

strict the power of the clergy and to prevent any enterprise of a reactionary nature.

Traitors who, sword in hand, had supported the empire of Maximilian and the banner of Religion and Privileges, were called to the highest offices in the government of the Republic, either in the army, in the government of the States, the Congress and the Senate or in the diplomatic service, and even in the cabinet itself.

The Laws of Reform only lived the solitary life of files and libraries, and nobody wanted to remember when or why or wherefore or by whom they had been issued, unless it was to ask that they be revoked.

Despite the ordinances which prohibit the establishment of monastic orders in the Republic, the country again became ridden with monks' and nuns' convents, which under pretext of founding schools and establishing charity institutions, abounded in every city. On streets and squares one could see the black soutanos of the clergy; public processions and all kinds of religious ceremonies were held everywhere, especially in small cities, where more than anywhere else it would have been necessary to repress them.

The clergy took deliberate hold of instruction, not only the primary grades, but high and professional schools, while public government schools closed day by day or were poorly attended on account the scarcity of teachers due to the miserable salaries, and the want of books and other school material, or merely on account of the absence of pupils who were not compelled by the authorities to attend official schools; the clergy multiplied its schools, seminaries and colleges, spreading its pernicious doctrines everywhere, especially amongst the children of the higher classes, and counting among their pupils the children of the highest official authorities. In regard to the children of the mestizos and Indians, of whom the Church could expect nothing, it was convenient to maintain them in ignorance, therefore, schools were closed for them, or at best, they were instructed only in the catechism, in separate halls, where they entered through special doors, because on earth as in heaven, the clergy has thus understood equality and democracy.

In its text books, in the pulpit, in its publications, the clergy brazenly attacked, not only the ideas contrary to them, but also the liberal laws the revocation of which it demanded insistently, and even went so far as to insult and ridicule our national heroes, and denaturing or omitting historical facts in our history.

Supported and served by the servile advocates of the conciliating "cientificismo," and counting upon the indifference, complacency and help of reactionary and venal

authorities and judges, the clericals distorted and misinterpreted laws and prohibitions, thus killing the spirit of the Reform.

By means of all kinds of subterfuges, and notwithstanding the prohibition imposed on religious corporations to possess and administer real estate or revenue capital, they began to monopolize a number of valuable rural and city properties, and large amounts of money which appeared to be the personal property of archbishops and bishops or fanatical wealthy individuals, the latter making a will in favor of the former; properties and capitals which by means of their parties, and with the complacent knowledge of the authorities, were leased or rented usuriously, or employed in shameful banking or bursatile combinations.

Temples, sanctuaries and oratories multiplied, and attached to the national churches, sumptuous chapels and magnificent residences were erected, many times paid for with public funds; the higher clergy living like princes, with carriages, automobiles and lackeys.

The authorities, from the President down boasted of the good terms on which they lived with the clergy, and the clergy boasted of its friendship with the authorities, and an interchange of calls was established between vestries and official palaces.

As if the diocesi already existant were not sufficient, new ones were created, thus ridding the republic with archbishops and bishops; and the number of brotherhoods, fraternities, congregations and religious societies, pious work boards, and other associations of which the clergy makes use to carry on its propaganda, were prodigiously increased.

Sensing a remote peril in the natives of the country, and following in this the past experience they had had, the Church excluded the Mexicans from seminaries and all ecclesiastical employments, offices and dignities. The greater majority of the alumni in the seminaries, was composed of boys brought from Spain to Mexico in order to "instruct or educate" them and convert them in some future day into princes of the *Mexican* church. All the clergy, high and low, with very few exceptions, (in which there were but few mestizos and Indians) was in the hands of the Spaniards, many of them absolutely illiterate, and whom public opinion pointed out as jail-birds, ex-grocers or ex-bull-fighters, in one word, members of the pestiferous clerical rabble which the catholic Spain itself had driven from its soil.

The bishops called and gave hearty welcome to friars and priests expelled not only from Spain but also from

France, who under the name of Marists and other suspicious names swarmed into Mexico, the new land of promise, wherein they could idle in luxury and steal under the name of religion, and in that name also corrupt men, women and children.

The numerous crimes of the soutane people went unpunished; for while in the United States it is easy to send to the electric chair any reverend who is a criminal, in the History of Mexico no case is registered wherein a priest has been condemned even to life imprisonment. When and wherever they pleased they could kill, steal and abuse. If the misdemeanor was of small importance or executed *in azima vili*, the matter was forgotten; but if it was an enormous crime either in its nature or on account of the victim, then the criminal was sent out of the diocese or out of the national territory, in accordance with the authorities and with money which sometimes the parishioners themselves, occasionally even the offended parties themselves, furnished, in order that the good name of the Church should not suffer.

The tithes were re-established in fact, by means of direct petitions which under the pretext of pious works to be made were addressed in writing to rich individuals, or by means of almoners who went from house to house, asking financial help for the reconstruction of such and such a temple, or for this or that novain; and those who refused were ostracized.

Under pretext of exerting the rights guaranteed by the Constitution, which they never respected, the reactionaries employed the authorities for preventing, forbidding, dissolving and punishing officially any campaign, any propaganda, any manifestation, any writing against clericalism; while they, in their large diaries, of which they had also taken possession, printed insults, attacks against the "enemies of the faith," and defamed and publicly calumniated the liberals, attacking them in their honor, and asking that bread and salt be denied to them, which really occurred, for to express anti-catholic ideas was enough to be placed outside of society. The non-catholic professionals starved, deprived of clients and help. Those who had the courage of not having baptism administered to their children or of omitting the religious ceremony of marriage, were looked upon with public contempt, considered as if they lived in concubinage and condemned to perpetual isolation.

The clergy ratified its hateful pact with the large landholders, successors in spirit if not in race, of the heartless "encomenderos" of the time of the conquest, in order to rivet the chains which held the people and continue holding it in slavery, which, in spite of anything stated to the

contrary, existed in fact in Yucatan in an open and disgusting manner. In the chapels installed in the farms and ranches, there took place periodical celebrations of masses and other ceremonies, liberally paid for, by the owners, with the object of "catequizar" the Indians, who were threatened with eternal torments if they disobeyed their owners or tried to leave the farms, an act of impossible accomplishment, since the authorities, by means of public troops undertook to pursue and even hunt as beasts the unhappy beings who tried to shake the yoke, and who when caught were thrown into inquisitorial cells, in stocks, after having been whipped barbarously; a custom which was common in Yucatan, until about the end of the year 1914.

With the complacency of the government, the clericals gave a final blow to the mother-country, and before the whole world condemned the work of the Republic in Mexico, erecting on the historical hill of "Las Campanas," on the same site where the Nation, in 1867, had executed those who had attempted to murder her, the chapel called the Expiation to make amends to the *Lord* for the offense against him made by republican soldiers when they marched against the clergy and against the empire of Maximilian; a chapel which, we understand, is still waiting to be demolished by the constitutionalist pick.

The clericals made idleness the national Mexican custom, promoting the renewal of the old practice of having civil holidays at the same time as the religious ones. These were distributed in such way that all cities, boroughs, towns, villages, farms, etc., in each state, celebrated them, either simultaneously or in turn, so that the holidays extended through the whole year, and there were fairs and other celebrations with the inevitable drunkenness, bull-fights and other barbarous amusements. During these festivities, each association or group of workmen, laborers, artisans, merchants, farmers, students and professionals (where there were any) and even women, had charge of a separate day, covering all the expenses incurred in such festivals, and in which the Church expenses were of course included. During these days, the populace, half drunk (for the clergy, for obvious reasons never fought drunkenness in the lower classes) rushed to the churches to pay for salves, rosaries, prayers and masses, to offer lighted wax candles which had been blessed by the priests (these candles were extinguished shortly after being offered, melted and sold again) to present and hang at the altars of saints or from their clothes, small human or animal figures, limbs, etc., made of gold or silver, but more usually of wax or paraffine; these offerings were sold by the priests at the doors of the churches. The parishioners knelt to kiss the feet, hands or vestments of the images which on these oc-

casions were taken down from the altars and set on brackets so that they were within reach of the lips of the people.

In one word, after four hundred years, other men, belonging to the same race of grasping adventurers, who under Cortez conquered the Aztec land, attempted to re-establish in Mexico the same social regime in favor during the viceroys, the same which is still dominant in many sections of Spain. In this task they had the support of the reactionary Mexicans whose great weakness, (whatever their color) has been to try to pass themselves as Spaniards or sons of Spaniards; and who in conversations, books, speeches, etc., always call the Spaniards (to the great amusement of the latter) their *Forefathers* and claim as their own, the glories of the Latin race which exist only in their excited imaginations.

When the reactionaries really considered themselves strong, when their preponderance was absolute, when the remnants of the liberal party were scattered, some in the more remote corners of the republic, others in exile in foreign lands; when the apostolic representative of the Roman Pope formally treating with the federal government for the re-establishment of official relations with the catholic pontiff, the reactionaries threw down the mask, and in the light of the sun, the sun which had shone on the bloody battlefields on Calpopalpam, Puebla and Querstaro, they organized the *Catholic National Party*, with the firm and express purpose of taking hold of the government which was already falling from the trembling hands of the dictator.

It was then that the dominant national conscience was awakened by the call of ingenious apostle *Francisco I. Madero*, who had been appointed by destiny to immolate himself on the altar of democracy and to undertake the work which in Mexico was considered absurd and impossible: the overthrowing of the porfirist rule. We say the overthrowing of the porfirist rule because the object was not to oust the dictator who was already within grasp of death's hands; but to put an end to a whole political system enthroned in the nation and deeply rooted for over one third of a century.

But if Madero was an apostle of democracy, he was not a politician nor a statesman, nor a true revolutionary: he was an awakener of consciences, but not a leader of men. He believed that Mexico lacked only justice and liberty, when it had an excess of slaves and of tormentors without the crushing of which it was impossible to establish a democracy. He imagined that a people of serfs, analphabets and fanatics could, by the mere *fiat* of an illumined one,

turn into a nation, strong, just, democratic, progressive and above all, free; without remembering that freedom and its corollaries are not the work of a law or the will of one man, but the slow and bloody conquest of a convinced people.

He thought of destroying the nefarious work of the reaction without attacking or punishing its authors; and believing that words of concord could replace bullets and that embraces could substitute guillotines and scaffolds, he invited with candid amnesities and ample pardons, all Mexicans to a union, a conciliation absolutely impossible and absurd.

He forgot the end of Juarez and of Lerdo de Tejada, and granted absolute, supreme liberties of which the people could not avail itself, since it was an abject, ignorant people, but which were favorable to the pharisees, the traitors, the reactionaries who in newspapers and tribunes condemned, insulted, ridiculed him and his own, impeding his work under pretense of exerting the constitutional franchises which they had never before respected.

Madero's generous and magnanimous spirit, was also credulous and weak, and he had all the sweetness, all the sincerity of a missionary of peace and love, ready to pardon, predestined to sacrifice; he did not have the iron, implacable hand, the steel will, the granite energy of the leader who wishes to remodel the soul and the brains of a race.

He imagined that by virtue of a speech, a vile slave could be converted into a conscious man; that the oppressors of a nation could become magnanimous Maecenas, and the ferocious praetorians of porfirism could be turned into loyal mandataries and defenders of the honor, peace and liberty of the republic.

His vain dream of finding at once a mother-country immediately great, free and happy, made him lose all caution, all political wariness, despite the advices and warnings of his partisans, and he not only admitted within the administration those who a few months before had been pointing him out as a dangerous visionary, but he permitted that militarism, the clergy and the plutocracy remain in their strong and inexpugnable positions.

He who could not conceive treason, and fell shortly after under the blows of Judases, in the midst of what appeared to be the signal, irremediable failure of all the democratic program in Mexico; in the midst of what appeared as the most brilliant justification of the brutal porfirist dictatorship.

But the men who accepted his legacy, the men who again raised the standard of revolution, who believed in the possibility of a resurrection of the mother-country, and did

not hesitate to march to reconquer liberty, at whatever cost, these men will not commit the same blunders which the Apostle incurred, and shall know how to profit by the cruel lessons of their hard experience.

Madero's failure, as all political failures, presents, indeed, a very valuable lesson, because it shows which path *must not* be followed.

Even Huerta's reactionary movement offers a precious teaching, because it makes evident which is the enemy, which continues being the enemy of liberty and progress in Mexico, who should be crushed forever, if we desire that the mother-country be placed on the straight path, and to progress along the lines of peace, democracy, justice and right.

That failure and this reaction warn us unmistakably that, despite what Madero believed, the Mexican people was not in a condition to enter fully into the modern democratic life, because it is impossible to come, in a few hours, from the darkness of slavery into the meridian light of the sun of freedom; and that it was and is indispensable to raise the obstacles which prevented the advance and to tear from the eyes of the people the thick bandage of lies, fanaticism and ignorance which blinded and still blinds it. In other words, and as it has always been recognized by the philosophy of history, it was and is necessary to prepare the people to accept the laws, and not to be satisfied with reproducing in the country, excellent codes made for other men, other civilizations, other conditions.

The sagacity of the chiefs of the Constitutionalist movement has thus understood it, and for that reason they established the *preconstitutional periods*, that is to say, the indefinite period of adaptation and moulding which will last in Mexico until the people are in conditions which permit the practice of political and social conquests which have made other nations great and happy, a state which the Mexican people has desired to secure, in their long expectation and work for liberty.

Unhappily, the liberty of the people is not the graceful and ephemeral flower which one gathers in the pleasant corner of a delightful meadow crossed by milk and honey streams, amidst dances and music; it is the eternal and dangerous fire of Prometheus, which one must win on top of the steep mountain, under the sweep of the hurricane, under the lightning, amidst ruin and desolation, stepping over corpses of brothers, crossing precipices, and rivers of blood.

And because the Mexican revolution is conscious of the tears and the blood which is the price which the Republic has paid, and of the devastation caused, it understands that

*it must justify* such devastation, and such shedding of tears and blood before the mother-country and the whole world.

And the only justification possible, the only reason acceptable, is; not the conquering, but the definite annihilation of the reaction; the real, assured, confirmed death of clericalism and plutocracy, names which in Mexico, and as in Mexico also throughout the world, mean *reaction*.

The reactionary party in Mexico must, therefore, abandon *all hope* of any possible conciliation with the triumphant constitutionalism, because there is no pardon possible for it, because it will never be re-installed in its old strongholds, because neither under the pretext of the freedom of cult, of speech, and of teaching proclaimed by the Constitution of '57, nor under the pretext of amnesty, nor under any other pretext whatever, will the reaction be installed in the exercise of its so-called rights, which are merely the means of which it avails itself to control the people of Mexico through religious fanaticism, and which permit it to be a constant threat for all republican institutions and for the peace of the country, as well as an almost impassable obstacle to the nation's development and progress.

The Federal Constitution of 1857 will not again be in force until the exercise of those liberties can be ruled in a more efficacious way; and if, in order to attain this object it is necessary to reform and modify it, the Revolution will not hesitate to undertake and accomplish this work.

For it is necessary to complete the holy and gigantic undertaking of our forefathers, the immense labor of freedom begun by *Juarez, Ocampo, and Lerdo de Tejada*.

Because the clergy will no longer be permitted to maintain the low people in ignorance and idolatry; nor to win over the children of the middle and upper classes, at schools, colleges and seminaries, thus preparing generations of traitors, of enemies of liberty, progress and the Republic, masses of slaves of the Catholic dogma and serfs of the Roman curia.

They will not be allowed to control woman, fomenting her superstition, developing habits of laziness and isolation as in the Middle Ages and keeping her subject to fanaticism and backwardness, by means of incessant religious practices carried on day and night in churches and sanctuaries, oratories, and convents, and in the fraternities, associations and other societies wherein feminine vanity is fanned and flattered making women believe that they are servants, daughters and even sisters of each and every personification of catholicism.

They will not be permitted to exert their ministry unless they are previously married, which is the only means to