivors free [2]

Early in the struggle General Fausto Ruíz dropped out, leaving the governorship race to the Vidal and Ramírez Corzo constituents While Ramírez Corzo counted upon the support of the state government, Vidal had on his side the "Laborista" party, the political organization of the C R O M , as appears in letters written by Juan Rico, a prominent member of the C R O M , to the federal authorities, complaining of injustice to Vidal, during and after the elections, by the state authorities Besides the "Laboristas," Vidal had the federal troops behind him, as is made clear in the following report of one of the agents of Gobernación

I interviewed General Avila Camacho upon my arrival, and in friendly conversation he confided that he had received letters from General Francisco Manzo and General Arnulfo Gómez, recommending the Vidal candidacy to him from this I assume that the same [3] is true for General Pineda [4] and that is why they [the federal troops] support * * * Vidal * * * The chief of the federal troops and the governor [5] * * * are openly at outs * * * as can be noticed easily in the governor's attitude, revealed in conversation, toward that general, for he speaks of him with a good deal of annoyance * * * [6]

The report of the legal counsel of Gobernación definitely establishes that Ramírez Corzo was the governor's candidate for the governorship It says

Lic Ramírez Corzo was supported by the governor of the state and by all the official element, and under these circumstances the electoral machinery functioned, with previous removal of the municipal governments not in sympathy with the state régime, and also of all functionaries and employees not absolutely to be counted on Armed detachments of state troops were sent to all the municipalities, to use pressure on the voters in favor of the governor's candidate Systematic opposition was practised toward Vidal and the candidates for the legislature * * * on his ticket * * * for the municipal governments refused to register their candidacies, stamp their ballots or allow their representatives to be part of the electoral

[1] The body that counts the votes
[2] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 75 5
[3] Endorsement of Vidal
[4] Head of the federal troops in the state
[5] Félix García, the nephew of Fernandez Ruíz, nominally the governor
[6] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 75 5

colleges * * * It is indeed true that the electoral law leaves in the hands of municipal authorities the appointment of the census takers, who may make up lists of their sympathizers only, the appointment of the instalment officials, who may place in the polls adherents only, the choosing of the locale for the electoral college, which entrusts said colleges to hands of possible bias, and therefore makes it easy for them to give credentials to their friends and none to their enemies * * *[1]

The agent of Gobernación in his report says "* * * General Vidal and Lic Ramírez Corzo both have constituents in the state, but I am inclined to believe that Vidal has more * * *"[2]

In the first days of November, one month after the elections, General Fernández Ruíz, though he said he had been elected a senator, re-assumed the governorship, which had been in the hands of his nephew, Félix García Under Ruíz's direction the counting went on that recognized all the Corzo sympathizers as elected, and left the "Vidalistas" out, entirely on the ground of technicalities, all of which had been observed by Corzo, who had had the official machinery at his disposal, and most of which had been disregarded by Vidal Out of sixty-two districts, the retiring legislature declared fifty-eight null and void Since wherever the "Vidalistas" were strong enough they set up the polls, and at those polls Vidal won, and the same occurred with the Ramírez Corzo men, both parties had sets of votes and credentials The Vidal men, however, did not send theirs to the state legislature to be counted, as the Chiapas electoral law provides, because they said that they were certain that these would be destroyed or at least disregarded

The Ramírez Corzo legislature installed itself in the state-house, and the Vidal legislature, with the aid of federal troops, on November 6, 1924, forced its way into the state-house also, and both functioned, in almost adjacent rooms Incidental to the latter seizure, there was shooting, the state police defending, the "Laboristas" and the federal troops attacking, although it is reported that the police fired first

Both legislatures appealed to Gobernación for recognition and protection General Rodrigo Zuriaga, evidently a Gobernación agent, or at least impartial, writes of the situation as follows

"I am absolutely unable to state which of the two actually won Each group declares itself victorious, and I can only say that public sentiment, such as is expressed, seems to be only in favor of a change of administration"[3]

The legal counsel of Gobernación reported to the president that the elections, in the primaries, and throughout to the counting, were on both sides illegal and fraudulent and in open violation of the state constitution and of the electoral laws, and that therefore both candidacies must be considered as null and void

[1] Relaciones Interiores Exp E 2 75 5
[2] That is, against the Ruíz-Ramírez Corzo combine
[3] *Idem*, Exp E 2 75 5 Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 75 5

Since two legislatures were functioning, the "case of Chiapas" was solved by Gobernación's declaring a state of anarchy to exist, under which circumstances the national senate intervenes Accordingly, the president submitted three names to the senate, from which that body chose Lic César Cordova as provisional governor of Chiapas, on January 1, 1925 Cordova carefully fulfilled the legal requirements for new elections, which were held, quietly, and the legislature then elected decided on May 11, 1925, that General Carlos Vidal was the state executive On June 1, 1927, General Vidal was still governor of Chiapas [1]

[1] Source for the foregoing data Archivo de Gobernación, Relaciones Interiores, Exp B 2 51 24, *Idem*, Exp D 2 74 15, *Idem*, Exp E 2 75 5



CHIHUAHUA

On January 1, 1921, the governor of Chihuahua was General Ignacio Enríquez [1]

On July 7, 1924, gubernatorial elections were held, at which time a substitute governor, appointed by Governor Enríquez, was functioning since he was on furlough [2]

The governor elected was Colonel Jesús Almeida The reason for this apparently peaceful transfer of office is made clear in the following report of a Gobernación agent

Colonel Jesús Antonio Almeida * * * took part in politics for the first time this year [3] * * * He launched his candidacy for the governorship of Chihuahua for the period 1924–1928, receiving the marked support of the * * * governor, General Ignacio Enríquez * * * with whom he had maintained friendly relations for a long time * * * He mixed in politics * * * following suggestions of General Enríquez and other friends who offered him their moral and political support, on the side of the capitalists of Chihuahua * * * He did not take any part in the Revolution of 1910 * * * later * * * helped Comandurán spread Orozquista [4] propaganda * * * because he was courting Comandurán's daughter * * * but did not take up arms in this cause * * * and did not marry Señorita Comandurán because her honor was violated by Francisco Villa * * * In 1916 he organized a body called the "Municipal Guards of Chihuahua" to pursue the parties of Villistas on the outskirts of the city * * * was given the rank of colonel and fought under the orders of General Ignacio Enríquez * * * At the head of the social defense troops * * * reorganized under General Enríquez * * * he rendered the state very good services * * * His opponents in the electoral race were Federico Moye and José Dolores Miramontes, whom he defeated thanks to the governor's aid * * * since one or the other of his opponents won in the cities, and Almeida was elected by votes from the sierras * * * [5] He is of average intelligence and little culture * * * They complain that he has raised taxes enormously, so that many business houses will be forced to close their doors * * * while he himself does not pay taxes on his lumbering enterprise * * * at present managed by four of his brothers * * * a charge based on his not paying taxes during the Enríquez adminis-

[1] Relaciones Interiores Exp B 2 55 6
[2] Relaciones Interiores Exp D 2 73 63
[3] The report was made in 1924 shortly after the elections
[4] Pascual Orozco who revolted against Madero
[5] It is generally conceded that the votes from the sierras and far districts come from voters following the instructions of their municipal president who is almost certain to be a governor's man, for the governor usually can depose unfriendly local authorities

tration * * * having been forced to pay $16,000 00 pesos of unpaid taxes during the term of the substitute governor [1] which he * * * Almeida * * * paid with very bad grace * * * He is accused of reactionary tendencies and has been seen to keep company with and be friendly to * * * the Terrazas and the Creels * * * [2] He has several relatives in government positions and not content with that is at present planning to impose one of his brothers as municipal president of Ciudad Juárez [3]

Almeida was inaugurated October 4, 1924 Some two and a half years later, April 15, 1927, the Chihuahua legislature deposed Governor Almeida, giving as a justification his "rebellious attitude," implicating him in the minor rebellions in different parts of the country related to the enforcement of the anticlerical laws

That the central Government considered this a mere pretext is evidenced by President Calles's prompt reply (April 15) to the Chihuahua legislators asserting his incredulity of the alleged rebelliousness of the governor and his belief that the issue was entirely a political conflict between the state's executive and legislative branches The president appealed to the patriotism of the legislators to avoid the disturbance of public tranquillity which their action implied, adding,

it is extremely distressing that at the very moment when the federal executive is using all his energies to overcome the varied difficulties which confront the nation and is struggling for its reconstruction and development he cannot count on the cooperation of the state authorities [4]

The legislature, however, paid no attention to the president's plea and announced that a substitute governor, Manuel Mascareñas, Jr , had already been sworn into office

The motives for this *camarazo* [5] were set forth by one of the two senators from Chihuahua, Luis E Estrada, the president of the national senate's permanent commission, as follows

Three of the deputies to the Chihuahua state congress, Señores Jorge M Cárdenas, Belisario Chávez, and Tomás M Fierro, have for some time been intriguing against Governor Almeida in order to unseat him The real reason for this is that the governor was not willing to give them money * * * These deputies have been supported in their work of obstruction by the military attached to the *jefatura de operaciones* who have taken charge of the campaign of General Marcelo Caraveo [6] for the state governorship * * *

In their zeal to make pressure against the citizens not addicted to the candidacy of General Caraveo, these elements have gone to the extremes of violence * * *

[1] Who held office during Enriquez' furlough
[2] The landowning and, under Díaz, ruling dynasty of Chihuahua
[3] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7 311 1 (1 4) Reports of agents No 13 and No 15
[4] Excelsior, April 16, 1927
[5] *Le* , a blow from a *camara* or chamber, that is, by the chamber of deputies
[6] The *jefe de operaciones* in the state

They have imprisoned nine of the Caraveo non-sympathizers, confining them in the Chihuahua barracks not only without a hearing within seventy-two hours as is required by law, but lacking right or authority to make these incarcerations

Their pretexts are various and curious They accuse those opposed to Señor Caraveo's candidacy of insults to the army and the president of the republic [1] More recently these same military elements have been disarming certain Chihuahua municipal employees Another method of eliminating their political adversaries consists of threatening them and forcing them in consequence to leave the state [2]

A state deputy, Ramiro Arzate, confirmed this charge specifying that he had been told that unless he joined the Caraveo adherents he would be obliged to leave the state He left [3]

That this political overturn was not merely a *camarazo* but had in it some of the ingredients of a *cuartelazo* [4] was indicated by a telegraphic order the following day by President Calles to General Caraveo, that he give "ample guarantees" to Governor Almeida This measure was probably needed since on the fifteenth of the month, according to Señora Hermenia de Nesbitt, the governor's mother-in-law, his house had been attacked and while he "escaped by a miracle" the policeman on guard at his door had been killed [5] The deposed governor, however, evidently had little faith in such protection as might be furnished, even under presidential orders, by his political opponents, for he turned up two days later across the border in El Paso

Meanwhile the Federal Government refused to recognize the governorship of Señor Mascareñas, which was unconstitutional as he had been collector of customs at Ciudad Juárez, the holding of federal and state offices at one time being illegal [6] Another substitute governor therefore took his place Gossip around the halls of the national congress linked the unseating of the governor with the coming presidential campaign, considering it a blow at *Obregonismo*, and in favor of *anti-reeleccionismo* since Almeida was supposedly a supporter of Obregón When speaking, not for direct quotation, no one politically wise would deny that the lust of power and the financial returns that political office may bring were at the bottom of the Almeida unseating Neutrals — those who were neither his avowed partisans nor enemies — asserted his régime to be notoriously corrupt, but raised the question whether those who had displaced him would be any better General Caraveo, however, these same neutrals generally asserted, enjoyed the unusual reputation of a chief of operations who had remained poor

On June 1, 1927, the political situation in the State of Chihuahua was still unsettled with the Ministry of Gobernación investigating

[1] Art 659 of the Penal Code provides that calumny or insult to the army, the judiciary corps, congress, be deemed a penal offense, punishable with not less than two months' arrest This does not apply to insult or calumny to individual members of these bodies

[2] Excelsior, April 16, 1927

[3] *Idem*

[4] *I e*, a blow from a *cuartel* or barracks, a military revolt

[5] Excelsior, April 18, 1927

[6] Const of Chihuahua, Art 84, Para VI

COAHUILA

On January 1, 1921, General Luis Gutiérrez was provisional governor of Coahuila On August 28, 1922, elections to the governorship fell due The candidates were

General Dávila Sánchez, strongly supported by the state authorities, General A J Mijares, General Francisco Coss, and General Arnulfo González, the parties being known as "Sanchista," "Mijarista," "Cossista," and "Gonzalista" General José Hurtado, head of the federal troops in the state, was openly friendly to González The "Laborista" and "Agrarista" parties were hostile to him

The "Sanchistas" were charged with using the state police and guards, and all the rest of the official machinery, to elect their candidate, while González was charged with receiving help from government troops

At all events, and without open clash, González was declared elected and given possession of the state-house by the retiring governor, General Luis Gutiérrez, on December 1, 1922 The legislature, however, was divided Seven deputies were hostile to the new governor and six friendly Two deputies were not functioning, one being at the time the appointed municipal president of a town in the state in whose local government the state legislature had intervened [1] The seven deputies hostile to the governor did their best to keep the other two out, in order to retain certain control over both the legislature and the executive committee [2] of that body, formed entirely of the members of their group

Calderón, the deputy who had been occupying the position of municipal president, was recalled by the legislature, but on technical excuses, put forward by the executive committee and sustained by the seven of the majority, was not permitted to resume his duties immediately when he appeared, on December 15, 1922, whereupon the minority protested and such an uproar arose that the session was closed and the seven members who controlled the house left immediately, going to ask the governor that the garrison keep the place in order They were told to put the petition in writing Returning to the chamber they found a cordon of troops about it, and were told that this was an order from the governor, whereupon the seven deputies said that this was a coup d'état planned because they had

[1] In certain cases this is legitimate and provided for

[2] *Mesa Directiva*

been about to investigate the treasury, from which large sums were missing They therefore set up the legislature in a private house, and wired Gobernación for guarantees, that is, protection

The six deputies in the state-house summoned the substitutes (*suplentes*) of the seven "Independents" as they now called themselves, and the seven in their turn called the substitutes of the six, one of whom presented himself and thus raised the number of "Independents" to eight, including the old executive committee, while several of their substitutes went to take the dissenters' places in the legislature friendly to the governor, now functioning in the official locale

Gobernación promptly made the issue one of discipline, and accused Governor Arnulfo González of infringement upon the deputies' rights by not permitting them, under threats of violence, to enter the chamber, this resolution was submitted to the national chamber of deputies, which, however, ruled that González was not guilty

The "Independents" appealed to the national senate, where they were sure of support, since Senators Eulalio Gutiérrez and Vito Alessio Robles had been attacking Governor González and charging him with permitting and secretly encouraging gambling-houses along the border, a charge reaffirmed against González later, in 1925, by a former friend of his who wrote the president

"Gambling is being permitted in Cuatro Ciénegas, where the houses operate openly, in the plaza, disguised only by the name of 'fair' as they did last month in Ramos Arizpe * * * "

The national senate attempted to take the "case of Coahuila" in hand, but was not permitted to do so by President Obregón, who said that it was not a conflict between branches of the Government, but within the legislature, and that therefore the senate had not the right to interfere [1] Obregón upheld Governor González Meantime, both legislatures continued to function, one in the state-house, the other in a private house This lasted, with short breaks, for eleven months

On February 11, 1923, two months after the original split, the "Independents," that is, those who had established the legislature in a private house, are reported on by a Gobernación investigator as follows

In view of their failure * * * to make the case of Coahuila appear a conflict between branches of the government, with the aggravating circumstance of armed struggle, they prepared an armed movement that would force the senate to take action * * * Together with a small group of sympathizers, they attacked and took a strong building, the "Miguel López" school, and there intrenched them-

[1] The national senate intervenes in the political affairs of a state when there is an open conflict between two branches of the state government, when there is a state of anarchy, that is, if there is no government or the legitimate government cannot be proved so, in case of two or more legislatures being established, and also when political conflicts give rise to armed struggle

selves, holding it against three secret service men and state troops, until the following day, when the federal troops attacked them They yielded when the head of the federal troops showed them a telegram from President Obregón ordering them to disarm During the skirmishing, one man was killed and several were wounded The deputies and their friends were promptly jailed

On February 24, 1923, President Obregón declared them rebels and offered to pardon them, at which they protested, declaring that they were not rebels but the majority and executive committee of the state legislature Shortly afterward they were set free, and reinstalled their legislature in a private house, naming Professor Candor Guajardo governor Their leader was Santos Guajardo, a brother

After that, Governor González went on a furlough, leaving in his place General Manuel Pérez Treviño, chief of the presidential staff, whom the "Independents" immediately "recognized" As soon as González returned, however, they split off again and functioned separately Meanwhile the national senate was insisting on being allowed to intervene, and President Obregón was refusing on the ground that it was not a conflict between different branches of the state government In May, the "Independent" deputies were again jailed and subsequently set free

On August 2 President Obregón yielded and authorized the senate to handle the matter, which it did, decreeing on September 6, 1923, that a conflict existed between legislature and governor, that is, between the executive and legislative, which meant that the senate recognized the "Independent" deputies as the legitimate legislature, and so decreed This was the legislature that had been functioning in a private house, and González and his legislature, who since the beginning of the struggle had been receiving official recognition, were now ruled out The "Independents" were reinstalled in the state-house by the aid of federal troops, bringing a storm of protest and dissent from all the municipal governments, which were by this time almost entirely "Gonzalista"

On October 29, 1923, the legislature, once the "Independents," substituted Carlos Garza Castro for Guajardo as provisional governor On November 15 Governor Castro was given authority by the state legislature to remove municipal governments and state government employees, and appoint others, to cut or raise wages and borrow money if his state needed it * * * Thus were the thirty-two out of thirty-seven admittedly "Gonzalista" municipal governments removed * * * on paper, because they refused to move and were upheld by state police and troops, who were still loyal to González

So there were still, despite the senatorial decree, two governments in the State of Coahuila, since the municipal governments refused to recognize or obey anyone but González In August, elections for deputies to the state legislature were scheduled

These had been formally announced by the González Government, and since the municipal governments were adherents of it, the elections — or the outward semblance of them — were held, though the "Independents" refused to vote and did their best to keep others from voting on the ground that the whole thing was unconstitutional since they had been recognized by the senate They announced the elections postponed, therefore, until January 27, 1924, on which date the *municipios*, having been meanwhile somewhat "cleaned" of Gonzalistas, the elections were held and a legislature friendly to Garza Castro, the 'Independent' appointee and ally of Senators Eulalio Gutiérrez and Vito Alessio Robles, was duly installed So ended the first struggle

In August, 1925, elections for governor again fell due The candidates were General Luis Gutiérrez, who had been provisional governor in 1921, and had friends in the senate, Lorenzo Dávila, "a rich lawyer, not popular with any class," according to a Gobernación agent, and General Manuel Pérez Treviño, of the presidential staff, supported by the "Laboristas," "Agraristas," and the army, whose commander in Coahuila was now Provisional Governor Garza Castro

The first real trouble came with another split in the legislature, by reason of which the Guajardo brothers again led an "Independent" legislature which established itself in a private house and wired the Federal Government for protection They were "Gutierristas," that is, in favor of General Gutiérrez's candidacy This had happened on February 7, 1925

Governor Garza Castro was accused of organizing a body of men of from 150 to 200 strong, for use in the elections, that is, to force voters and authorities who might otherwise be unwilling to put through Pérez Treviño's election The governor replied to this charge that his *charros*[1] were merely the remnants of the force with which he had fought de la Huerta Governor Castro also put a new man in charge of the state penitentiary, and since this man was the alleged murderer of an unfriendly journalist, Durán, it was charged that the governor had deliberately chosen him for the position in order that undesirable prisoners could be made to "disappear"

Then several high officials were removed from the state government, charged with "plotting to put Gutiérrez in power" The elections were disorderly Vague accounts are given of pressure on municipal authorities by state troops, and of outrages and violence committed by the Garza Castro *charros* incidental to the elections On November 23, 1925, the Garza Castro legislature declared General Manuel Pérez Treviño elected and turned the governorship over to him

In the meantime, the "Independents" continued to be "Gutierristas," and declared their candidate, General Luis Gutiérrez, the only legitimate governor They also used all their power in the senate to secure, as they

[1] Mounted men

had before, the recognition of an "Independent" legislature The same brothers Guajardo led these "Independents" also

On November 30, 1925, the national senate declared the State of Coahuila in anarchy and recognized the "Gutierrista" legislature and governor On December 20, of the same year, the senate reconsidered and revoked its previous recognition, giving it to the Pérez Treviño Government instead Since then, General Pérez Treviño has been governor of Coahuila and on June 1, 1927, still held that position Gobernación agents describe him as not objectionable, the chief reason for the hostility displayed against him being that he was the official or "imposition" candidate, all hostile to the "Laboristas" and the "Agraristas" were also hostile to General Treviño, their candidate Gutiérrez, the defeated candidate, is reported by a Gobernación agent to be "popular, honorable, and ignorant" [1]

[1] Sources for the foregoing, Archivo de Gobernación, Relaciones Interiores, Exp F 2 31 12, I II, Exp 2 314 4 (1–3) I, Exp F 2 33 3 Exp F 2 30 1, I, II Exp D 2 55 3 2, Exp D 2 55 3, Exp B 2 51 305, I, II, III, IV, Exp B 2 55 0 3, Exp B 2 73 10



COLIMA

On January 1, 1921, the governor of Colima was Miguel Alvarez García, a former "Porfirista" [1] and "Felixista," [2] according to a letter written by a private citizen to the president [3] His brother, Senator Higinio Alvarez,[4] had the same record, and a photostat is contained in the records of Gobernación of an electoral proclamation in which Alvarez García, his brother, and Dr Hurtado Suárez support Félix Díaz for president [5]

On July 1, 1923, elections for governor and state legislature fell due The candidates were

Dr Hurtado Suárez, supported by the "Partido Independiente," created for this purpose, his allies were Senators Higinio Alvarez and D Aguayo, members of the national congress, and less openly, Governor Alvarez García

Colonel Pedro Torres Ortiz, candidate of the "Partido Nacional Cooperatista," [6] and of the "Agrarista"

J Trinidad Alamillo, candidate of the "Partido Alamillista," supported by his personal friends, who had no slogan beyond the name of their candidate

Colonel Torres Ortiz was ineligible, since he was in active military service at the time of his campaign, making his candidacy unconstitutional [7] This is proved by the following letter from the War Department in answer to inquiry on this point

"This department * * * in answer to yours * * * informs you that the officer mentioned * * * Colonel Pedro Torres Ortiz * * * belongs to the infantry and is at present in active service " [8]

Nevertheless, Colonel Torres Ortiz ran for office, with the aid of an armed escort, in a manner effectively described by Lic Gilberto Valenzuela,[9] reporting to the Department of Gobernación

[1] Adherent of Porfirio Díaz

[2] Supporter of the candidacy of Félix Díaz, nephew of Porfirio Díaz, for the presidency, before and after the death of Madero

[3] Relaciones Interiores Exp F 2 36 1

[4] Alvarez is the paternal name The use of the maternal name following it is a matter of individual choice in Hispanic countries Thus in this case Miguel Alvarez García retained his mother's name, while his brother Higinio Alvarez, did not

[5] Politically, a highly damaging exhibit

[6] Political party led by de la Huerta and Jorge Prieto Laurens, dominant in the national congress, which disintegrated when many of its members joined the de la Huerta uprising against President Obregón in 1923

[7] Const of Colima, Art 59, Para VII

[8] Universal, June 6, 1923

[9] Then sub-secretary of Gobernación

The Cooperatista deputies [1] came from Mexico City, bringing with them the municipal band * * * and also the same *porra* [2] that went to Tlaxcala, during the elections there * * * There are about fifty of them, all armed with pistols and rifles They are employees of the national chamber of deputies, the secretaría of the treasury, and of the municipal government of Mexico City * * * [3]

Governor Alvarez García appealed to Gobernación for protection, stating that Torres Ortiz was preparing a coup d'état against him and gave other details of the armed invasion of the Torres Ortiz campaigners He writes

My government * * * has accurate information that members of the garrison here, far from complying with the disarmament laws, accompany groups of politicians on their campaign tours, and municipal authorities complain that the military officers confiscate arms * * * refuse to deposit them in the municipal presidencies * * * as the law provides, and do not give receipts to their owners * * * A change of garrison is in my judgment indispensable * * * in order to give full guarantees to all parties * * * and if this is not possible, my government should be provided with one hundred men in order to guarantee the stability of the state authorities [4]

In answer, Gobernación ordered the general at the head of the federal troops in the state, who had been absent, to return to Colima and see that order was kept Nevertheless, there was shooting incidental to the campaign, and two Hurtado Suárez supporters, who were alleged to have been paid by the governor to assassinate "Cooperatistas," the supporters of Torres Ortiz, were killed by soldiers during a skirmish in which a sergeant also fell [5]

The retiring legislature, controlled by Governor Alvarez García, reported, after the elections, that of the eighty-three polls established, twenty-five had been sacked by the opposition, and that the votes in the remaining fifty-eight had given a total of 3497 to Dr Hurtado Suárez against 1650 to Colonel Pedro Torres Ortiz and 351 to Señor Alamillo On July 19, 1923, Dr Hurtado Suárez was accordingly inaugurated governor [6]

Four and a half months afterward, the de la Huerta rebellion broke out Governor Hurtado Suárez was accused of being friendly to it but nothing could be proved However, General Castro, head of the state garrison, overthrew the governor and kept the government from December 7, 1923,[7] to February 25, 1924, when Governor Hurtado Suárez resumed his post [8]

The following month, Senators Aguayo and Higinio Alvarez, Hurtado Suárez's chief supporters throughout his electoral campaign, turned against him and led a group which petitioned the senate for action against him as a

[1] Members of the national legislature forming part of the "Cooperatista" bloc
[2] Armed and organized mob
[3] Universal, June 25
[4] Relaciones Interiores, Exp D 2 73 4 3
[5] Universal, June 30, 1923
[6] Relaciones Interiores, Exp F 2 36 1
[7] Outbreak of the de la Huerta rebellion.
[8] Relaciones Interiores, Exp C 2 51 267

"de la Huertista and Knight of Columbus," submitting as proof of the first of these charges a telegram said to have been found among the papers of General Enrique Estrada, one of the chiefs of the de la Huerta rebellion In this telegram a copy of which is filed in the records of Gobernación, Hurtado Suárez gives full and cordial support to de la Huerta The same senators accused Hurtado Suárez of using state money to build a road to his brother-in-law's *hacienda*, and through his nephew's property Eight deputies of the state legislature declared to the national senate that the real reason for this sudden about-face of the two former "Hurtadista" leaders, was that Higinio Alvarez, taking advantage of his friendship, wanted the governor to auction a *hacienda*, El Cacao, worth 150,000 pesos which owed taxes to the amount of 16,000, in order to acquire it, through a third party, for 20,000 pesos The owner of the *hacienda*, one Señor Fernández, paid half the taxes and appealed to the state legislature to condone the rest, which was done From then on, said the deputies, Higinio Alvarez was the sworn enemy of Governor Hurtado Suárez and went to Mexico City to denounce him to the authorities [1]

Then a number of state deputies, claiming to be the majority, formed a legislature of their own in a private house, taking a technicality as a pretext for this withdrawal, and impeached Governor Hurtado Suárez for rebellion, naming one Simon García provisional governor in his place [2] It appears that they were really the minority, for, as Gobernación's legal counsel points out, had they controlled the legislature there would have been no reason for withdrawing, and that therefore the majority, loyal to Hurtado Suárez, was really the legitimate legislature

Nevertheless, Gobernación, obeying President Calles's orders, recognized the "Independent" legislature, functioning in a private house, and both legislatures continued to function, bringing a storm of protest to the federal authorities, the tenor of which is well given by the following letter

April 24, 1925

Very Worthy President

For your own personal honor and the honor and dignity of an entire people I submit the following

The group of deputies of this state handled by Sr Higinio Alvarez has deceived you miserably, by stating that they form a legislature and thereupon securing your recognition, by which you have jeopardized in the minds of a whole people the honor and dignity of your government * * *

The group of deputies at the orders of Higinio Alvarez is made up of six, who do not make a real quorum * * * Deputy José Rasura [3] was not discharging his duties while the legislature was in session, being on trial for smuggling cocoa in Manzanillo and also discovered to have embezzled eighteen thousand pesos of

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp F 2 36 1
[2] All this instigated by Senator Higinio Alvarez
[3] One of the deputies who joined the dissenters after the split

federal funds — Deputy Joaquín Curiel [1] is at present on furlough, probably out of shame, because while drunk he beat his wife in a village in Jalisco * * * All the world in Colima knows these things * * *

The so-called provisional governor, Simon García, is of very low origin He cannot even read, and is able to write only his name * * * Everybody repudiates him because he has trafficked in bawdy houses and when at one time he was unfortunately a municipal president he encouraged all the vices and especially drunkenness * * * and is the blind instrument of Don Higinio who is trying to satisfy his lust for gold * * *

All Colima knows that the quarrel between Higinio Alvarez and the governor was because Suárez did not allow Higinio to steal the valuable *hacienda* El Cacao and the accusation of having recognized de la Huerta is only a pretext * * * [2]

Higinio Alvarez, Mr President, * * * was a "Porfirista" and escorted Don Porfirio to the *Ypiranga* * * * [3] He was a great supporter of the assassin, Victoriano Huerta, and defended that government by burning the property of Huerta's enemies * * * In truth, Don Higinio is a broken aristocrat who, by whatever means possible, wants to be rich again and to have lands, though stolen, and though he may seem your friend he is a frock-coated * * * secret enemy of all revolutionary principles * * *

If your policy cannot admit Hurtado Suárez as governor you can easily declare the state in anarchy * * * and name three to be chosen from as the law provides [4] * * * or you leave a people in the hands of a bandit supported by federal troops, as is Higinio Alvarez * * *

(Signed) José Rodríguez Mendez

A son of the people grateful for the Revolution who esteems you for your principles [5]

In May the governor appointed by the dissenters, Simon García, resigned, and Solórzano Béjar was put in his place At this time, Lic Juan B Castelazo, head of staff of Gobernación, writes the president, saying that Solórzano Béjar has been accused of many crimes and even of murder, and that it may be true, that his legislature is undoubtedly illegal and his position likewise, but that Gobernación upheld him and withdrew recognition from Hurtado Suárez

not because of his friendship with Lic Valenzuela,[6] to which the defeated attribute his triumph, but because Gobernación learned that the governor of Jalisco [7] was forming an alliance with the governors of Colima and Nayarit to build a strong group that could hold its own against the Federal Government, and therefore [8]

[1] The other of the deputies who joined after the split

[2] This paragraph sums up the basis for the entire legislative conflict

[3] Ship on which Porfirio Díaz sailed into exile in 1911

[4] When a state of anarchy is declared, the president submits three names to the national senate from which that body chooses a provisional governor for the state in question

[5] Relaciones Interiores, Exp F 2 36 1

[6] At that time secretary of Gobernación

[7] José Guadalupe Zuno

[8] To prevent this alliance, which is unconstitutional Const of 1917, Art 117, Clause I, provides "No state shall enter into alliances, treaties, or coalitions with another state or with foreign powers"

* * * Gobernación separated the respective functionaries from their posts * * * Finally, the needy class is not interested in the changes of authorities * * * all exploit them alike * * * the educated class and the business men want only stability in the government, the politicians being the only ones interested in stirring things up * * * so that you have the facts upon which to decide whether, although Solórzano Béjar may not be an ideal governor, it would be desirable to depose him and overthrow the group which supports him * * * This group is needed and strong, politically speaking [1]

Solórzano Béjar was upheld by President Calles notwithstanding the dictum of Gobernación's legal counsel that his government was illegitimate On June 1, 1927, he was governor of Colima [2]

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp F 2 36 1

[2] The above data were derived from the following sources Archivo de Gobernación, Relaciones Interiores Exp B 2 55 4, Exp C 2 51 267, Exp D 2 73 4 3 Exp D 1 72 4 3, Exp Γ 2 36 1, Exp F 2 33 4, Universal, June 6, 25, 30, Aug 30, 1923



DURANGO

The key to the political history of Durango is to be found in two men, General Enrique R Nájera and General Jesús A Castro In the report of an agent of Gobernación their careers are thus summarized

Enrique Nájera * * * was a poor peasant from the district of Santiago Papasquiara, Durango * * * He took up arms for Madero * * * in 1910 * * * and went back to the fields when the cause triumphed * * * In 1913, when President Madero was assassinated, Nájera again took up arms, joining the Constitutionalists * * * becoming a lieutenant-colonel * * * He is not known to have political affiliations other than military, being very intimate with General Jesús Agustín Castro In April, 1920, Nájera was commissioned by President Venustiano Carranza, together with General Jesús Agustín Castro, to spread electoral propaganda in favor of Ingeniero [1] Bonillas, the president having given them to use in this work ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS [2] * * * Hardly had the Bonillas propaganda started than the "Plan de Agua Prieta" [3] movement arose President Carranza ordered Nájera to organize his troops and fight the enemy In obedience to his orders, Nájera left Durango and went to Torreón, but there learned that the rebellion had spread over the whole country So he returned to Durango * * * took possession of that city *on behalf of the adherents of the Plan de Agua Prieta* [4] and proclaimed himself provisional governor of that state, which position was afterward recognized by the provisional president, Don Adolfo de la Huerta * * * While Enrique R Nájera was Provisional Governor of Durango [5] the head of the federal troops in that state was General Jesús Agustín Castro * * * They * * * Nájera and Castro * * * agreed that Nájera would give the government of the state into the hands of Castro and he * * * Castro * * * once his term was over, would give it back to Najera * * * [6]

The political history of Durango follows precisely those lines On January 1, 1921, General Jesús Agustín Castro appears as constitutional governor In August, 1922, elections were held for the state legislature Governor Castro was accused of attempting to put in his own candidates [7]

[1] *Ingeniero*, Engineer, used commonly as a prefix, as are *Licenciado* and *Doctor*

[2] The capitals are in the original report

[3] The proclamation against Carranza, for his attempt to "impose" Bonillas as president The movement, led by Obregón, overthrew Carranza, and de la Huerta was provisional president until the elections which made Obregón president

[4] Italics not contained in the report

[5] 1920

[6] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011(721 6)–1

[7] He had still two years in office, since the Durango legislature changes every two years, the governor every four

On June 8, more than two months before the elections, a letter to Gobernación from Senator Adalberto Ríos, complaining of "imposition," contained the list of Castro deputies which he (Ríos) said would win in the forthcoming elections, his information having been secured from various municipal presidents The names tallied exactly with the deputies declared elected the following September by the retiring Castro legislature[1]

The Durango constitution provides that the legislature be "renovada" or renewed every two years, a provision that, interpreted by seven members of the legislature which wrote it, means that it does not sanction reelection Nevertheless, six of the members of the retiring legislature were reelected One of the deputies of the Castro legislature, a member of the minority and hostile to the "imposition," states that these deputies approved each other's credentials, that instead of the packages of votes being opened and these counted aloud by the *mesa directiva*, the executive committee, as the law provides, packages of votes from one district were given to the candidate for reelection from another district, and in turn the votes from that district were given to the first candidate, so that both approved each other's credentials and declared each other elected, that in the case of deputies who were new candidates, evident fraud was practised and the ballots were tampered with by the authorities, since one package when opened was found to contain the ballots of two districts in different parts of the state

The state government and federal troops are both reported to have been friendly to the Castro ticket There was very little fighting during the elections, though occasional clashes are reported between police or troops and members of parties hostile to Castro

On September 16, 1922, the Castro ticket installed itself in the legislature and its opponents installed themselves, as a legislature, in a private house Gobernación recognized the legislature functioning normally in the state-house and on September 27 the "Independents" gave up the struggle and dispersed

In August, 1924, elections for the governorship, for members of the state legislature, and for the national congress were held The Castro party supported Enrique R Nájera, and Castro himself ran for and was elected senator

Running against Nájera for the governorship was Felipe Pescador, a former railroad superintendent, strongly supported by the "Partido Ferrocarrilero," made up of railroad workers Nájera, besides the official support, had also that of "Agraristas," who in armed detachments spread all over the state, kept close tab on the primaries The railroad men appealed to the general in charge of the federal troops, Marcelo Caraveo,[1]

[1] The same General Caraveo who figures in the events previously detailed in Chihuahua in 1927 The reappearance of the same generals in the accounts of different states is due to their being shifted from one command to another

to disarm those agrarians and protect the railroad men's candidate But the general answered that he had no authority to disarm the agrarians and that if Pescador or his candidates [1] ever needed protection he would be ready to give it, in consequence the armed agrarians patrolled all the polls, intimidating the voters and such municipal authorities as were not favorable to their candidates

According to the affidavits of witnesses, the elections were put through almost exclusively under the armed supervision of the "Agraristas" The ballot-boxes were in many cases taken home by the officials in charge of the polls, opened and returned the next morning to the polls Officials also filled out many ballots themselves, and did other things of the sort, say the witnesses, to ensure the election of Nájera and his ticket

The Pescador party, the railroad men, set up a legislature of their own in a private house, after the elections, and on September 20 Nájera, having been declared elected by the state legislature, this "independent" legislature inaugurated Pescador as governor of Durango The newspapers said that the people on the whole sympathized with Pescador, but Gobernación recognized the Nájera administration, since it was in possession of the state-house and nothing had occurred which would show that there was conflict between different branches of the state government, circumstances under which the national senate has power to interfere Since Castro was in the senate, this body showed no disposition to take the case of Durango in hand The Pescador legislature, supported by no armed body, dissolved shortly after, and on June 1, 1927, Nájera still appeared as constitutional governor of Durango [2]

[1] The candidate for governor runs on the same ticket as a complete assembly for the state legislature

[2] Sources for the foregoing, Archivo de Gobernación Exp 7/011(721 6)–1, Relaciones Interiores, Exp B 2 55 7 Exp B 2 74 1 7, Exp C 2 51 241, Exp C 2 73 3, Exp D 2 55 7, E 2 55 7 1 E 2 74 4, F 2 75 7, F 2 33 7



GUANAJUATO

On January 1, 1921, the governor of Guanajuato was Antonio Madrazo In August, 1922, elections for national deputies and senators fell due The usual charge of "imposition" in behalf of his friends running for congress was brought against Governor Madrazo They included Lic Enrique Colunga, candidate for senator, and, indirectly, Lic Manuel Hernández Galván, who was Colunga's "substitute"[1] Many of these men were affiliated with the "Cooperatista" which later perished in the de la Huerta rebellion, and were hostile to the "Laborista" or C R O M party Colunga, the senatorial candidate, counted friends in all parties including the Catholics and the landed gentry

The activity of the Catholics in these elections is made apparent in the following letter, written by one of the candidates for deputy, Lucas Contreras, to the priest of Urireo, Guanajuato, on May 4, three months before the elections

Dear señor Cura and fine friend

Not to make this letter too long, I limit myself to repeating what I begged of you in person last month

I can confirm every part of my last talk with you, for at our last meeting it was decided to work tirelessly to win the next elections, for all the group which you know We pride ourselves on being of the Catholic party, but for strategy are scattered among the various militant parties, we are certain that the next national congress, if not entirely ours, will have at least a weighty number of us in it

The sincerity of Madrazo is well proved, to make our victory certain On our success depends the next government of Guanajuato, and whether it will be in the hands of a person in sympathy with the interests of us Catholics

When the time comes the federal executive is sure to be ours also

As to the military preparations, I can only affirm that we have a strong strategic line established from the oil region to Sihuatanejo, and, as you see, it crosses the important central states and divides the country

This plan is the result of technique studied in the last armed movements from ten years to date

[1] Every representative in the national or state congress has a *suplente* or substitute, who runs in the elections on the ticket of the *propietario* and who takes his place in assembly when official duties of another position or absence prevent the "proprietor" from functioning

So, señor Cura, your share is to organize the masses, and launch them into the political struggle of to-day, and God willing, in the military struggle of to-morrow

For God and for the Fatherland
My victory is in your hands
Effusively,
LUCAS CONTRERAS (Signed)

The elections were troubled The various parties and candidates complained of electoral fraud, and fighting went on between members of opposing parties "Cooperatista" campaigners fell upon the Silao police commandant who had asked them to disarm, and in the ensuing melée one of them was killed

Many charges of ineligibility were laid against one of the "Cooperatista" candidates, Juan Razo, superintendent and owner of the National Brewery [1] whose record, according to the report of an agent of Gobernación, included Having cheated Lic Juan Castelazo, once a friend of his, out of his entire fortune in a business venture, of having killed a little girl, of dishonest dealings in business, of having owned and operated ten bawdy houses in the city of Mexico [2] where he sold the beer from his brewery

A year after the elections a report was made, by an agent of Gobernación, of the deputies and senators elected, containing the personal record of each Abstracted, the list runs as follows

Deputy Agustín Arroyo Ch ,[3] journalist, friend of Madrazo Disloyal to his political obligations

Deputy Constantino Llaca, agrarian Dishonest Rebelled during the de la Huerta uprising, and furthermore took advantage of the disturbed situation to organize his police into a gang of bandits who scoured the country-side, in Silao, where he was municipal president at the time [4] In the time of Siurob [5] he was a *coyote* for him

Senator M Gutiérrez Velazco "Cooperatista" Honest [6] During the de la Huerta uprising, joined the rebels under General Villarreal

Deputy José Guerra Radical Enemy of clergy, friend of Colunga Honest

Lic Guerra has friendly political relations with Lic Enrique Colunga, who, it is ascertained, gave him moral support in the campaign, and Guerra, not having

[1] Cerveceria Nacional
[2] The record contains the addresses of these houses
[3] The Hispanic custom adds a man s mother's name to his father's so that his real surname is what, according to the practice of other countries, would appear to be his middle name Often, however, the lesser importance of the maternal name is shown by its abbreviation to an initial In this case, Ch is the fourth letter of the Spanish alphabet, following C
[4] It is possible for a deputy or a senator to hold another office if his "substitute" functions in his place in the congress
[5] Formerly a governor of Guanajuato
[6] The honesty or dishonesty referred to by the agents refers to the acquisition or non-acquisition of money by illegitimate means, while in office and with the power of the office

obtained his credential,[1] they manufactured one for him, in the "Confederación de Partidos Regionales," in connivance with the state legislature He was a member of the "Cooperatista" party in 1922, having been named deputy for $15,000 00 pesos which he gave to Jorge Prieto Laurens,[2] and he remained in the "Cooperatista" party until this group joined the rebels, at which time Guerra went to his home state

Deputy F Fernández Martínez Honest Friend of Colunga

Deputy C García Téllez Friend of Colunga, "Laborista," honest

Deputy C Felipe Núñez Unknown Has friends and relatives in the state legislature * * * to this is attributed his election

Deputy C Juan Abascal Friend of Colunga "Cooperatista"

Deputy Benjamín Méndez Railroad men's candidate Friend of Colunga Honest

Deputy Olivarez G Friend of Colunga "Cooperatista" Honest

Deputy Angel Aragón Catholic Honest Friendly with Colunga Sympathizer of de la Huerta but not actively rebellious

Deputy Enrique Hernández Alvarez Friend of Colunga One of the few who took no part in the Revolution[3] "Cooperatista" Honesty doubtful

Deputy Lucas Contreras [4] Rich capitalist who, before mixing in politics, was in business, his principal occupation being lending money at exorbitant rates of interest In 1922 was deputy * * * substitute of Agustín Arroyo Ch "Cooperatista" Friend of Prieto Laurens and de la Huerta * * * Disappeared during the de la Huerta rebellion Many crimes which he has committed under the shield of his official position are charged against him * * * He received two salaries from the government, one as deputy to the national legislature and one as deputy to the state legislature, for he held one position as "proprietor" and the other as "substitute," and at different times functioned in both By means of his position * * * he avoided paying taxes on his property * * * which is extensive

Deputy Arturo Ducoing Substitute for Lucas Contreras Rich Went into politics * * * to protect himself by his position from punishment for the crimes he has committed * * * In 1917 he murdered Adolfo Chaire on his [5] *hacienda*, El Salitre, because Chaire had gone to protest against Ducoing's branding of thirty cows of Chaire's property * * * In 1918 he murdered an old woman named * * * Juana Aldape, sixty-five years old, and her blind son, Juan, who

[1] All elective officials receive a "credential" from the local authorities of the district in which they ran, certifying that the counting committees have declared the candidate elected

[2] Leader of the "Cooperatistas" and one of the leaders of the de la Huerta rebellion

[3] It is considered an honor to have been a militant Revolutionist Hence it is often a disparagement to speak of a man as not having taken any active part in the Revolution

[4] The writer of the previously quoted letter to the priest of Urireo See p 426

[5] Ducoing's

were on the road to San Luis de la Paz to complain because Ducoing had robbed them of thirty-five head of cattle * * * In 1920 he murdered a man * * * in order to take his daughter away from him * * * In 1922 he murdered Metodio Nuño On the 15th of September, 1924, he murdered, in the main plaza of the city Guanajuato, a man named Salvador Bertizo, because he courted Señorita Carmen Ducoing, a daughter of Ducoing's On the same day he stabbed to death Victor Charre in the town of Victoria, near Guanajuato * * * He is so degenerate * * * that he has prostituted his own daughters, Carmen and Teresa, and his third daughter, Señorita Elena Ducoing, had to take refuge in Mexico City from the persecutions of her own father * * * On his estates he has not respected a single one of the families of the workers, and sixty-nine children are known to be his, by the wives and daughters of his workmen * * * Carmen and Teresa, his daughters, have children by their own father, Carmen two, and Teresa one * * * Ducoing is very friendly with all the officials of the state and very intimate with Deputy Lucas Contreras * * * before he went into politics his sole contact with the authorities consisted in corrupting them to avoid punishment for his crimes

Deputy José Aguilar Maya Poor Honest Friend of Colunga and Hernández Galván

Deputy Federico Medrano "Cooperatista" Friend of Colunga, friend of de la Huerta and of Prieto Laurens "Has always used his political power for dirty business dealings * * *" During the de la Huerta uprising he was watched too closely by the authorities to permit of his expected joining with the rebels

Deputy Felipe Muñoz "Cooperatista" De la Huertista During the de la Huerta uprising went to Irapuato to join the rebels but, watched too closely, was unable to do so "Has always used his position for dirty business"

Deputy Dr Cayetano Andrade Good revolutionist, practised medicine, and helped the Maderistas * * * Helped Obregón * * * "by counteracting the work of the landholders and reactionaries of the state" Friend of Colunga * * * "and says that he owes his position to him" Honest

Senator Manuel Hernández Galván In the Revolution since 1910 Highly esteemed by Calles and Obregón Educated Honest Radical[1]

In August, 1923, elections for the governorship of Guanajuato fell due The candidates were

Lic Enrique Colunga, supported by the upper and middle-classes and part of the labor element "He has the majority of constituents," reports an agent of Gobernación His opponent was Manuel Aranda, of whom a Gobernación agent reports "It is true that he has friends in the government, but these do not think that he would make a good governor * * *"

The only objections raised against Colunga were that he was not a native of the state, had acted as provisional governor during a short absence of

[1] The above records are from Archivo de Gobernación, Exp VII/011(725 1), 7/011 12 (724 4)/-4, and 7/011 (724 4)/-1

Governor Madrazo, and had not lived in the state for five years immediately before the elections (three conditions which rendered him ineligible under the state constitution)

He was elected Aranda, his only opponent, was a weak and ineffectual candidate Several Gobernación agents report the elections to have been absolutely quiet and legally carried out Indeed, so model were they that the president himself congratulated Colunga on that fact and on his success [1]

When the de la Huerta rebellion broke out, Colunga was called by President Obregón to become secretary of Gobernación In 1924, due to political conflicts with the state party he had founded, he returned to his position as governor

In 1926, elections for the state and national legislature took place These elections were bloody, several people were killed The old Colunga group, which had campaigned before loosely affiliated as part of the "Confederación de Partidos Regionales," was completely divided by violent personal and political differences Colunga was charged with "imposition" but nothing was done about these charges The candidates elected were, as a whole, friends of Colunga [2]

June 1, 1927, Colunga was still governor of Guanajuato, and seeking to "impose" the aforementioned Deputy Agustín Arroyo Ch [3] as his successor against the "Laborista" candidate, General Celestino Gasca

[1] They were also marked by the unusual spectacle of the loser publicly shaking hands with the winner, congratulating him and pledging support to his administration The claim to being the first to establish this precedent of good sportsmanship was made to me by Ing M F Villaseñor, also in a Guanajuato gubernatorial election, in Madero's régime in which Señor Villaseñor ran second among four candidates

[2] Sources for the data on the political history of Guanajuato Gobernación records as follows, Archivo de Gobernación, Exp VII/011(725 1), Exp 7/011 12(724 4)/-4, Exp 7/011(724 4)/-1 Relaciones Interiores, Exp D 2 73 8 3, Exp D 2 55 8, Exp B 2 55 08, Exp C 2 51 269, Exp F 2 33 6 Exp E 2 55 8, Exp B 2 74 1 (08), Exp E 2 75 2, Exp E 2 51 119

[3] See page 487–9



GUERRERO

On January 1, 1921, the governor of the State of Guerrero was Professor Francisco Figueroa, brother of a general

In April, 1921, in a virtually uncontested election, Lic Rodolfo Neri became governor His record in the Gobernación files is as follows

Lic Neri * * * is the son of a Porfirista general * * * rich enough to send him to the best schools * * * He obtained his lawyer's degree * * * 1904 * * * showing * * * conscientiousness and intelligence * * * and having already * * * advanced ideas and a certain strength of character * * * In 1910 he took up arms against the old régime, remaining faithful to the Revolution until the end of this movement * * * [1] obtaining the rank of general * * * During the revolt of General Obregón [2] in 1920 he took a very active part * * * in his own state * * * being considered a very good element * * * but when his nephew's resignation as attorney-general of the republic * * * was accepted * * * both he and the nephew, Lic Eduardo Neri, seemed discontented * * * and when the de la Huerta rebellion broke out [3] he joined it * * * asking General Maycotte [4] * * * to support him in his position as state governor * * * which Maycotte refused, answering that the best he could do would be to permit Neri's leaving the state to join him [Maycotte] * * * for which reason Neri left * * * for Puebla [5] * * * but near Tixtla, Guerrero, learned that General Romulo Figueroa [6] had laid an ambush for him on the road So he retreated and joined General Silvestre Castro (alias "The Plum-Tree" [7]) * * * General Castro took Neri out of the state * * * saving his life by transporting him as an unknown sick person on a stretcher * * * which service Neri repaid by * * * denouncing Castro as a *persona non grata* to the federal authorities * * * once the rebellion was over [8]

Neri returned to Guerrero as soon as the de la Huerta rebels had been driven out, early in 1924, and throughout the remaining months strengthened his reputation as a tyrant Says a Gobernación agent's report

[1] 1915
[2] Against Carranza in 1920
[3] In 1923 against Obregón
[4] One of the chiefs of the de la Huerta rebellious troops
[5] Where Maycotte was at the time
[6] Figueroa, chief of operations in Guerrero, several days before the de la Huerta rebellion revolted on his own account against Neri, the state governor, seeking absolute control of the state, a personal objective which he continued to pursue after joining the rebellion Hence General Maycotte's indifference to Neri's demands — the support of a *jefe de operaciones* with his troops was more important to the rebels than that of a governor
[7] *El Ciruelo*
[8] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp C 7/011 (727 1)/-1, and C 7/011/2(727 1)/-1 A double switch common in Mexican politics Note the sequence Best educational advantages * * * high governmental post (governorship) * * * yet displeased because a relative does not get his share of reward * * * therefore joins rebels * * * does not get into rebellion on time * * * sees it collapsing * * * therefore "double crosses" rebel associates and gets back on governmental "bandwagon"

Governor Neri * * * has no admirers in this state * * * he is immoral, arbitrary, despotic, and both he and his high officials have been known to be dead drunk at ten-thirty in the morning, absolutely unable to transact any official business * * *[1]

In December, 1924, elections were held for both governor and members of the state legislature The candidates to the governorship were

General Hector López

Professor Adolfo Cienfuegos y Camus, who had been occupying the position of head of staff in the Ministry of Foreign Relations The record of General Hector López made by a Gobernación agent describes him as follows

Energetic, somewhat intelligent, and of average education * * * of modest and honorable family * * * In 1909 * * * had to leave his village, where he had been secretary of the municipal government * * * due to the enmity of the chief of police, on account of López's liberal ideas * * * He joined the Madero Revolution, and afterward was * * * the dominant political factor * * * in his home town * * * until the uprising of 1913[2] when he left, and joined the forces of General Gertrudis Sánchez in Michoacán * * * When General Sánchez was murdered by a group of men under him López became part of the forces directly under General Joaquín Amaro * * * who joined Obregón at Celaya, when Villa had been defeated * * * In 1917 López left the army * * * in 1920 * * * he was ordered by Obregón to organize troops * * *[3] He was in La Unión, Guerrero, when General Silvestre Mariscal was assassinated in Cinahua, Michoacán * * * by order of López, although his death was made to appear as occurring in battle * * * In the same year he was elected senator * * * thanks to the influence of the Liberal Constitutionalist Party[4] * * * and while senator opposed the Obregón administration systematically * * * though with negative results, since he lacks the intellectual capacity to make himself felt * * * In 1923 he and Senator Miguel Ortega were spreading pro-de la Huerta propaganda for the presidency * * * but during the de la Huerta rebellion he remained neutral * * *[5]

For the gubernatorial elections in 1924, General López was called the official or "impositionist" candidate An "imposition" can be carried out in Guerrero with especial ease, as the inhabitants, primitive and ignorant, scattered in inaccessible regions, shut off by rugged mountain ranges and deep cañons, without communications, are subject to their local authorities, caciques in fact, who in turn obey the governor, however contrary might be the desires of their people

[1] Same sources as 3

[2] Against Victoriano Huerta

[3] In preparation for the revolt under the "Plan de Agua Prieta"

[4] The "Partido Liberal Constitucionalista the party under whose banner Carranza was unseated which was dominant in the early days of the Obregón administration, till it was gradually overshadowed by the "Cooperatista"

[5] Archivo de Gobernación, 1 אק C ך /ס11/דרך 1)-1, and C ך/ס11/2(727 1)/-1

The elections, according to the report of Gobernación's agent, were an open fraud

The government of the state * * * is behind López, from the governor, Lic Neri, to the least employee * * * The secretary of the governor * * * told me so frankly * * * all the deputies of the legislature * * * have been elected twice * * * and when this election is over * * * will have been elected three times[1] * * * They took active part in the elections, as representatives of López * * * They reinstalled polls * * * outside of the legal hours and personally took a new set of votes, canceling the first ballots * * * going in automobile to the villages * * * on election day * * * and pistol in hand forced many ignorant people to vote for their candidate * * * They took the ballots * * * and changed them * * * the reports sent in by the heads of the polls * * * give a result entirely different from the report made by the deputies The victory was given to General López, but it is notorious that it belonged to Cienfuegos y Camus * * * whose candidacy was well received since the people want to be rid of Neri elements * * * Professor Cienfuegos y Camus is cultured and intelligent * * * while public opinion is hostile to López * * * because he created much hate in his political career * * *

In February, 1925, General Hector López was inaugurated as governor of the State of Guerrero, and on June 1, 1927, still held that position[2]

[1] Article 44 of the Const of Guerrero provides that the state legislature must be replaced "in totality" every two years Hence these state deputies were violating the constitution in succeeding themselves

[2] Sources for foregoing data on the State of Guerrero Archivo de Gobernación Exp C 7/011/727 1)/-1, Exp C 7/011/2(727 1)/-1, Relaciones Interiores, Exp F 2 37/5, Exp F 2 34 9, Exp F 2 33 9, Exp E 2 55 9 1, Exp E 2 74 5 I and II, Exp D 2 74 1 9, I and II, Exp D 2 51 50, Exp D 2 53 9, Exp C 2 73 26 Exp B 2 74 1 09, Exp B 2 55 09



HIDALGO

In 1921, elections for governor were held to replace the provisional governor then in power, and General Amado Azuara was elected Subsequently, he died, and his succession is reported by a Gobernación agent as follows

Upon the death of Amado Azuara, constitutional governor * * * his brother, Antonio, was named substitute governor, and functioned until shortly before the next campaign for governor and state legislature He asked for an indefinite furlough * * * saying that he did not want to be charged with "imposing" his brother Jesús who had already announced his candidacy for the governorship At that time the Azuara brothers counted on the friendship of Daniel Téllez Escudero and named him provisional governor * * * They believed firmly that he would help them * * * A few days after the campaign had begun Jesús Azuara gave up his candidacy, in view of the strength of the attacks against him all over the state * * * that the Azuara brothers wanted to enthrone the Azuarista dynasty in Hidalgo Then was born the candidacy of Francisco López Soto, intimate friend of the Azuara brothers in whom they saw the salvation of their political interests * * *[1]

Thus were the state's affairs reported at the end of 1925

The political situation * * * is in general uncertain, full of doubt for the middle-classes and the peasants * * * I must not omit * * * the sad and moving spectacle given daily by the armed bands * * * especially in Tula, Huichapan, Mixquiahuala, Atotonilco de Tula, Santiago Tezontlale * * * In this region the peasants have become familiar with all kinds of violence, such as murder These poor people see the loss of a human life with the greatest naturalness The origin of this calamity, which is ruining the morale of the peasant, is the lack of conscience and feeling of the professional agitators — whether they call themselves politicians or agrarians * * * This is directly the cause of the enormity of the crimes committed daily The agitators * * * incite without mercy one *pueblo* against another — to murder each other, exploiting cynically the blood of their victims * * *

The *pueblo* of Mixquiahuala at the beginning of the administration of General Obregón (1920) asked for *ejidos* and for this the lands of the *hacienda* of Ulapan were determined on At that time they were led in this petition * * * by Gerardo Cruz, Eulalio Cruz, Enrique Hernández, Tomás, Trinidad, Francisco and Agapito Montúfar, Crisóforo Aguirre, Leonardo Candelario, and others * * * The president decided favorably * * * Once in possession of the *ejido*, they began to give it

[1] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp VII/011 12 (724 6)1

out, but it was never done according to the agrarian laws * * * for the *ejido* was cut into a few parts and distributed among a few, so that they became true *latifundistas* * * * like Gerardo Cruz who himself appropriated the slight amount of seventy hectares of magnificent land The Montúfars, Aguirre, Hernández, and Candelario did the same, that is, a few individuals kept the whole *hacienda* of Ulapan * * * These men soon became the powerful bosses in that region In the meantime the *pueblo*, really needy, continued to suffer as it had under past governments * * * These men found a ready supporter in General Amado Azuara, governor of the state Gerardo Cruz, uncle of Enrique Sordo Cruz, at this time has * * * not less than fifty thousand pesos * * * The people of Mixquiahuala, headed by Manuel Mera, began to try to overthrow the land grabbers about the middle of 1922, and succeeded in controlling the administrative committee [1] a few months afterward, at which time the two parties which now struggle were formed One, in which are found the Cruzes, the Montúfars, etc , who are called "the rich," and the other, "the poor," who call themselves "Agraristas" The first have always been with Azuara and the second with anything but Azuarismo On this occasion the Montúfars and the Cruzes were with the candidate López Soto and the Agraristas were with Matías Rodríguez * * * The friends of the Azuaras * * * have committed a series of crimes and murders, truly hair-raising, such as that on the 2nd of March, 1923, whose victim was the first president of the administrative committee put in by the people ["The poor"] To this chain of crimes I shall add the case of the municipal president of Mixquiahuala, C Teodoro Cruz,[2] who was in this position last year Cruz was elected * * * by a majority of votes * * * The state government * * * knew that this president was not its friend and decided to remove him * * * giving the commission * * * to Enrique Sordo Cruz, who with two other individuals went masked to his house * * * on the 13th of last July, at midnight * * * took him out with blows of their pistol butts, dragged him into the country and gave him such a beating that he fell unconscious * * * Sordo Cruz and his companions thought him dead and fled, but the poor unfortunate came back to consciousness and as well as he could arose and went to town where a few people found him and carried him home in their arms * * * To date he has remained like an idiot as a result of this beating * * *

In Mixquiahuala was a group of soldiers of the 88th regiment under Second Lieutenant José Mariano, belonging to the federal troops of General Pedro Gabay * * * During the time that this * * * lieutenant * * * was stationed in Mixquiahuala, he was completely at the service of "the rich," that is, the Cruzes and Montúfars who are called by that name there * * * The soldier Mariano, working in accord with Sordo Cruz * * * devoted himself to "hostilizing" the Agraristas * * * and the people complained to General Gabay * * * who immediately * * * as soon as his connivance with the Jefe de las Defensas Sociales [3] [Sordo Cruz] * * * was proved ordered his immediate removal * * * Mariano was so closely bound up with Sordo Cruz that when * * * the chief of the federal troops, Gabay, ordered him to disarm Sordo Cruz's people * * * he told Sordo that he would take their arms * * * and give them others * * * in order to carry out the letter of the instructions * * * When General Gabay found it out he ordered Mariano

[1] That is the committee of their *pueblo* which represents it in its dealings with the National Agrarian Commission in the matter of land and water rights

[2] Evidently another and different Cruz

[3] "White Guards"

out of the *pueblo* * * * and he left * * * leaving the place without a garrison * * * of which situation Sordo took advantage by * * * murdering, together with some friends, Agustín Cruz, an enemy of his, in his, Cruz's house * * * That same night the *pueblo* * * * sent messengers to Texontepec, Mangas, and other [villages] near-by * * * for help to arrest the murderers * * * Sordo Cruz, fearful of what might happen, ordered his men to take strategic positions immediately * * * the church tower and the roofs of the houses adjacent * * * About eleven o'clock in the morning Emilio Cornejo and Juan Cruz passed near the church * * * when * * * shots rang out, killing Cornejo and Cruz * * * With these two deaths more, the excitement grew so great that at four o'clock in the afternoon, when the reinforcements came from neighboring *pueblos*, fire was opened by both sides and lasted until two o'clock the morning after, the 31st, when federal troops arrived to keep order * * * Two dead and fifteen wounded were found on the field * * * In the battle died Casimiro Alamillo, one of the Agraristas and helping the others, from the church, had fought his brother, Trinidad Alamillo * * * When he saw that his brother had been killed he exclaimed "Curse the soul of Francisco López Soto * * * who has brought us into this massacre * * * !" * * * The civil authorities never bother about clearing up these crimes, except when the victim is a friend of the state government, otherwise they shelve the affairs * * * They always act according to their political advantage * * * Whole families have had to leave Mixquiahuala on account of these dangers * * *[1]

The election to which this refers was that of governor and state legislature at the end of 1925, when the term of the dead constitutional governor, General Amado Azuara, replaced by his brother, Antonio Azuara, came to an end

The candidates were

Francisco López Soto, "Partido Confederado de Hidalgo," supported unconditionally by the retiring government,

C Romero Rubio, "Partido Independiente Hidalguense," an independent candidate who scarcely figures

Matías Rodríguez, "Partido Laborista" and "Agrarista," candidate of labor and the agrarians

Of López Soto much is said by agents sent to investigate him One writes as follows

Francisco López Soto * * * after a few years of primary instruction * * * worked in the fields * * * In 1914 he was appointed by General Matias Méndez * * * municipal president of Tulancingo, having had to leave the place a few months later when the Constitutionalist troops under General Cosío Robelo arrived * * * Afterward the same General Méndez gave him the rank of major In the battle of Celaya that same year, he was paymaster of the brigade under General Roberto Martínez y Martínez on the side of Villa, with the same rank, and in the middle of the battle deserted dressed as a woman and taking all the funds * * * A short time afterward he was back in Tulancingo and joined his old chief Matías

[1] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp VII/011 12 (724 6/1)

Méndez (Villista) * * * when he committed deeds of violence against many business men and factories, demanding * * * money and merchandise * * * then went to Tenango de Doria, taking with him merchandise belonging to General Agapito Barranco * * * In Tenango de Doria he followed the same ways, demanding money from *hacendados* and small villages * * * At the end of 1914, he went into conference with Manuel Peláez, on one hand, and with a commission of General Lechuga, of Morelos, on the other * * * to see which was the most advantageous * * * having accepted that of General Lechuga But this chief, observing the thievish conduct of López Soto * * * threw him out of his brigade, whereupon he * * * López Soto * * * returned to his lair and kept on annoying his countrymen * * * In 1916 to 1920 he lumbered excessively, destroying whole forests in Tulancingo * * * In 1920 he again rose up in arms, under the now dead General Amado Azuara, stealing the salaries of his men, with which he made his first political campaign * * * By grace of the brutal imposition of said general who at that time was head of the federal troops in the state * * * López Soto became for the first time deputy to the national congress * * * In 1922, he again announced his candidacy to the national congress, and his credentials were thrown out because they were stained with the blood of his opponent, Sr Felipe Díaz Martínez * * * Not satisfied with this defeat, López Soto again announced his candidacy for deputy to the local legislature * * * This election was no more than a farce * * * he was again imposed * * * the governor of the state being then General Amado Azuara * * * By means of his position * * * and intrigues * * * he, López Soto, had his political enemies (which were not few) persecuted without mercy During the de la Huerta uprising, he committed horrible murders, among them that of Major Rivera and other people * * * who went to make Calles propaganda in the district of Tulancingo * * * It is notorious in Tulancingo that López Soto * * * was in connivance with the now dead General Marcial Cavazos,[1] having betrayed him later when the situation was not favorable to the rebels * * * In those days * * * López Soto organized a so-called "Force of Social Defense" * * * a gang to help him commit his usual crimes * * * said force was good for nothing but to give arms to the enemy * * * for their chief, López Soto, fled shamefully at the news that the rebels were near and that was why Cavazos entered Tulancingo as often as he liked without being in the least molested * * * Lately López Soto has been affiliated with the Partido Hidalguense, made up of all the official element and enjoying as always the consideration of Governor Azuara * * * He is at present[2] deputy to the national congress and belongs to the "Confederado"[3] In Tulancingo he is much hated by the people of order * * *[4]

Another report of the same candidate runs as follows

"López Soto has no sympathizers and is not popular * * * It is public and notorious that as he is more daring, of more intellectual capacity than the Azuara brothers * * * he was during their administration the state's political director, having a dominating influence upon them They did what he wanted and committed many immoralities in connivance with inferior employees, defrauding the

[1] One of the generals who joined de la Huerta [2] 1924
[3] A political party of about the same caliber as the "Cooperatista" which it succeeded
[4] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp VII/011 (725 1) 1

state budget * * * In Tulancingo the municipality owned some very good urban property * * * López Soto had it auctioned off for a slight sum to a certain one who was none other than himself, selling it afterward at a good price * * * Furthermore, public opinion charges him with three murders by means of intermediaries, one of the victims a priest * * *[1]

Still another report says

In Tulancingo, Hidalgo, they recognize the military power of the brothers Azuara * * * in spite of being a native of this place, López Soto is not popular, for he has been pointed out as directly responsible for the death of General Daniel Cerecedo Estrada, who had announced his candidacy against Jesús Azuara * * * for Cerecedo Estrada was the truly popular candidate and * * * his victory would have been complete * * *[2]

Of his chief opponent, Matías Rodríguez, a far different record is given by the investigators

"Colonel Matías Rodríguez * * * is active and somewhat intelligent, and has an average education * * * He was born in Tetepango, district of Tula, Hidalgo, about 1875 * * * of honorable and very humble family * * * He went to school only as far as the fourth grade * * * and after that worked on his father's land, as a peon, and also worked at a lime oven making lime * * * In 1910 he joined the Revolution in sympathy with * * * Francisco I Madero, to whom he was loyal, remaining in his ranks until his cause won In 1913 he * * * fought against Victoriano Huerta * * * rose to the rank of major * * * In 1914 and 15, Rodríguez was still in the revolutionist ranks under General Nicolás Flores, then governor and military commandant of Hidalgo In this year Rodríguez rose to the rank of colonel Afterward he was a member of the XXVIIIth national legislature In 1919 and '20, he was president of the Agrarian Commission of the State of Hidalgo He left this position because of trouble with General Azuara but his work was in favor of the humble * * *

In 1921, Matias Rodriguez began to campaign for deputy to the national congress from Tula * * * He was supported by the "Partido Laborista," and also by the "Agrarista" element which he had protected so much, and was elected For the XXXVIth legislature (national) he campaigned supported by the "Partido Laborista," with his headquarters in Tacuba, D F, from which district he was candidate, but the "Confederado"[3] refused to recognize his credentials and therefore he was defeated * * * *[4]

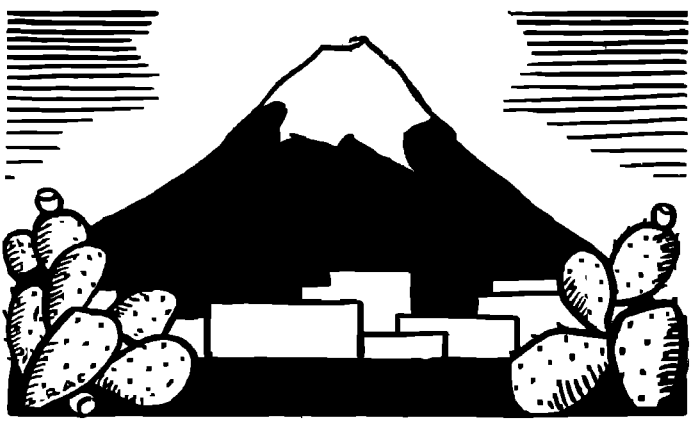
In the last armed movement * * * of de la Huerta, Matías Rodríguez was on the side of the established government, having organized a nucleus of competent men at whose head he fought * * * being among the first to take up arms in defense of the government * * * giving a personal escort of trustworthy men

[1] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011 12(724 6)–12
[2] *Idem*, Exp VII/011 12(724 6)1
[3] The majority political group in congress opposed to the "Laborista" and "Agrarista"
[4] A common fraud practiced consistently by the "Cooperatistas" and by their successors, the "Confederados"

to General Calles In the chamber of deputies he has acted in favor of agrarianism but was not of those in the limelight due to his lack of education Rodríguez has been a member of the "Partido Laborista," since he went into politics * * * his object being to help the proletariat which he has had the idea of lifting and helping for many years * * * He is known to have derived no personal advantage from his political career, has a little house in Tacuba and a little land of no great importance in his birthplace * * *[1]

The elections were held at the end of 1925 Despite the efforts of the "Sotolopiztas" (the followers of López Soto) to set up a rival legislature, the popularity of Matías Rodríguez, as one agent of Gobernación reports, "due to his friends among the lower and middle-classes, whom he has always tried to help * * * besides his friends in the other social classes" was too great to be resisted[2]

[1] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp VII/011 (72) 1
[2] *Idem*, Exp VII/011 (72) 1, Exp VII/011 12 (724 6) 1



JALISCO

In January, 1921, the provisional governor of Jalisco was Basilio Vadillo, having replaced F Labastida Izquierdo at the end of 1920 In this election a group of young men, protégés of Labastida Izquierdo, took an active part Among them were José Guadalupe Zuno and José María Cuellar, at that time deputies to the national congress, Alfredo Romo and Antonio Valadez Ramírez, all old friends They had a reputation for being "Bohemians" and before going into politics had spent much time in the Guadalajara *cantinas*, Zuno and Romo drawing portraits and caricatures for a livelihood, while Valadez Ramírez wrote verses for pleasure Says the report of a Gobernación agent

In this election Zuno and Cuellar murdered Lic Gudelio Jiménez, vice-president of the party which supported Francisco Escudero * * * This happened on election day, in the polls in the building of the supreme court[1] at the moment the polls were closing without anything out of the ordinary having occurred * * * their guilt having been ascertained by the judge who took the case in hand This official, as was customary, sent a copy of the proceedings to the chamber of deputies asking for a destitution of official exemption[2] from arrest for both Zuno and Cuellar, in order to try them * * * Nothing was done about this in the chamber, to which both Zuno and Cuellar were reelected * * * The copy of the proceedings sent to the chamber has since disappeared * * *[3]

Vadillo was elected The same report continues

Because Governor Vadillo did not yield to certain immoral demands of Zuno, Cuellar, and Alfredo Romo, three months afterward they became his enemies, and began to intrigue with the "Cooperatista"party to overthrow him For this they were expelled from their own party, the "Partido Liberal Constitucionalista," and joined the "Cooperatista" From then on the political group of Guadalajara became the tool of the "Cooperatista" and succeeded in overthrowing the governor,[4] substituting for him Antonio Valadez Ramirez"

[1] Another agent's report says it was the University, but both assert that it was in broad daylight, in the heart of the city, and with no provocation

[2] Art 109 of the constitution provides that in the event of an offense "of common order" by a congressman, the chamber shall determine whether an offense has been committed and whether the accused shall be turned over to the law courts for trial The same *fuero* or constitutional privilege applies to senators, ministers, and justices of the supreme court

[3] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011(723 2)/-1 [4] March 17, 1922

Of this affair another agent of Gobernación writes

* * * In all these acts[1] it was notorious that Labastida Izquierdo intervened as mentor or adviser, for which he was rewarded by the Zuno group by nominating him for the senate, where he is now seated * * *[2] and * * * has distinguished himself by protecting the group which raised him to power, contributing directly to Zuno's election as governor of the state later * * * He has some ability and his conduct has no stain beyond his alliance with the "Zunistas" * * *[3]

Further light is thrown on this by the report of a Gobernación agent

As Zuno took part in directing the massacre in the Municipal Palace of Guadalajara,[4] which served as pretext for the overthrow of Sr Vadillo, from that time on that group recognized the said Zuno as their leader * * * afterward made him the municipal president of Guadalajara and later governor of the state * * *[5]

Of the administration of the substitute, Valadez Ramírez, put in place of Vadillo by the "Zunistas," another report says

Valadez Ramírez was * * * provisional governor of Jalisco, named by the "Cooperatista" legislature which overthrew Vadillo, and pledged himself to "impose" as his successor, Guadalupe Zuno, a thing he had to carry out * * * During his administration, gambling was tolerated in that state * * *"[6]

At that time Zuno was reelected deputy to the national congress, which election is commented upon as follows

This election as deputy seems closely linked with the murder of the agrarian leader, Juan Bravo y Juárez, whose prestige as candidate from the same district made Zuno's election impossible[7] [And another report says] the crime was never punished * * *[8]

While Valadez Ramírez was in power, municipal elections were held and, in 1922, Zuno became municipal president of Guadalajara Elections for state deputies and the governorship fell due at the end of the year Then began a uniform policy of jailing all opposition leaders The candidate for the governorship against Zuno was Salvador Escudero, who had organized political clubs all over the state Neither of the candidates was officially supported by any of the national parties, although Zuno was affiliated with the "Cooperatistas" Indeed, the "Cooperatistas" decided to nominate another man, but apparently nothing came of it Nevertheless, they were indifferent to Zuno's candidacy What public opinion felt about Zuno is revealed in the following letter, written just before the elections by a private citizen to the president of Mexico

[1] Overthrowing the governor
[2] 1924
[3] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp VII/011 (725 1) 1
[4] No further mention of this event is to be found in the records
[5] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011 (723 2)/-1
[6] *Idem*, Exp VII/011(725 1)1
[7] *Idem*, Exp 7/011(723 2)/-1
[8] *Idem*, Exp VII/011(725 1)1

The poor state is hardly to be envied with these gentlemen in it * * * Since they were stricken with insanity for power, they abuse of their majority in the state legislature, which has become * * * the tyrant of this poor country-side * * * Who is not in accord with the ideas of the despotlets,[1] Zuno and company, alas for him, because he is worth nothing They have a horrible and insatiable thirst for power and say they will go over your will and that of all their "Cooperatista" comrades, and that they will lift Zuno into the governor's chair whatever be the cost and though bullets come with it But these poor devils can't see that all their strength is in the governmental machine without which they are not worth a cent, and they are hated by all classes in the state * * * You may be sure that if all hope is lost of remedying this situation and these men continue as they are, it is quite possible that an armed revolt will arise, not against the central but against the state government * * * All the Indians of Chapala and of the southern part of the state are constituents of Prof Vadillo who, although an agrarian, was a moderate, intelligent man, hostile to chicanery, who did his executive work, while the * * * rich landowners, who before talked against Vadillo * * * now sigh for him because he has become an angel in comparison * * *[2]

A group of Indians of Ciudad Guzmán called the "Comunidad de Indígenas," writes to the Federal Government

Since the fall of Governor Basilio Vadillo, we have suffered many hardships at the hands of the present government represented by Sr Valadez Ramírez, Zuno, and the municipal government of this city * * * On account of the coming elections we are being *hostilized*[3] * * * because we are in sympathy with Sr Escudero * * * Most of our comrades * * * have suffered duckings with all their clothes on and have been jailed on the slightest pretext * * * Our municipal government was locked up in a wet and miserable cell, on the charge of premeditated rebellion * * *[4]

These tactics seem to have been general all over the state Many complaints of opposition leaders being jailed and kept there were received The jailers were the municipal authorities, these were charged, in a rain of memorials, petitions, and letters, by private citizens and organizations all over the state, with open fraud and support of Zuno Revelation of the relations between Zuno and at least one municipal president are found in the letter he wrote Zuno on October 19, one month before the elections, in which the *Presidente Municipal* said "Rest assured that we are your faithful and sincere comrades and loyal to your good cause and that we will use whatever means within our power to keep them from registering their candidates * * * "[5]

[1] *Reyezuelos* [2] Relaciones Interiores, Exp C 2 73 12

[3] *Hostilizar*, 'to hostilize," an essential word in the Mexican political vocabulary, means to persecute, to "pick on" someone, to molest or attack him without previous provocation The antidote for being 'hostilized" is to get someone in higher authority to "give guarantees"

[4] Relaciones Interiores, Exp C 2 73 12 [5] *Idem*, Exp C 2 73 12

José María Ceballos, of Pihuano, Jalisco, upon being asked to head the anti-Zuno or pro-Escudero party in his district, accepted, writing

The brute force that the municipal * * * and state employees use in favor of Don Guadalupe Zuno will make the next elections, like the last, nothing but a political farce * * * and we should not be surprised at this * * * In this municipality, no one is in sympathy with the official imposition, except the municipal officials recently put in power * * * and they, in connivance with the state authorities, will make whatever they want out of the elections, paying no attention to our votes or our protests [1]

His prophecy appears correct in view of the reports and descriptions made of the elections One private citizen writes to his friend "Last Thursday I * * * went to arrange a matter * * * and by accident * * * caught the man in charge of the Civil Register, J Rosario Sandoval, and Salvador * * * brother of the treasurer, in the act of fixing the ballots, to save the citizens the bother * * * " [2]

On March 1, 1923, Guadalupe Zuno became governor of Jalisco Reports one Gobernación agent "Once in power, Zuno made an agreement with the National Syndicate of Agriculturists [3] which caused great stupefaction in Jalisco, and even his own friends repudiated his action * * *" [4]

On Zuno's administration, the following comment is made by a Gobernación agent "His administration has been of great advantage to himself financially * * * He has a house in the Colonia Reforma [5] and in La Barca [6] he has property, and an elegant house on Lake Chapala, and money in Mexican and foreign banks * * * " [7]

Another report

Governor Zuno, to enrich himself and acquire the hundreds of thousands of pesos with which to sustain himself in politics and bind the politicians to him with handsome gifts, took advantage of the fact that many of the rich of Guadalajara were sympathizers of the de la Huerta rebellion, and confiscated their property selling it at auction to his own advantage * * * For such manipulations, he used as his instruments several of his unconditionals,[8] but the most able of them, Benjamín Contreras * * * he continues to use in all the dirty business he undertakes * * * It is calculated that Governor Zuno has at least three million pesos, mostly in * * * foreign banks, and * * * property worth a fortune, such as the house he is building in the Colonia Nueva of Guadalajara, the cost of which is not less than two hundred thousand pesos * * * To satisfy his exaggerated love of lucre * * * when the Guadalajara streets were being paved [9] Zuno and Cuellar to-

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp C 2 73 12
[2] *Idem*, Exp C 2 73 12
[3] An organization of big landowners
[4] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011(723 2)/-1
[5] Guadalajara
[6] A town and district near Guadalajara
[7] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011(723 2)/-1
[8] *Incondicionales*, i e , thick-and-thin supporters
[9] Whatever the means or the motive, it is to be noted that Zuno paved streets, built roads, and opened schools, and probably has to his credit more public improvements than any other state governor in the years 1921–1926, excepting only Felipe Carrillo Puerto, governor of Yucatán from Feb , 1922, to Dec , 1923

gether with Deputy Carlos Cuervo sold at auction * * * the urban properties of all who could not pay the tax on the square metre of paving in front of each house * * * and now they are selling at auction the property of the eight deputies who tried to overthrow him * * * In order to force the judicial branch to obey his orders, whether in the verdict of a criminal or civil case, in a business of importance out of which he can get considerable quantities of money, he stops their salaries, upon which they either resign or obey his whims * * *[1]

Of his political activities another report of a Gobernación agent says

When the "Cooperatista" party was at the height of its power, Zuno was very influential in it because of his intimate friendship with Prieto Laurens, chief of that party, who let him do anything he wanted * * * In other parties with which he was affiliated he never was more than one of the many and when it was of advantage to him he betrayed them without hesitating During his administration Zuno sent Prieto Laurens, candidate for the governorship of San Luis Potosí, an immense armed mob ("porra viajera")[2] * * * When the de la Huerta uprising took place, Zuno had known about the plot since August 9, 1923, but did not inform the federal government until the eve of the revolt * * * He remained in his office until the ninth of December, 1923,[3] when he was replaced by Francisco Tolentino * * * but he remained in Guadalajara and was not molested * * * When he learned about the victory of Esperanza[4] he sent some representatives to Obregón * * * Once the government had won, Zuno left Guadalajara early one morning * * * and came back in the afternoon, accompanied by a few friends and took possession of the Municipal Palace[5]

In March, 1926, charges of violating the electoral laws were brought against Zuno in the national chamber of deputies by Romo, his former friend, who controlled the whole Jalisco representation and was secretary of the chamber, and in the senate the trial was begun under the leadership of Senator Manuel Hernández Galván, at that time its president Zuno, seeing that the senate, to which belongs the impeachment of governors, was hostile, resigned the governorship, saying that he did not want the honor of the state stained, and a Lic Sepúlveda became provisional governor It was recognized that he was merely a figurehead Later, Sepúlveda was replaced by a Lic Barba González, also notoriously Zuno's man Zuno himself spent most of his time meeting with agrarians and laborers, making speeches against the C R O M

He was not over-friendly to the Federal Government, having never been in sympathy with Calles

At that time the candidates for the gubernatorial elections of December, 1926, had begun to campaign These were

[1] Archivo de Gobernación Exp VII/011 12(723 2)1
[2] Literally "traveling mob" It was ready for duty anywhere
[3] The de la Huertistas under Estrada were in possession of Guadalajara on this date
[4] The victory by the federal general, Eugenio Martínez, over the rebels on the east front, which settled the outcome of the rebellion
[5] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011(723 2)/-1

Alfredo Romo, very influential in the chamber of deputies

José María Cuellar, municipal president of Guadalajara, intimate friend of Zuno

Daniel Benítez, who had been occupying the post of chief of staff in the Secretaría de Gobernación

The record of Alfredo Romo is given by one agent of Gobernación as follows

Son of a lumber dealer of Guadalajara * * * from the age of eighteen * * * led a riotous life, and is known to have been arrested and held in jail several times for drunkenness * * * Romo was never a revolutionist and even, in 1914 and 1915, spoke badly of the Constitutionalist Revolution and its members * * * He went into politics for the first time when * * * a provisional governor of Jalisco asked for liberals to replace the employees of the retiring governor * * * At that time he was appointed a member of the city government * * * He went into politics convinced that he could not work * * * He has no ideals of any kind * * * Romo, with Zuno and others, founded the party which * * * supported Vadillo for governor * * * but shortly afterward Romo was hostile to Vadillo * * * because of quarrels over moral matters in which Vadillo was always right * * * Romo became a member of the "Cooperatista" * * * and Vadillo overthrown, a deputy to the national legislature * * * and intimate friend of Prieto Laurens * * * Left the "Cooperatista" party because it was to his advantage to do so * * * but with his [local] party * * * remained, looking on * * * [during the de la Huerta rebellion] * * * until he saw which way victory was going * * * His personal morality has been bad When he was municipal president of Guadalajara in 1921, the extravagant life of a man about town that he led was notorious * * * as was the scandal * * * when together with Miguel Ahumada, Jr, they got Sr José Solórzano drunk * * * and won from him at poker * * * in a way said by witnesses to be fraudulent * * * some ten thousand pesos * * * which was denounced in the press and causing Romo's discharge by the governor * * * [Vadillo] [1]

The account given of Cuellar by Gobernación agents is similarly discreditable

Began as a clerk in the tax department of Jalisco in 1910 After four years there joined the forces of Colonel Melitón Albañez * * * As second lieutenant * * * he distinguished himself by his unique ability to perform not very decorous services [2] * * * for his chief * * * He had never gone into politics until 1915, when he was included in the impositionist ticket formed by Manuel Bouquet, provisional governor of Jalisco, under the instructions of Lic Manuel Aguirre Berlanga [3] * * * so that Cuellar came to the national legislature an unconditional Berlanga man * * * but with the duplicity of which he then began to give samples * * * "at three quarters to twelve" [4] he became an Obregonista * * * gaining by this

[1] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011/12(723 2)/1–

[2] The record indicates that these services consisted in arranging his chief's amours

[3] Member of Carranza's cabinet and an important figure in his government

[4] "At the eleventh hour"

* * * his reelection to the national legislature * * * which he entered under the flag of the "Local Cooperatista" * * * the flag then in fashion * * * When the campaign for governor of Jalisco came around, Cuellar became a Vadillista * * * his only achievement during this election being the murder, together with Zuno, of Lic Gudelio Jiménez * * * During the administration of Governor Vadillo, Cuellar was playing a double game of treason, for while Zuno and the others had declared themselves enemies of that régime and were, like Cuellar, "Cooperatistas," he, Cuellar, stuck to Vadillo's heels protesting his loyalty constantly * * * At that time he married his old general's widow, Sra Albañez * * * With Vadillo's overthrow, Cuellar returned to the national congress, for Valadez Ramírez was not governor for nothing * * * At this time he (Cuellar) and Zuno became very intimate friends of Jorge Prieto Laurens * * * and commanded the mob which Zuno sent to San Luis Potosí to help Prieto Laurens * * * who was running for governor of that state * * * and it seemed strange to all Jalisco that Cuellar did not join Laurens in his last adventure [1] * * * since almost to the end of November their friendship was as intimate as ever * * * At this last minute Cuellar became a Callista * * * and after the overthrow of the rebels * * * became municipal president of Guadalajara * * * and is also deputy to the national legislature, which post is filled by his substitute, his brother * * * His administration as municipal president of Guadalajara * * * was marked by the neglect of all public service * * * The cleaning of the city, for example, has been left in great part to private efforts The uniformed police has almost disappeared, being replaced by a secret police whose purpose is to "hostilize" all those considered unfriendly to the state government * * * It is not far-fetched to say that his complicity and Zuno's in the business of Gudelio Jiménez and other dirty things later will oblige Zuno to satisfy his (Cuellar's) ambition * * * to become governor of the state * * * It is difficult to ascertain exactly where Cuellar keeps his money, but it is certain that his profits have been plentiful, for he is insatiably avaricious * * * As to his education * * * he scarcely finished the primary grades * * * His chief weapons are falseness, hypocrisy, duplicity, and a certain hail-fellow-well-met quality which covers his base instincts * * * He is a man never to be trusted * * * It is true that he has been a revolutionist, but his conduct has not been satisfactory and he is pointed out as a murderer * * * He is violent, conceited, despotic, his character is changeable, he loves to exercise authority * * *[2]

Another report traces the relations between Zuno and Cuellar thus

Cuellar and Zuno * * * are closely bound together by a crime they committed together upon Lic Gudelio Jiménez * * * and also because recently, after the defeated uprising, one Felipe Moreno, alias "The Cock," involved in it, was taken prisoner by the military authorities * * * his guilt * * * is well established * * * and his execution had been ordered * * * but as this Moreno was bound to Zuno and Cuellar as an accomplice of several murders, he being executor of same, on the eve of his execution he told Cuellar that if they did not save him he would

[1] The de la Huerta rebellion of which Prieto Laurens was the most active civilian promoter after President Obregón refused to recognize his election as governor of San Luis Potosí

[2] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011(723 2)/-1

tell all he knew * * * Cuellar * * * went to the head of the federal troops, General Ferreira * * * in order to ask him to set free the famous Cock, but since the War Department already knew of him and his execution had been ordered * * * General Ferreira * * * refused to please Cuellar * * * and therefore he, Cuellar, proposed that they carry out the order but upon another individual named Felipe Moreno, employee of the municipal government * * * so that Felipe Moreno, alias "The Cock," was set free, and another Felipe Moreno, whose sole crime had been to be honest and a working-man and whose one misfortune was having the same name * * * as the one sentenced to death * * * was executed instead [1]

As to Benítez, the third candidate, the Gobernación agent who reported on him says

He studied law * * * and practised it in this city * * * He rendered important services as governor of the territory of Lower California * * * and his record in politics and in the Revolution is well known since he has been legal counsel, chief of staff, and sub-secretary of the Secretaría de Gobernación during the administration of General Obregón * * * He is quiet and calm, of straight standards, firm character, modest in his attitude, of humble and honorable birth * * * [2]

Another one of several agents sent to Jalisco to watch and report on the elections, says of Benítez

His candidacy has been seen with pleasure by many independent people here, but all his constituents are merely well intentioned and not men of action and they won't be able to win against the sweeping imposition of Zuno * * * whose party * * * is kept up by state funds and supported by federal troops Benítez's friends * * * feel [that they have] no other choice but to stand aside and not take his part openly, for all think that if they do, they will be persecuted [3] in some way, and until they are convinced * * * that their lives and positions will not suffer * * * no party will arise and the state government will be permitted to carry out its electoral farce unmolested * * * [4]

Another agent reports

Have just made a tour through the *pueblos* where Benítez has been campaigning * * * and it is clear to me that the people of Jalisco accept with joy and preference this candidate * * * He is courageously organizing and unifying * * * his friends * * * The enthusiasm he arouses is overwhelming * * * sincere and spontaneous manifestations not seen for some time * * * in defiance of the municipal authorities who are determined to impose Cuellar * * * I can assure you that the legal victory belongs to Benítez * * * As to Cuellar and Romo, honestly speaking, they have no support beyond that of the official element * * * Cuellar * * * who is certain that the state legislature will give him his victory * * * and the other * * * Romo * * * with the help he supposes he will receive from the municipal presidents he has bought * * * [5]

[1] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 135 (3 2)–1 [2] *Idem*, Exp 7/011 12(723 2)–1
[3] *Hostilizados* [4] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp VII/011 12(723 2/)1
[5] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp VII/011 12(723 2)/1

Another agent comments thus on the situation

To take precautions against the help that Gobernación is supposed to be giving Benítez * * * which is according to them * * * that Gobernación will recognize him as governor of the state after the elections are over * * * on the pretext of the official imposition of Cuellar, alleging the partiality which the state government has shown him * * * they * * * the Zunistas * * * have decided to change governors, naming Lic Silvano Barba González * * *[1] who is to declare to the Secretaría of Gobernación * * * that he is under no obligation or pledge to the Zuno interests * * * To finish the comedy, Barba González has ordered all the state prosecuting attorneys fired from their jobs, since the majority of them are charged with being pro-Cuellar propagandists and poll installers * * * but he is sending them as municipal presidents to the municipalities whose governments are not "Cuellaristas" * * * In my opinion * * * the best thing to change the political situation of this state would be that the Secretaría of Gobernación or the president influence the supreme court to come to a decision upon the injunction given to the eight deputies suspended by Zuno * * * as Romistas * * * so that they could occupy their position and, with four more who are functioning and upon whom they can count, form a majority * * * in the understanding that these eight deputies, although they are now Romistas, are ready to do whatever the Secretaría may order * * *[2]

The preelection situation is here summed up, by another Gobernación agent

* * * Lic Benítez has won the sympathy of the people and their votes, by convincing them * * * not by unrealizable promises but by stating that he will sustain the constitution and the laws of the nation absolutely, and his campaign, fruitful though it has been, has not had the noise and smoke of the other two, for he has had very little money to spend * * * One of his chief planks is complete and absolute allegiance to the policy of President Calles * * * The only charge against him is that he is not known in the state * * *

Romo * * * has campaigned, literally throwing money around, using a great number of men in his service, most of whom are strangers in the state * * * and in several cases has forcibly deposed municipal authorities and replaced them with his own men * * * and a building in which are located his headquarters * * * in Guadalajara * * * is called "The Fortress," because of the great number of armed men which fill it * * * He is charged with having furthered his own cause by unworthy means, such as declaring hostility to the policy of the president of the republic * * * offering the Catholics that as soon as he gets into power he will make Article 130 of the constitution null and void * * * A printed piece of pro-Romo propaganda requested the inhabitants not to show joy at his coming, out of respect for the religious feeling of the Catholic people * * *[3] Both Cuellaristas

[1] To replace Sepulveda, whom Zuno had "imposed" when he resigned the governorship

[2] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011 12(723 2)–1 This comment is interesting in its reflection of the assumed responsiveness of the supreme court to an executive suggestion

[3] Officially the Catholics were in mourning because of the withdrawal of the clergy from the churches on August 1, 1926

and Romistas are charged with having attacked the polls * * * and these charges have been proved * * *[1]

Romo's pro-Catholic election policy is further pointed out in letters, memorials, and petitions sent by many people and parties to the Federal Government, saying that Romo told the people that Benítez was a "Jacobino" but that he, Romo, "will know how to give you liberty and protection * * * " and would reopen the churches as soon as he was elected, by which policy he gained many votes in the smallest villages, cases being given of peasants arriving and asking for the "man who was going to bring religion back * * * " and a letter written by several citizens states that in San Andrés Ixtlán, "the priest of the place, Pascual Ortiz * * * pistol in belt and bottle in hand openly and publicly asked the citizens to vote for * * * Romo * * * stating that the others were Masons "

A report sent in by a Gobernación agent, just before the elections, reads

It is logical to suppose that the elections will be colored by blood, because of the crimes and disorders that are committed daily * * * The citizens will not go to the polls (as they did not in the recent elections) * * * fearful of a bullet or a dagger, for it is not to be forgotten that the two * * * Romistas and Cuellaristas * * * have killers[2] at their orders who, like their chiefs, stop at nothing to reach their goal * * * If to this fear is added the sympathy and even the wish to vote for Benítez, it is natural to suppose that they won't vote at all, for besides the danger they would be in from both Cuellaristas and Romistas * * * they are certain that their votes would mean nothing * * * for the polls are controlled by Cuellaristas, who for some time past have had the state treasury at their disposal and the others, the Romistas, with the money of the national chamber of deputies, can sustain a large body of men for whatever purpose they think useful * * *[3]

Immediately before the elections an agent telegraphed

Yesterday an armed body from Ahualulco attacked the town of Arenal shouting "Viva Romo y Cristo Rey,"[4] and killed the secretary of the municipal government of Tizapan el Alto Later, when the Romistas attempted to recapture the town, a battle ensued in which ten Cuellar men and two Romo men were killed without the town being retaken * * * It is entirely true that Deputy Romo has offered Minister Morones all the Jalisco delegation for the "Laborista bloc," if he influences the president to support him in that state as governor * * *[5]

The elections were, as prophesied — extremely bloody Groups of armed men, either Romistas or Cuellaristas, patrolled the state, and battled whenever they met It would be impossible to count the number slain for the agents report skirmishing constantly, with occasional fatal results

[1] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp X 7/011 12(723 2)-1
[2] *Gente matona*
[3] Archivo de Gobernacion, 7/011 12(723 2)-1
[4] Long live Romo and Christ the King
[5] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 7/011 12(723 2)-1

to one side or the other and the papers were full of little paragraphs reporting people killed, such as "Five Romistas Killed in Jalisco," which contained statements like the following "On the same date * * * the anti-Romistas killed Ramón Rodríguez * * * but he sold his life dearly, taking between his spurs[1] * * * two Zunistas"

As to Cuellar, his party attacked Morones and the C R O M, and indirectly, Calles, stating that he (Cuellar) was upheld by General Obregón and that pretty soon there would be trouble for Calles if he did not let them alone All of this is reported by different agents, as also the fact that arms and ammunition were being received constantly by one or another party Says one agent

The elections may be considered the filthiest things that can be seen in politics There was not the slightest respect for the act of voting Free voting did not function at all, not even to the extent of giving the thing a legal tint,[2] for in the roughest way, like the battles of the Romans and the Greeks, with groups of men clashing with other groups — this is what the polls became * * * Most of them were attacked at noon and none kept open until two, as the law requires * * * Fermín Labastida is one of those who distinguished himself the most, for he directed the maneuvering of the attacking and robbing the polls, in command of the Romista forces * * *[3]

Another report says

It can be stated that there were no elections * * * The Cuellaristas prepared the documents beforehand, installed the polls long before time, and let a few papers be snatched from them by the Romistas * * * The Romistas devoted themselves to attacking the polls, taking the papers and retiring to their offices to work * * *[4]

Reporting before the elections, one agent wires, giving the situation within the state legislature, until that moment pro-Cuellar

* * * Local deputies divided into two groups, one Benitizta of ten members and the other Romista of nine Romistas have taken three of the Benitiztas by * * * offering twenty-five thousand pesos to Loera[5] and fifteen thousand to each of the other two Probably at the hour of the struggle a conflict will arise and two legislatures will result[6]

On September 30, after the "election," an agent reports

The elections over, the Romistas devoted themselves to trying to buy deputies * * * Romo spent four hundred thousand pesos in the campaign * * * They wanted the state legislature to declare Romo governor but the majority, convinced that they could not declare Cuellar elected because of the charges against him,

[1] Cock fight phraseology
[2] Obviously the ultimate in corruption
[3] A state deputy who was Zunista and therefore also Cuellarista
[4] *Idem*, Exp 7/011 12(723 2)–1
[5] Archivo de Gobernación Exp 7/011 12(723 2)–1
[6] *Idem*, Exp 7/011 12(723 2)–1

divided into two groups, one Romista and one Benitizta, the first bought and the second convinced that after Cuellar, the only legal candidate elected was Benítez, this conviction predominating until the 26th of this month when they counted the votes and declared Benítez elected * * *[1]

Reports of agents afterward state that both Romo and Zuno, said to have joined forces, declared they were going to make trouble, Romo by establishing a separate legislature, and Cuellar by armed revolt "Zuno says that he can stand up against General Calles and is bringing arms to his house, saying that he counts on the support of General Obregón "[2]

In February, 1927, four months after the election, Benítez took possession of the governor's chair and was recognized as the legal governor by the Federal Government

On April 22, 1927, the local legislature by unanimous vote unseated Governor Benítez and named national deputy Margarito Ramírez in his place The latter took possession of the government palace *accompanied by ex-Governor Zuno, Alfredo Romo, and José María Cuellar* "Commerce in the center of the city closed its doors, but fortunately order was not disturbed since the local forces" (defensas sociales) "of Benítez were disarmed by the federal forces,"[3] telegraphed a newspaper correspondent

[1] Archivo de Gobernación, Exp 135(32)–1
[2] *Idem*, Exp 135(32)–1
[3] Excelsior, April 23, 1927



MEXICO

On January 1, 1921, General Abundio Gómez was provisional governor of the State of Mexico, appointed by the national senate In February, the state legislature appointed Manuel Campos Mena provisional governor in place of Gómez who was a candidate for the four-year constitutional governorship Elections were held in July, the term beginning in September The candidates were

General Abundio Gómez, said to be the "official" candidate

General Andrés Castro, supported by the federal troops stationed in the state

Ingeniero Angel Barrios, supported by the "Partido Agrarista" [1]

Before election, candidate Castro writes that if the "enemies of the government," meaning the Gómez party, are kept out of power, he is willing to withdraw his own candidacy and gives the following description of the Gómez party's methods

> Gómez * * * was told of the danger of failure * * * if he announced his candidacy without counting on the support of the Federal Government * * * so he remembered that he was the cousin of Jose Inocente Lugo, sub-secretary of Gobernación * * * and began to visit him frequently, until he secured * * * as is greatly probable * * * the support of said Sr Lugo * * * On the election of [state] deputies * * * depends the election of governor * * * but the former depends on the * * * municipal governments [2] * * * so it was to their advantage to take possession of the *municipios* * * * and here was born the imposition of municipal governments * * * Elections were decreed * * * for November 7 [3] * * * and the decree contained the following proviso * * * "Article 130 of the electoral laws is hereby modified so that in case of nonconformity * * * with the elections those complaining go to the executive of the state * * * and the commission appointed * * * by him * * * for this purpose * * * will render the final decision * * * from which there is no appeal * * *" By this method, not used in the worst days of Diaz and Huerta, the following municipal governments were imposed * * * [4] * * * Once this * * * preparation * * * had been effected * * * the candidates for deputies * * * to the state legislature were chosen * * * The majority are reactionaries and their leaders are

[1] Relaciones Interiores Exp B 2 71 9

[2] As they can control the electoral procedure in their municipalities

[3] This was 1919 when General Abundio Gomez was provisional governor

[4] The list given in the Gobernacion archives numbers eleven municipalities

Licenciado Eduardo García, brother-in-law of General Fernando González and representative of El Oro mining company

Licenciado Jenaro Barrera, secretary-general of the state during the * * * time of Huerta * * * representative of the mining company El Oro

Licenciado Leopoldo Rebollar, secretary of agriculture under Huerta

Escribano Silviano Garcia who * * * during the time of Huerta * * * made a speech insulting all the revolutionaries and very especially the Martyr President [1] * * * which he printed in pamphlet form and distributed * * * [2]

Castro goes on to say that the elections in all districts except two were illegal, that polls were violated, if not by direct connivance with the municipal governments, then by force, pistol in hand, and that the violators did whatever they pleased with the electoral documents [3]

The agrarians supporting Barrios also complained of fraud Nothing seems to have been done about these complaints except acknowledgments of receipt and notification that the governor of the state had been informed of the cases

To one complaint, the state government replied insolently

In answer * * * I state that your lack of confidence is a fear that you have because of your slight practice in electoral struggles * * * for * * * you will never be able to prove that the Oficial Mayor of this government has violated the electoral law, since what you call orders given by this official in electoral matters are decisions by the executive in compliance with the law * * * [4]

At the same time, the Gómez party complained that the federal troops, under General Amarillas, were taking an undue interest in the elections, in favor of General Castro On September 1, after the election, a dynamite bomb exploded near General Gómez's house He accused the federal troops of responsibility in this affair, and complained also that they refused to come to his aid but instead arrested the police inspector who did, to which General Amarillas answered that the arrest was a mistake [5]

On September 16, 1921, the legislature supporting General Gómez established itself in the official locale, and at the same time the legislature supporting General Castro established itself in the Church of Santa Clara, in Toluca, the state capital A day or two later, the "Castristas," aided by federal troops, captured the official locale and installed their legislature in it, and General Amarillas was ordered to keep himself and his men out of politics, but answered that he was only keeping order, whereupon he withdrew his soldiers and the state troops drove the "Castrista" legislature out of the state-house [6] The "Castristas" went back to the Church of Santa Clara

[1] Madero

[2] The purport of these biographical summaries is to prove the politically damaging fact previously stated that the leaders of the Gómez clique were "reactionaries"

[3] Relaciones Interiores, Exp B 2 73 9

[4] *Idem* [5] *Idem* [6] *Idem*

On September 16, 1921, both Castro and Gómez were sworn in by their respective legislatures Gobernación firmly upheld the Gómez party and refused to recognize the other Therefore General Abundio Gómez, at the end of 1921, was governor of Mexico [1]

In 1925 elections again fell due for governor The Governor's brother, Filiberto Gómez, a national deputy, tentatively announced his candidacy A letter written to President Obregón, in October, 1924, says of the coming elections

> The imposition is already being prepared for next year's elections * * * It is an insult to the state that men who are nothing but leeches * * * and not even natives of the state * * * should attempt to found a dynasty * * * The roll of this year's city government has just been posted * * * The municipal president, Fernando Garcés, can't even write his own name * * * He has been a groom all his life * * * He is an unconditional * * * Gómez man * * * Never before has this state seen such nepotism as now reigns The majority * * * of deputies * * * in the legislature * * * relatives of the Gómez dynasty which has left this unfortunate place * * * in such terrible poverty, but we can't protest because * * * if we do * * * we are considered enemies of the Federal Government [2]
>
> (Signed) I VALENZUELA,
> MARCOS RUÍZ,
> ROMAN DUEÑAS

A letter from a peasant of Amecameca complains of the mistreatment at the hands of the municipal president incidental to the coming "imposition"

> * * * We have to lament the painful and deplorable events in this poor State of Mexico, where daily we are made victims of the governor's verbal orders to the municipal presidents * * * All of us who do not mix into this dirty politics of the governor * * * everybody who does not enroll under his banner, is ordered killed, and if he escapes this, is beaten or jailed for several months in the corrals of the municipal presidencies * * * all by order of the governor * * * The municipal presidents don't hesitate to say so * * * Pablo Lara was put in here as municipal president by * * * the governor * * * Lara is a man soaked in *pulque* and alcohol * * * He is drunk daily, shouts and threatens, pulls out his pistol, shouting "This is supported by Calles * * * and by Gómez * * * and what can anyone do to me?" * * * and shoots right and left and insults whom he does not shoot * * * A few days ago the railroad of San Rafael Atlixco was attacked * * * these attacks are planned in the municipal presidency * * * by the order and with the help of Lara. * * * They are a bunch of bandits * * * [3]

Another sidelight on the elections is a letter written by a supporter of Carlos Riva Palacio, one of the candidates to the governorship, to the president of one of the polls

[1] Relaciones Interiores B 2 73 9
[2] *Idem*, Exp E 2 74 9
[3] *Idem*, D 2 74 1 12

* * * They tell me you have another candidate * * * contrary to mine * * * You shouldn't because if I named you president of the polls it was because I thought I could count on you * * * If you double-cross me this time, then keep in mind I'll be the first to finish you when I have the chance, for instance, by giving a list of our enemies to the general and to the deputy[1] * * * I tell you Damaso, don't you be flopping[2] on me, because you'll hurt yourself * * *

WILFRIDO ZARATE

To Damaso Cruz[3]
Barrio de Coyotillos

The candidates in this election were

Carlos Riva Palacio, supported by the "Partido Laborista" and openly by the retiring governor, General Abundio Gómez

Lic Domingo S Trueba, independent, former secretary of Governor Abundio Gómez

Colonel David Montes de Oca, supported by the agrarians, not organized except in a few localities

Dr Dario López, independent

Dr Espinoza de Monteros, independent

A report made to Gobernación on June 23, 1925, shortly before the elections, reads as follows

* * * The great interest of the state government in supporting * * * Riva Palacio * * * was evident in the demonstration * * * Filiberto and Margarito Gómez[4] personally directed the organization of it and had people brought in from the districts, having sent orders to this end to the municipal presidents * * * The railroad bill has been sent for collection to the state treasury * * * The municipal government[5] had special instructions given for the success of the demonstration, and ordered its personnel to attend * * * Riva Palacio * * * is scarcely known in this state * * * He was accompanied by * * * a number of deputies from the national congress, the two hundred horsemen of the old state troops under the command of Colonel Margarito Gómez * * * which the state, in spite of the Federal Government, clandestinely supports Nevertheless * * * the people were absolutely cold toward * * * the impositionist candidate And comments could not have been other than unfavorable * * * Of course Sr Riva Palacio considers * * * the road smooth for he has rented a luxurious residence where he will surely live when he becomes governor * * * Public opinion is that the electoral fraud will not be carried through, in view of the precedents established by General Calles and the Secretary of Gobernación Lic Valenzuela * * * to keep state governments from becoming political parties * * * and which guarantee the same criterion in regard to the State of Mexico * * * for it would be terrible if "Gomizmo" were perpetuated in the state, allied to the group of Morones * * * and with a man so lacking capacity and character as is * * * Riva Palacio * * * excellent personally, no doubt, and as a personal friend of General Calles, but of

[1] Filiberto Gómez was the deputy General Gómez was his brother It is to be presumed that they are meant

[2] *Volteando*, i e , switching political allegiance

[3] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 74 9

[4] Another brother

[5] Of Toluca, the state capital

little political intelligence and profoundly vain, which would make him become the tool of the terrible and immoral politicians, Angel Alanís Fuentes, José Luis Solórzano, and the not less immoral and bloody brothers, Filiberto and Margarito Gómez * * * The situation has bettered noticeably in favor of Dr Darío López, and this is due to the open pressure of the state government,[1] to the unpleasant methods of Montes de Oca and the ridiculous posing of Lic Trueba * * * all of which * * * have made a movement of sympathy toward Dr López * * * in whom is seen an independent, popular * * * candidate * * * and with certain administrative ability * * * On one side, the state government becomes a political party, the Rivapalicista, and on the other, an independent nucleus which has seen in Darío López the only hope of freeing itself from the Gomizta dynasty and the Moronista absorption, and around, as mere incidentals, the bloody figure of Montes de Oca and the comic figure of Trueba * * * Sunday night there was skirmishing between the Rivapalicistas [2] and the Dariolopiztas [3] * * * provoked by the drunkenness and lust for blood of Margarito Gómez, of whom it is said that he shot at a bootblack just because he wore a Darío López emblem * * *[4]

Agent No 18 reports on the demonstration in favor of Riva Palacio as follows

The scandalous events in the demonstration in favor of * * * Riva Palacio * * * in which a great many members of the state government took part * * * the governor himself and his two brothers Filiberto and Margarito * * * deputies to the state legislature * * * members of the city government * * * and employees * * * Offenses of the participants in the demonstration, against peaceful citizens, went unpunished, though some occurred in presence of the governor * * * The great quantity of wine and money distributed * * * presupposes that the best part came out of the state treasury * * * the enormous barbecue given in front of the chamber of deputies and served by employees of the government and public officials * * * Abundio Gómez * * * is a person with little energy * * * lack of character and standards, slight education, easily influenced, and for these reasons in the hands of a clique of politicians who have unscrupulously taken advantage of these circumstances to become directors of public affairs, with the object of personal benefit * * * This is why the election for municipal governments held in November of last year * * * were such unheard of * * * violations of the law * * * I visited San José, Valle de Bravo, Amanalco de Becerra, Asunción, and Tejupilco, in which imposed municipal governments function * * * In some cases * * * they were given possession by armed force * * * and they say that the same thing is true all over the state * * * I judge that * * * public opinion * * * is hostile to Riva Palacio * * * and in spite of official pressure and all kinds of obstacles placed in the way of the other parties, the small number of ballots distributed, with the premeditated end of keeping the people from showing * * * their sympathy for Dr Darío López * * * who in the primaries * * * obtained a tremendous majority * * * They * * * speak well of him * * *

[1] In behalf of its candidate Riva Palacio, which caused a popular reaction in favor of one of the other candidates

[2] Supporters of Riva Palacio

[3] Supporters of Darío López

[4] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 74 9

some with affection, others with gratitude for his humanitarian practise of his profession for the humble, and for his general reputation as an honorable man * * *[1]

Agent No 21 reports

We found out * * * visiting several places * * * in Toluca and around it * * * that the only candidate * * * for whom there was any real sympathy in the elections * * * was Dr Dario López * * * There was apathy in the voting * * * because General Gómez * * * is attempting to impose Riva Palacio * * * so that all efforts for other candidates would necessarily be sterile * * * Numerous employees of the national chamber of deputies came to help and support Riva Palacio * * * Also from the Ministry of Finance * * * and from the municipal government of Mexico City * * *[2]

In another report the same agent says

Deputy Fabila told me * * * that he knew that nearly all the employees of the Contaduria Mayor of the Finance Ministry had given money to the candidacy of Riva Palacio, but that this was spontaneous,[3] since with a suggestion from the head of the department * * * all had given at least one day's salary * * *[4]

About the elections themselves, No 21 reports

In the same train with me * * * going to Amecameca * * * were four employees of the Mexico City municipal government * * * commissioned by * * * Riva Palacio * * * to make propaganda and work for him in the elections * * * The people * * * are completely apathetic * * * don't show the slightest interest in the elections * * * the directors of Riva Palacio's campaign told me that the elections depended * * * not so much on the result of election day * * * but on the work of the counting committee which meets next Thursday * * * I learned, from the municipal employees who went to Amecameca to work in the elections for Riva Palacio, that other Mexico City government employees and employees of the treasury, had gone on the same day, to Toluca, Texcoco, and Tlalnepantla * * *[5]

Agent No 20 writes

In Tlalnepantla * * * on election day * * * were two gentlemen accompanied by *mozos* who filled the town with Carlos Riva Palacio billboards * * * When the presidents of the polls arrived to install the voting, these gentlemen held long conferences with them * * * and also with a lieutenant of the federal troops stationed there * * * who, with his soldiers * * * searched all the passengers on the trains * * * and disarmed them * * * At noon * * * I invited the two * * * gentlemen to have a drink * * * and found that they had been sent by the Secretaría of Industry * * *[6]

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 74 9 [2] *Idem*
[3] The "spontaneity" of such contributions following a "suggestion" from the employees' chief may be doubted
[4] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 74 9 [5] *Idem* [6] *Idem*

No 21 gives more details

In Temamantla * * * the municipal president, in combination with the president of the only polling place * * * installed * * * did not permit anybody to vote * * * except for Riva Palacio * * * In Chalco * * * the municipal authorities * * * were openly in favor of Riva Palacio * * * Employees of the Mexico City municipal government were there, working for Riva Palacio * * *[1]

Another report immediately after the elections summed up as follows

The elections and the counting committees have left the people tremendously discouraged * * * For one thing * * * the violations committed by the brothers Gómez, propagandists for Riva Palacio, such as removals of forty-odd municipal governments marked "Lopiztas," and the jailing of people * * * and for another, the belief that the imposition of Riva Palacio is fated and inevitable because General Calles wants it * * * To back this assertion * * * they cite cases of railroad passes signed by General José Alvarez, chief of the presidential staff, used by numerous employees of the Secretaría of Industry, of the Mexico City, Federal District, and Tacuba and Atzcapozalco[2] municipal governments * * * employees who * * * intervened as "porristas" * * * *[3] It can be asserted that in Toluca, Zinacatepec, Metepec, etc and the other districts * * * in that region * * * the voting frankly favored Dr Lopez * * * In the rural districts far from the center * * * the voting went to Colonel Montes de Oca, but for Riva Palacio the voting was of the slightest * * * since no one can take seriously votes manufactured by the authorities * * * Public opinion can be summed up as follows that Dr López obtained the true majority of votes, that perhaps it did not suit the ends of the Federal Government to have a civilian so near as the State of Mexico, that the voting in favor of Riva Palacio has been an immense and clumsy farce prepared by the state government and the Moronistas,[4] that the administration of Riva Palacio will be highly harmful and immoral because of the cooperation of Alanís and Solórzano, and the absorbing influence of Morones whose tendency is to take control of several state governments, and even to remove Lic Valenzuela in order to handle the next chambers and prepare his candidacy for the presidency * * * that the candidacy of Trucba has been a farce and that perhaps the best solution would be to recognize Colonel Montes de Oca, a resolute and trustworthy man for the Federal Government, from a political and military point of view, and who certainly is backed by a large mass of peasants * * * The only thing to be deplored would be an exaggerated * * * application of the agrarian laws * * * though I am sure that Lic Valenzuela would be careful to subject Montes de Oca to the line of conduct of General Calles in agrarian questions * * *[5]

The official resumé of the case, made by the legal counsel of Gobernación, establishes the following

All the violations of the law, all the irregularities and all the offenses of which the contenders were victims, can be summed up as the following

[1] Relaciones Interiores Exp F 2 74 9
[2] Suburbs of Mexico City in the Federal District controlled by "Laboristas"
[3] *Porra*, an organized armed mob
[4] Followers of Morones
[5] Relaciones Interiores, 2 74 9

A Imposition of municipal governments which were unconditionally the governor's

B Deposition of independent municipal governments

C Substitution of municipal presidents on the eve of elections

D Active and open campaigning for Riva Palacio by the authorities and employees of the state

E Material aid of the state government, such as payment for things used in the campaign [1]

F Census taking for voting, which included only the voters in favor of Riva Palacio

G Removal of employees not adherents of the same candidate, threats to the rest of meeting the same fate if they did not vote for him

H Refusal to register candidates in opposition to Riva Palacio, and also credentials of representatives of same parties

I Irregularities in the polls, such as non-instalment, instalment not in presence of representatives of contending parties, and double appointments to prepare the fraud

J Not enough ballots for many citizens not in favor of Riva Palacio

K Distribution of ballots with the names of those to be voted for, by order of the municipal authorities, or substitution of ballots with others * * *

L Help of authorities in obstructing free voting in favor of candidates opposing Riva Palacio

M Persecution and grave offenses and crimes perpetrated upon the adherents of Dr López, Colonel Montes de Oca, and Lic Domingo Trueba

N Armed forces in many polls, under the pretext of keeping order but in reality with the object of intimidating the voters in opposition to Riva Palacio

O Participation * * * in the electoral acts * * * of a large number of public employees of the Federal government and of the Mexico City municipal government * * * in behalf of Riva Palacio

P Theft of ballot containers and electoral documents, by the *Rivapalacistas*

Q Detention, kidnapping, and other violent means of threatening presidents of polls not adherent to the authorities, to keep them from going to the counting committees

R Substitution for legal votes of illegal

The charges brought against the other parties are similar, but far fewer The conclusion is

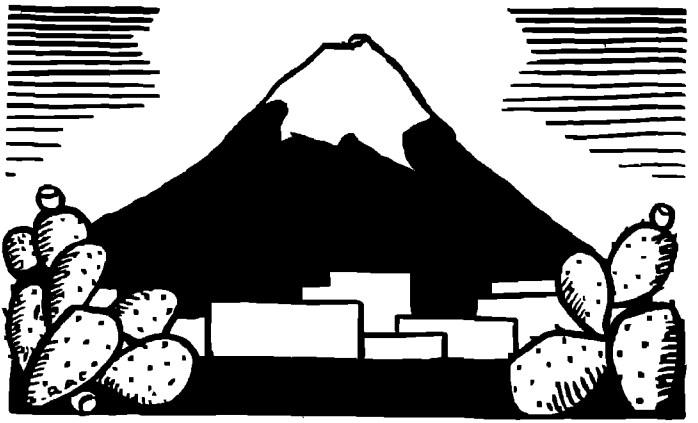
The irregularities committed before the elections and during them, on the 5th of July, and after them, on the meeting of the counting committees, suffice to determine * * * the elections * * * null and void, but since this decision is the exclusive privilege of the state legislature * * * in case various legislatures are established * * * the executive will be able only * * * to recognize that one the election of which was nearest the law, and which would give the most guarantees to the long-suffering State of Mexico * * * The voting in favor of Carlos Riva Palacio, and his ticket of deputies, is corrupt, having been done on a basis of imposition of the authorities * * * The most numerous and least corrupt voting is that

[1] This refers specifically to billboards, and other materials used in the campaign

in favor of Dr Dario López and Colonel David Montes de Oca, and in the third place, Lic Domingo Trueba It is for the executive to recognize between the three candidates, and their respective legislatures, those which in his judgment deserve it, corresponding to the genuine will of the people of the State of Mexico [1]

This report was rendered on August 20, 1925 On August 25, President Calles having ordered Gobernación to recognize Carlos Riva Palacio, Lic Gilberto Valenzuela, Secretary of Gobernación, and the sub-secretary resigned [2] On June 1, 1927, Carlos Riva Palacio was governor of the State of Mexico

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp E 2 74 9
[2] *Idem*, Exp F 2 34 12



MICHOACAN

January 1, 1921, the governor of Michoacán was General Francisco Múgica

In July, 1922, elections were held for the state legislature The governor was accused of putting in his own candidates

In July, 1923, elections were held for national senators and deputies, the "Laboristas" and "Agraristas" complained of fraud by the state authorities Gobernación ordered all municipalities not to declare any elections null and void, and to register all credentials [1]

In July, 1924, elections were held for governor and local legislature Candidates for governor were

Lic Josć Ortiz Rodríguez and General Enrique Ramírez Lic Rodríguez charged the retiring governor with imposition, and submitted proof that ten of the retiring deputies proposed the candidacy to Ramírez [2] After Ramírez was elected and the legislature installed there was an attempt to split it in two and form another The numbers were evenly divided, seven to seven The Federal Government, however, decided that there was no conflict between two branches of the government, and that therefore it had no right to intervene The legislature, therefore, integrated again [3]

Real excitement occurred during the elections for national deputies and senators in July, 1926 The state was divided into many political parties On one side was a federation of nine parties, mostly "socialista" or "agrarista," called "Confederación de Partidos Revolucionarios de Michoacán" Two other fairly strong parties, the "Socialista Melchor Ocampo" and the "Alianza de Partidos Socialistas de la República," and two smaller parties, made a total of thirteen [4]

The state government was charged with fraudulently putting in its own candidates, of which the following document said to have been taken from its possessor while drunk [5] was submitted as evidence

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp D 2 74 1 13 Nos I and II
[2] *Idem*, Exp E 2 74 1
[3] *Idem*, Exp F 2 37 11
[4] *Idem*, Exp 2 311 D S (3-4)1
[5] This document was submitted by the "Partido Socialista Nacional," with the comment that the owner "later appeared much worried and may leave his position and the state so great is the panic that exists among the people due to the measures the government takes against all who do not submit unconditionally to its instructions for the elections * * *"

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

To the Citizens Municipal Presidents of the State

Number Seventy-three

I "Shall avoid, as much as possible, registering those candidates of parties which are not friends of the government, that is, that are not part of the 'Confederación de Partidos Revolucionarios del Estado'

Number Seventy-three

II "In case they are obliged to make this registration, they shall do so with a color mark different from that which the parties and candidates, enemies of this government, have used in their propaganda, for which purpose they shall register previously for some of the parties of the 'Confederación' the color mark used by the enemy parties in their propaganda [1]

Number Seventy-three

III "They shall see that they refuse under all circumstances to register the credentials of the representatives of the parties, enemies of this government, that is, not 'Confederados,' and in case that is impossible said registration shall be done for the least number of credentials possible and never shall they authorize more than the law allows, except for the parties of the 'Confederación'

Number Seventy-three

IV "They shall give to the representatives of the 'Confederación' the number of ballots, credentials for poll installers and assistants, that they ask, for which purpose this order shall be shown to the employees whom it may concern, in the councils of electoral and district lists, but without leaving it under any circumstances in their possession, nor permitting them to see more than this clause, under the strictest personal responsibility to the possessor of this document

Number Seventy-three

V "On election day they shall see that, under all circumstances, whatever the cost and by force if necessary, polls not be established with elements not 'Confederado'

Number Seventy-three

VI "They shall give conclusive instructions to the presidents of the polls to gather up the credentials which the representatives of enemy parties may present to identify themselves, and destroy these and oblige the representatives to leave the polls

[1] The purpose being of course to mislead the voters who would vote under the color mark which they had become accustomed to associate with the party

Number Seventy-three

VII "They shall give instructions previously to the installers and assistants who, under the strictest personal responsibility, must not give their documents to the polls that might be installed with elements not 'Confederado'

Number Seventy-three

VIII "When the polls are closed, they shall give the representatives of the 'Confederados' the support of public force which they may solicit, to protect the containers and the documents until they are taken to whatever place said representatives may choose * * * where the counting committees meet

Number Seventy-three

IX "If for some reason, the ballot-containers and documentation of some poll were taken from the representatives of the 'Confederación,' pursuit with the greatest activity until whoever has them is captured should be made, returning * * * said documents * * * to said representatives of the 'Confederación'

Number Seventy-three

X "He is considered an enemy of this government, and he shall be proceeded against with all rigor, all who, having received a copy of these instructions, STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL, shall reveal, give, show, or not comply with them faithfully, for which * * * all copies are properly numbered and note has been given, so that if one of these said copies is discovered in the possession of an outsider, by its number which appears between each paragraph it shall be known who gave it and he shall be punished with the greatest severity"

Number Seventy-three

Morelia, Mich June, 1926 [1]

Since this document was submitted by a party in opposition to the state government and the "Confederación," it might be suspected a forgery It is typewritten on the official paper of the state executive power of Michoacán, and is evidently a carbon copy

The complaints by other opposing parties, however, tally with the "instructions," and the report of the agent of Gobernación confirms them One complaint by the "Alianza" party says that the municipal president of Puruándiro, Michoacán, refused to register the color mark [2] because the candidates of the "Confederado" had registered the same color mark previously [3]

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp 2 311 D S (3–4)1

[2] This color mark was a very complicated one and could not have been selected by two parties coincidentally

[3] Relaciones Interiores, Exp 2 311 D S (3–4)1

A report of a Gobernación agent says

I have learned * * * of serious violations of the electoral law * * * by the municipal authorities * * * in different districts, not only in the actual voting but in the preparations for the election * * * I am under the impression that the parties belonging to the "Confederación" if they did not have the actual support, had at least the sympathy of the administration * * * The majority of votes * * * was obtained in all the state except three districts, by the candidates of the "Confederación" * * * who, in my opinion, are in accord with the Government [1] and in sympathy with the present regime * * * I estimate that the parties of the "Confederación" are those who count on the most workers and peasants, and * * * are the popular parties * * * The elections were entirely orderly * * * Federal troops in small detachments * * * posted on street corners near the polls kept order and disarmed the passers-by * * *[2]

On June 1, 1927, General Enrique Ramírez was still governor of Michoacán Nothing except investigation came of the charges laid against him On April 28, "Excelsior" had reported that the state government had "laid off" two hundred school-teachers "in order to balance the budget "

[1] It is to be presumed that this refers to the Federal Government because in all cases where the state government is meant the words "local government" or "local authorities" are used

[2] Relaciones Interiores, Exp 2 311 D 5 (3-4)1

MORELOS

On January 1, 1921, the governor of Morelos was Dr José G Parres [1] He had been appointed provisional governor by the Federal Government, as had all the governors previously for about ten years A letter written by a number of private citizens to the president in 1925, asking for his help in solving the political problem of the state, stated that "among the governors we have had since 1910 are [2] Colonel Pablo Escandón, Juan Carreón, General Francisco Naranjo, General Juvencio Robles, General Adolfo Jiménez Castro, General Agustín Breton, General Francisco Romero, General Javier de Maure, General Pedro Ojeda, General Dionisio Carreón, Colonel José Aguilar, and Luis Flores " [3]

On December 10, 1923, Dr Parres left the governorship General Genovevo de la O, head of the federal troops in the state and former Zapatista, declared Dr Parres officially deposed and appointed Lic Alfredo Ortega in his place This appointment was ratified by President Obregón, who recognized de la O's appointee as the national senate was not in session to name a provisional governor [4]

On August 10, 1924, the national senate appointed General Ismael Velasco, an agrarian, governor [5] Velasco called elections for municipal governments and state legislature He was accused of trying to put in his own candidates exclusively There was some disorder, much of it being due to small groups of armed men all over the state, who, usually under the name of "agrarians," skirmished with whomever opposed them There were no armed authorities beyond the troops, and furthermore the state was so bankrupt that it could not even pay for its telegrams [6]

On October 6, Velasco was replaced by Lic Joaquín Rojas Hidalgo [7] Velasco had also been accused of high-handed and unlawful government, of fraudulent use of public moneys, and of privately maintaining groups of armed men to do his bidding

Of the situation in the state upon becoming governor, Rojas Hidalgo writes "The state is in such poverty * * * that the sick in the hospital

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp B 2 55 14
[2] Previous to Parres
[3] Relaciones Interiores, Exp F 2 30 5
[4] *Idem*, Exp D 2 73 14 2
[5] *Idem*, Exp F 2 33 14 and E 2 55 14
[6] *Idem*
[7] *Idem*

* * * having gone two days without anything to eat * * * were sent out to beg on the streets "[1]

Rojas Hidalgo called for elections for governor and state legislature for February 7, 1926 The candidates are reported as follows

There are at present the following political groups in Morelos The "Partido Libre Morelense," the "Gran Liga de Comunidades Agrarias del Sur," and the "Unión de Obreros y Campesinos", these, affiliated with and supported by the "Laborista" * * * nominate Senator Fernando López for governor The "Partido Regionalista Morelense" supports Carlos Ariza for governor, the "Partido Liberal Revolucionario Morelense" supports General Francisco Alarcón, and the "Partido Nacional Agrarista" supports Leopoldo Reynoso y Díaz [2]

The elections were held on February 7, 1926, as decreed The result, communicated by the secretary of Gobernación, A Tejeda, to the national chamber of deputies, read as follows

The State of Morelos * * * has three legislatures * * * one, supporting Carlos Ariza * * * the "Aricista" * * * in the official locale, this is supported by Governor Rojas Hidalgo Another, supporting Senator Fernando López * * * in a private house in Cuernavaca * * * and one supporting General Francisco Alarcón * * * in the city of Jojutla [3]

The chamber of deputies thereupon revoked the appointment of Rojas Hidalgo, and replaced him with Valentín del Llano [4] On March 6, del Llano declared the February elections null and void, raising a storm of protest from the candidates and their parties On March 13, del Llano communicated to Gobernación that the "Aricista" and "Lopista" legislatures no longer existed, and that all communications purporting to be from said bodies were dictated from Mexico City by Ariza or López, both of whom were in the capital [5]

In May, 1926, del Llano resigned The secretary of the state government was substituted for him, according to local law He was Lic Heracho Rodríguez [6] Gobernación reports to the national chamber of deputies, on June 11, as follows

We have information * * * that Valentín del Llano is still receiving his salary, though he left Cuernavaca since May 12 and has not functioned again * * * The state employees have not been paid since April 20 * * * we have news and complaints that, while some high employees receive their complete salaries, the inferiors lack even enough to live on * * * [7]

[1] Relaciones Interiores Exp F 2 33 14 and E 2 55 14
[2] *Idem* Exp I 2 30 5
[3] *Idem*
[4] *Idem*
[5] *Idem*
[6] *Idem*, Exp 2 314 1(4–9)2
[7] *Idem*, Exp 2 314 1(4–9)2

The "Case of Morelos" was again presented to the senate, together with a long list of names for possible provisional governors Letters, petitions, and memorials from private citizens, towns, political parties, labor, and other organizations rained in, each proposing a candidate or attacking one proposed The most praised and attacked, as the Gobernación report points out, was José María Figueroa, agrarian and former Zapatista The Gobernación report also says "All these petitions propose a candidate, and although no definite program is given for any of them, these petitions all claim that their candidates are admirable men and magnificently equipped with executive capacities * * * "[1]

One letter, very much like the rest sent by peasants, in part reads as follows

We, citizens of the *pueblo* of Santa María Alpuyeca, State of Morelos, respectfully say * * * that our *pueblo*, like the rest of the state, has been suffering a long series of injustices and ailments of all kinds, due to the confusion and complete disorder which have reigned * * * since the time of Sr Rojas Hidalgo, who came to impose authorities in the municipalities, these authorities being precisely the mortal enemies of the *pueblo* * * * Sr Rojas Hidalgo went, and we raised our hands to heaven thinking that we should now rest, but our disappointment was very painful when we learned that the contrary took place, for Sr Valentín del Llano, who came afterward, and who, they say, has Gachupin [2] blood, immediately let himself be deceived by the reactionaries and left things in that state This gentleman left, and for three months we have not known who is at the head of our government * * * All we know is that every day things go from bad to worse and who knows where we shall end if the supreme Federal Government does not save us * * *[3]

In the meantime, Senator López, one of the candidates in the February election, was protesting violently When José María Figueroa was appointed Provisional Governor in December, complaint was made that López began doing all he could to hinder and obstruct the new governor[4]

In February, 1927, the senate repealed the appointment as Provisional Governor of Figueroa, who had been attacked in the senate by López He charged Figueroa with violating the electoral laws by replacing municipal governments with his own appointees, with embezzlement of state funds, with high-handed and violent methods of removing authorities and officials not pleasing to him The state was again left without a governor and legislature and, according to a statement of Gobernación, "is much happier and more peaceful without politicians "[5]

[1] Relaciones Interiores, Exp 2 314 1(4-9)2
[2] Spanish
[3] Relaciones Interiores, Exp 2 314 1(4-9)2
[4] *Idem*
[5] Universal, March 10, 1927

II

The remaining states present a similar story [1]

In Nayarit violent electoral changes have been the rule Nuevo León has the distinction of having had probably the most dishonest governor in all the twenty-eight states, General Porfirio González, who not content to confine his thieving to state taxes collected in advance, defrauded the federal treasury by organizing wholesale smuggling from the United States In May, 1927, the people of the state were hoping for the governorship of General Aarón Sáenz, the secretary of foreign relations under Obregón and Calles, whose election would assure an honest state government

In Oaxaca in 1923 Governor Manuel García Vigil joined the rebels In 1924, José Vasconcelos was apparently elected governor in a truly popular demonstration, but President Obregón, repaying his former secretary of education for his inexcusable neutrality during the de la Huerta rebellion, awarded the decision to the opposing candidate, Jiménez Jiménez, two years later, was unseated by the state legislature which placed one of its number, Genaro Vásquez, in the governorship

The fecund State of Puebla has been ruined by a succession of atrocious governors — murderers, thieves, or drunkards General Mucio Martínez in Porfirio Díaz's régime was ill-famed as a great cacique, who ruthlessly removed his political opponents But he did some good In charge of state schools in those days was Dr Rafael Serrano, apostle of education, who created a normal school better than that of Mexico City and placed a school in every village Since 1920 but for a brief interlude — the administration of the young intellectual Lombardo Toledano — the governorship has been going from worse to still worse General José María Sánchez, "author" of the attempted assassination of Morones in the chamber of deputies in November, 1924, in which affray an innocent bystander of a deputy was killed, Froylan Manjarréz, who after looting the state joined the de la Huertista rebellion in search of still more loot, Alberto Guerrero, a drunkard, Claudio N Tirado, who stole at least a million pesos by the simple device of paying

[1] It may be pertinent to recall that political purpose and electoral fraud differ chiefly in degree, and to cite the Chicago municipal primaries of Feb 21 1927, in substantiation The New York Times Feb 23 under the head "Mayoralty Contest Marked by Shootings and Police Raids on Gunmen — Some Voters Kidnapped — Ballot Box Thefts are also reported and Sluggings in Many Districts," reports the following

"Local warfare raged in the thirteenth ward where a Saltis henchman John 'Dinghat' Oberta sought an Alderman's toga Two boxes full of ballots were stolen by a gang which the police said includes aides of José Saltis

"Camille d'Hoogh, a Lytsinger worker, was shot and probably fatally wounded in front of a polling place by Frank C Lombeck a Thompson lieutenant

"Two-hundred gun-toters, gang sluggers vote repeaters and others were arrested by the police * * *

"In a raid on the headquarters of Michael S Winek candidate for Alderman * * * police arrested twenty six men and seized ten revolvers All were held for trial Four of the men were found to have criminal records * * *

"Several kidnappings were reported by the authorities, but not so many as have been reported in past elections"

no one and keeping the state revenues, seeking immortality by cutting his name on every new stone erected in the state during his term, and General Manuel P Montes, the agrarian agitator In March, 1927, intoxicated, he entered the Palacio de Cristal, and began to quarrel boisterously with political enemies dining there When he drew his pistol, they retired, but not to be denied his fun the governor "shot up" the mirrors which give the restaurant its name Still feeling thwarted he ordered his opponents pursued and arrested He then followed to the jail, entered the detention room of strong-arm men and *marihuana* fiends and distributing money bade them in return "beat up" some prisoners soon to be introduced The political opponents, held in another cell, were then thrust in, where the governor's order was so well carried out that one died shortly after The others were released Manuel Montes is still governor[1] The only power that could impeach him is the state legislature — and there is none At his election four legislatures — all equally corrupt — declared themselves elected, and the Central Government refused to recognize any of them In Puebla teachers of the Colegio del Estado and the Escuela Normal are owed from two to three years' salary In fairness to the Montes administration it should be stated that it paid current salaries, a rare — in Puebla — degree of efficiency to be credited to an honest and decent secretary of state, General Lauro G Caloca, an agrarian, who is as poor now as before the Revolution

Querétaro has had a number of short term governors and but one, General Joaquín de la Peña, affiliated with the Labor party, was not a typical grafting politician On election day, 1923, I watched the workings of the suffrage in the city of Querétaro The two candidates were Ramírez Luque, backed by the "Cooperatista" party, then in the fullness of its power, and General (and Doctor) José Siurob The "Cooperatistas" had controlled the retiring state government headed by Governor J M Truchuelo A few weeks before election the legislature passed a new law, providing that not only were the name of the party and the *distintivo* or colored circle within which each voter marks, to be the exclusive property of the candidate first registering them, but that colors and names resembling those first chosen were forbidden to others Before the law was public the Luque adherents who had passed it had registered twenty-seven varieties of color combinations and party names including the favorite "liberal," "constitucionalista," "progresista," "nacional," "revolucionario," "socialista," "agrarista," and even "laborista," although his opponent had the Labor party indorsement Inadvertently the Luquistas, in their rainbow pursuit, had forgotten the colors black and gold, and Siurob was enabled to register these, appearing twice on a ballot which, with the twenty-seven rival designations, measured a yard in length The federal forces under General Pedro Gabay maintained order, but I saw all kinds of illegal practices Men armed with heavy sticks about

[1] June 1, 1927

the polls, campaign posters on the polling places, and electioneering within I heard a poll official ask an illiterate *campesino*

"You would like land, would you not, and oxen, and tools? In that case vote in the green circle, for Luque is the candidate of the Agraristas, and will provide all *campesinos* with land"

The Luque men controlled the electoral machinery in the state capital and announced victory by the usual *mayoria abrumadora* (overwhelming majority) But the governor was shortly after removed from the scene in a political fusillade The 1927 governor, Constantino Llaca, is correctly — and conservatively — summed up in the Gobernación record of the deputies of the State of Guanajuato, as dishonest [1]

San Luis Potosi has had its share of typical politics As the governorship of Rafael Nieto, one of the Revolution's intellectuals, and an important figure in the Carranza Government, neared its close in 1923, the legislature sought to unseat him, that it might more advantageously launch the candidacy of one General Santos Owing to violence in connection with the campaign, Governor Nieto had ordered certain guards disarmed The Santistas interpreted this as hostility when it was merely an effort to keep the coming election as orderly as possible He was determined to keep neutral

When Governor Nieto returned from a few days in Mexico City he found another governor at his desk with state troops on guard and orders to keep Nieto out Nieto dispatched his business at home, and for several days there were two governors Indignantly sympathetic crowds which he tried to calm gathered in front of his home Meantime he sent word to the legislature asking to be heard The usurping [2] government dared not refuse but ordered that he alone be admitted to the legislative hall in the palace But when the day came the throng was too great Without firing a shot or striking a blow it swept past the thirty soldiers on guard As it surged up the stairs the other governor fled out of one door just as Nieto entered his own room by another Taking advantage of his constitutional right to challenge and thereby disqualify three deputies, Nieto regained control of the legislature

The election of his successor in August, 1923, precipitated the de la Huerta rebellion The candidates were Jorge Prieto Laurens, mayor of Mexico City and head of the "Cooperatista" party the incarnation of political corruption, and Aurelio Manrique, agrarian, of advanced social views, and irreproachable character This election embodied more than any other the clash and contrast between the two types found in the revolutionary ranks — the professional revolutionists, politicians whose sole

[1] See page 427

[2] A temporary ousting by illegal means of an administration becomes a "usurpation" when the original incumbents return to power

purpose, however disguised by high sounding verbiage, is profit, and those with a sense of responsibility toward community and country In the Manrique ranks were many whose purposes were sordid, in the Prieto Laurens following their showing was practically unanimous The "Cooperatistas" poured money into San Luis Potosí, chiefly robbed from the Mexico City treasury, and resorted to every dishonest device, already made familiar, to win But in the regions controlled by the agrarian general, Saturnino Cedillo, those opposed to Manrique had no chance Both camps claimed victory, and President Obregón, with ample evidence of crookedness on both sides, and facing a difficult political problem, declared neither victorious, and the election null and void From this decision dated Prieto Laurens's intrigues, culminating in the de la Huerta rebellion in which he was an active leader

Governor Manrique automatically went into office He visited every *pueblo* Some had never before seen a state executive He himself opened the door of his reception room at the palace (state-house), so that he might hear everyone, high or low, in turn — a unique performance in Mexican political practice, under which the privileged stride in and others wait interminable hours — days — often in vain

Finding the state treasury bankrupt he made the startling move of reducing his own salary from fifty to fifteen pesos daily He then asked his deputies what they proposed to do of the same kind Now state legislatures are seldom conspicuous for altruism, and Mexican state legislators are not elected for the purpose of being worse off financially than they expected to be The rift between executive and legislative, begun then, steadily widened Governor Manrique also made the fatal mistake of antagonizing his former friend and supporter, General Cedillo, who, having contributed powerfully to seating Manrique, felt that in part, at least, he should govern the state In consequence, persons dissatisfied with the governor's decisions appealed to the chief of operations Conflicts of authority followed Manrique was unyielding in his attitude that the civil power was in practice, as in theory, supreme Moreover, he did a poor job administratively He established prohibition — in a state bordered by eight "wet" states — with the result that while the state was little "drier" it lost sorely needed revenue The "Center" [1] while friendly to Manrique was also friendly to Cedillo It sought to maintain peace through good offices but refused to take a hand Under those circumstances military force proved stronger than civil virtue, and Governor Manrique, rarely conspicuous for his honesty, went into the discard The legislature selected one of its number, Abel Cano, to fill out the unexpired term

The great State of Sonora, "mother" of the last three presidents and many high officials, has not distinguished itself in self-government in the last

[1] "El Centro," the Federal Government

six years In 1923 the candidates were Alejo Bey, Obregón's brother-in-law, and General Miguel Piña, Jr Piña was intensely beloved "Hasta los perros eran partidarios de el," [1] was the summary of a well-informed observer

In a free election he would have triumphed But de la Huerta went from the capital to "supervise" the election and supervised Señor Bey into office with President Obregón's approval Governor Bey had the sportsmanship to admit that his opponent had really won The farce was repeated in April, 1927, when the popular "Pancho" [2] Elías was defeated by Obregón's candidate, General Fausto Topete, feared and disliked for his many acts of violence, but who had the active support of the army headed in Sonora by General Francisco Manzo Elías was a formerly wealthy landowner, a cousin of President Calles, who contributed most of his fortune to the revolution against Huerta Obregón's opposition dates from 1915 when Elías as interim governor declined to declare "elected" a friend of Obregón's, Carlos Robinson, who had been legitimately defeated for the senatorship To-day formerly prosperous Sonora is at low ebb

The governor of Tamaulipas during Obregón's administration, César López de Lara, went out with de la Huerta His successor, Emilio Portes Gil, is above the average He has done something for education, and the application of the agrarian program in his state has been orderly and constructive Nevertheless, his administration leaves not a little to be desired in financial scrupulousness

Tlaxcala with a succession of fair governors, General Rafael Rojas and Rafael Apango, and the present upright incumbent, Ignacio Mendoza, presents a pleasant picture He inherited $206,000 pesos of indebtedness, some dating back to the Díaz governor, Prospero Cahuantzi Of this, $184,000 pesos had been owed the local electric light company since 1906, and $16,000 pesos was due a Mexico City publishing house for school-books The Mexicano railroad claimed $4000 pesos for rides by officials of previous administrations In two years Mendoza had reduced the debt to $26,000 pesos, was building a highway to Tlaxcala to Apizaco, expending $50,000 pesos annually in public improvements, and doing more for education than any previous governor Tlaxcala is the country's tiniest state and excepting a few textile mills depends on small-lot agriculture But the *ejidatorios* are now paying taxes at four pesos a hectare of irrigated land The governor, risen from a humble cobbler's bench, is honest, able, energetic, nearly, if not wholly, a full-blooded Indian His is a happy little state, self-sufficient self-sustaining — much as its ancestral "republic" of Tlaxcala was reputed to be

[1] "Even the dogs were in favor of him" — an expression to indicate virtual unanimity of all living creatures

[2] Nickname for Francisco

Contrasting as its clear white peak of Orizaba, apex of Mexico, with the reeking alleys of its seaport, is Nature's contribution to Vera Cruz and the politicians' use thereof That is the true cross which its people bear No richer territory exists on earth Climate and agriculture, variegated from tropical to temperate, the world's largest petroleum supply, water-power that could revolutionize all Mexico industrially, teeming fisheries that could feed its entire population, mines, lumber, precious woods, unmatched scenic beauty — here is a land that could be paradise, ravaged by hate, sordid intrigue, and unceasing conflict In 1927 the state barely paid its lesser employees

Yucatán is conspicuous among all Mexican states for its great governor, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, one of the outstanding figures of the Mexican Revolution He was butchered by the de la Huertistas in January, 1924, after peaceable surrender — seeking to avoid bloodshed by refusing to allow his followers to defend him His election in 1922 was the cleanest cut popular electoral verdict in the history of state elections In twenty-two months of governorship Carrillo Puerto brought prosperity to his state He built more roads in Yucatán than all the governors since the Conquest — the best highways in Mexico He gave education a tremendous impulse and put into practice a series of vital social reforms [1] Nowhere did the fire of revolutionary idealism burn more brightly than in the shining personality of this beloved Mayan His successor, Iturralde, was a common pilferer The present governor, Dr Alvaro Torre Díaz, is a cultured man, well-intentioned — but a high liver, and much of his riotous entertainment that would be a personal matter (if it were a personal matter) is charged to the empty state treasury Little remains of Carrillo's work but the highways that he blazed through the jungle to the stone monuments of the ancient Maya

Zacatecas completes the list Its manifestations during 1926 were of a well-meaning labor governor, Fernando Rodarte, who was unable to cope with the superior strength of a brutal and corrupt military commander, General Eulogio Ortiz, until, in 1927, the latter was transferred to work his havoc upon the neighboring State of Durango, leaving Zacatecas to breathe more freely, and the civil government to function peaceably

III

The violence constant in Mexican politics is abetted by the archaic *fuero* for the political aristocracy The Constitution of 1917 makes deputies and senators "inviolable for their opinions," [2] and somewhat indefinitely touches on their responsibility for "common offenses" [3] The state con-

[1] For a fuller account see "A Maya Idyl," The Century Magazine, April 1924
[2] Art 61 [3] Arts 108–114

stitutions have similar provisions for their governor and deputies The purpose of these clauses was to protect the legislators in their political rights and to render them immune from arrest and persecution such as they suffered from Santa Anna, Porfirio Díaz, and Victoriano Huerta Of course no precedent inspires belief that any future Mexican dictator strong and ruthless enough to impose his will would be halted by the mere provisions of a written constitution [1] In practice these intended constitutional safeguards merely afford impunity for crime instead of immunity against persecution It is the chamber of deputies which decides whether an offense is "common," [2] and even so common an offense as homicide has not once within the last ten years been ruled to be "common" — that is, subject to criminal prosecution

What lynching is in the United States, a typically national crime and a national disgrace, political assassination is in Mexico [3] It would be difficult accurately to total the victims Sometimes the perpetrator of the crime is unidentified Sometimes it is the outcome of a brawl somewhat in the manner of the Capulets and Montagues [4] in which, according to the Mexican phrase, "los animos se exaltaron" [5] But with a certain ironic justice the politician is in greater physical danger than any other individual in Mexico to-day If life insurance existed in Mexico as in the United States one may presume that no *político* would be accepted as a risk

The following well-known and typical political crimes are given by way of illustration, the principals being slightly above the average in importance

SHOOTING OF MORONES

On November 14, 1924, shortly before the presidential inauguration of General Calles, an attempt was made in the chamber of deputies to assassinate Luis N Morones, then a member, and feared as the powerful "Laborista" leader

The minority to which Morones belonged, was, against the will of the majority led by General José María Sánchez, investigating the national expenditures The dispute grew so hot that insults flew back and forth Two deputies went outside to fight but were dissuaded Then two more, one of whom was Jesús Ponce, quarreled and in the ensuing struggle to disarm them a shot escaped, Ponce being said to have discharged it

[1] Arts 59 and 101–108 of the Const of 1857 did provide similar protection for legislators but in nowise thereby inhibited the unconstitutional activities of either Díaz or Huerta against congressmen who differed with those rulers politically

[2] Art 109, Const of 1917

[3] If one enters into a comparison, lynching — the killing with occasional torture by a mob of a helpless wretch often innocent of any crime but that of being colored, when a legal remedy is available should he be guilty — appears far more detestable and savage than the Mexican political killings, generally speaking fair and even manifestations of a cutthroat game in which no one need engage, which participants enter with their eyes open, deliberately balancing its risks against its profits

[4] Romeo and Juliet Act I Scene I

[5] "The spirits were carried away by passion"

The minority, believing that they had been deliberately attacked, began shooting at the majority, the *pistollade* lasting some moments When the confusion subsided Morones was leaving, shot through the body, the bullet having grazed the pericardium — half an inch up or to the right, a mortal wound Another deputy, Leocadio Guerrero, who had taken no part in the mêlée, was dying

On investigation, General Sánchez declared Morones had shot at him Morones said that he had quarreled with Sánchez, but that the shooting was planned beforehand, that he received from the gun of Jesús Ponce, who shot four times, the first shot fired, and that another deputy shot at him also Most of the witnesses said that Morones tried to shoot but could not, and others said that he succeeded in shooting only twice, that they heard him say "They * * * have assassinated me!"

Jesús Ponce, however, denied the charge The first shot, he said, was accidental, that he did not know Morones, had no interest in him, and that Morones could not prove his charge

The prosecuting attorney found that the death of Guerrero must go unpunished because it was impossible to fix the blame on anybody, Guerrero having been caught between two fires (The idea of punishing all the shooters was evidently not considered)

The bloc of the majority, led by General Sánchez, dissolved, and integrated again leaving General Sánchez out[1] No other action was taken either by the chamber or the courts[2]

This was only one of several attempts on the life of the "Laborista" leader His automobile has not less than four times been the target for pistol shots He himself has told me of two plots to assassinate him, instigated, he said, respectively by General Arnulfo Gómez of the Federal Army and by Governor Zuno of Jalisco In the latter instance, two other prominent labor leaders, Federico Rocha and José López Cortés, both at the time Mexico City officials, were marked for death, according to a telegram from Guadalajara which was deemed of sufficient import by the president's private secretary, Fernando Torreblanca, to transmit textually to Governor Ramón Ross of the Federal District and by him to the police inspector-general[3] In April, 1927, a plot to kill Morones was attributed to some of the striking railway workers,[4] but their organization indignantly denied the charge, and no evidence of a plot was ever offered Public opinion was inclined to view the accusation as a political maneuver in the conflict between the two rival labor groups

[1] Owing to the severe rebuke by President Elect Calles administered to one of the majority leaders, Filiberto Gómez, the same Gómez who figures earlier in the chapter in the account of the State of Mexico

[2] Universal, Nov 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, Democrata Nov 15, 16 17, 21, 1924

[3] Excelsior, Dec 14, 1925

[4] See chapter on Labor

AMBUSH ON AVENIDA MADERO

An ambush to murder Tomás Garrido, governor of Tabasco and a powerful political figure in that state, caused a pitched battle on Avenida Madero, in the heart of the capital, on August 19, 1926, shortly after one o'clock, when the streets were filled with people on their way to the midday meal The attackers, stationed in the Hotel Iturbide portal, fired on Garrido and his friends, who were walking past Three with Garrido, his private secretary, a Tabasco deputy, and a colonel were killed, one instantly Garrido was slightly wounded A little boy, a lottery ticket vendor, received a bullet in the stomach but ultimately recovered Garrido's private secretary, a very young man, left seven small brothers and sisters who had been dependent solely on him

The investigation revealed that, while the attackers had shot first, the attacked had returned the fire Two of the assailants were definitely identified Garrido named four They fled too quickly to be caught, and the two against whom evidence existed were not to be found Others who were arrested were set free because of insufficient evidence The little boy who had been wounded gave the following version of the affair "Some gentlemen were shooting at each other and I got it "[1]

KILLING OF A DEPUTY

Deputy Gonzalo González, member of the "Laborista" bloc, was shot and killed by Juan Veraza, employee of the Buen Tono tobacco factory, in front of that building at noon October 2, 1926

Deputy González was accompanied by three friends, the brothers Linares, and Veraza was alone According to the brothers Linares, Veraza shot first, and also prevented them from taking the fallen man's pistol, aided in this by the policemen who appeared on the scene

No detailed explanation was given of the motive except by Veraza himself, who stated that some years ago when he was the private secretary of the head of the department of labor in the Secretaría of Industry, two strikes came up in the first of which he awarded the decision to the workers, while in the second he decided for the owners This displeased González, then a labor leader rising from the ranks of the Buen Tono operatives Some time later, González ran for deputy to the national congress, endorsed by Buen Tono workers Veraza, an employee in the factory's advertising department, undertook González's publicity campaign, for which work, Veraza stated, González never paid Due to this, he stopped speaking to González, now a deputy, and this angered González because he was sensitive about his humble beginning and felt slighted He began to talk ill of Veraza, saying that he was an enemy of labor

[1] Universal Aug 20, 21, 1926, Jan 3, 1927

On the day of the murder, González had come to the Buen Tono to cash a check, and Veraza was just going out to lunch He stated that he saw the four men in his path, and by their hostile attitude was certain something would happen As he passed, González insulted him, and Veraza said that he knew the quartet was ready to fall on him So he shot González

I am a married man [he declared], support my family and have several brothers, sisters, and my old mother dependent on me The man who was going to attack me was a deputy with a *fuero* [1] and so I jumped back and shot first The Linares brothers attempted to attack me, and to take González's pistol, no doubt to revenge themselves, and I defended myself from them without shooting, notwithstanding that I was armed * * * No one laments this incident more than I, for I am a man of conscience and realize that I have become a murderer But before the man who hated me, and was protected by a *fuero constitucional*, which makes crime unpunishable, could shoot, and knowing that if I had not shot first, right now I would be lying in a hospital, dead or wounded, and all my family left in utter poverty * * * I fired [2]

González left nine children No other news or comment on the affair appeared in the press, except an editorial in "El Universal" confirming Veraza's opinion of the *fuero*

DEPUTY KILLS DEPUTY

Marino Pérez and Wenceslao Macip, deputies from Puebla and school-boy friends, quarreled in the chamber because Pérez, according to Macip's lawyer, Calixto Maldonado, "insulted Macip from the platform with the most serious insult one man can offer another " After the session, in front of the chamber, on December 3, 1925, they drew and Macip killed Pérez

Macip asked the chamber to deprive him of his *fuero* in order that he stand trial, but that body, said Maldonado, "did not dare do so because, although Macip did not belong to the majority, everybody thought he had acted in legitimate defense of his life and honor " [3]

Macip's term ended, he surrendered himself to the authorities, his trial began on October 4, 1926, almost a year after the crime, and lasted three weeks He was acquitted for the same reason that the chamber had given for absolving him [4]

SENATOR KILLS SENATOR

During the session of November 9, 1926, Senator Enrique Henshaw, of San Luis Potosí, quarreled with Senator Federico Rocha, of Nuevo León According to other senators, Henshaw asked Rocha to step outside after the

[1] "*Fuero*" * * * The constitutional immunity from arrest to which deputies, senators, cabinet ministers, and supreme court justices are entitled

[2] Universal, Oct 3 1926

[3] Duelling in Mexico is forbidden by law

[4] Universal, Oct 4, 5, 25, 1926

session and finish the quarrel, but friends intervened and the difference seemed settled

Several senators were in the cloak-room after the session, among them Senator Luis Espinosa, a friend of Rocha's, who had been instrumental in making peace According to a senator witness, Leobardo Castro, Henshaw stepped up to Espinosa and said something to him in a low voice, to which Espinosa replied indifferently, whereupon Henshaw stepped back and shot at him, and Espinosa, due to the fact that he carried a cane, could not shoot back immediately, but did as soon as he had disengaged his pistol hand Henshaw fired eight times, Espinosa five Espinosa died a few hours later Henshaw, though seriously wounded, recovered

Rocha gave the following version of the shooting

> At the moment * * * I was in such a position that if I moved I would fall into the line of fire of one of the two * * * As soon as I could, I entered the room where the shooting occurred, and saw * * * Espinosa down and Henshaw staggering and crawling away, and therefore I immediately took out my pistol, but Henshaw said, "Don't shoot, I have no more cartridges Wherefore I did not * * *"[1]

Senator Henshaw was not tried The bloc to which Espinosa had belonged, as a protest against Rocha, who had begun the original quarrel, voted to withdraw in order not to make a quorum during the period still left to Rocha as secretary of the senate

DEPUTY MURDERS SENATOR

Deliberate assassination of Senator Manuel Hernández Galván, in a café frequented by lawyers and newspapermen of the capital, planned and executed by Galván's political rival, resulted in the death of the senator, of another man who happened to be on the scene, Lic Jesús Salcedo, and in the wounding of a boot-black

This murder occurred on July 29, 1926, when the senate was examining the credentials of its newly elected members Hernández Galván occupied his position as the alternate or "suplente" of Enrique Colunga, elected governor of Guanajuato after he had become a senator, and therefore unable to discharge his senatorial duties In the new elections, Hernández Galván was running against Enrique Hernández Alvarez, then a deputy of the national Congress, for a senatorial seat as "proprietor" Hernández Alvarez had the support of the state authorities, Colunga having turned hostile to Hernández Galván due to Galván's activity in portended impeachment proceedings against Zuno, governor of Jalisco

The credentials of both the candidates, therefore, were in doubt, since the elections in Guanajuato for senators and other representatives had been

[1] Universal, Nov 10 11 12, 13, 1926

a fairly clear case of "imposition" In these elections there had been fighting, and so strong was the hostility of the state authorities to Galván that he said that he expected to be killed during his campaign In the senate, however, Galván was favorably regarded, and was known to have the friendship and esteem of both Calles and Obregón Reports in the Gobernación files describe him as an intelligent and honorable man

On the day of the murder, when the senate had decided to approve Senator Galván's credentials, Hernández Alvarez, with fifteen men in an automobile, went to Galván's house, according to Galván's family, but not finding him in went away In the evening the same crowd found him in a *café-cantina* eating with two other senators

Hernández Alvarez walked up to Galván and after a few words opened fire, while his friends also shot Galván attempted to shoot back but died after two bullets had entered his body

The other senators were unarmed One of them called a policeman, and pointed out the murderer

Hernández Alvarez, while getting into an automobile, said to the policeman, "Yes, I killed him, but look at my *fuero* I am a deputy and you can't arrest me" Whereupon he departed No action was taken but there was much protest in the press The murderer's alternate at present occupies the disputed senate seat [1] The murderer was not arrested [2]

Obviously the *fuero* was never intended to protect such crimes, yet it does so Moreover, the disease extends through the whole body politic, where with or without the pretext or pretense of immunity killing goes on unpunished, leaving personal revenge as the only method of castigation — to the further detriment of law and order "Crime and punishment," that sequential formula essential to the formation of a stable society, does not operate in Mexican governmental circles But crime and politics are closely related and often indistinguishable Not a week passes that some state does not register its bloody and sordid encounter, such as the following as reported in the press

TRAGIC DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE VERA CRUZ LEGISLATURE

Special Dispatch to Universal

VERA CRUZ, Vera May 22 — To-day at dawn in the cabaret Monte Carlo, died tragically the president of the Vera Cruz legislature, deputy and Lieutenant-colonel Prudencio López, receiving three bullets, one in the mouth, one in

[1] On Aug 4, 1926, Universal published a cartoon showing a deputy defending the validity of his election in the following words "Gentlemen, my credential is indisputable proof thereof is that yesterday my opponent was killed"

[2] Universal, July 30, 31, Aug 1, 3, 8, 1926, Excelsior, July 30, 31, Aug 8, 1926, Gráfico, Aug 8, 1926

the left cheek and one in the body, which the captain of Vigilantes, Candido Rangel Vergara, discharged in his own defense when he was violently attacked by Deputy López

The president of the local congress, who was in a state of complete intoxication, had staged an extraordinary fracas in the cabaret * * *[1]

DEPUTY APANGO KILLED DEPUTY GALVEZ IN TLAXCALA

Special Dispatch to Universal

Puebla, June 10 — Word has been received here from Tlaxcala that in the corridors of the building of the local congress occurred to-day a bloody tragedy in which Deputy Rafael Apango, Jr killed Deputy Otilio Gálvez * * *

Special Dispatch to Universal

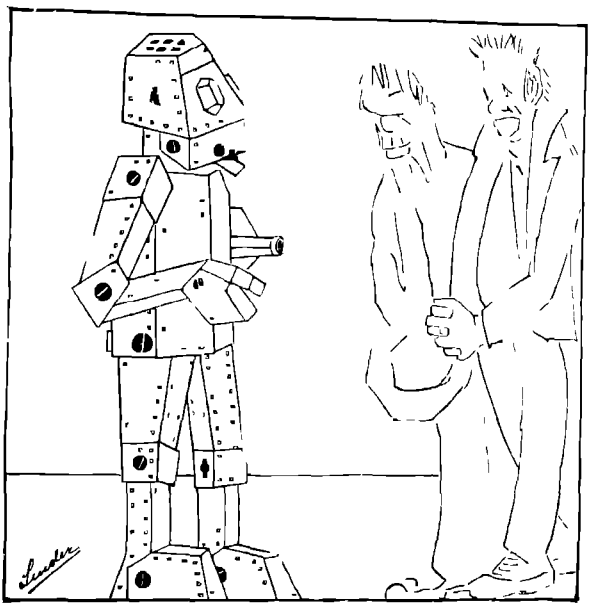
Tlaxcala, June 10 — To-day at 19 o'clock died Deputy Otilio Gálvez of a shot fired in legitimate self-defence by the president of the legislature, Deputy Rafael Apango[2]

Such killings are bound up with the prevalent Mexican "gun-toting," which emphasizes another illegality Though carrying arms into the national congress is forbidden by law it is nevertheless done almost without exception The "Cooperatista" deputy, Luis Ramírez Corzo, told me when on his way to assume (as he thought)[3] the governorship of Chiapas, in November, 1924, that he "did not feel dressed unless wearing a pistol" He voiced the feeling of many politicians

Repeated efforts in the wake of some fatal encounter to enforce the law among the lawmakers have failed utterly When President Nicolás Pérez of the national chamber read to that body on October 19, 1926, Article 47 of the internal regulations of congress forbidding deputies to carry arms, protests and jeers resounded Deputy Fabio Altamirano announced, "I shall always come armed unless I am given guarantees — but not guarantees of the kind they give us in Vera Cruz * * * "[4] It should be understood that this deputy is an active candidate for the governorship of Vera Cruz to succeed the present governor, General Heriberto Jara, and loses no opportunity to attack the state government and make public the many crimes he, Altamirano, alleges it is daily committing His charges are probably as true as that if Deputy Altamirano became governor he would commit precisely the same offenses

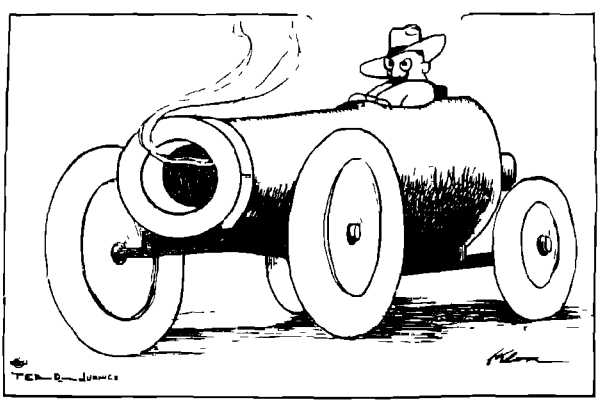
One may judge something of the political currents in this state from the debate in the chamber of deputies on that day From the tribune Deputy Altamirano denounces the bloody happenings in the *pueblo* of Misantla, the killing of six agrarians by one Major Márquez of the local military under

[1] Universal, May 23 1927
[2] Universal, June 11, 1927
[3] See p 406–9
[4] Universal, Oct 19, 1926



Cartoon — Masculine Fashion — Models specially designed for wear in the next session of the Chamber of Deputies — From Universal — June 19, 1919, p. 1

LA OPORTUNIDAD ANTE TODO



19 S Model Roadster especially designed for deputies and politicians — A cartoon in Universal — April 25, 1919, satirizing shootings by politicians of each other





(*Photos by the author.*)

TWO GOOD GOVERNORS

Pedro Matías Rodríguez of Hidalgo (1938–9) (right) Lauro Mendoza of Tlaxcala (1938–40)

orders of the chief of operations in Vera Cruz, General Arnulfo Gómez In reply, his opponents give out a telegram sent to that general of division by Brigadier-General Antonio Guerrero, commanding in Misantla

> Individuals shot by Major Marquez, according to authorities and respectable inhabitants of the region, were confessed bandits, for which reason I consider justified actions of said major The charge surely grows out of long standing rivalry between the ex-chief of volunteers, Lauro González Z , and Deputy Altamirano on the one hand, and Major Marquez on the other Allow me to state that Deputy Altamirano is the principal support of the bandits in the Misantla region of whose backing he availed himself recently in order to triumph in his election * * *[1]

Deputies, national and state, governors, and politicians generally are themselves the greatest obstacles to law and order and to the adoption of civilized manners in politics The most fruitful source of crime in Mexico is not the "illiterate, ignorant mass" but the more or less educated "representatives of the people," the leaders who above all should set a standard of decent behavior The underlying cause of this violence which makes mockery of all professions, — democratic, patriotic, revolutionary, Catholic, Socialistic, et cetera, — is, frankly, greed Public office, that that office may be exploited, is the little disguised aim of the overwhelming majority of Mexican politicians It has always been so, it is so to-day

Thus it may be asserted flatly that "effective suffrage" is non-existent in Mexico The reason lies deeply rooted in the Mexican heritage — the conception of office as a spoil, the absence of any national commercial structure, which drives the literate inevitably into some sort of government employ where the politicians occupy the higher rungs of the bureaucratic ladder Yet with all allowance for the causes that have made the present-day *político*, an unexplained hiatus remains The world has moved He has not New inventions have come to Mexico New ideas have floated across the consciousness of the literate minority Comte's "Positivism" had its vogue half a century ago A revolution boasted of as "social" is cracking age-long molds and offering the prospect of greater opportunity for greater numbers In its wake notions of the superiority of collective to individual rights, vaguely denominated as Socialism, have been engrafted as a new national philosophy But the venerable principles of justice, fair play, and honesty have gained not a millimeter of headway in the Mexican political field Judged by standards that may be considered universal, which no Mexican politician would reject in principle, which indeed he would be the first to proclaim, it is undeniable that the typical Mexican *politicastros*[2] are noxious animals, of the lowest order in the human scale

[1] Diario de los Debates, Oct 18, 1926, Universal, Oct 19, 1926

[2] An opprobrious corruption of the word *político*, applied by Mexicans to the worse type of professional politician

Their own deeds characterize them — murderers, thieves, debauchees — men without conscience, men without patriotism, men without honor, men without shame

Judged by the contemporary standard, which predicates the responsibility of the public functionary to the public, they are incredible But viewed as an anachronism, despite their utilization of modern electoral paraphernalia and the modern pretense of satisfying a popular will, they become understandable A characterization of fifteenth century Italian despots by one of their contemporaries fits their twentieth century Mexican equivalents admirably

> The crimes of despots always hinder and often neutralize the virtues of good men Their pleasures are at variance with morality By them the riches of their subjects are swallowed up They are foes to men who grow in wisdom and in greatness of soul in their dominions They diminish by imposts the wealth of the peoples ruled by them Their unbridled lust is never satiated * * *[1]

A type like Zuno of Jalisco is plausible if we simply collocate him with the Renaissance He oppresses and fleeces his subjects to gain riches, kills his foes (the revolver replacing the medieval poniard or stiletto) but at the same time is a liberal patron of the arts and other public beneficences which interest him With friends and followers he is gracious and princely, and an engaging personality goes far to explain his rise On the palatial residence he built for himself he employed at generous stipends struggling artists formerly his associates — his taste is excellent — and the resulting edifice, while quite shamelessly marked with the dates of his governorship, is not merely a monument to corruption, but to the Mexican Renaissance in art of this period No painter or sculptor would be allowed to starve in a state lorded over by this caricaturist risen to might He has brains, wit, charm — a delightful companion! Yet he is a murderer and a thief! He just does not belong to this day and age — outside of Mexico!

If these sinister aspects of Mexican politics merely resulted in the fatalities previously described, the guilty would be the chief victims, and a kind of retributive justice would seem to be operating in the vacuum caused by the absence of law enforcement But the real sufferers are the Mexican people Politics is not the least of the various causes prolonging their backwardness, misery, and ignorance

Come to one of those rare states over whose destiny presides an honorable governor Though he may have been in office but a year a difference is apparent It is like passing from the alkali wastes where nothing can grow to a refreshing oasis The State of Hidalgo, which I visited in March, 1927,

[1] Matteo Villani (Chronicle VI, I) quoted in Renaissance in Italy Age of the Despots, Symonds p 100

strikingly demonstrates this simple truth The governor, Matías Rodríguez, is a man of humble origin, of relatively little education and perhaps not extraordinary mental powers But he possesses those indispensable qualities, unusual in Mexican politics, honesty, good-will, kindliness, and above all the conception that he is in public office to serve others rather than himself (Incidentally he is nearly, if not wholly, Indian) In conversation with persons of every social stratum I found none who withheld unqualified praise for Governor Rodríguez One might expect that a governor elected as a "Laborista" and "Agrarista," who had consistently maintained their principles, would be suspected, feared, and hated by the conservatives Suspected and feared he was before his election Now the unanimous verdict of mine superintendent and textile mill-owner as well as of lowly worker in mine, factory, and field was "he is the best governor the state ever had " What, specifically, are the fruits of such a governorship beyond a general feeling of good will, security, and hope? The building of schools, hospitals, and roads, of a great dam to supply sufficient water to the hitherto dust-smothered state capital, Pachuca, relative prosperity amid a nation-wide depression, higher wages, the payment of arrears to school-teachers and other state employees whose salaries were stolen by previous grafting governors[1] In addition to being honest, Governor Rodríguez has not found it necessary for success to follow the widespread political custom of "robbing Peter to pay Paul", of "hostilizing" his political opponents, of indulging in demagogic revolutionary flag waving He has discovered and uses the only par currency, actions, in a country where words are as valueless as the revolutionary paper of former years

The recipe is so simple and so obvious and returns such handsome and immediate dividends both spiritually and materially that one may well wonder why it is the rare exception and not the rule When in February, 1927, in answer to a question, President Calles was giving me his estimate of the various governors, he said of Hidalgo's governor, "He is the best of them all " The president was right What would it not mean for the nation were the federal executive to have twenty-eight such collaborators?

Personalities, therefore, appear of unusual importance in Mexico, and they are Contemporary social theory emphasizes that the modern world is in the grip of economic forces which shape the destinies of nations and classes, and that the individual no longer counts appreciably That is undoubtedly most true in a complex and highly organized industrial country like the United States But in Mexico, which is neither organized nor industrialized, and in its internal political and military aspects is not yet of the modern world, the man counts surprisingly — for good or ill (Iturbide,

[1] The Azuara dynasty, which bequeathed to the Rodriguez administration approximately a million pesos of unpaid obligations Seventy thousand pesos which Governor Azuara had collected to build the water-works he gambled away in a single night

Santa Anna, Juárez, Díaz, Madero, Villa, Obregón, Calles) Politically the country has made no appreciable progress since Independence severed a political contact with a social complex that reached unbroken back into the Middle Ages Out of an established practice of *vested* despotism and spoilsmanship came merely a competition for the opportunity to despotize and spoil For the people the result has been the same, or worse, for the competition introduces the periodic armed conflict with all its horrors, that was formerly lacking The competitors form the political class, common to every Hispanic-American country, a body of power and office-holders and seekers, with their relatives and hangers-on who, untrained for productive work, make political administration their goal, and its potentialities their livelihood Such a group naturally produces few "good and great" men, but when one better than the rest appears and achieves authority, the consequences are notable The real task of the Mexican executive is to ferret out such men inside and outside the political class, and bring them into the task of government Some such there are in the present federal administration but not always in positions where they can be most effective

The traditional lack of a public conscience among public "servants" is one of the reasons for Mexico's stagnancy, for the generally squalid conditions of living, undrained and unpaved city streets, habitations unfit for human beings, widespread and needless ill health, high infant mortality If these statements appear harsh, they are unfortunately no harsher than the facts, especially when contrasted with the avowed revolutionary intention of "uplifting the humble" The Mexican Revolution has, with a few exceptions not reached the political class which paradoxically is entrusted with actualizing the Revolution It needs that radicalism of Lenin which ordered the execution of Bolshevists caught grafting, while commuting the sentences of ex-Czarists equally guilty on the ground that having belonged to the old régime they could not be expected to know better Yet Mexicans have themselves shown the way, furnishing eloquent proof in more than one instance that they can in an incredibly short time apply the needed remedy

Nuevo Laredo is an example The Federal Government turns back to each custom-house city for its own use two per cent of the tariff revenues it collects On the most direct line from the northern border to the capital, this town's share has amounted in recent years to the considerable sum of $300,000 to $400,000 annually This, according to Mexican consul I M Vásquez, of Laredo, Texas, was consistently pocketed by the municipal authorities He and others called this thieving to President Obregón's attention in 1924, and the president appointed a committee consisting of General Esteban B Calderón, administrator of customs in Nuevo Laredo, and several of the town's merchants to administer these funds What was the result? Within a year work was under way on a modern pumping station costing close to $200,000 In August, 1926, the Río Grande supplied

filtered running water for the first time to this Mexican city Within a month three thousand bath appliances had been sold in Nuevo Laredo In three months the plant was taxed to capacity and its enlargement to supply the demand had begun In four months Nuevo Laredo's infant mortality dropped seven per cent In six months two new factories had been started Now a sewerage system, paving, a gas plant and other improvements are being installed No new social discovery here, but the old-time elementary principle of common honesty

The problem is crucial In 1923 one of the most enlightened revolutionists said to me that out of twenty-eight governors there were just two for whose honesty he could vouch To two more he was willing to give a certificate of reasonable doubt Said he

"The best that can be hoped for, generally speaking, is not a governor who will not enrich himself through his office, for nearly all do, but one who while stealing will do *something* for his state The majority take all they can and leave nothing"

Four years later[1] and with an entirely new set of governors in office I can from my own personal knowledge reaffirm approximately the same proportion of state executives who do not regard the governorship as a financial opportunity By doubling this estimate one safely avoids doing an injustice

There is not a state in Mexico which could not only support itself (although some are naturally much less endowed than others) but with its surplus build schools for every child, connect every *pueblo* with highways, reclaim waste land by irrigation, sanitate — halving infant-mortality — educate, ameliorate Excepting one or two, no state government is even attempting it, and the full page advertisements to which each governor at intervals treats himself (at the state's expense) in the metropolitan press furnish a ludicrous contrast between the extravagant self-praise and the actual absence of accomplishment

In half a dozen states the "revolutionary" governors, supposedly elected on the basis of "uplifting the people," are closing state schools as fast as the national government opens federal schools The state contribution to education is either nothing or is diminishing, in the face of a national educational drive, in Campeche, Querétaro, Sinaloa, Puebla, and Mexico In this last state Governor Carlos Riva Palacio, disregarding his informal agreement with the ministry of education that he would support village schools if the Federation[2] would take charge of rural education, has closed seventy-five village schools while the National Government was opening a hundred new rural schools Of course, he needs money — for his carousing in the capital, to pay his gambling losses, which have reached as high as 20,000

[1] June, 1927
[2] Federal Government, Federation Central Government, "the Centre," are synonymous

pesos a night, for his high-powered cars with which he burns up the Toluca-Mexico road And then his numerous relatives, and the Gómez dynasty — which helped him into office and really rules the state — and its numerous relatives, must be taken care of

What is it that these delinquent state office-holders do with their time? They play politics — which follows a certain routine No sooner in office, the governor must fulfil his pledges He must arrange for a distribution of the spoils Offices, commissions, concessions, and often connivance at illegal despoilments for which any unusual situation or social dislocation, such as agrarian reform or rebellion, real or alleged, affords the opportunity The participants are his relatives, his executive staff — the *Secretario de Gobierno*, the *Oficial Mayor*, and various officials including the head of the state police, the deputies of the local legislature, usually fifteen in number, the *ayuntamientos*, especially that of the state capital, and often the *presidentes municipales* of the smaller towns and villages The governor must come to an understanding or carry out one previously made with the *jefe de operaciones* Sometimes state executive and federal commander work jointly, sometimes they agree on "spheres of influence," distinct and exclusive purviews for each The military generally get the gambling-houses

Having assigned the spoils, the governor's next move is to intrench himself and "consolidate" his gains The "outs," those defeated at the last election, cry to heaven over the looting of the state (which they wanted to do) and begin intriguing to regain control Those in power now start "hostilizing" their political opponents, and with the aid of state and federal machinery, doing it most effectively

If on the other hand a governor decides not to "play the game" in the usual fashion, he must be extraordinarily dextrous to avoid finding himself *desaforado* — that is, minus his *fuero* which means his governorship He is then constantly on the defensive against his deputies whom the state constitutions give the power to "sit as a grand jury" and unseat governor, or fellow deputies of the minority The governor's time is perforce spent in counter intrigues within the state, in "pulling wires" in the capital where he variously seeks the presidential ear or first that of some powerful minister, while both sides appeal to a limited and uninterested public opinion through the press, either by (frankly) paid advertising or (supposedly spontaneous) articles and editorials If the governor wins out, certain "disaffected" members of the local legislature will be replaced by others on whom he can count If he loses, his political *tiro de gracia* comes as a *camarazo* from the deputies for which the effective force is supplied by the local *jefatura de operaciones*, acting either independently and semi-insubordinately (for the military are officially forbidden "to mix in politics") or legitimately, under orders from the "Center" to support the constituted authorities, the Federal Government in that case taking the view that the new local régime is the

legally constituted one[1] But in either event — a victorious or a defeated governor — little time, energy, or thought is left for the supposed functions of state officials, namely, government

Against this perversion of public office there is a growing body of public opinion, of which may be cited as a specific expression a "call to the youth of the republic" signed by writers, teachers, and representatives of every social group and of both sexes issued in Jalapa, capital of Vera Cruz, in November, 1926, calling for the "de-pistolizing" of Mexico[2]

There is also the opposition of a limited number of federal officials, but so far the corrective forces have made no material headway Good milk mixed with sour becomes sour milk, the reformist forces, when not beaten, are in danger of being polluted Where so much of the political structure is honeycombed with corruption it is extremely hard to select at a given time and place sound political timber It is difficult to start afresh without illegality, and on an unsound foundation to build soundly This perplexity may be illustrated by the political situation as it appears in the State of Guanajuato at the time of this writing, June, 1927

A state election is due on July 6 The candidates are State Deputy Agustín Arroyo Ch[3] and General Celestino Gasca Arroyo is a typical

[1] Illustrative cases previously described, of a governor victorious over a hostile legislature Gov Rafael Nieto in San Luis Potosí (see p 470) Victorious over a hostile *jefe de operaciones* through the transfer of the latter to another state Gov Rodarte in Zacatecas (see p 473) Of a governor driven from office by deputies and military Gov Almeida of Chihuahua (see p 411–2) Gov Benítez of Jalisco (see p 451), and Gov Manrique of San Luis Potosí (see p 471) Often when the governor maintains himself there is no public *suceso*, or happening, to record what may have been a bitter struggle

[2] The proclamation is sufficiently important, and illuminating in that it is a Mexican — and a revolutionist — comment try on Mexican politics, to justify its quotation in part

political hordes
with their cave
mmon honor in a

gesture to oppose by every active means the state of affairs which is placing on our country the stain of an idiotic savagery

'A coincidence which may be symbolic brings this call on the date memorable for the initiation of the greatest move for social justice in Mexico [Madero s Plan de San Luis Potosí] and it is necessary that on this date which implies whatever was lofty, idealistic, and noble in the opposition of the people against tyranny our youth make an appeal to the entire nation to oppose this wave of violence, loosed by vulgar people, which has replaced the lofty significance of our struggle with a vile opera-bouffe of butchers and hoodlums Coincidentally with those bloody acts, which the professionals in scandal plan and execute, the cable carries the name of revolutionary Mexico to all the world and the struggle which has concluded with a needed victory for the people is obscured by the actions of those show bullies pursuing their selfish designs

"We ask that the workers, students honorable youths, and men and women who cherish an ideal, support our campaign to disarm all the pistol-carrying politicians in order to check crime, to encourage valor without ridiculous swaggering to save the good name of the Revolution, and the honor of our country

"*The 'depistolizing' of Mexico would indicate a real solicitude for social prophylaxis* It would create true courage, the ethical bravery that consciousness of *doing one's duty gives, which needs* no arms to make itself felt, but on the contrary is the triumph of the spirit valiant above the barbarism that manifests itself by assault on public office, contempt for the right of the people, a savage and selfish scramble * * * Jalapa, Nov 20, 1926 (Signed) Germán List Arzubide Humberto Gómez Landero, Ramón Alva de la Canal, Dr Salvador Gallardo Leopoldo Méndez, Antonio Helú X Icaza, E Barreiro Tablada Pedro S Casillas Germán Cueto, Roberto Rivera, Carlos Laisequilla, Ana María Avalos Julia Zorrila, Sara E Rebolledo Ana María Landero, Prof A Pérez y Soto, Guadalupe Moreno, Melquiades Ruíz, Victoriano Hernández "

[3] See p 427

politicastro, the incarnation of all that is vicious in Mexican politics Gasca is one of the ablest, most conspicuously honorable public men in Mexico Of humble origin, a shoe worker, self-educated, he fought in the Revolution, rose to a generalcy and took a conspicuous part in the labor movement He was an exemplary governor of the Federal District under Obregón Since 1924 he has headed the important government department [1] of *Fabriles* which manufactures army supplies — ordnance, ammunition, saddlery, uniforms — excepting what is purchased abroad *Fabriles* was long notorious as a gold-mine of graft From six months to a year at its head was deemed equivalent to a life competence I know of five unrelated cases, over a three-year period, in which salesmen to the Gasca management were amazed to find that they were required merely to offer better quality and lower prices than their competitors On the other hand the representative of a large American concern, which had been selling to *Fabriles* for years, on seeking its first order from General Gasca sent him a diamond ring The ring was returned, the firm's emissaries have not been able to enter *Fabriles* since

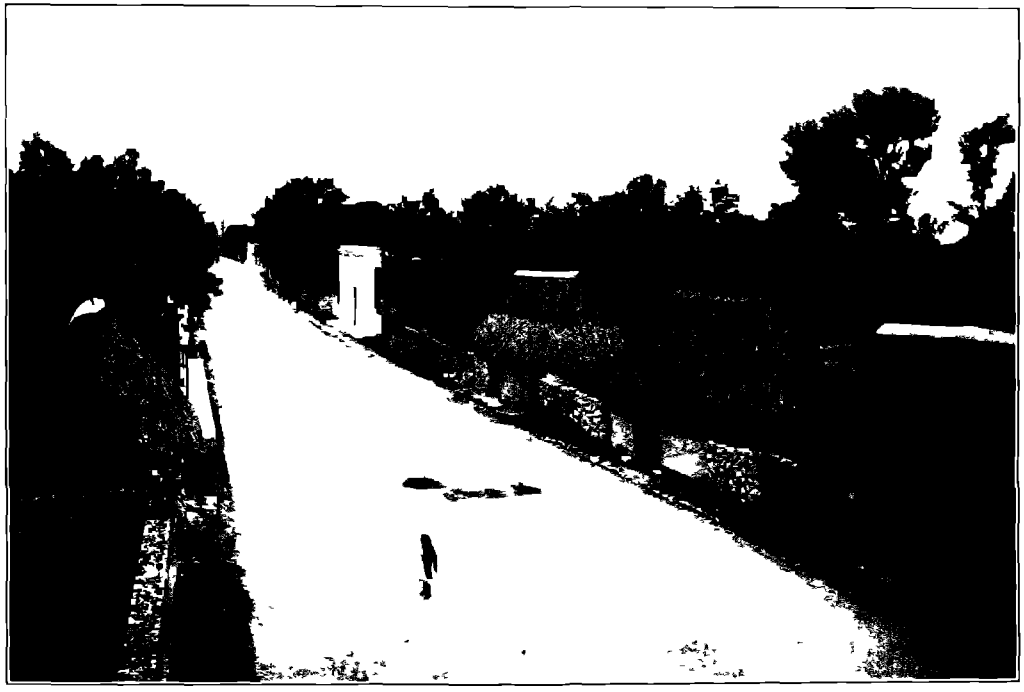
Gasca possesses statesmanlike qualities In an environment bristling with rivalries he has risen through a varied public career, not only with an impeccable record, but with the respect of his political opponents As governor he would transform any state in an incredibly short time

Yet it is impossible for him to become governor of Guanajuato without resorting to illegality to overcome the illegalities with which it is sought to defeat him The retiring governor of Guanajuato, Enrique Colunga, is determined — in order to keep his political control of the state — to "impose" Deputy Arroyo Ch , and has at his disposal all the municipal presidents and the state machinery generally No matter what the popular showing in favor of Gasca might be, the result will be counted as a victory for his opponents, in accordance with the current Mexican dictum "Quien escrute elige" (whoever counts the votes elects), and so ratified by the retiring state legislature

While campaigning the Gasca partisans were repeatedly fired on One of them pictured the prospects to me as follows

"The cards are all stacked Gasca would win in any kind of a free election If we cannot outbid the other side and buy enough of the deputies to declare Gasca elected, we shall have to engage in enough violence at election time to discredit the whole election, all we need to do is to shoot back when we are shot at Then the powers will have disappeared in the state — and we can count on the Center to support Gasca"

[1] In addition to the seven ministries or Secretarías, of Gobernación War and Navy Treasury Industry Commerce and Labor Agriculture, Communications and Public Works and Foreign Relations which compose the cabinet several other departments independent of the ministers report directly to the president and are almost equal in importance to the *ministries* They include *Fabriles*, Health, Post-office and Statistics



On the road to Kanasin one of the highways built in Yucatan, by Governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto



The entire population of the pueblo of Ixtenco engages in a demonstration of protest against a supreme court decision denying it the possession of land. (See pp. 508–510.)

In other words, it is not possible, given existing conditions in Mexico, to elect an honest and conscientious state government without dishonesty and lack of conscience

The president of the republic faces this dilemma constantly and in the end the responsibility is his Theoretically he has relatively little to say in state elections Practically he can control them all And here he is confronted by the alternative of thrusting himself into them, of approaching the Díaz system of imposing governors, or of letting the anarchic and destructive forces which we have seen wreak their havoc on state and nation The choice is tremendously difficult For, clearly, the one-man rule, however indicated by circumstances is, in the long run, a step backward A temporary relief, but no permanent solution, is to be found that way Moreover, the president is human and fallible He must rely largely on others for his information He is, himself, susceptible to friendship or prejudice and liable to make in consequence the poorer choice for the welfare of a given state

Uniformity in the actions of the presidents since Díaz toward the state governments has been lacking Madero did not impose his choice, but Maderistas inevitably replaced the ousted Díaz governors Huerta returned to the Díaz system Since his fall, with few exceptions all gubernatorial candidates have claimed to be "revolutionaries" Carranza tried to name the governors, and in part it proved his undoing Neither Obregón nor Calles has followed one policy consistently They have kept their hands off certain state elections They have interfered passively in some They have interfered actively in others — but always the interference has been *sub rosa*, to avoid the baleful charge of "imposition"

The motives for interference have been various Sometimes to do justice, sometimes to get the best candidate, sometimes political expediency, sometimes friendship for the candidate enthroned as victor, sometimes enmity for the candidate defeated Generally the motives have been mixed, but there has been no clean-cut policy of any kind

The question arises, why should the president interfere at all? The story of the states supplies the answer Anarchy He must intervene for the common weal The constitution provides for such federal intervention

On the specific interventions of the last six years, previously detailed, a uniform and conclusive judgment is impossible — too many factors were in play It is not always possible to foretell how a man will fill his office Certainly the aid given Matías Rodríguez in Hidalgo was beneficial that presumably to be given Gasca in Guanajuato equally so Certain governors like Manrique in San Luis Potosí and Benítez in Jalisco, whatever their faults, were clearly honest and public spirited men who should have been sustained at all costs The support which placed Riva Palacio in the governorship of Mexico has proved disastrous

Two principles borne in mind steadily by the federal executive would give better results To support the man, first, whose record — in personal honesty, ability, and public-mindedness — best qualifies him for a state governorship, and, second, who is most popular Deciding who is most "popular" involves the elusive and intricate question of public opinion How much public opinion is there? Who *is* the public? Certainly not the few hundreds who participate actively in the election day procedure And is the candidate who has perhaps demagogically captured the sympathy of a mass of unenlightened peasants or workers by glittering and unfulfillable promises, thereby the most popular? Or a candidate for whom the supernatural has been invoked by the clergy? A monster like Villa was for a time the idol of his deluded country-side On the other hand, deliberately to flout spontaneous enthusiasm for an eligible candidate, as has been done in behalf of personal friends by both Presidents Obregón and Calles, is unjustifiable on any basis Granting the difficulty of detachment where friendship is involved, and self-deception may easily make the friend appear the better candidate, such impositions are, when viewed dispassionately, destructive of faith, hope, morality, progress, and good government, and betrayals of a sacred trust The president may feel that a friend in the governor's seat assures a faithful collaborator with federal policies, but the contrary often results

A policy contemplated by President Calles at the beginning of his term had excellent possibilities It was unflinchingly to withhold recognition from any candidate in whose behalf fraud had been committed The president did not follow it Such a program would have disqualified all the candidates in nearly all the states Then the choice would fall to president and senate — not an ideal solution, but one capable of enormous educative possibilities by an executive determined to make a beginning at least of ridding the nation of electoral corruption, and the looting of the states which the electoral fraud predicates Concretely, let us suppose that the president, after a state election, with the full information at his disposal, issued a proclamation to the people of that state that the election was void because candidate A had committed such and such illegalities — giving them specifically and in the greatest detail — that Candidate B had been guilty of this and that violation of the electoral law, et cetera, and that the president would therefore, in conformity with the constitution (Art 74, V), send three names to the senate for a choice, meanwhile welcoming suggestions from citizens of the state Then after a careful study he would make public half a dozen or more names out of which he purposed to send three to the senate, again asking from the people of the state advices as to the character and records of these men and eliminating those against whom valid objections were raised At the end of such a process the trio presented to the senate would consist of worthy men, responding to a definite desire in their state, already

much discussed there and, above all, nominated on an anti-fraud basis If the next election were similarly purged, electoral honesty and genuine popularity would soon be at a premium In its execution such a formula would not always be simple, and the same destructive influences now in play would not be entirely eliminated, but a start would have been made Democracy may not be implantable from above, but it surely cannot grow in a soil acidified with fraud, violence, and thievery The immediate need is good government, out of it will blossom a desire to perpetuate good government, from which democratic practice will fruit, if such a practice is not, as now, made physically impossible Certainly the present policy of haphazard and arbitrary interference and non-interference has been a conspicuous failure It is difficult to imagine a more anti-social element than Mexican politics, a sieve which the Federal Government and all other constructive forces vainly attempt to fill with measures of social progress, and no real advance will be possible in Mexico till the problem is attacked with that conviction

In addition to the alternating cycles of semi-anarchy in the states when the politicians seek power, and of drainage of the public wealth when they have secured it, is the menace of a devastating rebellion every four years incident to the national election A peaceful and honest national election between *close* contenders at present is an impossibility When a candidate is overwhelmingly the man of the hour, his opposition is insignificant and his election honest Madero in 1911, Obregón in 1920, and Calles in 1924 had won their presidential victories in the field, though each of these was the logical and the dominant national figure On any basis they were *entitled* to their political victories Madero incarnated the sentiments that drove the country to the Revolution Obregón was the popular idol of the Revolution, and would have been elected in a free contest, he drew his sword when Carranza attempted with the government machinery to impose Bonillas Calles was the outstanding man in the Obregón administration After the de la Huertistas had risen in rebellion and been defeated he was naturally even more dominant than before, and his opponent, General Angel Flores, governor of Sinaloa, had no chance The election was honest It could afford to be The campaign manager, Dr José M Puig Casauranc, repeatedly sent out telegrams saying, "We again beg our partisans * * * not to destroy a single ballot of the opposition, and that the results of the voting be not modified in the slightest degree "[1] Dr Puig told me that from all parts came the query, "Yes, yes, those are your public instructions, what are the private ones?" and he was obliged to explain over and over that he really meant it

At this writing[2] another presidential campaign impends, and the three candidates now in evidence are General Alvaro Obregón, General Francisco

[1] A copy is in the writer's possession [2] June, 1927

Serrano, and General Arnulfo Gómez Not only do all three emerge from the Revolution, but from the Sonora wing thereof All three were together in the long march from Sonora to Mexico City, against Huerta, together in the subsequent campaign against Villa, together in overturning Carranza, together in defeating the de la Huerta rebellion — an association of fourteen years It would be difficult to imagine what "issues" could arise between three such old cronies But it was equally difficult to imagine that de la Huerta, one of the Sonora triumvirate, would lead an open rebellion against his two associates and against the government of which he was an integral part

Against Obregón is raised the cry of "reelectionism" — the only principle invoked in the campaign — and not unjustifiably, though plausible arguments are advanced for his candidacy[1] Minor differences identify Obregón with the "Left," Gómez with the "Right," Obregón having the strategic advantage therefore of assuming the rôle of "true" revolutionary, and labelling his opponents as "reactionary" (as damaging as "Bolshevik" in the United States) while Gómez since he has never been in office is able to capitalize all errors and excesses in Obregón's régime as the objects of his purposed reform A large part of the following of each is within the political class — obviously for place-holding Serrano's candidacy represents nothing else Essentially the contest is one of personalities, with Obregón's clearly dominant The campaign "buncombe" includes no issues The real issue for Mexico is whether the campaign can be kept in the plane of discussion and the election held peaceably without bloody antecedents or sequela Such a result would indicate whether the Revolution had any chance of conquering Mexico's political heritage A knowledge of past and present scarcely justifies optimism on that score

[1] Art 83 of the Constitution of 1917 reads "The President * * * shall serve four years and shall never be reelected" In 1926 an amendment initiated by Obregón partizans permitting a reelection for one term, after a four year interval was adopted by vote of congress and passage by two thirds of the state legislatures The official promulgation of this amendment carried the customary devise *Sufragio Efectivo No Reelección* which has adorned official correspondence of revolutionary administrations since Madero Obregón himself repeatedly asserted that this amendment was superfluous that the constitution merely excluded the president — the man in office — from election, that one who had retired from that office 'runs not as president but as a private citizen, and hence is being elected and not reelected Apart from this quibbling his supporters assert that the "no reelection" principle applied from the outset to the attempt of a dictator — Diaz — to perpetuate himself in office and that Obregón's case is clearly different His opponents point to the parallelism with Díaz's performance after a campaign and election on precisely the same "plank," viz, retirement after one term, a second election amendment to enable one reelection further amendments to establish permanence in office Many Obregón adherents sincerely believe that besides Calles he alone has sufficient weight to 'hold down" the presidential seat His enemies declare in rebuttal that 'a country which can be saved by only one man isn't worth saving," and point also to the possible alternation in power of Obregón and Calles as a manifest evasion of the non-reelection principle Doubtless, Obregón's place in history would be more secure had he declined to run again However potent the arguments for his candidacy, it scraps the outstanding achievement of his presidency that of completing his term, turning over the office peacefully to a duly elected successor and retiring to private life On the other hand his partizans' view is summed up in a statement made to me by President Calles "The Revolution has simply not produced another man," and that, in my judgment, comes close to being the exact truth and justifying Obregón's return to the presidency

POSTSCRIPT — DECEMBER, 1927

Subsequent to the conclusion of this chapter, events ran true to the Mexican political and military heritage Unable to secure any popular following which would render victory over Obregón's superior popularity and prestige probable, Generals Gómez and Serrano launched an insurrection to overthrow the government by armed force They were captured and summarily shot The only aspect of this affair in the least degree indicative of progress was the insignificant number of military chieftains whom they were able to seduce Unlike the de la Huerta rebellion there was no general uprising of generals With three or four exceptions, the army was steadfast Nevertheless, the historic Mexican election has again repeated itself Obregón will enter office without a contest and the balloting in July, 1928, will be a mere formality No blame for this attaches to either Obregón or Calles Serrano and Gómez, long time revolutionists, lacked the patriotism to restrain their personal ambition and to satisfy it were willing to plunge the country into chaos General Calles took the only course possible and deserves commendation for the promptness and vigor with which he stamped out their attempted rebellion

The resulting national political situation, however, is revelatory in more ways than one of the remoteness of a true political democracy in Mexico The undeniable fact emerges that at this writing there are just two men — Calles and Obregón — strong enough and capable of commanding the respect and allegiance of a sufficient proportion of the various struggling elements in Mexico to maintain peace and guide the country into channels of evolutionary progress Were anything to happen to either of them, the other would inevitably be compelled to assume the national leadership in order to obviate chaos It is difficult to visualize aught but utter anarchy should accident or violence cut short the careers of both

JUSTICE

JUSTICE

It was the king's justice in the colonial days, an executive instrument to carry out the royal and viceregal will and, in practice, the will of the court favorites[1] Nor could a republican constitution declaring the judiciary independent of legislative and executive, alter centuries of custom Justice continued to be the handmaiden and strumpet of the mighty, and sank as low as its masters "Lower and higher court judges," writes a Mexican historian of the thirties, "made common cause with the dominant faction * * * the judicial power lent itself to everything, resorted to every device to fill the jails with political prisoners "[2] So venal was justice that, in the opinion of one observer, "with money one could have the victim arrested and the criminal rewarded "[3]

Díaz's judiciary obeyed his slightest indication To have done other would have meant removal How many besides Don Porfirio were powerful enough to give a *consigna* (an implied order in the form of a suggestion) to the supreme court is still controversial In general the weak had slight chance against the strong Between litigants of equal strength, the scales were usually held even Outside the capital the judiciary was always in friendly contact with state governor, *jefe político*, and *hacendado*, played its appropriate rôle in maintaining the existing feudalism, and dealt ruthlessly with offenders against it Justice was, in short, part of the machinery of the Porfirian state Nevertheless, many upright and distinguished judges there were, who when nothing particular was at stake rendered learned and precedent-forming decisions

Huertism was in every respect a cruder and less disguised Porfirism Mrs Nelson O'Shaughnessy reports that on January 20, 1914, her husband left his automobile in Chapultepec Park to enter Huerta's, where they sat for an hour, during which the American chargé "procured the release of Vera-Estañol, one of the most brilliant of the Deputies, imprisoned since the coup d'état of October 10th Huerta also sent one of his aides with a note to the supreme court, written and signed by him, *telling the judges to render a just decision in a case affecting American interests which is now before the court* "[4]

[1] See p 21
[2] Quoted in The War With Mexico, Justin H Smith vol I p 409
[3] Suárez y Navarro, *Hist de México* p 238–9
[4] O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, p 154 (Italics not in original)

How is the administration of justice in Mexico to-day? How has it been affected by the Revolution? What part does it play in the social order? And whither is it heading?

Mexicans widely believe their justice to be corrupt and for sale to the highest bidder Confidence in the judicial system, the security in the belief that a wrong will promptly be righted, innocence shielded, guilt punished, and the individual's private rights impartially protected, a faith so vital to the happiness of a people, does not exist in Mexico

But Mexicans are inevitably pessimistic about their government in all its branches With their habit of linking past and present, bygones remain unforgotten Were their judiciary by some miracle to be reformed over night and attain the highest plane of wisdom and disinterestedness, Mexicans would be among the last to recognize it They believe the worst, because they have so often encountered the worst Where trust has been chronically betrayed, there can be little trust In Mexico faith is scant in institutions or in the men who direct them

Consequently what "one hears" in the street, what "they say," and "it is known that" — generalizations by the uninformed, or even particularizations about cases within the individual's personal knowledge, are valuable as reflecting a state of mind, but not trustworthy as evidence on Mexican justice and the judiciary On few subjects is a rockbottom of fact more difficult to attain than in the estimating of men's judgments over the lives and affairs of other men To get as nearly authoritative a picture of Mexican justice as it is to-day, I interviewed in the spring of 1927 twenty-two lawyers in the capital. Fifteen, the number originally contemplated, proved inadequate, because of a certain repetition in their views The larger number furnished greater variety Excepting two, these lawyers were in active practice, and included recognized leaders of the Mexican bar Seven were definitely "old régime," three adversely critical of both Porfirism and of the new order, five were revolutionists, but more associated with former revolutionary administrations, seven were predominantly of the newest generation Their views were not as much affected by their political background as might be expected, although the judgment of the first group was not unnaturally more adverse to contemporary administration than that of the last However, the bitterest indictment came from an attorney who had been persecuted by Díaz and had sympathized with the Madero revolt, and the most favorable pictures from attorneys more conspicuously identified with bygone revolutionary administrations

These twenty-two lawyers agreed

I That Mexico's judicial procedure needed reform

II That the judiciary was not independent of the executive

III That corruption existed among the judiciary

They differed in their interpretation of the executive-judicial relation-

ship, and they differed widely on the extent and place of judicial corruption

These answers were elicited by specific questions on the character and extent, if any, of executive influence over judicial decisions, and by retailing a statement made to me in 1923 by an American banker of long residence in Mexico He had said

"Justice is really much more satisfactory in Mexico than in the United States There you never know how your case is coming out Here you know to a peso the price of each judge, and if the matter under litigation is worth the price, you pay it"

I asked each lawyer whether in his judgment this statement was correct, exaggerated, or incorrect

Only one of the twenty-two attorneys, Licenciado A———, went fully as far, saying "Justice is worse corrupted than ever before There is not one judge — not one — who is not purchasable * * *"

"The increased corruption," he continued, "is in part due to petroleum It has thrust sums under the judges' noses which they have not dared refuse I have heard an oil magnate tell his attorney, 'spend up to $300,000 pesos but get that *amparo*' (injunction) In another case I personally saw a petroleum company representative write out a check for $50,000 pesos while a case was being tried and send it to the Anglo-South American Bank to be cashed, I saw a note go to one of the judges shortly afterward, up to that moment the magistrates stood evenly divided — five to five The finding was in favor of the company whose representative had cashed the check"

In 1923 a supreme court justice confirmed the bribe tendering by petroleum interests He told me that one oil company had offered as much as $200,000 pesos for a favorable decision to various supreme court magistrates He did not say whether any accepted He implied none had

Honest and competent judges there are, according to Licenciado B———, but they are the exceptions The judiciary is almost wholly corrupt He blames the manner of their selection — by the deputies — who select politicians of their own stamp[1] Said this lawyer "I know attorneys who rather than ask their clients for money for the judge, because they do not want to be suspected of keeping it themselves, have their clients talk directly with the judge's 'coyote'"[2]

"Crime has always gone unpunished in Mexico," points out Licenciado C——— "It follows that there is no justice How often does one hear of the death penalty inflicted in Mexico? Next to never Punishment is

[1] The eleven magistrates of the supreme court are chosen by a majority vote of congress from among twenty-eight candidates, nominated respectively by each of the twenty eight state legislatures Art 96, Const of 1917

[2] "Go-between"

carried out not through the law courts — through violence It was always so Díaz merely continued the previous condition It has been so all through the Revolution It is so to-day

"Why are death sentences not carried out for the many murders for which the law exacts that penalty? Because if the criminal has means he can buy the judge If he has no means the judge is generally compassionate, saying to himself, 'When generals, governors, and other high officials can kill with impunity, and be thought none the less of for their crime, why should I order the execution of this miserable wretch?' And so the criminal gets a prison sentence of which he is often relieved after a few years

"One could cite innumerable cases A few years ago the community was horrified by a most savage crime in the heart of Mexico Three men robbed a drug-store on Bucareli Street, inflicting some forty gashes on the unfortunate owner Society demanded swift trial and punishment for the murderers They are in jail, and doubtless will be out before long

"The criminal courts at Belén (court-house and prison) are a den of bandits From the porter to the judges, everyone is for sale The place is infested with *tinterillos* (scribes) who will agree to arrange anything and almost always can if the price is right It is natural that criminal justice be the most corrupt since it deals with criminals Those in charge of civil justice have to be more circumspect, and are so The corruption in the civil courts is less open and less flagrant than in the criminal branch The supreme court has more than one member who is open to bribery and has been bribed"

Licenciado D——— believes that the best way to indicate what happens in the administration of justice is to cite a concrete case

"Not long ago an attempt was made to assassinate a state governor Those who sought to kill him were what are known in Mexico as *gente decente* That is, they were people who owned property, some of which the governor had stolen, and against whom he had committed all sorts of depredations and crimes Unable to secure legal protection and justice these men finally resolved on the only course that appeared left to them, to kill the governor They succeeded, however, only in wounding him, but three who were with him were killed

"The men who had done the shooting were suspected, and a judge framed an indictment against them Under our law, in such a case another judge may be appealed to and if he can be persuaded that the indictment is unjust he can grant a 'provisional suspension' for seventy-two hours, during which, if discovered, the men are free from arrest If within this period proof can be adduced that the men are innocent the suspension is made definitive

"These three men who had attempted to kill a governor and had killed three others arranged through a lawyer with the judge that he would

grant them a 'provisional suspension,' for five thousand pesos With its protection they reappeared and walked into the offices of the judge who greeted them cordially 'The only thing I have against you, *señores*,' said he jocosely, 'is that as *Tabasqueños* [1] you let Governor X ——— live' With that they proceeded jointly to fabricate the material to allow the making of the suspension permanent After a number of false alibis and fictitious statements of witnesses had been manufactured, the judge paused, and announced that he would go no further unless he received then and there twenty-five hundred pesos in cash The men went out and got it The fabrication of testimony proceeded The judge granted a 'definitive suspension' and the men went free, having proved — as the official records show — that they were wholly innocent of the shooting in Mexico City streets which resulted in the death of three men"

"The whole judicial system needs to be made over — laws and men," in the opinion of Licenciado E ——— "As for the personnel of the courts — it is corrupt One does not judge a judiciary by the exceptions and by the few stellar figures There are but two members of the supreme court that I would not change to make an entirely honest and able court In the lower courts there are honest judges, but they are the exception It has been more or less so — always — better at times than others

"The remedy? Until we have stable and democratic institutions there is none The courts are but the product and reflection of our society

"Has the irremovability of the supreme court judges not tended to improve their character and performance by making them less susceptible to political winds? That is a much discussed question, not merely in Mexico, but elsewhere In theory it should have that effect In practice I am wholly doubtful about any considerable improvement in the four years since that reform went into effect" [2]

Many higher court judges handling cases involving large sums of money are, in the opinion of Licenciado F ———, corrupt and purchasable The root of all evil lies in the method of electing them Most of the deputies who name the judiciary are themselves lawyers and want judges who will decide cases in their favor In small private suits between individuals justice takes its course Above all the little country judges are honest — out in the *pueblos* and in the sierras where there is not much at stake One reason is that these judges need not be lawyers Another is that the Indian has a

[1] Inhabitants of Tabasco

[2] Art 95 provided that the first justices of the supreme court, after the adoption of the constitution, were elected for two years, the second court was to serve four years, and the third, elected in 1923, was to have a life tenure, the justices being removable thereafter only for malfeasance It was intended thereby to postpone the selection of the permanent court until reconstruction was well under way and the turmoil and passion of Revolution long past The supreme court names the circuit and district judges for four year terms They may not be removed except for malfeasance but the supreme court can shift the district judges from one district to another (Art 97)

very keen sense of justice and life is apt to become uncomfortable for a manifestly biased judge The following episode which he witnessed is illustrative

"Far up in the sierra I came across three men, one with a turkey in leash 'We're going to the *municipio* of the district,' he told me 'My turkey went into my neighbor's grounds and ate corn worth twelve centavos He thinks I should pay for the corn and I think I should not, because the facts indicate to me that the land is improperly fenced off We are not willing to abide by the decision of this gentleman, who agreed to arbitrate, so we are going over to the judge' I was interested and went to the court The judge decided in favor of the landowner and the owner of the turkey paid the twelve centavos Then the three men and the judge had a feast, the owner of the turkey slaughtering it while the owner of the land spent not less than five pesos All of which goes to show that the material interest played no part at all"

"It is not correct that all the present judges are purchasable" was the statement of Licenciado G ——— "In the courts of first instance I know of three who are absolutely for sale, but I know others there who are not Among the district magistrates,[1] the next category higher, some are and some are not In the supreme court there are three judges who are utterly incorruptible, Guzmán Vaca, Salvador Urbina, and Díaz Lombardo Two of the judges of that court are for sale The president of the court, Manuel Padilla, is absolutely honest, but a political type extremely open to suggestions from the executive and to other political influences

"How do the dishonest judges take money? Through a 'coyote' He does not even beat about the bush He comes to a lawyer and says, 'for so many thousand pesos I guarantee you a favorable decision in your action before Judge So-and-So' If the lawyer does not want to lose the case, he has to broach the matter to his client unless he wants to put up the money himself I knew of one judge of the first instance in Obregón's time who was so barefaced that he handled the matter without an intermediary He said brazenly to one attorney 'The other side has offered me three thousand pesos but if you give five thousand I'll decide in your favor' I know of cases in which 'coyotes' have taken money from both sides Naturally there was no redress for the loser I know of cases in which the 'coyote,' to show his good faith, when collecting from a lawyer said to him, 'You write out the finding' The lawyer has done it, and that, precisely, has been the finding brought in by the judge

"The difficulty is that the judges are named by the chamber of deputies

[1] That is judges of the Federal District (*in which the national capital is located*) not the federal district judges scattered throughout the nation and corresponding to the judges of the U S district courts.

which is almost wholly composed of politicians, and they name persons of their moral level"

Licenciado H ——— sees a slight and steady improvement since in the turmoil of Revolution the judiciary and the ordinary processes of law were abolished by fiat of the executive, and the court-martial and the dictum of the local general became the highest law

"That was the bottom, of course," said he, "for then we had no justice based on law As we get further from those times, and our governments become increasingly stable, the judicial processes tend to improve correspondingly Our judiciary is an integral part of our administrative machinery and is quite naturally a reflection of the character of our government A Mexican government that is well established — I do not mean militarily, but one resting on the stability that results from doing its duty by the nation, in other words, one that is morally intrenched — will inevitably have a more independent judiciary

"Only governments that are insecure, and therefore fearful, lean heavily on the judiciary An improvement may be noted since four years ago when in pursuance of the constitutional proviso, the supreme court was made permanent [1] Having a life tenure, and being only removable for cause and after a trial before the chamber of deputies that appointed them, makes the judges more independent When, as in all previous Mexican history, a judge's office depended on the will of an executive, there could be no judicial independence The permanence of the supreme court will in time not merely benefit that body, but also the lower courts, for the highest tribunal will be less likely to yield to pressure to remove inferior court judges because their decisions conflict with the politically powerful It is unmistakeable throughout the country that wherever district judges have felt relatively insecure they have been proportionately worse They have been cowed by the local *jefe de operaciones*, by the state authorities, by the *hacendado*, by any force whose hostility might cause their removal

"As far as the venality of judges at present is concerned — that is a difficult matter to prove even when it is generally known The mere fact that a lawyer reports to his client the sad news that to win the case he will have to disgorge so much for the judge may not mean that the judge is corrupt Some lawyers do just that, when they feel reasonably sure of winning a case, deceiving and cheating their client and blackening the name of the judge Of course a venal judge generally becomes known For instance, every respectable attorney tries to avoid at present the Secunda Sala del Civil, where two out of the three judges are notoriously open to bribery On appeal this *sala* can be avoided But in the other four *salas*, composed of three judges each, justice operates fairly well

[1] See p 501, fn

"The statement that every judge has his price is in my judgment an exaggeration, though this was more nearly true two or three years ago than to-day Supreme Court Justices Urbina, Díaz Lombardo, Vicenzio, Guzmán Vaca, Olea, and Estrada are irreproachable Manuel Padilla, the president, and Francisco Ramírez are, in my judgment, men of absolute probity — they could not be influenced by financial personal considerations — but both are exceedingly susceptible to political indications and inclined to accept them "

Licenciado I ———, however, feels that judicial corruption has been exaggerated Little, he says, exists in the lower courts Under the law,[1] the sum involved in an action before the lower courts cannot exceed five hundred pesos Obviously bribery plays no part there It is different in the higher courts where petroleum cases involve thousands and even millions of pesos Nevertheless even here also much that is believed about judicial dishonesty is out of all proportion to the fact

Licenciado J ——— feels that as far as the morals of the judiciary are concerned, the lower courts (*tribunales comunes*) leave much to be desired Not so, however, the federal district and circuit courts — there justice holds the scales evenly Nor in the supreme court Not a single charge has been brought against those now composing it Were they guilty of bribe-taking it would be speedily known, and action taken Four years ago, during the Obregón régime, there was a general house cleaning in which five judges were put out[2] The *Procurador General*, Correa Nieto, was especially appointed to do the job, and did it

The remaining lawyers' opinions fall between the extremes cited My own *impression* is that while considerable corruption exists, it is *to-day* less than generally alleged, and that the views of the more optimistic attorneys are closer to the truth I base this somewhat on the fact that the majority of instances of judicial dishonesty related to me by persons having had a first-hand knowledge of them, involved one or other of the five judges who were subsequently removed from office This fact was seldom pointed out by my informants but developed on inquiry Nevertheless, the picture is far from inspiring

Of the twenty-two lawyers, eight gave their views on the eleven individual members of the supreme court, one more (Lic G ———, previously quoted) declined to name the two he considered for sale, while naming those for whose sterling character he would vouch One other attorney agreed with Lic J ——— (previously quoted) that the entire court was unblemished

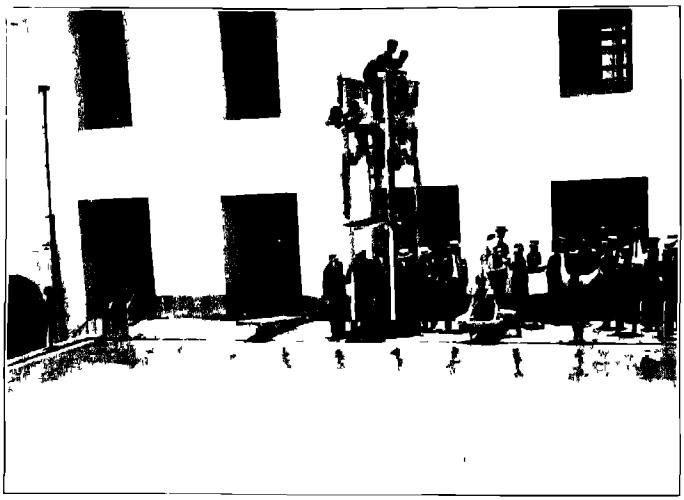
[1] Ley Organica del Fuero Común, Art 20

[2] They were Jesus Moreno Vaca Dario Pastrana, Adalberto Jauregui, José María Gutiérrez, and Rene Lajous



MEXICAN LANDSCAPE

Oil painting by Jean Charlot (See p. 644)





(*Photos by the Author*)

SWIMMING POOLS IN TWO NEW SCHOOL CENTERS ESTABLISHED BY VASCONCELOS

(Above) "San Pedro y San Pablo" (below) "Belisario Domínguez"

The detailed views of the eight lawyers on the supreme court largely coincided, certain magistrates being included on every list for their impeccability One alone was included by all eight as a bribe-taker, or a probable bribe-taker

The view that the irremovability of the supreme court magistrates, now in effect for four years, is bound to work improvement, seems logical, especially if the precedent established in Obregón's administration is followed from time to time, and notoriously corrupt judges are impeached Not less than six attorneys felt that presidential rather than congressional appointment would improve the judiciary It doubtless would, when a good president held office, if he disregarded political considerations, and based the appointments solely on merit after due consultation with the recognized leaders of the bar There are manifest objections to increasing the duties and powers of the executive And the required constitutional amendment is unlikely to receive the necessary two thirds vote from the congress whose powers it curtails (before going to the state legislatures, two thirds of which must also approve it) Finally, criticism, favorable or adverse, of the judiciary alone, is but a unilateral approach to Mexican jurisprudence Judges are chosen from the legal fraternity The standards of the whole profession need reform The charge is frequently made that the majority of Mexican lawyers are merely 'fixers," and that knowledge of law is little important to them Certainly personal relationship plays a disproportionately large rôle One commonly hears attorneys remark to their clients "We shall win this case It comes up before Judge So-and-So, who is a personal friend of mine" Deep-seated habits of thought are involved Neither legislation nor executive action can easily uproot them

On the need of reform of procedure Mexican barristers are unanimous "The law's delay" is a classic cause for complaint in many lands, but it is traditionally valid in Mexico Litigation begun in the early seventeenth century was still before the tribunals after Independence [1] Cases originating in colonial days still pend The death of all the parties at interest in a given suit before it is settled is not uncommon

In a suit for damages it is next to impossible for the plaintiff to get action — and justice — if his opponent elects Fabian tactics The speed with which a case is reached depends on a clerk who can put the *expedientes* on top or beneath the pile For a slight consideration he can — and often has — held them at the bottom for six months Then they go automatically into an archive, and various petitions and formulas involving several officials are necessary to get them out The defendant can with a modicum of finesse stall off a dangerous suit indefinitely

The only formula for getting anything out of suit was thus described by a business man who has been in several "Go at it hammer and tongs Get

[1] Zavala, Ensayo Histórico, vol I, p 35

to the court clerk first and make it worth his while to speed your case Embargo the other man's property Use political influence Claim your damages at twenty times their true amount Then settle at two cents on the dollar "

Another cause for delay in the administration of justice is the excessive use of the *amparo* (literally "protection" or "shelter") or appeal, adopted in its present form by the law of October 18, 1919 Under this law a finding of the lowest court for a verdict of thirty pesos may be appealed until it reaches the supreme court This tribunal is now so clogged that it has ten thousand cases pending As the law requires that the entire court sit on each case, the congestion is increasing, despite the court's passing more than two thousand cases a year — with Sundays and holidays omitted, about seven cases a day — a high degree of industry But it does not suffice Doubling the number of supreme court justices, and dividing the court into benches of five, composed of specialists in various branches of law, has been suggested

A close relation *on matters of policy* exists to-day between the executive and judicial branches, which runs counter to the avowed principle boasted in Anglo-Saxon countries, which in Mexico, also, is a theoretical ideal The most conspicuous example of executive intromission is in the famous five oil cases, during Obregón's administration, brought to test the retroactivity of Article 27 In the first, the Texas Company's on August 30, 1921, and four others, subsequently, the supreme court decided that holdings acquired prior to the constitution's promulgation in 1917 were not affected, provided there had been some "positive act" to show that the land had been sought for extracting oil These rulings followed an indication by President Obregón that a sound national policy required such a decision and that it was his hope that the court would so find I have this on the say-so of one of the magistrates then a member of the court

Interpretations of the relationship vary "Subserviency" is the word that unsympathetic criticism applies, and was applied by twelve out of fifteen lawyers who spoke on that point So, among the majority of Mexican attorneys sounded, expressions were heard such as "The president of the supreme court not only accepts the indications of the executive, he seeks them, he runs down to the palace to get them " Or, "in matters involving international policy the independence of the judiciary becomes a myth " Or, "it is axiomatic that the supreme court accepts not merely the indications of the president but of cabinet officers "

But this criticism is meaningless without a thorough appreciation of the special conditions governing the judiciary in post-revolutionary Mexico The Revolution, limited in scope, is incomplete It arose not as the result of a preparation in the practice of political and economic independence which made their complete achievement desirable, as with the American colonists Nor was it preceded by an educational campaign like that of the French

Encyclopedists It had at its start only one objective, purely political, but it united under its banner a multitude of grievances Attempted redress for these came in a haphazard, often arbitrary manner, by trial and error Within the revolutionary movement various interests clashed It did not move as one front The land legislation of 1915 was an emergency measure, and its history since has been of constant modification to make it conform effectively with the underlying purpose of breaking up land monopoly, abolishing peonage, and getting land to the greatest number of agricultural people

Mexico split into two camps Those adversely affected considered land reform, wrought by force, taking away what under the previous régime had been supposedly inalienable property (no matter how acquired), "illegal" What was to be the attitude of the courts, of the supreme court, the body with the power to decide what acts were "constitutional," or "unconstitutional," "legal," or "illegal"? Here fundamental policy was enormously complicated by the difficulty of distinguishing between kinds of Revolutionary violence, between "Revolutionary" changes affecting property, based on principle, and arbitrary and individual acts by persons with high Revolutionary authority

The judiciary is by nature, and intent, a *conservative* body It serves varyingly, in systems of jurisprudence the world over, to temper violent change, to brake, through its attachments with the past, the impulses to which the legislative and executive branches may, in a moment of emergency, have reacted The judiciary considers reform less from the angle of its proponents than in its relation to existing institutions and to all parts of the social order The relatively moderate Revolution in Mexico, unlike the French Revolution of 1793 and the Russian Revolution in 1917, abolished no existing institutions It did attempt sudden drastic modifications So when the brief reign of absolute military force passed, a legal profession trained under the old régime, dubious of the new, still integrated the courts The new legislation — untried, ill digested — it naturally resisted, partly for its principles and even more for its technical flaws Against the acts of a national or a local agrarian commission it promptly and automatically interposed *amparos* Where the legislation was so defective and capable of such varied application, it was often difficult to draw a line between legality and illegality under the new dispensation

Should the courts, basing their findings on the precedents of an overthrown régime, continue to oppose the effort to establish and legalize a new order? Obviously not And how better can the legalizing, regulating, and systematizing of this new order be effected than by conference and consultation between those charged with promulgating and enforcing new law and those whose duty it is to interpret it? That, precisely, is what has happened

It is quite true that the president of the supreme court confers regularly with the national executive New problems come to the supreme court for solution and the formation of a rule of conduct for future guidance It is the court's larger duty to interpret these new problems, not according to abandoned societal standards, not according to the personal reaction to its magistrates, but as nearly as possible according to the intent of the legislation in question That, precisely, is happening An entirely new set of precedents is being worked out [1] The overruling of presidential resolutions in agrarian matters, though not as frequent as it might be,[2] is an indication of a genuine effort at collaboration, free from executive dictation [3] The function, then, of the supreme court in interpreting new law is to harmonize it with the national desire, as that desire in turn is interpreted by the existing governments The five petroleum decisions were a reflection of President Obregón's belief that were Article 27 interpreted retroactively it would go beyond the revindication of national subsoil rights claimed for the nation by the constitution and be injurious to international relations, and Mexico's economic reconstruction With the responsibility for national affairs in his hands, what more logical and natural that he should so address himself to the supreme court, and that this body should respond in kind? A basis of patriotism could with entire correctness be given to such a plea It is pointed out that "Obregón wanted recognition," at the time, which is true, and that the supreme court's decisions obviously brought recognition nearer But this merely reenforces the thesis that the supreme court is, as it should, cooperating with the executive to establish a stable and ordered régime

If the relations between courts and administration appear different under an already stable and ordered government satisfactory to a majority of its people, such as the United States, it is perhaps not so different in principle The United States Supreme Court also reflects the prevailing sentiment of its time A 2 per cent income tax declared unconstitutional in Grover Cleveland's day was approved in a far more drastic form in Woodrow Wilson's During the World War the United States Supreme Court sanctioned invasions of the constitutionally guaranteed rights of free speech, yielding to emergency measures passed by Congress initiated by the executive The court is, in other words, responsive to public opinion or rather to public opinion as interpreted by and represented in the Government In Mexico, the president is the interpreter of a public opinion that is not yet fully vocal

The Mexican judiciary's accommodation to the prevailing idealogy is clearly illustrated in the reversal of the supreme court's position on the

[1] Los Fallos Pronunciados por la Suprema Corte de Justicia * * * Relativos al Problema Agrario * * * coll by Lic Manuel Martínez Pastor, is a useful compilation of the supreme court s position on agrarian legislation from 1917 to 1922

[2] Eleven in 1925, twenty-three in 1926 (Figures furnished by supreme court)

[3] See p 156–8 in chaptr on Land

Boards of Conciliation and Arbitration These were created by the Constitution of 1917 to settle differences between employer and employee From 1917 to 1923 the supreme court repeatedly ruled that these boards were in no sense tribunals, that they were established merely as a convenience to try and avoid violent disagreements between labor and capital, that submission of a difference to them was voluntary, and their decisions not binding on either party [1]

From 1924 on, the supreme court reversed this position, finding that the *Juntas de Conciliación* "are an official institution * * * not with the character of private arbitration, but public, it is not the desire of the parties at interest, which establishes them, it is the law * * * "[2] Otherwise, holds the court, workmen would be obliged to appeal to the ordinary courts and become involved in the cost and delay of litigation, which it was clearly the purpose of the constitution to obviate The court concludes by affirming the finality and complete jurisdiction of the Boards of Conciliation and Arbitration in labor disputes [3]

This altered attitude corresponds to an increase in the power of organized labor in Mexico One need seek no explanation of executive "indications" or direct labor pressure to explain the reversal, which indeed is wholly logical, and consistent with the change in the times The earlier decisions were handed down in the spirit of the vanished past The Boards of Conciliation were a new institution, they threatened, moreover, an invasion of the existing justiciable field The supreme court restricted them as far as possible Nothing in the spirit of the Carranza administration, during which these earlier findings were handed down, induced the court to do otherwise Despite the adoption of the constitution, Carranza was never enthusiastic about its social reforms He was not sympathetic with organized labor Obregón was more so, and toward the end of his administration — 1924 — loomed the still friendlier Calles The supreme court merely adapted itself to this trend

This adaptation is given further impulse by the pressure of popular demonstrations One by the C R O M in front of the supreme court, when the indemnity to the striking Aguila workers was under consideration, has been mentioned [4] On January 25, 1924, virtually the entire adult male population of the *pueblo* of Ixtenco, Tlaxcala, more than four hundred strong, marched to the capital to protest against the supreme court decision, voiding a presidential resolution giving this *pueblo* lands Bearing banners denouncing the supreme court the peasants stationed themselves in front of its building, paraded through the streets and called their grievance to the attention of the president Their protest is revelatory of the popular

[1] Ejecutorias of Aug 23, 1918 Jan 23, 1919, Feb 1, 1919
[2] Ejecutoria of Jan 24, 1924
[3] Ejecutorias of Aug 21, and Sept 23, 1924
[4] See p 365

attitude toward justice in a country which has never learned to respect the judiciary and judicial decisions

We, some 470-odd inhabitants of Ixtenco, have come on foot for the purpose of making a public manifestation against the illegal finding of the reactionary supreme court, which to-day dishonors the Revolution by having rendered a decision favorable to rich despoilers of the *pueblo* possessing the Mier Hacienda, contrary to the patriotic presidential decree which conceded to the *pueblo* of Ixtenco land to which, by law and revolutionary sanction, it is entitled

We know, Mr President, that you and the National Agrarian Commission, headed by that staunch revolutionist, Citizen de Negri,[1] are with this *pueblo* which does not ask, but demands, justice, because it has known how to give its blood, arms in hand, on the field of combat in defense of the revolutionary aims, and in defense of you,[2] because we believe you to be a sincere agrarian

You should know * * * that after you gave us possession of the land * * * the house of Mier, at various times, killed some of our comrades, and on other occasions the administrator of the *hacienda*, with servants and soldiery, stole our crops, causing a loss of $18,000 pesos invested at great sacrifice

Our villages do not believe in the decisions of lawyers bought by the rich, because we feel the truth and justice of our ideals, and we are not disposed to give up our lands even in the face of a hundred decisions by a hundred reactionary courts * * *[3]

The supreme court had found, as in other instances in which it overruled the presidential decree, that irregularities had accompanied the application of the agrarian reform.[4] But the land-hungry *pueblo* cares only about satisfying that hunger. The knowledge, moreover, that justice has often been for sale, and that many a land partition to which a village considered itself entitled had been side-tracked by the *hacendado's* bribery — of state officials, federal military, and of the local judge — makes for impatience of any adverse decision no matter how well buttressed, and puts the worst possible construction upon it.

This suspicion, this fact drawn out of Mexico's long past, tends to perpetuate and intensify the very evils that it connotes. If dictators had their way with courts, why not a triumphant Revolution which replaced them? Away with the judge who decides against the Revolution, who is "reactionary" (anyone who decides against me is a "reactionary"), who, if he decided against me, must have been bought! The C R O M at times has mobilized its strength against the judiciary and has caused the removal of a magistrate whose attitude it does not like.

Judge Ricardo Couto was, if one listens to the Conservatives, a learned and upright judge who would not tolerate the corrupt labor-dictated decisions of the *Juntas de Conciliación*. He was, if one listens to the Labor-

[1] Ramón P. de Negri was secretary of agriculture in the latter part of Obregón's administration.
[2] The de la Huerta rebellion was then at its height.
[3] Copy in the writer's possession.

[4] See p. 150–5

ites, invariably granting *amparos* to the employers against the *junta*, until his anti-labor bias became a scandal The one incontrovertible fact is that the C R O M organized a protest against this judge, and threatened a general strike unless he were removed, which he was — to remote Michoacán where there are no labor disputes The supreme court yielded to organized labor pressure The fact that with such attention focused on the judge, he was merely transferred — not impeached — would indicate that he was honest and unimpeachable

Judge Miguel Mendoza López y Schwertfeger, federal judge of the district of Tuxpan, Vera Cruz, presented on May 20, 1927, his resignation to the supreme court, charging constant and intolerable pressure against him by the secretary of industry, Luis N Morones These charges were published in the Tampico "El Mundo," on June 8, 1927 They did not appear in the capital's press They involved the minister's relation with the oil concessionaires, and the judge's issuing of writs of *amparo* to protect various claimants against the actions of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Labor No refutation has been attempted at the time of this writing (July 1, 1927) This judge is notable for his probity, his intellectual honesty, and his long devoted record in the revolutionary ranks Under Obregón, he was president of the National Agrarian Commission He has always been in modest circumstances He it was also who protested publicly and vigorously against the action of the military in disregarding a stay issued by him, and executing men without trial [1]

Against the arbitrary ruthlessness of the military, the courts have in recent years stood up creditably but unfortunately not always with success More than once army chiefs have snapped their fingers at an *amparo* interposed to save life, and the responsibility for such disregard of judicial authority falls on the president of the republic, commander-in-chief of the army, through his failure summarily to cashier the offending general, whose act impaired all governmental authority

The caliber and fate of the state judiciary (headed by a superior or supreme court, below which function courts of the first instance and minor judges) depend largely on the character of the state's political administration In twenty-five states the legislatures name the higher court magistrates, who for the most part choose those of the lower tribunals, although in some cases these also are selected by the legislature In Nuevo León the higher court magistrates are popularly elected, but the legislature fills vacancies [2] In Chihuahua the election is also popular, but the legislature names the substitute judges [3] In San Luis Potosí, the municipal governments name the magistrates of the supreme court [4] Of course a judiciary,

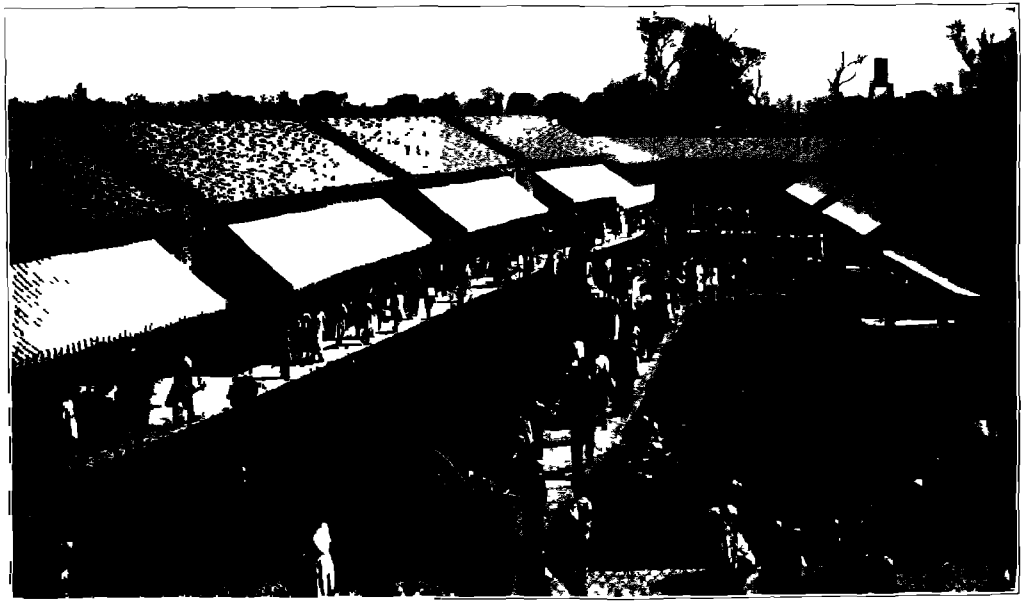
[1] See p 326
[2] Const of Nuevo León, Art 63, XXII, and 97
[3] Const of Chihuahua, Art 64, XVIII, C, and 102–3
[4] Const of San Luis Potosí, Art 64

like a stream, can rise no higher than its source When a governor can throw a supreme court in jail, as did Governor Elizalde of Aguascalientes in 1925,[1] or stop the judges' salaries until they "find" the way he wants, a practice of Governor Zuno of Jalisco (1923–1926),[2] it is idle to talk of jurisprudence or justice in such times and places In general it may be asserted that just as the Federal Government is morally superior to the run of state governments, so, correspondingly, is its judiciary

Such are the influences under which justice in Mexico strives to administer Certain it is that for long to come it cannot approach the abstract ideal of independence, and escape being blown hither and yon by the powers that rule — be they individuals or groups While fundamental social reform is in process, chiefly by the method of trial and error in an atmosphere of passion and conflict, detachment is impossible Pressure of any kind upon the judiciary is repulsive to our concept of justice Consultation between executive and judiciary such as now goes on between the president of the republic and the president of the supreme court, is *per se* not evil, but beneficial, judged by the needs of Mexico, as long as personal advantage plays no part Here as elsewhere personality — the personality of the president — is of transcendent importance One who would set his face like flint against judicial corruption on the one hand, and pressure of any kind against the judiciary on the other, could even in his brief four years go far to lift the administration of justice into public confidence Although the legislative nominates the judiciary, an executive determination to purify the courts would encounter but ineffective resistance

Whatever its weaknesses Mexican jurisprudence cannot be charged with errors that result in the execution of possibly innocent men, in which respect it compares favorably with past Mexican practice and contemporary practice in other lands Guiltless and guilty alike escape Thus the Mexican courts may to-day be counted as relatively a humane influence whose offenses are against property rather than against life and liberty

[1] See p 402 [2] See p 444



ALVARO OBREGON SCHOOL ONE OF THE NEW OPEN AIR SCHOOLS ESTABLISHED IN THE CAPITAL, UNDER THE CALLES ADMINISTRATION



(Photo by the author)

DR. MANUEL GAMIO

EDUCATION

EDUCATION

I

POPULAR education was unknown in Mexico before the Revolution Illiteracy was variously estimated at from 80 to 85 per cent In 1910 the Díaz Government published the following statistics for 1906 — the last year available [1]

No of private schools	1896	Total number of pupils in these non-public schools	163,020
No of clerical schools	547		
No of association schools	119	Total number of pupils enrolled in federal, state, and municipal schools	615,134
Total number of non-government schools	2562	Total number of pupils in all schools	778,154

These data would not err on the side of understatement They report but 5 per cent of Mexico's fifteen millions in schools A country's scholastic population is normally reckoned at 20 per cent of the total Accepting these figures, but one fourth of Mexico's children were being schooled The federal educational budget which provided for the bulk of these schools was $9,672,703 pesos

In reality the educational situation was far worse than the official figures showed Rural schools were virtually non-existent Occasionally a state governor established a few schools and devoted part of the state funds to education The two conspicuous examples were Governor Juan de la Luz Enríquez of Vera Cruz, who brought a noted Swiss educator, Rebsamen, to Mexico, and Governor Ramón Corral of Sonora In Puebla, also, the educator, Dr Rafael Serrano, had a free hand, and lifted that state educationally far above the average But these efforts were exceptional and temporary And the influence of the beloved Justo Sierra, minister of education in the later Díaz days, was confined chiefly to the capital

The real failure to develop education in Mexico may be ascribed less to men — although Díaz could have done much — than to the Mexican system

[1] Peñafiel, Cuadro Sinóptico de la Administración del Sr Gral D Porfirio Díaz Hasta 1909

A generation before, Juárez had expressed the problem in these terms

> Even though schools multiplied and be well endowed and teachers well paid, there would always be a scarcity of pupils, so long as the cause which prevents the attendance of children persists That cause is the widespread misery under which our people live The man who cannot supply his family with food views the schooling of his sons not merely as something remote but actually as an obstacle in his daily struggle for existence, since it takes from him his assistants * * * If that man would experience the least let-up in his struggle, if he could squeeze out of his toil the slightest profit, he would from that day forward be watchful of the education of his children The desire to learn and to improve himself is innate in the heart of man Take off the shackles of misery and despotism and education follows almost naturally [1]

But under the Díaz feudalism, education for the masses was held to be no more desirable than education for the slaves in the American South before the Civil War In both cases their masters had no intention that slave or peon should remain other than "hewer of wood and drawer of water"

Moreover, there was in Mexico no concept of what national education might be because there was no concept of Mexican nationality among the dominating oligarchy French art, literature, and *modes* were the vogue among its members They were absentee Mexicans — physically, often, culturally, always They ate European foods, wore European clothes, followed European manners, the while they despised everything natively Mexican, much as they looked down on its embodiment in the flesh, the lowly Mexican Indian (It is important to bear in mind that the Mexican prejudice was not of color and race but of caste) Patriotism, as established in the nineteenth century *mores* of the great nations, was a feeble and almost non-existent force in the Mexico of Porfirio Díaz The upper class Mexican felt he had much in common with the aristocracy of Europe but nothing with his fellow Mexican of lower station And the humble Mexican knew by instinct and by the oppressive facts of his life that he did not and could never "belong" to the privileged as represented in the *hacendado*, the white, urban dweller, the foreign entrepreneur — in fact, the entire category of men with soft hands and store clothes

This state of mind was mirrored in the state of so-called higher education [2] It produced a superficial and inadequate literacy, revealed, in the view of one writer, in the inability of ninety-five per cent of public officials or employees of commercial houses to compile a logical and succinct report, and of eighty per cent of them even to write grammatically [3] The wealthy sent their children abroad The boys to an American military school, a French

[1] Zayas Enríquez, *op cit*, p 43–44

[2] It is graphically described in Elevación y Caída de Porfirio Díaz, José López Portillo y Rojas p 338–341 Also in México Política Experimental, José Diego Fernández

[3] Peust (Quoted in Molina Enríquez, *op cit*, p 217)





(Photos by the author)

RURAL EDUCATION

San Jorge Tezoquipan (above) the Federal School for boys. May 1937
(below) the school committee



A class in apiculture at one of the new Mexico City open air schools El Pipila February, 1927

lycée, or Stonyhurst in England, while the girls attended foreign convents They emerged with a cosmopolitan outlook which they retained through life "Mexicanism" they never had an opportunity to absorb for the simple reason that there was none, taught, visualized, or projected

II

The Revolution brought a reversal new ideas of nationalism, new appreciations of the native race — in short, the ferment of a Mexican patriotism A precursor of this revaluation was a lawyer named Julio Guerrero who a decade before the fall of Díaz published a volume entitled "The Genesis of Crime in Mexico," [1] subtitled "A Study in Social Psychiatry," which stimulatingly suggested the bases for a study of Mexican society The new trend followed the trail blazed by Andrés Molina Enríquez, whose "Great National Problems," [2] published in 1909, is a fundamental contribution to the new Mexico A few suggestions appeared in "Some National Problems," [3] by Esteban Maqueo Castellanos, whose emphasis was chiefly on the perils of American economic penetration and the resulting atrophy of Mexico's self-development Finally, these germinating ideas found a new synthesis in the work of the young anthropologist, Manuel Gamio, in his "Forging the Fatherland," subtitled "Pro-Nationalism" [4]

The first translation of the new thought into constructive action was deferred a decade Far too slowly to satisfy popular desires! "Land and schools" was the crisp answer I received from peasants all over Mexico to my question, "What is it you people want?" Hunger for education is a patent phenomenon among the Mexican masses, however frequently bodily hunger drives the child from study to labor The budget for education in Madero's time was some eight million pesos [5] Under Huerta it dropped to four and a half million, and but a small part reached its destination [6] The ensuing years were submerged in turmoil Carranza did nothing appreciable for public instruction Only with the coming of Obregón was it undertaken seriously The expenditures for the ensuing years are revelatory In 1921 fifteen million pesos, 1922 thirty million, 1923 thirty-five million, [7] 1924 twenty-five million (this reduction over the preceding year being due to the financial straits following the de la Huerta rebellion)

The man largely responsible for the birth of popular education in Mexico was José Vasconcelos, to whom President Obregón intrusted the portfolio

[1] La Génesis del Crimen en México (Estudio de Psiquiatría Social)
[2] Los Grandes Problemas Nacionales
[3] Algunos Problemas Nacionales
[4] Forjando Patria (Pro Nacionalismo)
[5] 1912 $8,155,443 30 pesos
[6] 1913–14 $4,510 336 00 pesos
[7] The amount originally assigned was $52,362,913 50 pesos, but the subsequent rebellion reduced the sum actually expended by some $17,000,000 pesos

Vasconcelos had never been a teacher By profession a lawyer, by inclination a publicist, he had in his years of exile during the Huerta and Carranza régimes frequented public libraries avidly Whatever may have been his shortcomings, he attacked his gigantic assignment with apostolic zeal He advertised the nation's illiteracy and the need of combating it He sent "missionaries" to remote regions In the capital he erected a vast Ministry of Education, and unprecedented school "centers," equipped with libraries, playgrounds, and swimming pools, to meet the imperative lack of accommodations

The new emphasis on physical culture he gave concrete shape in a great stadium, thereafter scene of numerous school "folk" festivals and athletic meets To the arts Vasconcelos gave a new release The Mexican painters found him a generous patron The offices and patios of the new Education Building and of the "Preparatoria" blossomed with frescoes Those whose talents lay not in mural decoration, but in smaller canvases, found the ministry a purchaser

The campaign against illiteracy — planned as an auxiliary drive — brought forth many stirring examples of devotion Equipment was lacking In the patio of a *Casa de Vecindad* ("House of the Neighborhood") or tenement, I saw a girl of thirteen, who had gathered some twenty-five children about her, marking letters and figures on the pink-tinted plaster wall, while the mothers paused in their washing around the central stone fountain to gaze with admiration and awe Another child of the same age, daughter of an illiterate plasterer, had taught her father and 150 children to read and write These junior volunteer teachers were two out of several hundred drawn almost wholly from the laboring class

A product of the new contagion for education was the Francisco I Madero School in the long notorious Colonia de la Bolsa, where the cooperative efforts of teacher Arturo Oropeza and pupils have been sympathetically recorded by Mr Frank Tannenbaum in "The Miracle School" [1]

The desire to link education with immediate economic betterment led to the hasty emphasis on "little industries" — soap, perfumes, pottery, glassware, "craft" jewelry, leather work, metal nicknacks, and canned goods

The realization that an empty stomach meant an unreceptive brain led to breakfasts for the capital's destitute children Their undernourishment was one of Vasconcelos's concerns Under the direction of a young girl, Elena Torres, twelve thousand children were supplied with a simple breakfast of rolls and warm milk — tinted with coffee

In Mexico all this was new to the masses

Many obstacles were insuperable owing to lack of funds, of trained teachers, and of fit school-houses I traveled through sections of Mexico in 1923 not touched by the educational drive directed from the capital

[1] Published in The Century Magazine, Aug., 1924, and reprinted in pamphlet form

Nevertheless, it is impossible not to regard the work of Vasconcelos as memorable, and as the most notable contribution to Mexico of Obregón's administration However fractional in its scope, and by comparison with the immensity of the task infinitesimal in its ultimate results, it was the first visible realization of revolutionary promises To-day Vasconcelos's mistakes of judgment, none of them important, fade into the past, while the personality of the modest, enthusiastic, and conscientious public servant looms increasingly in retrospect To popular education he gave an impetus which carries on to this day And his stadium, his administration building, his schools — totaling more construction for public education than had been left in the previous half century by the régimes of Díaz, Madero, Huerta, and Carranza — stand as the first monuments to the birth of a new order

Unfortunately Vasconcelos eliminated himself — at least temporarily — from the public service in Mexico by being overtly "neutral" during the de la Huerta rebellion, when other than active support of the Government was not improperly interpreted as verging on disloyalty His course was shaped by distaste for the "strong arm" tactics of the C R O M leadership in behalf of the Government, though these were not invoked until after the cold-blooded killing of Governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto of Yucatán, which had left Vasconcelos apparently unmoved They hardly justified Vasconcelos's lack of understanding that the rebellion constituted an assault on everything he himself had stood for, by the militarism he had consistently denounced Not the least of the injuries which de la Huerta's treason inflicted on Mexico was the loss of Vasconcelos, whatever his own responsibility therefor

III

Another event in the Obregón administration was the work of Manuel Gamio As head of the Bureau of Anthropology he had for eight years been engaged in exploring the ruins and studying the population of the Valley of Teotihuacán, some thirty miles from the capital This survey, the first of its kind in Mexico, was a scientific record of the entire community [1] Thus prepared, Dr Gamio — departing from the general practice of scientists whose researches merely augment the archived store of information — put his knowledge to immediate use by developing his theory of "integral education" in practice

That only education applied to a whole community and embracing its entire way of life will serve in rural Mexico is Dr Gamio's thesis To intrude the partial "elementary instruction" of the Three Rs, et cetera, suitable to an "advanced" civilization, homogeneous in custom and language, would be ineffective among Mexico's varyingly developed peoples Reading and

[1] Published in three folio volumes See bibliography

writing by themselves have proved of little practical benefit among people who have small chance to exercise this talent, once acquired, or to convert it to their economic advantage "Integral education" includes guidance in diet, clothing, and shelter, in hygiene, in the methods of making a livelihood, in the relations of neighbors, in the integration of each village into the larger environment of which it forms a part (It is useless, for instance, to give children five minutes schooling in cleanliness, if in their homes domestic animals wander freely) But to apply "integral education" intelligently it is indispensable first to study each region, since the requirements of groups living under widely diverse climatic and physiographic conditions, with differing antecedents and contacts, and in distinct stages of development, are unlike Such a study is further essential because the teacher approaching the task is imbued with the "white" psychology, and has not penetrated the Indian's Having once familiarized himself with place and people, the teacher then adapts his method to the character of the region and its inhabitants, striving to bring about their spiritual, mental, physical, and economic progress through intelligently applied self-help

Precisely this Dr Gamio began to do The means at his disposal were negligible He was allowed to dispense the revenue from the tourists who visited the Pyramids of the Sun and Moon, and the Temple of Quetzalcoatl — the Plumed Serpent of the natives' ancestral worship — in the excavation of which Dr Gamio and his staff had played so important a part

With these funds he founded a school He established a clinic for prenatal and infant care Under his guidance the people built an open air theater, where their regional folk plays drew steadily growing audiences He introduced improvements in their methods of agriculture He uprooted nothing He took what he found, and sought gradually to get the natives themselves to improve it

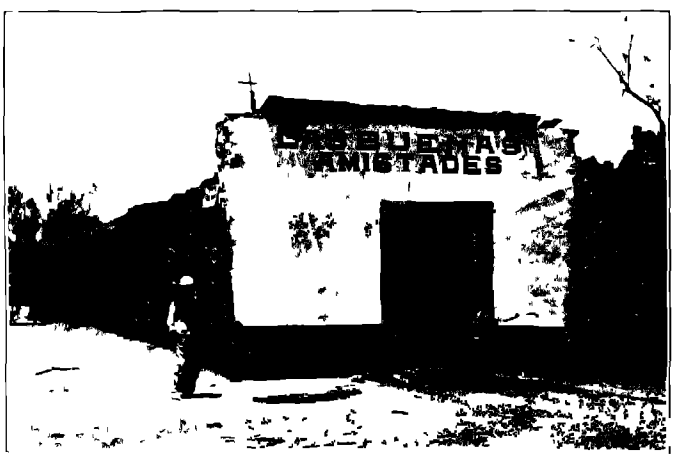
The Teotihuacanos had long produced a regional pottery, inferior to the ware in many other parts of Mexico It was made in only two colors — brown and black — and was porous and brittle Without attempting to alter in the slightest the rhythmic native designs, Gamio introduced both the use of pigments — extracted in the region — and improved the serviceability of the ware The result was a rarely exquisite and unique ceramic which found a ready sale, to the economic betterment of the potters and a greater joy in their craftsmanship

Gamio showed the natives more effective use of regional products Obsidian, found in superficial veins in neighboring hills, which had been used by the ancient Teotihuacanos for cutting instruments (I picked up many a prehistoric blade around the pyramids, as unmistakable as the modern "safety" razor blade), was again exploited in jewelry making The maguey fiber was woven into rugs, and from a thistle, *chicalole*, hitherto despised, was extracted an oil for soap making



"TEHUANAS" IN A "FOLK"-FESTIVAL IN THE STADIUM MEXICO CITY MAY 5, 1927





[illegible]

"THE ONLY APERTURE IS THE DOOR WAY" (See p. 584.)

Near a fiesta in Mexico in the village of Tultepec on the day of St. Peter (Above) a butcher shop. The Circassian. The native art on the walls reveals that pork is probably for sale within. (Below) a *fonda* named "The Good Friendship."

Gamio called attention to the unproductiveness of the valley's cattle, and a blooded bull and boar were bought and kept at stud, the cost defrayed by modest fees In his efforts to substitute milk for the *pulque* which the mothers had been giving their children, he imported goats for the many natives who could not afford the luxury of a cow

He built a model house, differing little in general appearance [1] from the valley habitations, yet modified in several essentials A chimney surmounted the fireplace, windows pierced the walls, and three rooms permitted cooking, eating, and sleeping in separate quarters He was planning to stimulate construction of such houses, the entire material and labor for which the valley itself provided

Such in brief was the experiment — fruit of long experience by a trained student — which remains as a prospect for Mexican education For unfortunately — and characteristically of Mexico, which does not utilize what it has — Gamio's opportunity to develop his program on a large scale was denied, although some of his ideas, in a much attenuated form, have been adopted The details of that episode, and the responsibility therefor, belong properly in an estimate of the Calles administration Suffice it to say here, that on assuming the presidency General Calles named Dr José Manuel Puig Casauranc secretary of education, and Dr Gamio, sub-secretary After five months the latter was eliminated, and Moisés Sáenz, up to that time *oficial mayor* of the ministry, was promoted to fill the vacancy Dr Puig had been a practicing physician, Sáenz a teacher, having studied at Columbia University, and served for years in the Mexican Ministry of Education

IV

The educational efforts of the Calles administration were materialized in four ways

I Eight large schools of a new character in the capital
II New rural schools numbering 3550
III The "House of the Indigenous Student" in Mexico City
IV Seven great agricultural schools each in a different state
V Three new art schools in the Federal District

Eight new "open air schools" were built in the capital With one exception, all were located in sections which called aloud for redemption These *escuelas al aire libre* were an audible answer to that call Their structure was in itself a hygienic victory For the heritage in architecture and bad personal habits had nullified the abundant sunshine and pure atmosphere of the Mexican plateau The new one-storied expansive edifices ward off solar rays and occasional rain, while permitting access to all air One,

[1] In Chapingo, at the National School of Agriculture, natives could not be persuaded to live in model houses furnished them gratis because totally unlike any they had known

sometimes two, sides are entirely open, the walls being occupied with blackboards, maps, and other scholastic paraphernalia Ample playground space, garden, and rudimentary workshops are part of each school

The extension of rural schools was the particular hobby of the Calles-Puig-Sáenz administration In its first three years some 3550 had been established, according to official figures, enrolling approximately 180,000 children Add some 40,000 adults in night classes and it becomes evident that at least a dent has, quantitatively speaking, been made, even with a 20 per cent subtraction to reach average attendance

The words "rural school" convey a picture that may mislead Its reality was founded in pursuance of the belief, which Sub-Secretary Sáenz takes pains to emphasize, that *any* school is better than none, and that even an inadequate school will stimulate more desire for more education than no school

The restricted budget compelled by Mexico's necessity — some $25,000,000 pesos a year under Calles — has left a very limited amount for each separate sphere of educational effort The Mexican rural school is the quickest and most extensive response possible to the native cry for education It is a one-man, or one-woman, response, multiplied as many times as resources permit The Government furnishes the teacher and books and supplies, as far as possible The village does the rest And that rest — the school-house — however inadequate from many angles, is promptly forthcoming The right kind of *maestro* can usually, before many months, direct the longing for a school into the construction of a better school-house than the makeshift often first assigned for that purpose Indeed, the school building, however widely its type may vary throughout Mexico, is generally the best structure the village affords The cost to the Government is therefore low — one thousand pesos annually, of which the teacher receives an average of 720 — two pesos a day, the balance going for school supplies

One of the obvious difficulties is finding teachers Few are the city dwellers with the devotion to cut loose from past contacts and, for a pittance, to bury themselves in some remote hamlet No one who has not seen it, can realize the isolation of many a Mexican *pueblo* So, generally, a native who knows a little more than his fellows perforce is made school-teacher At times this works fairly, sometimes not

"Have you a school here?" I inquired of a family of *zarape* weavers in the *pueblo* of San Miguel Chiconcuac, State of Mexico

"Sí, señor"

"Federal or state?" I asked

"Federal"

"Is it a good school?"

"Pues señor "

"Is the teacher not good?" I inquired

"Why, sir, he is of the village," was the reply in tones of infinite, if gentle, disdain

This defect is being combated First, the federal representative in each state, and an average of three inspectors constantly on their rounds, keep alive contacts between teacher and department, exhibiting its solicitude for his work Second, are the regional normal schools, of which several are already functioning, where the teachers spend a few weeks each year, while other teachers, meanwhile, are being more fully trained there Third, an advance over Vasconcelos's individual missionaries, is the "cultural mission" An experienced teacher at its head, a woman social worker, something of a hygienist and trained nurse, an instructor of physical training, an agronomist, two or three specialists in crafts — these pass six weeks in a given region in direct contact with teachers, pupils, and villagers Six such missions have been *en tour* simultaneously during the Calles administration and their quickening influence has been unmistakable

The realities of rural education may best be visualized by following a path of inspection (one of several taken by the writer) traveled in May, 1927, through southern Tlaxcala Its terrain is typical of the Mesa Central — rugged, its cultivated valley bottoms criss-crossed with barren ridges, bristling with cactus Far aloft to the west, the shimmering crest of Ixtaccihuatl floats disembodied from earth and, to the east, the long concave slopes of Malinztin soar sharply into a needle point A rocky and dusty road, scarcely possible for automobiles, winds along brown slopes, dips into gray-green hollows, circles the shoulder of a hill toward its summit and into the adobe village of Villa Alta Behind a low fence of organ cactus two adobe huts form the village schools with forty-three boys in one, forty-two girls in the other — the entire school population The children range from six to eleven years, are divided into two grades, though but a single room and teacher serve each school While one grade is instructed, the other studies — or waits The girls' teacher is a bright young Indian lass of eighteen, in city clothes and high heels — Señorita Citlalpul Centena, whose Aztec first name signifies "morning star," and Spanish surname, "one hundred" Instruction is by word of mouth, the class repeating, with one child at the blackboard, simple examples in addition and subtraction

The horses wind down the hillside into a level plain to San Diego Xocoyucan, seat of the regional normal school, located in an ancient *hacienda*, ravaged by time and revolution The building had been acquired eleven months before and showed the effects of vigorous cleaning Whitewash covered the repaired plaster and worm-eaten woodwork And if the structure, due to lack of funds, still had neither running water nor electric light, the want of conveniences and mechanical equipment seemed more than compensated by the enthusiasm of teachers and pupils Among the latter were forty-one boys and girls, between fifteen and eighteen, Indians and

mestizos from all parts of the state, and 120 children of primary grade, whom the older ones teach

In San Felipe Ixtacuixtla, with 1500 inhabitants, a considerable town for this region, some 200 children were crowded into the two one-room federal schools, one for each sex, while about fifty lacked accommodations

A brown and barren hillock rises abruptly from the plain like a rock from the sea Its sides and top are covered with the brown tiled roofs of the *pueblo* of Santa Justina Ecatepec — the invariable Aztec surname signifying "air on the mountain" Here the state boys' school with forty-four pupils, and the girls' with thirty-eight, have the customary two grades, though ages range from five to fifteen Both schools lacked books, pencils, even benches, which the ingenuity of the villagers in that treeless *pueblo* had not been equal to providing

The horses descend along the narrow gully that serves as road to the plain San Jorge Tezoquipan ("land very hard to work") lies agreeably shaded by tall eucalyptus trees The school committee of five comes to greet the visitors The two federal schools have seventy boys and fifty-one girls, with two teachers for the former, one for the latter

The road rises and twists, the valley is lost to view, another appears San Nicolás Panotla lies ahead, its colonial white church belfry shining in the blue sky — above brown roofs A tidy village inhabited by clean and self-respecting people — 250 "heads of families," to adopt the native method of enumeration The federal school is coeducational, with 180 pupils and four teachers who receive five pesos each daily Also a private school named "Benito Juárez," with forty boys and girls and two teachers, conducted by Mexican Methodists The pupils pay what they can, an average of a peso monthly There is cooperation, not competition, between the schools The older children attend school in Tlaxcala, the state capital, five miles away Every youngster in San Nicolás is a school child A fine, if exceptional village

The road continues upward, follows a ridge overlooking a tumult of great rock and dry gorges, brown as if burnt by the sun In a funnel nestles the brown-roofed village of San Damián Texoloc The white-washed school facing the ample plaza is draped in black, for *el maestro*, Juan Castillo Romero, has just died One thousand persons from the country-side attended his funeral the day previous and the whole village mourns, though he had come but eleven months before Their sorrow illustrates the schoolteacher's new importance in the village His influence extends over it and he becomes the visible symbol of a well-intentioned government

On the summit of a 300-foot hill perches the parched adobe hamlet of San Andrés Cuamilpa ("eagles' field" — or, according to another interpretation, "cultivated patch on the mountain") Here fifty-four boys and forty-five girls were in one school, the burden at this time falling wholly on the *maestra*, age nineteen, not inappropriately named Dolores Espinosa — for

the other teacher was ill When we arrived in the late afternoon the villagers had returned from the fields and were building a new school-room and a hennery adjacent to it for the children, while three village fiddlers enlivened the occasion with well-intentioned, if squeaky, accompaniment In a few months this young girl, by her personality and work, had won this entire village and roused it to the achievement we were witnessing

"All we need," she told the head of the Department of Rural Schools, "is the wire for the chicken coops We can't make that Can't you supply it?"

The answer was a regret that there was absolutely no money

At San Esteban Tizatlán, however, special assistance is given the children This village is the seat of a famous native industry, utilizing a heavy and flexible wood, *tlaxtle*, the best known products of which are the carved and painted Apizaco canes, so-called because sold in quantities at near-by Apizaco, on the Mexicano railway In addition to the two teachers in the federal "mixed" (*i e*, coeducational) school, the 118 pupils receive special instruction in woodworking from an expert, Maurillo Castillo Marín, who aims to carry their craft beyond their parents Under his direction the pupils were carving and painting smaller objects, preparatory to the more complicated craft of furniture making

In Tenancingo, near the Puebla line, elementary education sharply confronts the constant economic problem With forty-three boys and twenty-three girls in the two state schools, and thirty adults at night-school, some 150 youngsters of school age are truants due to extreme poverty Many fathers want their children to help in the fields, while others as young as ten to twelve work in the textile factories along the Atoyac River

This, then, is a cross-section of the rural schooling as it was in 1927 in Tlaxcala, which, it should be remembered, is distinctly one of the "better" states, possibly the best, in the proportion of children in school

V

Another enterprise is the Casa del Estudiante Indígena, or "House of the Native Student" To its newly erected buildings in the capital's outskirts 200 boys of purely indigenous stocks have come from the remotest parts of Mexico To qualify, the student, nominated by his state governor, must be pure Indian Mestizos are not expected to apply Under one roof are assembled Tarascos, Totonacos, Lacandones, Chamulas, Pimas, Papagos, Tarahumares, Tepehuanes, Yaquis, Mayos, Mayas, Ottomis, et cetera, from twelve to fifteen years of age They are drawn from the heart of tribal life, to be taught Spanish, modern Mexican ways, and all else possible After three years, it is hoped, they will return to their people and teach what they have learned Boys who show unusual aptitude in any direction will be given further opportunities

The concept of the school has come in for much adverse criticism in Mexico It has been pointed out that the boys will either not return to their people, or if they do will relapse into their old ways, that the few years in Mexico City will not enable them effectively to teach their tribe what they have learned, and that, moreover, such learning will be valueless and inapplicable to the tribe in its native habitat

The replies to these criticisms are That if twenty-five, or even ten per cent of these boys can be made useful teachers — or citizens — it will be a net gain and the efforts of the school repaid, that, obviously, sending a lone boy back to his tribe would be to undo his years of schooling, but that he will not return alone — a "cultural mission" will accompany him and revisit the place of his teaching at intervals, that, meanwhile, other boys from the same locality will come to the school and establish a continuous contact between tribal Indian and modern Mexican culture

It is too early to prejudge this undertaking However sound the adverse criticism appears, it would be entitled to greater consideration were the Government limiting its program for Indian education to this one school, or projecting its extension But nothing of the kind is contemplated This lone school is an experiment The new intelligence tests being worked out there alone would justify it Research is under way to establish a scale for the mental measurement of natives in varying stages of development, many of whom knew no Spanish, so that reliance need no longer be placed on the inappropriate American modifications of Binet-Simon tests devised for modern "Western" civilization

Besides being a laboratory, the school is a sentimental gesture, but by no means an empty gesture It is, first, a notice to distant tribes hitherto unaware of the National Government, or which, if aware, saw it only as an enemy, that the administration was solicitous for their welfare and purposed to include them in the category of citizens And when some of the chiefs, before permitting the sons of the tribe to depart for the unknown capital, first made the journey to judge for themselves and returned approving, one gathers that the bread may be cast on the waters not wholly in vain

Further, the emphasis on the indigenous is part of a definite policy inaugurated under Vasconcelos, revealed in the frequent folk festivals under Ministry of Education auspices On holidays and other special occasions, exhibitions of folk dancing and music are given in the education building, or elaborate pageants in which thousands of school-children participate are staged in the stadium Girls in *tehuana* and *china poblana* costumes, men as *charros* and *chinacos* engaging in regional dances — these symphonies of sound and hue express the native passion for color and rhythm, and the Government's purpose to give it the fullest play If these festivals are costly, they are the kind of luxury that may not be extravagance A further token of the same interest is that admirable publication, "Mexican

Folkways," edited in both Spanish and English by Miss Frances Toor, one of the teachers, whose efforts, first encouraged by Dr Gamio, have received the fullest support from Dr Puig

Another distinct achievement under Calles are the agricultural schools under the Ministry of Agriculture Four schools — in Hidalgo, Guanajuato, Michoacán, and Chihuahua — were functioning in 1927 and three more were under construction as part of a program which contemplates one in each state They are open to the children of former peons who are now independent *ejidatarios*, and aim to spell the last word in agricultural education They represent the closest union yet formed in Mexico between the school and the life which those trained there will lead Differing slightly in detail and in environment, one may be described as typical of all

On 2500 acres of farm land, some 200 boys between thirteen and sixteen come to a thoroughly equipped boarding-school They sleep in a large dormitory, eat together in a common mess hall A fine, healthy, promising group of youngsters they appeared after six months of healthful living there! At the end of three years they are to emerge competent farmers and ranchers The products of the farm are marketed for the school's maintenance — it is hoped that within a few years each of these schools will become self-sustaining In addition to the routine crops of cereals and vegetables — horticulture, apiculture, dairying, and every phase of animal husbandry is practised with the most modern farm appliances If the teaching personnel is maintained on the same level as that of El Meche school in Hidalgo, directed by a practical young rancher and graduate of Ames College in Iowa — Policarpo Garza — the prospect for the schools is bright They are the most conspicuous educational monuments of the Calles régime

VI

It will be noted that statistics are largely absent from this résumé of Mexico's educational endeavor They are omitted, not because of any question of their accuracy or inaccuracy, but because the ephemeral character of much of Mexico's reconstructive effort renders the data of a given moment meaningless A school opened one year may be closed the next — even before the ink that described it had dried A policy adopted by one executive may be — and often is — scrapped by his successor Notes on schooling in Yucatán, Morelos, Guanajuato, Oaxaca, and elsewhere, made by the writer in 1923 and 1924, are valueless now except as evidence not only of the instability of Mexican reconstruction to date, but of the elusiveness of a rockbottom of fact on which to anchor a record of permanent accomplishment A typical case is that of the Cruz Gálvez industrial school at Hermosillo, founded by Calles when he was governor of Sonora, an important exhibit in the list of his gubernatorial achievements But when

he left the state and another governor succeeded him, the school fell into neglect It required the founder's accession to the presidency of the republic to restore the school to its pristine activity and usefulness Other enterprises were not so fortunate A scientific and complete survey of Mexican education is, therefore, an impossibility for any one person because time and its changes would invalidate his effort before he had completed his circuit

It is more pertinent to consider the direction and purpose of educational effort And while it is particularly true in Latin-American countries that elaborate plans are drawn and never executed, the paper stage in Mexico is past Popular education has begun What are its prospects?

First, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that instruction is dependent on conditions that affect all Mexico, and subject to influences beyond the control of those directly in charge of the educational program Witness the economic stringency which reduced the budget well below the amounts expended on education in Obregón's last two years, and curtailed Calles's program of establishing five thousand new rural schools![1]

Witness that the chronic political evils do not exempt education! This is particularly evident in the states, where instruction rises and falls with the character of their governors Most of them, as an earlier chapter on politics reveals, cannot be depended on for disinterested public service Some have actually, within the last three years, closed state schools, while the Federal Government was opening others — incidentally a further disqualification of the statistical record The total of 3550 new rural schools cannot be accepted as net for this reason, and because also, in not a few instances, an abandoned or moribund state school has been revived as a "new" federal school Consequently, no certain progress lies ahead if any considerable part of the educational program is left to states — a regrettable fact, since education locally controlled is more apt to meet regionally diverse needs Nevertheless, the total annual appropriation for education in the twenty-eight states is not far beneath the federal — some twenty million pesos

While federal administration is not free from politics, it is incomparably superior to state administration But, clearly, an appropriation of some twenty-five million pesos is absurdly inadequate when the job is not merely to sustain an educational plant, but first to create one As it is, higher education, except for barely maintaining the university and professional schools in the capital, for seven years has been deliberately sacrificed — a decision from which it is difficult to dissent in view of the pressing needs of elementary schooling Certainly twelve times the present appropriation, which would be approximately the total government revenue, would not constitute an excessive educational outlay for the next generation Three

[1] The educational budget under Calles has been 1925 $21,962,813 pesos, 1926 $26,699,727 pesos, 1927 $25,630 588 pesos

hundred million pesos would mean a per capita expenditure of but twenty pesos — a fair method of estimating, since the task is not merely to educate the children, but the manhood and womanhood of the nation[1] Obviously, therefore, until economic reconstruction is farther advanced, and Mexico becomes more prosperous, anything beyond a fractional effort is a dream, and a majority of her children will continue as they are to-day, either without schooling or schooling so slight as to be negligible So much for the quantitative side of the problem

Qualitatively, one may look for improvement if administrative changes do not prove too upsetting, and the trend is steadily toward greater continuity and stability The most encouraging feature of the educational drive is the enthusiasm among many executives and in the ranks which often offsets lack of experience and equipment One may begin with Sub-Secretary Sáenz, who is the active directing head of the Secretaría, go down through such department heads as Enrique Corona, director of the Indian school, or Professor Ignacio Ramírez, head of the Department of Rural Schools, through the federal representatives in each state and their inspectors, to the majority of teachers, and find a very general and inspiring devotion to duty Indeed the extent of self-abnegation among the rural teachers raises the question whether whole-souled service as exhibited by such types as the school-teacher in San Andrés Cuamilpa — there are hundreds like her — will not wear itself out in discouragement unless more active cooperation, which is chiefly a financial problem, is forthcoming It may be asked whether the rural school program does not suffer too much from its extensiveness, and would not in the end produce better results with greater intensiveness and less striving for a numerical goal

Similar frustration lies in the size of the classes, with so great limitation in the number of grades that makes differentiation of pupils according to age and ability impossible Each rural teacher is expected to correlate his instruction with the life of the community *Escuela de acción* is the descriptive phrase for its highly practical objective The intent is excellent But in practice as I observed it, there was little else than the old routine teaching — of the Three R's, geography, national history, with one child reciting while fifty were non-participant The occasional chicken coop or weedy school garden emphasized, in my judgment, the remoteness of the desired end

This brings up anew the need of correlating the work of the Ministry of Education with that of other ministries The village of San Andrés Cuamilpa may again serve to illustrate the relative ineffectiveness of "schooling" *per se*

[1] The per capita appropriation for elementary and secondary schools in the U S for 1924 was $16 25 — exclusive of private institutions and all colleges Statistical Abstract of the U S, 1925, p 97

The village tops a three hundred foot hill The water supply is in a *barranca*, a small cañon, at the bottom Every drop has to be carried up those three hundred feet after laborious lifting from the depth of a sixty-foot *pozo* (well) by means of earthen *ollas* (water jars) attached to ropes The dominating — the literally desiccating — effect of this obstacle on the life of the village is difficult to imagine It makes cleanliness and health well-nigh unattainable It conduces to greater drinking of the destructive *pulque* which is easily accessible from the *maguey* plants in the *pueblo* itself One wonders why this village was ever so located Its origin doubtless antedates the pre-Conquest Tlaxcallan "Republic," when *pueblo* raided *pueblo*, and a steep hill overlooking the country-side was a vantage point not to be foregone But certainly no serious attempt to educate — to "lead out" — the people of this village can forego an early remedying of its water supply Better abandon the rural school for four years and invest the four thousand pesos thus saved in motor, pump, and piping! Running water would prove more "educative" than the best teacher's unassisted struggle against the odds erected by Nature and man s ignorance of how to extricate himself

Analogous conditions are plentiful Where it is not a deficient water supply, it is lack of communications — sometimes five miles of road would link an isolated village with a main thoroughfare Of course the villagers should be stimulated to bring about manifestly needed improvements themselves! But intelligent and comprehensive planning would suggest the advisability of often turning over a community for redemption first to the Ministry of Public Works, or the Ministry of Agriculture, or the Department of Health, or, at least, of their approaching it jointly with the Ministry of Education And this is precisely the "integral education" which Gamio preached and put into practice

The impression that may be carried away from the present effort in education is bound to vary with the individual observer It is worth noting that no less an authority than Professor John Dewey of Columbia, who visited the Tlaxcalan rural, as well as other schools, in 1926, was enthusiastic in his praise of them[1] While contrasted with the immensity of the task, the total achievement to date is not considerable, a definite beginning has been made Illiteracy is now estimated at some 62 per cent , and while this figure may not be more mathematically exact than the previous higher estimates, a gain has undoubtedly been registered[2] Checked against pre-Revolutionary days the improvement is marked But education cannot be disentangled from the Mexican complex While marching ahead, it has been, is, and is destined for some time to be, a victim struggling against the Mexican heritage

[1] See Mexico s Educational Renaissance, by John Dewey, in "The New Republic," Sept 22, 1926

[2] Boletín de la Secretaría de Educación Pública, vol V, No 11, p 8, fn

HEALTH

HEALTH

I

MEXICO'S social illness is revealed in the illnesses of the Mexican people Their heritage of ignorance and neglect exacts an unmitigated toll in bodily suffering and needless death The chronological disparity between nations abreast of modern hygiene and a country where thousands die annually without benefit of therapy is unmistakable While for a small urban minority, physicians, asepsis, and foreign-owned drug-stores have existed for a generation, pre-Conquest practices prevail among the masses, to whom civilization has brought some of its diseases, but few of its cures Herbs, incantations, charms, amulets, and a variety of superstitious practices have long been the weapons with which the majority of Mexicans combated sickness

The state of Mexican ill health was lucidly exposed in 1916 by Alberto J Pani, an engineer, who holds the unique distinction of having served all the revolutionary administrations in an important capacity [1] Pani's book, "Hygiene in Mexico," [2] was an indictment in purpose and in fact against the neglect of national health under Díaz With the premise "that there exists a precise and direct proportion between the sum of civilization acquired by a country and the degree of perfection reached in its administration and stewardship of public health," [3] Pani demonstrated

I That the coefficient of mortality [the number of deaths per thousand inhabitants] of Mexico City [42 3] is nearly treble the average mortality coefficient of American cities [16 1] having similar population

II That Mexico City's mortality is nearly two and a half times greater than the average of European cities [17 53]

III That it is even greater than the mortality coefficients of the Asiatic and African cities of Madras and Cairo [39 51 and 40 15] respectively, even though in the former, cholera is endemic [4]

Pani's exposition dealt wholly with Mexico City, and only by implication with the entire country The capital, of course, presented the phenomena peculiar to urban congestion, as well as the extremest contrasts between misery and affluence But fully as grave an indictment could have been drawn of other Mexican cities and of rural Mexico had data been available

[1] He was sub-secretary of education under Madero, subsequently secretary of commerce and industry, secretary of foreign relations, secretary of the treasury, and minister to France
[2] La Higiene en México [3] *Idem*, p 8 [4] *Idem*, p 17, 18

The unhealthiness of the Mexican people is due to a variety of causes which in this day may be reduced to the heading of "social"

Under the caste system, little modified in four centuries, its serfs, living often literally no better than animals, could scarcely cope with disease But aside from sheer destitution, a definite heritage of bad habits nullified available assets for good health

Conspicuous is ignorance of ventilation The houses of Mexican poor on the plateau have always been built without windows and chimneys The door alone serves as every kind of aperture, and the benefit of pure air is destroyed in an enclosed atmosphere vitiated by hours of human and animal exhalation

This ignorance extends to the aristocracy I have seen houses on Yucatecan *haciendas*, built by the *hacendado* for his peons, which lacked even the advantage in airiness of the permeable bamboo lattice huts, and whose only opening was the doorway

The houses of the well-to-do are, relatively, little more healthful The type of construction of palace, hotel, and *casa de vecindad* is of rooms around a courtyard, cubicles in which the door into the patio is the only entry for air and light Within these cul-de-sacs the air is dead and sunlight cannot penetrate Cold, damp, and cheerless in wet weather, they are breathless in hot A window opposite the doorway in each of these rooms would transform them, but that, until most recently, was undreamt of

Servants' quarters even in palatial residences are generally damp basement cells without light, air, or heat The janitor's family in many an office building cowers in the darkness under the stairway "That is what they are accustomed to," is the almost invariable answer from master or landlord Precisely this attitude characterized the opposition to model tenements in New York only a generation ago

Fresh air is commonly held to be dangerous — an idea still prevalent on the European Continent A deep-seated fear of night air causes the widespread and irrational practice of muffling the mouth and nostrils, and leads also to tight shutting of the doorway when darkness falls Within, among the poor, in a single room, which has served as a workshop by day, human beings of all ages and both sexes share quarters in terrible congestion and inevitable filth amid workshop odors, the smoke of a smouldering *brasero*, the smell of cooking, the emanation of fetid breaths, the foulness of unwashed bodies, and the stench of excrement In one block in the Colonia de la Bolsa in Mexico City in 1927, I found an average of two families per room and one animal per person In one case eight persons and fifteen animals — a dog, a cat, two pigs and eleven chickens — huddled in a room twelve feet square This condition is not exceptional I found it elsewhere in the capital, in Vera Cruz, Toluca, and Guanajuato It exists to only a slightly lesser extent in rural communities, where ample space and building materials

are available Pigs, donkeys, and chickens make themselves at home around the family hearth Ignorance as much as economic pressure has made for such housing In 1923 the stevedore mayor of Vera Cruz, Rafael García, showed me his living quarters of two rooms in one of which seven persons slept As evidence of political honesty, it was gratifying, and contrary to the not uncommon blossoming out in luxury of new office-holders But as a revelation of lack of knowledge of the elementals of living in the city's chief executive, it was lamentable

Propinquity with animals makes for the chronic residence of parasites on the human body The varieties of lice — cephalic, corporal, and pubic — bedbugs, ticks, *pinolaria*, and other regional pests, in addition to the bacterial diseases they transmit, are the constant source of skin irritation brought about by the incessant scratching of dirty nails Pediculosis is widespread Dr Roberto Medellín, secretary of the Department of Health, is authority for the statement to me that in the "disinsectization" practised on army recruits *three grams* of pediculi were removed from one individual

Beds are unknown among the humbler dwellers of city and country A straw *petate* stretched on earthen floor and the blanket, used by day as a coat, serve as bedding Such covering is insufficient during the cold winter nights on the mesa The *campesinos* lie huddled together sleeplessly Small wonder that in the warmth of the morrow's sun they gratefully stretch out their cramped limbs and drowsiness overcomes them

In the warmer regions, vertical bamboo slats, an inch or two apart, and a leaky thatch form an inadequate shelter when a *Norte* blows the chill rain in gusty cascades It would seem simple to fill up the interstices in the walls, and to make the roofing water-tight But it has never (with rare exceptions) been done and is therefore (with rare exceptions) not now done

Paralleling the proscription of air are taboos about water Bathing was a frequent practice among the Aztecs, and probably no cleanlier race exists on earth to-day than the Maya It is something of a feat to find a stain on the white *huipils* of the women or on the "pyjamas" of the males of Yucatán to-day In June, 1923, I sat in the plaza in Mérida for hours on several occasions watching hundreds of natives go by The women's feet were bare but clean After several hours what I took to be a spot on a white *camiza* turned out to be a hole through which brown skin shone darkly I finally saw several whose garments were somewhat tattered, but they were immaculate tatters

"Their bodily cleanliness," wrote Santiago Méndez, one of Yucatán's governors in the middle of the last century, "almost borders on superstition, for they consider a person who does not wash his body every day not quite sane and reasonable" A definite relation between the personal habits of Yucatecans and their healthfulness undoubtedly exists, though statistics are lacking

Aztec practice survives on the mesa in the *temazcalli* or steam bath, but the pre-Conquest bathing in lakes, rivers, and ponds of which the earlier Spanish chroniclers spoke with a certain astonishment,[1] has disappeared

To-day Mexican workers are being reeducated away from the belief that bathing is dangerous to health Wrote Lumholtz a quarter of a century ago

> A custom universal among Mexican working men, amounting almost to superstition, is to avoid contact with water when warm from their labor I could never induce them to wash their hands under such circumstances, as they were afraid of catching cold, or getting influenza or pneumonia [2]

But apart from such inhibitory beliefs in regions where water may be plentiful, a large proportion of Mexicans encounter in the extreme aridity of the plateau a constant obstacle to cleanliness Failure to exploit subsoil water courses, to sink artesian wells, and to provide adequate storage for rain-water, has left a scant supply for ablutionary uses And for drinking purposes, the water has often become so contaminated as to be highly noxious

A common water supply for the mesa village is a stagnant pool Sometimes it is a mere accumulation of rain-water holding over from one rainy season to the next, and growing steadily fouler Sometimes it is a tiny pond fed by springs Occasionally it is a meagerly trickling stream expanding into a shallow reservoir Often this water is literally invisible for the covering of green algal scum Yet man and beast drink it, and it serves for cooking and washing Of course, natives have through the generations developed a high degree of immunity to water which would be lethal to a stranger, and every drop of which is a microscopic aquarium Nevertheless, the polluted water kills many babies

Shortly after my first arrival in Mexico, in company with a group of Americans and Mexicans, bent on an ascent of Popocatepetl, I spent the night in Amecameca, lying picturesquely at the volcano's base During supper at the village inn, I inquired whether the water, standing in caraffes on the table, was "good"

"Look here," spoke up an old-time American resident "If you're going to be happy in Mexico, don't ask whether the water is 'good,' or where it came from It's the best water they have It's fine, drink it"

Thus encouraged I did so In front of the hotel after supper gazing upward at the great snow mass turned crimson in the sunset, I glanced up and down the village street, crudely paved with small round stones In a central gutter water trickled Occasionally from some habitation an Indian housewife would empty the contents of a jar or bucket into the street Presently the hotel *mesero* emerged and filled up from the same stream the water caraffes which were then set back on the table I experienced no physical

[1] Viz Clavigero, *op cit*, vol I, vii, p 429. [2] Unknown Mexico, II, p 143





TYPES OF NATIVE HABITATIONS

(Above) neat cottage of volcanic stone and thatched roof, Tromatil Federal District, 1927—native culture unspoiled. (Below) lean-to of volcanic stone, wood, reeds, tin sheeting, and animal hide, Ahuizotla Federal District, 1927—effect of civilization which has damaged native culture without substituting anything better



THE TEMAZCALLI OR AZTEC BATH

The stone in the mound in the foreground is removed. A fire is built within the smaller mound; water is then poured on the fire and this chamber is filled with steam. The bather then enters the opening of larger mound to which the Indian girl is pointing. (photo taken in Milpa Alta Federal District Mexico by the author)

ill effects — doubtless the melted snow-water entered the village more than ordinarily pure But subsequently I saw natives in town and village drawing their water from gutters much farther removed from the source

Even where the water is potable, its scarcity dominates life In the capital the municipal supply is "turned off" at night, and in quarters fortunate enough to be connected with it, the householder, before 7 P M, prepares for eventualities by filling basins, pitchers, or bathtub — if he has one Elsewhere ideal sanitary arrangements are next to impossible One cannot flush without water A sewerage system is known to but a few Mexican cities, and not wholly to any, and the disposal of human excrement is fraught with constant peril In many towns the drain debouches into the street The dry air of the mesa checks putrefaction But the microbic contents desiccate and blow about as dust Attempts to combat this menace are singularly ineffective Street sweeping is seldom other than dust raising with brooms that are mere handfuls of untied straws, and so short that the sweeper bends double to do his work A large part of Mexican labor is carrying water, picturesque when borne by native women with a graceful *olla* on shoulder or head, less so when gasolene tins balance on a yoke

II

The water shortage makes for greater consumption of alcohol

Total abstinence in Mexico is practically unknown Many children are accustomed to drink from infancy Some kind of stimulant is considered an essential part of the meal in almost every home, high or low In the lowlands the intoxicant, made from sugar cane, is *aguardiente* (literally "fiery water," which recalls the "fire-water," the name applied by the North American Indian to the spirits of the "paleface")

On the Mesa Central, the most densely populated section of Mexico, *pulque* — "the national beverage" — is the fermented juice of the maguey, which includes several varieties of the agave Stretching in endless rows, or growing haphazard, these crowns of heavy bluish-green leaves, each tapering upward into a needle point, often taller than a man, are the most characteristic vegetation of central Mexico

The destructive effects of *pulque* derive largely from its peculiar elaboration and the quantity of its consumption The magueyes are grown from suckers that spring up about the parent plant, are transplanted into rows when two or three years old, and reach maturity after about eight years Normally the plant would flower into a stalk from twelve to twenty feet tall To make the plant productive, it is not allowed to blossom The heart is cut out in such a way as to leave a cavity, which then fills with from one to two quarts daily of sweetish *aguamiel* for as long as six months

This unfermented juice, the slight nutritive qualities of which reside in

its sugar content, is not palatable to many Mexicans Fermentation is induced before the withdrawal of the liquid by introducing wood shavings into the plant cavity Inadequate covering of the aperture likewise gives access to dust and insects The liquid is tapped every day or two through a long gourd, called *acocote* The *tlachiquero* sucks it with his lips, creating a siphon The liquid filling the tube exerts a corresponding suction, into which the *tlachiquero's* saliva is often drawn, thus adding a variety of bacteria The liquid is then transferred to a pigskin container in which the *pulque* is transported on burro back to the *tinacal* There it is poured into vats made of beef hides, hung on wooden frames No other containers, is the belief, will give the proper "body" Here fermentation is stimulated by adding various impurities, but generally this process takes place after the *pulque* has reached the city and passed through the *pulque* exchange What milk trains are to a modern American city, *pulque* trains are to Mexico City From the nearer *pulque haciendas*, burros and carts carry a part to suburban *pulquerías*

Among the adulterants that are poured into the *pulque* are *tequesquite*, a chalky rock, *ixti*, a native plant that contains lye, vegetable parings, and sometimes even *caninilla*, or dog excrement, to increase the fermentation Almost any dirty objects, such as rags or old rope, have somewhere served to "improve the flavor" of this popular beverage — for the complaints most apt to be voiced by the customer are that the *pulque* is too "fresh," "sweet,' or "pure" In one of the beef hide tubs of the *tinacal* the so-called "seed" is made, in which a limited quantity of highly fermented liquid is kept, which serves to hasten the fermentation of the fresher liquid in other tubs

Pulque is never bottled It is ladled out in the *pulquerías* from barrels which are seldom fully emptied and to which the newer *pulque* is incessantly added Though its alcoholic content is not high, — approximately 5 to 7 per cent, — the beverage continues its fermentation within the gastro-intestinal tract of the consumer, causing the putrefaction of its contents, impeding digestion, and creating a toxemia diagnosable through a symptomatic stupor *Pulque* is in varying degrees a *bacterial culture* It may transmit almost every microbic disease known to man

Despite general recognition of *pulque's* harmfulness, its abolition encounters virtually insuperable obstacles, religion, habit, addiction, and economic reasons make for its perpetuation

The origin of *pulque* is immemorial Tradition ascribes to it the decline and fall of the Toltecs While the Aztecs restricted its use,[1] it was also an element in their religious festivals

[1] "Intemperance in public was free to people more than seventy years old, while if grown men below that age appeared in a drunken state (festivities excepted) their heads were shorn clean in punishment" Bandelier, On the Social Organization and Mode of Government of the Ancient Mexicans, p 625

At the annual feast to the firegod (variously called Xiuhtecuth, Ixcocauhqui, Cuecaltzin, and Ueueteotl) it was customary for the old men to drink *octli* (*pulque*) after pouring a libation thereof on four parts of the hearth But every fourth year, when the occasion took on especial solemnity, young men and girls and children also drank, the occasion being called Pillauano, which meant "feast on which children drink *pulque*" [1] Possibly the Aztecs assumed a relation between the warmth of the fire which they were worshiping and the internal warmth produced by the beverage Its use, however, was not confined to religious ceremonials, like almost every object supplied by Nature, it was utilized somewhere in a cult which was at bottom Nature worship — either a direct worship of the elements or natural phenomena, or of their impersonation in some idol

The essential fact is that *pulque* traces an unbroken line through the customs of the Mexican people from prehistoric times, and the ancient method of elaboration even to some of the most elementary details persists unchanged The long gourd siphon, the *acotote*, is the *acototl* of the pre-Cortesian Aztecs, the *tlachiquero* who extracts it is the ancient *tlachique* [2] The *tinacal* was the *tinacalli*, "the house" where the juice was transformed into potency And the sign of the contemporary *pulqueria* is the gay fluttering colored papers which, Aztec fashion, adorn it

So the Mexicans have always consumed *pulque* Its accessibility to the humblest, who need but tap a maguey, makes its use inevitable In considerable areas it is literally the only liquid available — good or bad It is one of Nature's compensations, a spring set in aridity, a plant that extracts liquid from dry soil, a Philemon and Baucis pitcher Primitive man could not — cannot — reject it His sin lay in corrupting the gift

It is not surprising therefore that habits of intoxication have become rooted in the Mexican people Mothers in their ignorance and in the absence of milk, wean their children on the whitish *pulque* Starr, in the nineties, repeatedly found villages whose inhabitants were all intoxicated Drinking as an accomplishment of religious festivals has been preserved [3]

So general is this habit that the incapacity of workers on Monday and their high percentage of absenteeism from the effects of Sabbath inebriety has given the first work day of the week the cognomen of *San Lunes* — "Holy Monday" The Mexican factory hand's output is lowest on Monday, and rises steadily through the week, the reverse of the American worker, who shows the effect of fatigue increasingly with each consecutive day of labor

[1] Sahagun (Jourdanet-Siméon), *op cit* Lib I, Chap XIII *Pillauano*, from *pilli*, 'children," and *tlauana*, "to drink," or 'to become slightly intoxicated"

[2] Sahagun *op cit* Lib I Chap XXXVII p 16 *ero* is the Spanish ending

[3] Starr witnessed the following at San Juan Zautla "At eight o'clock there was a procession in the churchyard, the saint, dressed in flowing garments was carried about, accompanied by banners and a band of music During the festival, everyone drank, even the little boys of eight or nine years * * * drank like old topers" Indian Mexico, p 209.

It takes some Mexican workers six days to recover fully from their Sunday carousal [1]

In mesa villages in the late afternoon I have repeatedly encountered loquaciousness and good-nature indicative of a general mulling with *liquor divino*, the result often, I am convinced, not so much of deliberate imbibing, for its effects, as of a repeated allaying of thirst brought about by labor in the meridian sun Under its burning rays one must quench one's thirst or die, and *pulque*, white, foamy, and cool, is always accessible And when one contemplates the conditions under which the natives of the mesa live, one inclines with Flandrau, to marvel "not, like the tourist of a week, that they are dirty, but that under the circumstances they are as clean as they are, not that so many of them are continually sick, but that any of them are ever well, not that they love to get drunk, but that they can bear to remain sober" [2]

In the economic field *pulque* is strongly intrenched This mammoth industry occupies nearly a million acres of agricultural land Much of it at present useless for other crops, gives employment to a million and a half people, and pays not less than ten million pesos in taxes Its sudden abolition would profoundly affect administration, national and state, agriculturist, laborer, retailer, consumer — and produce an economic cataclysm Since each plant, costing $2 00 pesos up to maturity, gives some 300 litres of juice, an acre, which holds about 400 plants, yields to the *hacendado* $2400 pesos of gross income The juice is valued on the farms at about two centavos a litre and is sold in the cities for from twelve to fifteen A *hacienda* which produces sixty barrels daily employs not less than sixty *tlachiqueros*, ninety peons, and forty others engaged in specific tasks — or approximately three persons per barrel In addition are those who transport the *pulque*, and the employees in *pulquerías*, *cantinas*, and *fondas*, the poor man's restaurants, of which there are more than 2000 in Mexico City alone

In 1923 taxes were paid on a production of 294,117,750 litres (litre = 1 0567 quarts) The Department of Statistics calculated that year's per capita consumption in the nine *pulque*-growing states (Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, Mexico, Puebla, Vera Cruz, Querétaro, Guanajuato Michoacán, San Luis Potosí) and the Federal District, to be 458 litres, or one and a quarter litres daily [3] The consumption is undoubtedly much greater — for the large quantities consumed in the fields cannot be estimated It greatly exceeds that of other alcoholic beverages In the same year the total production and importation of wines, liquors, and spirits of all kinds was given as

[1] Observations in the textile industry of Mexico indicate that the average output of the Mexican operatives was between 65 per cent of normal on Monday 73 per cent Tuesday 77 per cent Wednesday 91 per cent Thursday, 93 per cent Friday, and 100 per cent Saturday Robredo, Puntos de Vista de los Industriales de Hilados * * * etc, Chart 9, p 85

[2] Flandrau, *op cit*, p 119

[3] Estadística National, No 3 Feb 15 1925, p 10



A CASA DE VECINDAD IN MEXICO CITY

Pastel by Francisco Goitia in the Secretaría de Educación, Mexico City





(Photo by the author)

TWO KINDS OF URBAN WATER SUPPLY

(Above) Girls running water for the neighborhood. Communal outlet (below) cutting the supply from the main. In San Luis Potosí, incidentally, all the refuse from the houses on both sides is dumped into the street.

42,848,035 litres — also a great underestimate, since *aguardiente* in the tropics, and *mescal*, distilled from a smaller variety of agave, are made privately in many hamlets The consumption of beer was 48,485,746 litres, an accurate figure, since it is possible to keep check on the output of breweries Reduced to terms of alcoholic content, the National Department of Statistics calculated an annual consumption equivalent to 7 93 litres of pure alcohol per person in Mexico, compared with 4 20 in Holland and 2 31 in Norway [1]

Excepting an occasional *pulque* magnate who has insisted that "the Indian works better after drinking *pulque*," and the general agreement that in its fresh state, in which it is seldom consumed, *pulque* is relatively harmless, I found no one in Mexico who did not condemn the industry as a national menace Madero viewed it as one of the causes of "our decadence" [2] Carranza attempted to suspend the traffic but the attempt was short-lived and ineffective Calles publicly declared, "I am an enemy of *pulque*, because it is prejudicial to the people" [3]

Yet abolition is manifestly impossible The efforts of the Calles administration have been exerted in a mild way toward ridding the *pulque* industry of its worst abuses, and inspection of *pulquerías* and *cantinas* has become increasingly stringent President Calles believes that progress may be achieved by attempting the gradual substitution of beer, which is not only excellent in Mexico, but brewed in model establishments, and the consumption of which is steadily, though slowly, increasing At present its price is too high to make it widely available to the masses Taxes on *pulque* are being increased, and a propaganda campaign against giving it to children, as well as against alcoholism generally, has been undertaken by the Department of Health This of course cannot be widely effective until sanitary dairying is generally introduced, and that in turn depends on the creation of a comprehensive water supply — artesian wells, aqueducts, reservoirs, filter plants, and general piping *Pulque* is prohibited in the government agricultural schools, several boys have been expelled for violating this order The countrymen are forbidden to plant magueyes on their newly acquired *ejidos*, and such plants as exist they must destroy But the problem is too much entangled with every phase of Mexican life to give hope for any but the slowest kind of evolutionary progress, however essential the destruction of *pulque* may be to the health of the Mexican people

III

In other ways the Mexican diet is deleterious Poverty, first, makes it inadequate Pani's examination of the budgets of Mexican laborers shows

[1] *Idem*, p 11–13 [2] La Sucesión Presidencial, p 237
[3] Quoted in El Demócrata, April 6, 1926

that the caloric content of the food they could afford to buy barely furnished the energy required by an individual "at absolute rest" [1] The insufficiency falls most heavily on the children, who, with few exceptions, are noticeably undernourished and enter adult life handicapped beyond repair Ignorance is largely responsible The poorer mother suckles her child as long as she can, and it is common for two and even three children of different ages to seek their nourishment at her breast When she weans the child it is on adult foods — *tortillas*, *frijoles*, bananas, and even *chiles* Clean cow's milk is not available for the majority of Mexicans, and its use is undeveloped Even in well-to-do families children of three and four often drink black coffee and are allowed to gorge themselves on meats and sweets The transitional alimentation for the infant in the shape of cereals and well-cooked green vegetables is almost unknown The large infant mortality may be ascribed first and foremost to diet

The most detrimental factor in that diet is the caustic *chile* — whose almost universal use is also a direct heritage from pre-Conquest days Mexicans of course develop a tolerance and craving for highly spiced foods, but that they pay the price in ill-health and death is evidenced by the extraordinary preponderance of gastro-intestinal ailments Of the deaths from all causes in Mexico City in the nine years 1904–1912, 32 1 per cent were due to diseases of the digestive tract The enormity of these figures may be judged from the fact that in the United States in 1924 the corresponding diseases accounted for but 6 6 per cent of all deaths [2] It is the relative *proportions* that are significant

In addition to the character of the food is its quality Refrigeration is not a factor in Mexico The masses never secure its benefits The meat hangs in butcher shops exposed to dust and flies — a less serious condition in the dry air of the mesa than in the lowlands Food in markets has only now begun — in the capital — to be covered, in consequence of the vigorous methods of the Department of Health Outside the capital, and still to a considerable extent in it, the danger of contamination is constant Rotten fruit and decayed food are still offered for sale, and their lower prices attract purchasers Much of the food for the masses is prepared by unwashed hands within a few inches of the sidewalk or germ-laden soil And the manner in which Mexicans of the middle-class, of adequate means, will not hesitate to buy hunks of boiled fowl, *enchiladas*, and other victuals exposed at the railway stations after no one knows how much handling by unclean fingers, shows that disregard of elementary precepts of hygiene is not confined to the poorer classes

[1] Pani, *op cit*, p 71 fn , p 223–230

[2] Pani *op cit* p 218–9 gives the average number of deaths in Mexico City 1904–1912 as 10 012 4 of which diseases of the digestive tract caused 6 407 3 U S Mortality Statistics, 1924 give the total deaths as 1,77, 000 while deaths from diseases of the digestive system were 122,727 p 8, 115

IV

Much Mexican ill health is due to venereal disease The comparison of 8 3 deaths per 100,000 from syphilis in the United States in 1924, with 59 1 in Mexico City in 1926 is suggestive, merely [1] Neither of the above figures includes locomotor ataxia and general paresis of the insane, which are derivatives of syphilis But the testimony of Mexican authorities is conclusive

The social background that makes for the prevalence of venereal disease was thus depicted by the historian Francisco Bulnes

> According to the civil register of Mexico City, 70 per cent of the births were of natural (illegitimate) children Violation of the women of the humble classes was an established and respectable custom According to the calculation of Dr Domínguez, 60 per cent of the population suffered with chronic alcoholism In 1919 the medical service of the Department of Education declared that the majority of the children attending school were afflicted with hereditary syphilis The lower classes, in order to become still lower, smoked tobacco with or without *marihuana*, in the superior classes *nirvana* was sought * * * by means of opium and its alkaloids and cocaine [2]

The picture while florid is not exaggerated It is confirmed by other less rhetorical observers Writing early in the last Díaz decade, Julio Guerrero, jurist and publicist, calls attention to the fact that in the previous year 666 *new* prostitutes had been inscribed in the Inspección de Sanidad [3] Dr Luis Lara Pardo, physician and student of Mexican social problems toward the close of the Díaz régime found that 12 per cent of all the women in Mexico City between the ages of fifteen and thirty were *inscribed* as prostitutes, a proportion approximately ten times greater than in Paris The actual number in Mexico, obviously unrecorded, he considered very much greater [4]

The consequences to the physical and mental health of Mexico's population he sums up in these words

> Venereal disease is so common that to reach adult life without having contracted it may be considered exceptional * * *
>
> To-day venereal disease has become so widespread that only an infinitesimal group of individuals who appear nearly immune to infection, may be said to be exempt We may assert without fear of exaggeration that these diseases cannot spread further, because the population is already saturated with them [5]

Again Mexico is paying the price of ignorance, for as Dr Pardo asserts, "in Mexico venereal diseases are considered as trivial as measles or whooping cough, as illnesses to which every man must some time in his life pay tribute" [6]

[1] See p 548

[2] Bulnes, El Verdadero Díaz y La Revolución, p 422–3 *Marihuana* (Bot cannabis sativa), possibly at times mixed with other native narcotic plants produces hallucinations

[3] Guerrero, La Génesis del Crimen en México, p 351

[4] Lara Pardo La Prostitución en México p 18–22

[5] *Idem*, p 179, 227 [6] *Idem*, p 181

Dr Bernardo J Gastélum, head of the Department of Health in the Calles administration, told the first Pan-American Conference of Public Health Officers, in 1926

> In Mexico * * * 60 per cent of the inhabitants suffer from syphilis, in the capital more than 50 per cent Of the prostitutes, who number around twenty thousand, eighteen thousand have it, in the population between fifteen and twenty-five years of age, 35 per cent are afflicted with it [1]

Mexico is sick — gravely sick

Venereal disease approaching the saturation point — with its unescapable deterioration of the physical mental and moral fiber of the race, its devastating consequences to children yet unborn, its heritage of insanity and blindness — where one sees such woe as this, in a third class coach

> Further down the car was a most miserable, revolting family, bedraggled, dirty, clad in rotten rags that scarcely clung to their unwashed bodies The skinny Indian father, face with pock-marks big as raisins, and four of the children were blind, their cheeks streaked with tears and grime The mother carried the smallest child, the only one with sight, in her arms Its skin was a mass of open sores * * * [2]

Alcoholism which has sapped energy and resistance

Digestive diseases which destroy vitality and effort

Tuberculosis that is widespread — General Gasca, in 1926, found that 15 per cent of the seven hundred women employed in the military factories had consumption in various stages [3]

Malaria that saps the strength of the majority of tropic-inhabiting Mexicans

Other tropical diseases such as Pinto and Onchocercosis, whose cause, or treatment, are as yet unknown

Almost universal ignorance of the elementals of sanitary living

Can it be doubted that, as Pani expressed it

"The true problem of Mexico consists, therefore, in hygienizing the population, physically and morally " [4]

V

A slender beginning was made under Obregón But the first determined attack on Mexican ill health came with the Calles administration Under Díaz the neglect of public health was in utter contrast to the luxury dis-

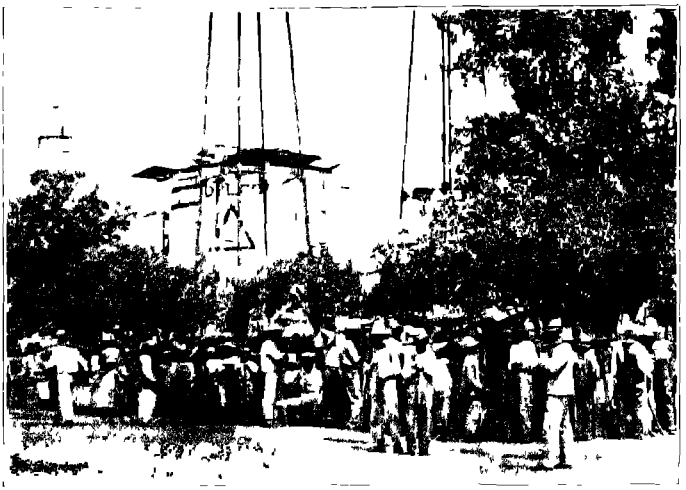
[1] Quoted in Boletín del Departmento de Salubridad, 1926 No 4, p 6
[2] Beals, Brimstone and Chili p 111–112
[3] Plan de Organización Técnica Industrial (an unpublished report)
[4] Pani *op cit*, p 191





(*Photos by the author.*)

(Above) Maguey plants as far as the eye can see, Hidalgo, 1927. (Below) Tequila *hacienda*, Piz arro, Vera Cruz





(Above) the author

(Above) crowds of men in San Luis Potosí waiting in line with gasoline tins to get water from public pumping station in heart of city — (below) carrying water in earthen *ollas* Leon Guanajuato 1925

played by the régime's beneficiaries In its apogee, the only hospital at Cuernavaca — show place and pleasure resort of the national capital's élite, and capital of Morelos — was thus described

The beds have strong iron frames, but plain boards take the place of a mattress There are no sheets, no clothing for the sick and wounded, and when a patient is carried to the hospital * * * [his] clothing * * * is never changed and the only protecting cover is a blanket * * * In the general ward patients with open wounds were bunched with those suffering from infectious diseases Two convalescent patients, one suffering from black smallpox and the other from erysipelas, took their meals from the same dish [1]

In Calles's second year the budget for public health was nine times, in his third year, fourteen times, what it had been annually under Díaz Following are the federal appropriations

1909	$583,022 11 pesos
1910	562,899 06
1911	591,477 46
1912	561,213 71
1913	741,154 96
1914	781,060 21
1915	None
1916	None
1917	None
1918	1,808,396 50
1919	1,987,401 50
1920	2,116,981 00
1921	2,564,072 50
1922	3,602,782 05
1923	3,705,214 50
1924	2,706,847 70
1925	3,466,759 20
1926	5,107,580 20
1927	8,403,547 50

Working directly under the president, the Department of Health began a vigorous attack on the most obvious foci of disease A new sanitary code, giving authority to punish infractions of health measures, was adopted to replace the obsolete code of 1902 Bakeries, butcher shops, dairies, drugstores, *cantinas*, barber shops, *mesones*, or lodging houses, and markets, which did not conform to prescribed standards of cleanliness and special regulations for each category, were closed, and their proprietors fined In 1926, 17,268 fines were imposed, totaling $462,328 pesos Every month thousands of pounds of tainted foodstuffs were seized and destroyed

[1] Baerlein, *op cit*, p 234–5

The change in the markets was noticeable When I first visited Mexico in 1923, those in the poorer districts, such as La Merced, were everything that a market should not be Food was covered with flies, some of the vendors were filthy, eating and sleeping went on in the food booths, dogs sniffed and children played with meats offered for sale To-day the venders are compelled to wear white protective clothing and to be clean themselves Foods susceptible of contamination are kept covered The stalls and aisles between them are kept fairly clean — though there was in 1927 still much room for improvement

Especial attention was for the first time given the milk supply Foul and dingy shops, where milk was ladled out by unsuitably garbed persons from miscellaneous containers, yielded to new white and shining shops, presided over by spotless attendants with their quart bottles arranged in meticulous rows Save two or three model dairies, which had long supplied milk and cream, chiefly to the capital's foreign colony, the industry had to be reformed from top to bottom It was not done without resistance The department was obliged to close 136 dairies in 1925 To-day, excepting one or two high grade dairies, which produced milk of so low a bacterial count as to permit its gradation as "certified," virtually all the milk that comes into Mexico City is pasteurized

"Sanitary brigades" went to distant parts of the nation to combat any local epidemic Specific drives against cerebral spinal meningitis, bubonic plague, cholera, hookworm, and various epizootic diseases were carried forward In a determined effort to stamp out smallpox, which had been gathering headway, *five million persons were vaccinated in two years* The vaccine was made in the new Institute of Hygiene in Popótla, D F, a model of scientific efficiency and a fine laboratory for the training of Mexican physicians in preventive medicine

A campaign of destruction of the thousands of *barracas*, the squatters' huts, which infested the outskirts and poorer quarters of the capital, was undertaken Abandonment of 968 of such habitations, made of parts of crates, tin sheeting, and branches, was compelled in the year ending July, 1926

A vigorous drive to bring the masses to the public baths brought the following results in the first year (1925)

No of Persons	*Bathed*	*Deloused*
1st quarter,	19,709	3698
2nd quarter,	29,291	23,665
3rd quarter,	37,772	29,076
4th quarter,	47,337	36,022

Few of these reforms were accomplished easily They met resistance in many quarters The venders, experiencing for the first time the confis-

cation of their polluted products, clamored loudly Several health inspectors were roughly handled The metropolitan press joined in protest, emphasizing every untoward incident, and picturing the distress of the poor milkmen, whose adulterated or dirty milk had been unceremoniously dumped

The opposition culminated when the department attempted to carry out the Schick and Dick tests respectively for diphtheria and scarlet fever in the public schools "El Universal" cartooned the head of the Health Department as a Herod seeking to massacre infants, and sentiment was finally so aroused that in deference to popular fear this useful work of immunization was abandoned except when requested It had a tragic aftermath, however, in a Morelos village, where a corps of nurses went to combat an epidemic of measles Rumors of "death dealing injections" having reached the villagers, many mothers unaware that no "injections" were contemplated, rushed their fever-stricken infants to the sierras Only the utmost tact secured their return, but not until nine infants had perished from the effects of disease and exposure

Nine new public dispensaries have been founded in the capital in the last seven years In respect to venereal disease the department has abandoned the old policy of licensing prostitutes which was, in effect, government recognition of the traffic Bawdy houses have been closed by insuperable inspection fees All efforts have been concentrated on the health aspects of the question With this in view, clinics have been established in various parts of the city where prostitutes are obliged to report every six days for examination and free treatment Their card records their previous clinical history The women are accorded the courtesy extended any patient They are asked no questions except those related to the medical problem and, in consequence, instead of fleeing from treatment, are cooperating by coming readily This is precisely what the department hoped to accomplish So insistent is it on this policy that it dismissed a physician who treated one of the women contemptuously When ill they are sent to a hospital, and during convalescence are taught a trade, and, if illiterate, to read and write

Prenatal clinics, clinics for children, research in tropical diseases, a vast amount of health propaganda by lecture, radio, motion-picture, and pamphlet — conclude the summary of the Department of Health's efforts in the first three years of the Calles administration The task still ahead may be gauged from the latest mortality statistics

To give an approximate idea of the mortality from disease in Mexico and furnish some basis of comparative measurement, Mexico City data for 1926, the most recent available, are used No mortality data for Mexico at large or for other Mexican cities exist The comparison is arbitrarily made with (1) St Louis, Mo , since it is an inland city of approximately the same size as Mexico City, (2) Washington, D C since it is likewise the national

capital, and (3) the United States, since the corresponding data are not all available for the cities [1]

MEXICAN MORTALITY STATISTICS

Deaths in Mexico City from the commoner diseases — 1926

(Figures indicate deaths per 100,000)

Disease	Mexico City	United States (1924)	St Louis (1924)	Washington D C (1924)
Cancer	60 5	91 9	133 3	115 2
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	6	8	not recorded	
Diarrœha and Enteritis (2 yrs and older)	261 7	7	not recorded	
Diarrœha and Enteritis (Under 2 years)	417 7	27 8	23 5	25 5
Diphtheria	4	0 4	0 7	6
Dysentery	10	3	not recorded	
Erysipelas	11 8	2 5	not recorded	
Influenza	8	10 5	12 8	12 5
Leprosy	83	0000015	0 0	0 0
Malaria	8 5	2 5	1 1	0 2
Measles	2 7	8 6	2 6	0 4
Pneumonia	422 8 [2]	57 2 [2]	153 8 [2]	118 7 [2]
Puerperal Infection	16 3	5 8	not recorded	5 7
Scarlet Fever	1 7	3 1	0 5	6 0
Smallpox	2 7	1 3	0 0	0 0
Syphilis	59 1	8 3	not recorded	
Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	168 2	78 7	71 0	106 8
Typhoid	8 5	6 7 [3]	3 7 [3]	3 9 [3]
Typhus	4 7	0000000	0 0	0 0
Whooping Cough	16 7	8 3	4 3	3 1

A comparison with the pre-Revolutionary decade is also instructive It should be borne in mind that medical science has made vast strides in twenty years and that, excepting cancer and syphilis, the mortality from disease (in

[1] The Mexican figures were arrived at from the mortality tables in the last three trimensual numbers of 1926 and the first of 1927 of the Boletín del Departamento de Salubridad adding the totals of deaths for each disease in each quarterly period The rate per hundred thousand is calculated on a population of 600 000, a generous estimate, since the department's statistics are for the municipality of Mexico, and do not include the adjacent municipalities of the Federal District The population of Mexico City was 471 000 in 1911 (La Higiene en México, A J Pani Cuad I) The Mexican mortality per 100,000 errs therefore on the side of understatement The U S data are derived from the 1924 report of the U S Census Bureau The figures for the country at large are based on the "registration area," which in 1924 included 88 5 per cent of the total population

[2] The Mexican data for "broncho-pneumonia" and "pneumonia" were combined for comparison as the U S data lump all pneumonia deaths The Mexican data were lacking in the first quarter of 1926 and were averaged from the remaining three quarters

[3] Includes paratyphoid

the United States) is declining The following table shows the deaths in Mexico City from twenty diseases in the nine years 1904–1912 and 1926 (No allowance is made for the increase in the capital's population)

Disease	Average 1904 12	1926
Cancer	234 2	363
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	23 9	36
Diarrœha and Enteritis (2 yrs and older)	2130 3	1570
Diarrœha and Enteritis (Under 2 years)	2190 1	2506
Diphtheria	79 7	24
Dysentery	48 7	60
Erysipelas	112 1	71
Influenza	100 8	48
Leprosy	5 9	5
Malaria	35 7	51
Measles	136 8	16
Pneumonia	2452 2	2536
Puerperal Infection	82 7	92
Scarlet Fever	124 2	10
Smallpox	345 4	16
Syphilis	148 4	355
Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	1170 8	1009
Typhoid	32 4	51
Typhus	642	28
Whooping Cough	133 7	100

Only two significant changes are registered The decline in smallpox and typhus, both of which may be ascribed to the preventive measures by the Department of Health, respectively vaccination, and delousing and disinfection, which has been followed assiduously in typhus cases

The drop in scarlet fever mortality is not significant In the United States the mortality has been steadily decreasing since the first statistics, but it is a disease whose incidence runs an irregular curve with sudden "highs" brought about by epidemics The mortality in Mexico City from scarlet fever was as low as 8 in 1905 The same may be said of measles, which rose to more than 500 deaths in 1925 and dropped to 16 in 1926 It will be seen that no material progress has been made against the gastro-intestinal diseases — which depends on change of diet, and involves economic and habit factors beyond the reach of a Department of Health in one year!

It is premature to discuss the future of health work Like all else in Mexico, its progress depends greatly on general economic conditions The

eight million peso budget did not escape a pruning of $800,000 pesos during the forced retrenchment of 1927, but the sanitary and medical services, being considered paramount, were not curtailed Only construction on the new Health Building was suspended But even this went on, though somewhat more slowly, when all the employees of the department contributed two days' pay and tendered one day's pay a month regularly thereafter that the work might proceed This offer was characteristic of the spirit of the department's personnel

Restoration of health in Mexico likewise depends on far more than the utmost efforts of even the best conducted government department The task cannot be separated from the entire task of reconstruction It depends on achieving a higher economic level, higher standards of living, on a commercial and industrial revival, it depends on the discarding of deep-rooted habits and the formation of others — in short, on education, it depends on housing, irrigation, communications, it depends on national prosperity

With full understanding that the three years' work in public health is but the barest beginning, and that outside the Federal District the nation has scarcely been touched, the department's material achievements are deserving of the highest praise It has gone just as far as the budget permitted enthusiastic and conscientious service to go Much of its personnel still lacks experience, which is to be expected in pioneer effort It is wholly likely that some of the lesser inspectors, among many, have abused their powers for personal advantage But for the first time in Mexican history the purpose to rout disease has been made manifest Whatever success has been attained has been due in no slight measure to the unswerving support of the executive, and his understanding of the paramount importance of striving "to hygienize the nation" Certainly the nucleus of an organization has been formed which, if expanded to appropriate size, could improve Mexico's health appreciably in a decade, and very considerably in a generation



FOREIGN RELATIONS

FOREIGN RELATIONS

I

It is difficult for a people, strong, free, independent, and isolated, to realize what the dominance or menace of another nation may signify in the life and history of a weaker neighbor European "powers" have traditionally faced others potentially hostile, and in their existence epochs of peace have alternated with the anticipated episodes of war But they have formed alliances and balances of power or secured guarantees of neutrality which insured, or seemed to insure, ultimate safety Incredible as it may seem to the average American, fear of the United States has been constant in the minds of thinking Mexicans since their independence

A weak and turbulent nation, distracted by civil strife, in frequent clash with other countries over grievances of their nationals, a nation defaulting repeatedly on its external obligations in the days when the creditor states made such default a *casus belli*, a people, in short, struggling at all times on two fronts against its own internal weaknesses and portended foreign aggression — that has been Mexico

Across an often invisible frontier the United States waxed steadily, assuming gradually by virtue of its nearness, its might, and its Monroe Doctrine the representation of all the world's plaintiffs against Mexico, its dominance not offset by Mexico's lesser diplomatic, commercial, and cultural intercourse with other distant powers, or with insignificant states nearer by The "Colossus of the North" has become the transcendent fact in Mexico's life as a nation among nations

Nor has mere morbid fancy, in the Mexican view, erected the "Yankee Peril," the reverse of which in the United States is merely "the Mexican problem," a detail of international policy with which the great majority of Americans feel slight concern The United States has affected, modified, and shaped Mexico's destiny in every decade So Mexico's foreign policy has come to express the supreme urge among nations as among individuals — self-preservation That policy has become a defensive against dangers, which whether real or imagined have assumed enormous proportions in Mexican administrative circles and in the whole warp and woof of Mexican national life

Fear of the United States was present from the start Less than two weeks after Manuel Bermúdez Zozaya, Mexico's first minister, had been formally received in Washington, he discovered annexationist ambitions in regard to Texas, and wrote his Government on December 26, 1822

> The haughtiness of these Republicans does not permit them to regard us as equals but as inferiors, their vanity * * * leads them to believe that their capital will be that of all the Americas, they have great affection for our money but not for us, and are not capable of entering into any treaty which is not to their advantage * * * In time they will be our sworn enemies, and foreseeing this we should treat them accordingly from this day [1]

His successor, Chargé José Anastasio Torrens, advised his Government not to permit the American population in Texas to become preponderant [2]

Even before Mr Joel Poinsett, the first American minister had presented his credentials, "Mexico had come to look upon the United States as its natural rival and enemy" [3] His reception was in marked contrast to that warmly welcoming H G Ward, the first British envoy Four years later Poinsett was recalled at President Guerrero's request, leaving the belief in Mexico — perhaps unjustly — that he had meddled far beyond a diplomatist's prerogatives in its internal affairs

At this period a Mexican publicist, Lorenzo de Zavala, shrewdly observed a profound truth about the foreigner in Mexico, which applied not only in that day — but ever since

> Very few are the strangers, who, after making great fortunes here remain, few marry into Mexican families It would appear as if they regarded their business here as campaign booths, as tents to be struck as soon as their affairs are concluded [4]

Poinsett was followed by Anthony Butler, whose only qualifications for the post, according to Justin Smith, were "an acquaintance with Texas and a strong desire to see the United States obtain it In brief," writes that authority, "he was a national disgrace * * * personally a bully and swashbuckler, ignorant of the Spanish language and even the forms of diplomacy * * * wholly unprincipled as to methods and by the testimony of two American consuls openly scandalous in his conduct" [5]

Mexico likewise asked his recall — in 1835 A few months later Texas revolted, and in the next twenty years Mexico was to lose in three successive instalments to the United States territory exceeding half the national domain However great may have been the responsibility and guilt of Mexican administrators, the stark fact of territorial loss remains, undeniable

[1] Archivo Histórico Diplomático Mexicano, No 20, p 154
[2] La Diplomacia Mexicana, vol II, p 22
[3] Rippy, The United States and Mexico, p 5
[4] Ensayo Histórico, vol I, p 20
[5] Justin H Smith, The War With Mexico p 62

and obtrusive upon Mexicans and unforgotten long after attendant circumstances have faded from their knowledge [1]

Indeed the version accepted in Mexico and taught in its schools assigns to the United States the rôle of scheming despoiler A characteristic — though moderate — presentation of that view by a historian whose participation as a youth in the war gives him an added sentimental importance, is the following

What caused the war with the United States? Mexico had declared that it would consider the annexation of Texas a *casus belli* The annexation began to take place in 1844, and at the same time, giving as a reason defense against the inroads of savage Indians, the North American forces occupied the territory up to the left bank of the Río Bravo Under the pretext of our opposition to recognizing the annexation of Texas, and another pretext of financial claims * * * our neighbor assumed the offensive and waged war against us with the little disguised purpose of assuring its conquest and acquisition of the immense stretch of territory which, in addition to Texas, was yielded [2]

As not a few American writers have taken a similar view,[3] and President Grant, a participant in the war, characterized it as "one of the most unjust [wars] ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation," [4] it is not surprising that Mexicans have nourished a grievance which establishes the United States as the historic menace Subsequent events have repeatedly lent themselves to a confirmation of such fear

Verily, Mexico's difficulties with the United States did not end with the loss of half the national area The threat of reinvasion, further partition, of annexation, was ever present Year after year, from the halls of Congress in Washington, echoed sonorous addresses affirming the God-given need, right, and duty to proceed southward It was, as Callahan terms it, "the interesting period of American history in which the shibboleth of 'manifest destiny,' was added to the Monroe Doctrine of national security" [5]

[1] Space lacks to enter extensively into the controversial question of the right and wrong of the war between the United States and Mexico The opinion widely held in the United States and nearly universally in Mexico is that the war was an almost unprovoked and premeditated assault by the United States on a weaker neighbor The facts as well set forth by a Mexican, Francisco Bulnes, in Las Grandes Mentiras de Nuestra Historia (The Great Lies of Our History), and by an American, Justin H Smith, in The War With Mexico, the most exhaustive and authoritative study of the subject, make clear that the blame for the secession of Texas lay almost exclusively with the Mexican politicians and military Texas's secession in consequence of almost intolerable abuses was analogous to the revolt of any colony against the oppression of the mother country Mexico failed to recognize the independence of Texas, and by continuing to harry that state after its annexation to the United States ten years later, virtually forced the United States into war The seizure of much Mexican territory as part of the peace however, not unnaturally placed the United States in the position of grasping imperialist and obscured the earlier issue Whatever blame may attach to the United States essentially Mexico lost the first part of her northern territory, Texas, because her rulers misgoverned it as badly as they did the rest of Mexico and the Texans with a different heritage and training, did not submit, revolting instead

[2] Ros Barcena, Catecismo Elemental de la Hist de Mexico, p 226

[3] Jay, A Review of the Causes and Consequences of the Mexican War, Edward Mansfield, The Mexican War Livermore The War With Mexico Reviewed, etc

[4] Personal Memoirs of U S Grant vol I, p 53

[5] Callahan, The Mexican Policy of Southern Leaders Under Buchanan's Administration, p 135

In 1850 Daniel Webster proposed a protectorate over the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to protect a concession for a projected railroad [1] The American minister, James Gadsden, who was sent to Mexico further to decrease its territory in behalf of the United States, was, according to Rippy, eager for "the southward flight of the American eagle * * * and with few scruples as to the means of attaining the particular end in view" [2]

Already in the first quarter century of neighborly relations, diplomatic pressure in behalf of private claims, even before their consideration by the appropriate tribunals, was sufficiently common to cause Gadsden to complain about their number, and in the same month (September, 1853) to note that "more than nine tenths of the issues on private claims" arose from "palpable disrespect" of the Mexican law [3] Yet this pressure in behalf of unjustified claims was backed by the power and prestige of the victor in the recent war and by a policy which Gadsden summarized as, "We should show on all occasions the sword, however covered by the olive" [4]

Two years later he wrote Secretary of State Marcy that "if property, extension of territory, or other grants or commercial privileges are not acceptable as a means of settlement, resort must be had to the sword which will end in the absorption of the whole Republic" [5] Other American agents in Mexico urged the annexation of the "isolated and unprotected provinces of Mexico" on the ground that this would "add to the security of Mexico" [6]

Forsyth, who succeeded Gadsden, urged in 1858 the acquisition of territory on the ground of "'manifest destiny' supported by the inevitable, unchangeable and inscrutable laws of the creator" [7]

In a private dispatch he expounded the situation as follows

> You want Sonora? The American blood spilled near its line would justify you in seizing it * * * You want other territory? Send me power to make an ultimate demand for the several millions Mexico owes our people * * * You want the Tehuantepec transits? Say to Mexico, "Nature has placed that shortest highway between the two oceans, so necessary for the commerce of the world * * * Give us what we ask in return for the manifest benefits we propose to confer on you for it, or we will take it" [8]

Outrages against Mexicans in territory formerly theirs were frequent, unpunished, and unidentified For corresponding outrages against Americans south of the Río Grande incident to the chaos which reigned during and in the wake of civil war, likewise unpunished and unidentified, intervention was proposed in many quarters as the only solution The Democratic platform of 1856 "was boisterously belligerent," and both President

[1] Rippy, *op cit*, p 55 [2] *Idem*, p 127–8 [3] Rippy, *op cit*, p 132–3
[4] In a communication of Sept 18, 1853, quoted in Rippy *op cit*, p 136
[5] April 3, 1855 Quoted in Callahan, *op cit*, p 137
[6] Quoted in *Idem* [7] Callahan, *op cit*, p 140 [8] April 15 1858 Quoted in *Idem*

Buchanan and Secretary of State Cass evinced dissatisfaction with the amount of territory acquired from Mexico

Senator Houston of Texas in February, 1858, introduced a resolution providing for the appointment of a committee to investigate and report as to the advisability of establishing a protectorate over Mexico and Central America [2] In his annual message that year Buchanan asked Congress to authorize his use of the armed forces of the United States to protect Americans in Mexico, but the measure was defeated by a narrow margin [3] Pacification, declared Consul Twyman of Vera Cruz the next year, could be accomplished only by intervention [4]

Armed invasion by the United States was averted by the intense sectionalism which preceded their own Civil War The McLane-Ocampo treaty which provided for intervention by either nation when "necessary" was rejected by the votes of northern senators, who presumably regarded it as favorable to extension of the slave-holding territory European intervention of Mexico looming, the United States showed its sympathy with the Juárez Government, but not until the conclusion of the Civil War was Seward able to make effective his policy of insisting on French withdrawal, a policy held in abeyance by the fear of an alliance between French Emperor and the Confederacy

A period of good feeling in administrative circles, brought about by the evident friendliness of Seward to the Juárez Government, was but fleeting Mexico had suffered too much from foreign invasion to allow confidence in American purposes and friendliness to take root In 1868, the American chargé, Plumb, noted a feeling of hostility to all foreigners which did not except Americans [5] Minister Nelson found this feeling more intense two years later The situation was aggravated by a troubled border along which robbery, depredations, armed raids, and reprisals continued for nearly a decade and kept alive mutual distrust [6] Twice during this period American congressional committees "investigated" and rendered damning and inflaming reports on Mexico Intervention was again advanced as "the only solution" The Mexicans were deeply incensed by these findings and rebutted them vigorously Of the relative merits of the controversy Rippy writes, "Both groups were unfair and inaccurate, but the truth perhaps corresponds more nearly with the findings of the Mexican commissioners" [7]

Particularly wounding to Mexican pride were the repeated penetrations of American forces in pursuit of marauders, with the tacit approval of their Government Not less than twenty-three of these invasions occurred

[1] Rippy, *op cit*, p 213
[2] *Idem*, p 217
[3] *Idem*, p 218–19
[4] *Idem*, p 189
[5] *Idem*, p 280
[6] A graphic account is given in the chapter "Border Irritations," 1868–1877, in Rippy, *op cit*, p 282–295
[7] *Idem*, p 288

between 1874 and 1882 [1] Indeed in 1877 the United States issued an order to General Ord, commanding on the border, giving him discretionary power to cross the frontier [2] This order set Mexico aflame [3] Tension was, moreover, greatly aggravated by the refusal of Washington to accord recognition to Porfirio Díaz, a refusal based not on any contention of the illegality of his accession to power, or other conditions in Mexico, but responding to political exigencies in the United States The newly inaugurated Hayes administration, needing an issue to allay the bitterness sequent to its dubious victory over Tilden, sought it in Mexico Wrote John W Foster, the United States minister

* * * Certain gentlemen * * * especially interested in * * * the administration of President Hayes, had conceived the idea that in view of the tension in the public mind created by the partisans of Mr Tilden and of the disturbed condition of affairs in the Southern States, it would divert attention from pending issues and tend greatly to consolidate the new administration, if *a war could be brought on with Mexico and another slice of its territory added to the Union* [4]

The situation presented striking parallels to the relations between the two countries forty years later The Grant administration, like the Woodrow Wilson administration, had been willing to grant recognition to the new government in Mexico, risen to power by revolution, to concede the *de facto* principle The Hayes and Harding administrations reversed the policy of their predecessors, laying down certain conditions precedent to recognition which Mexico must fulfil In both cases these conditions were offensive to Mexico as impairing its national sovereignty and were rejected In both cases public opinion in the United States, made effective through congressional opposition, forced the administration's withdrawal from its stand In both cases the conviction that special interests and not the national interest were being served by the executive policies became dominant in the United States In both cases President, secretary of state, and American envoy in Mexico, all strongly anti-Mexican, were beaten Hayes was compelled to recognize Díaz, just as forty years later the Harding-Coolidge administration recognized Obregón In both cases the Mexican executive was able to strengthen and intrench himself at home by capitalizing Washington's hostility In both cases Mexican diplomacy outmaneuvered American

II

Nevertheless, American power imposed itself irresistibly in another form Overt political domination was replaced by economic penetration

[1] According to a subsequent compilation by President Venustiano Carranza (Informe * * * Leido * * * Ante el Congreso * * * 1919)
[2] Foster, Diplomatic Memoirs, vol I, p 89–90
[3] *Idem* [4] *Idem*, vol I, p 92 (Italics not in original)

which carried with it the constant implication of a watchful American tutelage over Mexico Though it came a little later, the industrial invasion of Mexico corresponded to the era of railroad building in the United States But if the American empire-builders dealt ruthlessly with state and local government in the days of westward expansion, they were dealing with people of their own nationality who, within a generation, had by legislation largely curbed the excesses of rampant capitalism In Mexico no similar resistance was possible The Díaz Government rested on the premise that foreign capital was to have its way unhindered, that labor was to remain cheap and docile, and that through both Mexico's natural resources were to be exploited While generous concessions were tendered the foreigner, and much in the form of land was actually given him, he also earned a large measure of his financial reward Accepting the unusually favorable conditions, his brains, energy, and initiative developed what would otherwise have remained undeveloped He left his mark in a network of railroads, a great power development which illuminated cities and furnished them with transportation

However, as has been shown, the Mexican people — as distinct from an infinitesimally small group — not only benefited not at all from this penetration, but were actually worse off after a generation of it than before The foreigner came in for his share of odium Díaz and his administration were in a sense but a native constabulary to keep the native in order — in his own country — for the foreign overlord There was little friction in the relationship of the United States and Mexico for a generation because Díaz was in effect the agent of foreign interests, and David E Thompson, the American ambassador, was as active in business as in diplomacy "Mexico," says Rippy, "was rapidly becoming a land of large American estates" [1]

Wrote a correspondent to "El País" in the closing Díaz days

> All the caciques joyfully rub their hands when an American prospector speaks to them about leasing lands The greater the amount of trouble they have, the more advantageous it is for them to lease their lands, as it is known all over the country that against an American neither reason nor judicial power can stand [2]

"The amount of trouble" referred to, was the difficulty in getting away from the villagers land which they considered their own Thus were acquired not a few estates, the validity of whose titles was to furnish the basis for international tension, a decade later, when the people had risen blindly against the governmental and foreign rule

Certainly the American stake was immense and its preponderance undeniable In 1912, Marion Letcher, United States consul at Chihuahua, placed the total American investment at $1,057,770,000 and the

[1] Rippy, *op cit*, p 315
[2] From a letter dated Mexico, May 8, 1909, signed by Manuel Azpiros published May 13, 1909

British at $321,301,800,[1] and the estimate of a British financial writer the next year is almost identical.[2] As Mexico's total wealth at that time was $2,434,241,422, American investors apparently owned half of it.[3]

This investment, according to a subsequent estimate, was divided approximately as follows:[4]

Oil lands and refineries	478 million
Mines and smelters	300 million
Agricultural and timberlands	200 million
Railroads	160 million
Manufacturing	60 million
Wholesale and retail stores	50 million
Government bonds (not including state and municipal bonds)	22 million
Banks, telephones, and telegraphs, light and power companies, tramways	10 million[5]

This large stake exerted a tremendous direct and indirect influence in Mexico. The United States ambassador, Mr. Henry Lane Wilson, did not hesitate to use his post to cause the suppression of periodicals which were anti-American. An article — inspired by the burning alive by a Texas mob of a Mexican named Rodríguez, charged with rape and murder — entitled "The Cloven Hoof of 'Dollarism,'" brought about the prompt extinction of "El Debate," which had published it, following a call of Mr. Wilson upon Porfirio Díaz.[6]

In November, 1910, the American ambassador demanded in writing of the president of Mexico action against the Catholic daily "El País" and the "Diario del Hogar," for their anti-American articles, and the Mexican minister of foreign affairs, Enrique C. Creel, promptly suppressed them as "unpatriotic."[7]

If these anti-American expressions were an inevitable by-product of the surging anti-Díaz sentiment, the Madero movement was nevertheless conceived essentially in a spirit of friendliness for American democracy as a happy condition long denied Mexicans, and a goal which they hoped to attain.

Madero's foreign policy was merely a mild reaction from Díaz's subser-

[1] Mexican Yearbook, 1920–1921, Cleland (ed.).
[2] *Idem.*
[3] Dunn, American Foreign Investments, p. 90.
[4] Figures from Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, 1924. Quoted in Dunn, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
[5] This figure, owing to the recent extension of the telephone system, is now approximately three times as large, and by 1926 the total American investment had, according to a compilation by U. S. consuls, reached $1,489,061,000.
[6] Prida, De la Dictadura á la Anarquía, vol. I, p. 162.
[7] Wilson's letter was dated Nov. 18, Creel's reply saying that the suppression had taken place Nov. 24. Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1911. File 812.00/516.

vience to the United States, which had failed to take into account, Madero wrote, "that each concession constitutes a precedent and many precedents constitute a right" [1]

If anti-Americanism was heightened as the months rolled on, this change was in no small measure due to the obvious enmity of Ambassador Wilson for Madero and everything he represented The ambassador was publicly hissed on more than one occasion [2]

Even before Madero took office, and de la Barra was functioning as the national executive, Ambassador Wilson in two confidential dispatches to the secretary of state, as early as May 23, and again on May 31, 1911, expressed the fear that the Madero movement "might lead to a disrespect of constituted authority," and on July 11 detailed the probabilities of Madero's failure [3]

Henry Lane Wilson's hostility to the Maderist administration may be explained by his antecedents and associations His appointment was due to the political influence of his brother, former Senator John M Wilson, Republican boss of the State of Washington, a close political associate of Richard Ballinger, Taft's first secretary of the interior, whose intimate relationship with the Guggenheims was made notorious by the revelations following the Ballinger-Pinchot controversy The Guggenheims — the American Smelting and Refining Company — had vast interests in Mexico They were in conflict with the smelting interests of the Maderos [4]

No sooner arrived in Mexico in the closing days of the Díaz dictatorship, than Ambassador Wilson was surrounded by a small clique which, in his protecting shadow, was determined to get richer quicker and was not overparticular as to the means employed The group included the personal representative of an American petroleum magnate, a former judge in the Orient, a lawyer, a business man who specialized in supplying furniture to government offices, a railroad official, a newspaper publisher, and a banker — Americans all They became known as "The Society of Friends of the American Ambassador" While they represented only themselves, they elected to speak for the entire American colony in Mexico

It was as a presser of claims for these friends that Ambassador Wilson made his first and repeated contacts with the Madero Government His associates had taken on the representation or collection of divers claims of various nationals On their behalf the ambassador of the United States insisted on immediate settlement His inability to secure prompt compli-

[1] La Sucesión Presidencial p 223–4 After giving various illustrations of Díaz's subservience, Madero urged that Mexico work for a federation of the five Central American republics "For thus * * * they would become * * * our natural ally * * * while divided they run the risk of falling separately into the hands of some ambitious power as happened in Panama and we should obtain a dangerous neighbor whose presence would constitute a threat" (*Idem*, p 231)

[2] O'Shaughnessy, Diplomatic Days p 37

[3] For Rel 1911 812 00/2149

[4] The conflict is detailed in The Political Shame of Mexico, Bell p 129–133

ance aroused a resentment he could not conceal His reports to Washington increasingly reflected the bitterness of the thwarted concessionaires

"Mexico," he telegraphed on January 23, 1912, "is seething with discontent — principally among the higher and educated classes * * * at this moment the area of actual and open rebellion against the Government is not inconsiderable " [1]

The ambassador's alarmism — directed against the one government which represented anything approaching a national desire in Mexico and alone embodied whatever prospects that country held for stability and ordered progress — was productive of far-reaching results It brought about the mobilization on the border on February 4, 1912, of the entire regular army of the United States In Mexico the effect was galvanic From the Río Bravo to the Guatemalan frontier it was interpreted to mean but one thing — disapproval of the Madero administration And lest there be any misunderstanding that this concentration might be for mere guard duty, it was followed by a mobilization of the National Guard, with a demand for quotas of volunteers, making a total force of 100,000 men

Whatever may have been the motive of so formidable a demonstration of power, the effect on the fortunes of the Maderos was highly unfavorable It breathed life into every latently hostile group or person It encouraged banditry It actively stimulated rebellion In the opinion of a discerning American observer, it was for Madero "a thrust which it is scarcely an exaggeration to number with the wounds that killed him And it spilled rivers of blood in Mexico " [2]

Less than a month later on March 1, the Orozco rebellion, financed by the Terrazas family, the land barons of Chihuahua, broke out in that state The ambassador's messages grew steadily shriller On March 2 he urged Americans to abandon various sections of Mexico [3] No other foreign diplomatist in Mexico could find similar cause for alarm And while contributing to panic and disorder, the American ambassador increasingly pricked the harassed Madero Government with every grievance, real, manufactured, or imagined

It is true that in the course of the Orozco revolt in the North, the Zapata rebellion in Morelos, and in scattered regions elsewhere, lives — Mexicans and foreign — were lost, *haciendas* were looted, and foci of lawlessness developed To the American ambassador these calamities were apparently opportunities which he missed no occasion to magnify

On March 15 he telegraphed Washington whether 500 rifles and ammunition could not be sent for self-defense to the "arms and ammunition committee of the American colony " [4] Having secured the United States Government's assent, he ordered on March 22 in behalf of the "American

[1] For Rel 1912 812 00/2710
[2] Bell, *op cit*, p 148
[3] For Rel 1912 812 00/3048
[4] *Idem*, 812 113/218

Colony Committee" 1000 Krag-Jorgenson rifles and 250,000 cartridges [1] The next day he quadrupled the number of cartridges ordered [2]

Three days later he telegraphed

> Mr George W Cook and Mr Emanuel Beck, wealthy and responsible Americans in Mexico City, desire from patriotic motives and on their own responsibility to order an additional 1000 rifles, 1000 field service belts, and 1,000,000 cartridges, to be shipped with and in the same manner and for the same purpose.[3]

The Department of State was "disinclined to accede" to the request of the ambassador's friends, Messrs Cook and Beck,[4] but a large shipment of arms went forward nevertheless, supposedly for the protection of the American colony in Mexico City

On May 3 the Madero Government deported two naturalized Americans from Mexico as pernicious foreigners, when it was discovered that a mail order business, which they had been conducting under the name of the Tampico News Company, was delivering arms and ammunition to Zapata Two of the members of the American ambassador's ring were directors of this company One was Mr Beck, president of the Mexico City Banking Corporation, for whom the ambassador had solicited arms, the other was Burton W Wilson, an American lawyer, who was also attorney for Mr Beck [5]

On August 22 Ambassador Wilson reported conditions in six states to be "as bad as at any time during the two revolutions, if not worse," and "the Government apparently incompetent to meet the situation * * *" [6] Two hours later he desired to call the President's attention to

> the growing anti-American spirit of the Madero administration, which not only shows a decided preference for European markets in all lines, but is harassing and discriminating against American interests, manifested recently in the lockout of the American employees of the railways, in the persecution of the Associated Press, and the one American newspaper in Mexico, in the Government's suborned decision in the Tlahualilo case, in the discriminatory and almost confiscatory tax placed on the oil products at Tampico, and in the present attempt to annul the concession of the Mexican National Packing Co

and suggested "a positive stand in all Mexican matters, in view of the services we have rendered to Mexico and our patience with the Government" [7]

On September 15 he transmitted a sharp note to Minister of Foreign Affairs Lascurain, listing a number of Americans killed in different parts of Mexico and again demanding the immediate settlement of a variety of claims, concluding with a peremptory demand for a

[1] *Idem*, 812 113/241
[2] *Idem*, 812 113/242
[3] *Idem*, 812 113/251
[4] *Idem*
[5] Bell, *op cit*, p 202–3
[6] For Rel 1912 812 00/4692
[7] *Idem*, 312 11/811

comprehensive and categorical statement as to the measures the Mexican Government proposes to adopt * * * to bring about such an improvement in general conditions throughout Mexico that American settlers * * * will no longer be subjected to the hardships and outrages attended by a more or less constant state of revolution, lawlessness, and chaos [1]

These messages were typical of the ambassador's communications, both to the Department of State and to the Madero Government

His complaints were answered by the foreign minister, Pedro Lascuraín [2] After confessing surprise at the ambassador's tone, he took up one by one the ambassador's grievances In the thirteen reported killings of Americans, four of which had occurred during the Díaz régime, judicial investigation had been instituted in ten cases, in three of which men had been found guilty, and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment In two cases the accused had been released for want of evidence In the case of another, one Henry Crumbley "His death was due to a fight with a peon who wounded Crumbley because the latter was making love to the peon's wife "

The other cases were under investigation Three more men who had been killed, he asserted, were engaged in active warfare against the Government and filibustering

Therefore [continued Señor Lascuraín's reply] the attitude of the Mexican Government with reference to the prosecution and punishment of persons guilty of violence against American citizens has been adjusted to the law and it can not be made the subject for reproach, except as the result of an eminently partial and adverse judgment, which is not in keeping with the proofs of amity previously received and with the course followed by the Government of the United States with reference to crimes committed within its territory against Mexican citizens By way of an example, I may refer to the following * * * Antonio Rodríguez, burnt alive in Rock Springs, on November 9, 1910, Celso Cervantes, murdered by an American policeman in Los Angeles, California, the murderer having been acquitted, Damián Ríos and another Mexican, murdered in Texas in November, 1910, Cruz Rodriguez, murdered in Del Río by an American customs officer The latter was acquitted because it was said that the victim was drowned in the river while escaping from his pursuers Nicanor Treviño, murdered in Galveston in June, 1911, Antonio Gámez, a boy, lynched in Thorndale in November, 1911 The above are a few of the many cases which prove the procrastination or indifference of the American authorities The Mexicans arrested at Seguin on August 5 of this year, wounded by the constables and sheriffs at Marion, Texas, and placed without medical treatment in a dungeon, where one was found dead on the following day and the other lost his reason, prove the injustice of the imputation of cruelty and insensibility on the part of the Mexican judicial authorities

The Mexican minister then took up one by one the claims which were the ambassador's special concern The Tlahualilo Company, a British cor-

[1] For Rel 1912 31. 11/814a

[2] In a communication dated Nov 22, 1912

ton-growing concern that had, years before, brought suit against the Government because of its failure to receive a determined amount of water from the Nazas River to irrigate its property Even during the Díaz administration the company's right to the waters which it claimed at the expense of thousands of small growers had been disputed Repeated court decisions had been unfavorable to the company The company's claims, if not invalid, were certainly not beyond discussion

The Tampico oil companies, Señor Lascurain continued, had not been, as the American ambassador claimed, victims of "a discriminatory and almost confiscatory tax," or taxed "out of an anti-American sentiment" Oil, one of the great sources of wealth in Mexico, had, under Díaz, paid no taxes The contracts entered into with several companies exempted them from all sorts of taxes, except the one paid by revenue stamps This tax, against which the ambassador was complaining, the equivalent of three Mexican centavos ($1\frac{1}{2}$ cents U S cy) per barrel could scarcely be considered exorbitant, since it was far less than the taxes levied on oil in California Moreover, this tax could scarcely be accused as anti-American, since it had been levied equally on English and Mexican oil interests as well, which had accepted it without discussion

Concerning "The Mexican Herald," the evening edition of which, published in Spanish as "El Heraldo Mexicano" — this paper, formerly the recipient of a subsidy from the Díaz Government, had become violently hostile to the Madero Government after its refusal to continue the subsidy The paper, not limiting itself to editorial hostility, had commenced a terrific campaign against the Government, publishing false reports of an extremely alarming character, which caused panic throughout the country The Government, therefore, suppressed "one issue of a foreign mercantile concern, which speculates with the peace of the country" (The issue in question had announced the disastrous defeat of the government forces by Orozco)

The directors of the paper took advantage of the opportunity to suspend publication of the daily which was not profitable, and were pressing a claim for the supposed losses caused by the paper's "suppression" [1]

In his contentions Señor Lascurain had both facts and equity on his side Attempting to convert the defunct 'Heraldo' into an American "right" was typical of more than one of the ambassador's grievances The discrimination alleged against the Associated Press was nothing more than a disagreement between the Government and the press association over the terms of a contract [2]

The lockout of the American employees on the railways, of which the ambassador complained, was in reality a walk-out of the American railroad

[1] The full text of Señor Lascurain's note is found in For Rel 1912, 696 11/1001
[2] For Rel 1912, p 874

men, following the adoption of the Spanish language for use in train orders This step was part of a general policy for Mexicanization of the lines, which in turn was a reaction against the long-standing discrimination against the majority of Mexican employees in favor of a minority of Americans Unquestionably the pendulum was swinging the other way, but the Mexican policy in other nations would have been taken for granted, and scarcely have been made the subject of diplomatic pressure [1]

Among other claims which the ambassador was pressing was that of $3,000,000 for Chinese murdered in Torreón — his interest in this claim being accentuated by the retention of one of his associates, Judge Wilfley, as counsel for it

On January 7, 1913, Ambassador Wilson in a message to the secretary of state regarded "the whole situation as gloomy, if not hopeless" [2] A week later he reported that the "Madero Government was planning [plans] sham revolutionary uprising * * * in order to kill Félix Díaz and his companions in prison, and to make it appear that they were killed accidentally, or to be justified in shooting them immediately afterwards" (The entire Madero policy of forgiveness and amnesty was a refutation of this ambassadorial report) The ambassador urged sending a warship [3]

On February 9, with the seizure of the arsenal and the assault on the National Palace, began the tragic ten days [4]

The attempt was a complete fizzle But for the grossest treachery within the presidential camp ten days later, and the active aid and encouragement of the American ambassador, the mutiny would have died on the day of its birth

On February 10 Ambassador Wilson wired the State Department, "practically all the local state authorities, police, and rurales have revolted to Díaz * * *" [5] The fact was that the entire rebellious force consisted of eight hundred men, three batteries of artillery and the palace guard

The next day Wilson wired that "public opinion, both native and foreign, as far as I can estimate, seems to be overwhelmingly in favor of Díaz" [6]

Later in the same day he wired that he was "convinced that the Government of the United States should send firm, drastic instructions, perhaps of a menacing character," [7] and suggested that he be given possession of such instructions, or clothed with general powers in the name of the President But on the following day, Secretary Knox wired that the President of the United States was not convinced "of the advisability of any such instructions at the present time" [8]

[1] The diplomatic correspondence, orders, etc, of this railroad controversy are to be found in For Rel 1912, p 910–924
[2] For Rel 1913 812.00/5823
[3] *Idem* 812.00/5865
[4] See page 305
[5] For Rel 1913 812.00/6075
[6] *Idem*, 812.00/6086
[7] *Idem*, 812.00/6092
[8] *Idem*

On the same day Ambassador Wilson reported that he had gone to protest to the president against the continuance of hostilities and reported President Madero as "visibly embarrassed" The ambassador then reports that upon visiting Díaz he was received "with all the honors of war," and that "the morale of his troops was excellent" [1]

During the ensuing days the American ambassador used his utmost influence to persuade the diplomatic corps to ask the president to resign On February 15, a delegation, headed by the Spanish minister, went to the palace for that purpose President Madero replied that he did not recognize the right of diplomats to interfere with a domestic question [2]

On the very same day Ambassador Wilson reports that he "wrote a courteous note to Huerta," asking him to remove a battery which had been placed in the block where the embassy was situated, to another part of the city "He sent me a very courteous reply," telegraphed Mr Wilson, "saying that orders in compliance with my request had been issued, and that the battery had been removed" Later the same evening the ambassador went to the palace to confer alone with Huerta [3]

Mr Wilson's rôle in these crucial days is revealed by a neutral witness, the Cuban minister to Mexico, the Hon Márquez Sterling

> Mr Wilson has said since that "the Embassy converted itself into the center of all activities in favor of humanity" But in all truth, as I saw it, then and later, with the testimony of the Spanish Minister, Señor Cólogan, and the numerous proofs which had been accumulating since, the embassy was not other than the center of a true conspiracy against the Government * * * [4]

On February 17, *the day before* the fatal treachery of Gen Victoriano Huerta, Ambassador Wilson wired the State Department

> Huerta notifies me to expect some action that will remove Madero from power at any moment, plans fully matured, the purpose of delay being to avoid any violence or bloodshed I asked his messenger no questions and made no suggestions beyond requesting *that no lives be taken except by due process of law* [5]

The following day he wired at noon that he understood that the federal generals had taken control of the situation [6]

The coup had originally been planned for noon, but owing to unexpected delay did not take place until 1 30 P M The ambassador sent word that it had happened an hour and a half before the event

"Not the revolt of the citadel, but the conspiracy of the embassy," as the Cuban Minister puts it, "had triumphed" [7]

[1] For Rel 1913, 812 00/6112
[2] *Idem* 812 00/6175
[3] *Idem*, 812 00/6178
[4] Márquez Sterling, Los Ultimos Dias Del Presidente Madero, p 379–80
[5] For Rel, 1913 812 00/6225 (italics not in original)
[6] Disorders in Mexico Dept of State Div of Information Series A No 95 Mexico No 18
[7] Márquez Sterling, *op cit*, p 391

The mildest judgment that can be passed on Ambassador Wilson's rôle *up to this moment*, is that made by Edward I Bell, who perhaps more than any other American is informed on what happened

> Knowing as I do how narrowly Madero missed a triumph over the extraordinary difficulties and deadly enemies that beset him, I am constrained to believe that the least value which can be assigned to the unfortunate influence of the American Ambassador is still sufficient to have turned the scale [1]

On the very night that treason had overthrown the Government, the leader of the citadel revolt, Félix Díaz, and the recent head of the government defense, Victoriano Huerta, met in the American Embassy, and under the ægis of the American ambassador drew up the so-called "Compact of the Citadel," since known in Mexico as the "Compact of the Embassy" The diplomatic corps was assembled there at the invitation of its dean, Ambassador Wilson, and to it he declared "Mexico has been saved! From now on we shall have peace, progress, and prosperity I have known about the plans to imprison Madero for three days It was slated to occur this morning" [2]

To the astonished diplomats he announced the exact composition of Huerta's cabinet To them the compact was read aloud The ambassador led the applause When Félix Díaz entered the ambassador cried out, "Long live General Díaz, Saviour of Mexico!" All were invited to step to the buffet and partake of champagne After Huerta and Díaz had been ceremoniously ushered out, one of the diplomats asked, "And what will be the fate of poor Madero?"

"Oh," answered Ambassador Wilson, "they will put Señor Madero in a madhouse, where he should always be kept As for the other [Pino Suárez] he is nothing but a scoundrel, so if they kill him it will be no great loss"

"We must not allow it," said the Chilean minister

"We must not meddle in the domestic affairs of Mexico," replied the ambassador

Not a word was spoken in reply The diplomats filed silently into the street, stupefied by what they had seen and heard Said one of them

"This Ambassador does not refuse to allow a rebel chief under the very roof of his government to plot the downfall of the legitimate government to which he is accredited He is a willing witness to the compact, he even discusses the persons who will form the new government without a thought as to whether or not the matter deals purely with the domestic affairs of the country, but when the question turns to the saving of the lives of two officials whom treason and infamy are perhaps even now discussing the manner of killing, he finds his position as representative of a foreign power does not allow him to intervene" [3]

[1] Bell, *op cit*, p 416 [2] Márquez Sterling *op cit*, p 471–2
[3] Pnda, De la Dictadura á la Anarquía, vol II, p 547–8

This policy of non-interference to save the lives of two men, which a single word from him would have done, Ambassador Wilson maintained After the butchery of Gustavo Madero and Basso, the *Intendente* of the Palace, little doubt was possible that the lives of the president and vice-president were in the most imminent peril But Ambassador Wilson not merely did nothing, he adopted an attitude which indicated, both before and after their murder, that he condoned it

On February 19, when the murder of Gustavo Madero was spread on the front pages of the Mexico City newspapers, Wilson reported the following interview

> I went to see General Huerta this afternoon to get guarantees of public order and to learn the exact situation He gave me satisfactory assurances and explained that Gustavo Madero had been killed by soldiers, without orders General Huerta said that the President and Gustavo Madero had twice tried to assassinate him and had held him a prisoner for one day He asked my advice as to whether it was best to send the ex-President out of the country or to place him in a lunatic asylum *I replied that he ought to do that which was best for the peace of the country* [1]

Not a question about Gustavo Madero's death — not a word of caution lest "soldiers, without orders" also kill Francisco Madero

Indeed the next day, February 20, the ambassador wired the Department of State that "a wicked despotism had [has] fallen" [2] Within two hours he telegraphed again, asking the department "immediately" to instruct 'as to the question of recognition of the Provisional Government, now installed and evidently in secure position" And he added, "It would be well to note that the Provisional Government takes office in accordance with the constitution and precedents" [3]

An hour later he telegraphed the text of the resignation which had been wrung from Madero and Pino Suárez

Even before the tragedy that was to transpire, two days later, the Department of State clearly sensed the ambassador's participation and responsibility Wired Secretary of State Knox in prompt answer (February 20, 11 P M)

> * * * General Huerta's consulting you as to the treatment of Madero tends to give you a certain responsibility in the matter It moreover goes without saying that cruel treatment of the ex-President would injure * * * the reputation of Mexican civilization, and this government earnestly * * * hopes to hear that he has been dealt with in a manner consistent with peace and humanity * * * You may in your discretion make use of these ideas in your conversation with General Huerta" [4]

[1] For Rel 1913 812 00/6271 (Italics not in original)
[2] *Idem*, 812 00/6277
[3] *Idem* 812 00/6287
[4] *Idem* 812 00/6271

The next day, February 21, Secretary Knox telegraphed again that "the shooting of Gustavo Madero [had] caused a most unfavorable impression" in Washington, and that "the President was [is] gratified to believe that there was [is] no prospect of injury to the deposed President or Vice President * * *"[1]

The ambassador, however, was apparently more interested in securing recognition than in following either the dictates of humanity or the suggestion of his chief On February 21 he telegraphed the State Department

In the absence of instructions and in view of the extreme urgency, I assembled the diplomatic corps * * * relative to the recognition of the new government * * * My colleagues * * * agreed that recognition of the new government was imperative, to enable it to impose its authority and establish order I shall accordingly unite with my colleagues, believing that I am interpreting the desires of the Department, and assisting in the tranquilization I am sending a circular telegram to all consuls * * * instructing them to do all possible to bring about a general acceptance of the Provisional Government[2]

The Department of State replied as follows

In view of the statements and tenor of your recent telegrams,[3] the Department is disposed to consider the Provisional Government as being legally established * * *

In order to obtain recognition, the message continued, the various grievances of the United States against Mexico would first have to be dealt with in a satisfactory manner[4]

Meanwhile every effort in Mexico was made to get Ambassador Wilson to intercede for the lives of Madero and Pino Suárez On February 19, the day after Gustavo Madero's murder, the Cuban minister wrote Wilson a definite warning and offered the use of the Cuban cruiser *Cuba*, lying at anchor in Vera Cruz, to transport the deposed executives The president's father, Francisco Madero, Sr , and mother, Mercedes G Madero, distracted by the fate of their son Gustavo, wrote to the diplomatic corps, of which Mr Henry Lane Wilson, by virtue of being the only ambassador accredited to Mexico, was the dean, asking for its intercession

Finally Madero's wife, stifling her bitterness at what she knew had been the ambassador's responsibility for her husband's fall, called at the American Embassy Following is a verbatim account of her interview with Mr Wilson

Q When did you have your interview with the Ambassador?

A That afternoon, February 20, 1913 Mercedes, my sister-in-law, was with me The Ambassador was not in when we entered the Embassy Mrs Wilson

[1] For Rel 1913 812 00/6104a
[2] *Idem* 812 00/6119
[3] Italics not in original
[4] For Rel , 1913 812 00/6325a

received us, and caused a telephone message to be sent to the Palace (he was with Huerta at the National Palace) notifying the Ambassador that we were there

Q What was the manner and appearance of the Ambassador?

A * * * His manner was brusque At times Mrs Wilson tugged at his coat, apparently to try to induce him to speak differently It was a painful interview I told the Ambassador that we had come to seek protection for the lives of the President and the Vice President "Very well, Madam," said he, "What is it you want me to do?"

"I want you to use your influence to protect the lives of my husband and the other prisoners"

"That is a responsibility that I do not care to undertake, either for myself, or my government," replied the Ambassador

"Will you be good enough then," I asked, "to send this telegram to President Taft?"

I handed him a message addressed to President Taft, which had been written by the President's mother and signed by her It was through the Ambassador that our only hope lay in obtaining communication with President Taft We supposed that the cable was in the hands of the government (the Huerta government) and that it was useless to expect that a message of this sort would be allowed to pass

Q What was the reply of the Ambassador to your request, after he had read the message?

A "It is not necessary to send this," he said But I persisted "All right," promised the Ambassador "I shall send it" He put the message in his pocket

Q What followed after you had delivered to the Ambassador the message directed to President Taft?

A The Ambassador said "I will be frank with you, Madam Your husband's downfall is due to the fact that he never wanted to consult with me" I could reply nothing to this, for I had gone there to ask a favor, to plead for my husband's life, not to discuss questions of politics or policies with the Ambassador

Q What else did the Ambassador say?

A The Ambassador continued "You know, Madam, your husband had peculiar ideas" I said "Mr Ambassador, my husband had not peculiar ideas but high ideals" To this the Ambassador did not reply, and I proceeded to say that I asked the same protection and assurance for the life of Vice-President Pino Suárez, as I asked for President Madero The Ambassador's manner grew very impatient "Pino Suárez is a very bad man," he said, "I cannot give any assurance for his safety He is to blame for most of your husband's troubles That kind of man must disappear * * *"

Q What did the Ambassador mean by saying that Vice-President Pino Suárez "must disappear"?

A I inferred that the Ambassador meant that the Vice-President's life must be sacrificed I then represented to him that Mr Pino Suarez had a wife and six children who would be left in poverty in the event of his death

Q What did he say to that?

A He merely shrugged his shoulders He told me that General Huerta had asked him what should be done with the prisoners "What did you tell General Huerta?" I asked "I told him that he must do what was best for the interests of the country," said the Ambassador Here my sister-in-law interrupted and said "Why did you say that? You know very well what kind of men Huerta and his people are, and that they are going to kill them!"

Q What did the Ambassador say?

A He made no response, but turned to me and said "You know that your husband is unpopular, that the people were not satisfied with him as President" I asked, "Why, then, if this is true, is he not permitted to go free and proceed to Europe, where he could do no harm?" The Ambassador replied, "You need not worry, the person of your husband will not be harmed I knew all along that this was going to happen That is why I suggested that your husband should resign" "But if you knew of this in advance, Mr Ambassador," I asked him, "why did you not warn my husband?" "Oh, no," he replied, "that would not have been good policy, because then he would have prevented it"

Q The Ambassador is quoted in an interview in the New York Herald on March 21, 1916, as saying that you had requested him to ask Huerta to "put your husband in the penitentiary for safe-keeping" Did you make such a request of the Ambassador?

A No We discussed only the personal safety and the urgency of Huerta being compelled to keep his promise to allow the President and the other prisoners to leave the country I spoke of the uncomfortable accommodations they had "He seems to be getting along all right," said the Ambassador, "he has slept for five hours without waking"

Q What was the outcome of the conversation?

A When the interview was terminated and we went away, we had gained nothing excepting the Ambassador's assurance that the President would not suffer bodily harm and his promise to send the message soliciting the intervention of President Taft to save the lives of the prisoners

Q Was the Ambassador's assurance carried out?

A Two days later the prisoners were assassinated

Q Did you converse with the Ambassador in Spanish or in English?

A In English

Q Is it your opinion that the lives of the President and the Vice President could have been saved by the Ambassador?

A It is my belief that had properly energetic representations been made by the Ambassador which it was reasonable to expect him to make, in the interest of humanity, not only would the lives of the President and the Vice President been spared, but a responsibility would have been averted from the United States which was thrust upon it [1] by the acts of its then diplomatic representative in Mexico [2]

[1] In the original Mrs Madero wrote 'him"

[2] This interview took place August 15 1916 between Mrs Madero and an American journalist, Robert Hammond Murray, who during the Madero and Huerta *régimes*, and at the time of the interview was the Mexico correspondent of The New York World and during the World War headed the United States Committee on Public Information in Mexico City The interview was

On the night of February 22, Francisco Madero and Pino Suárez, shortly before midnight, were taken from the palace They were told that they were being transferred to the penitentiary for greater comfort But none of their effects were taken with them The two men were transported to the rear of the penitentiary Here the automobiles stopped The prisoners were asked to step out As they did so, revolvers were placed to their heads and their brains were blown out The officer in charge, who personally killed Madero, Cárdenas, was later promoted by Huerta [1] After the murder, a group of men stationed in the doorway of the penitentiary, under the command of one Cecilio Ocón, the same Ocón who had participated in the butchery of Gustavo Madero, fired a dozen shots into the air [2]

The Government's official version, given out for publication for the next morning's papers, was that a rescue of the prisoners had been attempted, that the automobiles had been fired upon, that the prisoners had sought to escape, and that in the firing both had been killed

This variant of the *ley fuga* found no acceptance outside of government circles [3] Mexico City was shocked with the horror of the crime, especially in view of the conspicuous magnanimity that Madero had shown to rebels against his Government

The day after the murders, Ambassador Wilson telegraphed the Government's version to the Department of State, and the day following, February 24, telegraphed

> The tragedy of yesterday evidently produced no effect on the public mind The city remains perfectly quiet and unofficial telegrams indicate the same situation throughout the Republic, with few exceptions * * * It is quite evident that the people hail with satisfaction the present régime [4]

Subsequently, the same day, he telegraphed

> I am disposed to accept the Government's version of the affair and consider it a closed incident [5]

The incident, however, was not so easily closed

Two weeks later, when Ambassador Wilson became cognizant of the storm of protest aroused throughout the civilized world, he attempted to justify himself He wrote to the secretary of state, Mr Bryan, as follows

presented subsequently to Mrs Madero for her approval as to its correctness and was sworn to by her before the vice consul of the United States in Mexico City April 29 1927 Certified original is in the possession of Mr Robert Hammond Murray The material, used here for the first time, is through the courtesy of Mr Murray and is copyrighted by him

[1] With the victory of the Constitutionalists in 1915 Cárdenas fled from Mexico to Guatemala Subsequently he made a full confession It was published in La Nación, Havana, April 24 1916

[2] A compilation of the affidavits etc bearing on the murders is found in Los Asesinatos de los Señores Madero y Pino Suarez by Calixto Maldonado R

[3] Cólogan, Por La Verdad

[4] For Rel, 1913 812 00/6347

[5] *Idem*, 812 00/6353

In my own mind I anticipated that a mild form of coup d'état * * * might be undertaken [And further] I believe that in announcing publicly my acceptance of the official version of the death of these two men * * * I adopted the surest method * * * of allaying that singular and perverse sentimentality which frequently leads to the commission of greater crimes as punishments for lesser ones [1]

The ambassador's struggle to secure recognition for Victoriano Huerta as provisional president dated from the coup d état As early as February 21 he sent the following telegram to every United States consular officer in Mexico

Provisional Government installed yesterday with General Huerta as President General public approval of Congress in this city, which is perfectly quiet, reassuring reports come from other places President Madero is a prisoner awaiting the decision of Congress in his case Senate and Chamber of Deputies in full accord with new administration You should make this intelligence public, and in the interest of Mexico urge general submission and adhesion to the new Government, which will be recognized by all foreign governments to-day [2]

The statements that congress was "in full accord" with the new administration and that it would be "recognized by all foreign governments to-day," were false The request to the consuls to engage actively in Mexican political affairs by "urging submission and adhesion" to the Provisional Government appears to have established a new precedent in official interference in the internal affairs of another nation There is no record, however, that the State Department offered any rebuke or countermanding order to the ambassador [3]

On February 25 the ambassador telegraphed the State Department that the Associated Press announcement that the British Government would "refrain from recognizing the present legally constituted Provisional Government * * * had [has] made a disagreeable impression on the Mexican Government * * * and aroused profound indignation in the British colony In view of the depressing effect which any similar utterance from our government might cause," Wilson urged upon the State Department a statement which he had drawn up, implying that recognition was not far off [4]

The following day, February 26, he again wired all the United States consuls in Mexico — this time to exert themselves "without ceasing to bring about the general submission to the Provisional Government " [5]

Within a few days, however, an event of overshadowing importance was to disarrange completely the ambassador's plans, and likewise to alter the

[1] For Rel, 1913 812 00/6840, March, 12 [2] *Idem*, 812 00/6325
[3] At least none appears in Foreign Relations, 1913, and undoubtedly would have had any been sent
[4] For Rel, 1913 812 00/6373 [5] *Idem*, 812 00/6521, 812 00/6968

subsequent history of Mexico On March 4 the Taft administration retired, and Woodrow Wilson became President of the United States

Perhaps the first inkling of a changed Mexican policy in the United States is found in the ambassador's protest to the State Department on March 9 that only a simple acknowledgment and that merely "addressed to him as General Huerta" had been received in answer to Huerta's telegram of congratulations to President Wilson on the latter s taking office

Meanwhile Ambassador Wilson's reports minimizing the nature and extent of the revolt against Huerta, and his assertions of Huerta's control over all Mexico, were directly contradicted by reports of American consuls

On March 1 Ambassador Wilson telegraphed that Governor Carranza of Coahuila had "submitted unconditionally" and after listing other submissions, concluded with, "It looks now as though adhesion to the Provisional Government would be general " [1]

On the same date Consul Louis Hostetter telegraphed from Hermosillo, the capital of Sonora, that "conditions were [are] assuming a very serious aspect * * * the majority of the people in the state are not at all in favor of General Huerta on account of these assassinations [of Madero and Pino Suárez] " [2]

The next day, March 2, Consul-General Hanna telegraphed from Monterrey, "The State of Coahuila is in revolt " [3]

On March 10 Consul Edwards at Ciudad Juárez telegraphed

> Reports from the south and west do not show conditions improving Every indication justifies the claim of the anti-government faction and they are daily growing in number It is also becoming apparent that the struggle now augmenting [sic] will prove to be a real war [4]

For the "real war" which Consul Edwards so correctly foresaw, which inundated Mexico in blood, the Mexican people from that day to this hold the then ambassador of the United States in no small measure responsible [5] It is for this reason that the detailed examination here made of the record to ascertain his innocence or guilt is essential to a study of the relations of the two countries, which seeks to bring to the surface some of the causes for friction and misunderstanding

Ambassador Wilson continued to work unceasingly for the administration he had nurtured On March 11 he telegraphed Washington that Carranza had been defeated and had "retreated to Monclova, where his forces would [will] in all probability be dispersed "

"If any of our consuls have inadvertently been sympathizing with local activities against the federal government * * * they should," he urged

[1] *Idem*, 812 00/6447
[2] *Idem*, 812 00/6521
[3] *Idem*
[4] *Idem*, 812 00/6611
[5] His responsibility has been charged officially See, *inter alia*, Carranza s Manifesto to the Nation of June 11, 1915 Pub in Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, 1916 p 311

"be instructed * * * to work for submission to the federal authorities, by which alone peace can be restored" [1]

Consul Ellsworth's telegram of March 14, however, indicated that Carranza's success at Monclova was unquestionable [2]

On March 28, Consul Thomas Bowman wired from Nogales, Sonora, that the rebellion of the Sonora state government seemed to be receiving enthusiastic and almost unanimous encouragement from all over the state

> Recruits continue to join the armed forces throughout the state and there seems to be a real sentiment of patriotism behind the revolt Foreigners are generally well treated, and so far this office has received no complaints from Americans as to the treatment accorded them by the state government Colonel Obregón refused to receive American recruits while at Nogales, and explained to this office that he was waging a patriotic war and wanted only his own countrymen to help him [3]

On March 30, on the same day that Carranza declared himself provisional president, Ambassador Wilson telegraphed the State Department that "the necessity for immediate meeting for the consideration of recognition," was being urged upon him by his diplomatic colleagues [4]

He repeatedly urged recognition "for the peace and good-will of this continent," "upon the high grounds of international polity, American interests, and procurement of peace and order in Mexico" [5]

On July 17, Ambassador Wilson sailed for the United States He had been recalled Even the most fervent efforts on the part of his clique in the American colony, which deluged the State Department with telegrams, and sent a delegation to Washington, purveyed with a 39-page pamphlet,[6] setting forth the necessity for keeping him in office, could not save him He retired to private life on October 4

Whatever may be the verdict of history on President Wilson's refusal to recognize the blood-stained Huerta on the recommendations of the American ambassador, it cannot be doubted that the United States, as embodied in the Taft administration, through its representative, Henry Lane Wilson, played a decisive part in overturning the popular and democratically-intentioned government of Francisco Madero Without the militant encouragement and support of the ambassador, the treason of Huerta would never have been conceived It would have died still-born in that crafty Indian's mind, if indeed the thought itself had ever lodged there But from the moment of that fatal coup d'état of February 18 and the murder of the

[1] For Rel, 1913 812 00/6631
[2] *Idem* 812 00/6693
[3] *Idem*, 812 00/6980
[4] *Idem*, 812 00/6944
[5] April 9 (812 00/7066), April 15 (812 00/7161), May 8 (812 00/7431), May 15 (812 00/7652), June 9 (812 00/7741)
[6] FACTS Submitted by the Committee of the American Colony to Pres Wilson * * * relative to the Mexican situation and the record of the Hon Henry Lane Wilson * * * G W Cook, Chairman



CHAPALA TEPISTIC STREET SCENE IN CONTEMPORARY MEXICO (GUANAJUATO)

In the foreground a potter is at work on a large earthenware jar on the village street. Behind the potter's wheel are the jar's companions, drying in the sun. In the middle distance two women are carrying water jars on their heads. At the left, father is serving a meal to his family in the common street.



(Photo by the author.)

A *palqueta* with a church in the background. Patterns of colored paper are laid out on the ground. Congaree Valley, Guatemala. This custom of the past persisted to this day.

president and vice-president four days later, Mexico was destined to be rent asunder, and the problems that might conceivably have been worked out, however blunderingly and ineffectively, were destined for years to be submerged in chaos

III

If the attitude of one American administration profoundly altered the course of Mexican history, it was to be further shaped, dominated, and determined by the Wilson administration

Before long the Wilsonian policy of non-recognition of the Huerta Government, of passive disapproval, and of allowing the Mexicans to work out their own destiny, proved too slow for the White House

"It is now our duty," President Wilson had said in his message to Congress on August 27, "to show what true neutrality will do to enable the people of Mexico to set their affairs in order * * * We cannot be the partisan of either party to the contest that now distracts Mexico * * * Neither side to the struggle now going on in Mexico will receive [receives] any assistance from this side of the border" [1] Exportation of arms or munitions to any part of Mexico was forbidden [2]

At the same time the President sent former Governor John Lind of Minnesota, as his confidential representative to lay down certain conditions to Huerta, which called for "an early and free election," in which all parties were to participate, and the result of which all parties agreed to abide by [3] (President Wilson was demanding an impossibility but he did not know it)

This and his further request that Huerta withdraw, Huerta rejected [4]

From then on the Wilsonian policy became more and more aggressive On October 13 the State Department wired Chargé d'Affaires O'Shaughnessy to deliver immediately to the Foreign Office word that the President was "shocked at the lawless methods employed by General Huerta * * *" and that "General Huerta's course in dissolving congress and arresting deputies the President found [finds] it impossible to regard otherwise than as an act of bad faith towards the United States" [5]

Less than three months after declaring his neutrality, President Wilson announced to the world

> Usurpations like that of General Huerta menace the peace and development of America as nothing else could, they also tend to set law entirely aside, to put the lives and fortunes of citizens and foreigners alike in constant jeopardy, to invalidate contracts and concessions in any way the usurper may devise for his own

[1] The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson vol I, p 45–51 [2] *Idem*
[3] Foreign Relations, 1913 812 00/8041a
[4] *Idem* 812 00/10637
[5] *Idem*, 812 00/9180a (It is not made clear why Huerta's dictatorial acts were viewed "as an act of bad faith towards the United States")

profit and to impair both the national credit and all the foundations of business, domestic or foreign

It is the purpose of the United States therefore to discredit and defeat such usurpations whenever they occur The present policy of the Government of the United States is to isolate General Huerta entirely, to cut him off from foreign sympathy and aid and from domestic credit, whether moral or material, and to force him out

It hopes and believes that isolation will accomplish this end and shall await the results without irritation or impatience If General Huerta does not retire by force of circumstances *it will become the duty of the United States to use less peaceful means to put him out* * * *[1]

And President Wilson gave notice on November 11 that the United States would not consider concessions granted during the Huerta régime as binding on the Mexicans[2]

What was Woodrow Wilson's Mexican policy at that time? It is revealed in his own words by a statement that he made to Sir William Tyrrell, secretary of Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary, who was visiting the United States

"When I go back to England," said the Englishman, "I shall be asked to explain your Mexican policy Can you tell me what it is?"

President Wilson looked at him earnestly and said, in his most decisive manner

"I am going to teach the South American republics to elect good men!"

"Yes," replied Sir William, "but, Mr President, I shall have to explain this to Englishmen, who, as you know, lack imagination They cannot see what is the difference between Huerta, Carranza, and Villa"

The only answer he could obtain was that Carranza was the best of the three and that Villa was not so bad as he had been painted But the phrase that remained with the British diplomat was that one so characteristically Wilsonian "I propose to teach the South American republics to elect good men!" In its attitude, its phrasing, it held the key to much Wilson history[3]

By January, 1914, Secretary of State Bryan announced that the Government of the United States was convinced that there would be "a more hopeful prospect of peace, of the security of property, and of the early payment of foreign obligations,"[4] if the contenders from the North were victorious No one in Mexico City, he asserted, would do other "than try to perpetuate and strengthen the selfish, oligarchical, and military interests" embodied in the Huerta Government, and that the President no longer felt justified in

[1] For Rel 1914 812.00/11443d (This message was sent on Nov 24 to all the governments of the world through the U S embassies and legations Italics not in original)

[2] O'Shaughnessy, *op cit* p 47

[3] Hendrick Life and Letters of Walter H Page p 204–205

[4] The Huerta Government had defaulted on the semi-annual interest payment of the Mexican foreign bonds on Jan 1, 1914

staying neutral He therefore was about to lift the embargo on arms to Mexico, so that those in revolt against Huerta could secure them [1]

On February 16 William G Benton, an Englishman, whose property in Chihuahua had been "confiscated" by Villa, went to see that general to protest He was there killed under circumstances which have never been fully elucidated Villa declared that Benton had threatened him, that Villa had disarmed Benton, and caused him to be tried by a summary court-martial, which had passed sentence of death on the Englishman [2]

The United States, pressed by Great Britain, made urgent representations to Villa and Carranza Villa ignored them [3] Carranza maintained that he would not accept representations made by other powers in behalf of their nationals through the United States, and that the proper method for other powers was to accredit representatives to him as the first chief of the Constitutionalist Army [4] Despite every effort, the United States could not even obtain the exhumation of Benton's body and its return to his widow [5] In his first message to congress in 1917, after becoming Constitutionalist President, Carranza cited his conduct of the Benton incident as illustrative of his foreign policy [6]

The Benton case, though merely one of Villa's murders, was more salient because the victim was an Englishman A far greater number of victims were Chinese and Spaniards

On a question of property, the "confiscation" of "El Desengaño," a mine in Durango, by Villa, in January, 1914, Carranza reaffirmed his position On March 12 he wrote that in these "lamentable events," such as the Benton case, and the Desengaño mine, the nations affected (Great Britain and Spain) could not expect redress from him since they had recognized Huerta, that they could, however, extra-officially make representations to him (Carranza), but had no right to make them through the United States [7]

On February 3, President Wilson lifted the embargo on arms This move gave material aid to the Constitutionalists [8]

President Wilson was furnished a further opportunity against the Huerta régime by an unexpected incident

On April 9, the paymaster and crew of the whaleboat of the *U S S Dolphin*, flying the United States flag at bow and stern, were engaged in loading gasoline at Tampico They were arrested, and marched to jail on

[1] Secretary of State Bryan to all diplomatic missions of the U S Jan 31 1914 For Rel, 1914 812 00/10735a

[2] Telegram of Villa to Carranza, Feb 21, 1914 Labor Internacional de la Revolución Constitucionalista p 37

[3] Consul Letcher to Secretary of State For Rel, 1914 312 41/126

[4] For Rel, 1914 312 52/224 Labor Internacional, etc, p 39-40

[5] *Idem*, p 842-865

[6] Informe * * * Leido ante el Congreso * * * 1917

[7] Labor International de la Revolución Constitucionalista p 27-30 For Rel 1914, p 784-838

[8] For Rel, 1914 812 113/3105a

the ground that they had landed in a forbidden military zone An hour and a half later, the commanding general in Tampico, Ignacio Morelos Zaragoza, heard of the arrest, released the men, and apologized

Admiral Mayo, however, demanded more formal reparation — assurance that the officer responsible would be severely punished, and that the Huerta Government "publicly hoist the American flag in a prominent position on the shore and salute it with twenty-one guns," which salute would be returned Mayo gave a twenty-four-hour ultimatum for compliance

The Wilson administration backed up the admiral Huerta replied that he considered the apology of the commanding general, coupled with the prompt arrest of the offending officer, sufficient, since the marines had had no right to land He expressed his willingness, however, to salute the American flag, provided the salute were returned gun for gun, and to punish the officer if investigation showed him to have transgressed The United States declined to accept this, as well as Huerta's proposal that the whole matter be referred to the Hague Tribunal Huerta also recalled that the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo provided for arbitration of disputes between the two countries [1]

On April 14 Secretary of the Navy Daniels ordered the Atlantic Fleet, with the first regiment of marines, into Mexican waters [2]

On April 20 the President appeared before a joint session of Congress After recounting the refusal of the Huerta Government to give satisfaction in the form demanded, he added that the incident could "not be regarded as a trivial one," that "it was not an isolated case," that "a series of incidents had [have] occurred * * * to show a disregard for the dignity and rights" of the United States He cited as one of these incidents "A few days after the incident at Tampico an orderly from the *U S S Minnesota* was arrested at Vera Cruz while ashore in uniform to obtain the ship's mail and was for a time thrown into jail "

The President therefore asked the approval of Congress, "to use the armed forces of the United States," to secure redress [3]

That President Wilson was not unwilling to use this incident to hasten the ousting of Huerta, who had not yielded to the policy of "watchful waiting" as quickly as President Wilson hoped, would appear from Admiral Fletcher's dispatch to the Secretary of the Navy *four days previous* to the President s message to Congress

About 10 A M on April 11, while in the postoffice at Vera Cruz, a mail orderly from the *Minnesota* got into a discussion with a Mexican mail orderly of the 18th battalion They could not understand each other and the policeman, in order to avoid a possible disturbance, directed them both to come with him to the station The police judge, upon hearing the statement of the police officer, at once told our

[1] For Rel , 1914 p 488–464 [2] *Idem* p 812 00/11507a
[3] House Document No 910 63rd Cong 2nd Session

mail orderly he was not at fault and would not be detained The Mexican mail orderly was found at fault by the judge and was detained and turned over to the military authorities and was given proper punishment *The attitude of the Mexican authorities was correct, there is no cause for complaint against them and the incident is without significance* [1]

Late on the very night that the President had delivered his message to Congress the State Department was notified that the Hamburg-American Line steamer *Ypiranga* was due to arrive at Vera Cruz the following day with two hundred machine-guns and fifteen million cartridges, and that thirty cars were ready to transport these munitions inland [2]

At two-thirty in the morning Mr Bryan roused Mr Tumulty, the President's secretary, from sleep They communicated with Secretary Daniels, and likewise awakened the President at the White House Bryan informed the President of the arrival of the munitions ship Mr Bryan and Mr Daniels, on being asked their opinion by President Wilson, agreed that "immediate action should be taken to prevent the German ship from landing its cargo" Without a moment's delay, the President said

"Daniels, send this message to Admiral Mayo 'Take Vera Cruz at once'" [3]

In seizing Vera Cruz some two hundred Mexicans, chiefly young cadets in the naval school, and twenty-one American sailors and marines, were killed Wrote Mrs O'Shaughnessy at that time

> We are at war American and Mexican blood flowed in the streets of Vera Cruz today * * * We have certainly trampled on the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo after 1848, providing that all disputes should be submitted first for arbitration So sing me no songs of treaty rights! [4]

The attack on Huerta by the armed forces of the United States clearly sealed General Huerta's doom and the triumph of the "Constitutionalist" cause Yet the next day Carranza telegraphed the State Department an emphatic protest against "the invasion of our territory," as 'violating the rights that constitute our existence as a free and independent sovereign entity" [5]

Meanwhile Huerta had handed Chargé O'Shaughnessy his passports, severing all diplomatic relations [6] All Mexican factions, however hostile to each other, were opposed to the landing of American forces on Mexican soil

[1] For Rel, 1914 812 00/11532 (Italics not in original)
[2] Consul Canada to the secretary of state April 20 9 P M For Rel, 1914 812 00/11547, 11564
[3] Tumulty, Woodrow Wilson As I Knew Him, p 151–2
[4] O'Shaughnessy, *op cit* p 288–290
[5] Labor Internacional de la Revolución Constitucionalista, p 101 (Telegram from Ciudad Juárez)
[6] For Rel, 1914 123084/122

In this situation President Wilson invited the diplomatic representatives of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, who on April 25 officially tendered their good offices to effect if possible a settlement of the difficulties between the United States and Mexico The United States accepted Huerta accepted The Constitutionalists accepted only on condition that no issues would be taken up but the differences between the United States and Huerta

The Latin-American mediators proposed that a provisional president be selected by Huerta's turning over his government to the secretary of foreign relations, who would name a cabinet composed of one Huertist, one Constitutionalist, and two neutrals [1]

President Wilson, however, contended that it would be futile to set up a provisional authority which would be neutral "It must, to be successful," he contended, "be actually, avowedly, and sincerely in favor of the necessary agrarian and political reforms, and * * * be pledged to their immediate formulation * * *" [2] The Constitutionalists alone, he further insisted, could be considered as the successors to the Government of Mexico [3]

Nevertheless, Carranza declined the mediators' request for a suspension of hostilities between the Constitutionalists and Huerta forces, denied the mediators' right to deal with it on the ground that it was purely an internal affair of Mexico's, and so likewise categorized the establishment of a new provisional government and the discussion of the land question in Mexico Only matters affecting the international relations of Mexico were in his view in the sphere of mediation and he declined to send representatives on any other basis

The United States reaffirmed that it was only seeking to assist in the "pacification of Mexico" [4]

But the Huerta commissioners had contended that the end and aim of the United States policy was "the unconditional and absolute triumph of the Revolution," and in pursuing this policy was taking "upon itself the direction of Mexico's internal affairs * * * and assuming [assumes] the responsibility for the new order of things, which it was establishing [establishes]" They pointed out that "by insisting that Carranza and his followers shall form a provisional government, the Washington government" was forcing Carranza's election [5]

While working for the success of the Constitutionalists, the American Commission attempted vainly to win their assent to the mediation On June 16, after a four-hour talk, "these had stated * * * that the mediators ought to stop attempting to settle internal affairs of Mexico" [6]

Although the American Commission urged that mediation "would give

[1] For Rel, 1914 812.00/2,3445 [2] *Idem* [3] *Idem*
[4] Letter of Justice Lamar, American Commissioner to Emilio Rabasa, Huerta commissioner, June 15, 1914 In For Rel 1914 812.00/12288
[5] Memorandum June 11 For Rel 1914 812.00/12263½
[6] The U S commissioners to the secretary of state

them now all they could hold at the end of a bloody war and was in effect a present surrender to the Constitutionalists by Huerta,"[1] the Constitutionalists' representatives were adamant In the words of the United States commissioners

> They insisted that they might be willing to take up the question of surrender with someone outside the mediation with which the United States had nothing to do, but that so far as mediation was concerned they would absolutely decline to receive anything from the mediators or through the mediation, that they would not accept as a gift anything which the mediators could give them, even though it was what they were otherwise seeking, that they would not take it "on a silver platter" They declined to discuss names or propose names for provisional president, saying that no one would be satisfactory that was appointed by the mediators, even if it was Carranza himself, because anything that came from the mediators would not be accepted by their party or by the Mexican people
>
> Their manner was courteous, expressing regret that they should decline what was [offered] in mistaken kindness, but their statement was so explicit, their objection so positive, their spirit so defiant, that we asked them if we were to understand that they were expressing their own views or the views of Carranza To this they emphatically replied that they were absolutely instructed by Carranza to deliver this as his final answer We inquired again if they meant this to be accepted as final and to be reported to Washington, they said they did, and that under no consideration would Carranza accept the result of mediation, no matter how far it might be in his favor[2]

Nothing could more clearly reveal the determination of the Constitutionalists to obtain for Mexico an absolute autonomy

The mediators' and the United States' plan for Mexico differed in that the former desired the new provisional president of Mexico to be selected from the "neutral" element, that is, neither Huertist nor Constitutionalist, while the United States' plan insisted that the Provisional President must be selected from the Constitutionalists, and be pledged promptly to formulate agrarian and electoral reform[3]

The mediation offered Huerta an opportunity to retire gracefully The Mexican congress, which had been reintegrated according to Huerta's wishes, accepted the appointment of Francisco Carbajal, chief justice of the supreme court, an able and honorable person, who had kept somewhat out of the civil conflict On July 15, 1914, he succeeded Huerta, who resigned and sailed for Spain, accompanied by a number of his generals, who had been conspicuous in their treason against Madero, and feared the reprisals of the Constitutionalists The United States had again been the decisive factor in a change of government

Meanwhile Carranza and Villa had split President Wilson tried in vain to secure a cessation of hostilities between them The country was sinking

[1] The U S commissioners to the secretary of state [2] *Idem*
[3] For Rel, 1914 812.00/12313

into chaos Marauders made life unsafe, property was to be had by the stronger for the taking It was President Wilson's wish, now that Huerta had been driven out, that all remaining factions unite and settle their differences amicably

"Not only the United States, but all the world," wrote Secretary Bryan on July 23 to Carranza, "will watch with the greatest interest and concern the course now to be pursued by the leaders of the Constitutionalist cause in effecting a transfer of power at Mexico City * * *"

He ventured, "because of our earnest sympathy with the main purposes of the Constitutionalists and our desire to be of permanent service to them in bringing Mexico out of her trouble," to sound a warning that the future policy of the Constitutionalists would determine whether the United States would recognize the coming government [1]

Five weeks later a tone of impatience crept into the secretary of state's messages in the face of Carranza's refusal to budge, and various outrages inflicted on Americans throughout Mexico

> Excesses of any kind, even towards their own people, and especially extreme measures against political opponents or representatives of the church, if such things should occur in connection with their assumption of power at Mexico City, might make it morally impossible for the United States to recognize the new government If we did not recognize, it could obtain no loans and must speedily break down [2]

Nevertheless, the Constitutionalists proceeded on their own schedule On August 13, Acting President Carbajal resigned and left the country, and the Constitutionalists marched in On August 22 Carranza announced that he had taken charge of the executive power of the Mexican Republic, in accordance with the Plan of Guadalupe [3] He promptly requested the withdrawal of the United States occupation from Vera Cruz, which took place November 23 He followed to that port in less than a week, for Zapata had refused to recognize him, and combined with Villa had driven the Carranzistas from the capital Nevertheless, Carranza expected the diplomatic corps to follow him, paradoxically insisting on the recognition due a government in full control of the country [4]

The various factions now began in the regions under their respective controls to initiate their revolutionary program General Cándido Aguilar, son-in-law of Carranza, at this period governor and military commander of the State of Vera Cruz, issued various decrees in which he declared null and void all acts of the Huerta authorities This was interpreted by the oil producers as canceling leases, concessions, et cetera, secured during the Huerta régime Although Woodrow Wilson had himself served notice that

[1] For Rel, 1914 812 00/14052a.
[2] (Bryan to Vice-Consul Silliman — for transmission to Carranza) For Rel, 1914 812 00/12846
[3] *Idem*, 812 00/13007 [4] For Rel, 1915 812 00/143456

all concessions granted by Huerta would not be recognized by the United States, Secretary Lansing, on November 3, demanded that the provisions of General Aguilar's decrees "should not be applied to American citizens, who acquired titular interest * * * during the Huerta régime" [1]

On March 6 Secretary Bryan telegraphed both Carranza and Obregón through the Brazilian minister, who had been officially in charge of American interests in Mexico since the rupture of diplomatic relations with Huerta, that "conditions have become intolerable and can no longer be endured" [2]

Carranza answered three days later, insisting on his good intentions,[3] and on March 11 President Wilson replied

> If our messages are occasionally couched in terms of strong emphasis it is only because they concern some matter which touches the very safety of Mexico itself, and the whole possible course of her future history * * *[4]

The same day Secretary Bryan telegraphed Special Agent Silliman that "the various representatives bring the troubles of their nationals to us, and we have been anxious to do all we can to help them, but if our efforts provoke protests from Carranza, it is better to have the effort made through local representatives of other nations" [5]

Thus Carranza completely established his point that he would not and need not accept the representation of the United States in behalf of other nationals

The chaos in Mexico, however, became intensified Mexicans, Americans, and other nationals continued to suffer death, violence, and loss of property Reports of outrages — sometimes true, sometimes grossly exaggerated, sometimes fabricated — spread throughout the United States and inflamed public sentiment An increasing proportion of the press called for intervention The Hearst papers demanded "planting the American flag all the way to the Panama Canal" [6]

[1] *Idem* 812.6363/143
[2] *Idem*, 812.00/14501
[3] *Idem*, 812.00/14550
[4] *Idem*, 812.00/14573
[5] *Idem*, 812.00/14552

[6] Yet figures compiled subsequently by the State Department showed that in that year, 1915, more Mexicans had been killed in the United States than Americans in Mexico in that year and the two years preceding

	Americans Killed on Mexican Soil	Mexicans Killed on U. S. Soil
1910	10	Not listed
1911	22	Not listed
1912	15	Not listed
1913	Not listed by separate years	2
1914	76	Not listed
1915		87

In addition 20 U. S. civilians and 16 soldiers were reported killed in the United States in 1913–15, incident to border troubles Report of Secretary of State Lansing to the President For. Rel., 1916, p. 472–80

On June 2 President Wilson issued a statement that

> For more than two years revolutionary conditions have existed in Mexico * * * but the leaders of the revolution in the very hour of their success have disagreed and turned their arms against each other All professing the same objects, they are nevertheless unable or unwilling to cooperate * * * Mexico is apparently no nearer a solution of her tragical troubles than * * * when the revolution was first kindled

President Wilson therefore "publicly and very solemnly" called upon "the leaders of factions in Mexico * * * to act promptly for the relief and redemption of their prostrate country," warning them that if they did not "accommodate their differences * * * within a very short time," he would "be constrained to decide what means should be employed by the United States in order to help Mexico save herself * * *" [1]

On June 18, however, Secretary Lansing wired that it was within the possibilities that the United States might recognize Carranza,[2] but suggesting that if he did not go "the full length of conciliation and conference with all the principal factions" he would not be recognized Carranza replied that he did not want recognition conditioned on conciliation, and declined to make any overtures or listen to any proposals from the Villa and Zapata groups [3]

"The intransigent and cutting way in which Carranza received the two Peace Commissions sent to him [by the Zapata and Villa followings] throws upon him and upon the United States the responsibility of the consequences which will eventually arise from the prolongation of hostilities," wrote Lefaivre, the French minister in Mexico, on July 4 [4]

Secretary Lansing replied that

> in view of this inflexible attitude of General Carranza, a situation of the gravest nature is forced upon this government, prompted as it is by feelings of deep friendship for the Mexican people This government has used its best offices to bring about a peaceful solution of difficulties afflicting the Mexican people, but its efforts have not always been met with the spirit of cooperation by the Mexicans themselves whom it is desired to serve [5]

Meanwhile (June 30) Carranza had enunciated in a message to the United States his doctrine of the rights of Americans and other foreigners in Mexico

> * * * Every foreigner who leaves his own country to settle in another and create interests there, *ipso facto* accepts both the good and the bad fortune of the country in which he is settled [6]

[1] For Rel , 1915 812 00/15122b
[2] *Idem*, 812 00/15261a (Lansing to Silliman)
[3] *Idem*, 812 00/15288 (Silliman to Lansing)
[4] *Idem*, 812 00/15381
[5] *Idem*
[6] *Idem* 812 00/15873

In this dilemma President Wilson again called a conference of the ambassadors of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, and this time, also, the ministers of Bolivia, Uruguay, and Guatemala, to confer "as to when it would be opportune to recognize in Mexico, and in what form moral support should be given to, some party there in order to establish it" [1]

After consulting with their governments, they accepted Within the next three weeks, control of Mexico City passed from one revolutionist group to another five times On August 13 the State Department sent separate messages to a great number of revolutionists prominent in either military or civilian ranks, offering, jointly with the six representatives of Latin-American nations, to mediate the differences between the revolutionary factions [2] The offer found acceptance outside the Constitutionalist ranks, but not within them Replying to the "Pan-American" note, General Carranza on September 10 wrote that as "first chief of the Constitutionalist Army in charge of the executive power of the republic," he could not "consent to a discussion of the domestic affairs of the republic by mediation, or on the initiative of any foreign government whatever * * *" [3]

He was willing to discuss his recognition and that alone Carranza was supported in this position by his generals and governors, twenty of whom, upon receiving the Pan-American note, declined to reply, and merely referred the matter to him [4]

The Pan-American Conference met with little to discuss Secretary Lansing's position in this conference was to urge the joint recognition of Carranza as the best solution

What President Wilson's attitude on recognition was at this time [5] may be found in the report of a conversation with him by his foremost confidant of that time, Col E M House

> We discussed Mexico * * * we agreed that if Carranza was to be recognized he must first guarantee religious freedom, give amnesty for political offenses, institute the land reforms which had been promised, give protection to foreigners, and recognize their just claims [6]

Carranza, however, would guarantee nothing, and on October 11 the Pan-American delegates found his party the only one "possessing the essentials for recognition as the de facto government of Mexico" [7] On October 19 the United States extended recognition to Carranza On the same day President Wilson by proclamation restored the embargo on arms to Mexico,

[1] Cable from Minister Joaquín Méndez to Pres Cabrera of Guatemala, July 7, 1915 For Rel, 1915 812.00/15451
[2] For Rel, 1915 812.00/15788a
[3] *Idem*, 812.00/16088
[4] A list of these is to be found in For Rel, 1915, p 753
[5] Sept 23, 1915
[6] Intimate Papers of Colonel House Ed by Chas Seymour, vol I, p 221–2
[7] For Rel, 1915 812.00/16509b

thus firmly establishing Carranza in the executive chair against his enemies [1] For the embargo did not apply to him [2]

President's Wilson partiality for Carranza was the more striking in that less than a month previously, on September 23, troops under the command of a Carranza officer had crossed the Río Grande, attacked a small detachment of American soldiers, killing two of them [3]

Despite a sharp note from Acting Secretary of State Polk, no action was taken by Carranza, raids from the Mexican side of the border continued without let, some participated in by Carranzista soldiers,[4] and on October 21 General Funston telegraphed that it was becoming increasingly evident that no help from Carranza could be expected [5]

A week later Governor Ferguson of Texas wired the President that the border troubles were becoming more serious and that an apparently well organized band was making unexpected raids into Texas to rob, murder, and terrorize, then to return quickly to safety across the border [6]

On January 6, 1916, Senator Fall of New Mexico introduced a resolution for an investigation of Mexican affairs, the tenor of which was indicated by its first request that the President inform the Senate if there was a government in the republic of Mexico [7]

On January 10 Villistas held up a train near Santa Ysabel, in which American mining engineers were returning from Chihuahua to reopen a mine at Cusihuiriachic Sixteen of them were lined up and murdered in cold blood Only one escaped to tell the tale [8]

In response to the Fall resolution, President Wilson submitted a month later, with his approval, Secretary Lansing's report favorable to the de facto government It was "affording * * * reasonably adequate protection to the lives and property of American citizens" [9]

On March 9 Villa attacked Columbus, New Mexico, with some 400 men, killing sixteen citizens and partly burning the town [10]

The next day President Wilson ordered an armed force into Mexico to capture Villa and prevent further raids by his band, the expedition to be conducted "with scrupulous regard to the sovereignty of Mexico" [11]

Throughout the United States, which had been swept with horror at the savagery of the "Santa Ysabel massacre" and the Columbus raid, the news was greeted with widespread satisfaction The order, "Get Villa alive or dead!" reechoed from coast to coast It was expected, in view of the friendship President Wilson had consistently shown for the Carranza Government, it would cooperate in Villa's pursuit

[1] For Rel., 1915, No 1315
[2] *Idem*, 812.113/3812b
[3] *Idem* 812.00/16329
[4] *Idem*, 812.00/16001
[5] *Idem* 812.00/16545
[6] *Idem*, 812.00/16666
[7] For Rel., 1916 812.00/17062
[8] *Idem*, p 650–660
[9] Senate Document No 324, 64th Cong., 1st Session
[10] For Rel., 1916 812.00/17455
[11] McCain to Funston For Rel., 1916 812.00/17398

But from the first, resentment by the Carranza authorities at the American expedition, which they claimed was unnecessary, was indicated [1]

Carranza's reply, to Secretary Lansing's message that the incident had created the "most serious situation" [2] which had confronted the American Government, was highly characteristic The first chief was "pained to hear of the lamentable occurrence at Columbus * * * on the occasion of the attack * * * by bandits led by Francisco Villa "

"The deplorable incident above mentioned," he continued, "bears some resemblance to the raids into Sonora and Chihuahua by Indians of the reservations of the United States,' and he then rehearsed some of the horrors perpetrated on the Mexican side of the border in the eighties He recalled an agreement existing at that time between the two governments providing for reciprocal pursuit of bandits into the territory of the other country, and requested such an arrangement be now entered into, "if the raid effected at Columbus should unfortunately *be repeated* at any other point on the border " [3]

The next day, March 11, Carranza indicated that he would object to the crossing of American forces, and on March 12 issued a proclamation that the Constitutionalist Government would not admit "under any circumstances * * * that the territory of Mexico be invaded for an instant, and the dignity of the republic outraged "

In a rapid exchange of notes the United States insisted on the need of pursuit, its promise to retire with the capture or death of Villa, and cited Carranza's proposal of reciprocal pursuit in justification Carranza maintained that his proposal applied to all future raids

From the first the de facto government lent no assistance to Pershing, denied him the use of railways for transporting supplies, forbade the occupation of towns, and made no effort of its own to capture Villa Yet while pleading with Carranza for cooperation, President Wilson was subjecting the American forces to the arbitrary restrictions imposed by Carranza, which in Pershing s words revealed the "deliberate and premeditated intention on the part of Carranza forces from the first to prevent the success of the expedition " [4]

On April 12 the de facto government requested Pershing's withdrawal [5]

While the hostility of the Carranzistas was becoming daily more marked, early in May another raid across the border took place at Glen Springs, Texas, in which a nine-year-old American boy was among the victims of a raiding party of seventy-five Mexicans [6] The next night the same gang of bandits raided the town of Boquillas, Texas

On May 22 Secretary of Foreign Relations Aguilar sent to the American

[1] Collector Cobb, El Paso to Lansing For Rel, 1916 812 00/17408
[2] For Rel 1916 812 00/17382
[3] *Idem*, 812 00/17415 (italics not in original)
[4] *Idem*, 812 00/18067
[5] *Idem*, 812 00/17865
[6] *Idem*, 812 00/18073

secretary of state a note that for sharpness and bitterness probably surpassed anything in the previous history of Mexican-American relations It charged the American government with bad faith and demanded the immediate withdrawal of the "punitive expedition" [1]

The message was described in Mexico City by foreign opinion as "inaccurate, indecorous, and inopportune", by radical opinion as "inexact, improper, and impudent" [2] It is difficult for an unbiased observer not to agree with these characterizations If Woodrow Wilson had taken this opportunity to sever diplomatic relations and to include both the Carranza and Villa contingents in a "punitive expedition" for the redress of American wrongs, he would have had a sternly united and determined nation behind him For the wrongs which the Pershing expedition was seeking to right were not only genuine, they were the deepest and gravest wrongs which one nation can inflict upon another — the wanton invasion of its territory and the murder of innocent people Granting that the de facto government was not responsible for the action of bandit bands, its attitude after the event was one of condonation and supineness

Compared with the Columbus affair and others to come, the incident at Tampico, which had caused the bombardment and seizure of Vera Cruz, was the merest pin prick, if indeed, in view of its commission by a subordinate and the prompt apology, it was a real offense at all It may be said that President Wilson had in a large measure invited the rebuffs of Carranza The Constitutionalist point of view at that time and to-day would be that the Mexicans unitedly resented the American invasion, and that the Mexican Government in opposing the expeditionary forces was merely expressing the popular will That is largely true It was true in the case of the seizure of Vera Cruz, which the Mexicans regard as a wholly wanton killing of many inoffensive Vera Crucians In the case of the Villa pursuit a correct appreciation of values by Carranza would have led him to see that the Pershing expedition was a belated reaction to unmitigated wrongs which the Carranza Government had been unwilling or unable by itself to prevent or punish

The Pershing expedition passed through almost empty territory With a proper explanation by the Carranza Government, Wilson's sincerity of purpose could have been made clear to the Mexicans beyond doubt With Carranza's cooperation, Villa could have been captured in a week The whole episode is illuminating, however, of Mexico's sensitiveness in its asseveration of national dignity — however perversely it may seem to have been conceived in this instance

It is also not unlikely that Carranza never trusted Wilson's declared purposes Past relations with the United States, the American armed occupation of Haiti in 1915 and of Santo Domingo in 1916, in sharp contradiction of President Wilson's professed Latin-American policy, may have gone far

[1] For Rel, 1916 812 00/18450 [2] *Idem*, 812 00/81203

to intensify Carranza's suspiciousness The declarations of a section of the American press and of various public officials that Mexico should be annexed, or expressions equivalent thereto, further deepened the apprehension of many Mexicans [1]

President Wilson's lengthy reply to Secretary Aguilar, refusing to withdraw the expeditionary force until its purpose had been accomplished, was a model of self-restraint, calmness, and logic It will stand as a shining example of power and strength held in check despite almost intolerable grievances [2]

Almost simultaneously came from Mazatlán word of the unprovoked attack on a boat from the *U S S Annapolis* which had approached shore to inform the vice-consul that the *U S S Annapolis* would take aboard Americans who desired to leave On reaching the wharf the officers were invited to land, and then arrested by the Mexican authorities Seeing what had happened, those in the boat pushed off They were fired on by Mexican soldiers, one seaman being killed The seamen returned the fire, wounding three Only after the most arduous protests were the American officers released Commander Kavanaugh of the *U S S Annapolis* showed fine self-restraint in withholding fire from the ship's battery, for his firing would undoubtedly have resulted in the death of non-combatants In the opinion of Admiral Winslow, then commanding in Pacific waters, "the outrage [was] a far more serious affront than the Tampico affair" [3]

On June 17, three days before the Wilson-Lansing reply to Aguilar, General Pershing was notified by the Constitutionalist general-in-chief, Jacinto Treviño, that he would prevent by force of arms any further invasion of his country, and was ordered to move neither south, east, nor west, under penalty of being attacked Pershing replied that his Government had placed no such restrictions on his movements, that he should continue to use his judgment in what direction he should move in the pursuit of bandits, and that under those circumstances the Mexican forces would have to abide by the consequences of any attack they made on him [4]

On June 21 an American troop moving eastward near Carrizal was ambushed by Mexican troops Some on both sides were killed, and a number of Americans made prisoners The de facto government explained the next day that this was due to the Americans' disobedience of General Treviño's orders [5]

[1] The Congressional Record from 1913–1920 contains many such declarations made both in the Senate and House of Representatives

[2] For Rel , 1916 812 00/18450 Space is lacking to reprint this 5000 word note, but no student of Mexican-American relations can overlook its importance as an historical document It is signed by Lansing

[3] For Rel 1916 812 00/81666

[4] *Idem*, 812 00/18544

[5] Arredondo to the Secretary of State For Rel , 1916 812 00/18574

On June 26 a launch from the *U S S Marietta* was fired on without warning by Carranza's soldiers at Tampico [1]

Conferences held meanwhile between Generals Hugh L Scott and Obregón, looking toward a peaceable settlement of the international difficulties, were fruitless Late in July President Wilson invited the de facto government to send three commissioners to the United States to discuss the international problems In consequence Señores Luis Cabrera, Ignacio Bonillas, and Alberto J Pani met with Franklin D Lane, Judge George Gray, and John R Mott in New London early in September An impasse was overcome with the greatest difficulty because the Mexicans were under orders to treat of nothing until the withdrawal of American troops had been determined That the troops would be withdrawn was the upshot of the conference The Mexican commissioners' claim that Villa, while not captured or killed, was powerless, was sharply contradicted by Villa's emergence in a successful raid on Chihuahua, September 17

Wilson's policy to date, however well-intentioned, had been far from successful Relations were deeply strained, rancor, hatred, and complete misunderstanding were widespread in both countries The Columbus massacre was unpunished and the Villa menace apparently as great as ever

Americans continued to be killed by the vengeful Villistas, at times for no other reason than that they were "Gringos" [2] Mexicans likewise were killed in Texas chiefly because they were "greasers" [3]

Of the Mexican grievances a responsible American journalist, George Marvin, writing in "The World's Work," declared

> The killing of Mexicans * * * through the borderland in these last four years is almost incredible * * * Some * * * rangers have degenerated into common man-killers There is no penalty for killing, for no jury along the border would ever convict a white man for shooting a Mexican Their ranks are swelled by so-called deputy sheriffs Some of these men are responsible citizens, but others are unstrung gunmen * * * General Carranza still wants to know if we have done anything about bringing to trial the executioners of 114 Mexicans believed to have been innocently killed on our side of the line But there are a great many more than 114 Mexicans, good and bad, lying dead, and some of them unburied, north of the line Reading over the Secret Service records makes you feel almost as though there were an open game season on Mexicans along the border [4]

Nevertheless, there was now no alternative for the United States Government other than the withdrawal of Pershing, short of war on the entire Mexican people He had — through no fault of his — failed in his objec-

[1] For Rel, 1916 812 00/18643

[2] *Idem*, 312 11/8259

[3] In his presidential message of 1919, Carranza lists four Mexican deaths among seventeen cases of various kinds of violence against Mexicans by citizens of the United States, occurring in the previous year

[4] Quoted in Inman, Intervention in Mexico, p 150–1

tive and his presence was steadily increasing irritation and making possible incidents which could give rise to international conflict

On January 8, 1917, Consul-General Hanna telegraphed from San Antonio his opinion "The withdrawal of American troops from Chihuahua would produce satisfactory results and place the responsibility for restoring order in Mexico on the de facto government where it belongs" [1]

Pershing's force withdrew from Mexico on February 5, 1917

It is significant that with this withdrawal the de facto government's pursuit of Villa began in earnest On March 8 British Vice-Consul O'Hea reported, "it is evident government troops are trying to capture * * * Villa, and that the Government's overwhelming forces certainly will be able to eliminate, if not annihilate rebel forces," [2] and on the same date United States Consul Blocker telegraphed, "Pursuit of Villa seems well organized and dissolution of his band probable" [3]

Although Villa was not captured, nor punished in any court of law, he ceased from that day to be an international menace That the de la Huerta Government was obliged subsequently to *purchase* his quiescence is scarcely a creditable chapter in Mexican history Ultimately assassination removed this bandit, who at one time was looked on by President Wilson as the man who might lead Mexico into peace and happiness

On March 12, 1917, Carranza was inaugurated as president, Henry P Fletcher became the United States ambassador in Mexico, while Ignacio Bonillas represented Mexico in Washington

At this time the United States was entering into the World War, and President Wilson's attention was drawn elsewhere At the close of the conflict he was absorbed in securing the entry of the United States in the League of Nations until stricken by the illness under the shadow of which he concluded his second term in office The spring of 1917, therefore, furnishes the logical point from which to estimate the meaning and ultimate effects of Wilson's Mexican policy

It is probable that no President ever resisted greater pressure for permanent intervention The cumulative outrages by Villa and the stubbornly hostile attitude of Carranza had stimulated a widespread interventionist sentiment in the United States, which was actively promoted by certain oil interests, whose chief spokesman in American public life was Senator Albert B Fall Some of Wilson's staunchest supporters gradually fell from him on his Mexican policy Ambassador Page was convinced that the United States would have to "Cuba-ize" Mexico Former President Roosevelt summarized the Wilson policy as "an unbroken course of more or less furtive meddling in the internal affairs of Mexico * * * and * * * the plunging of this country into what was really a futile and inglorious little war * * * [which] resulted in the sacrifice of a score of American lives and

[1] For Rel, 1917 812 00/20229 [2] *Idem*, 812 00/20619 [3] *Idem*

102 Mexican lives * * * served no good object * * * achieved nothing and [was] abandoned by Mr Wilson without obtaining the object because of which it was nominally entered into "[1]

The tragedy of the Wilson policy was that it was not appreciated by the Mexicans it aimed to help But while Carranza was obstinate, cantankerous, unobliging, and never reciprocated in the slightest the invaluable services that Woodrow Wilson rendered him — without which Carranza might not have triumphed — no one could have made plainer that he wanted no interference even in his own behalf He carried that policy to the point not only of contempt for legitimate American grievances, but of wanton disregard for the revolutionary cause and an afflicted Mexican people, in behalf of which Woodrow Wilson's support and ready sympathy might have been utilized to far-reaching advantage

Condemnation of Carranza's foreign policy is not confined to foreigners One finds it in the words of General Calles, long one of Carranza's chief supporters

> One of the greatest infamies committed by Carranza is his famous international policy with which he has been systematically deceiving the Mexican people to such a degree that I myself was one of the deceived, since I came to believe that that policy, despite certain exaggerations, was based on a sincere and patriotic nationalism, and that is entirely false The only thing that Carranza has done is to excite and exploit, for his own benefit, the patriotism of the Mexicans * * * to use this force in his ruinous and selfish purpose of maintaining himself in power at all costs without regard of the international perils to which he was exposing the nation[2]

It is true that General Calles's strictures were pronounced in the passion of revolt against Carranza But the very obduracy which provoked that revolt, Carranza exhibited in his relations with the United States He was blind to the axiom that insistence on rights is predicated on the fulfilment of corresponding obligations and responsibilities

And yet, despite its exaggerations, Carranza's foreign policy in the main represents the aspirations of the Mexican people He resented all intrusion in Mexican affairs — even when he was its beneficiary His record is clear on that point His instantaneous protest against the occupation of Vera Cruz, although the success of his own movement was still dubious, his rejection of mediation by the A B C powers on Mexico's internal affairs, although he chiefly would have profited by that mediation, his refusal to accept recognition on any conditions — and then obtaining it without conditions — are but a few high spots in a policy that was consistent, courageous, and in principle patriotic

Carranza's refusal to join the League of Nations "since its organization does not allow an absolute equality between all nations and all races," and

[1] Roosevelt, Fear God and Take Your Own Part, p 231-2
[2] Interview given in Agua Prieta, April 24, 1920 Rep in Sonora y Carranza, p 306-9

his non-recognition of the Monroe Doctrine "since it establishes without their wish * * * a forcible tutelage over all the peoples of America,"[1] embody doctrines highly significant to the future of Pan-Americanism

If, like some Wilsonian doctrines, they fell short of realization, they express an aim which seems destined never to be wholly lost from view There was a curious resemblance in the characters of Woodrow Wilson and Venustiano Carranza There was an ironical analogy in their purposes in regard to Mexico Both were self-willed, both "single-track minded," and both undeviating in their courses, which were determined subjectively and with a disregard for external circumstances that clashed with their preconceptions These characteristics explain the relative failure of their respective objectives To attain his vision of a Mexico, untrammelled by interference from the outside, Woodrow Wilson interfered in Mexico constantly His aphorism of "a war to end war" found a parallel in his Mexican conduct of "meddling in order to end meddling" His larger purpose for Mexico was virtually identical with Carranza's But the egocentricity of both men defeated them, leaving an example and ideal of United States policy toward Mexico, and of Mexican policy toward the United States, still to be materialized

But certainly Carranza (and Wilson) laid the ideological bases for a Mexican foreign policy (and of a United States policy toward Mexico) which reacted sharply from the past — as the entire Mexican Revolution purported to Previous Mexican governments had danced to the strings pulled at Washington Carranza insisted that Mexico, whatever its weaknesses internally, had the full rights of a sovereign nation The policy could have been more nearly achieved with less intransigence, more tact, and, above all, with a greater regard for realities The policy would have been more effective but for the corruption and dishonesty of Carranza officials, many of whom used the Revolution as a cloak for thievery, and whose malefactions Carranza supported in his international as well as in his domestic dealings Finally, the policy could never have been carried out at all without Woodrow Wilson in the White House So in the end the paradox remains The complete independence of Mexico, so unflinchingly maintained by Carranza, was in the last analysis conditioned on circumstances outside Mexico's borders and beyond Mexican control

The Carranza presidency, and its relations with the United States, continued a struggle against intervention Backing up the Wilsonian policy were the Protestant churches, the American Federation of Labor, various chambers of commerce, a few Democratic and liberal newspapers and magazines Dr Samuel Guy Inman's book, "Intervention in Mexico," a plea for letting Mexico work out its own destiny, and Mr L J de Bekker's "The Plot Against Mexico," which aimed to expose certain oil interests'

[1] See Carranza's message to congress, 1919 (Informe * * * Leido, etc)

efforts to bring on intervention, helped guide public sentiment into less belligerent channels As it was, Mexico narrowly escaped permanent United States occupation Even President Wilson at one time was almost carried away

IV

The issues — from 1917 on over property rights which the American Government was increasingly to make its concern — had their origins in the new Mexican Constitution Washington voiced its objections even before that charter's promulgation

On January 9, 1917, Secretary Lansing telegraphed Mr Parker, "representing American interests in Mexico city," to "keep the Department telegraphically advised of any proposed or adopted changes in the Mexican constitution now under discussion by the Querétaro assembly which are or may be inimical to the rights and interests of Americans " [1]

On January 22 the secretary of state telegraphed his objections to Articles 27, 28 (which abolished monopolies and exemption from taxation), and 33 (which permits the Mexican executive to expel foreigners without trial) [2]

On July 3, 1917, Secretary Lansing requested Ambassador Fletcher to take up the averting or minimizing of a threatened oil workers' strike in Tampico,[3] following the request of Consul Claude I Dawson, who reported that the strike was due to the "joint refusal of employers to meet ridiculous wages and other demands " [4] The strike was declared, and the department telegraphed Ambassador Fletcher that the governor of the state (Tamaulipas) had imprisoned three labor leaders, but that the men were threatening a general strike unless the three leaders were released and that it was "important for the protection of foreign interests that the Mexican Government vigorously support" the governor [5]

Increases in taxation, tariff changes, export and import duties, the activities of organized labor, the agrarian program, and the Constitution of 1917, continued to be the subject of diplomatic protest Secretary Lansing finally broke with President Wilson and left the cabinet over the Mexican policy

The drive for intervention [6] — much of which was engineered through various nominal "associations" for the protection of "American rights," "religious liberty," et cetera — culminated in an investigation of Mexican affairs by a Senate subcommittee, headed by Senator Fall, designed to bring out American grievances The investigation was framed as an indictment

[1] For Rel, 1917 812 011/3a
[2] *Idem*, 812 011/11a
[3] *Idem*, 812 504/11a Lansing to Fletcher
[4] *Idem*, 812 504/114 Consul Dawson to the secretary of state
[5] *Idem*, 812 504/148 Polk to Fletcher
[6] It found eloquent and sincere expression in Is Mexico Worth Saving? by George Agnew Chamberlain, who had been U S Consul-General in Mexico City, published in 1920

and carried through as such, its testimony and findings being summed up in two ponderous tomes, totalling over 3500 pages [1]

The committee recommended that no Mexican Government be recognized unless it exempted Americans from certain provisions of Articles 3, 27, 33, and 130 of the Constitution of 1917 It further recommended that if the Mexican Government refused to accede to these conditions and had not after due warnings "restored order and peace * * * and effectively extended protection to our citizens * * * a police force consisting of the naval and military forces of our government" be sent into Mexico [2]

With the fall of Carranza in May, 1920, the tension lessened briefly Obregón had had considerable personal contact with Americans He projected a policy of friendliness without yielding national rights

The situation in the United States, however, was also to change The Republican platform [3] denounced the Democratic administration's "ineffective policy * * * of wordy, futile, written protests * * * [which] has earned for us the sneers and jeers of Mexican bandits and added insult upon insult against our national honor and dignity" The Republican party pledged itself to a "consistent, firm, and effective policy toward Mexico"

This policy, as interpreted by Charles E Hughes as secretary of state, was not to recognize Obregón unless he agreed to the terms laid down by the Harding administration

While not going as far as his fellow cabinet member Secretary Fall, Secretary Hughes insisted on the signing in advance of recognition, of a treaty guaranteeing American rights "against confiscation" [4] This the Obregón Government declined to do, on the ground that it was humiliating, unbefitting the relations of two sovereign nations, and violative of the Mexican Constitution

Public sentiment, however, began changing in the United States, with the obviously increasing stability of the Obregón administration and its expressed desire for amicable relations The divergence between the Carranza and Obregón followers, which had led to the change of government in Mexico, further revealed the new attitude and the cessation of needless pin pricking and anti-American incitements below the Rio Grande

The Hughes policy began to lose American public support Interventionist sentiment rapidly declined Yet with no official relations between the two countries, the possibility of some incident leading to conflict was ever present Counting on United States government backing, American oil companies in Mexico refused to abide by Mexican government decrees,

[1] Doc 285, Pursuant to Sen Res 106, 66th Cong, Directing the Committee on Foreign Relations to Investigate the Matter of Outrages on Citizens of the United States in Mexico
[2] *Idem*, p 62–67
[3] Adopted in Chicago, June 10, 1920
[4] Announcement by Department of State, June 7, 1921

refused to pay their taxes, and labor troubles in the oil fields precipitated the sending of United States warships

"Conflict with Mexico is inevitable," warned "The Nation" on July 20, 1921,

unless something can stay the hand of our imperialists at Washington * * * This crisis is far more serious than the public realizes, for the Hughes-Harding policy, if persisted in, will lead straight to intervention and bloodshed Indeed, the stage is * * * set At Tampico * * * the great American oil companies have shut down their works in protest against the export tax imposed by the Mexican government and demanded by our American domestic oil-producing interests Thousands of employees are thus turned out to starve, and the minute they were locked out came intimations that there was likely to be disorder and rioting[1]

Meanwhile another aspect of Mexican-American relations was brought home to Americans by the killing of Mexicans in Texas and Illinois

Friction between Mexican and American laborers led to the lynching on November 11, 1922, in Weslaco, Texas, of the Mexican, Elías Zárate, who had been locked up for taking part in a fist fight The Mexican consul at Hidalgo, Texas, had warned the authorities that the prisoner was in danger and asked for his protection, but Zárate was nevertheless removed by a mob and killed (To date[2] no one has been punished for this crime, and no redress made)

Meanwhile some three hundred Texans warned all Mexicans who had been living in Breckenridge, Texas, to leave Violence increased to such an extent that Secretary Hughes telegraphed Governor Neff of Texas to take adequate measures

"It was high time for the State Department to intervene," said "The New York Times" editorially[3] "Too long have protests of the Mexican government against outrages upon its nationals in the border states fallen upon deaf ears, or been pigeon-holed after perfunctory assurances that protection would be afforded in the future * * * The killing of Mexicans without provocation is so common as to pass almost unnoticed "

Wrote the New York "World," ironically, under the heading, "Backward Mexico"

The Mexican Government has protested to the State Department against the lynching of a Mexican in Texas * * * It was not so long ago that all sorts of Republican best minds were in a state of seething indignation because the Wilson Administration did not go to war with Mexico because of the Mexican Government's inability to furnish adequate protection to Americans on Mexican soil Now it is Mexico which is complaining because Mr Hughes fails to furnish adequate protection to Mexicans on American soil Meantime the policy of the United States has shifted

[1] Nation, vol 113, No 2924 [2] November, 1927 [3] November 18, 1922

The test of government is no longer its ability to safeguard life but to safeguard oil, and here again Mexico is weak and incompetent Our own Government may be a little uncertain in respect to human life, but its fidelity to oil is beyond question Whoever lays a desecrating hand on an oil derrick, or a desecrating tax for that matter, is ipso facto excluded from the comity of nations

If Mexico is still talking about old-fashioned things like the security of life, it goes to prove how incorrigibly backward is Mexico [1]

Not only in Texas did Mexicans lose their lives while their killers went unpunished In the Herrin, Illinois, massacre, the same year, two Latin-Americans, presumably Mexicans, were killed Two others who had set out from Chicago in search of work and were patronizing the Herrin station restaurant while the train stopped, were set upon by a mob armed with clubs and knives These victims were apparently not even strikebreakers In reply to representations of the Mexican consul in Chicago the governor of Illinois made an official acknowledgment that two Mexicans had been victims of the mob, and the Mexican Government made formal protest to the American Government But to date [2] the murderers — of Americans as well as foreigners [3] — in that bloody episode, have not been brought to justice

If these Mexican grievances were a surprise to Americans, they had long been familiar in Mexico, where the press had vividly detailed the sufferings of Mexicans in the United States Wrote the "Heraldo" of Mexico City

It is thoroughly irritating that while in our country American citizens enjoy ample guarantees and when anything happens to them, it is settled by United States consuls, in that country, on the other hand, Mexicans are still being killed without any effort by the American authorities to punish the murderers * * * Up to the present not a single person has been electrocuted for killing a Mexican, no matter how brutally or basely he might have perpetrated the crime [4]

In January, 1923, the Mexican Government refused to participate in the Fifth Pan-American Conference at Santiago, Chile, the following March Its refusal was based on the fact that the governing body of the Pan-American Union, under whose auspices the conference was being called, consisted of the diplomatic representatives of all the American republics accredited to the United States Mexico, having no accredited diplomatic representative in the United States, declined to send a substitute to the conference With Mexico not represented, and a violent heckling disturbance precipitated by the unexpected appearance of unofficial Dominican and Haitian representatives, the conference proved a failure in promoting understanding and cordiality between the Anglo-Saxon and Indo-Latin republics

[1] Nov 17, 1922 [2] November, 1927

[3] Subsequently the Mexican nationality of the Latin-Americans was disestablished by the U S Department of State (One was apparently a Cuban, the other, a Nicaraguan)

[4] May 15, 1922

Meanwhile pressure at home on the Harding administration to abandon its insistence on a treaty in advance of recognition was growing State legislatures passed resolutions The press became insistently more critical of the Hughes policy The New York "World" in a leading editorial referred to him as "Secretary of Oil" With the Presidential campaign looming, in which the Republicans' foreign policies would come under fire, conferences were initiated in Mexico City on May 14, 1923, with Charles Beecher Warren and John Barton Payne as American commissioners, and Ramón Ross and Fernando González Roa as Mexican commissioners The sessions lasted several months, in the course of which views were exchanged The tangible results of the conferences were two agreements — a special and a general claims convention to settle all losses or damage, suffered by Americans during the revolutionary years (Nov 20, 1910–May 31, 1920), and to adjust the claims of the citizens of each country against the other Recognition of the Obregón Government followed

V

On December 6, 1923, the de la Huerta rebellion broke out, directed against the Obregón Government and the Calles presidential candidacy

President Obregón sent Ramón Ross to Washington on a hurried trip as his special emissary to ask the United States Government to sell him ships and arms and to withhold them from his enemies The ships were badly needed as the complement of the few naval vessels which Mexico possessed, lying in Vera Cruz Harbor, had joined the de la Huertistas, endangering the customs, one of the Government's vital sources of revenue The request for ships was refused, but after some delay the Coolidge administration, having just recognized Obregón, agreed, somewhat grudgingly, to the sale of arms This aid proved decisive

President Calles took office December 1, 1924, and Mr James R Sheffield replaced Mr Charles Beecher Warren as the American ambassador Secretary Hughes had retired to private life Señor Manuel C Téllez, who had for several years served as Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, was promoted to the ambassadorship

Apparently the relations between the two countries had not been smoother since the opening of the Revolution, although it was generally understood that the problems relating to American interests in Mexico, which would be affected by coming enactments of constitutional provisions, were still not settled

On June 12, 1925, however, the two countries were astounded by a statement given to the press by Secretary of State Kellogg It was as follows

I have discussed Mexican affairs with Ambassador Sheffield at great length He has gone over the entire situation It will be remembered that we entered into

two claims conventions with Mexico under which joint claims commissions were appointed to adjust claims of American citizens for properties illegally taken by Mexico and for injuries to American citizens of their rights These commissions are now sitting and will, in due time, adjudicate these claims Conditions have improved and our Ambassador has succeeded in protecting American, as well as foreign, interests Our relations with the Government are friendly, but nevertheless conditions are not entirely satisfactory and we are looking to and expect the Mexican Government to restore properties illegally taken and to indemnify American citizens

A great deal of property of Americans has been taken under or in violation of the agrarian laws for which no compensation has been made and other properties practically ruined and, in one instance, taken by the Mexican Government on account of unreasonable demands of labor Mr Sheffield will have the full support of this Government and we will insist that adequate protection under the recognized rules of international law be afforded American citizens We believe it is the desire of the Mexican Government to carry out the conventions and to indemnify American citizens for property taken So long as we are satisfied that this is the policy of the Mexican Government and this course of action is being carried out with a determination to meet its international obligations, that Government will have the support of the United States I cannot go into the details of the many cases which Mr Sheffield has taken up with the Mexican Government, but they will be worked out as rapidly as possible

I have seen the statements published in the press that another revolutionary movement may be impending in Mexico I very much hope this is not true This Government's attitude toward Mexico and toward threatened revolutionary movements was clearly set forth in 1923, when there was such a movement threatening the constituted Government of that country, which had entered into solemn engagements with this Government and was making an effort to meet those obligations at home and abroad

The attitude taken by this Government at that time has since been maintained and it is now the policy of this Government to use its influence and its support in behalf of stability and orderly constitutional procedure, but it should be made clear that this Government will continue to support the Government in Mexico only so long as it protects American lives and American rights and complies with its international engagements and obligations

The Government of Mexico is now on trial before the world We have the greatest interest in the stability, prosperity and independence of Mexico We have been patient and realize, of course, that it takes time to bring about a stable Government, but we cannot countenance violation of her obligations and failure to protect American citizens

Even before the puzzled public in both countries could grasp the purport of this message, a rejoinder came from Mexico, in which after summing up Mr Kellogg's note, President Calles retorted

The best proof that Mexico is willing to comply with her international obligations and to protect the lives and interests of foreigners lies in the fact that although

not bound to do so, according to international law, she invited all nations, whose citizens might have suffered damages through * * * the political upheavals * * * to draw up conventions to establish joint commissions that might consider said damages in order to grant due indemnizations Besides that, another convention was entered into with the United States to adjust claims of citizens of both countries against the other and in these conventions are included all cases in which properties or rights might have been affected by the Mexican laws, therefore, so long as the aforesaid commissions have not adjusted the cases submitted to them, it is irrelevant to charge Mexico with failure to protect American interests in violation of her international obligations

The application of the agrarian laws cannot be a subject of complaint because Mexico has issued them in the exercise of her sovereignty, and apart from that, the State Department, in behalf of American citizens, has accepted the form of indemnization prescribed by the Mexican laws

To be regretted is the contradiction found in Mr Kellogg's declaration that the United States has the greatest interest in the maintenance of order in Mexico, and in the stability of her Government, at the same time that he states that he has seen news of revolutionary movements, since this last affirmation tends to cause alarm in the world in regard to conditions in my country, coupled with the statement that the Government of the United States will continue to support the Government of Mexico only so long as it protects American interests and lives, and complies with its international engagements and obligations This embodies a threat to the sovereignty of Mexico that she cannot overlook and rejects with all energy, because she does not accord to any foreign country the right to intervene in any form in her domestic affairs, nor is she disposed to subordinate her international relations to the exigencies of another country

The statement affirms also that the American Ambassador has succeeded in protecting American as well as foreign interests * * * and attention should be called to the fact that said Ambassador does not represent any other foreigners, but his own fellow citizens, and Mexico cannot admit that without her previous authorization the American Ambassador act in behalf of persons or interests alien to those of his country

If the Government of Mexico, as affirmed, is now on trial before the world, such is the case with the Government of the United States as well as those of other countries, but if it is to be understood that Mexico is on trial in the guise of a defendant, my Government energetically rejects such imputation * * *

To conclude, I declare that my Government, conscious of the obligations imposed by international law, is determined to comply with them, and, therefore, to extend due protection to the lives and interests of foreigners, that it only accepts and hopes to receive the help and support of all the other countries based on a sincere and loyal cooperation and according to the invariable practice of international friendship, but in no way shall it admit that a Government of any nation may pretend to create a privileged situation for its nationals in the country, nor accept any foreign interference contrary to the sovereignty of Mexico

The reaction of the American press was of historic import In overwhelming majority it took issue with its own administration Scarcely half

a dozen important papers raised their editorial voices in defence of Mr Kellogg Chief among these were the "Washington Post," the "New York Herald-Tribune," and the "Chicago Tribune "

"Sympathy seems to be with the Mexican President," was the opinion of the "St Louis Star " [1]

"A serious mistake," was the New York "Journal of Commerce's" view of Secretary Kellogg's note,[2] and "a very serious diplomatic blunder," that of the "Manufacturers' Record," of Baltimore [3]

The "Brooklyn Eagle" asserted that "the Mexican situation" would "never be settled unless we have secretaries of state who know their business " [4]

The New York "Evening World" maintained that "while big business may dictate domestic policies for the gouging of the millions without serious protest, the people have no intention of permitting big business to use the people's government as a club in international affairs " [5]

The "Daily Oklahoman" held that either "conditions in Mexico warranted another border occupation, if not invasion of Mexican territory," or else "the Secretary of State had [has] sent to Mexico the most insolent and ill-considered note that has emerged from any cabinet since the Austrian insult invoked the anger of Serbia and led straight to the center of Armageddon " [6]

The "Washington News" asserted "10,000 Pan-American tablets and a library of phrases cannot unmake the unfavorable impression created by one lone act which the Pan-American countries will construe as bullying " [7]

The "Arizona Daily Star" felt that the warning of Mr Kellogg looked "like another chapter in a book which might be entitled 'United States Diplomatic Blunders in Mexico '" [8]

The "Chicago Evening Post" viewed Mr Kellogg's broadcasting of rumors that the Calles Government was "threatened with overthrow" parallel to the action of a "bank circulating stories that another is on the verge of experiencing a disastrous run " [9]

The "Roanoke [Va] Times" averred that "a wise head and steady hand are needed in the State Department Secretary Kellogg has yet to prove he has either " [10]

The "Baltimore Sun" declared "every day in every way the diplomatic stupidity of Secretary Kellogg's recent public warning to Mexico becomes more apparent " [11]

No further public reply came from the State Department While there were definite issues between the two governments, and each could readily produce a number of grievances, relations were now strained by the Kellogg

[1] June 16, 1925
[2] *Idem*
[3] June 18
[4] *Idem*
[5] June 19
[6] June 26
[7] June 17
[8] June 16
[9] *Idem*
[10] July 2
[11] July 5

note issued on the advice of Ambassador Sheffield Mr Sheffield's actuation in Mexico City was unfortunate His early intentions were clearly of the best But he was soon lured by the siren social song of the American colony to disaster His intimates numbered some of the very men who twelve years before had formed the inner ring surrounding Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson The American Embassy which, incidentally, now stood upon ground donated by the petroleum magnate, Mr Edward L Doheny, in the figure of an American newspaper correspondent, "fairly oozed oil"

The counselor for the embassy for a time lived in the house of Mr Doheny's representative in Mexico and Mr Doheny's representative subsequently lived in the counselor's house While technically there was nothing incorrect whatever in this procedure, it gave an atmosphere to the embassy which precluded a meeting of minds with the Mexicans From an embassy thus involved, understanding of the tremendous problems which the Mexican Government and people were confronting, was next to impossible

As an ambassador either of good will, or as a protector of American interests, Mr Sheffield soon proved to be worse than negligible He wrote a great variety of notes and fretted impatiently when a swift and favorable answer was not forthcoming

An American manufacturer in Mexico who was threatened with a strike took his troubles to the ambassador

"I was much disappointed," the manufacturer told me subsequently "The ambassador pounded the table with his fist and declared that he would not tolerate such demands of labor for an instant I went away much encouraged But nothing ever happened The men struck and I had to give in to them"

The fact was that Mr Sheffield had little knowledge or wisdom in dealing with the Mexicans, and with the problems which confronted him He was unable to distinguish between matters which were clearly domestic and not for diplomatic interference and issues within his sphere

A part of the ambassador's failure was due to the atmosphere in which he found himself, represented not only in the American colony itself, but by some representatives there of the American press

"Never," an experienced correspondent, sent in the spring of 1927 to Mexico to secure some special articles, said to me, "in any capital of the world have I seen a body of newspaper correspondents who so uniformly hate the Government and the people of a country to which they are assigned" [1]

VI

The United States, however, had a good case, and legitimate grievances — though surely none that would warrant the slightest deviation from the

[1] Some of the correspondents to whom he referred at that time are no longer in Mexico

path of discussion through diplomatic channels Simplified, the case rests on the oft-repeated statement that the United States has no desire to interfere with Mexican legislation, that it is none of the United States' concern how far these laws limit the right of foreigners to acquire property or do business in Mexico, provided that these laws are not confiscatory of rights acquired prior to the promulgation of the Constitution of 1917 In other words, the protests are now against retroactivity

Now the right of a government to enact legislation that is frankly retroactive and confiscatory may be disputable The Mexican Government, in various notes, referred to the confiscatory character of such American legislation as the abolition of slavery after the Civil War, the Eighteenth Amendment, which wiped out overnight millions of dollars — some of it foreign — invested in breweries and distilleries, to the anti-Japanese land laws in California, and to other analogous cases It was emphasized that no foreign powers had ventured to protest to the United States in behalf of their nationals, and had one done so it would have availed nothing The validity of the American case rests, therefore, but lightly, if at all, on the illegality under international law of retroactive and confiscatory legislation It does rest, however, in my judgment, on the promises of the Mexican Government

In various official notes the Obregón administration repeatedly promised that

> all rights of property acquired prior to May 1, 1917 * * * will be respected and protected The famous Article 27, one of the clauses whereof declares the petroleum deposits of the subsoil to be the property of the nation, will not have retroactive effect * * *

The Pani-Summerlin note of May 24, 1922, cited six official iterations by President Obregón in these words and declared that they represented the government policy [1] And one of the American contentions, in reply, was that Obregón was merely an individual, and that the United States wanted that same declaration of policy by the Mexican Government irrespective of personalities [2]

The policy of not interpreting Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917 in a retroactive sense was again affirmed by the Mexican commissioners, González Roa and Ross, during the proceedings of the United States-Mexican Commission [3] They cited five consecutive decisions of the Mexican supreme court, the one relating to the Texas Company *amparo* case being the first, that the ownership of oil would go to the owner of the surface provided there had been prior to May 1, 1917, some "positive act" indicating that the land had been acquired with the view to exploiting its petroleum deposits "Pos-

[1] Correspondence between American Embassy and Mexican Foreign Office
[2] Summerlin to Pani, April 20 and August 3, 1922
[3] See minutes of May 18, 1923, Proceedings * * *, p 16

itive acts" included arrangements for drilling, an abnormally high price paid for the land, et cetera

The international controversy centered on the enactment into law (*reglamentación*) of the general constitutional provisions in regard to land and subsoil deposits This enabling legislation had not been put into effect either in Carranza's or Obregón's time The reason unofficially assigned in Mexican administrative circles for this delay was the pressure of the United States Clearly, with recognition withheld because of the possibilities inherent in such legislation, the renewal of diplomatic relations in August, 1923, followed within a few months by the de la Huerta rebellion, gave the Obregón administration no time to enact the far-reaching and complicated laws growing out of the constitution's general provisions It was not until President Calles had been in office six months, and had met pressing financial, military, and organizing problems, that he turned to legislation It was then that the "petroleum" and "alien land" laws were proposed

The diplomatic correspondence from the autumn of 1925 to date concerns itself chiefly with these laws This legislation, the United States complaints against it, and the resulting interchange of notes, merely continue, in a more limited field, the previous differences between the two governments dating from the Constitution of 1917 [1]

The essential complaints of the United States were

I The provision by which aliens acquiring land, et cetera, agree to renounce their right, in respect to such holdings, to appeal to their governments for diplomatic protection [2]

II The provision in the land law requiring foreigners owning fifty per cent or more of the stock in an agricultural development company to divest themselves of that excess within ten years, provided they are corporations, or if individuals, at their death [3]

III The provision in the petroleum law that owners of titles to oil land acquired before May 1, 1917, could have these "confirmed" by receiving in exchange a fifty-year lease dating from the acquisition of the property [4]

The contentions of the two governments on these points found repeatedly in the notes exchanged, may be summarized as follows

I United States An injury done by one state through a denial of justice is an injury done to the state whose national is injured The individual

[1] Beginning with an "aide memoire" from the U S secretary of state of Nov 17, 1925, there were in the next year not less than fifteen notes, memoranda, and aides memoire interchanged See Senate Doc 96, First Session 69th Cong (two parts)

[2] Art 2, Land Law (Passed Dec 23, 1925 in Diario Oficial, Jan 21, 1926 Known as Law of latter date)

[3] Art 4, Land Law of Jan 6, 1915 Art 9 of Regulations of said law, promulgated March 29, 1926 Pub in Diario Oficial of same date

[4] Petroleum Law (Passed Dec 18, 1925 Published in Diario Oficial, Dec 31, 1925 Known as law of latter date) Regulations of said law adopted Dec 26, 1925 Pub in Diario Oficial, April 8, 1926

cannot waive the right of his state to extend diplomatic protection to him The right of diplomatic protection is not a personal right, but exists in favor of one state against another [1]

Mexico. The so-called "renouncement of nationality" is really nothing of the kind The Mexican Government has a right to make as a condition prerequisite to an alien's acquisition of land that he agrees not to invoke the diplomatic protection of his country in respect to that land No alien is required to acquire land in Mexico But if he does so, he must accept the condition imposed by Mexican law [2]

II United States The obligation of shareholders in Mexican agricultural stock companies to divest themselves of their ownership in excess of fifty per cent before death, if they be individuals, and within ten years if they be corporations, is retroactive and confiscatory, and cannot be tolerated [3]

Mexico The provision permitting stockholders to retain their shares in excess of fifty per cent in agricultural stock companies for life, during which time they may or may not dispose of their excess, but requiring their estate to do so at their death, is not confiscatory It does, however, limit inheritance, which is the right of any sovereign government to do, and is in conformity with international law

The compulsion of a corporation to divest itself within ten years of its excess is likewise not confiscatory, since it not only gives ample time for said divestment in compliance with the law, but is merely a requirement for a transformation in the character of the property — the excess stock — held

Moreover, it is a universally accepted principle that every nation is sovereign to legislate in the matter of real property within its own territory [4]

III United States· To compel the exchange of ownership for a lease is confiscation, and, therefore, to substitute for the titles to oil lands acquired before May 1, 1917, leases, even extending fifty years, is retroactive and confiscatory [5]

Mexico The giving of a concession valid for fifty years seems to be a lessening of a right, but is not so for those whose purpose in the acquisition of oil lands was the drilling for oil Any oil in the lands at issue — those acquired prior to 1917 — will be surely exhausted before the fifty-year period expired If by any chance it is not exhausted further extension of the concession will be obtainable [6] The Mexican Government desires to put into practice its constitutional principle that the ownership of the deposits of the subsoil is vested in the nation For holdings acquired subsequent to

[1] Kellogg to Sáenz, Jan 28, 1926
[2] Mem of Mexican minister of foreign affairs Dec 5, 1925
[3] Aide memoire, Sheffield to Sáenz, Nov 27, 1925
[4] Memorandum, Sáenz to Sheffield, Dec 5, 1925
[5] Kellogg to Sáenz, July 31, 1926
[6] The further extension of thirty years apparently has been tendered in informal discussion It does not appear either in the legislation or in official diplomatic communications

1917 this principle is now effective, and is effective for all Mexican holdings But there cannot be two laws One concerning rights acquired prior to 1917 and another for rights acquired subsequently Nor can there be two laws One for nationals, the other for aliens The Mexican Government has deemed the provision giving a fifty-year leasehold a just and equitable solution [1]

These in substance were the conflicting contentions

No progress in mutual understanding was arrived at from the early days of President Calles's administration in 1925 to the resignation of Ambassador Sheffield in the summer of 1927 The various notes from both governments kept on reiterating the respective points of view and refuting the opposing arguments, the United States' communications becoming steadily more acrimonious as Mexico proceeded to enact its legislation The Calles Government did not, however, enforce the penalties for non-compliance with the oil law — clearly for fear of precipitating a crisis

A further controverted point was the maintenance by the United States that pledges made by the Obregón Government in the Mexico City conferences were precedent to recognition, and that recognition would not have been granted without faith in the security of those pledges To this the Calles Government replied, first, that there had been no violation of any pledges made at the Warren-Payne, Ross-Roa conferences, since in the view of the Calles administration, legislation subsequently enacted was not retroactive or confiscatory, second, that the only commitments in those proceedings were those involved in the two claims conventions which had been duly signed and were being put into effect, and third, that while it was not the intention of the Calles Government to repudiate the recommendations and purpose of the Obregón Government, the conversations between the commissioners could not be expected to have the binding force of a treaty, and to commit or bind subsequent administrations

Another basic contention of the Mexican Government was that the United States' protests against legislation, as such, were improper because premature, that the correct procedure for aliens who felt themselves damaged by a concrete act arising *under* legislation was to appeal to the Mexican courts, if then justice were not done, the issue could more validly be raised The five Mexican supreme court decisions protecting the Texas Company — and other oil companies — against the Mexican Government were cited as illustrative of this process

The theory underlying this contention is that a sovereign nation can legislate as it sees fit without interference from foreign governments, but leaves to its courts, and subsequently to international claims commissions the chance to redress any specific wrongs committed under that legislation which have not previously been righted

[1] Sáenz to Kellogg, Oct 7, 1926

With hundreds of thousands of words of diplomatic correspondence, largely restatement, complicated by much highly technical legal citation, out of which a conclusion as to the merits of the controversy is difficult, and with those merits resolving themselves into a matter of opinion, it may not be amiss for one student whose view is unclouded by interest to give his opinion

In my judgment, logic and equity lie preponderantly with the United States Making all due allowance for decided differences in the Latin-American and Anglo-American attitudes on the sacredness of property, and the greater Hispanic emphasis on the revocability of "vested" rights,[1] the most thorough reading of the contentions of both parties leaves me with the conviction that Mexican legislation in regard to petroleum and, to a somewhat lesser extent, to land (in the "alien land law") is, as the United States State Department claims, retroactive and confiscatory

To give a concession or lease where there has been ownership *may* work out without detriment But it distinctly lessens the value of holdings if their sale — one of the rights of ownership — is contemplated It leaves the concession, moreover, at the mercy of subsequent administrations, who may desire to revoke it, just as the revolutionary governments revoked many concessions granted by Díaz

To compel an alien land company to divest itself of stock — even with a ten years' grace — when there *may* be no purchasers, seems to me obviously confiscatory [2]

The right of a sovereign government to pass such legislation, which can more easily be sustained than controverted, is only slightly germane to the issue, for while the Mexican Government has in its official correspondence mentioned that right, *its essential insistence has been that the legislation was not retroactive and confiscatory*

The Mexican Government stood and stands, however, in my judgment, on much firmer ground in contending that the confiscatory or non-confiscatory nature of the Mexican legislation can only be determined by the courts, and that American grievances would be established only when specific property has been confiscated without compensation and such compensation definitely refused This contention clearly portended a declaration by the supreme court declaring the petroleum law unconstitutional, which would furnish the Mexican Government a way out, if it so desired Such a possibility has been foreshadowed from the start As early as March 14, 1927, Mr R B Creager, the Republican national committeeman from Texas, who has various interests in Mexico, and is on friendly terms with the Calles Government, stated his conviction that the international difficulties would

[1] See pages 101–5

[2] It should be understood that these comments do not hold for the general agrarian legislation which applies equally to all owners — Mexican and alien alike — which aliens may properly be expected to accept, with the same recourse of appeal the natives enjoy

be solved in this manner[1] Such a finding — obviously the first of a series — has now, as this book goes to press, been brought in by the Mexican supreme court[2]

On the question of the validity of the commitments of the proceedings of the United States-Mexican Commission in Mexico City, it is necessary to go beyond the record and examine the background

On the Mexican side, the Obregón Government intensely wanted recognition, and was prepared to go a considerable distance to obtain it, but not to the extent of signing a treaty in advance, or to pledge itself in advance to a policy It had, however, done much to predispose the American Government favorably Resumption of the international debt payments under the Lamont-de la Huerta agreement, the first steps in the return of the railways to their foreign ownership, a steady trend toward "legality" in the agrarian legislation, consistent friendliness to American visitors, et cetera All this was evidence of a desire not merely for a genuine *rapprochement*, but for recognition

While it is true that the two claims conventions were the only formally signed agreements emerging from the conference, very little time was devoted to them, the sessions being almost wholly given over to expounding the Mexican attitude and purpose in agrarian and subsoil legislation, particularly in its relation to foreign owners The Mexican commissioners took frequent occasion to give assurances which were not capable of misunderstanding that the position of the American and Mexican governments would not be far apart on these issues Technically, in my judgment, the Calles administration was not bound by such declarations, morally, it unquestionably was, especially in view of the intimacy of the Obregón and Calles administrations — Calles being the head of Obregón's cabinet, and as such bound by its international commitments[3]

On the other hand, the subsequent official declarations of the United States Department of State that "recognition * * * would not have been extended * * * without the assurances received in the course of the negotiation,"[4] may be discounted in considerable measure

The Hughes Mexican policy was increasingly under the fire of editorial censure in the United States, which reflected a mounting popular disapproval, and of attacks in Congress, especially of the redoubtable Borah, chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations The Harding

[1] See special dispatch to the New York World from Mexico City, pub March 15, 1927

[2] Nov 17 1927 See Associated Press dispatches in American newspapers of Nov 18 Also Washington "Special Dispatch" in the New York Times of Nov 19

[3] It is pertinent that in a Senate debate on Jan 25, 1927, two senators Borah and Lenroot, while opposed in their views on U S administration policy toward Mexico — Borah attacking Lenroot supporting — were nevertheless in agreement with the Mexican contentions that in the proceedings in Mexico City both governments had reserved their rights, and that the language employed by the Mexican commissioners did not result in an agreement Cong Record, Vol 68, Part 2, p 2205–6

[4] Kellogg to Sáenz, July 31, 1926

administration was, in short, being driven to the recognition of Obregón against Secretary Hughes's will The proceedings in Mexico City were to a degree a matter of face-saving To have broken them off without recognition would have been highly embarrassing

Nevertheless, one factor throws the balance heavily against the Mexican contention and in favor of the United States The appeal of Obregón for aid against the de la Huerta revolt, and the compliance to a considerable degree by the Coolidge administration — to the extent of saving both the Obregón administration and the Calles candidacy — should have placed the ensuing Mexican administration under a heavy moral obligation For, clearly, the Mexican position, which was predicated on the fullest sovereignty and independence of Mexico, contrasted sharply with the Government's inability to save itself without United States aid However wounding to Mexican pride, the fact was there and the Mexicans should not have forgotten it

VII

Why then, with the case of the stronger of the two nations in many respects sound, were the results for nearly three years so lamentable? The answer may be found, as so often before, in personnel and personalities Allusion has been made to the unfortunate immersion of Ambassador Sheffield in an American colony, notorious in Mexico for hating things Mexican, especially all things of the new régime, and for showing its contempt for the country and the people among whom the colony had chosen to live The blunder of the Kellogg newspaper warning to Mexico — inspired by Mr Sheffield — made subsequent progress almost impossible

But the blunders did not end there The blustering tone adopted by the State Department, and other episodes not on the official record, made mutual understanding increasingly difficult

The climax was reached when, on November 15, 1926, the assistant secretary of state, Robert E Olds, a former law partner of Secretary of State Kellogg, called the representatives of the three news services — Associated Press, United Press, and International News Service — and pledging them not to quote him, told them that the relations between Mexico and the United States had reached a very acute stage, that the State Department, while it could not prove the fact, was "morally certain that a warm bond of sympathy, if not an actual understanding," existed between Mexico City and Moscow, and that a "steady stream of Bolshevist propaganda" had been "filtering from Mexico down through Central America, aimed at property rights and designed to undermine society and government as now constituted"

Mr Olds expressed the view that this picture should be presented to the

American people, and asked the newspaper men's advice and cooperation to that end

One of the correspondents said that the matter was simple — let the State Department issue a statement to that effect over the signature of the Secretary of State, and every newspaper in the country would publish it

Olds recoiled at the suggestion with an exclamation of apprehension, declaring that to be impossible, as the department could not be in the position of directing such a serious statement against a government with which it was officially on friendly terms

The correspondents then protested against taking the responsibility of such propaganda on themselves Mr Olds pointed out that he thought they could work it into their news dispatches without attributing it to the State Department He asked them how, in their opinion, the press of the country would receive such a statement One correspondent replied that it would be ridiculed by the editors of liberal papers

"What would they do," Olds then asked, "if it were said that a Mexican-fostered Bolshevist hegemony in Central America was menacing our control of the Panama Canal?"

One of the correspondents said he thought most of them would laugh at it, but another said it would undoubtedly cause great alarm among the American people generally

The suggestion was then made that the story could be "tied" to the announcement that the State Department had decided to recognize the government of Adolfo Díaz in Nicaragua

The Associated Press alone among the three news associations acceded to Mr Olds's wishes and the story in a somewhat modified form was sent out to the Associated Press newspapers the following day [1]

The revelation of the attempt to inflame public sentiment against Mexico caused a sensation throughout both countries

Senator Wheeler of Montana declared that it was "perfectly plain that the State Department" was "trying to prepare public opinion for a break * * * with Mexico" [2]

That a rupture of diplomatic relations and armed intervention were imminent was widely believed

"The administration," declared Representative Huddleston of Alabama in the House on January 8, "is driving deliberately and consciously toward a war with Mexico" [3]

[1] The above account of the Olds incident is based on the original dispatch by Paul Y Anderson, Washington correspondent of the St Louis Post-Dispatch, of Nov 27 Rep in the Congressional Record, Jan 6, 1927 The State Department made no denial of the Anderson story until on Jan 5 — more than five weeks later — in response to a resolution introduced into the House by Rep La Guardia, Secretary Kellogg issued a "general denial" The denial was not considered by the press as other than a "diplomatic device"

[2] Quoted in "Editor and Publisher" Dec 4, 1927

[3] Cong Rec 69th Cong, 2nd Session Part 2

On January 11 Secretary Kellogg in a closed session of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations presented his evidence concerning "Bolshevik Aims and Policies in Mexico and Latin America"[1]

The reaction throughout the United States was in the main highly unfavorable to Secretary Kellogg's declaration A few administration papers, such as the New York "Sun" and the New York "Herald-Tribune," voiced a perfunctory approval The friendly "New York Times," however, in an editorial entitled, "Too Easily Scared," declared Secretary Kellogg's pronouncement to show "a singular lack of perspective"[2]

The "Baltimore Sun" the next day declared

We doubt seriously that ever before in the history of this Nation has the head of the State Department appeared in public in a state of such utterly indecent intellectual exposure Such drivel, offered by the Cabinet officer in charge of foreign relations, to the Senate committee in charge of foreign relations is, we believe, without previous example in the history of this country from the administration of George Washington to the administration of Calvin Coolidge[3]

The New York "World," in an editorial entitled, "A Crime Against Peace,"[4] carefully analyzing Secretary Kellogg's statement, declared, "The Kellogg memorandum on Bolshevism was written by a man who set out deliberately to poison the minds of the American people," and pointed out that the purpose of the Kellogg document was to make Americans believe that the Mexican activity was directed by Moscow, so that they might be led thereby to approval of any hostile measures the administration might contemplate The editorial concluded with these words

We cannot go further along the path the State Department is now taking if our purpose is to protect our honor and to be true to the principles we profess Revolution, perhaps war, much human misery, and a complete moral isolation throughout the world are at the end of a path along which a feeble old man is stumbling[5]

Meanwhile, American sentiment was mobilizing against war with extraordinary rapidity So unmistakable was this feeling that the Washington correspondent of the strongly pro-administration New York "Herald-Tribune" complained

With American rights being trampled under foot in Mexico, in the view of the Administration, but with the American public almost militantly opposed to any backing up of the firm stand already taken, President Coolidge and Secretary of State Kellogg are at a loss today as to the next move in the situation[6]

[1] The text of a written memorandum embodying Secretary Kellogg's views was submitted to the press and published in the morning newspapers of Jan 13
[2] Jan 13, 1927 [3] Jan 14, 1927 [4] *Idem* [5] *Idem* [6] Dec 7, 1926

This national conviction was based on the needlessness of aggression against Mexico over the property issues involved It endorsed an informal declaration made by President Calles on January 9 that he would be willing to submit the differences on petroleum and land to the Hague Tribunal, although he considered both domestic issues [1]

The cry, "Arbitrate!" resounded from coast to coast Public meetings adopted resolutions Memorials, petitions, and resolutions rained in upon Congress and the White House College faculties in many universities added their pleas [2]

In Congress also the administration policy was under a vigorous barrage Senator Dill of Washington declared that President Calles's offer to arbitrate was "unanswerable, unless it be the purpose of this country to play the part of a big bully, rather than a big brother" [3]

Senator McKellar of Tennessee declared the administration's policy "absolutely indefensible" [4]

Senator Fletcher of Florida read a letter from one of his constituents, a World War veteran, protesting against the hint of war with Mexico, which Fletcher declared typical of the communications received by him [5]

The most devastating attack, however, was launched by Senator Robert M La Follette, Jr , of Wisconsin, who, calling Secretary Kellogg's statement a "fishy piece of propaganda," charged the secretary with a "very significant omission * * * which * * * could not have been made other than consciously," namely, the emphatic denunciation by President Calles on May 6 1925, of a statement by Foreign Minister Chicherin of Soviet Russia, indicating that Mexico "might serve as a useful political base" in the Western Hemisphere

La Follette thereupon read an Associated Press despatch from Mexico City, dated May 9, 1925, telling how Ambassador Sheffield had told a group of newspaper men that relations between Mexico and the United States had been improved by President Calles's reply to Chicherin Therefore, said La Follette, while fully aware of this reply, Secretary Kellogg had cited Chicherin's statement, but had omitted Calles's answer [6]

The Nicaraguan issue, which further complicated Mexican-American relations, arose from the recognition by Mexico of the "Liberal" Govern-

[1] This declaration was made in Mexico City to a group of visitors headed by Hubert C Herring, comprising a "Good-will Mission" of American educators clergymen, etc

[2] Notably the faculty of the University of Texas (Jan 13), Converse and Wofford Colleges, Spartanburg, S C (Jan 24), and one hundred professors representing thirty-eight universities and colleges, etc (Jan 27) See also telegram of Jan 14 from Boston to Senator David I Walsh, signed by Judge George W Anderson, Bishop William F Anderson, Roland W Boyden, George W Coleman, Dr L O Hartman, Joseph Lee, Rabbi Harry Levi, John F Moors, Rev Boynton Merrill, James F Munroe, Dean Stephen Rushmore, Moorfield Storey, Prof Francis B Sayre, Rev Dr Harold E B Speight, Rev Eugene R Shippen, Prof Frank W Taussig, Thomas Wood, Prof Allyn A Young, Rev Dr Ashley Day Leavitt This memorial is typical of the protests and of the character of the men protesting throughout the country

[3] Cong Rec Jan 14

[4] *Idem*

[5] Jan 24

[6] Jan 14.

ment of Sacasa and by the United States of the "Conservative" Government of Díaz Of the relative merits of these two candidacies, Senator Borah declared, "If there is anybody in Nicaragua who is constitutionally entitled to be president * * * it is Sacasa" [1]

The New York "World," in an editorial entitled, "Sacasa and Díaz," declared

It needs but a single reading of the two statements which came out of Nicaragua [Sunday, Jan 2] to be convinced that one sent to the World by Dr Juan Sacasa, Revolutionist President of the Republic, is from a Nicaraguan patriot, and that the other, given to the Associated Press by Don Adolfo Díaz, the president kept in power by our marines, is from an American press agent [2]

On January 10, President Coolidge, in a message to Congress, charged that Mexico was shipping munitions to Nicaragua He thereupon intervened, sent marines and sailors to Nicaragua, effectively routed the Liberal forces of Sacasa, and established Díaz firmly in the presidential chair The White House "spokesman" also intimated that the Mexican issue was not *arbitrable*

The administration's Mexican policy was defended in Congress by Senator Reed of Missouri, who declared, "Mexico has not in all respects kept faith with us" [3] While Senator Lenroot of Wisconsin maintained that "no strong government in the world today * * * would violate the rights of American citizens as Mexico has done * * * and * * * only because of the weakness of Mexico and the strength of the United States," had our Government "been so patient and forbearing" [4]

Senator McLean of Connecticut stated that the American imperialism was the imperialism of "science, and peace, and justice." [5]

Nevertheless, public sentiment had risen so overwhelmingly against the use of force in the Mexican controversy that the Senate on January 25, by a unanimous vote, adopted the resolution introduced by Senator Robinson, of Arkansas, calling for arbitration

A week before this resolution was adopted, The New York "World" declared in a leading editorial that the world had

witnessed something which has not happened very often before in the history of international affairs A nation by the sheer force of its own public opinion has restrained its own government in a course to which there was no external opposition * * * During the last seven days the American people have demonstrated in a remarkable way how sincerely opposed they are to a diplomacy of violence [6]

With the passage of the Senate resolution calling for arbitration, the tension lessened, although fear was widespread that with the adjournment of

[1] Cong Rec, 69th Cong, 2nd Session, p 1292 [2] Jan 4 [3] Jan 18
[4] Jan 25 [5] *Idem* [6] Jan 18

Congress, hasty executive action, or some unforeseen incident, might precipitate bloodshed

In Mexico City prominent members of the American colony announced intervention to be a certainty after March 4 Declaration by the United States of the oil fields " a neutral zone" was confidently predicted

"Liberty," a weekly magazine of wide circulation, in an editorial entitled "Should We Give Back Our Southwestern States to Mexico?" declared that "destiny was at work behind the selfishness of unmoral politicians * * * and seventy-five years from now the inhabitants of Mexico, Nicaragua, et al , would [will] be singing the 'Star-Spangled Banner' and scoffing at the idea that anyone would return to the old governments " [1]

American public opinion, however, had done its work effectively A section of that opinion was reflected in a play, "Spread Eagle," shown in New York, which pictured war on Mexico precipitated by the machinations of business interests unfavorably affected by conditions in Mexico [2]

American opinion was strongly influenced by the prominence in the Mexican oil situation of Mr Edward L Doheny and Mr Harry F Sinclair, whose oil leases in the United States had been declared by the United States Supreme Court to have been secured fraudulently [3]

"These are the worthies for whom the honor of our Nation has been jeopardized," declared Representative Huddleston in the House [4]

"Whose Property is Mr Kellogg Protecting?" inquired an article by Mr Carleton Beals in "The New Republic," [5] which suggested that faulty titles lay at the bottom of Mr Doheny's refusal to obey the Mexican oil law and regulations

And under the heading, "The Same Old Gang," the New York "World," after quoting figures to indicate that out of 666 foreign oil companies in Mexico, all but twenty-two had obeyed the law by applying for confirmatory concessions, and that 46 per cent of the oil land controlled by these twenty-two companies was dominated by Mr Doheny, concluded

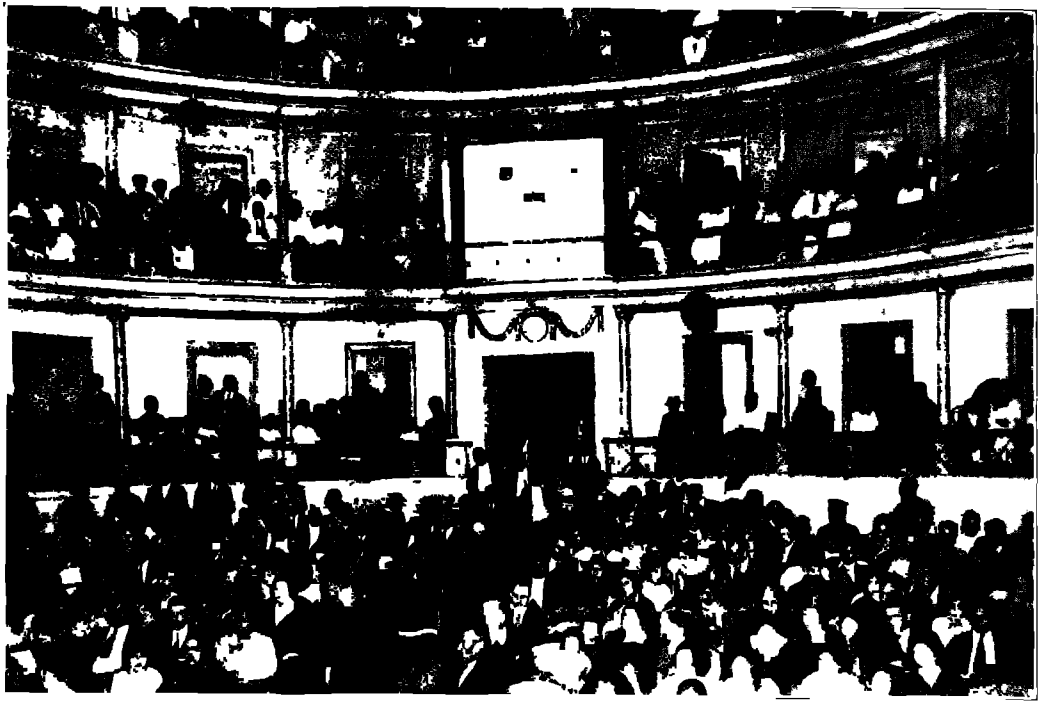
> The heart of the opposition is the same group of oil men who engineered Teapot Dome and Elk Hills * * * The American people has not forgotten that Albert B Fall not only helped Edward L Doheny obtain the naval reserve "by fraud and conspiracy" * * * but that Fall, the friend of Doheny, was a persistent advocate of war with Mexico The American people has not forgotten that Edward L Doheny did not hesitate to cover his transactions with the cloak of patriotism and to instigate trouble between the United States and Japan * * * Let Mr Cool-

[1] Feb 12, 1927
[2] "Spread Eagle" by George S Brooks and Walter B Lister, opened at the Martin Beck Theater, N Y , April 4, 1927
[3] "Consummated by conspiracy, corruption and fraud," in the Doheny case, "fraudulently, by means of collusion and conspiracy," in the Sinclair case
[4] Feb 8 Cong Rec vol , 68, p 3295
[5] Feb 23, 1927



THE SPANISH HERITAGE

Mexican señoritas in the Peninsular garb Mexico City 1925



A conference on hygiene held January 25-[illegible] under the auspices of the Department of Health in the Morelos Theater at Cuernavaca, an unprecedented event in Mexico

idge take care that after all they have already done they do not also involve this country in a war [1]

Whatever the correctness of these allegations, they profoundly affected American sentiment The reverse of the medal — that there might be a "Fall" in the Mexican cabinet, using his office and the new legislation for his own advantage and that of his friends — was not exhibited The charges in Mexico of a district judge in Villacuauthemoc and Tuxpan — the heart of the oil region — Judge Mendoza López y Schwertfeger, who resigned his office on May 20, 1927, attracted slight attention They reveal, however, another aspect of the oil muddle little known, but analogous to incidents that have so often obscured Mexican revolutionary reforms and laws — which, while defensible in principle and as promulgated, are often indefensible in their application As the judge's contentions constitute merely a one-sided presentation, they are summed up below without comment other than the judge's rectitude is held beyond question in Mexico — where the public official who, justly or unjustly, escapes calumny, is rare In substance they are

Practically all the old established oil companies have faulty titles because under the old Hispanic inheritance laws the holdings in each generation were divided and subdivided among many heirs Before the discovery of oil, the oil lands were waste Many owners, considering their titles worthless, did not trouble to register them properly Under the petroleum law the "confirmation" of title may be denied by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Labor, where the title is not one hundred per cent proof — as very often it cannot be, no matter to what extent, or how honestly the claimant may have tried to make it so Under these circumstances the claims may be "denounced" and the concessions given to fake companies in the names of people who have not the money to exploit them but who then "*coyote*" them (sell them as "go-betweens") to other oil companies, or even the same oil companies This amounts to being bled for a confirmation of title Such proceedings are, of course, not possible without the collusion of ministry officials That this has been going on under the petroleum law was the judge's charge [2] His resignation grew out of that situation

The conclusion that may be drawn is that the oil industry as conducted in Mexico has been correctly described as "a dirty game" Bribery, extortion, fraud, theft, and murder have been incidental to it But for every bribe-giver among the oil men, there has been a bribe-taker among government officials or military "Bandits" like General Peláez, who have been

[1] Jan 27, 1927

[2] These charges have been published in part See "El Yunque" of Mexico City, June 11, 1927, quoting verbatim an interview given by Judge Mendoza López y Schwertfeger to "El Mundo" of Tampico

hired by oil companies, have likewise at other times held responsible posts in "revolutionary" ranks If it has been deemed expedient to "remove" some obstreperous native owner who stood in the way of a valuable oil title — and one ragged illiterate might block the acquisition of millions of dollars worth of "black gold" — the brain that conceived and the arm that executed his removal were seldom of the same nationality If various American oil men have been active interventionists and have used the cloak of patriotism to further their personal fortunes, various Mexican officials have, under the pretense of patriotically repelling *los petroleros*, feathered their own nests, and defrauded their fellow Mexicans as well as the foreigner [1]

Nevertheless, the American conviction appears to be steadily crystallizing that American business abroad must take its chances in the country of its investment — a view concisely expressed as follows.

It is all perfectly right and proper for me to take my dollar to Mexico or any other place and get all I can out of it by every decent means (or leave it there and come home as most investors do) But for me — after subjecting my dollar to the larger and fully anticipated risk for the sake of the larger and fully anticipated return — to come running to the American taxpayer the moment the risk materializes and the return does not, demanding that he, the taxpayer, who has never invested a cent in Mexico and probably never will, shall send his son and his money southward to get my adventurous, deliberately hazarded dollar out of trouble, is obviously a performance that requires diplomatic description, lest the public should see it in its true light and call it by its correct and by no means agreeable name [2]

VIII

Underlying the estrangement which has arisen periodically between the two governments is little more and little less than their divergence in heritage and history The contemporary Mexican policy of "Mexico for the Mexicans" corresponds not only to the policy which the United States and other great nations avow and practise, but in Mexico responds peculiarly to the desires of a people which in four hundred years has never achieved nationality The foreign policy, which has been the most persistent common denominator of every revolutionary administration since Carranza, is a perfect corollary to the longing for the creation of a nation As long as Mexico was obliged to remain a "backward" country, either as a conquered colony of an Old World royal house, or as a sphere of exploitation for latter-day foreign industrial kings, as under Porfirio Díaz — while to be sure international friction was absent — there was neither a national nor a correlated international policy

[1] An excellent picture, though in fiction form, of the seamy side of the oil industry in Mexico, is Joseph Hergesheimer's "Tampico"

[2] "The Flag and the Dollar" by Amos Pinchot, in The Forum, September, 1927, replying to an article by Rear-Admiral William L Rodgers in the June issue of that magazine, warning Mexico of intervention unless Mexico's policies changed

The related policy of fostering Hispanic-American solidarity, first suggested by Madero, is purely defensive It has at present neither political nor military nor economic strength It is a gesture, a tendency It is an instinctive huddling together of the sheep when the eagle appears in the sky As far as Mexico is concerned, it is obviously a policy of *rapprochement* with its fellow Indo-Latin-American states [1]

The Nicaraguan episode of 1926–7 threw the divergence between the United States' and Mexico's Central American policies into sharp relief for the first time One significant feature of the episode was that whatever might have been the sympathies of the people of other Central-American republics, not one of their governments followed Mexico's lead But although at present these Indo-Latin liaisons are an imponderable force, their potentialities should not be overlooked An enlightened American foreign policy would dissipate them — by removing, rather than by accentuating, the cause of fear — by engaging likewise in a competitive conquest of this hemisphere by good-will This method — as a governmental procedure — remains to be tried by the United States

For rhetorical platitudes by official speech makers and resolutions at Pan-American conferences under the auspices of the State Department-dominated Pan-American Union are more than nullified, with a great part of Latin-American sentiment, by the fact of armed interventions, the bombing of villages from airplanes — as in Haiti and Nicaragua — and the patent southward extension of United States hegemony

In Mexico's attempt to work out its destiny, there need not only be no irremediable clash of interests with the United States, but there should be an identity of interests Mexico ought to do its part to overcome the stumbling blocks inherent in the present property dispute by yielding the unessential and highly theoretical question of national ownership in properties acquired prior to her Constitution of 1917, whenever those holdings were legitimately acquired Arbitral commissions should be able to work out the equity in such conflicts

On the other hand the Washington administration should mend its manner, abandon "dollar diplomacy" and remember that injustice and damage to property rights are not exclusively sins of any one nation, that while they may or may not call for proper representations through diplomatic or informal emissaries, they never justify bluster, bullying, and pressure with the threat of intervention in the background Much more can be achieved through an effort at sympathetic understanding At this writing, Mr Dwight W Morrow, the new American ambassador, seems to be demonstrating the superiority of the technique of friendliness, and furnishing for the first time in decades the hopeful spectacle of an American diplomatist

[1] "Mexico is marching on the canal with music, banners and flowers We are marching with dollars, machine guns, and marines,' wrote Carleton Beals in Current History, Sept 1926

in Mexico equal in *savoir faire* to Mexico's ambassador to the United States Obviously Mexico's needs have brought forth abler diplomatists They have made up in ability what their country lacked in strength

The stake in the relationship of the two countries is very much larger than the total value of American investments in Mexico The American Government should realize this and the Mexican Government should realize it The policy on which both nations could and should unite for their own advantage, would be the building up of a progressing, flourishing, and happy Mexico — as Mexico defines progress, florescence, and happiness — and with only such suggestions and help from the United States as will obviously be acceptable To those Americans who look at the question merely in dollars and cents such a policy would be infinitely more profitable — for all Its spiritual dividends would be incalculable

Not a few American agencies have already shown the way One of the achievements of the late Samuel Gompers was the current of sympathy between the most important labor groups in each country, which he set in motion The Carnegie Foundation, under a contract as unselfish as science, is restoring for Mexico — and the world — the ruins of Chichen-Itzá, the most considerable monument of the highest aboriginal civilization in the Western Hemisphere To extend that work — to include the entire prehistoric record in stone, now crumbling in jungle and on mesa — would in more ways than one be an imperishable achievement The Rockefeller Foundation has shown what it might do in the most important assignment in health establishment on the continent American individuals like Samuel Guy Inman, publicist for better Pan-American relations, Frederick Starr, the ethnologist, John Kenneth Turner, the journalist, Frank Tannenbaum, the sociologist, and a notable group of historians in our universities, have in widely different ways contributed to mutual understanding Educators, "good-will missions," delegations from the Federal Council of Churches, have been among the pioneers of a true neighborliness

Such an entente — though without precedent in Mexican-American relations, and still beset by many traditional handicaps — is eminently possible Wise statesmanship in Washington and Mexico City could make it a reality in an incredibly short time

WOMEN

WOMEN

THE diversity between the two cultures south and north of the Rio Grande is sharply discernible in the respective status of their women Again the historical, racial, and religious differences have combined in each case to establish a contrast which has persisted to this day

The North American settlers brought their women Miscegenation with the natives was not sanctioned The "squaw-man" was outcast Yet white women in the early colonial days were greatly in the minority Only four wives of the *Mayflower's* boatload withstood the rigors of the first winter Only the fittest survived, and both in person and in symbol came to be highly esteemed and cherished The exalted position of woman in the American ideology dates from the pioneer days of companionate hardship and effort when every woman was desired and courted by many The agelong discriminations of the Eastern World against the weaker sex, some of which persist in the United States to this day, were first tempered, spiritually at least, all along the far-flung frontier

The Aztec female, on the other hand, played the part of handmaiden to the warrior male Her position was characteristic of the barbarian stage of racial development — perhaps, among the Aztecs, even lower Authorities differ Wrote Bandelier

> The position of woman was so inferior, they were regarded as so far beneath the male, that the most degrading epithet that could be applied to any Mexican aside from calling him a dog was that of "woman"[1]

The Conquistadores came without women, and took them from the natives by right of conquest The great disparity between the sexes already existing in Spain and in Mexico was increased by the gulf of caste and race Marriage was a seizure — not a courtship The Mexican woman became even more the creature and the chattel — rarely the comrade — of the Mexican male She was to satiate his appetites, to bear his children as fast as nature would allow, to serve her lord and master, to suffer uncomplainingly Both the Hispanic and the Indian heritage postulated her inferiority The combined heritage further deepened it, and the later

[1] Bandelier, On the Social Organization and Mode of Government of the Ancient Mexicans, p 625

arrival of a minority of women from the Old World did not affect the already established habits

An ethnic heritage and an environment which accentuated the lusts of life contributed to maintain the Mexican woman in the subject state Wrote a traveler to Mexico in the late eighteen thirties of its upper class

> Interest or family expediency alone determine marriages in Mexico The couple observe a certain mutual politeness, but fidelity, at least on the part of the husband, is never thought of I doubt whether there is a country that calls itself civilized where the cult of Cytherea is followed so openly as in Mexico [1]

The education of women was at the same epoch thus described by the observant Madame de la Barca

> * * * the Mexican señoras and señoritas write, read and play a little, sew, and take care of their houses and children When I say they read, I mean they know how to read, when I say they write, I do not mean that they can always spell * * * If we compare their education with that of girls in England or in the United States, it is not a comparison, but a contrast Compare it with that of Spanish women, and we shall be less severe on their *far mente* descendants * * * As to schools, there are none that can deserve the name, and no governesses Young girls can have no emulation, for they never meet
>
> I asked a lady the other day if her daughter went to school "Good heavens!" said she, quite shocked, "she is past eleven years old" It frequently happens that the least well-informed girls are the children of the cleverest men, who, keeping to the customs of their forefathers, are content if they confess regularly, attend church constantly, and can embroider and sing a little * * * I do not think there are above half a dozen married women, or as many girls above fourteen, who with the exception of a mass-book, read any book through the whole course of the year [2]

On the eve of the Revolution, in the first decade of the present century, Mrs Alec Tweedie considered that the condition of Mexican women was not unlike their status in England in the eighteenth century "For," wrote she, "it is barely more than a hundred years since women were first allowed to think for themselves in England" [3] This comparison applied to the women of the aristocracy or upper middle-class, among whom Hispanic marital customs prevail

In these social strata courtship was governed by an arbitrary and rigid set of customs Girls and young men never met except under the vigilance of chaperones Young women lived in almost conventual seclusion until their marriage Courtship consisted of serenading outside of barred windows — and the young girl was not allowed to meet her suitor alone even when, after months of persistence, he had finally attracted the notice of her parents Mutual acquaintance was impossible And when marriage followed, the

[1] Lowenstern, Le Mexique, p 150 [2] Barca, Life in Mexico, Letter 23
[3] Tweedie Mexico As I Saw It, p 91–2

woman was still imprisoned in a private seraglio of her husband, while he was free to philander as he pleased — a custom not reproved by church or society Divorce was unthinkable The woman was supposed to suffer in silence

> The young girls of our community are sentenced to marry without love, they have no opportunity to choose, they have to wait until they are sought, and never know what they will draw in the hazardous lottery of matrimony The girl who manages by means of daily contact and habit to secure the affection of her husband does not ask more Love is a luxury which the women of our class cannot enjoy [1]

These words, spoken by Esther Maqueo, one of the characters in a novel of contemporary life in Mexico, depict the status of the Mexican woman in "society"

Divorce was unknown in Mexico until the eighties But even the Civil Code adopted in 1884 adhered to the canon law which proclaimed the indissolubility of marriage What was known as "divorce" in that code was merely a legalized separation under which remarriage was forbidden [2]

In 1904 a bill legalizing divorce was approved by the chamber of deputies But it was disapproved by the devout Carmen Romero Rubio de Díaz, the president's wife, and was in consequence not even discussed when it came to the senate [3]

Beneath this hypothetical sanctity of matrimony and the home, existed a reality which Judge Julio Guerrero at the beginning of this century described in these words

> * * * in Mexico the immense majority of adult society lives in concubinage, that is to say, in a shameful union which has for its objective lust and not love, since it is neither concerned with nor guarantees the formation of a family the true objective of this sentiment, as it is ennobled and controlled by Christianity throughout contemporary civilized mankind [4]

He believed that this state of affairs was induced by the indissolubility of marriage and attributes the devoutness of Mexican women — as contrasted with men — to their attempt to find consolation in religion for the unhappiness of their married life The purest girl, he points out, is obliged to tolerate her fiancé's nocturnal rendezvous and learns not to be scandalized by his peccadillos [5]

Evidence of the relative disregard of formal marriage and its vows and the dominant rôle that sexuality plays in Mexican life is plentiful (Allusion

[1] Palavicini, ¡Castigo! p 222

[2] Art 155 of the Civil Code of 1884 declared marriage to be indissoluble, and Art 226 reads as follows "Divorce does not dissolve the bonds of matrimony, it merely suspends some of the civil obligations provided in the corresponding articles of this code"

[3] López-Portillo y Rojas, Elevación y Caída de Porfirio Díaz, p 330

[4] Guerrero, La Génesis del Crimen en México, p 344

[5] *Idem*, p 275, 344

has already been made to it in the chapter on Health) In Mexico it is taken as a matter of course Mexican literature is filled with it In his novel, "Monja y Casada," the historian Vicente Riva Palacio described Mexico City in its colonial days as "one of the cities in which prostitution was most scandalous," and Federico Gamboa, in his tragic story of a prostitute's life, "Santa," refers to the capital as "the immense lascivious city" The high cost of the religious ceremony as a bar to marriage among the poor is referred to casually in such Mexican classics as Fernández de Lizardi's "El Periquillo Sarniento," Manuel Payno's "Los Bandidos de Río Frío," and Luis G Inclán's "Astucia" And the father with several families, one legitimate and others not, is reflected in Mexican literature as inevitably as it exists in Mexican life

They are part of its tragic warp and woof — the tragedy of the unloved wife clinging forlornly to her legal and social status, and to her children in whose lives she foresees the repetition of her own grief, the tragedy of the socially outcast concubine, apprehensive of her future and of that of her offspring, the tragedy of the children of each of these two women — by the same father These are not the consequences of any social philosophy — but rather of an ethnic, and possibly a climatic, legacy, and the circumstances under which it has been handed down through the generations

The social effects are far reaching Ellsworth Huntington observes that peoples remain backward whose thought and energy are largely swallowed up in matters of sex

> During the years when the young men ought to be getting new ideas and thinking out the many little projects and the few great ones which combine to cause progress, the vast majority are thinking of women, and planning to gain some possession of some new woman or girl Under such circumstances no race can rise to any high position [1]

Rebecca West has made almost the same point with specific reference to its political consequences

> In Spain there is such an excessive interest in sexual relations that it is embarrassing for a woman of anything under middle age to walk through a city or travel in a train because of the immediate reaction of all the men to her charms * * * Unchastity has in Spain as in Italy brought its punishment on itself While the Spaniards and the Italians were annoying women in the streets and the railway trains, Mussolini and Primo de Rivera got their chance to abolish civil liberty and establish dictatorships [2]

This comment is not inapplicable to Mexico Certainly one violates no proprieties by adducing truths patent to the casual observer which the principals concerned are at no pains to conceal In a single cabinet, one

[1] Civilization and Climate, p 46

[2] Divorce, in The Forum, Aug 1926

minister made an affair with an actress an international scandal by taking her on a mission to the United States, another minister for two years paraded his mistress nightly in the café-dansant most frequented by foreigners, a third was notorious for his orgies, a fourth could not keep his dates with *las muchachas* from conflicting with important functions — "he has been called by the President," was the apology which his underlings would be compelled to make All four are married

Such an example is followed down through the bureaucratic ladder where efficiency is materially impeded by the office workers' thoughts lightly turning to love and away from the daily task

The Revolution has done little, purposefully, toward the emancipation of women True, it legalized divorce, first, through various decrees issued by the Constitutionalists in 1914–15 But custom has been stronger than legislation The "easy divorce" available in Yucatán, Sonora, and Morelos under those states' laws has served Americans more than it has Mexicans In upper "society," the divorced woman, no matter how complete her innocence and how flagrant her husband's guilt, would still be considered "disgraced" by divorce She prefers to keep her status as a legally wedded wife Some Mexican "Feminists," sufficiently aware of woman's handicaps to protest against them publicly and in print, are, paradoxically, still so imbued with the conventionally Mexican way of thinking that they object to legalizing divorce on the ground that it releases a husband from his marital responsibilities [1] Moreover, the almost complete lack of training for self-support coupled with the scarcity of opportunities in Mexico for a woman of the upper or middle-class to earn a livelihood would freight such a release with the gravest economic consequences to the divorcée

The law of family relations,[2] adopted in 1923, removed a great number of legal discriminations against women, but leaves not a few It concedes equal guardianship over children — formerly exercised by the father — to both parents But a married woman may still not engage in any profession or business without the consent of her husband [3] Although she attains her legal majority at twenty-one, an unmarried woman may not leave the parental home until the age of thirty — except to marry — without her parents' consent [4]

Moreover, "the double standard" persists legally Article 77 of the law provides that "adultery by the wife is always ground for divorce, by the husband, only under the following circumstances" These circumstances are if the adultery has taken place in the conjugal home, if there has been a public scandal or insult by the husband to the legitimate wife, if the adulteress has ill-treated the legitimate wife, and if there has been concubinage

[1] G Soffa Villa de Buentello, La Mujer y La Ley, p 89–114
[2] Ley Sobre Relaciones Familiares [3] Art 44 [4] *Idem*, 479

between the adulterers (concubinage being interpreted as the maintenance of a separate establishment by the husband for another woman)

The law gives the husband the right to recognize and legitimatize his natural children, born either before or during his marriage, but the wife is forbidden to do as much even for children she may have borne before entering into matrimony with that husband [1] The law raised the age of matrimony for women from twelve to fourteen

A number of callings are still legally closed to women They may not vote in national elections, and only in San Luis Potosí, Yucatán, Tabasco, and Chiapas, in state elections

Indeed in her political disqualifications, the Mexican woman is but a very few years behind the women of the United States, and legal handicaps as heavy as those which she now suffers persist in not a few of the southern States of the United States

Slight signs of change are visible in the status of woman south of the Río Grande — not a little traceable to American influence Economic necessity, as well as the example of their northern sisters, is impelling women to earn their own livelihood — a procedure which even a decade ago among the leisure class would have been deemed scandalous Wage-earning by women is still strongly opposed by the church As recently as 1925, the archbishop of Mexico, José Mora y del Río, issued a pastoral in censure of this adaptation of "a North American custom," and Father Medina, S J, in his monthly review "La Paz Social," vigorously preaches against it, both of them in evident misconception of its effect on American family life [2]

Nevertheless, the trend toward self-support is increasing The example of Dolores del Río — incidentally, of the same family as the archbishop, and one of Mexico's most aristocratic and wealthiest — and her success as a motion-picture star, has had far-reaching educative effects

In Mexico the woman who occupies the most influential and responsible post is Señorita Soledad González, private secretary to President Calles An orphan in San Pedro de las Colonias in Coahuila, she was one of a number adopted by Francisco Madero, Jr At the early age of twelve, she was typing busily as one of his secretaries, and her introduction to public service came with her transfer to the capital when Madero became president She subsequently served President Obregón and became the private secretary of General Calles when he was minister of Gobernación Her office is conspicuous for its unusual efficiency — and it is often said in Mexico that "were she not a woman there is no post in the republic that she could not

[1] Arts 215–216

[2] In the issue of Jan 1925, p 37, an article on "The Family Income and Woman's Work," concludes with the sentence, "And [with woman's not working] will be postponed the ruin of the home, of the truly Christian family, the glory of our race, which God free from being converted into a gringo 'home' without hearth or fireside!"

In the April issue in commenting on the archbishop's views, Father Medina quotes "The woman, from the moment that she becomes a worker, ceases to be a woman" P 103

fill" She illustrates the obvious truth that given the opportunity, women could render service of the highest importance to Mexico in every sphere

The feminist movement is chiefly identified with Señora Elvia Carrillo Puerto, formerly one of four women deputies in the state legislature of Yucatán During her brother's governorship she organized feminist leagues throughout that state, which devoted themselves to instilling the duties of citizenship and teaching the elementals of hygiene to its women and children

In 1925, she "ran" for the national chamber of deputies from the fourth district of the State of San Luis Potosí, in which women vote, and where she established a legal residence The legality of a woman's running for a national elective office is a matter of controversy, though nowhere in the Constitution of 1917 is it either explicitly or implicitly forbidden Before launching her candidacy she had a favorable opinion from Secretary of Gobernación Adalberto Tejeda, who also contributed financially to her campaign She likewise had the support of the then governor, Aurelio Manrique, and of the *jefe de operaciones* in the state, General Saturnino Cedillo

An episode in her candidacy illustrates vividly the vertical cleavage that exists between Mexican men and women even within the bosom of the family

Señora Carrillo considered it essential to have another woman as her *suplente* or substitute, although the local politicians urged her to have a man, saying that it would be impossible to find another woman who was not, as they said, "reactionary and Catholic" She replied

> What about your mothers, your wives, your sisters, and your daughters? Fine Liberals you must be, if in not a single one of your families you have been able to convert your women folk to your point of view

They were unable to make an effective reply

Señora Carrillo then went from house to house trying to find a woman suitable to be her teammate After two weeks she found her in Señorita Hermila Zamarrón, a stenographer employed in the local internal revenue office

Shortly before the election Governor Manrique was ousted and replaced by Governor Abel Cano who let it be known that no woman would represent the state if he could prevent it At the last minute another candidate named Florencio Galván was entered He made no attempt to campaign, the only evidence of competition being that in the village of Guadalcazar, eight shots were fired at Señora Carrillo by her opponent's substitute, one Cesareo Vásquez

In the election Señora Carrillo received 4576 votes against her opponent's 56 Her credentials were duly approved by the local authorities and were entirely in order But the permanent commission of the national

chamber of deputies threw out her credentials — as they did those of many others

Would women be useful in Mexican politics? When on one occasion Señora Carrillo asked one of the two senators from San Luis Potosí, Luis G Monzón, who had been a member of the Constitutional Congress of 1917, and on its committee for women's rights, why the important question of equal suffrage had been left indefinite in the constitution, when apparently at that time there had been a strong sentiment in favor of it, Senator Monzón replied

"I tell you, *compañerita*, when that question came up, we had been on such a tremendous *parranda* and I was so drunk that we really did not know what we were doing"

But there is not as yet a widespread desire for equal suffrage Politics has been a deception and a fraud among men — suffrage is not "effective" among them, and it is scarcely surprising that the Mexican literate woman who has been traditionally sheltered should not desire to wallow in its muck Yet her entry could not but improve Mexican politics — she would bring to it a conscientiousness, and a selfless desire to serve which is largely lacking among the male politicians The more enlightened governors such as the late Rafael Nieto of San Luis Potosí, under whom equal suffrage was introduced in that state, and Carrillo Puerto of Yucatán have done what they could to bring women into public service

It is more likely that women's march toward equality will come in the economic field A steadily greater proportion of them are becoming school-teachers — though still discriminated against in the matter of wages despite the constitutional clause which provides equal pay for equal work regardless of sex [1]

While the Revolution has done relatively more in behalf of women than the régimes which antedated it, discrimination is still flagrant in the matter of opportunity The "House of the Native Student," the Indian school in the capital is for boys only — and there is no corresponding school for girls

Women are increasingly taking their place in factories, and many of them belong to labor unions — but the leadership, as in labor organizations in the United States, is monopolized by men

One woman has achieved eminence in the law — María Sandoval de Zarco — who has been for thirty years the only practising lawyer in Mexico, and an exceedingly successful one A corresponding position in medicine has been attained by Dr Antonia Ursua though there are several women physicians These women have been wholly exceptional, as unique in their

[1] Art 123, par VII In San Jorge Tezoquipan, Tlaxcala, I found in May, 1927, in two federal schools, the teacher of the boys' school with seventy pupils was receiving two and a half pesos daily, and had an assistant whose pay was one and one half pesos The teacher of the girls' school, with fifty-one pupils, had no assistant, and was receiving one and a half pesos This case was not exceptional but typical

time as Juana de Asbaje, the poet and scholar of the seventeenth century, better known as Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, her name after she had taken the veil, and the two women whose names are imperishably linked with independence, Josefa María Ortiz, wife of the Corregidor Miguel Domínguez, and Leona Vicario

Yet a change is noticeable in that in 1927 a dozen girls were registered in the law school and more than thirty in the medical school

There is a very different world of women — away from the urban life hitherto described The position of native women varies in different parts of Mexico with the tribe But in general the rural *india* enjoys far more nearly an equality with man than her white and mestiza sisters This is partly because both Indian man and woman are workers, and the male being no longer the warrior of pre-Conquest days has lost some of the bright plumage which then set him off In one region of Mexico, the Tehuantepec Peninsula, the women, famed throughout the land for their beauty, are distinctly superior to the male not merely in ability, but in prestige and status among their people They dominate the native trade and industry of that region, and probably constitute as self-sufficient and happy an entity as exists in Mexico

A true social and racial synthesis would doubtless help the status of woman in Mexico At present she represents one of the conspicuous wastes of the Mexican heritage, for the considerable contribution she could make to Mexico's social, economic, and spiritual progress is still unutilized — obliterated by the shroud of persistent custom Potentially she is one of the most valuable elements in the Mexican social complex The Revolution has not yet begun to emancipate her Nor will it achieve a thoroughgoing emancipation of Mexico while one half of its population remains to be set free





(Photo by the author)

THE INDIAN HERITAGE THE MARKET IN TLHUANTEPEC, 1924



(*Photos by the author*)

FIVE MEXICAN PAINTERS

(Above) left to right Montenegro Atl, (center) Best-Maugard (below) left to right Rivera Goitia

CULTURAL PRODUCTS OF THE REVOLUTION

CULTURAL PRODUCTS OF THE REVOLUTION

I

THE Revolution was a dissolution No violent upheaval overthrew Díaz A stately edifice long admired from without for its magnificence and apparent stability unexpectedly crumbled A disintegration had taken place in the body politic and social Its ferments were a variety of long latent desires for self-expression Chief among them was racial nostalgia The Revolution gave it release It began to effervesce and to re-crystallize long before the economic needs which required studied direction and common effort began to organize themselves

The new efflorescence was visible in popular art and craft, song and story It flowered supremely in painting

Art before the Conquest was the ultimate expression of religious fervor Pyramids which lifted their oratories toward the sun, deities hewn from stone and fashioned from softer materials, elaborate traceries, rhythmic and joyous, on temple walls — these endure to-day in over eight hundred known monuments, some of them veritable cities

Art after the Conquest was also the expression of religious fervor Great cupolas whose deep blue and yellow tiles glinted afar in the sun, graceful belfries which lifted the cross sharply above sloping horizons, saints and holy families on copper and canvas — the transplanted painting of sixteenth and seventeenth century Spain, façades luxuriously exuberant in their *churrigeresque* detail — these are visible to-day in thousands of churches and in monasteries and colonial residences now destined to other usage

These soulful creations of religious devotion had ceased before Independence In its first century of national life there was, with a few salient exceptions, little in any of the arts that could be called national or racial Art, like political forms, like manners and customs, was an importation It had no roots in Mexican soil The dignity of Maya and Toltec temple, the loveliness of the belfried mission, and the appropriate beauty of the colonial mansion built of dull red *tezontle*, with its rich, yet restrained gray stone reliefs, had been succeeded by hybrid monstrosities like the Ministry of Public Works, or by amorphous masses of marble, like the unfinished Opera House Modern French statuary dotted parks whose trees had shaded the predecessors of the Aztecs Painters specialized in Parisian

ballet dancers, Sevillian señoritas with comb and mantilla, and idyllic pastoral landscapes, and neglected Mexican folk dancers, the gentle Indian and mestiza types, and — excepting the great landscapist, Velasco — were blind to the incredible beauty of their own land. It was the fashion to depreciate all things Mexican

Yet underneath the Mexican events of record, a current of native creation had trickled uninterruptedly Like Yucatán's buried rivers, which only here and there are visible from the surface to those eager to peer into the depths, the stream flowed on To-day one finds in the sierra *pueblos* and in the humblest homes on mesa and lowland, objects of everyday use of rare beauty, wrought in the spirit and form of pre-Conquest days These potteries, tapestries, wood-carvings, this lovingly elaborated leather work, these painted and lacquered chests and trays are analogous to the objects mediæval Europe used, which our machine age now seeks so eagerly for its museums They are the offerings of a race which has not yet learned to separate art from life

Now a new esteem of this Mexican creativeness is surging over Mexico Appreciation of it shows in a hundred ways Two folio volumes, "Las Artes Populares en México," written and profusely illustrated by a Mexican painter, poet, and publicist, Dr Atl, were published in 1922 by the Obregón Government — the first attempt at collating the evidence of a national fecundity without surviving parallel in the present day world The author's adoption of an Aztec name (*Atl* = "water") in place of his Hispanic patronymic, Gerardo Murillo, is a minor symptom of the revival of Indo-national sentiment Another young painter who similarly Aztecized her name is Carmen Mondragón — now Nahui Olin ("the four movements of the Sun")

Coincidently, Adolfo Best-Maugard, himself a conspicuous exponent of symmetrical grace in contemporary Mexican art, made an important contribution to the artistic renaissance Fifteen years before, while sketching archeological monuments for Professor Franz Boas, he discovered that inherent in the ancient paintings were seven fundamental motifs or lines, taken directly by the primitive artists from their impressions of nature As director of drawing under Vasconcelos, he developed this discovery into a technique of art instruction which gave contemporary Mexican children facile access to their objectives in line and color[1] He was merely guiding their irrepressible creative urge

The work of the master painters likewise reflects the new spirit They picture Mexico Their background is the Mexican landscape, the luminous landscape of golden desert and heliotrope mountains, the crumbling and mellow-tinted village walls of rose and orange and lavender, or the grayness

[1] A subsequently enlarged version has appeared in book form translated into English, entitled A Method for Creative Design

of adobe and dreary people when clouds pall the sun The subjects are the folk of Mexico The themes are drawn from the Mexican struggle

The new painting is, generally speaking, marked with realism It is tinged with irony and pathos But in its balance, its brilliant yet harmonious colors, it is intrinsically a product of the Indian influence — although several of its ablest exponents are ethnically unrelated to it

It is not within the scope of one chapter or one volume to do justice to the fecund outburst of the innately Mexican form of expression — painting — which is exhibited by children in Mexico City, in the "open air art school" originated by Alfredo Ramos Martínez in Coyacan, in the similar new schools in Tlalpam, Xochimilco, Guadalupe Hidalgo, in Guadalajara, Yucatán, and elsewhere, a creative impulse which has for centuries found expression in every handicraft, in the *retablos* — the votive paintings offered to saints for miraculous cures — in the ingenuous scenes on the walls of *pulque* shops, and now has risen to a new climax in the work of a score of artists It is possible to mention only a few of the more prominent and their work

II

Francisco Goitia, thirty-five years of age, mestizo, is still relatively unknown even in Mexico Shy and retiring — that is the Indian in him — and without the desire to step into the spotlight of fame, he works in poverty in his small home in the Indian village of Xochimilco, a home which it is his ambition, some day, to adorn with his frescoes His inability at times even to buy materials or to pay his models hinders his progress, since his tiny subsidy from the Ministry of Education hypothecates his pictures to it (they hang on its office walls) and a possibly larger income from a free sale of his works is not available due to his utter lack of capital with which to get an independent start No easily recognizable *genre* runs through Goitia's work Perfection of lighting alone distinguishes them as works of one man His canvases have been few — and not of great dimension But each is superb in execution and pregnant with meaning His "Baile Revolucionario" — the "Dance of the Revolution" — in a few square feet breathes the abandon of the Mexican Revolution A night scene — its darkness is suffused with amber warmth, the rose and saffron of the women's dresses light up the brighter but shadow-subdued blankets of the crouching and recumbent natives No one can make browns so rich and alive as Goitia His composition recalls the great tableaus of Velázquez, but here is more motion As the couples whirl one fairly hears the plaintive strumming, and feels the cadence of swaying bodies

"All the sorrow that is in Mexico," says Goitia, is in his picture of the two Indian women, perhaps mother and daughter, who crouch in the light of a lone candle All the grief — that falls so much more heavily on the

women — is graven on the wrinkled face of the old Indian and speaks through the hands that cover the tears of her younger comrade

"All the evil that is in Mexico," says Goitia, is in "The Witch's Face" — a life-size head Both literally and symbolically is it true The wretched "witch" portrays with harrowing fidelity the ravages that social dislocation — and its diseases — may work to render unrecognizable one of God's creatures

Not all of Goitia's subjects are somber though he is a master of light effects Something of Gerard Dou's love for night scenes permeates him — alluring in a country where the flickering *ocote* or kerosene torch, the *brasero's* embers, the candle and the glow of cigarettes alone scatter the darkness

But sometimes his paintings blaze with Mexican sunlight The white church set in a background of blue hills is dazzling, the blue sky was never bluer except in nature, the straight shadows of the green organ cactus lie purple across the sandy soil The white teeth of an Indian maid gleam in a countenance that glows with the bronzing of ages of sunlight

Such is Goitia whose canvases pant the Mexican anguish and sparkle with Mexican joy and light

III

Where Goitia entirely fulfils the tradition of garret obscurity, the fame of Diego Rivera has spread abroad To visit the jovial and robust Don Diego, to sit under his scaffolding as he lays his vivid colors on wet plaster with broad strokes, conjuring forth a tableau with incredible speed, has become as routine in the tourist's week as to visit the Pyramids or the Caves of Cacahuamilpa And well that it is so For nowhere else can hurried visitor or deliberate voyager see such a panorama of Mexico, so pulse the throb of revolutionary Mexico as in the flaming gallery that Rivera has made of the three-storied patio in the Ministry of Public Education

The Mexican at work, at play, before, during, and after the Revolution Here is a weaver's home workshop in the tropics, stripped to the waist, the brown bodies bend over rudimentary looms Next, the dyers of Tehuantepec, dipping the cloth into the Tyrian purple they have extracted from Pacific coast shells Adjacent, stately Tehuanas, red-skirted, with flower-embroidered *huipiles*, bear on their heads painted wooden trays heaped with pineapples, bananas, and mangos

The next wall deals with labor in central Mexico The miner emerging from the pit is searched by the armed mine guard The miner's hands are up, his head, from sheer fatigue droops — the symbolism of the crucifixion leaps out! How subtly the artist portrays Mexican sensitiveness This daily, though momentary humiliation, is to the worker a heavier cross than his days of darkness and body-breaking toil

Pendant to the mine — the *hacienda* Peons bent under the weight of grain sacks while the checker sits comfortably by, pencil in hand and the *capataz*, the manager, lips tightly drawn, keeps his thumbs idly in belt — but it is a cartridge belt from which hangs a pistol

Another *hacienda* Where the cords that tied the flaccid body of a peon who has just been whipped are being cut

In between, peasant and city worker meet in an embrace of mutual comforting "Disinherited of the field and city * * * united in struggle and pain * * *" begin the accompanying verses by Gutiérrez Cruz

The steel industry Red molten metal pouring into molds, turning dull red the dusky bodies of the workers

The Mexican at play The market place, folk dances, festivals, the "Day of the Dead", Holy Saturday with its "Judases", the Feast of Flowers along the Viga Canal — all these are riots of color, masterpieces of compression, in which the world variety of types that make Mexico pass in review White, brown, red, mestizos with green-blue eyes, blondes with brown eyes, the peroxide "city flapper," the Indian maid shawled in blue *reboso*, the city aristocrat, the *campesino*, the "Bohemian," the city worker, the soldier

Harvest of the Revolution Distribution of land — a tableau of the ceremonies Brown faces, white shirts, blue overalls, red banners in vertical splotches of color And into these great gatherings, Rivera has worked the martyrs of the Revolution, those who died that the people might get land — Zapata, Felipe Carrillo They appear again in separate panels — painted niches, saints of the popular creed — a bullet wound is over Carrillo's heart

This collection of frescoes, now nearing completion after four years, is so stupendous in conception, design, and color that the composite effect defies adequate description Hampered by the structural limitations of the edifice, the walls of which were not planned for decoration, with their frequent interruptions of doorway and stanchion, Rivera has preserved the architectonic requirements Complete in itself, each painting fills its space as part of the whole, achieving both structural harmony and unity of theme

This work of Diego Rivera is dynamic and irresistible It "grows on one" At first sight some are affronted by a certain simplified crudity Some are repelled by the gentle caricature of the artist's aversions He is wholly Indianophile — and the "bourgeoisie," which is preponderately "white," is the target for this artist of mixed blood To the criticism that he has missed the beautiful types in painting his women, he replies that their faces are beautiful to him A certain stolid, bovine quality in their visages is matched by spatular hands and feet which eliminate details of fingers and toes These are to Rivera the hands of "use" It is the disused hand of an effete civilization that is ugly, he says These details of controversy vanish in the compelling strength of Rivera's lines and masses of color One

senses that he is supremely master of his subject and his material — spiritually and mechanically — and his work is always unmistakable Underneath the unwrinkled, white one-piece garment of the sugar-mill workers, lifting the dead weight of molasses tubs, one feels the taut pull of their straining backs One feels the same hidden power under every Rivera brush stroke He is probably the greatest painter of our time, and the Mexican epic which he has painted in the heart of its educational building may yet be esteemed as the greatest achievement in painting in the western hemisphere

Rivera's prolificacy is phenomenal Besides the work in the Secretaría, his great fresco of "The Creation" backs the stage of the amphitheater in the preparatory school (and the five-year interval since its completion marks an enormous improvement in his work) Other impressive murals adorn the agricultural school at Chapingo, and he has found time for a great variety of smaller canvases, sketches, and illustrations He conveys more of the spirit of Mexico in fewer lines than any other artist [1] His brush is constantly at the disposal of every revolutionary "cause" with which he is in sympathy His poster, designed to show the peasants that the return of the *ejidos* was not in violation of the divine law as they had been told, is a striking example of the fusion in Mexico of art and propaganda, which is characteristic of much contemporary painting It had a wide effect throughout rural Mexico Now, his preliminary sketch of a gigantic triptych for the main stairway in the National Palace, which tells Mexico's story from remotest times to present, indicates that possibly still greater achievement lies ahead for Diego Rivera

IV

Pathos arising from profound sympathy for the "under dog" and acrid irony derived from an uncompromising hate of sham and oppression, are the diverging — or possibly, the parallel — strains which dominate the paintings of José Clemente Orozco Curiously his technique reflects his varying moods His frescoes in the Escuela Preparatoria might be the work of two different men, or of three men, if one go outside of Revolutionary subjects to a pre-Raphaelite birth of Christ, in which the influence of Giotto and Botticelli is clearly discernible

Having lost one hand, Orozco could not fight on during the Revolution, but he went through its campaigns, saw its agonies, its sordid scramble for loot, its betrayals And he painted them His sympathy goes out to the parents walking behind the body of their son who died for Revolution, for the prostitutes in brothels — the rejects of society, for the *soldaderas*, the women dragging themselves after the Revolutionists throughout their long marches How expressive he makes their backs! Suffering, resignation, infinite weariness, is painted into their simple curves

[1] His fine illustrations of Dr Alfons Goldschmidt's Mexiko are a revelation of his skill



THE REVOLUTIONARY DANCE

Oil painting by Francisco Goitia



"HOME SCENE IN HIDALGO"

Pencil drawing by Maximo Pacheco

But his irony lashes out savagely at the politicians who have robbed the people who elevated them to power, at the labor leaders who imprint a "Judas kiss" on the humble worker's cheek, at the clergy, and — at the boasted accomplishments of the Revolution itself!

In the patio of the Preparatoria assigned to Orozco for decoration — below a bitterly anticlerical painting, showing a beringed hand receiving the coppers dropped into the offertory box by toilers' hands emerging from tattered sleeves — there is also a heroic size "Liberty," a toothless hag with Phrygian cap askew, who, while breaking the "chains of serfdom," is leering suggestively at the people's betrayers Beneath is the curious phenomenon of a painted pun Another Phrygian cap — symbol of liberty — and a flat-iron are juxtaposed Now *plancha*, the Spanish word for flat-iron, means also in Mexican slang "a sell" — something which did not turn out as promised The liberty promised the Mexican people is a delusion! Breaking their chains was a joke! Their vaunted "liberators" have sold them out! And in adjacent paintings, politicians with diamonds in shirt front and on their fingers are drinking champagne with prostitutes sitting on their laps, while the workers toil on to support these orgies

The real import of these graphic indictments is that they are on walls of government buildings, paid for by the Government, and remain there without a breath of official objection Which brings into relief that, in certain respects, greater freedom exists in Mexico than in the United States

More liberty in Mexico than in the United States? Incredible! Yet such is the case despite apparently contradictory incidents described elsewhere in these pages Except within limited spheres where some special course of action brings conflict with political authorities or runs afoul of some dominant current of "social" purpose, there is an atmosphere of personal independence unknown in most parts of the United States In Mexico a man may live as he pleases, think what he pleases, say what he pleases — that is considered his own business He is not ostracized for it Neither organized society, nor self-appointed regulators of beliefs, morals, or personal acts seek to regiment him in a mass formation, to make him bow to local taboos, or to conform to conventional standards "What the neighbors think" is not a force in Mexico And occasional Americans, of an essentially individualistic turn of mind, have, somewhat to their surprise, gratefully found the truer intellectual freedom of Mexico a relief from that experienced at home in the land "of liberty" and of professed individualists

Certainly a parallel to Orozco's mural satires would be unthinkable in the United States One need only recall the rumpus over MacMonnies's "Bacchante" in Boston, and the frequent suppressions of plays and books to imagine the fate of a painter (and his paintings) who, commissioned to decorate a city high-school, painted the ward politics and bossism of his municipality *as they are!*

The reaction of various Mexican officials to whom I spoke of the Orozco paintings was illuminating Two replied in effect—"Well, he is the painter, it is his right to choose his subject" Two others chuckled uproariously, saying of the paintings, "They're immense, they're priceless!" One said, "If only the rest of the teaching in the Preparatoria were so veridical, the boys would learn something" And another, a deputy, said with a smile "It would be more appropriate to have the painting about the politicians in the chamber of deputies, and the one about the priests in the cathedral The students can't appreciate them!"

The United States could learn much from Mexico in regard to freedom of expression and tolerance And a saving grace about Mexico's worst abuses is that those who practise them are generally ready, humorously, to admit the worst Like *Cyrano de Bergerac*, however, they prefer to be the ones to poke fun at their own defects I well remember asking President Obregón in jest on a trip to the ceremonies incident to the renewal of work by the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1923, where the bandits were that I had expected to see in the country — and his reply "When I left the country and came into the city, the bandits came in with me!"

V

Orozco's experience is not unique Nor has he monopolized the idea that militarism and clericalism are two of the burdens which the Mexican people bear This concept is likewise carved in the panels of the door of the university at Guadalajara The design is by the painter David Alfaro Siqueiros, and the execution by twenty-three-year-old Juan Hernández, sculptor by avocation, mechanic by trade Siqueiros's conception of the government's policy of "disarming the agrarian" reveals two army officers emptying their revolvers into a sleeping peasant

Mexican artists tend easily to caricature García Cabral and Miguel Covarrubias are the most conspicuous in a considerable group wholly given to it And by implication at least much of the contemporary art is distinctly "tendencious" No more gripping epitome of the iron of the Mexican Revolution has been penned or painted than Leopoldo Méndez's "El Fusilamiento"—the firing squad at work, which, with all its deliberate restraint, breathes the artist's condemnation of this too common Mexican procedure And Ramón Alva's "Tren Militar"—the "Troop Train"—shows an institution that is both uniquely Mexican and of the Revolution

A strikingly plastic quality, a heightening of the three-dimensional effect, characterizes the work of many younger painters There is a primitive joy in their neat rhythmic arrangement of maguey plants, trees, tiles, stones All these become unusually tangible in the work of Maximo Pacheco, an Indian lad, barely in his twenties, who, working as a plasterer for Diego

Rivera, became filled with a longing to paint — and did so His interiors of the humble Mexican home are as significant of his time and place as those of the younger Teniers Now Pacheco is completing the decoration of the Domingo Sarmiento School, one of the new open air schools, which the Government has wisely assigned to him

The renaissance in art is largely a youth movement Its most promising product was Abraham Angel, who died in 1924, at the age of nineteen, leaving behind him portraits tenderly minutious, landscapes almost stereoscopic in the saliency of their trees and buildings, and all so true, so savory, so Mexican, that they form an imperishable record of the everyday types of his time — "The Indian," "The Lovers," "The Waitress," "The Cadet"

Of him Best-Maugard wrote in a monograph [1] published shortly after his death "Abraham Angel achieved * * * the perfect expression of the popular spirit of Mexico"

The same quality which appears to the new-comer at first as "naïve" but is really "native" in that it sees the scene through Indian eyes, is found also in the work of Manuel Rodrigo Lozano If his execution appears "primitive," it is so Not the "primitiveness" of sophistication which deliberately bungles perspective, but the truthful crudeness of a race that while innately at home with color and rhythm, is feeling its way in the more complex matter of form, and therefore painting painstakingly and literally How clearly these characters are revealed in Lozano's "El Corrido," which represents that common event in the life of Mexican folk, singing on a street corner, to guitar accompaniment, of some new popular *corrido* or ballad!

VI

The art of coloring reaches unusual heights in the wholly different work of three unrelated revolutionary painters — Carlos Mérida, Fernando Leal, and Dr Atl All love color for color's sake In varying ways they reflect an environment in which both Nature's and man's designs are but arrangements of color contrasts and sequences where mountains daily live through a chromatic scale, their form only a changing stain on the more luminous background of sky, and where native clothes are only blocks of color — red, blue, white

Mérida, for whom outline is nothing but a transition of color, obtains a kaleidoscopic effect which would suggest Byzantine mosaics did it not first achieve a result that is more Indian-Mexican

Leal, who does not neglect outline, successfully combines the brilliant colors that in Mexican nature do not clash in scarlet poinsettia, magenta bougainvillia, vermilion geranium, purple petunia, heliotrope, crimson roses, the orange tiger lily, and the carmine tulip! Every one of the hues is found,

[1] Abraham Angel, Mex., 1924

with the matchless harmony of stained glass, in Leal's fresco in the Preparatory School, of the Indian Feast of Chalma

Atl, who has specialized in Popocatepetl, to whose nearly 18,000-foot summit he has climbed more than a hundred times, whose beauty and mystery he never tires of rehearsing in lyric prose, in poetry, and in paint, likewise achieves his effects by pure color The volcano's infinite distances, its desolation, its mystic moods, its breath-taking might, he has interpreted in hundreds of paintings, all different, and nearly all memorable [1] On the patio walls in the School of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Atl has likewise captured a bit of Mexican coast, a fantastic shore of orange and porphyry cliffs against which an ultramarine sea dashes its emerald surf by day, and where by night the oily blackness of a tropic deep, electric with green phosphorescence, mirrors the steel blue and topaz stars of the sparkling firmament

VII

Unusually versatile is Jean Charlot, of preponderantly French and some Mexican origin, but wholly identified with the present art movement in Mexico He has left behind his style of five years ago represented by a great fresco in the Preparatoria, of the assault of Alvarado's steel-jacketed horsemen against the unarmed Aztecs on the day of the flower festival, and another in the Education Building, of Indians bearing stone blocks up a mountainside In those days Charlot, who is not yet thirty, was under the influence of the Cubists and of Diego Rivera He was not then expressing himself Since then, landscapes, intimate patios, "types," portraits — oils, water-colors, pastels, wood-cuts, pen and ink — have come forth in increasing variety and excellence Perceptive, sensitive and intelligent, Charlot has not yet "found himself" with the instinctive certainty that reveals the purely indigenous artist

Roberto Montenegro is the most finished of contemporary Mexican painters More conventional than his fellows, his work more easily finds a common denominator of appreciation His work is cosmopolitan and his range of subjects is wide Historical episodes of Mexico's past, symbolic representations of the great religions of the world, which adorn the walls of the Minister of Education's private office, a decorative fresco in the School of Music, a fusion of Greek and Indian spirit, showing the influence of both classic tradition and native environment

VIII

Not only is the work of these Mexican artists compelling, their personalities are a part of the revolutionary crop They have sprung from a soil

[1] They do not, unfortunately, reproduce adequately in black and white



THE FEAST OF CHALMA

Encaustic Painting by Fernando Leal (in the Escuela Preparatoria, Mexico City). A picture of the annual dances that take place in connection with the Festival of Our Lord of Chalma in the State of Morelos



"THE LOVERS"

Oil painting by Abraham Angel

plowed by Revolution, wet by its tears, fertilized by its blood More nearly than any other group, they sustain the idealism which others never had or early lost One of them may serve as a type

Major Bulmaro Guzmán, who is in his thirty-first year, has the double distinction of being both a painter and having fought in the Revolution, or to put it in another way, he is one of the few of the younger military men, who have contributed something to his country besides service in the field As it is, his military record is unusual At the age of fifteen, immediately after the Victoriano Huerta *cuartelazo*, he entered the Constitutionalist army, under the leadership of General Francisco Urquizo His espousal of this cause was wholly natural — for he was a native of Cuatro Ciénagas, Coahuila, Madero's and Carranza's state He served Don Venustiano to the bitter end — when all others had deserted — and was present at Tlaxcalantongo, when the First Chief was shot to death by General Antonio Herrero's raiders

Young Guzmán's loyalty to his commander proved no subsequent handicap From the opposite camp General Obregón recognized this constancy, and the young soldier continued to serve Now he teaches sketching at the military school in San Jacinto

Bulmaro Guzmán was a pupil of Professor Ramos Martínez, who in the Obregón administration originated the open air art schools Professor Martínez creates charming Watteauesque pastels of graceful damsels tripping on flower-studded green lawns His former pupil has abandoned his master's idyllic landscapes for the Mexican scene, and has substituted for pastoral softness some revolutionary sternness in color and design

His best work is a canvas about six feet square, "La Merienda," a sort of Mexican picnic — or better, an "al fresco" repast of a higher order — usually in the afternoon The five figures variously grouped around the table laid in the Mexican outdoors are a cross section of Mexico's people Two young ladies of the "upper class," white, *criollas*, the young *charro* turns his face away, but his light hair suggests that he too is of the same social class and race The buxom and smiling girl, serving a great platter of sliced watermelon, is the typical *criada*, fresh from her *pueblo*, while the aged, weather-beaten, *jorongo*-clad Indian is the gnarled *viejito* whose stock is firmly rooted in the soil Still somewhat idyllic, the painting wholly conveys the Mexican fragrance It is first a symphony of color — an oil in pastel shades, from the distant, cloud-shadowed blue and copper peak, the nearer brown hills, pinkish in the afternoon light, the lavender and rose mesa dotted with green maguey, to the vivid figures that gracefully occupy the foreground — the Indian's red and brown *jorongo*, the fleshy black-seeded watermelon against the Indian maid's cerise dress, the bright flowers in the foreground, the blue and silver-buttoned *charro* trousers, the green and yellow fruit and Oaxaca pottery on the table, while from the gay *jarra* at the youth's

feet comes the enticing suggestion of *pulque rosa*, the mesa beverage, rosy with fruit juice The bright red knobs on his vivid green chair, the blue flower which the girl at the table is pinning to her dress, and the sun-lit green leaves at right and banana palm at left (a phantasy when located on the temperate plateau) give the painting a brilliance and mingling of pastoral charm, and realism, which embody the elusive magic and sensational beauty of Mexico — the caressing warmth of its mesa sun, the coolness of its mesa air

Major Guzmán, unlike most of the other post-revolutionary moderns, paints without *genre* No Cubistic or Impressionistic influences affect him Light and color are his media in landscape, while his portraiture lacks nothing in plasticity and force His Indian heads — more than life-size — have depth He is still young and relatively inexperienced, his subjects are still conventional He has done canvases and quick illustrating for the Military College "Review" Unlike his civilian comrades of the palette he has had no opportunity at frescoes Given the chance he should go far, for there are suggestions of intuitive skill about his work which denote undeveloped genius rather than finished craftsmanship

The figures in "La Merienda," incidentally, except "Don Panchito," the old Indian model, are fellow artists — the *criolla* at the table is Celia Redondo, her kneeling companion, Raquel Lluch, the *charro*, Jesús Sánchez, and the Indian maid, Jacoba Rojas

Other painters who should be mentioned are Xavier Guerrero, Amado de la Cueva, killed in a motor-cycle accident in 1926, Rufino Tamayo, Carlos González, who in addition to his frescoes and canvases is making his mark as a painter of stage settings, Agustín Lazo, Rosario Cabrero, Fermín Revueltas, Carlos Orozco, Gabriel Fernández Ledesma, Jorge Enciso, Julio Castellanos, Porfirio Aguirre, Joaquín Clausell, Emilio Caero, Angel Zarraga, Carlos Gutiérrez Cruz (better known as a poet), and Agapito Rincón, who in small pastels bottles the color and warmth of sun-lit village street and holds the ethereal zenith of Ixtaccihuatl

Many more should rightly be named, many hidden under the anonymity of the "unknown painter," who is nearly every Mexican!

Of the sculptors mention may be made of Fidias Elizondo, Ignacio Azúnzolo, Yela Gunther, who (though born in Guatemala) has expressed Mexico in bas-relief, Manuel Centurión, and Guillermo Ruíz

IX

A word must also be said on a subject to which much more space should be consecrated — music "Music in this country," wrote Madame de la Barca more than three quarters of a century ago, "is a sixth sense" And a thorough student of Mexican folkways declares that "the musical feeling

of Mexicans is extraordinary, and their interest in music is greater than for any other of the arts "[1]

Little is known of the pre-Conquest music Modifications of its drums, the *uevetl* and *teponaztli*, survive in remoter villages, as well as a variety of wind instruments of wood, reed, and horn But when the more developed Spanish instrumentation was introduced by the priests for religious ceremonials, it found a complement in the Indian sense of rhythm, which gave the resultant music a new vitality and a character all its own Music in Mexico has become an almost universal form of expression From the humblest *choza* floats song In every patio, while flowers greet the eye, melody welcomes the ear At nightfall the sweet harmonies of a lover's serenade rise in the moonlight Strolling musicians, *mariachi* orchestras of stringed instruments, chiefly guitar and harp, are everywhere The most menial task is performed to the spirit-lifting accompaniment of song — perhaps that is why the Mexicans have been able to endure so much These songs, generally wistful, express the melancholy of a people that has suffered much, has experienced much disillusion, has learned through bitter experience to commune with its own sorrows

To know the Mexican people one should be familiar with its songs For not only the music is significant, in its variations from the little more than rhythmic monotone among the less developed indigenous groups to the sophisticated syncopations of the capital The words of the songs reveal much that is expressed in no other way

The commonest form of musical expression is the *corrido*, literally, "current happening" Any event that touches the people immediately finds its way into this form of ballad Its words are printed on a gaudy sheet of paper, usually green or pink, embellished often by a lurid wood cut The verse is doggerel and the music a "catchy" refrain But the *corridos* are a valuable index to popular thought During the Revolution Zapata outranked all other figures in the variety and number of *corridos* about him Villa, pictured as "muy hombre," the hero of gigantic exploits, came next Carranza did not figure in *corridos* — he made no appeal to popular imagination "The arm of Obregón" — the arm lost on the field of battle — did Heroic, tragic, gruesome, pathetic themes prevail Deeds of valor, floods, earthquakes, famines, calamities generally, which affect the people are instantly sung The writer usually begins by announcing the subject of his verse — as if addressing an audience, and in concluding often takes leave of it He is a modern troubadour — but instead of offering his vocal wares to the mighty, as of old, the people are his patrons, for the *corridos* are sold for a centavo or two in the markets

An essential quality of the *corridos* is their ingenuousness The writer is wholly frank He tells not only of his hero's prowess, but of his weaknesses

[1] Atl, Las Artes Populares en México, vol II p 199

— his drunkenness, his offenses against law and order, his fickleness to his sweethearts, as well as their faithlessness And just as he views the hero of his theme without illusion he applies similar measurements to the great and near-great of his country — the generals and politicians The shrewdness of many ballads indicates a keen sense of reality A few verses of typical *corridos* may be quoted

BALLAD OF EMILIANO ZAPATA AND FRANCISCO I MADERO

Harken, educated public, to the song about our martyr,
Verses telling you the story of Emiliano Zapata,
Of his taking up of arms, and to fight then like a hero,
To defend the noble cause of Francisco I Madero

On the twentieth of November when the war blazed up in terror,
Was Madero in San Luis, and Zapata in his *tierra*,
And Zapata helped Madero, helped him to achieve a victory,
Feeling that the plans of each contained nothing contradictory

But, no land was being given, "And if now Madero fail us,
We'll fight on," declared Zapata, "we the people of Morelos,
We, the suffering *campesinos*, who have lived till now in squalor,"
And he thereupon proclaimed revolt — the Plan of Villa Ayala

And so on for many verses *Corridos* of this sort are innumerable Another typical revolutionary ballad is the following, recording an episode in the struggle against Victoriano Huerta

THE TAKING OF ZACATECAS BY VILLA, URBINA, NATERA, ETC

Hah! You drunkard Victoriano,
Your bad heart will slip a beat,
When you hear of Zacatecas
Where your troops have met defeat

On the twenty-third of June —
I address those who are here,
"Pancho" Villa stormed the city,
Taking it by front and rear

All the streets of Zacatecas
Were piled high with federal dead,
And the few that were not slaughtered,
Early in the day had fled

For some federals were so frightened,
That they hid in women's skirts,
Pulling them up over trousers,
And mantillas over shirts



MAJOR BUTMARO GUZMAN

Portrait of the painter by himself



"REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH"

Wood carving by Juan Hernandez from design by Xavier Guerrero for furniture in house of Jose Guadalupe Zuno, Guadalajara

The following ballad of the boy soldier reveals the pathos and frankness characteristic of the *corridos*:

CORRIDO OF THE SOLDIER BOY

At the age of fifteen
With many men abler,
I was pressed into service
In the Fifteenth Puebla

I marched and I fought,
In battles quite noted,
And after a while
Was duly promoted

Then tired of fighting
For home I did grieve,
So I simply deserted,
And went back without leave

And while with my mother
As happy as could be,
The patrol arrived there
Looking for me

Señores, señores,
Oh, please do not harm me!
You scoundrel, you rascal,
You deserted the army!

So they took me away
While my mother cried,
Before my own colonel
Who ordered me tried

Good-by, little brothers,
Dear parents, farewell,
Here my sins end,
I have no more to tell

Perspicacity in regard to a common type of "Revolutionary" general is revealed in the following

OH! MY BELOVED GENERAL!

Lieutenant Killseven
Got up at ten,

A lieutenant at eleven,
He was a captain at twelve,
At ten minutes past noon
General of a Division

Chorus

Oh! Oh! My beloved general!
Oh! Oh! My beloved general!
How foxy was my general!
Who never overlooked anything!

He showed great bravery
In the wars he won,
He was two leagues away
While the fighting was on,
Proving thus to the world
That greater man there was none

Chorus

Oh! Oh! My beloved general!
etc

He made a sharp advance
Against the peasants' land,
He became rich and famous
After six months in command,
And owned more farms
Than ever he had planned

Chorus

Oh! Oh! etc

But not content with his lot,
Against his government he rose
Taking part in a plot,
A court-martial tried him
And had him shot,
And that was the end of my general

The tense situation between the United States and Mexico in 1926 during the exchange of notes over the Mexican legislation enacting various provisions of the Constitution of 1917, brought forth the following satire

THE DESIRES OF UNCLE SAM

(Ballad of the Constitution)

The Constitution of Seventeen
Does me annoy
I'll pull a few tricks —
Those laws I'll destroy

Its article twenty-seven
Aims to take our *haciendas*
But our army and navy
Will surely defend us

Its article one-twenty-three
Is friendly to labor
We can't stand such laws
In our next door neighbor

We shall not permit
That these articles stay so
We shall triumph again
Through our *Doctrina Monroe*

And out of the same situation came the following

BALLAD OF INTERVENTION

Mother mine of Guadalupe,
In your blessings do make mention
Of your son who goes to fight
Against the intervention

Oh! I'll gladly shed my blood,
Dear mother of all creation,
Before permitting our banner,
To be stamped on by another nation

Oh! Dear holy Guadalupan,
Whom we worship and adore,
Do not let the strangers enter,
Do not let them spill our gore

While these *corridos* reflect the spirit of the great mass of the Mexican people, and are the closest approach to national folk-songs, the social and ethnic extremes are not included in that form of expression. At one end

are the purely indigenous who know little or no Spanish and still keep their tribal songs, which vary wholly with each region At the other end is the urban intelligentsia, still dominated by foreign and Spanish influences, and scarcely affected by the Revolution

Three anthologies of Mexican poetry have appeared in little more than a decade, all giving particular emphasis to the most recent verse [1] The most striking phenomenon about these poets is their complete divorce from the Mexican scene They versify on the subjects which have appealed to poets traditionally — the sea, dawn, a flower, but it is not even a Mexican sea, dawn, or flower, that they sing They write in a void unrelated to earthly existence Out of 113 poems of the most modern group of fifty poets, nearly all living, only two poems deal with a Mexican theme [2] One is an Aztec legend, the other, entitled, "The House of Montejo," describes the beautiful colonial residence that *conquistador* built himself in Mérida, it would be impossible to find a more Spanish subject in Yucatán [3] One may take as typical of the other 111 the selection of poems by José Juan Tablada, which are respectively entitled, "Onyx," "Japan," "Prologue," "The Bees," "Bamboo," "The Peacock," "The Heron" Or those of Amado Nervo, who died in 1919, considered by many to be Mexico's greatest poet "To Kempis," "In Flanders," "Old Song," "Sad," "Song of the Mayflower," "Cowardice," "Offering to God," "Unity," "The Gift," "In Peace," "The Cross-roads," "Always," and "Not Yet"

The point is interesting for several reasons It shows that the Revolution has found no spontaneous expression through the written word, as it has in painting — another indication that the Revolution is at bottom an ethnic manifestation, since it has flowered especially in the one form of expression that is particularly indigenous, and not at all in the forms that are "creole," "white," "Hispanic" These terms, while not registering exactly, do denote one of the two cultures that have existed side by side in Mexico

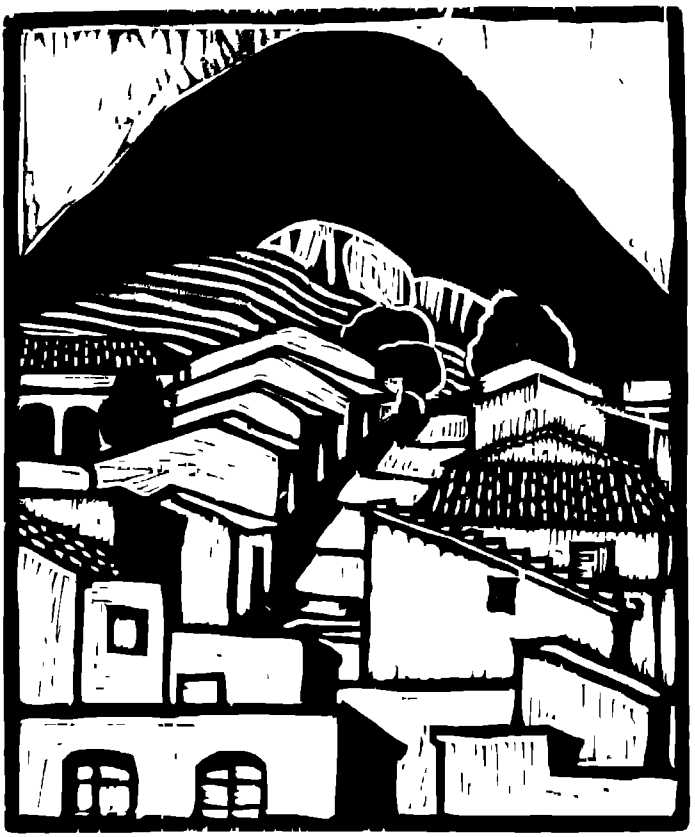
Certainly the poetry of the Mexican poets as revealed in their anthologies is neither revolutionary nor Mexican — it might have come from any Hispanic country, which further reaffirms the corollary that the Revolution is a nationalist movement, it emphasizes things Mexican It is a curiously paradoxical detail that the anthology from which the above selections were drawn ("Lírica Mexicana") is illustrated with designs from Maya and Aztec monuments They are the only visible evidence in that book of "Mexican" poetry of a Mexican background

The revolutionary and nationalistic aspect of verse and song, of poetry

[1] Poetas Nuevos de México, Estrada ed, Pub 1916, Lírica Mexicana, 1919, Antología de Poetas Modernos de México, 1920

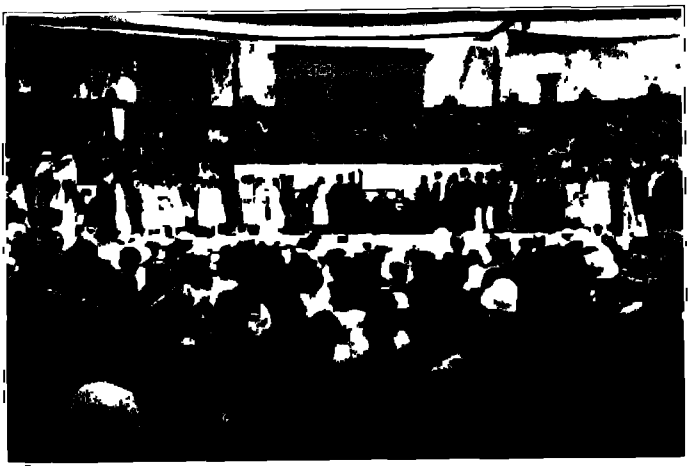
[2] Lírica Mexicana, p 105–315

[3] Yet its author, Antonio Mediz Bolio has written a beautiful *prose* interpretation of Maya legend La Tierra del Faisán y del Venado



MEXICAN VILLAGE

Woodcut by Carlos Orozco





(*Photos by the author*)

"MUSIC IN MEXICO HAS BECOME AN ALMOST UNIVERSAL FORM OF EXPRESSION"

(Above) chorus of working people giving an open air concert under the auspices of the Department of Education in Chapultepec Park 1924 (below) working girls' orchestra in army supply factory at Tacubaya 1924

and music, is the awakened interest in the native manifestations For the first time they are being collected and studied, and to a certain extent are serving as an inspiration for a group of musicians, who are collecting, writing, playing, and singing songs [1] The most conspicuous of these is Ignacio Fernández Esperón, more widely known by his pen name of "Tata Nacho" His "La Borrachita" (The Little Drunken Girl), "Adiós, Mi Chaparrita" (Good-by, My Little One), "La Morenita Tapatía" (The Little Brown Maid from Jalisco), are among his many popular songs which are peculiarly Mexican "La Borrachita" was selected by Calles as his campaign song in 1924

In the Revolution each of the contending groups had its marching song, usually a popular ditty whose words were wholly unrelated to any revolutionary cause, and whose music was a fairly simple, swinging refrain "Adelita" was chosen by the Zapatistas, "La Cucaracha" (The Cockroach) by the Villistas, and "Valentina" by the Carrancistas Another popular composer is Alfonso Esparza Oteo Among the collectors and interpreters of folk-songs, Concepción Michel and Carmen Herrera de Mendizábal are worthy of note Finally there is the Yucatecan music, with its rich, mellow, and sensuous harmonies, its sweet and plaintive melodies, whose chief contemporary exponent is Ricardo Palmerín Its best examples are his "La Peregrina" (The Pilgrim) and "Las Golondrinas" (The Swallows) An analogy exists between the Yucatecan and Hawaiian music, though the former lacks the cloying quality of the Pacific islanders' It is not unlikely before long to be widely known, which it deserves to be, as the expression of a very special and unique culture that is reviving in the general Mexican renaissance

It is in the arts — in painting, now, and perhaps before long, music — and above all in its emphasis on individual craftsmanship that Mexico can make its greatest contribution to the Americas and to the world Here may lie the goal of Alfonso Reyes's quest for the Mexican soul

> A people saves itself when it discovers the message it has brought to the world, when it finds its pole-star, real or imagined, and steers toward it The creation was not an idle sport Every fact holds its secret meaning and one must press it passionately to extract its hieroglyphic essence Search for the national soul! That would be my constant message to the youth of my country I decline to accept history as a mere cumulation of chance events that are silent There is a voice which comes from the depth of our past griefs above the chaos of our rancors * * * Who will understand the call * * * and hear in its mystic confusion of sound and thought the answer to our cry, the cure of our dissidence, the key to national concord? [2]

[1] Among these collections already published are Sones, Canciones y Corridos Michoacanos, collected by Francisco Domínguez under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, and Musica Popular * * * de Oaxaca pub by Gov Genaro Vásquez of that state, in 1924 "Tata Nacho" has likewise collected several hundred of native songs

[2] Reyes, Mexican minister to France and Argentina, is one of Mexico's best known poets

CONCLUSION

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WHAT lies ahead for Mexico?

To that question any study of Mexico invariably leads It is easy to ask — impossible to answer with any degree of assurance The deeper one goes into the circumstances that have contributed to create present day Mexico, the less one feels inclined to prophesy, the more hesitant to affirm the certainty of a sequential course of events The "if" is too dominant in every prognosis to exclude its reverse as a possibility The largest "if" which includes all others is the likelihood of Mexico's freeing itself from its heritage To what degree can Mexico get rid of the legacies of political and social ill health, to what extent synthesize into a more harmonious and functioning unity widely disparate racial, chronological, and economic elements The same question may be put in a variety of ways What is the prospect of Mexico forging out of its heterogeneous materials — a nation that can endure? What are the chances of achieving permanent and augmenting "peace, prosperity, and happiness" for the Mexican people? And if no categorical reply can be given, what are the factors which may now be grouped as social and anti-social?

To bring these into relief a brief summary of the Calles administration, now in its fourth and last year, will be helpful

Administratively Mexico has made definite progress under Calles The federal departments which bulk relatively much larger in the life of Mexico than in the United States, are more efficiently organized than at any previous time

In the matter of personnel the picture is varied and contradictory In Calles, Mexico has had a leader who combined in a higher degree than any previous executive the qualities of public spirit, devotion to ideals, ability, inflexibility of purpose, character, and strength The avoidable shortcomings of the Calles régime have been due to errors in judgment which have been reflected in a part of his official entourage

Few executives have been freer to select their assistants than Calles He was virtually free from commitments With the failure of the de la Huerta rebellion, Calles automatically became the candidate of every numerically important or otherwise potent group in the republic — army, peasantry, the greater part of labor If any political obligation there was, it was to

Obregón, and to the generals who remained faithful to the Obregón administration and helped defeat the military treachery aimed at the Calles candidacy The obligation to Obregón should not, however, be considered personal Obregón was merely seeking to maintain himself and his Government against a coup d'état No evidence exists that previous to the de la Huerta revolt he had lifted a finger to "impose" Calles, although obviously Calles was the only man capable of succeeding to the presidency, and Obregón better than anyone else appreciated that fact Obregón had requited the generals with promotions and "gratifications" before the end of his term Calles merely continued them in their posts

To no other group or individual was Calles obligated, except to the inner circle of the C R O M headed by Morones They formed battalions in the rebellion and among the civilian element were the backbone of his candidacy In placing Morones in the cabinet — and a cabinet position has far greater importance in Mexico than in the United States — Calles not merely repaid a political debt but went far beyond a mere political obligation by giving organized labor a recognition and a standing exceeding what it ever had had Morones was the acknowledged leader of Mexican labor at the time, had achieved an unprecedented feat as an organizer His appointment appeared unusually sagacious Its advantageous results may be summed up in the loyalty and dependable support which the C R O M group has given Calles throughout, especially in the crises through which his Government has passed The disadvantageous results were an alienation of one wing of labor, the Mexican Federation, from all other labor and from the peasants, and above all in an economic prostration to which the inadequacy of Morones as minister of industry contributed Legitimate business, of which Mexico has been and is so sorely in need, could find little basis of understanding with the Ministry of Industry An exception should be made of mining, which was in contact with an efficiently conducted department within the ministry The influence of Morones was likewise unfortunate in the controversy with the petroleum interests

The appointments of Generals Joaquín Amaro and of Miguel Piña as secretary and subsecretary of war, were free from politics and dictated by considerations of efficiency and dependability The same cannot be said of the appointment of General Abundio Gómez as *Oficial Mayor* in the War Office — the third ranking position Gómez was merely an ex-governor of the State of Mexico, out of a job, with nothing in his gubernatorial record to commend him for further public service

The appointment of Gilberto Valenzuela as minister of Gobernación was a promotion in line of service He had been subsecretary when Calles headed that ministry in Obregón's cabinet Valenzuela knew the workings of Gobernación intimately If not a distinguished figure in public life, he was a conscientious public servant His resignation in protest against the

recognition, over his recommendation, of Riva Palacio as governor of Mexico,[1] revealed an unusual degree of courage and fidelity to principle It appeared at the time that political rivalry between two groups sparring for power, with Valenzuela aspiring to head one, Morones the other, underlay the episode Political considerations within the cabinet may have been present to a degree Yet the records of Gobernación are irrefutable Calles was swayed and betrayed by personal friendship The result has not been happy

Adalberto Tejeda, who succeeded Valenzuela as head of the cabinet, had previously been secretary of public works Under Obregón, he had been governor of Vera Cruz During the de la Huerta rebellion, he was active in behalf of the Government A cultivated, civilized gentleman, he is utterly lacking in force, energy, and executive ability He has been merely a rubber stamp for the administration's wishes

Luis León, best known for his oratory, had served during the post-revolutionary days in various posts He was an active campaigner for Calles, to whom he was deeply devoted, and who reciprocated the young man's affection Calles made him secretary of agriculture, for which his training as an agronomist gave him some claim The appointment was personal rather than political Calles with a very definite idea of agrarian reform, wanted an obedient executor of orders, rather than an initiator León did extraordinarily well The Calles-León combination gave land distribution an impetus which it had lacked León did his work efficiently, until in his case as in that of so many others, the Mexican heritage reasserted itself He became enmeshed with one of the capital's well-known actresses After a while even a cabinet officer's income could not support her extravagances The temptation to exploit his office became overpowering After repeated admonitions, the President was compelled to ask for his friend's and Minister's resignation Subsecretary José G Parres, who succeeded to the head of the Ministry of Agriculture, is a devoted public servant, honest and clean-cut His administrative ability remains to be tried

The secretary of the treasury, Alberto J Pani, a hold-over from the Obregón administration, served ably in that office until, in a mounting rivalry with Morones, he was forced out of the cabinet Pani had never been sympathetic with the activities of organized labor He was known as the *"Conservative" in both Obregón's and Calles's cabinets Although he had* served every revolutionary administration since Madero's in important capacities, he has never impressed himself on the popular imagination as a disinterested revolutionary apostle His ability, however, is unquestioned, and his book "Hygiene in Mexico," one of the Revolution's most important contributions to Mexican social progress His involvement of his Government in a public scandal when he took a well-known actress to New York

[1] See p 460

when sent to negotiate an adjustment of the foreign debt, revealed a rare degree of tolerance in the nation's executive Possibly the fact that the exposure was due to the efforts of de la Huertistas in New York, enemies both of Pani and of the administration, impelled President Calles to overlook this minister's indiscretion

The Ministry of Foreign Relations, under Aarón Sáenz as secretary and Genaro Estrada as subsecretary, was another hold-over from the Obregón administration It is in the field of diplomacy that Mexicans excel The Mexican diplomatic corps includes some of the nation's most distinguished sons Letters and diplomacy are closely associated in the Mexican tradition Besides Genaro Estrada — author, critic, and bibliophile — the diplomatic corps is adorned with Alfonso Reyes, Antonio Medíz Bolio, Luis Quintanilla, the Nervo brothers — the late Amado, and Rodolfo — Alfonso Cravioto, Carlos Trejo y Lerdo de Tejada, Pascual Ortiz Rubio, Enrique González Martínez, Francisco Urquidi, Rafael Cabrera, Efrén Rebolledo, Antonio Castro Leal, Gustavo Villatoro, Luciano Joublanc Rivas, and others, significant in contemporary Mexican literature But the outstanding example in the Calles administration of appointment on a basis of merit may be found in the naming of Manuel Téllez as ambassador to the United States He had been chargé d'affaires of the Obregón Government in Washington During the difficult years of non-recognition, Téllez consistently achieved the supreme task of the diplomatist — maintenance of one's own country's prerogatives while strengthening whatever ties of friendliness exist This he accomplished through the charm of his personality, tact, and a thorough knowledge of the conditions with which he dealt It is not too much to say that on more than one occasion Téllez's presence in Washington went far to avert a breach between the two countries Against the protests of the older diplomatists President Calles, as a tribute to ability, promoted Téllez directly from chargé to the most important post in the Mexican diplomatic service

To head the Ministry of Education, Calles selected Dr José M Puig Casauranc The appointment was political Dr Puig, formerly a practising physician, had been a deputy and a prominent member of the "Cooperatista" party When the de la Huertista split became imminent, he was among the minority who supported Calles After the defeat of de la Huerta, Dr Puig became manager of the Calles presidential campaign It is scarcely necessary to reaffirm that Calles was as good as elected after the military victory and that no individual's contribution to the campaign was of any importance But Dr Puig's activity and personal loyalty were rewarded with the secretaryship of education Dr Puig is a man of personal attractiveness, of courtly manner, kindly, and both intelligent and adaptable But he had no particular qualifications for the supremely important task of directing the nation's education, which requires both preparation



(*Photo by the author*)

A MINSTRELS' BAND AT AGUASCALIENTES



MEXICAN GIRLS IN "CHINA POBLANA" COSTUME AT FESTIVAL IN STADIUM, MEXICO CITY, MAY 5 1927

While regional Puebla this has become virtually the national folk costume

and an apostolic devotion Puig is a political figure and rather of the type known in Mexico as *vividor* — a man who enjoys life Had Calles wanted to reward Puig, a diplomatic post would have been wholly appropriate

To the subsecretaryship the president called Dr Manuel Gamio This post the latter was loath to accept He foresaw the difficulty of working out his own carefully studied ideas of indigenous education He asked that instead a separate "Department of Indigenous Culture" be created in which he would be directly responsible to the president President Calles declined, but assured Gamio that he would be entirely unhampered, and would maintain direct contact with the presidency whenever he desired After five months, Dr Gamio, finding himself a mere functionary, prevented from carrying out his program, and aware, moreover, of various irregularities within the ministry, tendered his resignation This President Calles refused to accept, demanding a full statement of Dr Gamio's grievances These Dr Gamio gave him, calling attention to departmental purchases which directly contravened the declared presidential policy of "moralizing" the federal administration, as well as the program of efficiency and economy President Calles, apparently in full sympathy, told Dr Gamio to proceed to the limit Then a few days later, he withdrew his support, writing Dr Gamio a letter which was tantamount to a suggestion that he resign This Dr Gamio, convinced of the rightness of his position, would not do, whereupon he was discharged He thereupon published the entire correspondence between the president and himself [1] It tells its story convincingly

The episode marks the first serious error of the Calles administration Apart from the loss of the unique services which Dr Gamio might have rendered, it appeared as a reversal of the announced — and up to that time, executed — policy of "house cleaning" It served as a warning that if other employees discovered what appeared to them irregularities in their departments they should connive at them and be silent, or risk losing their posts The loss of public employ in Mexico in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred means economic ruin There are almost no opportunities outside of the government service, and wholly exceptional is the man, like Gamio, who can go abroad and earn a good living Adherence to his principles in this matter would have required of Calles a searching examination The Gamio charges were never pursued, but that more than one administrative official in the Secretaría de Educación has enriched himself through his office is beyond denial

Generally speaking, it is undoubted that there has been less grafting in the Federal Government under Calles than in previous administrations Where it has taken place, it has pretty much been reduced to a matter of percentages Several of the ministries are spotless

In brief, the Calles cabinet resembled the Harding cabinet Calles has

[1] Universal June 8, 9, 10, 1925

often been worried about the lack of competent men to assume important executive responsibilities The Revolution, he told me once, had not produced them There is no reason why it should have Executives who combine experience, ability, and, above all, a selfless devotion to their tasks are hard to find But much available talent remains unused The error has been to use high office as a political reward It is done in the United States, but the United States can afford the price better than Mexico It has likewise been a mistake to limit the choice not merely to the revolutionists, but to a particular group within the revolutionary fold The spoils tradition persists But neither Calles, nor Obregón, in his next term, has been and is under the slightest necessity of bowing to it They can well afford to be above political obligation for the larger obligation of national service The ultimate responsibility is theirs

These manifest truths sooner or later disclose themselves The character of de la Huerta should have been evident to both Obregón and Calles Obregón had as his minister of war in General Francisco Serrano a notorious waster and profligate, who often gambled away more than his yearly salary *in a night* The *national treasury paid the losses* When Calles came in Serrano was kept abroad on a "mission" — at the nation's expense — but when he returned Calles named him governor of the Federal District Subsequently he broke — as had de la Huerta — with his "bosom friends" and revolted

Neither Obregón nor Calles can avoid a large share of responsibility for the continued presence in public life of such a type — and for the damage done in his costly leaving of it One such focus of immorality and profligacy goes far to nullify and offset a number of fine appointments of high-class public servants A government cannot proceed that is partly pure, partly tainted Calles himself has expressed this idea repeatedly "The old mixture of rascals and honest men in government is no longer possible!" [1] But execution lags behind the spoken promise

In the larger aspects of politics, it may be asserted flatly that no progress whatever has been made since Mexican Independence Mexico's order depends to-day on two individuals — Calles and Obregón Were anything to happen to both of them chaos would in all probability ensue at once The return of Obregón to power is a revelation that there literally was no one else to take the difficult helm of the Mexican ship of state However democratically inclined these executives may be — and both are — stable government that depends for its continuance on any personality is the antithesis of democracy It should be remembered that similar conditions obtain throughout Latin-America — and it is far too early to say that Argentina and Uruguay, which have supposedly entered the calm seas of elective popular government, will not again encounter troubled waters Chile recently

[1] Speech in Monterrey, Feb 17, 1926

has undergone precisely such a recurrence with a military revolt against President Alessandri Democracy, of course, cannot come from above — and the catastrophic state politics, previously described, reveal how remote in Mexico is the development of self-government from beneath

If there is hope of advance in this direction, it probably lies through the economic path of agrarian reform, which stands as the most notable achievement of the Calles administration If this reform can be continued uninterruptedly through a generation, Mexico will be transformed — from a nation of serfs to one of small independent landholders

The economic problem has overshadowed all Mexico's national life — since Independence The fictitious Díaz "prosperity" has not yet been balanced Calles, inheriting an empty treasury, launched a program of efficiency and economy which within his first year enabled him to repay nearly fifty million pesos of pressing internal debts, to found the National Bank with a paid-in reserve of sixty-eight million pesos, to found a farm credit bank, to undertake a program of road building, irrigation, and school construction Never in Mexican history had the outlook been so promising as at the end of President Calles's first year

The tide of progress and of impending prosperity began to slow down and then to ebb This was due largely to legislation enacting the constitutional provisions of Article 27 in a manner deemed by the business world retroactive and confiscatory That imponderable but potent force — *"confidence" — waned Revenues declined Repeated retrenchments* were necessary The year 1926 closed with a deficit In 1927 further curtailments of the reconstructive program were rendered necessary — and though the foreign bond interest payments were continued, it was indicated that a further "adjustment" of that debt would be necessary By another route, and in another way, the Calles Government which had begun so auspiciously and so brilliantly, seemed destined to close as the Obregón Government had — still in the saddle, the country nominally at peace — but without the amount of tangible achievement that seemed surely realizable at first, and under the pall of a profound economic depression

The lesson is obvious Mexico's condition has been and is so precarious, that its Government cannot afford to make mistakes One serious error is almost certain to bring disastrous results In the case of Calles, the error came in not having fully realized the consequences of embarking all at once on a program of legislation which simultaneously antagonized the Government of the United States, the oil interests, the foreign land interests, and the Catholic Church, and, with the resulting depression — a large part of the Mexican people Synchronizing the attempted reforms proved impossible — the Government is wisely yielding in the matter of retroactive legislation — and the objectives sought were of dubious value, when contrasted

with constructive achievements in the shape of schools, roads, and irrigation that had to be sacrificed

One other grievous error of the Calles administration which must be recorded is the ruthlessness incidental to the suppression of the revolts, Catholic and political, in the years 1926–7 Granted that it is a government's duty sternly to crush rebellion, that soldiers found guilty of treason should receive only summary execution In executing Generals Serrano and Gómez, the Calles Government could pursue no other course The same applies to the rebels and bandits who, perverting the banner of "Christ King," under it assaulted trains and committed murder and robbery But summary execution was wholly unjustifiable when applied to civilians, taken from their homes on suspicion, no matter how well founded, tried secretly by court-martial and shot It would be superfluous to analyze the folly and wrongfulness of such conduct, which has stained the Calles administration as it stained that of Díaz, of Huerta, of Carranza, and of every other government under whose auspices it takes place Concomitantly with this came — in April, 1927 — a censorship of the press, unprecedented for seven years, which reversed the fine Revolutionary tradition established by Madero, reaffirmed by Obregón, and continued by Calles during his first two years Nevertheless the Calles administration represents a marked step forward in national consciousness, it has turned the corner in agrarian reform and laid the basis for the economic emancipation of "the twelve million who live on the fringe of civilization," as Calles expressed it,[1] it has enabled labor unionism to take shape and become a force that may be turned to the greatest use in the upbuilding of a new Mexico, it has made a slight advance against the century-old menace of Mexican militarism, it has very definitely established Mexican sovereignty in its foreign relationships, it has taken a step forward in education in its agricultural schools, it has made an unmistakable dent in its assault on national ill health

These are no mean achievements in the face of the Mexican heritage *If* these gains can be consolidated and further advances made, *if* they are not swept away in a recurrent upheaval, *if* the lessons of the last eight years can be taken advantage of, *if* Obregón in his next term can build on Calles's administration, as Calles built on Obregón s, and as Obregón built on the wreck and ruin of the past — then the next few years can easily mark a progress unparalleled in Mexican history That is the hope in which Mexicans and Americans may join Whatever may be the failures and setbacks that lie ahead, they will be understandable through an appreciation of the past which the seventeen revolutionary years represent a groping effort to liquidate In the last eight years that effort has become steadily more directed and determined

[1] In an address at a banquet given him in New York by American business men, Oct 28, 1924

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I

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