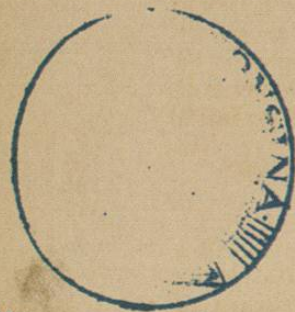


F1208  
R76  
V. 5

COPYRIGHT, 1898  
BY  
MATIAS ROMERO  
Entered at Stationers' Hall, London



FONDO BIBLIOTECA PUBLICA  
DEL ESTADO DE NUEVO LEON

132550

The Knickerbocker Press, New York



SECRETARIA PUBLICA DEL ESTADO

## PREFACE.

At two different periods I have been in Washington as the official representative of Mexico in the United States. My first sojourn began on December 24, 1859, when I came as First Secretary of the Mexican Legation, continuing as such until August 14, 1860, the day on which Minister Mata left Washington on leave, and I became Chargé d' Affaires and continued in that capacity until October 29, 1863. On that day I presented to President Lincoln my credentials as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Mexico, in which capacity I remained in Washington until July 16, 1868, when I took my departure for Mexico. I was therefore in Washington during nearly two years of Mr. Buchanan's administration, the whole of Mr. Lincoln's first and second administrations, and of his successor, Mr. Johnson. I, therefore, was fortunate enough to be in this capital during the most serious crises that this government ever passed through, that is, during the preparation for the secession of the Southern States, during the secession, the Civil War that it brought about, and the Reconstruction Period, as well as during the whole period of the French Intervention in Mexico, which was an incident closely connected with the Civil War in the United States. It was my fortune to meet the most prominent men of this country, both in political and social life, and to hold very friendly personal relations with many of them, such as Secretary Seward and General Grant.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The extent of the personal friendship with which Mr. Seward favored me, appears from the following official communication dated at Washington, October 7, 1867, in which he tendered me a public vessel of the United States to convey me and my friends from Charleston, South Carolina, to the port of Veracruz in Mexico, on my return home. Governor Morton, of Indiana, and General Banks had intended to go to Mexico with me, but could not leave when I started, and I only left with my family.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,  
WASHINGTON, Oct. 7, 1867.

TO SEÑOR DON MATIAS ROMERO  
etc., etc., etc.

SIR: You are aware of the intention of the Government to provide you with a passage to Mexico in a public vessel of the United States. I now have the honor to acquaint you that in a letter of this date, the Secretary of the Treasury informs me

iii

49974

The second period of my service in Washington extends from March 7, 1882, to the present time, and it has continued without interruption excepting from May, 1892, to February, 1893, when I discharged, while absent on leave, the duties of Secretary of the Treasury of Mexico, filling that office for the third time.

During the years which elapsed between these periods I served at two different times as Secretary of the Treasury in Mexico, and for a few months as Postmaster-General of that country, although that office is not in Mexico, as in the United States, a cabinet position; and during the intervals I travelled in different parts of Mexico and spent about three years in agricultural pursuits in the District of Soconusco, State of Chiapas, bordering upon Guatemala, an incident which gave me the opportunity of becoming familiar with the political and social conditions of Guatemala, a country which I twice visited, and which furnished me practical knowledge of the boundary question between Mexico and that republic, which several times threatened to disturb the peace between the two countries.

During my second official residence in the City of Washington, I have contributed to the Press of this country several papers relating to Mexican affairs, prepared with a view to correct misapprehensions concerning the laws of Mexico, and its social, political, industrial, and commercial conditions, the feelings and disposition of its people towards the United States, and several other subjects affecting the relations between the two Republics, and to furnish information on matters concerning Mexico, which ought to be better understood in the United States. It has been my special desire to do whatever might lie in my power to lessen the risk of misunderstandings and to further the knowledge of each country by the other, and thus to develop friendly political, commercial, and social relations between the two nations, and establish the basis of lasting peace between them. The contiguity of the two Republics, the peculiarities of each, and the special advantages which, in certain respects, each possesses over the other, are such as to promote and preserve, in the near future, the strongest ties of interest, respect, and friendship. It was with the view of furthering such a result that these articles were originally written, and it is the same purpose that has induced me to reissue them in book form.

that the Revenue Cutter *Wilderness* will be ordered to Charleston, South Carolina, for the purpose of receiving you and your friends and of making the voyage referred to.

If, therefore, you should reach Charleston by the 14th of this month, it is probable that you may then embark in the *Wilderness* there.

I will avail myself of the occasion to renew the assurance of my high consideration.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

I had enough letters from General Grant to fill a volume, and may use some of them hereafter.

These contributions have now become quite numerous, and because of the frequent demands received for copies, I have considered it advisable to revise and publish them in book form, in such manner as to make the collection a convenient source of knowledge and reference for citizens of the United States who desire to have a more intimate knowledge of Mexican affairs. At first I thought that I would group my papers in the chronological order of their publication in this country; but after further consideration I decided to follow the order in which they now appear.

I have carefully revised the articles embraced in this volume with the view of making them parts of a comprehensive work. When I began to prepare these papers I thought it would be proper to begin the same with a short description of Mexico, and I used for the purpose a paper I published in the *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* of New York on December 31, 1896, adding to it considerably, so as to embrace the more recent geographical and statistical information on Mexico that could be obtained, and in that way the first paper of this set came out in a more voluminous way than I had intended. The several articles I had published bearing on historical affairs concerning Mexico were grouped together under the head of *Historical Notes on Mexico*, and followed the one containing geographical and statistical data, and those of a miscellaneous character are grouped together rather on my theory of their importance than on the date of their publication.

As each article was written with a certain purpose, a repetition of some facts and views on a given subject has at times been unavoidable, because the statement of such facts, or the expression of such views, was in each case indispensable to a thorough knowledge of the subject-matter of the article. I have tried to avoid these repetitions as much as possible, but I have found that I could not altogether succeed in doing so.

I feel constrained to say that my stay in Washington has been so long, and my acquaintance with the leading public men of this country so intimate, that I can state with truth that I know a great deal of the unwritten history of this country, which if carefully collected would afford material for very interesting personal memoirs. Although these articles are far from having that character, they contain facts which throw light upon some incidents of the inside political history of the times, and which have not heretofore been within the reach of the general public. I trust therefore that for this reason these papers will be found of interest to those who may wish to know something of the workings of the great Government of the United States as viewed by friendly foreign eyes.

This book makes no pretensions to literary merit. I have been

in this country long enough to learn something of the English language, but of course I cannot aspire to as perfect a knowledge and command of it as if it were my mother tongue. These articles were written by me originally in English, as they were intended to be read by the people of this country, and although I have submitted them to friends of mine for correction of the style, the corrections that have been made have been of small importance, and the style, therefore, remains my own. I know very well that it is far from being perfect, or even as terse or correct as I could reasonably desire, but I have done my best to make it as good as I knew how.

I know that it is something new and a rather delicate undertaking for a diplomatic representative of a foreign country to write articles for the Press of the country to which he is accredited, and I am well aware that to an European diplomat this would be considered a serious breach of etiquette; but the conditions in this country are so different from those prevailing elsewhere, and the relations between Mexico and the United States are so exceptional, that I have felt myself justified in following this course, and so far I have had no occasion to regret it. I have found, besides, that some of my colleagues, not only representing American, but even European countries, have acted in a similar manner; the former Brazilian Minister in Washington, Señor Mendonça, who is a very accomplished diplomat, the former Argentine Minister, Señor Zeballos, the former Belgian Minister, Monsieur Le Ghait, an able man of very wide diplomatic experience, representing a very conservative European State, and also two Japanese Ministers, Messrs. Tateno and Kurino, have published articles on important subjects relating to their respective countries.<sup>1</sup> I am also able to cite as a precedent the example of the diplomatic representatives of the United

<sup>1</sup> The articles referred to are two from Señor Don Salvador de Mendonça, published in the *North American Review*, one in January, 1894, entitled "Republicanism in Brazil," and the other in the February number of the same year, entitled "Latest Aspects of the Brazilian Rebellion"; one from Señor Don Estanislao S. Zeballos, published in the August, 1894, number of the same paper, entitled "Civil Wars in South America"; two from Mon. Alfred Le Ghait, one published in the March, 1892, number of the *North American Review*, entitled "The Anti-Slavery Conference," and another published in November, 1893, entitled "The Revision of the Belgian Constitution"; one from Mr. G. Tateno, published in the January, 1893, number of the same paper, entitled "Japan at the World's Fair"; and two from Mr. S. Kurino, one published in November, 1894, entitled "The War in the Orient," and the other published in May, 1895, entitled "The Future of Japan."

Señor Zeballos published besides, in 1894, while he was Argentine Minister in Washington, a book of 656 pages entitled *La Concurrencia Universal y la Agricultura de Ambas Américas*, which he prepared in the shape of a report to the State Department of his country on the agricultural conditions of the United States. I understand this book was published simultaneously in English and Spanish, but it was written in Spanish, and I have only seen the Spanish edition of the same.

States in England. This country bears towards England, in some respects, relations similar to those borne by Mexico towards the United States; and it may therefore not be considered extraordinary that the Mexican representative in Washington should feel justified in following their example. If a representative of an European Government should make public addresses in London on subjects of common interest to his own and the British Government, or on other subjects of a political character, public opinion in Europe would find ample ground for criticism, and he would possibly even be reprimanded by his Government; but the peculiar position of the United States representative at the Court of St. James has been held to justify the course taken by Ambassadors Bayard and Hay and their predecessors during their mission in Great Britain.

I have also thought that the presentation of trustworthy information for the purpose of avoiding misunderstandings between two sister Republics, and of furthering satisfactory and friendly relations, was not only a privilege permissible, but a duty of the representative of Mexico in the United States. Besides, in this case I have only collected in book form, papers which I have already published in this country, some of them as early as 1883, and I cannot see any impropriety in reprinting them. The American public has very kindly received my papers, and with perhaps a single exception, in which I touched on a question which was at the time paramount in a hot political discussion in the United States, which preceded a Presidential election, they all have been commented upon in a great deal more kindly and complimentary manner than I had any reason to expect.

My experience in dealing with two peoples of different races, speaking different languages and with different social conditions, has shown me that there are prejudices on both sides, growing out of want of sufficient knowledge of each other, which could be dispelled, and by so doing, a better understanding be secured. This fact was very plainly shown to me during the Pan-American Conference, which met in Washington from October, 1889, to April, 1890, where serious prejudices prevailing among some of the delegates regarding the various countries were dispelled by the close contact with their respective representatives at the Conference. I have often witnessed in Washington very serious misunderstandings to the prejudice of the Latin-American nations, and especially in regard to Mexico, resulting from want of proper information on the questions involved, and I thought that I would render a service both to Mexico and the Latin-American countries at large, as well as to the United States, if I did what I could to dispel those errors, and so obtain a more satisfactory understanding between the two races inhabiting the American continent.

On account of my long residence in the United States, the greater

part of my life having been spent here, many people in Mexico, and especially those who are unfriendly to this country, have thought that pleasant and agreeable associations may have imperceptibly influenced and controlled my judgment and methods of thought. While this belief may be perfectly correct, in so far as a full knowledge and appreciation of the American people and their institutions and tendencies is concerned, it is not true that I am the less jealous of the rights and interests of my own country. The peculiar position which I thus occupy enables me to judge correctly of the conditions of the two countries, and of the manner in which such obstacles as are in the way of a better understanding of each other may best be removed.

I do not need, of course, to say that I publish this book in my personal character as a Mexican citizen, and not in my official capacity as a diplomatic representative of the Mexican Government in Washington. Everything that it contains is therefore said on my own personal responsibility, and in no case should the Mexican Government be held responsible for any views or statements of mine.

Although the first term of my residence in Washington was the more important of the two—both because of the Civil War in this country and of the French Intervention in Mexico which took place during that time—it would swell this book to unreasonable proportions were I to collect here all my writings, speeches, interviews, and other papers written during that trying period; and therefore I shall include in this work only such matter as has been published during the second period, excepting a few short papers that I think I ought to present now.

My correspondence with the United States Government during my first sojourn in Washington, which I consider of great importance, was sent by Presidents Lincoln and Johnson to Congress, and published in several volumes, containing a record of important events then occurring in Mexico. I append a list of the different Messages sent by the President of the United States to Congress during the French Intervention in Mexico, bearing on Mexican affairs. Most of that correspondence, together with my official letters to the Mexican Government, and the instructions from that Government to the Mexican Legation at Washington, from 1859 to 1867, I published in Spanish in Mexico, in ten large volumes, some of them of over 1,000 pages, containing data in my opinion indispensable to write an accurate history of the events which took place in Mexico during that eventful period.<sup>1</sup> As those papers are already printed I do not think it advisable to include them here, notwithstanding that they belong to a most interesting historical period.

<sup>1</sup> The extent of the labor I accomplished during that period, appears from the following extract of a statement of work done by the Mexican Legation at Washington, from August 16, 1860, when I became Chargé d'Affaires, to December 31, 1866, which I published on that date:

As an instance illustrating the importance of those documents, I append to this Preface an autograph letter from Mr. Lincoln, dated at Springfield, Ill., on January 21, 1861, addressed to me after a short visit that I made to him at his home, a few weeks before his inauguration as President of the United States. This letter, which has not before seen public light, shows his feelings towards Mexico, and is quite typical of that great man.

It is hardly necessary to say that in the publication of these papers, I have had no thought of pecuniary profit. I have often been asked by the editors of the periodicals in which they were originally printed to consent to receive an honorarium, which I have always declined. My object in writing them was, as already stated, to diffuse important information, and not to make money, and I considered that the periodicals which published my papers did me a favor, as they contributed to the accomplishment of that object. I have now decided to print the book containing them through a leading New York and London editorial house, because that is the only effective way of putting it within the reach of the general public for continued reading and reference. If I had printed this volume for private circulation it would have reached comparatively few readers, and my object would not have been accomplished.

I shall be well satisfied if I succeed in my purpose of placing within reach of the people of the United States a knowledge of Mexican affairs which is the result of many years of experience and of an intimate acquaintance with the condition of things in my own country, and will feel still more pleased if I succeed in accomplishing my object of contributing to establish a lasting friendship between the two Sister Republics.

WASHINGTON, July, 1898.

AGGREGATE STATEMENT OF WORK.

|   | LETTERS AND ENCLOSURES TO | PAGES. | LETTERS AND ENCLOSURES FROM | PAGES. |
|---|---------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|--------|
| Department of State of Mexico.....            | 6,643                     | 23,791 | 1,905                       | 4,834  |
| Department of State of the United States..... | 1,720                     | 8,948  | 483                         | 721    |
| Mexican Consulates, Legations, etc.....       | 1,301                     | 1,729  | 1,379                       | 1,951  |
| Private Letters.....                          | 7,430                     | 14,920 | 7,405                       | 16,678 |
| Total.....                                    | 17,094                    | 49,388 | 11,172                      | 24,184 |

TOTALS.

|                        | LETTERS AND ENCLOSURES. |        |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------|
|                        | Number.                 | Pages. |
| From the Legation..... | 17,094                  | 49,388 |
| To the Legation.....   | 11,172                  | 24,184 |
| Total.....             | 28,266                  | 73,572 |

Springfield, Ill. Jan. 21. 1861  
Mr. Matias Romero.

My dear Sir:

Allow me to thank you  
for your polite call, as Charge d'Aff-  
aires of Mexico— While, as yet  
I can do no official act on be-  
half of the United States, as one  
of its citizens, I tender <sup>expression of my</sup> the sincer-  
est wishes for the happiness, prosperity,  
and liberty of yourself, your govern-  
ment, and its people—

Yours Obedt. Servt  
A. Lincoln

Facsimile of autograph letter of Abraham Lincoln, written a few weeks before his  
inauguration as President of the United States, to express his sympathy for Mexico.  
This letter was written on note paper  $7\frac{1}{8}$  by  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches.