

	Men.	Women.	Total.
Robbery, . . . . .	1,500	470	1970
Prostitution, adultery, bigamy, sodomy and incest, . . . . .	312	179	491
Quarreling, wounding, . . . . .	2,129	1,140	3,233
Rioting and bearing arms, . . . . .	612	444	1,056
Homicide and attempt at ditto, and robbery and homicide, . . . . .	70	17	87
Rape and incontinence, . . . . .	65	21	86
Forgery, . . . . .	7	1	8
Gambling, . . . . .	3	0	3
Total, . . . . .			6934
High grades of crime, . . . . .	6934		
Misdemeanors, . . . . .	1927		
Total, . . . . .	8861		

\$4,121 were expended for salaries in the Acordada; and \$30,232 for the maintenance of the prisoners. It should be stated, moreover that a large number of the above criminals were committed and punished for throwing vitriol on the dress and faces of persons in the street; — that 113 dead bodies were found; — 894 individuals sent to hospitals; and 17 executed by the *garrotte*. The culprit who is sentenced to this mode of expiating his crime is seated in a chair on the scaffold, whilst his neck is embraced by an iron collar which may be contracted by a screw. A sudden and rapid turn of the lever drives a sharp point through the spinal marrow at the moment that the band closes around the throat and strangles the victim.

NOTE. — In confirmation of all we have said in this chapter in regard to the administration and condition of law in Mexico, and in relation to the army, we refer to an able pamphlet published in that country, in 1848, entitled "*Consideraciones sobre la Situación Política y Social de la República Mexicana en el año 1847*," written, we understand, by Don Francisco Lerdo. It presents a dark picture of the country at that epoch; but the author's purpose was to unmask the social and political diseases of his country, and his patriotic task was the more needed because that country was on the brink of ruin from war.

It is to be especially noted with commendation that the Mexicans have recently become the severest critics not only of their institutions but of themselves. The miserable, boasting spirit, — the taste for grandiloquent proclamations, — the indiscriminate laudation of Mexican virtue, talent, science, honor, valor, and justice, which filled the papers and pamphlets of the nation, but which were never sustained when the Mexicans came in contact either with highly cultivated foreigners or were opposed by foreign arms, have all been greatly qualified since the war. The combined lessons of her unsparing but truthful satirists and of her invading enemies, will not be lost on a people really sensible and sensitive, though bewildered for more than a quarter of a century during which bombast served for glory or consolation when anarchy was not altogether triumphant. In confirmation of this growing spirit of self-examination with a view to national reform, we would also refer to the discreet and able memoir of Don Luis G. Cuevas, minister of foreign and domestic relations, read by him before the Chamber of Deputies, on the 5th of January, 1849.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## REFLECTIONS UPON THE REPUBLIC.

WHAT MEXICO HAS DONE — REVIEW OF HER CONDUCT AND CHARACTER. — MEXICAN OPINIONS — CLASSES — INDIANS — MESTIZOS — WHITES — ARMY — CHURCH. — DIVISIONS OF WHITES — WANT OF HOMOGENEOUSNESS. — WANT OF NATIONALITY AND OF A PEOPLE — REMEDIES — EMIGRATION — RELIGIOUS LIBERTY — POLITICAL ORDER — LABOR.

EVERY reader who has accompanied us thus far in studying the history, geography, resources, and character of Mexico, will scarcely require to be told why it is that the nation has continued disorganized and become impoverished in the midst of such abundance as has been lavished upon it by the beneficence of God. At the conclusion of our chapter upon the commerce of Mexico we described the remarkable geographical position of the territory, and have shown that, by the laws of nature, it ought to enjoy a controlling influence in the affairs of the world. And yet almost three centuries and a half have rolled over since Cortéz planted the Spanish banner on the palaces of Tenochtitlan, and still the question may be asked whether the region is more progressive under republican and royal rule than under Aztec sway? The world has advanced in commerce, manufactures, science, literature and arts, but Mexico has remained comparatively fixed in the midst of a stagnant semi-civilization. She has not exhibited a true warlike character either in her domestic broils or in her opposition to a foreign invader, though her soil has been converted into a camp for nearly forty years. She has confessed her manifold errors by her indemnities and her diplomacy, though she has contrived to invite quarrels, discussions and affronts by an aggressive demeanor towards sojourners in her territory. A religious country by the protective sanction of all her constitutions, still she denies the right of conscientious worship to all who come within her borders. With a military police, and an immense array of judicial officers, her cities and highways are thronged with felons while the disputes of her citizens linger undecided for years in her courts. Her domestic markets are dear, and she has but little to spare for foreign commerce, though her soil is extraordinarily fertile and her climate yields

the fruits and grains of the temperate and tropical zones. Throned on mines, she is a borrower at exorbitant usury. Washed by the two great oceans of the globe, her mariners are fishermen and her vessels skiffs. Ready at all times to borrow from every capitalist, she sees her opulent citizens send their wealth abroad for investment in spite of the tempting interest she promises to pay. Boasting of faith, she is without credit. At peace with mankind and fortified by nature, she is forced to maintain an army either to protect her from herself or to bribe the innumerable remnants of her military politicians into peace. Endowed with a constitution and enjoying the name of a republic, she beholds that constitution violated or overthrown by her army without even demanding the consent of the people. Vaunting, in the most grandiloquent language, her intelligence, glory and resources, she exhibits not a single evidence of that patriotic unity and order which would entitle her to domestic confidence and foreign respect. Owning an extensive territory which is attractive not only for its essential qualities but for its magnificent beauty and grandeur, she has drawn to her shores, since the conquest, only a million of white men. Losing Texas, which in her hands had been, for all this time, a howling wilderness possessed by beasts and savages, she sees that state become, under the magic influence of another race, an independent nation, a maritime power, a commercial territory yielding millions annually for the trade of the world. Surrendering California as a boon for peace, she beholds in a single year, the sands that had been trodden by her own people for several centuries, turn to gold in the developing hand of the energetic emigrants to whom it was given up. Impoverished, haughty, uneducated, defiant, bigoted, disputatious, without financial credit, beaten in arms, far behind the age in mechanical progress or social civilization and loaded with debt, Mexico presents a spectacle in the nineteenth century, which moves the compassion of reflective men even if it does not provoke the cupidity of other races to wrest from her weak grasp a region whose value she neither comprehends nor develops. This compassion is the result of a genuine sympathy with the true patriots who really love their country and know its worth, but whose numbers are too few to cope with the scandalous intriguers and ambitious soldiers by whom the nation has hitherto been converted into a gambling table and its money and offices into prizes.

In the introductory chapters upon the viceregal government and revolution of Mexico, and in our remarks upon the growth of parties at the close of the war of independence, we have endeavored

to exhibit fairly the existing causes of trouble at those epochs.<sup>1</sup> There was an apology for incapability of political self-rule when a bad government or a degrading despotism was suddenly removed. But, since then, twenty-six years have elapsed; and, in more than a quarter of a century, mankind is fairly entitled to demand from Mexico a denial of the sarcasm of her oppressive *oidor* Bataller "that the worst punishment to be inflicted upon the Mexicans is to allow them to govern themselves!"

Dark as is this picture of neighboring republicans, we should have been loth to paint it had not our careful studies of their statistics and the commentaries of their own citizens justified the sombre coloring. "For our own part we believe,"—says Don Francisco Lerdo, in his *Considerations upon the Social and Political Condition of the Mexican Republic in 1847*,—"that all this may be explained in a few words. *In Mexico there neither is nor can there be what is called national spirit, because there is no nation.*"<sup>2</sup>

This, perhaps, is the key of Mexican decadence. The national spirit is centrifugal, if any thing can strictly be called national when citizen is armed against citizen, and when men in civil life and politicians in public life, are constantly seeking to aggrandize themselves either in wealth or power without a thought of loyalty to the constitution which should perpetuate and consolidate national unity of principle and action in spite of all their personal ambitions or party dominations.

If we recur to our statistics in the third chapter of this volume we shall find that, out of seven millions six hundred and twenty-six thousand eight hundred and thirty-one inhabitants of the republic, it is calculated that four millions three hundred thousand are Indians, that more than two millions are either mixed bloods or negroes, and only about one million white, while, of the whole population, not many more than seven hundred and forty thousand are to be regarded as either educated or at all instructed! The most numerous class, the large majority of Mexicans,—the Indians,—are not civilized. We make this assertion without qualification. They are *tamed* and have been comparatively submissive; they are not open idolators and have generally conformed, according to their limited understanding and instruction, to the direction of the Catholic priesthood; but neither this taming nor this conformity, considered relatively to their general demeanor, constitute civilization either under a monarchy or a re-

<sup>1</sup> See vol. 1, pages

<sup>2</sup> Lerdo, *Consideraciones*, &c., &c., p. 42.

public. The Indians, therefore, regarded as a political or social element in a democracy, are not fairly to be valued as integral constituencies of the Mexican *republic*. We have already delineated the character of this class and will not recapitulate the points of sluggish indifference which forbid the hope of its elevation. Less savage than the North American red man and hunter, the Mexican Indian is only dwarfed in energy and in the expression of passion, by the emasculating influence of the climate. In all other respects he resembles the tenant of our western forests and will neither willingly mingle with us, adopt our habits, nor labor for others upon a soil which spontaneously supplies his wants. In his passive state he is content with imitation; in his aroused anger he rushes blindly and vindictively into danger, and is willing to die rather for revenge than for right. Is it not folly then to ask this class to comprehend the representative system? Nor can we justly expect its comprehension and correspondent adherence or practice from the unenlightened Mixed Races, especially when those races do not derive their origin, exclusively, from pure white stocks, but are formed by a medley mosaic of Indian, African, Oriental and Spanish. The hope of Mexico must, therefore, repose in the whites alone; and, on this class we might confidently rely as the nucleus around which future numbers and civilization would gather, if we found them orderly, free, united and firm in adherence to their constitution modified by the indispensable addition of religious liberty and the speedy as well as inflexible administration of justice. But, in this small class, we have the most serious difficulties to contend with, for, without constitutional recognition, the officers of the army, the hierarchy, and the intriguing politicians, form three distinct powerful bodies who must blend in perfect union for mutual support, or must be content to see the country involved in civil war if they differ.

We have already noticed the origin and continuance of the army's influence, and the natural despotic tendencies of that class. It represents Force. It is, moreover, a historical fact, that the Mexican church does not confine itself to matters of faith, but, as the richest national proprietor and as the comptroller of conscience by virtue of the constitution, has constantly quitted the cloister to fight in the arena of politics. Nor was its weapon weak, for it was armed with Superstition. Wielding the bolts of spiritual thunder in a nation in which no other religion is tolerated or known; possessing the power of discovery by confession, and of control by penance, excommunication, anathemas, and ecclesiastical interdicts; ruling the

soul without appeal, and grasping the purse, it will be at once seen what a powerful element of influence such an institution must become when directed by a single head. If the masses would prey upon the church, it was the policy of the church to support the army; if the people desired to destroy the army, it was the interest of the army to support a church which could control by conscience or bribe by money the miscalled representatives of the people.<sup>1</sup> With force and superstition, thus welded together by interest, the representative system can expect but little favor from these two important divisions of the white race.

Is there hopeful reliance, then, upon another power which is controlled by a portion of the educated whites? The Liberty of the Press, in Mexico has disappointed its warmest advocates. An instrument which should ever be used for the enlightenment of the multitude has been employed only to demoralize and deceive it. Instead of attacking bravely all abuses of administration and all international prejudices, or weaknesses; instead of holding the executive departments to strict accountability before the chambers and the people; instead of displaying frankly the vital interests and materials of social reorganization, and thus contributing to the common prosperity and peace of the country, the periodical press of Mexico, with few honorable exceptions, has fostered the meanest passions and hatreds of the ignorant masses and has betrayed public opinion by trafficking with or truckling to the men or the classes who live by public abuses and disorder.<sup>2</sup> Instead of checking and thwarting the interference of the church in civil affairs, it has stood mute or appalled before the ecclesiastical power. If there is no reliance, therefore, on the press, what available trust may be reposed in the pure, civil patriots, men of letters, professional characters, merchants and proprietors? The slender numbers of this class, compared with the army, church, *Empleados* or government *employés*, and intriguing civilians connected either with the state in its various departments of *finance*, or with the press, at once deprive it of equality in influence. In all the turns of fortune in Mexico, these men have, hitherto, never been able to command the country for any length of time so as to give a permanent beneficial direction to public affairs, and we may, therefore, readily agree with Lerdo in believing that his country possesses no elements of nationality. He might have gone further in his analysis, and declared

<sup>1</sup> Lerdo, *Consideraciones*, p. 46, 47.

<sup>2</sup> Lerdo 43. — Cuevas's memoir of 1849, as Mexican Minister of Foreign and Domestic relations, p. 29 of American translation.

that there was no nationality because there was no PEOPLE; for who will dignify with that republican name such discordant and heterogeneous materials of races, characters, politics and purposes. A PEOPLE is not a mere aggregation of human beings. A nation, in the true sense of nationality, is only a great family, for whose strength and power it is necessary that all its individual members should be intimately united by the bonds of interest, sympathy and affection. Such a nation may form a government, but it is difficult for a government to form such a nation. And this was the peculiarly fortunate position of our North American states at the period of Independence, for we had no political and social revolution to effect. Our people and our government grew up together. At the close of the war the United States were poor. The military men had enjoyed no revenue from their services but personal honor. They were badly fed, paid and clothed. There was no rich, ready made prize to be seized by ambitious or avaricious men in the gorged treasury of a nation. All were essentially equal because all were equally forced to work for livelihood. There was no recognized class in government or society. We were all of one blood, and did not fall into the error of amalgamation with Indians and negroes. We were controlled by reason and not governed by passions or instincts. We had nothing but liberty and space; soil and freedom. Our soldiers were rewarded with land; but that land was in the wilderness and exacted toil to make it productive; and thus, compulsory industry diverted the minds of our political founders from those ambitious enterprises, which by the aid of the military have so long degraded Mexico. Conquest and rapid Fruition,—was the maxim of Spain; Occupation and Development,—the policy of England. The eager Iberian was prompt and headlong in the adventurous life of discovery. The cautious Anglo Saxon followed in his steps, ready to glean and replant the fields that had been hardly reaped of their virgin harvests.

We have endeavored to analyze candidly the condition of the Mexican republic, and, in performing the disagreeable task we have been guided not only by our own personal observations in the country, but by the argumentative criticisms of native writers. Having ascertained the disease it is our duty to seek the remedy. The obvious policy of Mexico, under existing circumstances, is to exhibit a firm, constitutional, orderly, peaceful aspect, which, together with her manifold allurements of soil, climate, and geographical situation, will gradually attract to her shores the eager mul-

titudes who are seeking a new home in America. Emigration is the overflowing of a bitter cup. Men do not ordinarily leave the land of their birth, the home of their infancy, their parents, friends and companions, for the untried hazards of a land in which there is no community of laws, habits, and language, unless poverty and bad government force them into the wilderness. They depart to better their lot. They must have the assurance, therefore, of their rights in property and personal liberty guaranteed by stable laws promptly administered by incorruptible judges. Such meritorious emigrants will not populate Mexico unless she demonstrates her capacity for order and security; and, without these accessions, we have shown that Mexico never will, as she does not now, possess a republican PEOPLE. She must cultivate the *civil* idea; she must abandon her military parade; she must discard her habitual bombast and grandiloquence; she must banish the despots who have debauched and plundered her; she must reform her social life and learn to believe that there are other pleasures worthy the notice of men besides gambling, bull baiting and cock fighting; and, above all, she must establish religious liberty. It is an absurd idea that nationality can be preserved by enforcing Catholicity by virtue of the constitution. The Roman church must consent to share this earth,—the patrimony of mankind,—with other believers and spiritual laborers. It cannot monopolize the soil, even if it can control the faith. The day of monopoly is gone,—that of individuality has come, and there can be no good government that is not founded on tolerant Christianity, which is the creed of Love, the enemy of Force, the founder of true Democracy.<sup>1</sup>

When an orderly and firm government shall have been established, Mexico will be refreshed continually by the energizing blood of a hardy, industrious and enterprising white race from beyond the sea. Germany will send her sons and daughters; Ireland, France, England, Italy and Spain will contribute theirs. The various nations, mingling slowly by marriage with the white Mexicans, will amalgamate and neutralize each other into homogeneous nationality. Mexico may thus gradually congregate A PEOPLE. The language of the country will, in all likelihood, be preserved;

<sup>1</sup>It will scarcely be credited, but such is nevertheless the fact, that it was once seriously contemplated in Mexico to deny the right of sepulture to all strangers who were not Catholics, and that the point was only overruled by an ingenious liberalist, who contended that it was certainly healthier for the living Catholics that the dead *heretic* should rot beneath the ground, than taint the atmosphere by decaying above it! The priests have constantly and violently opposed marriages between Mexicans and foreigners, unless they were Catholics.

for the white natives who now speak Spanish will of course form, for many years, the bulk of the population, and when they die, their offspring and the offspring of the emigrants will know but one tongue. There will thus be no violent extirpation of races; but a slow and genial modification. Modern inventions, arts, tastes, science, emulation, new forms of thought, new modes of development, will be introduced and implanted by these emigrants. The million of white men, and the two millions of mestizos, will become more prosperous under the increased trade and industry of the nation. A good government will be ensured, for the hardy emigrants fly from the political oppression and poverty of the old world to enjoy peaceful *liberty* in this.

There is nothing in this scheme of progress to which a good man or a republican can object, and if Mexico is sincere in her professions of democracy, and not merely anxious to preserve intact the fragments of a ruined Spanish colony, *without a people and without nationality*, she will imitate the example of the United States and welcome to her vallies and mountains all who are willing to approach her in the name of order, labor, and liberty. But if she stubbornly adheres to her stupid self-seclusion, and bars the portals of her splendid empire with the revolutionary impediments that are annually scattered over the republic, she will break the beautiful promise given to humanity in the success of her revolution;

“Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, unfinished,  
As if a morning in June with all its music and sunshine,  
Suddenly paused in the sky, and fading slowly descended  
Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen!”

LONGFELLOW'S EVANGELINE.

## B O O K V.

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THE MEXICAN STATES AND TERRITORIES;  
THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS, CITIES, TOWNS,  
PRODUCTIONS, MINES, GENERAL CHARACTER-  
ISTICS, ANTIQUITIES, ETC.