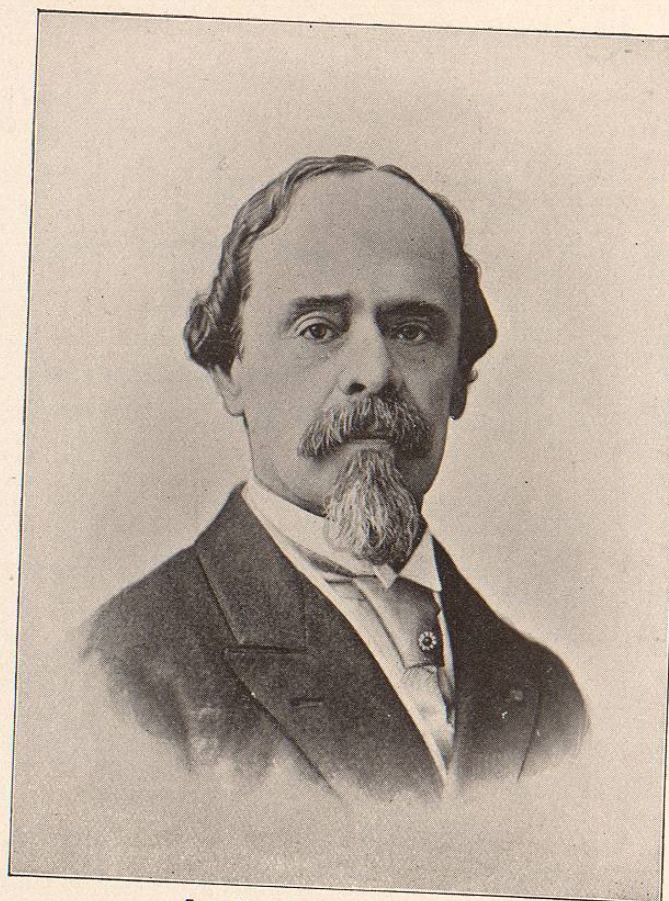


CHAPTER XI

THE MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

THE government of Mexico is conducted very much after the plan of that of the United States. The president is elected for a term of four years, and he appoints the ministers of his cabinet, which is composed of seven members. Following is the list of these offices, with their present incumbents:



LIC. DON IGNACIO MARISCAL,
SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Secretario de Relaciones (Foreign Affairs), Lic. Don Ignacio Mariscal.

Secretario de Gobernación (Interior), General Don Manuel Gonzalez Cosío.

Secretario de Hacienda (Treasury), Lic. Don José Ives Limantour.

Secretario de Guerra y Marino (War and Navy), General Don Felipe Berriozabal.

Secretario de Justicia y Instrucción Pública (Public Instruction), Lic. Don Joaquín Baranda.

Secretario de Fomento (Encouragement), Señor Don Manuel Fernandez Leal.

Secretario de Comunicaciones y Obras Públicas (Public Works), General Don Francisco Z. Mena.

When the president is re-elected to another term of office it is the custom of the Mexican cabinet to resign in a body, thus leaving the president free to form a new bureau, if he chooses,—a custom to be commended to older and larger republics. This custom is but another sign of the universal courtesy and instinctive politeness of the Mexicans, which would thus relieve the head of the nation from any embarrassing position that might arise. Thus far, however, the president has seen fit to request his ministers to remain in charge of their respective offices, and by this means a continuity of good government is insured, while the dangers of change and disruption are avoided.

The minister of foreign affairs sends in his resignation through the sub-secretary of his

department. All the other ministers tender theirs through the secretary of foreign affairs. The president replies to the resignation of the latter as follows:

"Let the minister of foreign affairs be informed that his resignation is not to be accepted; inasmuch as the president of the republic considers his re-election for another constitutional period as an implicit approval of his acts as chief executive, and as Señor Mariscal is one of his associates, he looks to his patriotism that he will continue to co-operate in the labors of the public administration." And to all the other ministers he sends an answer couched in similar terms, requesting them to remain in office.

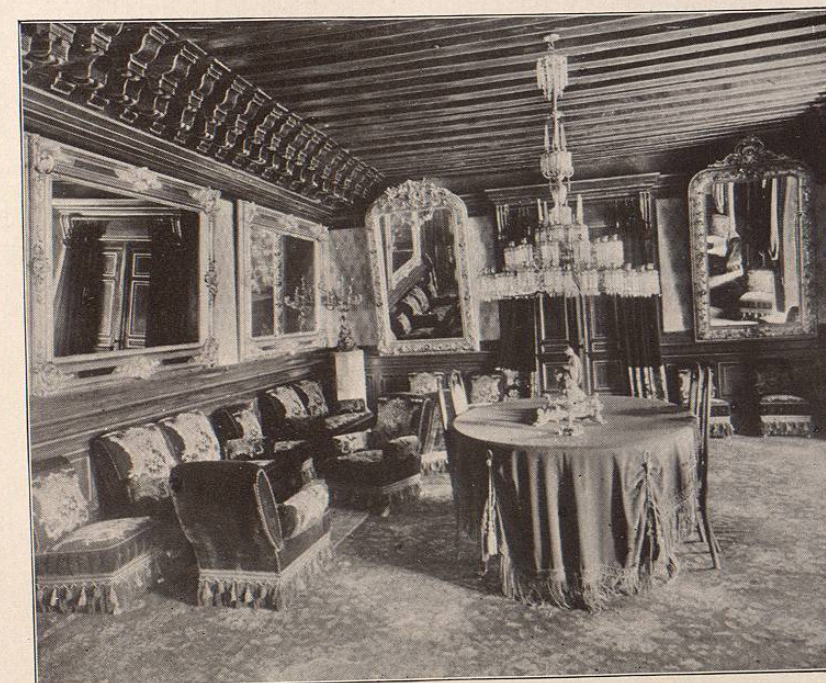
This course of action on the president's part is but another proof of his wise statesmanship, as each of his ministers was carefully chosen in the first place with a view to his fitness for the work to be intrusted to his judgment and abilities; and in no case has the choice proved a wrong one.

Perhaps the best known of these ministers, from his connection with other nations, is Señor Lic. Don Ignacio Mariscal, a man as universally beloved as he is admired and respected for his truly great qualities of heart and head.

He was born in Oaxaca on the 5th of July, 1829. His parents, who belonged to an honorable family, endeavored to educate their son according to his aspirations. When quite a youth he showed that he had political talent. At twenty years of age, after sustaining brilliant examinations, he received his title as a lawyer, and at once took a high position. He affiliated himself with the Liberal party, for which he has at all times been ready to make every sacrifice. He became a member of the Constitutional Congress—representing Oaxaca—and distinguished himself as one of the most active in giving Mexico its Magna Charta. He was ever one of Juárez's most ardent friends. In 1861 and 1862 he occupied a seat in Congress, after which he was magistrate of the Supreme Court, and later was appointed secretary of foreign relations. During the war of intervention he went to Washington as secretary and legal counsel of the Mexican legation, together with Señor Juan Antonio de la Fuente, minister plenipotentiary from Mexico. Then it was that Mariscal revealed great talent as an expert diplomat, aiding Señor Matías Romero in influencing the American government to take an active stand against Napoleon.

When Mexico became conqueror, Mariscal was appointed chargé d'affaires in Washington, where he won public appreciation and sympathy. Desiring to return to his native country, he resigned this high position, and was appointed president of the Supreme Court of Justice of the federal district, was next elected to Congress, and afterward was chosen justice of the National Supreme Court.

In 1866 he was a member of Juárez's cabinet as secretary of justice and public instruction.



SALON OF THE SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

He is the author of "Reforms in Criminal Law," a work which reflects upon him great honor. His services were once more needed as minister plenipotentiary from Mexico to the United States of North America, which position he held for six years.

During Lerdo's administration he represented Mexico in the United States, and afterward returned to Mexico to private life; but President Diaz, knowing how useful and talented a man he was, appointed him as judge of the Supreme Court of Justice of the district, and in December, 1879, made him secretary of justice and public instruction. In 1880, under his direction and supervision, there was published the Code of Civil Proceeding,—the law and regulations governing the new organization of tribunals and penal proceedings,—which was of great importance to legislation. Afterward he was appointed secretary of foreign relations; and when

President Diaz finished his term, and General Manuel Gonzalez succeeded him, the latter kept Señor Mariscal in this position on account of his vast knowledge of international law.

During President Gonzalez's administration Señor Mariscal filled several difficult and high positions, among others that of minister plenipotentiary to Great Britain.

On General Diaz's return to the presidency he again called Señor Mariscal to his side and appointed him secretary of foreign affairs, which position he still holds. In this delicate position he has justified the confidence deservedly placed in him, and has amicably arranged differences which had arisen, and re-established friendly relations with France, England, and the other nations of Europe.

As a diplomat Señor Mariscal has an enviable reputation, and as a lawyer he is one of the notabilities of the Mexican forum. His opinion on any question of public, private, or international rights has great weight. As a speaker he uses with great facility, elegance, and correctness of style the rich language of Cervantes. He speaks several languages, English among others, and has translated into

Spanish some of the choicest poems of Longfellow, Poe, Bryant, and other American writers.

In his home he is an affectionate father and an excellent husband, and is a type of the perfect gentleman. His wife is an American lady of high standing.

For his important services he has won high consideration from the governments of France, Portugal, Venezuela, and others, which are unanimous in greatly honoring him.

Señor General Manuel G. Cosío is the secretary of the interior, one of the most important positions in the cabinet.

Few men in Mexico are so enthusiastic for the development of the country as General Cosío, and few have the ability, push, and energy that he has developed in the many offices which he has occupied.



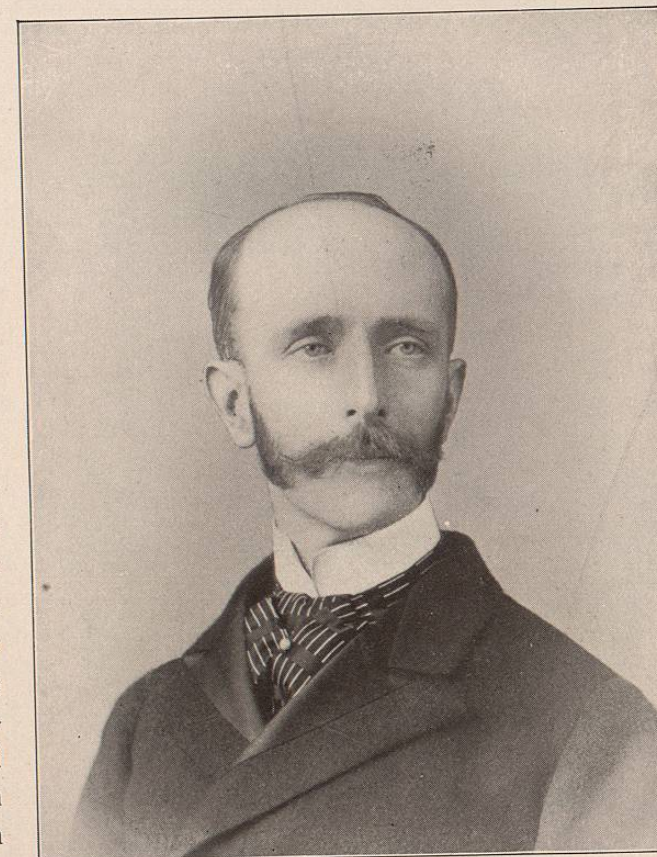
GENERAL DON MANUEL GONZALEZ COSÍO,
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

Señor Cosío was born in the state of Zacatecas, and, besides having occupied the position of governor of that state and that of congressman and senator, he displayed great ability as mayor of the city of Mexico. He is one of the most popular men of the cabinet.

There is quite a romantic episode in the life of General Cosío. During the civil war of the United States he was in New York in company with two other young officers, destitute, but anxious to return to Mexico to fight for his country against the French. None of the three had enough money to take him back, so they decided that one of them should be selected by lot and enlist in the army of the United States, obtain the eight hundred dollars in greenbacks which were given as bounty to each enlisting man at that time, and give the money to the other two to go back to Mexico and fight for their country.

The lot fell to Cosío, who was on the point of presenting himself at head-quarters in New York and enlisting in the army so that his two companions could go back to Mexico with the money thus obtained, when General Mejia arrived in New York. He was visited by the three young officers and acquainted with their intention, and he gave them all passage-money and sent them back to Mexico as commissioned officers. Thus it was that instead of fighting for the American Union, as Cosío came very near doing, he battled for his own country until the French were banished from Mexico. The popularity of General Cosío is unquestioned. He is a man of large intelligence, long experience in civil affairs, and proved capacity. A man who has fought in revolutions, won distinction for gallantry in the war against the empire, suffered imprisonment in France as an incident of that conflict, served twice as governor of Zacatecas, been a deputy and a senator in the Federal Congress, and for ten years held the most conspicuous place in the municipal council of the city of Mexico, is surely qualified to hold an important ministry in a great country.

The charities of Mexico City are wonderfully abundant. These are both public and private. There are at least half a dozen institutions maintained by private enterprise and Christian philanthropy. The public charities of Mexico are organized and conducted under the auspices of the federal department of the interior, of which General Manuel Gonzalez Cosío is chief. Many sick and dying, hungry and homeless, have had reason for gratitude to a government so considerate. Minister Cosío is especially interested in these charities, and often makes personal inspection of these institutions in his department. One of these is the *Proveeduría de la Beneficencia Pública*, or Storehouse of the Bureau of Public Charities. This immense storehouse supplies provisions for several public establishments, where the poor are provided for without money and without price.



SEÑOR DON JOSÉ IVES LIMANTOUR,
SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

The system of the hospicios is exceedingly beneficent and worthy of a much more extended description than can be given in these pages. Mexico takes good care of its sick and unfortunate ones, and some of her benevolent institutions are very old. The Hospital of San Andres, for instance, was founded in 1626 by private donations. It was converted into the Jesuit College and the Church of Santa Ana in 1642, but Captain Andres Tapia Carbajal reconstructed it in 1676 and called it San Andres. After the Jesuits were expatriated it was abandoned until 1779, when Archbishop Alonzo Nuñez de Hara y Peralta turned it into a pest-house for smallpox. In 1861, under the Reform Laws, it was secularized, and now, under



GENERAL DON FRANCISCO Z. MENA,
SECRETARY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS.

the Secretario de Gobernación, it is a large and spacious institution, with fine wards for the sick and infirm, who are all well cared for by the protecting government.

Away back in 1575 the Augustinian fathers founded a college in the city of Mexico which flourished for some years but was finally abandoned. Later on, a cuartel was built from its decayed ruins, which was fortified and occupied until 1847, when it was converted into a "Hospital Provisional." The founder of this project was Urbano Fonseca, who placed therein forty beds for men and twenty for women. The first to occupy these beds were the wounded from the battle of Padurna, August 23, 1847. Later this building was converted into a municipal hospital and named "Hospital Juarez," under which title it has been the source of relief for many unfortunates. The same period of war was the occasion of founding another of Mexico's great charities. In 1850 a committee rented the Tecpan de Santiago, in order to provide a suitable retreat for the young prisoners who were then in the national prison. It was called at first a branch of the prison, but later

it became necessary to place there many children who were not criminals. Señor Azcarate established there, for all these children, in 1853 some excellent schools and workshops, and put them under the direction of Señor Licenciado Antonio Díaz de Bonillo. As first conducted, the school partook of a correctional nature, but some years ago it was renamed the Industrial Orphan School, and the character of it somewhat changed. This school was protected by the late Hon. Manuel Romero Rubio, but it is now in the direct charge of General Cosío.

Other institutions under his efficient care are the Hospicio de Pobres, founded in 1765 by Fernando Ortiz Cortez, who obtained a license to establish a local hospital for the poor of the city,—the place was recognized and formally opened in 1774,—and the Casa de Maternidad, founded by Carlotta in June, 1865, with an annex for hospital purposes.

The departamento de hacienda, which is the treasury of Mexico, is without doubt the most important of public departments. This is at present under the able, well-organized manage-

ment of Señor Lic. Don José Ives Limantour, one of the most notable financiers of Mexico, whose superior intellectual faculties have placed him in this office, where he has shown remarkable executive ability.

In "La Aduana," a building situated in the Antigua Plazuela de Santiago Tlaltelolco, are located all the offices, store-rooms, deposits, etc., that come under the direction of the minister of the treasury. It also serves as a wareroom for the railroads that belong to the republic.

The Casa de Moneda (Mint) was established in 1526, and then occupied a department of the Municipal Palace. In 1640 the mint was built on Calle de Moneda, which was afterward taken for the National Museum (which up to date has cost more than a million dollars). On account of unpaid contracts, the department came under the charge of the government afterward, and later became entirely government property. It now occupies a large and handsome building on Calle del Apartado. The bureau of engraving is situated in the National Palace, and the Lotería Nacional is in the first Calle del Reloj. The latter is a spacious building, with fine offices and a grand saloon, where the drawings take place. The Lotería is under charge of the secretario de hacienda.

Señor Don José Ives Limantour was born of French parents in the city of Mexico in 1853. His parents being wealthy, he had the opportunity of the best schools in the city. In 1866 his parents took him to France to complete his education. Some two years later he returned to Mexico to study law in the School of Jurisprudence. The term for graduation, as fixed by the faculty of this school, is six years, but Mr. Limantour, being an unusually bright and studious scholar, completed his graduation in four years, becoming distinguished for his intelligence and his energy. Mr. Limantour is especially versed in political economy, and during his college course excited considerable comment from the politicians of the day by his views on political economy. After his graduation he was appointed by the faculty professor of that branch in the School of Jurisprudence. Later he was sent by the government to Europe to settle several difficult financial questions. Owing to his extreme modesty, Mr. Limantour kept out of public life until the year 1893, when Mr. Matías Romero tendered him the office of sub-secretary of the treasury, which he accepted. Although he was an entirely new man in the department, he soon won the confidence of Secretary Romero; and in the same year, when Mr. Romero was appointed minister to Washington, Mr. Limantour was appointed secretary of the treasury, which place he fills to-day with ability and honor, returning his salary each month to the treasury of the republic. He has a sufficient



GENERAL DON FELIPE BERRIOZABAL,
SECRETARY OF WAR AND THE NAVY.