INTIMATE PAGES OF MEXICAN HISTORY

by

EDITH O'SHAUGHNESSY



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BY

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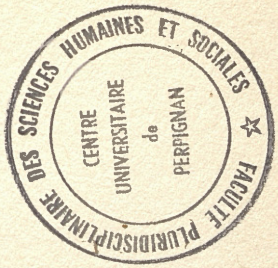
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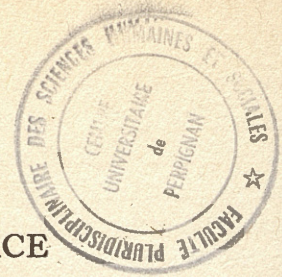
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TO

MY SON

THESE PAGES OF HISTORY



PREFACE

This book, concerning the four Presidents of Mexico whom I have personally known, contains only what I have seen myself, or what, by word of mouth and eye in eye, I have learned from those intimately connected with the men and events of which it speaks.

In the chapters relating to Huerta there will be found, however, some considerations of the phenomena presented by Hispano-Indian politics, which are as distinct from those of the United States as are the flora and fauna of the two countries. Without some study of them, Mexico will continue to be a Terra Ignota, resembling, on any chart prepared for American use, those portions of the globe in seventeenth century maps represented by blank spaces embellished with scroll-like patterns. But the tides which ebb and flood under the Mexican moon wash shores whereon the laws of climate and of race, though so diverse, operate as definitely as do our own. These differences are shown in great relief by the figure of Huerta, in whom race, environment, and tradition present themselves in the most specific form, for he always ran true to type, and acted and reacted along secular lines.

He will furthermore be distinguished from other Presidents of Mexico by his struggle to maintain his government in the face of the displeasure of a President of the United States who could starve him from

without, feed his enemies from within, and finally bombard and take from him his principal revenue-bearing port. He will remain too, for all time, a tragic and very explicit example of the unavailingness of the rights of the weak when they cross the desires of the strong. His end even shows how the unrighteous man, if he be in himself worthy of persecution, may become a martyr, and against the blood of martyrs even the mightiest are without defense, for of all things committed to the earth it gives the speediest and most abundant return. . . .

No man may enter the womb of his mother a second time and become whole, neither can Mexico be reëmbodied in her one-time glories, yet she exists, nearest if not dearest, neighbor of the mightiest nation on earth, and her destinies would seem to depend on the will of whatever autocrat rules above the Rio Grande. A beneficent tyrant is the best she can hope, who according to his qualities, together with some instinct for facts, will extend his hand to raise and not to crush. For his, as we have been witness, is the power to say: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."

We have finally revolved, and it has taken us seven years, in the vicious circle of interference in Mexican affairs to arrive at our starting point—revolution and assassination. Any one following the tracing can only find himself where he set out. On his round he will have encountered hundreds of thousands of dead Mexicans, over a thousand dead Americans, and yet uncounted billions of destroyed property, to say nothing of the wealth that has remained potential during the seven lean years. Saddest of all he will find that the

natural hope of the country, the new generation, has passed from an innocent childhood to a demoralized adolescence. The ruin would seem to be complete.

The solution of Mexico's problems, nevertheless, even in a world of covetous and desperate nations gone bankrupt, is possible, and in a way so simple that it is almost an anti-climax to her tragedy. Our own rôle should be largely negative, leaving something, after the way of wisdom, to time, nature—and the Mexicans. We have but to permit her decent people, the men of education and experience that she is quite capable of producing, and whom our theories concerning an imaginary Mexico have largely kept in exile, to return and form the sort of government suited to her natural idiosyncrasies and the present stage of her evolution. An even more self-abnegatory expression of benevolence would be to cease the sale of arms and ammunitions to any and every group of "revolucionarios," reserving the various perfected twentieth century means of peace for the one man whom destiny (and ourselves) will have placed in control of the intricate and delicate machinery of Mexican Government. Then we may indeed stand off and survey our work, without too much shame nor through too many tears.

EDITH O'SHAUGHNESSY.

Paris, June, 1920.

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PART ONE: PORFIRIO DIAZ

OAXACA: SEPTEMBER 15, 1830 — PARIS: JULY 2, 1915

Mexico's Augustan Period

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

INTIMATE PAGES OF MEXICAN HISTORY

PART ONE: PORFIRIO DIAZ

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

CHAPTER I

In Exile, Rome, 1913—Retrospect—Triumphal Entry of the Heaven-born General into Mexico City, November 21, 1876—First Administration—Immediate Predecessors: Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, Proud and Unpopular. Benito Juarez, the Great Liberal, the "Man in the Black Coat."

Diaz needs no written praise. His works have long since been set in final and magnificent relief against the chaos that followed his disappearance from Mexican history.

Yet a few human things concerning one to whom nothing human was foreign will not come amiss.

The Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, traveler and savant, passing through Mexico in the early sixties, says of him that he was the most perfect type he had ever seen, and what he imagined the kingly hero Cuauhtemoc to have been. More than half a century has passed since then. During these decades, doubtless sometimes mistakenly, after the human way, but always in the grand manner of Empire-builders, he transformed his country, bandit-ridden, revolution-

rent, blood-stained, darkly passionate, where things are seldom what they seem, into something bright and beautiful and explicit among the nations.

I knew him only in exile, but even then old, very old, and hurt unto death, so much of the magnificence of his high and tragic destiny hung about his person, that I was dazzled and silent as I stood looking at him in the radiance of that Roman Easter morning of 1913. His head was of fine proportions, somewhat square and high above the ears, his white hair was still thick, his jaw was firm, the lines leading from nose to chin, though deeply cut, caused no sagging of the face. His eye, that strange hazel eye, with its very dark pupil, was piercing and still beautiful; his forehead in spite of the many lines above the accentuated protuberances of the eyebrows, and the furrows between the eyes, was stamped with a patient yet stern serenity. His visage, though stained and yellowed, seemed to have escaped the degradation that time is accustomed to inflict upon the human countenance. There was nothing broken nor defaced in his aspect, though aged he was not destroyed; rather over his outward being lay, as it were, a beautiful patina, such as time gives to temples and pictures, but rarely to their creators.

His figure, of medium height, was strikingly erect, and his few gestures had the noble reserve of one long accustomed to authority.

Beside him stood the incomparable companion of his greatness. In her severe, deep-blue dress, her close, deep-blue hat, a single string of faultless pearls about her throat, she was of an indescribable elegance, the storied queen in exile.

She had noble, strongly-marked features and a skin of ivory-like texture and pallor. Her head was carried with a sort of lofty modesty, peculiar to her alone among the women I have known of high destiny. Her figure was slender-hipped, small-waisted and she had a low, gently-swelling bosom. There was something passionately shielding in her attitude, and a great tenderness in her look when it turned towards her husband, something in her naturally gentle being that suggested the vigil of the lioness over the wounded King of the Forest who feels the hurt is mortal. It is no small thing for a woman to have lived for more than three decades with the greatest man of her country. . . .

After the greetings, and when he had given me the far-famed, appraising glance, we spoke of the Madero assassinations then so recent.[1] It was in deep sadness that he deplored the event, but without any hint of self-justification, though ruin had been wrought such as he had rescued his country from in the days of his youth, and preserved it from all the years of his power.

With a look on his face which it might have worn had he been alone, he continued:

"I might have reëstablished order,—it would not have been the first time" (here he paused for an instant, doubtless reviewing in memory the blood of battles and the bending of law-breakers' wills), "but it could only have been done by a fratricidal war which would have destroyed the industries and commerce of the country, and exposed it to international complications."

[1] Madero and Pino Suarez were killed on February 22.

"But the evil has been greater," I hazarded (in French, he speaking Spanish). He made a gesture of assent, then without any trace of bitterness added simply:

"It was told me that my presence was the reason for the revolution. What could I do except withdraw, making a last sacrifice to peace?"

I could not speak to him of the ingratitude of nations, who, with such rare exceptions, put their great men to death or send them into exile. He would have brooked no reproach where his people were concerned, even though they had cast him out. As, deeply moved, I arose to go, he held me for another moment, saying: "My only ambition is for my country's peace and prosperity," adding, "what can it matter to me whose hand will be privileged to accomplish this? It is the only happiness I can know in exile." He made a slight gesture, involuntarily calling attention to that hotel room in which his soul was so evidently a stranger.

As for myself, instead of that crude blue and gold salon of the Hotel Bristol where they were receiving me, I saw for a moment, hanging in a strange transparency, the high castle of Chapultepec. Beneath was the troubled, gun-shot city. It, like Rome, was enfolded in the natural beauty, even greater, of its Easter morning. I suddenly realized that I was witnessing one of those swift and formidable vindications that nature and history sometimes permit to greatness. Events had again exalted Porfirio Diaz, as definitely as if some Fate personified, stooping, had lifted his fallen statue and placed it again on its pedestal.

* * * *

After the launching of the Plan of Tuxtepec in Oaxaca on January 15, 1876, Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, then President of Mexico, fled to the United States. Out of the ensuing disorder finally emerged the "Greatest Mexican," Porfirio Diaz, and the manner of his appearance at the head of the government was in the typical Mexican manner,—after a revolution, by a military coup. Under his command the revolutionary army entered Mexico City on November 21, 1876, and their leader was proclaimed provisional President.

The entry of General Diaz into the capital was in keeping with the majestic period it inaugurated.

Clad in a gray field-uniform, relieved only by a single row of gilt buttons on which was embossed the Mexican eagle, mounted on a mettlesome steed, astride one of the English saddles he always used, his fine eyes flashing as they glanced vigilantly about him, his lips and chin firm, his head high, his whole bearing stamped with an indomitable will and an unfaltering courage, what wonder that an awed populace saw in him the heaven-sent leader? The revolutionary army which followed him doubtless resembled outwardly other revolutionary armies; we are all more or less familiar with them now, but no acts of violence were committed, no scenes of disorder took place. Their chief's commands were too explicit, infringement meant death. Lerdo's troops—he himself had fled the day before—made no resistance in the capital, but were swept away or melted quite smoothly into the victorious ranks. It was the beginning of the great Porfirian peace, of Mexico's Augustan Period.

General Diaz remained but a few days in Mexico City, the government being given into the hands of General Juan Alvarez, he himself leaving to continue the work of pacification in the interior. With an army of three thousand men he marched against Iglesias, who, after making a show of resistance, fled to the port of Manzanillo, whence he embarked for the United States. He had been elected President of the Supreme Court of Justice in 1873. This position made him virtually Vice-President of the Republic. Disputes had arisen between him and Lerdo. Being aggressive and very ambitious, Iglesias openly launched a revolution, after the time-honored custom, with the intention of ultimately assuming the supreme power. But one greater than them all had arisen in their midst.

The Congress of April, 1877, which decreed Porfirio Diaz President for four years, laid the corner stone of the magnificent edifice known as "Modern Mexico."

The only visible and decidedly encumbering furniture of State left in the débris of the old edifice, except, of course, the Constitution made of the greenest of wood, was the English Debt, the Spanish Debt, the United States Debt, one known as the "Padre Moran" debt, together with interior liabilities too numerous to inventory. All was done up in the frayed upholstery of banditry and revolution, and sagged and creaked with poverty. The only furnishings still in perfect working condition were the conflicting passions of half a hundred years. We of 1920, familiar with Mexico in revolution, can somewhat appreciate the difficulties confronting Porfirio

Diaz, and the sovereign wisdom which alone enabled him to construct a new Mexico.

In 1880 the term for which he was elected having expired, with a political vision that merited better results, he retired according to the constitutional provision that no President should succeed himself. Naturally this mark of civism was little appreciated by his compatriots, who considered that he was but biding a greater hour.

During this first term of office he was largely employed in discouraging banditry, and quelling the numerous revolutions which formed themselves spontaneously and continuously out of the abounding elements of disorder. For this, twenty years of active martial life had supremely fitted him. Knowing the physical and moral conformation of Mexico as no other man has ever known it, the potentialities of his people, the spirit and variety of their national qualities, he proceeded first to give them the essential gift of peace, leaving that of liberty for a more profitable moment.

He renewed diplomatic relations with France, with Belgium, with Portugal, though on account of the big English debt, an inheritance from the splendor-loving but terrible Santa Ana, recognition was withheld by Great Britain. The difference of opinion as to the quality of the arms and ammunition supplied by England, which jamming or failing to explode, did not kill so many Mexicans as was expected, further embittered relations.

Though the United States maintained its diplomatic representative in Mexico City, Mr. John W. Foster, accredited there since the days of Lerdo,

Washington, too, delayed recognition of the Diaz government, and this for a diversity of reasons, the chief of which was lack of confidence in the establishment of peace, and in the security of commercial relations. Though the government of the United States was aware of the military achievements of General Diaz, it knew nothing of his civic genius. It did know that his country was bankrupt and unruly. There was nothing in its history since 60 years to cause the government of the United States to suspect that a man had appeared who in his single person would deliver Mexico from the evils of those six decades.

His genius was soon, however, to reveal itself clad in the rarest of all governmental garbs—instinct for facts. He proceeded to give the first great impulse to railways, knowing that better communications would tend more than anything else, except his own energy and judgment, to rid the country of bandits, and gain the indispensable good-will of his Northern neighbor. Lerdo had been wont to say that "between Mexico and the United States there should remain a desert," adding "those who wish to traverse it, can do so on donkeys." A more classic expression attributed to him is, "Entre el debil y el fuerte, el desierto." (Between the weak and the strong, the desert.) The word of Diaz was: "better communications,—roads, railways, bridges, economic relations, reciprocal services, understanding, bonds."

He discovered also another short, very short way, into the green paths of prosperity. The Mexican state being bankrupt, foreign capital was the evident and only means for the development of its latent

riches and the suckling of its infant industries. He proceeded to make it not only safe, but pleasant and profitable for foreigners to invest their brains and money in Mexico. They brought with them the golden keys with which again to open the "Treasure House of the World."

Diaz was succeeded by General Manuel Gonzalez, who had none of his predecessor's gifts and few qualities of his own. Riots, rebellions, revolutions were once more the chief concern of the Mexicans.

Fatalistically and surprisingly they allowed him, however, to finish his term, perhaps because in the Mexican subconsciousness lay the knowledge that a great man awaited destiny in their midst.

During President Diaz' first incumbency, at his solicitation, Manuel Romero Rubio, who had been Lerdo's Minister for Foreign Affairs, a charming and able gentleman, initiated by long and varied experience into Mexican political mysteries, returned to Mexico from New York, where he and Lerdo had been living in exile, according to the even then traditional custom of Mexicans who had served or tried to serve their country.

Lerdo's personal pride was immeasurable, and he always refused to return, saying "my dead body perhaps, but never alive." He died in New York; and when at last his body was returned to its native soil, President Diaz gave him the most splendid of burials, as befitted one who had been invested with the Supreme Power.

Lerdo's administration had been extremely unpopular, one of his so-called reforms having been the expulsion of the Sisters of Charity from the Republic,

and the attendant closing of many hospitals, asylums, and homes for the aged. It was as President of the Supreme Court of Justice that he had succeeded to the Presidency, quite fortuitously, on the sudden death of Benito Juarez, July 17, 1872.

A word concerning Benito Juarez, the "man in the black coat," the only civilian figure of the first magnitude which had appeared in the history of Mexico since her Independence. He was a Zapotec Indian of pure race, born on the day of the vernal equinox of 1806, in an adobe hut, in the mountains of Oaxaca, on the borders of a lake known as the "Laguna Encantadora," the enchanted lagoon, from the way it had of unexpectedly drawing under to their doom even the strongest swimmers.

His education began with a bookbinder of Oaxaca into whose employ he was taken at the age of twelve. From this humble starting point he was destined to tread the exalted and extremely varied paths of the Mexican patriot. He was to know supreme honors, likewise prisons and exile; at one period of his career he was a fruit peddler in New Orleans. On his return to Oaxaca in 1855 he soon gathered about him men of like political beliefs, among whom was young Porfirio Diaz, whose military star was just showing above the revolutionary horizon.

On February 5, 1857, a new figure appeared in Mexican history, the gory Goddess "La Constitución," who has since rivaled the sanguinary gods of the Aztec teocalli in the sacrifices she has exacted from the Mexicans. President Comonfort was sponsor for her, assisted by Benito Juarez, who became later Comonfort's "Minister of Domestic Rela-

tions." These "relations," be it said in passing, were of the noisiest and most disputatious kind, and Comonfort subsequently had their Minister cast into prison. Comonfort's own natural end was flight. After various eclipses and further vicissitudes, Benito Juarez emerged as President of Mexico and professed upholder of the Constitution, though being a wise Indian, he doubtless looked upon it as Mr. Clémenceau once looked on the Peace Treaty, as something with which, though not perfect, one could *perhaps* work.

This indefatigable and gifted being of iron nerves and seemingly deathless body, who had never known a day's illness, died suddenly of heart disease in the Palacio in Mexico City on July 18, 1872.

His body lay in state for two days, while an awed, highly-colored, big-hatted populace defiled through the Palace to look upon his basalt-colored face, which is said to have worn an expression of surpassing, almost alarming tranquillity, despite the great scar that stretched across it.

These two men, Benito Juarez and Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, were the immediate predecessors of Porfirio Diaz, and he alone knew how strange was the heritage they left him.

CHAPTER II

The Love-marriage of Porfirio Diaz—He Finds an Incomparable Companion for His Splendid Years—He Rides into His Native City, Eloquent of His Martial Life, with His Young Bride—His Sternness in Matters of Discipline—His Generosity Towards Enemies—His Only Visit to the United States.

It was while Governor-Elect of the State of Oaxaca that General Diaz married, on November 7, 1881, Carmen Romero Rubio, daughter of the man who had been Minister of Foreign Affairs under Lerdo, and who had accompanied him in his flight to the United States.

At the time of her marriage "Carmelita," as she was to be known affectionately and admiringly during long years to the Mexican people, was only sixteen, her seventeenth birthday not occurring till the following January.

About General Diaz hung visibly much of the magnificence of his destiny. Romance clothed his past, and there were potentialities of splendor about his future. He was the fabled, fancy-stirring "man on horseback"; the type of man that every government of Europe openly inveighs against and secretly desires in this year of 1920; the savior, who like all coming to save, performs his task above and beyond the crowd, which later, after salvation is accomplished, resents his disdain and forgets his benefits.

He had fought continuously during the war against the French. The pictures of him at La Carbonera on

his sorrel horse in his picturesque "charro" costume, a pistol in his hand, his steed pawing the air, the French in retreat, will live as long as the history of that epoch lives. He accomplished many daring escapes, such as that from Puebla in 1865, when he was a prisoner of the French from the 10th of February to the 22nd of September, and which is one of the most thrilling evasions of history.[1]

Courage, decision, judgment, luck, all the great military qualities showed themselves even in this feat.

[1] The following relation of General Diaz's escape from prison at Puebla in 1865 is in his own words:

"We were delivered over to the Austrian forces who imprisoned those of us above the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the fortress of Loreto. We were threatened with summary execution unless we would swear allegiance to the Empire and the majority yielded, but four of us refused, and a few days later I was transferred to the convent of Santa Catarina and placed in a cell with two other officers. On the pretext of a disagreement with them, I obtained a cell by myself and forthwith began digging a tunnel, starting underneath my bed. I was on the ground floor, in a chapel which had formerly been the cell of a nun of miraculous powers, and there was a well in it, famous for its curative waters. I used the well for receiving the earth which I dug from my tunnel. When I had almost reached a point underneath the street, after five months' work, I was suddenly transferred to the convent of La Compañia. While there I was treated with great courtesy by the lieutenant in command, Baron Chizmendia, who took me to a bull-fight on one occasion and even gave me permission to leave the prison alone on parole. This cost him dear on the return of his superior officer, the Austrian Count Thun, who put him under arrest for having given me these privileges. When I took Mexico, on June 21, 1867, I found Chizmendia among the Hungarian prisoners, set him at liberty and later sent him and other Hungarian officers, who were his friends, back to Europe on the "Novara" an Austrian frigate, which had come to Vera Cruz to take Maximilian to Europe.

"Count Thun had returned to Puebla in ill humor from an unsuccessful campaign in the Sierra. He summoned me before him and after trying to induce me to give orders for an exchange of prisoners, which I refused to do, and expressing astonishment at what he termed my insolence after nine months' imprisonment, he ordered the shutters of our cells closed, leaving us in darkness. He increased the number of guards, authorizing them to enter the cells at any time, and to remain there if they considered it necessary. He made me an especial victim and to the extent that I resolved to make my escape. I first chose my birthday, the 15th of September,

The internecine wars on the Isthmus and in Oaxaca, were also, as far as Diaz was concerned, a record of

but as that was the eve of the anniversary of our independence, I could not carry out my plan because of the illumination of the streets of Puebla. So I put it off until the 20th.

"I have succeeded in buying some horses which were in readiness, in charge of a servant in a house near by. Two of my fellow officers were in my confidence and they agreed to invite the others to a game of cards so that I might be left alone. I had provided myself with two coils of rope, wrapped about my body, and a third coil which I carried separately. My only weapon was a sharp dagger.

"After the night-bell had sounded, I went from my cell to a room common to all the prisoners and finding no one there, I threw one of the ropes to the roof, caught another rope over a stone eaves-spout and climbed up, pulling the rope after me, and picking up the other. My progress across the roof to the corner of San Roque, the point I had chosen for my descent, was most dangerous because of a detachment of troops that occupied the higher roof of the church, overlooking the convent. Although the night was very dark, there were frequent flashes of lightning, which exposed me to discovery at any minute.

"Finally I reached the wall of the church. Here the roof slanted and was very slippery from the recent rains and I was in imminent danger of falling. I had just descended to the low roof of the chaplain's house when a young man entered it from the street, gayly humming a tune, as if he had just returned from the theater. Soon after he came out, carrying a lighted candle and passed by the place where I was hiding. After what seemed to me an interminable wait, he returned and reëntered the house. I gave him sufficient time to go to bed—and perhaps to sleep—and then I pursued my way to the corner above the street of San Roque. There stood a statue of San Vicente Ferrer, and it was my purpose to tie to it the rope by which I was to make my descent. The saint was not as steady as could have been desired, but I supposed that he was sustained by an iron bar, and for greater safety, I attached my rope to the pedestal, which served also as the corner of the building. I decided that it would be unsafe to drop to the street, as I might be seen by a passer-by, so I chose as my place of descent an open lot on the side of the building, without knowing that it was a pig-pen. As I began to let myself down, my dagger fell from my belt and must have wounded one of the pigs, as a great squealing ensued that threatened to expose me to discovery.

"Upon reaching the ground, I hid for a while until the noise ceased and I was about to climb over the wall to the street, when I had to withdraw quickly on the approach of a gendarme going his rounds and examining the locks of the doors. When he had passed I gained the street, and was even able to suppress a terrible desire to cough, brought on by torments in my chest, resulting from the fatigues and anxieties of my flight.

"I ran to the house where my guide was waiting for me with horses and weapons. We mounted and, luckily, found the Teotihuacan

brilliant victories, wounds, fantastic and hair-breadth escapes. At all times and in all circumstances he had been a magnetic and romantic personality. He was of handsome and authoritative presence. His eyes, when I looked into them, were even then, at more than four-score, of an extraordinary and brilliant beauty. What deep attraction must have lain within their glance thirty years before! An immeasurable tenderness, too, one of the best gifts of strong men to beautiful women, lay beneath the absolutism of the maker and ruler of Mexico.

Such was the man bronzed, decorated, aureoled in victory, who would descend from his horse at the door of the house of Don Manuel Romero Rubio, in which is now the Calle Tacuba, then Calle San Andrés. There was that in Porfirio Diaz' instinct which led him to seek a woman whose qualities would be supplementary to his own; there was that in his destiny that enabled him to find her; and having once found her, he exalted and cherished her to the end.

gate open and so could leave the city without question. Colonel Bernardino García was to have awaited me with his troops on the boundary between the States of Puebla and Guerrero, but because of having had to postpone my escape from the 15th to the 20th, I did not find him there. I then swam the river Mixteco on horseback, not daring to be unarmed even for a moment, the Imperialist forces, under Colonel Flon, being in close proximity. On arriving at the village of Coayuca, I found that a fiesta was in progress. I avoided the center of the town but while in the outskirts I met the alcalde, whom I knew. I pretended to be a merchant on the way to the coast to buy cattle. He recognized me, however, congratulated me on my escape and offered his help, urging me to stop a while as there would be no danger. I declined and went on. A few moments later I heard rifle shots and climbing a hill I could see that fighting was going on in the town. I learned afterwards that a squadron of Imperialists had made a sudden attack in the hope of surprising García's guerrillas, who were attending the fiesta.

"We continued, without further incident, and after covering fifteen or twenty miles, found refuge in the rancho of Colonel Bernardino García, in the mountains of Oaxaca."

In the unevolved being of her sixteen years this woman held predestinatedly the choicest qualities of tact and goodness in addition to her outward graces, and was to add to his autocratic rule a crowning touch of gentleness and modesty.

During the period of the wars of Reform and Intervention he had been the man of camps, of sieges, of blood and battles, and doubtless himself and his methods were often rough and ruthless. The polished statesman of the last three decades of his administration was evolved, however, from this military chief.

They met, with the immediateness Fate sometimes shows, on the occasion of Carmelita's first appearance in society, at a luncheon at the Tivoli Eliseo given in honor of General Diaz. Afterwards at the house of the Duchess de Regla, the General and Carmelita danced together one of the charming Mexican "danzas," the young girl experiencing a very natural thrill at the attentions of the man whose gifts and achievements were even then the pride of his nation. A few days later they met again at a reception at the German Legation, where his interest was evident to all. Shortly afterwards it was made known to the parents of Carmelita that the General was madly in love with her. It was Romance, ageless, repetitive and beautiful.

But whether it was as son, lover, husband or father, each and every feeling of the heart was to be experienced in its fullness by Porfirio Diaz. His devotion to his mother gives him a typic and exalted place among the legendary sons of history. As lover,

his being was agitated by the extreme of passion and longing. As husband, fidelity, devotion and adoring solicitude accompanied every act to the end. He was, too, the kindest of fathers, respectful of the needs and rights of the separate individualities of his children. Never were they to hear from his a violent, unconsidered word, nor suffer an arbitrary decision. I witnessed his final farewell from his daughter, Amada, his first-born. Such deep, paternal tenderness emanated from that ultimate embrace, that many who witnessed it were affected to tears. I was on my way back to Mexico in September, 1913, and for a few hours the "Espagne" lay off Santander. About four o'clock a small launch was seen approaching the ship over the glittering, many-colored, afternoon waters. In it were Don Porfirio and his wife bringing Madame de la Torre, Amada, who was returning to Mexico. As he took his daughter in his arms, pressing her so closely to him, he seemed entirely forgetful of all else save love for that child he was to see no more. When at last she tore herself from his embrace and passed up the gangway, he could be seen standing motionless, majestic, his head bared, his eyes fixed on the ship whose prow was turned toward Mexico.

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Carmelita's mother was a woman of superior intelligence, though, after the Mexican way, her abilities were used exclusively for the benefit of her family. Her portrait shows something reserved, tranquil, unalterable in her being, and the small but modish bonnet of the period, with its narrow velvet strings tied under the chin, seems fitly to enclose the firmly-

chiseled features and the deep, dark eyes, with their undeviating look, of this woman, then young and very handsome.

But even a faded colored photograph cannot dim the bright glance of Don Manuel Romero Rubio's eye, nor efface the pleasant, humorous lines about the mouth, revealing him a man of easy sympathies, of a tolerance of the generally unwise attitude men take towards the things that happen to them. His brown suit set off by a lightish blue tie, the broad kind, worn crossed, further reveal his type, while his rather heavy mustache and his chin-whiskers complete the very Mexican ensemble. Altogether something human and engaging emanates from the fading presentment of one long since vanished from the human stage except as the memory of his children recalls his words and acts. . . .

Porfirio Diaz and Carmen Romero Rubio were two beings separated by a generation of time and every outward circumstance, which seemed to forecast unhappiness for both, rather than the years of mutual adoration, unbroken harmony and immeasurable trust, which were to compose their rare and perfect union. The gift of Porfirio Diaz' heart to his wife was as complete as the gift of his wisdom to his nation. She was to be the love of his life. And she, so early wedded, called, scarcely out of childhood to be the mate of the maker of Modern Mexico, was in turn to find all her joy in him, to live in and by and for him all the days of her life. "He was the beginning and the end of my existence," she once said to me, "life had no other meaning, no other value. I had only youth to give him; he gave me every-

thing. I adored him from the first and I live now only in memory and in the hope of another meeting."

* * * *

At the time of their marriage he was a widower of a year and a half. He had three children, one son, Porfirito, afterwards married to Luisa Raigosa, and two daughters: Amada, who became the wife of Señor Don Ignacio de la Torre,[1] and Luz, the wife of Señor Don Francisco Rincon Gallardo. His father was a Spaniard and his mother was Spanish through her father, though her mother had been a Mixtec Indian. The Indian blood of Don Porfirio was therefore only one quarter. His wife, Carmelita, was of pure Spanish extraction.

He was born in the city of Oaxaca on September 15, 1830, on the twentieth anniversary of the "Grito de Dolores." His cries and those of the mother bearing him were the cries of a new Mexico.

* * * *

It was to his native city that Don Porfirio took his young bride, the wedding journey through that incomparably beautiful country being made mostly on horse-back, with nights spent in hidden and romantic *pueblos*. The gorgeous valley leading to the city of Oaxaca, through which one can in fancy see them passing, is a riot of brilliant birds and flowers, and broad, shining leaves. The red-granite hills surrounding it are more austerely beautiful. It is inhabited by a race not speaking Spanish, often of

[1] Don Ignacio de la Torre was dispossessed of his great estates in Morelos by Zapata, who had been a groom in his stables. He died in exile in New York in 1918 leaving no children. Don Francisco Rincon Gallardo was murdered by bandits on his hacienda of Santa Maria in Aguascalientes in 1913. His wife and nine children survive him, the last being born after his death.

strongly-marked Asiatic type. The men are small, but firmly-knit, silent, and white-shirted; the women, dark-eyed, pearly-teethed, envelop their heads after an immemorial custom in long blue cloths, and wear golden necklaces of hand-wrought filagree. Only a few kilometers away are the unsigned monuments of an ancient civilization, the ruins of Mitla. They lie overgrown with gorgeous vegetation, among other austere, red-granite hills, outlined against the bluest of skies. Locked in these mountains, too, are treasures which men have always sought feverishly, and for which they strangely lay down their lives,—gold and silver and copper, and also precious stones that generations of women receive from them to wear around neck or finger, or hang in ear. . . .

The climate of Oaxaca is as perfect as anything earthly can be. Those who know it, may perhaps for a moment, as they read these words, feel themselves enfolded in the glittering November beauty that, at the close of the rainy season, lay about the city of churches and earthquakes, as he who was its greatest son, rode into it with his adored and beautiful young bride.

It was eloquent of his martial life, for Oaxaca had been besieged and taken by him three times. The first time was in 1858 under the orders of Colonel Ignacio Mejía, fighting against the chieftain Cobos who held it. In 1860 he took it under General Salinas, and was severely wounded. In 1865, being in command, he held the city against Marshal Bazaine, who besieged it for days with overwhelming forces. He held it till the last cartouche was fired, the last corn and sugar consumed, then with that

incomparable serenity of soul which marked all the great moments of his life, he surrendered with his troops, and was taken prisoner to Puebla. Again, on escaping, he took it in 1866, from General Oronoz. It was after this, with the cannon and arms taken from the enemy in the battles of Miahuatlán and La Carbonera that he began the siege of the city of Puebla, which he took by assault, on the unforgettable day of the 2d of April, 1867. A few days later, in the battle of San Lorenzo, he defeated Marquez, "The Tiger of Tacubaya," and proceeded to the siege of the city of Mexico, which fell into his power on the 21st of June, 1867. Thus terminated the War of Intervention and the last days of the Empire in Mexico. . . .

It is said that before his final retreat to Querétaro with Marquez and his two thousand armed men, Maximilian had watched in silence and despair, from behind a curtained window in the Palace, the departure of the French troops from Mexico City. His hour on the Hill of the Bells was near.

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Oaxaca's low, massive-built houses are earthquake-resisting, with a Spanish-Moorish touch, and because of the gold in the near mountains it is intimately connected with the history of the Conquest.[1]

[1] It was occupied by Diego de Ordaz, one of Cortés' most intrepid companions, who in 1521 took it from the Aztecs, the Emperor Ahuizotl having founded it some forty years before. In 1522 Gonzalo de Sandoval was sent there with his thirty-five-never-before-seen horsemen, bringing about a panic somewhat after the manner of the tanks in 1918. An edict of Charles V., July 6, 1520, finally created Cortés Marquis of the Valley of Oaxaca, and the lands all about are known to this day as the "El Marquesado." The first convent was established there in 1529 by Fray Gonzalo Lucero and the ancient bishopric was described as a triple vale, trefoil in shape, with the

General Diaz and his bride took up their abode in the Government Palace, built in the noble form of architecture the Spaniards introduced into Mexico. It has but one story above its Doric-columned "portales," and its cornice is surmounted by urn-like shapes. In the interior are many ample, sun-stained patios, and great stairways, leading to spacious, high-ceilinged rooms. On Sundays and on feast-days the "buena sociedad" of Oaxaca congregates in the Plaza, and at all times there are changing groups of Indians coming from every part of the state, belonging mostly to the Mixtec and Zapotec races. Wrapped in picturesque and immemorial garb, they offer delicate filagree work, bright woolen zarapes woven in their mountains, painted gourds, and highly-colored fruits.

An incident which shows the unswervingness of Porfirio Diaz' purpose, the comprehension of his task, occurred but two weeks after his marriage. Under the very windows of the stately apartment inhabited by General Diaz and his bride, a young Indian soldier, on sentinel-duty before the door of the palace, who had smoked the strange herb, marihuana,[1] which

city of Oaxaca at the stem. One valley tends towards the Pacific, another towards the Atlantic and one stretches to the north.

The city itself is built at the foot of a hill, sloping towards the River Atoyac. The cathedral was founded in 1553, but it has been so bombarded and pillaged that little of its beauty remains, and even more cruel than wars have been the restorations. The great monastery and church of Santo Domingo in their fortress-like massiveness have resisted both earthquake and cannon. The French troops, during the war of Intervention, plundered and devastated the city, and for much of the defacement of the Plaza of Oaxaca, Don Porfirio himself was responsible, in the sieges he so successfully undertook.

[1] Legend has it that the Empress Carlota was secretly poisoned with this herb before she departed from Mexico to make her despairing appeals to Napoleon III and Pius IX. It was at the Papal court that her insanity definitely developed. Her husband and an Im-

crazes him who takes it, had killed an under-officer. His wife with her baby in her arms, that same day of his arrest, gained access to the young bride, beseeching her to intercede with the Governor. When she implored the pardon of the unfortunate murderer, he answered her: "Though I adore you, and would lay down my life for you, I cannot do what you ask me. The death of this man is as nothing compared to the sustaining of military discipline throughout the country. It cannot be known of me that I condone such an act."

The end of the story is that the next day a delegation of women of the city of Oaxaca sent an appeal to President Gonzales, who commuted the death-sentence to fifteen years imprisonment in the fortress of San Juan de Ulua.

But when discipline was not menaced, General Diaz could show himself of a royal generosity.

After the storming of Puebla, three hundred Mexican officers fighting in the Imperial ranks fell into his hands. According to the law promulgated by Juarez, all such were to be summarily executed. Imprisoned in one of the great chambers of the Municipal Palace, they gave themselves up for lost, and begged for notaries and priests, that they might regulate their affairs of this world and the next. This was at 8 o'clock in the morning. The victor sent word to them that they could do as they wished till three o'clock of the afternoon. They were even allowed to go into separate rooms with their con-

perial Crown were forever lost to her. The world knows how she has passed the succeeding forty years of her life in the Château de Bouchoute, in a rayless night of insanity, kinder to her perhaps than would have been the light of memory.

fessors and notaries. Later, all were transferred to the Archiepiscopal Palace. At half-past three General Diaz in his battle-stained garments, victory still shining from his face (for Puebla had been taken in the night), appeared suddenly in their midst.

He broke the mortal silence which fell upon the condemned men to say sternly:

"According to the law you are all subject to the death penalty, for you betrayed your country when she had most need of you." Then he paused, changed his tone, and continued: "In view of the fact, however, that there are so many of you, I have the conviction that ultimately the Government will be inclined to mercy, but the Law would require that you be kept in the strictest confinement till your fate be decided. I have myself so recently suffered all things for the cause I uphold that this I would spare you. Believing in the victory of the Republic, I permit each one of you to go forth a free man, upon giving your word in writing that you will present yourself for judgment at any time it be required of you by the Government."

The scene was indescribable. The faces of three hundred men who had stepped back from death were turned towards him.

Among them was Colonel Vital Escamillo, who had increased from his own purse the price that Count Thun, Diaz' one-time jailor at Puebla, had put upon his head. He was unknown personally to General Diaz, but that touch of human frailty, never wanting on any great occasion, was shown when one among those assembled, thinking to gain favor, pointed him out to the victorious General. His ges-

ture of scorn was for the informer, rather than the culprit, as he answered: "He, too, is free."

It is said, also, that after returning the look of the three hundred men to whom he had given life as definitely as they had received it at their birth and their beginning, he turned suddenly away overcome by emotion, and left the place.

General Tamariz, also among the prisoners of that famous day, then exclaimed to those about him: "Twice Diaz has vanquished me. Once by his military genius, now by his generosity. I would gladly serve him, even in the ranks."

This act of magnanimity was of political import as well, for it was typical of the policy of converting enemies into friends, which he pursued through all the days of his power. . . .

It was while Governor of Oaxaca that, in 1883, General Diaz, accompanied by his wife, made his only visit to the United States. To see was, with Don Porfirio, to understand, and he doubtless set apart in the best eclectic manner some of our institutions for imitation,—others for avoidance. Mr. John W. Foster, who had been so long Minister to Mexico, was officially appointed by President Arthur to receive and accompany them, together with his wife, on this visit. Carmelita and Mr. Foster's daughter Eleanor, now Mrs. Robert Lansing, had been playmates at the Romero Rubio house, and at the American Legation.

CHAPTER III

Second Administration—Empire-Building—Social Life in Mexico City Since the Brief and Tragic Glory of Maximilian and Carlota—Don Porfirio's Family—He Leaves His Mother's Death-bed at the Call of Country—His Relations to the Church—Love of the Chase—Serenity of Soul—Disdain of Riches—Personal Habits—The *Ypiranga.*

In 1884, when Don Porfirio was again made President by an almost unanimous election he continued to dwell in a house in the Calle Humboldt, opposite my first Mexican home. It was a then newly-built, not large, irregularly shaped structure, having several pink cupolas, with blue-painted ceilings, and was next the square building in more classic Mexican style, which was used as the Ministry of Finance in my day.

A curious incident, concerning the building of this house, shows how forgetful Don Porfirio had been of money when he was in power, and its sources, fluid, unsealed, were near to his hand. In order to complete it, after his first Presidential term, he found himself obliged to ask a loan of 8,000 pesos from the Banco Nacional, which owed its prosperity to him. There were, after the usual human way, men on the council of the bank who inevitably voted not to let him have it. A Spaniard among them, Don Juan Llamedo, indignantly rose and said that he would personally be responsible for the sum, and that he considered any discussion as to the solvency of General Diaz unbefitting the nation, with which state-

ment almost every one (unless somebody may have too recently tried to borrow from him) will agree.

It was to this house that he returned after taking his oath of office on December 1, 1884, and I have been told, by one who stood among them, of the immense and enthusiastic crowds that waited for hours before its door to acclaim him as he drove up, again President of Mexico, and entirely competent artisan of an undreamed greatness. He continued to dwell in it for some months, driving or riding to and from the Palace, a picturesque and noble figure, whose significance was becoming more and more apparent.

From there he began with unerring instinct to gather the materials for his work of Empire-building. A few rather scattered and defaced remnants of his first administration remained. With these he proceeded. He promptly removed the beam from his own eye by cutting his salary as President in half (from 30,000 pesos to 15,000) and further (but less popular) reforms were operated on others, as he proceeded to reduce, though not to such an extent, the salaries of many government officials. He was to prove as implacable towards those who unduly pillage the State in eras of peace, as to bandits and enemies who do it in times of war. His complete knowledge of human nature, however, led to a toleration on many occasions of what the French delicately call "le pot de vin."

Shortly after his inauguration the increasing duties of State made it necessary for him to live nearer the Palace where the administrative work was carried on. In it, then as now, were not only the

offices of the President, but the Senate Chamber, and the Ministries of Treasury and War. He decided not to take up his abode in the Palace itself on account of the expense the Government would be put to for the keeping up of such a vast establishment, so he moved to a house in the Calle de Cadena, a street lying near it. In still later years he used the castle of Chapultepec for a summer residence.

It was this house of the Calle de Cadena, inhabited by him during the decades of Mexico's Augustan Period, which a forgetful people, in the form of a howling mob, was to surround on the 24th day of May, 1911, shouting "Muera Diaz" and "Viva Madero." From it he left the City of Mexico forever in the early hours of the 26th of May, 1911, showing once again that a ruler who has wrought good is as often hated as one who has wrought evil. The terrifyingly potential noise of that same mob, its ebbing and swelling mutterings I shall never forget, driving hastily back from the Japanese Legation, where we had been informed of the outbreak, to the Calle Humboldt, in mortal anxiety lest something had befallen my little boy.

Don Porfirio's son occupied the pink-cupolaed, now Bougainvillaea-hung house opposite, so long lived in by his father. Behind its closed shutters and barricaded door, his wife was awaiting her deliverance in the midst of preparations for flight, and I remember thinking, as I looked across the street, "Woe to them that are with child."

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At the period of Don Porfirio's second term of office, social life in Mexico was of the simplest. Din-

ners would be given to incoming or outgoing Ministers, but the entertaining ended there. His wife did not, according to the then prevailing Mexican custom, assist at the banquets.

Since the brief and tragic glory of the Court of Maximilian and Carlota, society, as our pre-war world considered it, had not existed. During the Presidency of Benito Juarez the aristocratic and governing worlds had been cut in twain literally by fire and sword, and there were no overlapping ends. The conservative and upper-class elements boycotted his régime, somewhat, doubtless, as I saw them boycotting the Madero régime. The War of Reform was too recent, and the almost daily confiscations of Church property were often accompanied by some personal act of Juarez, as when he permitted his soldiers to raid, one night, the great Franciscan Convent in Mexico City. Mexican women of that day, whose only and traditional spheres of activity were their homes, were aroused to such indignation that they marched the next morning around the convent, black-robed and protesting. They naturally never lent their beauty and their virtue to any public functions of his régime.

Juarez had an exemplary and handsome wife, but was himself very ugly, much below medium height, thick-set, swarthy, plain-featured, without outward graces of any kind. His adventures with the fair sex, who do not demand beauty in men, were, however, numerous, and at times spectacular. In this he but was true to type, for it would seem, looking down the vista of history, that illustrious statesmen and warriors are drawn on, in direct ratio to their gifts, by

the eternal feminine, responding even more easily than other men to the great invitation which women throughout the ages extend to them. Of the antique chase, for which they are equally well equipped, I say nothing here.

Juarez' successor, Lerdo, though a great lawyer, proved to be an indifferent President from every point of view, being very indolent—what is called "muy flojo." To this was joined his excessive personal pride. Peace and prosperity in Mexico demand, as we have seen, other qualities. He was unmarried, but was also of an amorous disposition, and seems to have been, to use a provincial but still explicit phrase, "a fast man." During his incumbency, society was also non-existent. By society I mean those groupings about the central power of culture, beauty, elegance, wit, set in splendors of fortune and tradition, which have always accompanied the rise of nations to greatness. Now by some strange distortion of the post-war lens, through which we look on life, these attributes, once the glory of states, are replaced by drab, misshapen, unwieldly, penurious, irresponsible groupings of mediocrities, which, however, thanks to nature who abhors equality more than she does a vacuum, will, in the end, disappear. Once again such highly individualistic achievements as those of art and science, and the pursuit of honors and riches, natural objects of human endeavor and ambition, will reappear in their true form and value, and we shall understand and desire once more the benefits of that "just inequality," without which no State can be great. . . .

During Don Porfirio's earliest incumbency his first

wife, a Oaxacan like himself, had died, and he had been furthermore too engrossed in the problems presented by banditry, and debts internal and external, to take part in social functions, or to hold any himself. The simple austerity of his private life, his extreme personal modesty, combined with his great natural dignity, commanded respect and admiration, apart from the romantic prestige of his military triumphs, and would have made him a welcome figure in any circle.

Victory by arms will forever enhance the glory of civic achievements, we cannot say why, and even those who abhor solutions by force see, as a lamp shining in the hearts of the generations, the memory and knowledge of the splendor of martial deeds,—though their end is so often exile or death. . . .

When, on his second incumbency, President Diaz appeared with a young and beautiful wife, related to various great families in the Capital, things began insensibly to change.

The formation and welding of the society of Mexico City, very aristocratic and exclusive on one hand, on the other composed of new governmental figures, was, however, a slow process. The Corps Diplomatique aided this greatly, discharging one of its organic functions (which I have seen operating in other countries, between Court and industrial circles) by consorting with both and unifying social life. In the end, culminating in the Centennial celebrations, Mexico City became one of the most brilliant capitals in the Western Hemisphere, even from the point of view of society. Women when going there needed notoriously the best clothes to be had in Paris or New

York; the prestige of Diaz, which alone would have made of his capital a rendezvous of brilliant men, being further enhanced by the fact that his wife's natural and acquired elegance could vie with that of any woman.

Much hospitality was then offered by the President and his wife. Everything was done impeccably, with care and distinction. Even now in exile, in a small apartment in a small street in Paris, the same distinction is apparent in each simplest expression of hospitality given by his widow.

Except for his children and his nephew Feliz, Porfirio Diaz was without near family. When a great man is thus, like Melchizedech, without father, without mother, without brothers, he is indeed chosen of heaven, standing quite free for service. The impedimenta of his so inscrutably predestined successor, Madero, on the other hand, included 232, or, according to some, 299 members of a family singularly acquisitive and active.

Don Porfirio's children, fourteen, eight and six years of age at the time of his marriage to Carmen Romero Rubio, lived in perfect harmony with their young stepmother. "A situation that might have occasioned so many difficulties," she once said to me, "produced only the tenderest affection. They were always perfect to me. My mother, too, loved them very tenderly and was adored by them in turn."

In his own earliest childhood, the home of Diaz had been devastated by the great cholera epidemic of 1833, during which his father and two sisters had died. His mother was left thus early to provide for the subsistence and education of her remaining chil-

dren. Even in that land of many resources and few needs the struggle was hard. Her husband, José de la Cruz Diaz, of Spanish parentage, after having served in the army in his early youth, had been for a while a blacksmith. Later, he was employed in the celebrated mine called "Cinco Señores" connected with those of "San José" and "El Socorro" in the district of Ixtlan. He was soon found to be worthy of the fullest confidence, and was put in command of the small force of men who transported the ore and distributed the wages of the employees. It was when he was thus engaged that he fell in love with and married Petra Mori, whom he had met in the neighboring town of Yodocono. She was of Asturian origin on her father's side, as her name indicates; her mother was a Mixtec Indian. She was of small stature, straight-featured and dark, and was to prove herself a woman of unusual gifts in the way of rectitude, charity, good sense and energy. Don José was a tall, strong, well-formed and handsome man, of great determination and most laborious habits.

Their first married years were passed in the district of Ometepec, near the Pacific coast, where Don José had rented with his savings a small sugar "finca," on which he also opened a little shop, after the secular manner of Spaniards in Mexico. Later, he moved to the city of Oaxaca, where his two youngest children, Porfirio and Feliz, were born. Porfirio was three years old at the time of his father's death. His sister, Nicolasa, always entirely devoted to him, inherited many of her mother's qualities. She kept his house and guarded his children during his widowed period, remaining unmarried until some

time after his marriage to Carmelita. Then, no longer young, she became the wife of one of his aides-de-camp and comrades in battle.

His brother, Feliz, the father of Feliz Diaz of our day, was a short, swarthy, thick-built man, having none of the beauty of Don Porfirio, though he was also of an adventurous disposition, and gifted with courage and energy. He embarked early on a military career. He was taken prisoner by the French in their first engagement on Mexican soil, and later he was among the prisoners who accompanied the escort of the Condesa de Prim, wife of General Prim, from Vera Cruz to Mexico City. He had been wounded in the battle and was taken care of by the general's wife. He afterwards successfully made his escape by attacking a mounted guard and getting off on his horse.

Later, when he was governor of Oaxaca, he was called to quell an uprising in the town of Juchitan, which then, as when I saw it in 1912, was giving ample testimony that what the Juchitecos best love is a fight. He fell into an ambush outside the riotous town and was murdered.

At the time of his mother's death General Diaz was Military Governor of Tehuantepec. Being informed of her grave illness, he went on horseback, without a halt, to Oaxaca to embrace her a last time. He had barely reached home when a courier arrived with a message that a military crisis necessitated his immediate return to the Isthmus. Though the doctor told him his mother had but a few hours to live, at the call of country he relinquished the supreme and august privilege of holding her in his arms and receiving her last sigh. The grief of that parting he

never forgot, and late in life he would speak of it with undiminished emotion. It is typical of his patriotism. . . .

So much has been said of Don Porfirio's irreligion that a word of his personal relations to the Catholic Church will not come amiss.

His first marriage was performed by a priest of Oaxaca. His three children were baptized and sent to religious schools, his two daughters being educated in the convent of the Sacred Heart, which institution was established in Mexico during Don Porfirio's second presidential term.

His marriage to Carmen Romero Rubio was consecrated by Monsignor Pelagio de la Bastida, Archbishop of Mexico, in the Chapel of the Archiepiscopal Palace, an ancient edifice in the Calle de Perpetua. He also performed the marriage ceremony for Don Porfirio's elder daughter, Amada, when she became the wife of Don Ignacio de la Torre, the President assisting at the nuptial mass.

On the death of Archbishop La Bastida, Monsignor Prospero Maria Alarcon became Archbishop of Mexico. He blessed the marriages of Don Porfirio's son and younger daughter, under like circumstances.

These two prelates, men of great gifts in very dissimilar ways, were both personal friends of the President and his family. In fact Don Porfirio always showed the greatest courtesy in his relations with the bishops of the country. He looked on the Church as on all other things, with strict impartiality. He knew it to be the most durable of all human institutions, and recognized its greatness and allowed for its power. The bishops, in turn, knowing how

ardent and convinced was his liberalism, and that he would always be careful to respect the form of the Constitution, wisely seldom asked impossibilities of him.

Of the many names in Mexican "Independent" history, four stand out: Hidalgo, Morelos, Juarez, Diaz. Their attributes are as definite as their names, and have been stamped for all time on their various generations. The last two were each in their different ways great, typic Liberals and followed, as do men of genius, the signs of their times. Liberalism was in the air they breathed. The first two men were priests.[1] The *Zeitgeist* of their times was "Independence" and they, too, followed it. It is certainly confounding to those who would give casual judgments concerning the Catholic Church in Mexico that Hidalgo should have raised the first cry for freedom there and have been the first to put upon a banner "death to bad government."

The rôle of Morelos, whose battle-cry was "Freedom from Spain," was more complex, his motives more discussed. On freeing Mexico from what has been called the "Peninsular economic domination," it has been reproached him that he wrote:

"Our only object is that the political and military Government by Spaniards pass to the Creoles."

But into what hands should the country have been delivered? Certainly not as President Wilson tried to deliver it a century later, into those

[1] Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, born May 8, 1753, at Corralejos, Guanajuato, shot as a rebel against the Spanish Crown, July 31, 1811. José Maria Morelos y Pavon, born at Valladolid, Michoacan, 1765. Captured, tried and finally shot as a rebel against the Spanish Crown, December 22, 1815.

of the unprepared eighty-five per cent. Indian and half-breed, from whom it would have been as promptly and easily taken by the one-half of one per cent. as it was to-day by those representing our once incomparable Carranza. The Creoles were the logical inheritors, the next link in the chain, not the Indians.

As to the so reviled domination of the priesthood, never in the most powerful days of Spanish and Church rule was such a system of bondage countenanced to terrorize, despoil and destroy the Indian as that in Yucatan in the 20th century of the syndicalism of General Alvarado; and the god of antiquity who devoured his own children is again about, for from Spain another domination than that of the Friars has come, in the guise of thousands of anarchists, who by fire and sword and many words continue to prepare the salvation of the Indian in the next world if not in this. The Friars, as everybody knows who is familiar with the landscape of Mexico, built pink and lovely churches with patios, warm, flowering, tree-planted and sun-bathed, where the Indian could bring his distresses, receive education, of a primitive order 'tis true, and often, not always, get his wrongs righted. And these churches resemble not at all the bare walls of the I. W. W. assembly rooms.

The Mexican of all classes is essentially religion-loving, which is one of the reasons why the present régime of terror and persecution, of closed churches and banished priests and nuns is so disastrous.

The attempt at the destruction in the human breast of a belief in a higher power, typified first in a small way in Mexico by the Carrancista church persecutions, now become part of the Bolshevist world-

program, assails something so inherent in man that doubtless he himself will be destroyed in his mad assault on the things of eternity.

Ah! if there were no death, if man were not cut down like grass at evening, if there were no Reaper, if each one's night wherein he works no more were not his most certain end, one might perhaps experiment. But even then, who would not wish to consider at times things supersensual, supervisual, the precious Res Celestia? Whatever form it may take, worship is man's first, last and greatest right, and often his only real possession.

* * * *

Don Porfirio's private life, of which there are so many fantastic and calumnious accounts, was of the simplest and happiest. He found his pleasure in his family, and in the candid and natural joys it offered. He had little of the taste for cards or other games of chance usual to his race. He was often to be seen towards dusk, accompanied only by his wife, in the lovely park of Chapultepec, under the century-old ahuehuetes shading its broad calzadas; sometimes pausing under the great tree of story, the "arbol de Montezuma," which in addition to the glories of the Porfirian Mexico, had witnessed those of Montezuma and of the Spaniards. . . .

To the end he preserved his great predilection for hunting and delighted in organizing shooting-parties. Quail, wild pigeons, snipe, rabbits, hares, abound on the Plateau,[1] and sometimes, too, he would slip out of

[1] A Spanish diplomat, Don José Romero Dusmet, now Minister to Bulgaria, a colleague of our first Mexican days, told me yesterday of one of the shooting-parties at which he assisted.

The guests left Mexico City early in the morning in the presi-

the city for a few hours' shooting, accompanied only by a single aide-de-camp. Around Cordoba, too, he often went to stalk deer. It was traditional in the family that he should spend the greater part of Holy Weekso engaged, returning for Easter Sunday with great quantities of venison, which he would distribute among his friends.

His love of the chase dates from his earliest years, and there is a typical story of his boyhood, which he himself used often to recall, and which shows his natural constructive abilities. Impatient with the archaic sling and other like weapons and not hav-

dential train, and were to make the once beautiful hacienda of Jalpa, belonging to Don Guillermo Landa Y Escandon, then Governor of the Federal District, their rallying point. After luncheon they went out again for snipe, and were caught in one of the usual afternoon deluges of the rainy season. In the train, on the way back to the city, Don José and Don Guillermo begged the President to get out of his wet things, as he had a servant and a change with him, but he refused—he a man of eighty—because the others could not do the same.

The hacienda of Jalpa had been built by the celebrated Conde de Regla, who had come into possession of the famous Real del Monte Mine in the early part of the 18th century, and was so fabulously rich that he could quite conveniently lend the King of Spain a billion pesos, and give him several fully-equipped war-ships as well.

The hacienda contained many works of art, for besides the massive silver-services, and various paintings of the Spanish Masters, it was renowned for its priceless antique Chinese vases and French procelains, these latter having been bought by the grandfather of Don Guillermo, a man of vast wealth, in Paris, early in the nineteenth century. These were either smashed on the spot by Carrancista soldiery, or carried away by their officers to be sold. A few objects of special value were removed in haste, by what seem to have been experts, appearing at the hacienda simultaneously with the entry of the Constitutionalist troops into Mexico City. Among these were the immense silver lamp before the altar of the hacienda chapel, bearing the date 1677, the Ribera above Don Guillermo's bed, and a chair belonging to Cortés, which are known to have found their way to the border, after which all trace of them was lost. A great silver platter hammered out by hand, that Cortés ordered made for a Church vessel, alone has been preserved. For the rest, of the once splendid mansion and its many treasures, there now remain only the walls. E. O. S., January, 1920.

ing money to buy a rifle, out of rusty parts of pistols and muskets, bought as occasion offered for a few pennies, and which he himself put together in the forge of a friendly smith, he made his first firearm. It was out of as unpromising bits as these that he subsequently forged modern Mexico.

He became very expert in the making of these primitive fire-arms, selling or giving them to the Indians of the Valle Grande, and he was a familiar sight seated before the door of his modest dwelling, busily combining the different parts of his muskets or tracing artistic designs on butt and barrel.

He early delighted in all sorts of physical exercises. When a very young boy chance put a book on gymnastics into his hands. He proceeded to improvise a little gymnasium in the courtyard of his mother's house, making the various kinds of apparatus himself, and finally even establishing a class. But best of all he loved to lose himself in the dense tropical prairies of Oaxaca, or explore its mountain fastnesses. These excursions, for which often his only opportunity was the night, gave him a close acquaintance with the native tribes, and fostered his inborn love of Nature and solitude. His habit of sleeping under the stars, his delight in adventure, his resource and courage in danger, his knowledge of the habits of birds and animals, made him adored by the Indians. This life, which he followed so instinctively, was to develop his magnificent muscular strength, temper his nerves to steel, and later enable him to support with ease the fatigues of the martial achievements that were so great a factor in his career. Doubtless it also aided him to pre-

serve to a great age a vigor known to few men. It was, too, an equally instinctive preparation for his incomparable strategic successes, for his intimate acquaintance with the Indians of southern Mexico gave him later the power to quickly recruit his armies, and train them for seemingly impossible feats. This magnetic control over the inhabitants of his native State was one of the secrets of his disconcerting mobility, of the cunning ambushes he laid for his enemies, enabling him so often to win victory over forces greatly superior in arms and numbers. To the Indians he was not only a dauntless chief, an incomparable leader, but embodied almost supernatural qualities, becoming to them as a god of war, a benign reincarnation of the god Huitzilopochtli of their ancestors.

Brother-officers who, later, were to see him as the great administrator, calm, sure, prudent, farseeing, constructive, said of him that in combat he was like a lion. Over his being a great change would come, light would flash from his eyes, his nostrils would dilate, his lips would part, a bright color would lie upon his cheeks. Terrible, irresistible, invincible, they knew him for the heaven-born general and followed where he led. . . .

As to money, his relation to which has been so little understood, though Porfirio Diaz knew it to be a vital necessity for the State, it was without meaning in his own existence. He had no personal wants, he accumulated no personal effects. He used only what was necessary for his being and his situation, without any accompanying sense of possession. He was never heard to say, "I would like to have this

thing or that," though he delighted in making little presents to the members of his family, and was always thoughtful about fulfilling the desires expressed by those he loved. When he left Mexico, he left it with but the amount of money indispensable to a certain comfort and dignity, living modestly and restrainedly during the years of exile.

This unreality of money was a mental and spiritual idiosyncrasy of his being. Everywhere about him were men passionately desirous of riches, but he himself was always immune from this ageless fever of mortality.

After his glorious entry into Mexico City, he was literally penniless.

To Juarez he had turned over the military strongbox, containing the sum of twenty-two thousand pesos, and an army equipped and armed.[1] His only possession was the jeweled sword presented to him by the City of Mexico in recognition of his victories in the International War. This he found himself forced to take to a usurer in the Capital. He then turned his face southward to Oaxaca. Soon afterward, however, the hacienda of La Noria was given him by his native State. From it he launched, in November, 1871, his famous "Plan de la Noria," summoning Juarez, between whom and himself the breach was complete, to put into effect the reforms promised by the Constitution of 1857. Later during a revolu-

[1]To later-day Mexican generals this will be scarcely believable, or so stupid that a man showing such lack of understanding of the situation and the hour would be dead politically, considered incompetent by friends and enemies alike, fit but for exile, the firing-squad or the madhouse.

tionary upheaval, the estate passed out of his possession, was pillaged and finally sold into other hands. He never reclaimed it during his long years of power, when by simply raising a finger, that or anything else could have been his.

In the days of his country's prosperity he was loaded with honors and decorations from the Powers and Principalities of the earth. In his reception of them, in his wearing of them, there was never a gesture nor an expression that dimmed his perfect modesty. He received them and wore them as if to Mexico they had been given, and his but the accidental form on which they hung. They represented, after long years of contempt and neglect on the part of the nations, her new greatness, were visible testimony to her new glory. The only decorations he held in honor were those gained on the field of battle in blood and danger of death.

He was of a scrupulous neatness in his attire, but instinctively, without any preoccupation by it; his linen was always spotless and his uniforms well kept. This was part of his innate sense of suitableness and personal dignity.

His treatment of his inferiors, of servants, was marked by an extreme kindness, and to those of long service he displayed a simple affection, preserving at the same time respect for his position.

In Porfirio Diaz' heart was an immense yearning over his people. He was more than the friend of each, he was the father who labors for his children. He knew as far as is permitted to one finite man, the details of his government, as well as its great basic lines. It has been said, and with truth, that great

wrongs were committed under his rule, yet these were always without his knowledge. If a wrong could be brought to his attention, he righted it whenever he had the unrestricted means to do so. It will be argued that he, being absolute, had in every case these means; but rulers are also servants, and any man at the head of a government, even one he himself has brought into being, cannot on all occasions see beyond the Chinese wall that his ministers, always lesser than himself, build about him. These he must inevitably serve. But in no instance can it be pointed out that abuse of power was for his personal advantage, or that he knowingly gave his consent to things harmful to his people. As far as the ponderous machinery of a great and prosperous government, becoming more and more complicated as it grew, permitted, they had individual access to him, and where he knew facts he gave prompt and impartial judgment.

It is the fashion, temporary as all fashions are, to rate the achievements of Porfirio Diaz not by the human standard, which would show him too great, but by some angelical measure. He was, like other rulers, mortal, and like them, what he administered was mortal, and even so great a man as he could not disprove the scriptural axiom that there must always be rich and poor, lowly and exalted, nor overcome nature's repugnance to equality.

He was of iron constitution, and during long years knew nothing of the miseries of the flesh beyond wounds received in battle. He always arose at five o'clock, bathed, took a cup of coffee and immediately passed to the business of the day. He never seemed

to feel hunger; it was a matter of indifference to him after a long morning's work if he lunched at one, at two or at three o'clock. This abstemiousness was doubtless some heritage from his Indian ancestors, also in part was due to something naturally self-abnegatory in his being. It is recorded of him, too, that he ate with the greatest niceness, and that though his early life had been of the simplest, and afterwards much of it was spent in camps and battles, his manners at table would have befitted a prince.

He was alike unaffected by extremes of heat and cold, and could endure easily fatigues crushing to other men.

He was never vexed by trifles, nor was he visibly perturbed by misfortune. This dominion over himself came in part from the admirable poise of his being, in part from the long habit of dominion over others.

Even on the night of his final departure from Mexico City he was in full possession of his serenity, though all about him were hurried and distraught, and he himself just arisen, physically weak and broken, from his bed of pain. There were no outward marks of emotion when, with his wife, he got into the motor standing in front of the house in the Calle de Cadena, at two o'clock of that May morning,—the 26th; nor when Huerta assisted him into the special train awaiting him at the station of the Ferrocarril Mexicano, nor even when, without whistle or word of command, it slipped quickly out of the dark station.

But when aboard the *Ypiranga* in Vera Cruz harbor he had heard for a last time the voices of

his people, gathered, thousands, to greet him, when the last hand-clasps had been given, the last "abrazos," and the *Ypiranga* had turned her prow to the open sea, he wept.

And those venerable tears should have been caught in a golden cup by a whole people on their knees, those eyes wiped dry with the cloth of gratitude and repentance, to be kept, cup and cloth, as long as the nation lasts. What will they ever find more sacred?

CHAPTER IV

Dictator of Mexico—The Revival of the Explosive Office of Vice-President—Diaz Chooses a Great Minister of Finance, José Yves Limantour—Unparalleled Prosperity—Ernesto Madero, Uncle of the "Redeemer"—The Single Meeting of the Maker of Modern Mexico with the Instrument of Its Destruction.

It was in 1892 that all questions as to reëlection ceased and Porfirio Diaz became Dictator of Mexico. He had led her out of the wilderness into green, very green places.

The National Convention which nominated him candidate, revived, however, a governmental corpse —that of the office of Vice-President. This was done by the enlightened and gifted group of young men who dominated the convention, with a view to curtailing the possibilities of revolution in the event of the death of Don Porfirio.[1]

But like all things human, and especially things human and Mexican, this had its disadvantages. Don

[1] Every man yet living of this group of farseeing and patriotic Mexicans is in exile. This toleration and even connivance, at the expulsion of the educated classes from Mexico by the United States, though one has heard about it ad nauseam, is still apparently so little understood, that one may be permitted to illustrate it in the following crudest of ways: It is as if the Emperor of Japan, having decreed the person and term of office of the President of the United States, furthermore gave the country into the hands of the "Reds" whom we now so industriously cast from us, while the members of our Congress, the heads of banks, the founders of great industrial concerns and professors of Universities were compelled to flee, leaving everything in the hands of an untrained, undisciplined mob. Yet this is what happened in Mexico, based on but one reason, the hatred of a foreign autocrat for the ruler of a people whom fate had placed in his power.

Porfirio, from the first seeing that this office would be the goal of passionate desires, awakening the always too-lightly sleeping envy, and engendering endless intrigue, had, after his simple yet genial way, suppressed the explosive office. It was only when time began to show its implacability in his own person that he conceded the matter.

The Vice-Presidency seems to be a thorn in the side of every Latin-American President, and, to change the figure, as the heel of Achilles of every Latin-American Government.

General Diaz was aware of this as early as 1877. He proceeded with extraordinary astuteness, and on the excellent principle of safety in numbers, to decree that the President of the Chamber, who was elected every month, be called on to fill the Executive office in case of the death of the President. Later this right devolved on the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

During the greater part of the administration of General Diaz, this post was occupied by Don Ignacio Mariscal, one of the most faithful and intelligent collaborators any President of any country has ever possessed. He held this position for twenty-two years, becoming what one of the diplomats called "the dean of all the ministers of the world." Such a fact is testimony both to the man and to his country. He was further highly cultured, possessed of animated and agreeable manners, and though not striking of stature nor feature, was a marked and unforgettable personality.

It was largely at the instance of Don José Yves Limantour that the Vice-Presidency was created; Don Ramon Corral being elected to the office. Don

Ramon, whatever his private sins, always conducted himself with entire political and personal loyalty towards his illustrious chief. He was, too, for a while, popular with the country. Later his connection with the Cientificos, in addition to the destructive office of Vice-President, gave rise to a terrible campaign against him, culminating in the unanswered charges preferred by Madero in his "Presidential Succession."

Since then the Vice-Presidents of Mexico have either died with the President, or vanished into void at the psychological moment, or, more simply still, have never been drawn out of nothingness. At this moment "no hay." The procedure is of a disconcerting simplicity. . . .

Don Porfirio having in his splendid years the finest flair for men's capacities, February of 1893 was to witness a special act of wisdom, for he then appointed Don José Yves Limantour Secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit. How admirably this man filled his office is known to the world. In the closing years of his dictatorship the Iron President saw more and more in Limantour the natural successor to the Presidency, one into whose careful and skillful hands the splendid thing known as modern Mexico could be entrusted, and there are many recorded conversations concerning the matter. There were two outside difficulties (what enemies of Limantour's apparent destiny lay within his own being I cannot say). He was of French parentage; the other was his uncompromising war on what Mr. Bulnes calls "bureaucratic cannibalism." In Latin America, or

anywhere for that matter, this alone would have produced an army of enemies.

His incumbency as Secretary of the Treasury, which was uninterrupted, led to the result that in 1910 Mexico's foreign debt was quoted above par and many millions lay snugly in the Treasury. Before the outbreak of the Madero revolution, the bonds of the exterior debt were selling on the Stock Exchanges of London and Paris at a premium of 5½ per cent. So high was the credit of Mexico at that epoch, that Mr. Limantour was in Europe successfully arranging a conversion of the foreign debt to 4 per cent.[1]

It has been asserted, and the testimony has even been used to damn the Cientificos, of whom Limantour was the chief, that no Latin-American administration ever placed its country in the same credit rank as that enjoyed by Mexico during the financial rule of these reviled gentlemen.

If to lead one's country into unparalleled paths of prosperity is criminal, then indeed they were criminal, caught by the world, red-handed, in the act.

However, paciencia, "El Incorruptible" was coming. The Mexicans, in the strangest fit of national folly ever known, were to place in the hands of a man, who was to break them into a thousand bits, the precious works of wisdom.

This man was Francisco I. Madero, whose political avatars are the quickest recorded in the history. Once "Redeemer of Mexico," "Bridegroom of Mex-

[1] Though never in the history of Mexico have her fiscal receipts, through oil, and the world's need of it, been so great as now, the Carranza régime never even platonically discussed the payment of any kind of interest at any per cent on the National, or any other debt.

ico," her "Apostle," her "chaparrito" even, in moments of extreme tenderness, he finally came to be known, sometimes as the "monkey of Coahuila," oftener as the "lunatic of Parras." And his death was even more disastrous to his country than his life. The hydra was a headless being in comparison with that "vengeance" of mixed and indigenous parentage, which sprang up and proceeded to destroy Mexico in his name, the rôle of "Vengador" having been played since by every villain in Mexico, and many just men in and out of it, leaving little or nothing for God to repay.

The ultimate fact (and facts in Mexico resemble the seldom encountered white blackbird) concerning the finances of the Diaz administration in that Señor Don José Yves Limantour closed his work by handing over 72,000,000 pesos in hard coin to Señor Don Ernesto Madero, his successor as Finance Minister.

This clever and agreeable gentleman at that moment occupied the neat but also gaudy position of uncle to the "Redeemer," this position being sensibly brightened as the lily is gilded, by his becoming Secretary of the Treasury in the *ad interim* Presidency. From any point of view his situation could only be described as gorgeous. These 72,000,000 pesos in sounding coin were deposited in the National Treasury, in the Banco Nacional, and in various banks in New York, London, Paris, Frankfort, and could be seen by anybody at any time. This is how Porfirio Diaz and José Yves Limantour "served the Mexicans." It will stand as a model of service for all time and its popularity will doubtless outlast that of some later models.

President Diaz saw the "Redeemer" on a single occasion. It was after the publication of Madero's "Presidential Succession," and an audience having been arranged, Madero went to the house in the Calle de Cadena and was ushered into the great man's presence. The conversation between the Empire-builder and the instrument of its destruction took the following simple turn:

Madero: "It is not against you but against your system that I am working. For you personally I have all respect, but the country is ready for democracy, and we must have unbiased elections, freely and regularly held. It is time that you relinquish the power."

Diaz: "Into whose hands do you counsel me to give it, Señor?"

Madero: "Into the hands of an honest man. I," striking himself on the breast, "am an honest man (*un hombre honrado*)."

One can imagine the look with which that incomparable appraiser of men's abilities scanned the little man before him.

Diaz: "Señor, a man must be more than honest to govern Mexico."

After which Madero took his leave, and the world is visiting the ruins.

CHAPTER V

Unconsciously Experimental Forms of Porfirio Diaz' Earliest Years —He Studies for the Priesthood—His Mother's Grief When He Turns to the Law—Bugle-call to Arms—His Martial Glory—The Statesman—Mexico's Greatness.

The tentative, doubtless unconsciously experimental forms in which Don Porfirio's earliest years ran, are both interesting and enlightening. At fourteen he began his studies for the priesthood in the seminary of Oaxaca. This step was determined by the pious wishes of his adored mother, who desired above all things the sacerdotal life for this, her best-loved son. His acquiescence even for a time revealed something idealistic and self-abnegatory in his young being, and some inherent concern for things invisible in one afterwards so eminently practical in government.

Two years later he was brought to the attention of Don Marcos Perez, an ardent Liberal and professor in the School of Law, which formed part of the Institute of Arts and Sciences of the city of Oaxaca. He soon perceived the exceptional qualities of the young Porfirio, who was even then studious, brave and wise beyond his years, and set about to persuade him to give up his studies in the Seminary and enter the Institute as law student.

Though the proposition of Don Marcos greatly attracted him, the thought of his mother's grief and disappointment made him long hesitate.

Don Marcos finally invited him to assist at the annual distribution of prizes, when he presented him to the important personages taking part in the exercises. It was on this occasion that he was presented to Benito Juarez, then Governor of Oaxaca. The relationship so begun was to be a determining factor in the career of both men. Diaz relates how on that very day he became conscious of an irresistible attraction for the life of which he had so unexpectedly caught a glimpse.

What he was to call in later years "the greatest conflict of his life," then took place. The next morning, pale with decision, after a night spent in following the windings of the river Atoyac, he informed his mother of his desire to leave the Seminary and begin the study of law.

"My mother gave me a look of infinite sadness. When I saw her tears and how bitter was her disappointment, I was dismayed. I told her that though every desire of my being drew me to the Institute, and that it was nothing that could disgrace her or make her lastingly unhappy, still if her heart were set upon it, I would become a priest. But she loved me greatly and was possessed of much judgment. After awhile her tears ceased, she embraced me in silence, and left the house to go to church. Later that same day she called me to her, and pressing me to her heart, told me that she realized that I must follow out the career for which I felt myself best fitted."

It was thus that he passed to the study of law in the Institute of Oaxaca, impelled, doubtless, by some inherent love of justice, and interest in the manner of its application. This life, also, he was not long

to pursue. He was the heaven-born general, and inevitably his genius led him in the paths of military events. When he was but seventeen the trumpets of the War of 1847 sounded through the land, stirring his young and ardent soul. But again following the advice of Don Marcos, he resisted the call to battle and continued his law studies, becoming clerk in the office of Perez, who was, however, shortly afterwards cast into prison in the convent of Santo Domingo, charged with plotting against the Government.[1]

Later the War of Reform and the French Invasion were to reveal Porfirio Diaz to himself and to Mexico. By 1857 he had risen to the position of Jefe Politico of the District of Ixtlan. But civil war, the ardors of which had been dampened for awhile by the struggle with the United States, had broken out again and with renewed fury. He then gave up this position, corresponding so little to his real powers, and became captain of a company in the forces com-

[1] Certain letters were found, written in cipher, implicating Don Marcos in the revolution. The young Porfirio, realizing the importance of acquainting him with the charges against him and the testimony of the other accomplices, resolved, at the risk of his life, to repay the affection that Perez had bestowed upon him, by penetrating to the convent garden and climbing to the windows of the tower in which he was confined. He induced his brother Feliz to join him in the adventure. They provided themselves with a long rope, chose a dark night, and succeeded in scaling a 13-foot wall without being noticed by the sentinels, crossed the garden, climbed to the roof of the convent bakery and thence to a higher roof with the aid of their rope, and so on until they reached the top of the tower itself. While one of the brothers held the rope fast, the other let himself down to the level of the window of Perez's cell, 70 feet above the courtyard. After overcoming all these obstacles, the window was found to be closed and no communication with Perez was possible. But the young men had at least succeeded in reaching the window and knew where the guards were stationed. They made three more hazardous attempts during the nights following and finally succeeded in talking with Perez. As a result of the information he then obtained, Perez was able to defend himself so effectually against his accusers, that he was acquitted of the charges of conspiracy and his life was saved.

manded by the liberal chief Lieutenant-Colonel Manuel Velasco, who was conducting operations in the State of Oaxaca against the revolutionary chief José Maria Salado. On the 13th of August of this same year, Porfirio Diaz received his baptism of blood, for on that day, at Ixcapa, near the Pacific Coast, the two armies met.

Early in the combat Diaz was wounded by a ball in his side. He fell to the ground. To the wonder of his comrades, he was seen shortly afterwards, his face shining with a strange whiteness, his uniform wet with blood, fighting in the foremost ranks. Sustained by a new and magical ardor, he was able to continue the struggle till victory was achieved. When he was carried unconscious from the field, the chieftain Salado lay dead with many of his men.

The poorly equipped government forces having no doctor among them, Diaz was taken care of by a devoted Indian in the ranks, who accompanied him on a long and torturing muleback journey across the mountains, from Ixcapa to Oaxaca.

This was the first of the series of military victories which were to fling a lasting glory about his person and his country.

These three stages, which I have so fleetingly indicated, were to leave each its mark upon his mature being. The spiritual longings of his adolescence were to reveal themselves later in a supreme love of country, in a clear realization of her needs and his responsibilities. His inclination for the law showed itself in the beautiful and fecund order he brought out of disorder, for he doubtless dispensed as much justice and prosperity to as great a number as the

narrow limits of mortal life permit to any one man. His taking up of arms was followed by two splendid decades of martial triumphs, the glory of La Carbonera, of Miahuatlán, of Dos de Abril, of Puebla, of San Lorenzo, of Oaxaca, of the taking of Mexico City, were to hang forever visibly about him.

In the battle of Miahuatlán, he commanded the forces against Oronoz and Testard. This latter was a natural son of General Forey; young and of great physical beauty, he was left dead upon the field. Diaz who happened to be passing where his body lay, had it buried with full military honors. The dog belonging to Testard refused to leave the spot, lying with his nose close against his master's grave. Subsequently Diaz sent the faithful animal together with all the little personal belongings found on the dead chief, officially to France to his family, saying as he commanded it to be done:

"Those soldiers who fall in foreign lands die a double death. . . ."

These were the years that made him strong, daring, inventive, resolute, undiscourageable, and wise in the things of humanity. From being one of the greatest military men of his day, he became one of the greatest statesmen and Empire-builders of all time. Now that the illustrious epoch is finished, sealed and safe in history, we begin to see its harmony and naturalness. Its brightest glory, its chief and most abiding use is that it showed to the world, and above all to the Mexicans themselves, their possibilities as a nation under a form of government suited to their idiosyncrasies. What has been can be again. Were Porfirio Diaz to live once more, once more to lead his people

out of their Egypt, his genius would show him new ways, new methods, suited to these our new times.

And in the light of this man's wisdom and the splendor of his achievements, which corresponded so perfectly to the period of his country's evolution, how dark and cruel and disserviceable are the deeds of Mexico's men of to-day, and how sinister and destructive the meddling of the United States in her destiny.

That he was to watch, in exile, the fall of each pillar of the temple he had built, that his spirit wrapped in calumny and ingratitude must haunt a country in ruins, is to the everlasting shame of the men who made the ruins.

"To be a sun and not irradiate the most beautiful rays, which are those before setting; to be a torrent and be constrained to finish in the waters of a stagnant basin; to be an eagle that with broken wing contemplates the heavens; to see a tragedy hanging over his country, such as he had averted in his youth, and not able to remedy a single evil; that was his end. . . ."

Don Porfirio was a consummate reader of men's hearts, and above all of the ends of their desires. The cold look of the oppressor, the gleam in the eye of the office-seeker, the uncandid and murky glance of the envious, the hesitating gesture of the man afraid, were to him as pages in a primer. Men of affairs who were received by him tell of the extraordinary sureness and quickness of his decisions. If he felt a man to be honest and his requests legitimate and useful, he immediately regulated the business on which the applicant had come. He would go into the next room, dictate a telegram or give an order, without

any hesitation, rarely putting the matter off for future judgment.

If he had no confidence, he was still polite, but very brief; the affair would not survive the interview, and was as without hope of issue as a man in the prison of San Juan Ulua.

He was, too, of complete practicality in his decisions, academic discussions having little or no interest for him. He became more and more convinced as time went on of the value of foreign brains and capital in Mexico, desiring only to prevent a monopoly by any one Government. One of the oil pioneers told me of his initial conversation with President Diaz, who quite frankly said he had several reasons for wishing him and his comrades success. First, he considered that men who left their own country, accepting the risks and hazards of labor in a foreign land, were entitled to help in the furtherance of their schemes, which were nearly always of mutual benefit. Second, that he realized the inestimable, educative value of foreign methods of work, and that by such illustration much could be accomplished that he himself was unable to do for his people.

It is thus that the wisest Mexican looked on the processes which his successors have so strangely condemned, though from them Mexico draws to-day the very breath of her national and financial life. Without oil, discovered by strangers within her gates, she would, at this moment, be the least among the nations of the earth.

Diaz was of an extreme sensibility in spite of his iron deeds. In a recent testimony Mr. Edward L.

Doheny, who has doubtless had more to do than any other man with the present riches of Mexico, even from the Mexican standpoint, tells of Diaz' visible emotion when he said that he never contemplated without deep sorrow his failure to bring good conditions to *all* the working-people of Mexico.

The recital of any generous act would often bring tears to his eyes, and he sometimes said: "How is it that I, an old soldier, am so moved by such things?"

I myself saw his eyes wet, though then he was mourning over the ruins of Mexico, as prophets of old wept over those of Jerusalem.

If to maintain order in his country, whose component parts showed a continuous and intrinsic tendency to dissolution and chaos in the pursuit of "Liberty," Diaz had to strike hard, he did it, and 'twas doubtless without hesitation that he sent his famous telegram to General Mier, "Strike while the iron is hot," which was the decree for the shooting of the principle Jefes of the revolutionary Junta in the Port of Vera Cruz on June 25, 1879. Later the bloody suppression of the Orizaba textile riots, was another example of his remorseless determination to preserve order.

Late in life, at the critical moment, however, he was to have an invincible repugnance to the shedding of blood. The life of one man, or of a few men, was above the life of the country. This was no longer statecraft but his manner of showing old age. In the fullness of his powers if, for the good of the country, the death of a hundred disturbers of the peace was required, he had never flinched in decreeing it.

As a military chief he had possessed in their full

ness, the four Ciceronian qualifications for generalship: courage, technical skill, authority and luck. Later he translated these into his conduct of civil affairs; for he was bold in his plans, attentive to the details of their carrying out, sagacious as to methods, prompt, very prompt in his decisions, and, being heaven-born, he was lucky. His accomplishments,[1] during the long years of what may now be called the Porfirian peace, "an educational peace" he himself called it, are with every year more visible, though the knowledge of his achievements is only really complete when one looks at an electioneering sheet of the period, where nothing, of course, is omitted.

"Poca política, mucha administración" was the keynote of his rule. He knew better than any one the blind, passionate personalism that distinguishes politics in Latin-America, the disintegrating tendencies it furthers, the hatreds it fosters in its breast, and the destruction that is its natural consequence. Also that alone by peremptory decisions could he deal with it,

[1] Mexico, "the treasure house of the world," could open her doors again in safety, enjoying her own riches a hundred-fold, and contributing to the wealth of other nations. Vast facilities for transport were inaugurated during Don Porfirio's dictatorship, over 20,000 kilometers of railways were constructed, running the length of the country, and the ports of Vera Cruz, of Coatzacoalcos, Salina Cruz and Manzanillo were entirely remodeled. Mexico City owes both her beauty and health to President Diaz, and the valley her health, if not her beauty. The admirable work of draining the valley, dreamed of and planned under the Viceroys, was finally carried out by him. The city, which during centuries was recurrently flooded at the rainy season, was also most unhealthy during the long dry months. He had sewers constructed, the streets paved and kept clean, and pure drinking water was brought from the springs of Xochimilco. Hospitals, asylums, schools, and new governmental buildings were generously constructed, and throughout the length and breadth of the land, like reminders of his dictatorship still exist, resembling little the defaced buildings, the empty schools and asylums, the looted churches, the destroyed railways, broken bridges, flooded mines and untilled lands of his successors.

especially in its most characteristic form of envy, that besetting sin of Latin-America, and worthy pendant of the Anglo-Saxon vice of hypocrisy. To envy is due much of the extreme personalism of Latin-American politics, and a trait so salient and so determining of action, merits some study. Mexico has been called *"un pais de cabezas,"* a nation of heads, each individual man being convinced (unto death, if need be) that his way is the only way. Few political Mexicans like each other, even when they are of the same party; and they always hate each other when they differ. Yet politics necessitate political parties and, even were it not so, there would be little joy in being segregated with one's own opinion, and nobody to fight. It is a *cercle vicieux,* and generally no way out save sudden death or exile, which oftener comes to Mexican politicians than to those of other countries.

Knowing to the very marrow of its being, as only the man of genius can know things, that undisciplined, heterogeneous, passionate mass of human beings, the Mexican people, in his wisdom Don Porfirio had never experimented with the cruelties of a sentimental and unripe democracy. He did not even permit his people to destroy themselves in their own way, so familiar since to the student of "the Mexican situation." He knew how slow is the growth of a representative form of government, and how yet unfit they were to assume it. He chose the surer, prompter methods of paternalism, bestowing the blessings of peace on as many as were ready for it, and imposing it on those who were not. He continued, too, in spite of inevitable disillusions, to realize the value of the

example of foreign methods of labor, seeming to be brought as by the ravens to Mexico at that time, but which now, alas for her, are shot at as unpleasant-habited vultures.

One who reads history even cursorily will discover that nations—the United States is an example—in pursuit of their national development, continuously welcome foreign money and foreign brains. In Mexico alone, through the usual distortion of facts so disconcerting there, this is anathema, foreign brains and foreign money having become symbols of turpitude on one hand and of victimization on the other.

The beauty, order, and naturalness of the Porfirian scheme needed, for full fruition, time—which respects nothing that is done without it. If like Noah Diaz could have lived, in full exercise of his powers, for 750 years, he might have made desire for peace indigenous even in the hearts of that one-half of one per cent. of his people, who when they find themselves in power seem congenitally to abhor it.

He was wise enough to respect the letter and the form of the democratic government that circumstance rather than intrinsic fitness have so strangely imposed on the Mexicans, but his genius colored and shaped it. As he breathed his spirit into it, it became something living and elastic, fitting needs and events. It is impossible to govern, or even vote intelligently without a knowledge of facts, and in Mexico few or none of these seem to exist. A Mexican, as well as a foreigner, must be heaven-born, a half-god, to discern any. To Don Porfirio's genius for facts is due the only period of prosperity that "Independent Mexico" has known. The perception of these he was not, un-

fortunately, able to transmit to posterity. His peace has been condemned as mechanical rather than organic, but I think in this year of disgrace, 1920, we are perhaps no longer so "nice" about adjectives applied to the Need of the World.

Now the antics of the tragi-comic "democracy," about as normal to conditions as an iceberg in the harbor of Vera Cruz, the arrival in Mexico of some 10,000 anarchists, mostly Iberian, the unbridled greed and cruelty of that one-half of one per cent. of the population in the name of "La Constitución," have destroyed his peace and his work. Even the illustrative, rather weather-proof methods of the foreign investor are intermittently continued in storm and stress. So much for the ways of the "new men." Everybody is miserable. Even they themselves are exposed to the most horrid vicissitudes, for one by one they are done to death in the back or stood before firing-squads.

Since the world has been thrown into disorder even the blindest amongst us sees that order, not liberty, is the first necessity of society, and that the most beautiful attributes of liberty are the restraints that wise men put upon it. This Diaz realized at all times and in all places. To refuse recognition of the greatness of his administration because every Mexican was not happy, is as if we should reproach the Presidents of the United States with the fact that all dwelling under the Stars and Stripes are not in the possession of felicity. We do not dream of placing to their personal debit the fact that we permit child-labor, harbor sweat-shops, endure slums in our midst, im-

prison men because of their beliefs, or conduct ourselves in many ways according to the faultiness of mortality rather than the precepts of perfection.

I am not sure that the deportations of the Yaquis, or the horrors of the Valle Nacional, once described in such high colors by Mr. Turner, are more heart-breaking than the misery of rooms not far from mansions in our great cities, where only a chalk line separates one family from another at begetting, birth and death. Why should we be so proud? My own head is bowed nearly all the time, and the only reason I dare sometimes raise it, is that but lately, East, West, North and South, many men of many races have died gladly for an idea, loving something unseen more than visible life and joy.

Even a casual survey of the Porfirian régime will reveal the great and simple reasons for its unparalleled prosperity. None of the practical means to success were neglected. Conditions, not theories, were studied, and behind all its brilliance was a supreme love of country, an undeviating directness in her service.

"And the land rested for thirty years."

Fate puts a literal price on the head of him who achieves great things. The evolution of a man's qualities, beyond a certain point, always awakens the jealousy of Nature on the watch to say "Halt," to one who oversteps the human limits, be it through pride, by which the angels fell, or even through the instinctive exercise of the gifts she herself gave him in a generous moment. Mexico's greatest son, inevitably, inexorably, foredoomedly, was to be cast from her.

"Far, yes" (with a hand held out for the price), "but no further."

And he who would not pay for glory must die early —and even then——!

CHAPTER VI

The Call from Exile to the Greater Fatherland—His Venerable Ashes Await in the Church of Saint Honoré d'Eylau the Hour of Their Return to Mexico.

It was in Paris, at six o'clock on the afternoon of the 2nd of July, 1915, that Porfirio Diaz passed from exile to the greater Fatherland. So gentle was his last sigh that the companion of his splendid years and of his banishment, who held him in her arms, could not believe she was alone.

There was no agony; for months he had been failing, visibly, surely, as a being fails that finds no nourishment for its life. He had no definite illness, his splendid organism was unimpaired; nostalgia was consuming him. The fifth year of his exile had begun. It was too long.

For days before he died he could not speak because of weakness, and he took scarcely any nourishment. But his eyes, brilliant to the last, would rest on his wife with the tender devotion he had always shown her during their long, unseparated life of heart and body. He never spoke to her of the death he knew was approaching. To the last his supreme solicitude permitted no mention of the grief awaiting her, that his own love enabled him to fully measure.

He never complained of his exile, neither did he show the slightest impatience at its finality, though he sometimes sighed for *"algo de Oaxaca,"* something

of Oaxaca. Who shall say what symbol, bird, plant or flower lay in his desire? *"Es un sol pintado,"* it is only a painted sun, he would often say of the French sun, and the landscapes and horizons in *grisaille,* so beautiful to us of the north, lacked to him an essential warmth and color. Enfolded by Oaxaca's thick, dry heat, by its lustrous air, he would have lived another decade. He was of the stuff of centenarians.

Several weeks before he died, when it was clear to all save his wife, that he was fading out of existence, a priest of Mexico, Carmelo Bley, at that time in Rome, who had been a friend of Carmelita and of her mother before her, came to Paris to bring the consolation of common memories and of a common hope. Then Porfirio Diaz washed his soul in the Sacrament of Penance and partook of the Holy Communion.

* * * *

In this he but did as the greatest of the Ancients, who also prepared himself for the last journey by prayers to the gods, for, when at sunset he took the hemlock bowl from the hand of him who brought it, he asked:—"Is it not permitted to make a libation with a little of this draught?" And when it was answered him that only what was necessary for his death had been brewed, he said:—"So be it. But at least it is just and fitting to address, at my last moment, prayers to the Gods that they bless my journey and render it propitious. This, then, is what I ask of them. May they grant my prayers." And he put the cup to his lips. And even as Phædo said to Echecrates, when he had finished the precious recital of the last day of Socrates:—"He was the wisest and

most just of men," so that priest, in tears, said, as he left the room wherein the soul of Porfirio Diaz was so soon to be separated from its body:—*"Es un justo."*

His heart had held no rancor, nor any desire for vengeance; it was not even necessary for him to "forgive his enemies." Both justice and mercy were known to him. In the strict impersonality of his soul, he had hated no man for any reason that concerned himself, which is the supreme virtue of a ruler. He never said: "I will do thus and so, because I like this man, or because I dislike that one." His single thought had been "Will he or will he not be useful to the country in this or that circumstance?"

During his exile men gaining access to him would try to speak to him of those who had betrayed him, and tell him how it had been done, but he would stop them saying:

"What can it matter to me personally by whom and how it was done? The country is lost. That alone matters."

Even his wife was never to hear from his lips a word of reproach concerning any man.

In the days of power he had been above the hatreds of enemies, above those, more terrible still, of friends. In the days of exile, his soul, which had preserved its full serenity, continued to be inaccessible to them.

In the victories of peace, though stern, he was always restrained, pursuing no evil-doer with his personal wrath. In the victories of war, once the end assured, he was magnanimous, and an example to victors for all time, as when he said, concerning the French and Austrian prisoners of the War of Intervention:

"They have but obeyed orders, as I would have obeyed the orders of my Chief. Let them keep their swords."

His country's star arose with his; when his had set, it too disappeared, and there was darkness. . . .

As he lay in final quiet on that last and narrowest of all beds, his son flung over him the green and white and red flag of the "Tres Garantías" that he had so often carried to victory, both in war and in peace. Then without that blare of trumpet or beat of drum, which, had he passed down the great Avenue of the City he so loved, would have called the sons and daughters of Mexico to gather with folded hands and bowed heads, he was taken to the church of St. Honoré d'Eylau. In its crypt his ashes await the hour when the passions of the people whom he loved, as a gifted and wayward child is loved by his father, shall have abated.

For a lustrum now his wife has gone every morning to pray by his bier, and sometimes I have thought it is this continued intercourse with one who is no more which gives her a look of other-worldliness; something clarified and almost virginal hangs at times about her, who for more than thirty years was an adored wife. She mourns him as she loved him, after the Spanish way of love and mourning, intense, intransitive and perfectly exclusive in its fidelity.

The ship that one day will carry his venerable dust to Mexican shores will return to them the greatest riches any country can receive, the treasure of good tradition, the reminder of a glory that having been, can be again; for however blindly the nations try to

foreswear and disown the heritage of their past, as foolish sons squander the goods of their fathers, it remains their greatest weal, their most abiding strength.

And the place where Porfirio Diaz lies at last will be to Mexico's sons and daughters a holy place of pilgrimage.

PART TWO: FRANCISCO LEON DE LA BARRA

QUERÉTARO: JUNE 16, 1863 —

El Presidente Blanco

PART TWO: FRANCISCO LEON DE LA BARRA

"El Presidente Blanco"

CHAPTER VII

My First Sight of Francisco Leon de la Barra—An Appreciation—His Brief Visit to Mexico City, September, 1910—His Audience with President Taft, March 23, 1911—Return to Mexico—Minister for Foreign Affairs—President Diaz Falls Ill—The Ciudad Juarez Convention, May 21, 1911.

The magnetic use Chance makes of men's qualities is what impresses me as I consider this chapter in a life, this episode in a nation's destiny: the ad-interim Presidency of Francisco Leon de la Barra.

I saw him for the first time from a distance, but at the climax of his career, on the afternoon of May 25, 1911, as he drove back from the Chamber of Deputies after taking his oath of Supreme Office.

I was standing on the balcony of our house in the Calle Humboldt, whence I could see his carriage cross the broad Plaza de la Reforma and pass the bronze equestrian statue of Charles IV. He was sitting very straight, and looking very pale and completely Aryan amongst the highly-colored populace that acclaimed him. Across his breast was the red and white and green sash of his exalted office. He rode in the shining equipage, with its princely liveries, that but the day before had belonged to the Iron

President. He was accompanied by the glittering, galloping outriders, their white plumes floating from their shining helmets, who had been wont to accompany him, who at that moment was lying ill, broken, rejected, in the abyss that separated him from the vast accomplishments of his life and the final praise of history.

The carriage disappeared down the broad Paseo to shouts of "Viva de la Barra," followed by cries of "Viva Madero!", "Viva el Apostol."

I thought of Mr. de la Barra then as public opinion voiced him, a suave, cultured, useful man of more than ordinary tact, belonging to no political party, who for the greater portion of his life had lived out of his country, who had no encumbering affiliations, who, in a word, would "do" and do well.

When he had finished his "Interinato" bearing the name of "El Presidente Blanco," relinquishing it, with nothing warmer nor redder than a handshake to the then undiagnosed visionary called the "Man of Destiny," I began to suspect him of other qualities than those so apparent. Now long acquaintance[1] has proved him appreciative of all superior things, consistent in act, finishing what he begins, astute in judgment, faithful in personal relations, and as kind as humanity in its governmental aspects permits a man of political career to be. In his family relations he is a model of affectionate courtesy and solicitude, and "mañana" is not in his vocabulary. He is a man

[1] During the highly educative years of the Great War I saw much of Mr. de la Barra, who has lived in Paris, since his departure from Mexico. It is this closer acquaintance with him that has made me appreciative of further qualities underlying those apparent ones that distinguished him when I knew him in Mexico.

in fact whose qualities of judgment and perseverance permit his conquest of circumstances, and in turn the use of him by events. The knowledge of all these things gives me an insight into a personality that presents few of the so-called Mexican characteristics.

This was the man, Ambassador to Washington at the height of his country's prestige, who made a short visit to Mexico during the Centenary Celebrations. He found himself on the 6th of September, 1910, lunching with the President, then in full apotheosis, at the Castle of Chapultepec. After luncheon, at which were present, besides the lovely wife of Don Porfirio, Don Pablo Escandon and Don Ramon Alcazar, the party went out on the castle terrace. One can picture the President and his successor, linked by destiny, diverse in mind, in body, in each and every attribute. The bearing of the Iron President was imposing and martial even in peace; and, when the knell of his eightieth year was about to sound, his piercing and beautiful eye turned continually towards the matchless valley, glittering in one of those diamond-like September noons, peculiar to the Plateau. The city he had beautified lay at his feet, the volcanoes and the mountains alone were unchanged by his will, for even the valley he had drained and modified for greater use. All was inhabited by a people that his strength and wisdom had exalted among the nations of the earth, whose envoys, gathered from the four winds, were assembled to celebrate the glory of Mexico.

Mr. de la Barra, at that time forty-three years of age, in full career, alert, fresh-complexioned, hair and mustache whitening early, immaculately dressed

in mourning garb for his first wife, was the diplomat of story in appearance and in manner.

He had been for a year and a half Ambassador to Washington, from which perspective the clouds gathering in the Mexican horizon were, to the weather-wise, somewhat disquieting, though the force of the "redemptory" hurricane then gathering no one suspected. It had been thirty-five years since any one had tried to "redeem" or "liberate" the Mexicans, or even "serve" them; but the reading of history is unfortunately no more instructive than the experiences of one's parents. . . .

After a few days in the Capital, Mr. de la Barra returned to Washington. The situation developed rapidly in the ensuing months. Mr. Limantour, at that time in Europe, was recalled by President Diaz. He took passage via New York, where he was awaited with the greatest impatience by the Madero group who hoped to make an early and favorable compromise with the Porfirista government.

It was then that the name of Mr. de la Barra was proposed as Minister for Foreign Affairs, with the understanding that on the resignation of President Diaz, he would become President ad interim.

Mr. Limantour, alarmed by the gathering force of the revolution and fearing American intervention, that determining ghost in Mexican politics since Maximilian, shortly continued his journey back to Mexico. He was accompanied to the station by the father of Madero and other members of the family then in New York. Hope was in the "apostolic" air.

On arriving in Mexico City he was received im-

mediately by General Diaz, going from the station to the Palace.

In the conversation which ensued Mr. Limantour, fully informed as to the Madero strength, potential and actual, stated in substance the following to the President: "Your continued presence at the head of the government can only give rise to further troubles and disasters, even to intervention by the United States. My advice to you is to present your resignation."

Deeply impressed by the words of his Minister of Finance, Don Porfirio immediately decided to resign his high office.

It was then that he made his historic answer:—

"I could control the revolution; but I will not do it for it would necessitate the shedding of blood, and, more important than all, it might perhaps endanger the independence of Mexico. I had thought that my holding of the Supreme Power was with the consent and approbation of my countrymen. But if this is not so, they must have the master that they choose and I must resign." . . .

Immediately afterwards, the Government began to treat with the revolucionarios. . . .

On the 23rd of March, 1911, Mr. de la Barra received three telegrams, one from General Diaz himself, another from Mr. Creel, and one from Mr. Limantour, informing him that he was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs.

That same afternoon, having made up his mind that he must accept, he telephoned to the White House.

Mr. de la Barra's decisions are always rapid and followed by the corresponding act, another quality which distinguishes him from the large majority of his compatriots, whose decisions and their consequent acts are apt to be quick only when it is a question of flight or execution.

An appointment was made at the White House for late that afternoon. On arriving he was received by Mr. Charles D. Norton, who ushered him into the small private office of the President, in the new wing giving directly on the lawn, still covered with late snow. He found there both President Taft and Secretary Knox, who received him most cordially.

He stated the reasons for asking for an immediate audience.

"When are you going?" was the President's first question.

"To-morrow at noon," he answered.

There was a slight pause which President Taft broke to say suddenly:

"I think, Mr. Ambassador, that you will at no distant date find yourself President of Mexico."

Mr. de la Barra answered: "But no, I am not a politician. I have lived all my official life out of Mexico. They will want another type of man."

Upon which Mr. Knox said with a smile: "We need not speculate upon it now,—time will show."

Mr. Taft continued:—"It will perhaps be as well, however, to base our discussion upon that probability."

Then was begun a conversation lasting an hour and a half mainly concerning the problems of the relations between the two countries, though both

the President and Mr. Knox were fully alive to the many interior difficulties as well, which awaited Mr. de la Barra as head of the Mexican Cabinet. The growth of the revolutionary party was already apparent by shots across the border, as well as by those loudly echoing throughout Mexico, and the extraordinary contagion of the "Madero idea" determined all situations.

President Taft, with the courtesy which he always brought to any discussion, expressed his pleasure and satisfaction at having as a personal friend the man with whom the important and delicate matters pending would be discussed, and told Mr. de la Barra that he could telegraph him directly concerning any difficulties that might arise, adding:—"You may be sure that I will help you in every way compatible with justice, and the interests of the United States."

The rather delicate fact of the mobilization of the American troops on the Mexican border was touched on, but I gather that, in regard to it, the three statesmen followed carefully the French maxim: "Glissez, n'appuyez jamais."

The President reminded Mr. de la Barra, however, that he had declined, without Mexican consent, to order a troop of cavalry across the border to protect the breakwater that Americans were constructing at the mouth of the Rio Colorado, in an endeavor to save the Imperial Valley. The Chamizal claim, involving a part of the city of El Paso, was discussed, and they also spoke at length concerning Magdalena Bay, whose harbor, one of the finest on the Pacific coast, will forever be an object of desire for several countries. It would seem that in direct proportion

to the beauty and usefulness of the natural conformations of the earth, the envy and greed of the nations are aroused.

The El Paso rencontre of the year before was mentioned where, on his return from California, President Taft met President Diaz. The interview had been unfortunately most formal. Mr. de la Barra himself was not present, having been called to Paris by the grave illness of his wife. The potentialities of the meeting were great, but some necessary, unifying, quickening process had been absent, and it had reduced itself to a conventional exchange of good wishes between the two Presidents. Mr. Taft not speaking Spanish, nor Don Porfirio English, they had been further separated by the formalities of an interpreter.

Probably the most definite result was a photograph taken on the Mexican side of the International bridge. The photograph, which was sent broadcast throughout Mexico, bore the caption "Two Great Presidents of the Two Great Republics of North America." Both Executives were in evening dress, flanked by an aide de camp in protocolic garb. Don Porfirio stood straight as a die, his face bearing its usual expression of stern serenity, while Mr. Taft's wore its wonted kindly smile. To a people with an eye for externals, the contrast was symbolic, but misleading. . . .

From time to time during the White House interview, President Taft would emphasize his appreciation of the difficulties awaiting Mr. de la Barra on his return to Mexico, repeating: "I shall always stand for the maintenance of good relations with your country."

What one gathers to have been in the nature of agape terminated by President Taft presenting to Mr. de la Barra a large photograph bearing the most appreciative of dedications, and asking one of his in return. This photograph was subsequently stolen (probably for the sake of the frame rather than the image) together with nearly everything Mr. de la Barra possessed from his house in Mexico City, when the country had been thoroughly saved by the "Messiah."

As the three statesmen stood talking at the door of the Executive office, President Taft said to him again with a smile:

"Mark my words, you will soon find yourself President of Mexico."

The farewells were cordial, even affectionate, though lacking the "abrazo," of course, that would have closed the scene in another latitude. . . .

Arriving at the Buena Vista Station in Mexico City, Mr. de la Barra was received by Mr. Limantour, Mr. Creel and the son of the President, Don Porfirito. From that moment until his final departure (flight, or escape, in 1913) Francisco Leon de la Barra played leading rôles in the drama of his country. . . .

On the fourth of April he called a Cabinet Meeting, when he gave an exposé of the relations between Mexico and the United States, telling of the very understanding friendship and cordial goodwill shown by both President Taft and his Secretary of State at the farewell interview. Passing then to interior and urgent matters, he admitted that though the government of Don Porfirio possessed the force, the revolution seemed to have public opinion on its side,

and he suggested that an endeavor be made to reconcile the old facts with the new opinions.

From November, 1910, in hard contrast to the dazzling glories of the Centenary celebrations, revolutionary sounds of no uncertain caliber had been heard from time to time in Puebla, echoing throughout the North. The public in general, however, gave them small attention. The Iron President had always promptly nipped in the bud any blossoms of disorder, and doubtless would continue to do so. But the banner of the revolution was a "trouvaille." The Mexicans excel in their manufacture above all nations of the earth, and a people wanting, they knew not why, a change, could not resist the glitter of "Sufragio Efectivo y no Reelección" embroidered on the still more attractive background of the distribution of lands. The United States as well, with the now demonstrated lack of continuity of democratic institutions was for a change. It was not taken into account if the change were for the better or the worse, just a change—any change—was wanted.

Madero, the man whom the crowd was acclaiming as the Apostle of "free government" (whatever that may mean) over against government by a dictator had been in jail for some months in the Penitenciaría of San Luis Potosí. In October, 1910 (his imprisonment being preceded by many dramatic adventures, hiding sometimes from the wrath of the government, enjoying sometimes a personal homage from the crowd unknown even to the Iron President), he had been released on bail of 8,000 pesos.

Since then he had been almost exclusively engaged in sowing dragon's teeth the length and breadth of

Mexico, in the shape of promises of everything to everybody, and which, even after they began to crop up, took on for a time in the landscape the misleading aspect of Manna. . . .

Another and fatally determining factor of the situation was that early in May President Diaz fell ill of blood-poisoning, after the fracture of the jaw-bone caused by the clumsy extraction of two infected molars. Some attributed his illness to a simple act of God, others to the more complicated machinations of enemies. However that may be, for days he lay in danger of death. Shortly before his malady had fully developed, but when he was already consumed by fever, his brain deadened by frequent injections of morphine necessary to allay the excruciating pain, Don José Yves Limantour, alarmed at the terrible momentum of events, counseled him to enter without delay into some sort of negotiations with the leaders of the revolutionary movement, and at the same time to change his cabinet. This he did. Unfortunately, the masses took it as a sign of weakness, not appreciating the profound patriotism of the President's attitude, and an immense prestige was immediately flung about the motives and aims of the revolution. It was the first direct step of the maker of Modern Mexico towards death in exile.

By the middle of May the revolutionary kettle was at boiling point.

On the 21st of May, there met, in the extremely unpicturesque building of the Customs at Ciudad Juarez, Francisco S. Carvajal, representing the Diaz government, Francisco I. Madero, José Maria Pino Suarez, and F. Vasquez Gomez, representing the


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revolution. Then was drawn up the covenant according to which Don Porfirio was to resign before the end of the month, as well as the Vice-President, Don Ramon Corral, whose "press" had gone from bad to impossible. Even with the hand of death visibly laid upon him, no one wanted him. Francisco Leon de la Barra, actually Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Diaz Government, was to be charged with the Presidency ad interim of the United States of Mexico. Hostilities between the forces of the Government of General Diaz and of the revolution were to cease, and general elections would be arranged for according to the clauses of the constitution.

Now practically nothing had been heard of "La Constitución" for some thirty years, but as the country had steadily progressed in paths of unaccustomed prosperity without it, it would seem to the innocent bystander that it might just as well have been left in its unsullied obscurity.

Like the happiest woman, it had no history. The date of its birth and a somewhat difficult infancy, were all that was known of it. But by some strange contradiction, the least amorous of apostles was to seek it out and woo it on the highways. The book of its subsequent career is not for general and family use.

CHAPTER VIII

President Diaz Writes the "Renuncia"—His Last Hours in Mexico City—The Parting from His Successor.

Don Porfirio wrote and signed the fateful and fatal "Renuncia" [1] when he was in physical agony, the dark

[1] The resignation of President Diaz reads as follows:

"Mexico, May 25, 1911.

"The Mexican people—the people who so generously loaded me with honors, who proclaimed me as their chief in the international war, and supported me patriotically in all the work undertaken for strengthening the industry and commerce of the Republic, for founding its credit and for gaining the respect of friendly nations and occupying a decorous position among them;—this People, gentlemen of the Chamber, has now risen in insurrection, and thousands have banded together and armed themselves, declaring that my presence in the exercise of the supreme executive power is the cause of the revolt.

"I know of nothing that I have done to warrant this social upheaval, but, granting that I may be unconsciously culpable, though without admitting it, this very possibility forces me to the conclusion that I am of all people the least qualified to reason and decide as to my own guilt. Therefore, respecting, as I have always respected, the will of the People and in conformity with Article 82 of the Federal Constitution, I come before the Supreme Representative Body of the Nation to resign without reserve the office of Constitutional President of the Republic, with which I was honored by popular vote. I do this with the greater reason because, in order to retain my high office it would be necessary to continue shedding Mexican blood, lowering the credit of the Nation, demolishing its wealth, exhausting its resources and exposing it to international conflicts.

"I hope, gentlemen of the Chamber, that when the passions that accompany all revolutions subside, a more conscientious and careful study of the facts will lead to a correct judgment in the mind of the Nation, so that I may die, conscious in the depths of my soul of a just and fair appreciation of the devotion to my fellow countrymen, which I have maintained throughout my whole life and will never cease to cherish.

"With all respect,

"Porfirio Diaz."

door of death ajar; his indomitable will, working instinctively, alone enabled him to accomplish fittingly the sacrifice.

Thus was completed the last official act of this man, who, by the alchemy of his wisdom, by the working of his will, had transmuted bandits into statesmen, destroyers into constructors, disintegrating individualism into national union, foreign debts into a world-credit system. He is probably the most conspicuous example in history of a man in his single lifetime making his country great out of such elements. I have sometimes thought, studying his visage, both in picture and in memory, how clearly wisdom had revealed itself in that direct yet visioned look of his beautiful eye, and how the will that molded Mexico to use and greatness had been testified to in the stern yet pitying lines about his mouth. Throughout the ages, doubtless like expressions have lain on the countenances of the builders of nations. I will have seen but one of them, and that one in exile,—his work consummated, and also destroyed, but he is unforgettable. And as he passed over the bitter waters, and through the Ebon Port, Mexico followed him,—and she, unlike him, is not yet arisen. . . .

The Vice-President, Don Ramon Corral, then in Paris, was increasingly ill of a cancer in the pancreas, which after being operated on, was found to be incurable. He had already sent his resignation to Mr. de la Barra through a friend, asking him to withhold it until that of Don Porfirio was ready. After receiving it, Mr. de la Barra kept it locked in his desk for several days, awaiting that of the Iron President.

But with his own power and might Porfirio Diaz also signed away the power and might of his country, and her glory, in conformity with the mysterious will of the blind and passionate race he had so long governed after the only manner that could bring them, in spite of themselves, to prosperity,—"Poca política, mucha administración"—"Little politics, much government."

When one considers the epithets applied to politics in all quarters of the globe, even by politicians themselves (who certainly know what they are talking about), the man who could in any way exorcise this supposedly necessary evil, and at the same time maintain his position, was certainly possessed of supreme gifts.

Immediately after the signing of the "Renuncia" Mr. de la Barra had been summoned to the house in the Calle de Cadena. He found the maker of Modern Mexico sitting in an armchair in one of the big salons. Two men besides Mr. de la Barra were present, Licenciado Carlos Saavedra, President of the Chamber of Deputies, into whose hands a few minutes later the resignation was given, and a secretary who accompanied him. Saavedra, destined from all time to be the bearer of one of the most disastrous messages in history, was a man in the early forties, alert, with a clever eye, whose political career was just beginning to take form. Periodically the Presidency of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies changes; he happened at that moment to be occupying the position.

After his departure there was silence in the room —one of the great silences of history. The past was as dead as if a century instead of a quarter of an

hour had slipped by. Finally Don Porfirio made a slight gesture as of one relinquishing what was no longer his to keep.

Then he looked long at his successor, scrutinizing as it were what he himself had been in its new form. What his thoughts were, who shall say?

Many great men have been betrayed by a single friend, and the "et tu Brutus" has sounded but too often through the ages. Many have been vanquished by enemies; others have been done to death by mobs. Few men have been betrayed by their nation. The greater the power the greater the hurt.

When he at last spoke it was simply to say:

"I have already given orders concerning my journey to Vera Cruz to-night, but as this afternoon you will be President of Mexico I beg you to confirm them to General Huerta."

A few moments later Mr. de la Barra took his departure.

One of the members of General Diaz' staff, Captain José Espinosa, came up to the President-elect as he was leaving the house, and said he had been deputed with the rest of the Staff to accompany him to and from the Chamber when he took his oath of office.

"Did the General command this?" Mr. de la Barra asked.

"Yes, to-day at noon," was the answer.

The first orders that Mr. de la Barra himself signed as President were to General Huerta to escort the ex-President to Vera Cruz.

At nine o'clock on the evening of that same day whereon he had taken his oath of office, driving back from the Chamber through the great Avenue to the

applause of the people who but so lately had cried death to the man who had made them great, Mr. de la Barra went a last time to the house in the Calle de Cadena to take leave of his illustrious predecessor. He found Don Porfirio in bed trying to rest before starting on the journey to Vera Cruz, arranged for three o'clock in the morning. He was lying in his wife's room, a very spacious chamber, square, high-ceilinged after the Mexican way, and dimly lighted. In its depths was a large Italian tryptic in the Primitive style with a faintly glinting gold background, its sacred figures only vaguely outlined in the obscurity. Mr. de la Barra sat in a large chair by the bed. Always prudent, General Diaz' first words were to beg Mr. de la Barra not to accompany him to the station as had been planned. Then followed a last conversation between these two men placed in such strange relation, and who were destined never again to meet under the sky of their Fatherland.

One can well suppose that Don Porfirio had been thinking over many long past things, as one does at the hour of any death, physical, political or moral, for he almost immediately recalled to Mr. de la Barra how he had first seen him at Querétaro on the day of his baptism in 1863. Mr. de la Barra's grandfather, Benito Quijano, was General of Division, and Diaz himself happened to be passing through Querétaro to the North. Between that hour in the dim and splendid church of Querétaro standing by a carved baptismal font where he saw a new-born child, to this hour, lying in the vast, shadowy room, lay four decades, Fate in her cruelest yet grandest manner having perfectly joined that beginning and this end.

His conversation, though so great in substance, was very simple in form. Mr. de la Barra told me that more than his words, he remembered the majesty of his being in that last hour. Even in that moment of supreme betrayal and heartbreak, his every word breathed the intensest love of country, and there was no bitterness attendant on the dolorous surprise with which he relinquished his power.

But giving Mexico into the new President's hands was to Porfirio Diaz as if he were giving to him something inestimably precious, something that would be broken and destroyed if not carefully handled, even as an anxious father might at the hour of death commit a beloved yet wayward child into another's keeping.

"He showed me the greatest kindness and even affection, and I think he pitied me for the difficult unknown on which I was embarked," Mr. de la Barra told me. "The conversation was almost entirely of our interior situation. I felt more and more how great was his patriotism, how intense his solicitude for his people, and my consciousness of the nobility of his spirit in misfortune increased at every word. Our foreign relations were scarcely mentioned. Mexico was the whole world for him, in the truest sense his Alpha and Omega. . . ."

If in supreme hours the vision of great men, in whom the secret and primary gifts of imagination and prophecy are forever at work, is indeed enlarged, how immeasurable must have been Don Porfirio's anxiety as he surveyed his passionate, undisciplined, diversely-composed race, about to be engulfed in the flood of indigenous "democracy." Its waves,

aglitter with a dreamer's promises, rippled misleadingly over the rocks of facts. . . . Later, in despair, he was to see the destruction completed from without. . . .

When the last moment came, the greatest Mexican raised himself slightly in bed. The new President bent over him. They gave each other the "abrazo" after the immemorial manner in which men, throughout the ages, have said their supreme farewells,—only fitting end, Biblic, noble, personal to such a scene. . . .

On issuing from the room, where the prosperity of Mexico lay dead by the side of a broken-hearted man, Mr. de la Barra found much coming and going in the lighted salons and antechambers in preparation for the impending departure. The two sisters of "Carmelita" were with her, Señora de Teresa [1] and Señora de Elizaga, also Don Porfirio's son, his two daughters, Señora de la Torre and Señora de Rincon Gallardo; the husband of Señora de Elizaga and an aide-de-camp. . . .

[1] Señora de Teresa was the widow of Don José de Teresa, the Mexican Minister Plenipotentiary to Austria, who renewed diplomatic relations with that country in 1901, suspended since the death of Maximilian. It was a brief but tragic episode, for he died a few weeks after his arrival in Vienna, leaving his young widow and little son to make a lonely journey back to Mexico.

General Diaz' chivalrous treatment of the Austrian prisoners at the time of the taking of the City of Mexico had been much appreciated by the Emperor Francis Joseph, who bestowed on him in that same year of 1901, the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Stephen, brought to him by Count Hohenwarth, first Minister Plenipotentiary to Mexico since 1867. Prince Khevenhüller, whom General Diaz had defeated at the battle of San Lorenzo in 1867, and made prisoner at the taking of Mexico City, had been the special friend of Don José de Teresa on his arrival in Vienna. It was he and his wife who sustained the young widow by their sympathy and friendship, and who made the practical arrangements for her sorrowful return to her native land.

As for the thoughts of him lying in that vast, dim, silent chamber, few could have followed them, for they embraced the heights and depths of national and personal disaster.

But though their end is so often exile, the rise of nations to power is always due to their very few great men, whom destiny at its own hour and for its own purpose calls into being. "And it will forever be a difficult thing, worthy of the greatest praise, for a man to live justly, when he has complete liberty to do evil." Nature forms few in this mould.

CHAPTER IX

The Presidency ad Interim, May 25 to November 6, 1911—Typical Scenes—The Army Celebrations in Chapultepec Park—Legislation Concerning Labor—Plot to Assassinate President de la Barra.

Then began the ad-interim Presidency of Francisco Leon de la Barra. It proved to be a constant struggle against the impatience of the Maderistas to get into power (an impatience they made not the slightest attempt to hide); the then-undiagnosed activities of the atavistic Zapata in the fair state of Morelos; the exactions of the disbanded army and the personal hopes of each and every Mexican patriot.

Though he repeatedly announced in and out of the Chamber that he would under no circumstances be candidate for either Presidency or Vice-Presidency, there was an uneasy "quien sabe" among the Maderistas. It was so unlike what they themselves would do, that they could not decorously await the day of Madero's inauguration to find out if he really meant what he said. In the meantime, Mr. de la Barra, though supported by expert governmental minds, trained during the practical Porfirian era, as well as by the order-loving elements, was discovering the discomforts of the Procrustian bed on which the Presidents of Mexico are accustomed to take a somewhat broken sleep. Its coverlet is daily made up and nightly turned down by jealous, impatient politicians

in the name of country, or bandits in the name of liberty and the poor. It is further surrounded by the astral projections of hungry bureaucrats, envious enemies and treacherous friends.

Later Madero, sleeping in that same bed, watched over by the more fraternal ghosts of great departed, Washington, Franklin, Rousseau, Tolstoï, were among those he best loved, was held by dreams that had no more to do with the facts of the Mexican situation, which were of the unavoidable, inexorable, inevitable economic order, than Tennyson's "Dream of Fair Women" had to do with the suffragette question.

Don Porfirio's long and prosperous administration of national affairs was due to his genius for facts. *He* knew that order was the first requisite for prosperity and proceeded to make order, and even Madero, whose obsession was liberty, was later forced to the unwilling conclusion that it comes before liberty. After a few months of responsibility he was even convinced that there can be no liberty without it. He had not, unfortunately, within himself the ability to bestow peace, and his "plan" and his "program" were both soon as démodé as a last year's hat. "In politics nothing ages so much as incompetence," is the dictum of a brilliant Mexican polemist. One is tempted to go further and say that incompetence is a crime, against which nations are justified in protesting. They will, naturally, protest in their own inherent way. In Latin America by a revolution or a coup d'état, in northern latitudes by electing some one else from whom they hope again what they had vainly awaited from the last. In either case the

process bears within itself its own specific and inevitable consequences.

At his first cabinet meeting Mr. de la Barra had presented the lines of conduct he had laid out for his term of office. His objects were three: pacification, reorganization of the public service, and preparation for the presidential elections due in October. In the first council of his ministers, the 26th of May, he exposed this program, stating that it could not be carried out, however, without the confidence and aid of the various (and variegated) political parties, and of the people. Addressing himself to the country and the Chamber, he furthermore stated that he had not desired the Presidency, and that the happiest day of his life (and one might add the safest) would be that on which he would relinquish it.

Events proved this to be true, but it was quite, if not entirely, unbelievable by the impatient Maderistas. Madero at that time was most cordial to the ad-interim President, hailing him, whenever they met, as "gran ciudadano," great citizen, at the same time doubtless wondering if he would really get out at the appointed hour.

Fortunately for him, however, and for the good name of Mexico the order-loving elements, at that time still in the majority in all classes, sought occasions on which to show him their confidence and respect. Various members of the since reviled landowners, intellectuals, and representatives of the equally reviled high finance and big industry, even went so far as to arrange a fairly comprehensive banquet in his honor in the Jockey Club,—when already the jealousies of the masters of the New Dis-

pensation were to be feared and were everywhere at work.

The "Old Army" reorganized under the command of the Minister of War, General Rascon, of patriotic and loyal record, was with Mr. de la Barra, not alone through military obedience and the still potent traditions left by Diaz, but because its chiefs saw the old ghost of revolution appearing on the horizon. This loyalty of the army was crystallized in the great fête, organized in Chapultepec Park on the day when Mr. de la Barra returned the flag to the Thirty-second Infantry regiment. It was on this day that, inspired by the flag, opposing leaders such as General Reyes, also candidate for the Presidency, and Francisco I. Madero, (to meet their death two years afterward in such tragic antithesis) made mutually amicable speeches, as well as the Minister of War and Mr. de la Barra. The glitter of the setting Mexican sun transfigured for yet a moment the fast approaching specter of brotherly hate.

The machinery of government was still working with the old impetus of law and order, and under the ægis of Mr. de la Barra several important measures were proposed and carried through, such as the commission, presided over by the very able Don Pedro Lascurain, for the study of agrarian problems and the foundation of a national Bureau of Labor, which have both survived the succeeding revolutions.

Now the days of any President of Mexico are uncertain, and the following incident is typical. On the eve of the anniversary of the death of Juarez (18th of July), towards four o'clock General Huerta, sent from General Reyes, came to see President de la

Barra at the Palace, to inform him that there was a plot on foot to assassinate him during the ceremonies. A short time after the chief of police appeared to say that it would be better to change the route of the procession at the last moment. From the monument of Juarez in the Avenida Juarez the President was to go to the Panteón of the Church of San Fernando, where the body of Juarez rests under the monument raised to him in the '80's, representing him with his head lying in the lap of a weeping woman, symbolizing the sorrows of the nation, which he had thought to heal. President de la Barra was then to proceed on foot along the Avenue, turning in at the Calle San Diego, thence into the Avenida de los Hombres Ilustres, and into the little Plaza in front of the Church of San Fernando.

His wife said to him as he left the house, "I am suddenly so anxious; as soon as you get to the Panteón, have me informed." He had, of course, made no mention of the rumors concerning the plot to his family. He was to be accompanied by his ministers, his État Major and his three brothers. Nothing happened. The day after an army doctor said to General Rascon, the Minister of War, the President's loyal friend, that as he was sitting two days before in civilian clothes on one of those single-backed, double-seated benches in the Zocalo, two tough-looking, big-hatted men seated themselves on the other side of the bench. The name of President de la Barra being mentioned, the doctor pricked up his ears. He heard one of them say:

"I shan't do it. I have six children. One lives but

once, and who knows if they will pay what they promise?"

Then they got up and crossed the square.

"Why didn't you immediately inform me?" General Rascon cried.

"I attached no importance to it at the time, but when I saw in the newspapers to-day the account of the plot to assassinate the President, I realized the import of the conversation. One of the men had a broken nose. I should recognize him."

It is a little glimpse behind the scenes. The public sees the stage set quite sumptuously for the act. The reverse side shows a few crude lights, a lot of unpainted canvas, rough boardings and cobwebs. The usual arrangements for assassination are as simple as this described. The details alone differ—and the victim.

CHAPTER X

Madero's Oft-cited Visit to Cuautla—Zapata and His Attempts to Restore Primal Aztec Life in Mexico—The Glory That Was Spain's—Considerations Concerning the Spaniard in Mexico.

When, in October, Huerta, according to orders, was vigorously pushing the campaign against Zapata in Morelos, the President received at seven o'clock one morning a visit from Madero. He was accompanied, as usual, by some nepotic group; on this occasion, by his uncle Ernesto, then Minister of Finance, his cousin by marriage (I think), General Gonsalez Salas, and his cousin by blood, Rafael Hernandez.

Madero opened the conversation by saying that conditions were so bad in Morelos that he was most desirous of having an interview with Zapata, then at Cuautla, in an attempt to come to some arrangement, and he begged the President to give the necessary orders to facilitate his going.

Mr. de la Barra, greatly surprised, answered:

"You must not go. It will be both dangerous and unwise. Measures are being taken to bring the campaign to a successful finish. It will be better for you, better for me, better for the country, not to interfere at this moment."

Madero's uncle and General Gonsalez Salas were also of the opinion that the trip to Cuautla might be disastrous, politically and personally.

The President continued:

"General Huerta is taking measures to push the Zapatistas back, and General Caso Lopez, chief of the Zapadores, has been sent into the state of Puebla, to get them on the other side. They will thus be caught between two fires. Let well enough alone."

It was finally agreed, after some further conversation, that Madero should abandon the trip to Cuautla. All that day the President was in constant communication with both generals, and matters were proceeding satisfactorily according to plan.

At ten o'clock on the evening of that same day, Madero's brother, Gustavo, and Diaz Lombardo, Minister of Fine Arts, came to him in much agitation. A message had just been received from Madero from Cuautla, begging to have the movements of General Huerta's troops immediately stopped, that his, Madero's life, was in danger, that the greatest excitement prevailed among the inhabitants of the town, who, because of the advance of the Federal troops, and the attack on Cuautla, a stronghold of the Zapatistas, thought he, Madero, was a traitor. In consternation, the President said to the three men:

"How is it possible that he can be there, against my advice, and at such risk to himself?"

"He is lucky," Gustavo answered confidently, for until his last day the legend of Madero's luck influenced practical decisions. The others doubtless raised their hands and said, "Quién sabe?"

The President realized, however, that he would be held responsible if anything happened to the "apostle," even through his own rashness, and also that the so-desired pacification was greatly endangered. There was no time to lose. Madero brought

back to the city on a bier would, at that moment, have been a national catastrophe.

He said that he would immediately find out the real condition at Cuautla, and asked them to return in an hour.

At the telegraph office in Cuautla he got hold of a confidential agent who reported that the populace, as well as the Zapatista soldiery, were in the greatest state of excitement, walking about with loaded pistols and guns, fearing the advance of Huerta's troops on one hand and of Caso Lopez' on the other. They suspected that a trap had been laid, that Madero was really allied with Huerta, and not the friend of Zapata, as they had supposed. Everywhere were cries of "Traidor, traitor!" The only effective protection for Madero would be to have the march of Huerta and Caso Lopez immediately stopped and to proclaim an armistice of forty-eight hours. This was finally ordered by the President, much against his judgment, —any disaster except harm to the "apostle."

As early as June, 1911, there were rumors of an "entente cordiale" between Madero and the "Atila del Sur." These were sometimes vague, sometimes quite definite. The "entente" was most simple of explanation, the only real difference being that one revolucionario was embarking on the Ship of State, the other was still swimming about in wreckage.

Madero could never visualize himself in his true relation to the events he wished to mould. He was about to become President of Mexico, because of involved, largely subjective happenings, of states of mind. These had brought him to place and to power, not facts; the facts of the situation had been deter-

mined by others than himself. He thought he had but to appear, and, at a from-all-time preordained moment, magnetically the destinies of Mexico would group themselves about his person, with attendant materialization of the millennium.

The combination of events and personalities at the moment of the overthrow of Diaz is completely baffling to reason, and reminds me of a paragraph from Sir Thomas Barclay's "Sands of Fate": "The folly of man shifts its center from nation to nation like the wind and the storm, and the least likely (or the most) may in turn become its victim in spite of every argument of reason, interest and national tradition."

Never was this more typified than in the case of Mexico, where national folly flew as steel to the magnet of one man's madness.

As to Zapata, time has testified in its own inexorable manner that, in spite of the horrid things he did, he was neither so oppressive, so corrupt, nor so incompetent as the other Liberators of his decade. Though his methods for the distribution of land were generally abrupt and always painful, he was consistent in his idea, directly inherited, Zapatismo having proved itself to be an atavistic, Aztec arrangement for the despoiling of those who seemed to have too much in favor of those who obviously had too little. The unequal distribution of wealth has puzzled and discouraged wiser men than Zapata. His method worked out so badly because it was completely out of date, there being no room for primal Aztec life in a country linked by railway and telegraph and hav-

ing the inestimable blessing of a Chamber of Deputies.

Zapata being the only one of the Liberators who really set about distributing the land, if "land for the landless" was what President Wilson truly desired in Mexico, it has been suggested that the impeccable logic of events demanded *his* recognition rather than that of Carranza. His record was, however, too picturesque, too anachronistic, to be really attractive, even in what might be called the experimental period of Mr. Wilson's connection with Mexico, and that of his uncertainty as to whether Villa or Carranza would make the best "constitutional" President of Mexico.

Zapata first emerged out of the mass of the 85 per cent as stable boy to Don Ignacio de la Torre, who told me he had found him an excellent domestic.

His solicitude for the poor of Morelos, and his peculiar conceptions of "mine and thine" were later developments. The ejection of Don Ignacio de la Torre from his hacienda by his one-time servant seems to have been painful to both. Don Ignacio told me, however, that Zapata did what he could in the matter of supplying him and his friend, Don Joaquin Amor, with horses and food and some elemental sort of passport and safe-conduct in their flight across country. But it is always a poor proposition when the valet drives out his master.

The followers of Zapata were almost entirely pure-blooded Indians and as easy as infants to lead. The pistol and a horse will always prove more stimulating to the imagination than a cornfield and the hoe, and this last any Indian (and many white men) will

quickly drop for the noisier and more immediate joys of fire-arms. The record of Zapata's occupation of Mexico City shines, however, in comparison with that of Carranza's half-breed hordes. The Zapatista soldiery proved to be stupid enough to pay for what they found in the shops instead of just taking it, after Carranza's "Preconstitutional" example. This was a decided blow to Zapata's prestige among other Liberators, and even among the still enslaved 85 per cent. A Mexican, a decent Mexican, is reported to have said of them, innocently but revealingly withdrawing the curtain from before his own soul: "Poor fools, they knew no better." Another and still simpler method of Zapatista procedure is exemplified by the note at the bottom of this page.[1]

[1] How and to whom a lady might be called on to serve a cup of tea, during the Zapatista occupation of Mexico City, is shown in this quotation from a letter from Madame Simon, wife of the Inspecteur des Finances of the Banco Nacional:

"I was alone in my salon one late afternoon when the mâitre d'hôtel came to say that there were four Zapatista officers in a carriage in front of the house, and that they wished to speak with my husband on an urgent matter. A glance from the window revealed a carriage full of *hats*—you see the picture. Nothing daunted I said to the alarmed servant: 'Tell the ranking one to come in.' A moment after a tall, handsome brigand with a very large and decorative hat in his hand, his torso almost concealed by cartridge belts and armed with rifle and knife, appeared at the door. He bowed with excellent manners and asked if I preferred to speak Spanish or English. My English being the better of the two we carried on the politest of conversations in that language. I offered him a cup of tea. Between dainty sips he told me he had been educated in the United States and had studied law there. His history between his American studies and brigandage in Morelos he did not reveal. The gentle object of his visit was to obtain 30,000 pesos which he needed to pay his men. My husband appeared at this moment, and he repeated his demand, with the additional remark that if he didn't get the money he would proceed to the sacking of Mexico City. There being no choice but to comply, my husband went to the telephone, saying that he had no such amount in his home. There was no one at the bank and it was impossible to get hold of any one else at that hour. The General began to get very impatient, suspecting, of course, that some trick was being tried on

A determining factor about Zapata was his instinct for the picturesque, his habits, clothes and general get-up being suited to his ends. His features were straight, his mustache was dark, even lustrous; his trousers were long and tight, and many silver buttons adorned the outside seam, his hat was big and heavily ornate with chapetas, his fine horses had beautiful saddles. Indeed, at any moment Zapata, without a single change, could have stepped on to any stage perfectly dressed for his rôle. Then, too, the indestructible beauty of the state of Morelos set off his person and his "works." Villa's background, dusty stretches of chaparral and mesquite in the north, typified, too, the eternal adjustment of race to landscape. He generally affects shabby American clothes, has an indeterminate nose and a front tooth is missing. However, all this is ancient history. After a somewhat long run—for Mexico—Villa has been supplanted in the public imagination by a man with one arm, which advantage a more than casual study of Mexico and the Mexicans alone enables one to appreciate. One might as well be writing of the

him, and said finally in a loud tone: 'If the money isn't in my hands by 10 o'clock I will give orders for the sacking of the city. The responsibility will be on your hands. I must have money to pay my men.'

"In the end, my husband prevailed on him to wait till 9 o'clock the next morning, telling him to present himself at the bank at that hour. This he did, received the money and departed. We thought the affair forever closed. A little later, however, the whole sum was repaid to my husband, to whom it was delivered on his being told to send for it at a certain address. This proved to be a miserable hovel in a squalid, cut-throat part of town. The messenger saw that money and a great deal more simply thrown into one corner of the dirty room, just as you would sweep up rubbish. Though so carelessly guarded, such was the discipline and honor among this especial set of thieves, that no unauthorized person would ever have attempted to touch it."

"Tiger of Tacubaya" as of the "Tiger of the North," as far as actualities are concerned, and Villa is only of permanent interest in the light of the one-time glory so singularly flung about his person by Washington.

Dr. Gates' account of his visits to Zapata, his rides across country in the heavy silver moonlight of Morelos, brigands silently gathering in mountain fastnesses, remind one of the second act of Trovatore, the anvil chorus left out and political talk thrown in. Villages would be entered, decorated after the Aztec manner, with green branches and bright flowers, and innocent strains of music on archaic instruments would complete the bucolic picture.

Zapata's death came about in the best "redemptory" manner. He was invited by Carrancistas to a meeting under formal terms of truce. Incautiously sitting at bread with the other Liberators he was done to death in the back.

But his ghost, as picturesque as his living body, will long haunt the loveliest of the Mexican States, inciting his followers to vengeance, even though the "First Chief" of those who betrayed him has also gone the well-trodden and inevitable way of treason and assassination. . . .

His doctrines, too, have inherent reasons for survival, for Morelos, one of the garden spots of the earth, is among the few Mexican states where the division of the land into small holdings is feasible. But God, not man, made this to an extent possible, because of its rainfall and its irrepressible flora. The Indian of the North, to whom unirrigated land is portioned out, either starves or goes elsewhere.

But at all times he is ready to serve, to fight, to build, or to destroy according to the temper of those who lead him.

And if the Indian had a bad time in the old days in the name of the King of Spain and God, he is having a worse time now in the name of Liberty, Reform, Justice, Independence. These words are known to every Indian equally with "siesta" and "mais." Of their origin and attributes he has no clearer idea than we of the great First Cause. Doubtless when his corn has been trampled by soldiers in the name of "Independencia," his wife (or wives) and daughters outraged in the name of "Libertad," his land taken from him in the name of "Reforma" and he himself is up against a wall looking with deer-like eyes into the muzzle of a gun in the name of "Justicia," he has a vague though necessarily brief and profitless perception of their meaning.

Pure races act along the simplest and most direct of evolutionary lines. It is the mixed races that make the trouble. The half-breed of the rural districts has always supplied the elements of guerilla warfare in Mexico. He can often read and write, and he knows something of "the law by which sin came." In the cities the mestizo also supplies the elements of "bureaucratic cannabalism," and his propensities are evident to those he feeds on. *He* can always read and write, and generally knows envy and brotherly hate in their perfected forms.

Zapata's "Indianismo" has proved to have been quite simply a 20th century reappearance of the Aztec type, interrupted and modified but slightly by the coming of a foreign race. It presupposes,

among other things, the religious life, and the religious life of the Indian always externalizes itself in rites and practices, distasteful to his rationally-minded contemporaries of other climes. But the Indian without religion is an abortion of nature. The "old town hall" will never satisfy him. His mystical needs will forever seek nourishment in symbols, and much as he needs corn, he cannot live by it alone. That is for the brutes. Spain with all her faults knew this, and looking at history, who reveals herself only to the free of eye, it would seem that all that has been done in Mexico since the days of her discovery by the white man has been done by Spain and the sons of the Catholic Church, "por Dios infinitas almas y por el rey infinitas tierras,"—and foreign capital. To these she owes all except her beauty, her natural riches and the right to revolution,[1] which she exercises so abundantly.

Strangely enough Spain has been forced by the intolerance of the 20th century point of view to be apologetic for her former greatness. There is even a Spanish saying, "Culpa fué de los tiempos nó de España." (It was the fault of the times, not of Spain.)

But in Mexico we have not done as well. We have proceeded on the assumption that the deepest need of

[1] Of this last I am tempted to quote General Grant when he says, with large and quiet vision: "Now the right of revolution is an inherent one. When people are oppressed by their government, it is a natural right they enjoy to relieve themselves of the oppression, if they are strong enough, either by withdrawal from it, or by overthrowing it and substituting a government more acceptable. But any people or part of a people who resort to this remedy stake their lives, their property and every claim for protection given by citizenship on this issue. Victory or the conditions imposed by the conqueror must be the result."—*Personal Memoirs.*

her soul is to be a miniature United States of America. The Spaniards, historically very learned, never dreamed of making her like unto themselves. We have traversed so far along this wrong road that we will have difficulty in getting back to the natural starting point in any nation's destiny,—the impulse of her own being; and though we bind Mexico with a thousand miles of best American cord (even made of sisal) she will in the end burst them or perish from the face of the earth as did our Indians. Middle course there is none.

Another of our faults in Mexico is tangling this thread of her racial and historical continuity. This will be said to be of the thinnest, but such as it is, from it she must spin her national destinies. We snapped this thread lightly in our fingers, frayed the ends and passed on. One of the uses of the World War is that it has shown the very relative value of civilizations. In fact we live in a world of nations as naked as were our first parents, and, alas, in no Garden of Eden.

The work of Spain in Mexico was the result of attentive and persistent measures applied by a central power working continuously, not through one or more Presidential terms, and intermittently at that, but through generations. In the end a whole was formed out of the most dissimilar groupings of race, acting and reacting according to inescapable climatic conditions. With all its black spots New Spain was a thing of beauty and use. Under our auspices it is simply a nuisance—except in the oil regions.

As for liberty as we understand it, it was as un-

known to the gifted Spaniards of the 16th and 17th centuries as the electric light and the airplane. Their results were obtained by methods we have chosen to anathematize. What succeeding generations will say of the twentieth century expressions of liberty I shudder to think. Even as he who has not studied history understands but imperfectly this strangely mysterious present, he who considers that the passions of the human heart which regulate the destinies of nations can be changed, will also think falsely concerning the future. That each state bears inherently within itself the seeds of death as well as life no one will gainsay. No nation could attain to the might and power of Spain in her apogee except by the exercise of supreme gifts, and her greatness shown in her colonizing energies is one of the mightiest manifestations of history. Her strength and her glory came from her virtues operating in spite of her defects, and that they replaced in Mexico a lesser thing by a greater who shall deny?

The grandeur of the Spanish civilization of the 16th and 17th centuries is comparable only to that of the British Empire to-day. Both are colossal expressions of national genius. The Spaniards in Mexico present to our attention every fault inherent to the world-conditions of their day. These are especially antipathetic to our habit of thought, though our disregard of the imponderable values of existence may cause us to be held by more sensitive-minded generations to come in even greater contempt than we do the Spaniards in America. Brutality, rapacity, intolerance were used abundantly in the exploitation of the Indian, but beauty, an essential, was added to

the beauty that they found and the mystical life, without which neither individuals nor nations subsist, was encouraged and sustained.

The strange but here very visible processional of fate decreed that the next exterior influence in Mexico should be foreign capital. It was applied to her as oxygen is applied to a person struggling for breath, to get her over the critical moment. She would have died without it and the most expensive illusion ever nourished about Mexico by President Wilson, expensive alike to Mexicans and Americans, is that which pictures the foreign investor as her scourge. Her history shows imperturbably that at intervals, almost rhythmic, the foreign investor has been Mexico's only salvation, and at all times has enriched her.

Sadness overcomes me looking at the natural processes, they are so cruel yet so unhaltable, always imperfectly viewed from some personal, seemingly expedient angle. And the battles of nations are typified by the battles nature wages in each heart.

CHAPTER XI

Grito de Dolores—September 15, 1911.

The one hundred and first anniversary of the "Grito de Dolores" was the earliest "ensemble" picture I was to see of the political elements of 1911, wonderfully framed in the century-old Palace.[1]

The city had been deluged all the afternoon by one of the heavy rains accompanying the close of the wet season on the Plateau. The streets were still splashy, the trees dripping, as we drove down the Avenida San Francisco with the Ambassador, who had called for us. We proceeded slowly through an immense and orderly crowd, concentrated in the Zocalo, mounted police making way for us. The windows of the Palace were ablaze and above them, against the sky away from the lighted square, were outlined blackly the ancient small turrets (almenas) which once designated the habitation of a "war-lord."

Entering through the Puerta de Honor we went up the broad stairway, carpetted with the handsome red carpet bought for the Centenary celebrations of the year before. The sumptuously furnished salons were strongly lighted. The President and his wife and

[1] On the site now occupied by the National Palace was once a Palace of Montezuma. Part of the present edifice dates from Cortés, notably the ancient wing of pink tezontle. The Palace, so closely bound up with the history of Mexico, has suffered many vicissitudes as well as many renovations, these latter largely made under the great Victory Revillagigedo at the end of the eighteenth century, and during the brief reign of Maximilian.

the members of his cabinet were receiving at one end of the vast Sala de los Embajadores. The President was in evening dress, across his breast the broad red and white and green sash of his high office. Madame de la Barra, pretty and smiling, was in a smart Rue de la Paix gown. About them were grouped the members of the Cabinet.

Don Ernesto Madero, Minister of Finance, presented, as always, the appearance of a polished man of the world. He was "fin," agreeable, and doubtless technically much more competent than any other member of the Madero family. Don Rafael Hernandez, first cousin to Madero and Minister of Fomento, who stood near him, was of tall and handsome presence, with very black hair, brilliant complexion, high arched nose, and he showed very white teeth when he smiled, which was often.

Don Alberto García Granados, Minister of Gobernación and past seventy, experienced with the broadly human experience of fifty years of Latin-American politics, was the only personal friend of the President in the Cabinet. He was a man of great probity as well as intelligence, and was to suffer the most tragic of deaths under the Carranza régime.

General Gonsalez Salas, Minister of War, also a cousin of Madero, made a showy figure in the rather gaudy uniform of his high rank. It will be seen that the Cabinet of President de la Barra was deeply dyed in Maderista colors. Don Francisco Vasquez Gomez, of many ambitions, was Minister of Public Instruction. Such were the figures in highest relief among the official group.

But there was another group, denser and more

portentous, that stood about Madero, who was naturally the real center of interest. He was smiling, but his eyes had a distant, unfocussed look, making him seem like a man in a dream. His attitude was devoid of pride and an amiable simplicity stamped his words and gestures. His wife stood near him. Her dark, sharp-featured face was softened by an expression of admiring affection and satisfaction, though, even on that auspicious occasion, there was something vigilant in her attitude. She was plainly, darkly and unbecomingly dressed. Behind them, overflowing into the other salon, were as many of the 232 members of the Madero family as could get to Mexico City, together with their friends and the friends of their friends. I have to this day the impression of something austere, provincial, yet impatient and vaguely ominous in these groupings.

Of Madero's immediate family I remember especially his mother, "Madame Mère," as Madame Lefaivre used to call her. Her pride was quite pardonable at the astonishing apotheosis of her son, visibly illumined, manifestly predestined and justified by the greatest of all justifications—success. His sisters, Mercedes and Angela, stood near their mother, small, dark, thin-featured young women, in rather dull costumes. Of the many brothers I only remember Gustavo,[1] familiarly called "ojo parado," whom I met there for the first time. Exuberant, "rasta," tireless, an abounding quality of life proceeded from his being, and was his most noticeable attribute. He was tall and well-featured with red-brown hair, and a small red-brown mustache,

[1] He had a glass eye.

which did not conceal the pleasure-loving lips of his amiable mouth. He seemed to have, that evening, the gift of ubiquity, for he was always to be found in any room into which one happened to stray. He was, I fancy, of a naturally adventurous spirit, and of a creative type of mentality. Although he held no official position, he was the most dominant personality among the advisers of his brother. Indeed, the rest of the family were quite jealous of his influence with the "Redeemer."

Some of the Madero women were fresh and good-looking in their pleasant, provincial way. Ernesto Madero's wife was very pretty, dark-eyed, bright-complexioned, rather plump, "de la costa," and there was something pleasing and unsophisticated about her person, clad in a soft and becoming gown. But mostly the women comprising the Madero phalanx that evening wore beetling, towering toques, and tight-waisted, dull dresses, or very big picture hats and impossible high-necked, spangled gowns with trains, reminding one of King Edward's remark to Lord H—— when he appeared in a frock-coat and pearl-gray trousers in a country-house in the morning: "Good God, when will you learn to dress?"

Joined to the nepotic groupings were countless others, related by expectancy rather than blood. It all reappears in memory like those pictures of immense concourses of human beings whose forms become more and more undefined until at last they melt into the horizon. About these dark archipelagoes of humanity, as I walked through the brilliantly lighted rooms, was everywhere the same "expectans expectavi" look, and the solemn, dense atmosphere,

embued with something strange, undefined, yet potential. What would have been the history of Mexico had Madero been a poor orphan and the only son of the only son of an orphan, one can but surmise. For if to a few relatives are a blessing, to how many they are more disastrous than enemies and much less useful than strangers.

At this moment of writing, every political man in that special assemblage is either dead or in exile. If there be an, to me, unknown exception, it but proves the Mexican rule.

I was subsequently taken out to supper by Don Manuel Calero, Minister of Justice. He was tardily presented, when I found myself nearly alone in the room, by the Chef du Protocol, who approached me apologetically, a long list in one hand, and Calero, so to speak, in the other, somewhat flustered by the task of properly mating the new and diverse apparitions.

We hastily followed the cortège out to a high, bountifully-spread, flower-decorated table, at which we stood, instead of sitting, as is the custom. The dining room is furnished with huge, elaborately carved sideboards of Alsatian oak. Over the high ornate mantelpiece I noted a large and admonitory marble bust of Minerva. On the table were magnificent silver épergnes and fruit-dishes, bearing the imperial and tragic crest. Even at that time when I was only in the protoplasmic stage of my Mexican development, and was steeped in the natural beauty of Mexico rather than intellectually perceptive of the idiosyncrasies of its government, I was aware that I had opened an extraordinarily interesting book. But it was in a foreign language and I had to use a dic-

tionary for nearly every word. I found my supper companion, however, to be one with whom one might easily converse. He had clever eyes and a strong jaw and he spoke excellent, idiomatic English with a pronounced American accent. He was in deep mourning for his lately deceased first wife, even to dull jet shirt-studs and cuff-buttons. I noted, however, that from time to time he smiled reassuringly across the broad table, where just opposite was a shy, smiling young woman, his bride of two weeks.

He knew almost all the things we Anglo-Saxons know and many that we do not. Now every Mexican political man finds himself in a world peopled by enemies who want his place, and friends who do likewise, and the tight rope is child's play compared to the feat of sustaining his equilibrium. Indeed, it is only a clever man, and he but for a brief period, who can accomplish it. Looking back on it all I am struck by the extraordinary talent of the public men I knew there, scarcely an "imbécile" among them, such as every other political system I am familiar with not only tolerates but fosters. They cannot exist if they are stupid in Mexico, and never was the survival of the fittest more apparent. "What, then, is the matter?" I used often to ask myself, and I continue to ask myself to-day, when all those elements have been washed free of illusion, and even hope in the blood of not one but many revolutions.

Calero, later to be Ambassador to Washington, discovered there fully what he doubtless then suspected, that the Mexicans understand us far better than we understand them. The study of our favors,

our caprices and even our insults has since become part of every public man's education in particular, and a stumbling block to Latin-America in general. I was myself, that evening, simply an easily pleased foreign woman, supping at the Palace for the first time, not too hard to talk to, and quite willing to trim the wick of that dimly-burning lamp in whose uncertain light what is now classically known as the "Mexican situation" is regarded. In Washington, Calero was to discover that easy and pleasant assurances, rather than disagreeable facts, are what suit us temperamentally where Mexico is concerned. He gave them to us in abundance. When Washington would periodically ask how soon peace and prosperity were to be restored in Mexico, he would answer in a few well-chosen, conciliatory words, which always had a soothing effect. On his return from Washington he was, however, quite desperate about the situation, and he made a completely revelatory speech in the Senate Chamber concerning his ungrateful mission. "Whoever," he cried, "will be called on to discharge the delicate duties of Mexican Ambassador to Washington, must array himself in a domino and cover his face with a mask, if he would try to maintain the almost lost reputation of his government. . . ."

The climax of the evening was the ringing of the Campana de la Independencia, the "Liberty Bell" of Mexico. Never in all its history since the night of 1810 had its ringing been so significant as when President de la Barra stepped out on the little balcony, and, raising his hand, pulled the hanging cord

while its rather toneless sounds filled the Plaza.[1] It was to ring in a new order, to herald a new day.

Shortly afterwards, being the only lady of the American Embassy present, the President asked me to join him on the balcony. For a few strange moments I found myself standing between him and Madero. I was suddenly and acutely conscious of the complete psychical divergence of the two men, but this feeling passed as I found myself looking down on something more impressive, more touching than anything I had ever beheld before,—an Indian people expectant of redemption.

Seen from above, the crowd presented a strange appearance in the light that literally bathed the Plaza. Tens of thousands of peaked hats were seen at an oblique angle, lighter than the shadowy faces under them, upturned to the balcony.

The towers of the cathedral and the façade of the Sagrario were outlined by electric lights, as well as the Palace and the houses and portales surrounding the other two sides of the Square, whose trees and bushes were either of the intensest black, or of a trembling whiteness as they caught the light. Huge, spray-like green and red and white fireworks continually illumined the sky.

The "Redeemer," whose garments I was touching, stood looking down upon those he had come to save, and I think at that moment he had no doubt of his

[1] It was twenty minutes before midnight, according to the legend, that on the 15th of September, 1810, the priest Hidalgo rang this bell hanging in the church of Dolores, a little town in the state of Guanajuato, calling patriots to fight for Liberty and Independence. In 1896 with great pomp and ceremony, this same bell was brought to the capital, and hung where it now is, above the little central balcony of the Palace looking out on the Zocalo.

complete competence. The smile was gone from his face, though there was a strange brilliancy about his eyes as he looked fixedly at the swaying, suppliant mass of humanity. Usually so loquacious, he was suddenly silent, his white-gloved hands twitched slightly as he held the iron railing of the little balcony. What President de la Barra thought, I know not. His face, too, was very pale, and the light caught the colors of his red and white and green sash. Wave-like sounds came from the crowd. "Independencia," "Mexico," "Madero," "Libertad," "Salvador," "de la Barra," could be distinguished, though mostly it was but an indeterminate expression of human hope and the strange rustling sound of crowds. Above it all the old bells of the cathedral rang out, and a few minutes later came the deafening cannonading of the salutes.

The rain had long since ceased. Immense and brilliant constellations scarcely dimmed by the fireworks and the electric lights, shone in a sky of deepest blue, with those strange, terrifying spots of infinite black one finds in tropical heavens. As I turned after a brief, awed moment, to go back into the glaringly-lighted sala, I brushed against Madame Madero, standing at the window-sill. She quickly slipped into my place, her small, darkly-clad form outlined against the brilliance of the Plaza lights. . . .

Never had I seen the tools of Fate so near the human clay. The Potter's hand, too, was visibly reaching out.

CHAPTER XII

President de la Barra Advances the Date of His Withdrawal from Power—President Madero Takes His Oath of Office—Concerning the "Military Genius"—The Three Figures Seen in the Twilight, November 6, 1911.

In Paris, years afterwards, I once said to Mr. de la Barra: "Knowing that the popularity of Madero was on the wane, and being convinced of his complete unpreparedness for government, did you never think of remaining in office on the Huertista principle, 'that the law is not violated if the country be saved'?"

Mr. de la Barra: "It would have been impossible. It was necessary, in the state of mind in which the country found itself, that Madero be 'tried out,' otherwise it would have been said that had he had a chance, he could have established a perfect democracy in Mexico. It was a case of Scylla and Charybdis, and Mexico was wrecked on both. No man could have steered contrary to the Maderista tide. The inauguration was set for the 20th of November, but I felt it wiser to hasten the event. I therefore asked a committee of friends in the Chamber to advance the date from the twentieth to the sixth of the month. I also arranged to leave the country the evening of that same day, accepting the mission to Italy, to return a somewhat belated thanks for the sending of the special Italian Embassy to the Centenary celebrations. I had promised the country to leave the Presi-

dency on the election of my successor and his full recognition by Congress. I kept my word. I knew the incompetency of Madero for the governing of the Republic, but I had to accept the decision of the great majority of the people. Many suggestions to remain in power were made to me, and many offers to stand by me in such an event. But I refused. Moreover, had I not kept my word, and acted against the spirit of the law—not against the letter—I would have been called a traitor, and I would have found a flag of insurrection in front of me."

Whatever may have been the reasons, it must always be remembered of Francisco Leon de la Barra that he could have made efforts, perhaps successful, to keep his position, many political elements being in his control, and that he did not seek to retain it beyond the moment of his promise.

According to a witness of the scene, Madero was very nervous, and even agitated at the Palace on that morning of the sixth of November when Mr. de la Barra gave over to him the supreme power. His eyes were brilliant, but could not fix themselves on any person or object; he was deathly pale, and more than usually talkative, his excitement generally showing itself by increased loquacity.

Mr. de la Barra, in brief words, expressed his wishes for the prosperity of Mexico during the new administration and for the personal success of the new President.

Mr. Madero then thanked him in the name of the country, hailing him as "the great citizen who had governed Mexico wisely, transmitting the supreme power integrally and in strict conformity to the law."

He gave orders that Mr. de la Barra be accompanied to his home by a Guard of Honor. Pascual Orozco, the "Cabecilla" of Chihuahua, one of the Maderista heroes, asked to form part of it. And it was thus, surrounded by the mixed escort of Presidential guards and Maderista generals, that Mr. de la Barra, deeply moved, returned to his home, followed by an immense crowd shouting, "Viva el Presidente Blanco."

When Madero appeared at the Chamber to take his oath, even from the distance of the diplomatic loge, his pallor was appalling, his eyes deep-ringed, his small beard like a spot of ink. He took his oath firmly, however, but as he turned to leave the Chamber to go back to the Palace, where the members of the government and the diplomatic corps awaited him, he made a sudden strange movement, almost supplicatory, of putting his hands together, invoking what spirit or spirits I know not. He was at the summit of his desire. What frightening, prophesying apparition he met on those heights, who shall say?

In the streets an immense crowd was calling him "Salvador" and "Apostol." The greatest confusion prevailed and even he had much difficulty in getting down the steps leading from the Camara, and into his motor. The diplomatic corps had arrived at the Chamber of Deputies, with garments torn, top hats furry and battered, and had finally entered by a small side door to which they were for the most part engineered by Manuel del Campo, Third Introducer of Ambassadors. To this day I remember the sudden dim quiet of the small passage and the returning sense of personal safety, as we found ourselves shut

out from the excitement and potentialities of the crowd. Madero had not called out the soldiery, wishing, as he said, to show his confidence in the people. The confusion, naturally, was indescribable. Even the band of the Presidential Guard was scattered and the trombones sounded from one side and the bugles from another. It was the Mexican people in the full enjoyment of a change for the worse.

"Now I can put everything straight," Madero said, with a childlike smile to a foreign minister on receiving his congratulations at the Palace. Doubtless at the moment he saw himself leaning down from a cloud of glory, dispensing happiness and security to each and every Mexican. Had he been a bad man, but a clever one, with his feet on the earth and some knowledge of statecraft, according to Machiavelli, the history of Mexico would have been different. His very virtues, so multiple, so apparent, so confounding even, meant her ruin and his own, and that incompetent, short, squarish hand of his, so freely used in gesture, was the predestined instrument of catastrophe. . . .

My last sight of Mr. de la Barra that day of Madero's inauguration was as he stood on the rear platform of the special train that took him in the afternoon to Vera Cruz, whence he was to embark for France.

The crowd and disorder at the station was even greater than that around the Chamber of Deputies in the morning, and it was with difficulty that the official world got through the waiting thousands. Mounted police had been at last called out; even they had trouble in keeping a space free for the passage

of the motors and carriages. The ex-President, with his usual punctuality, was the first to arrive, accompanied by his wife and children. The Corps Diplomatique, already there, proceeded to make their adieux to Madame de la Barra in her flower-filled compartment. She was smiling, and doubtless very happy to be safely descended with her husband and children from those dangerous heights whereon is placed the Mexican presidential chair.

Then a long, very long wait occurred, which I spent sitting on a pile of boards in company with the German Minister, who was very pessimistic as to the eventual outcome of "so much legality" in Mexico. "You will intervene in the end," he said. The French secretary, M. de Vaux, was more optimistic, and what he was fond of calling "la démocratie intégrale" was indeed in apotheosis. He was even unmoved by jokes concerning the famous unopened sacks of votes we had seen at the Chamber of Deputies that morning, in the Protocol office,—corded, sealed, bearing naïvely the evidences of their origin, "Colegio Electoral de Torreon," "de Guadalajara," "de Chihuahua," etc., whose numbers were to forever remain a secret. He did allow, with an unavoidable smile, that it would have been wiser to remove the bales, or at least their tickets, from the cold foreign eye.

"Blood and Sand" had played a not unimportant electoral rôle in various localities, large votes having been cast for favorite bull-fighters.

The confusion, even on the safe side of the picket, continued and the screams of the wife of the Spanish Minister, separated from her daughter in the momentum of the "démocratie intégrale," made a little

change in the monotony of the long wait. The Japanese Chargé, always active and practical, found and restored them to each other's arms.

Madero, though naturally courteous, did not possess the crowning "politesse des rois" and was generally late everywhere. At length, however, the familiar swelling, mob-like cry arose, faint then almost deafening, and we knew that the "Redeemer" was approaching. He appeared on the platform, still smiling that probably uninterrupted smile of the morning, bowing right and left, and an expression, rather touching, of happiness and satisfaction distinguished his whole being. He was still on the dizzy heights of his wish and hope. I remember thinking suddenly of the old Provençal proverb: "God keep thee from the she-wolf and from thy heart's desire."

He was accompanied by his wife, two red spots of excitement on her usually sallow cheeks, her eyes very bright, and by General Pascual Orozco, the "military genius" present at all determining moments of Mexican history, true god of her machine.[1] Even Madero, frankly and sincerely anti-militarist, could not exorcise his presence at that moment of complete "legality." Doubtless, too, he preserved some secret sympathy for his comrade, still in the pleasantly irresponsible position of "revolutionario." No one was going to ask Orozco to divide up the land, or harry him about the budget.

Concerning the military genius, a more inevitable and essential figure in Mexico than a President, and

[1] The private secretary of the unalphabet bandit recently come to power is also another inevitable figure of any Mexican drama, but of him another time.

whose species will persist through revolutionary eons, becoming extinct only when, as an organism, it finds no food for its being, I would like to quote Francisco Bulnes, who knows his Mexico as he does his doubtless empty pockets. Nearly four years ago he predicted that Obregón, Carranza's "military genius," would one day be President.

The following bird's-eye view of the history of military geniuses in Mexico will be enlightening to those few who desire to be enlightened as to Mexican political arcana:

"General Guadalupe Victoria, the hero of the war of Independence, associated with General Santa Ana, revolted against the Emperor Iturbide and won the supreme power by means of a military coup. Another Independence hero, General Vicente Guerrero, carried his revolt against President Victoria to a successful termination. General Anastasio Bustamente in turn ousted General Guerrero from the presidential chair by force. General Santa Ana, the next military genius, by means of a military coup overthrew President Bustamente in 1832 and again in 1841. Santa Ana's great friend, General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga, in his capacity of military genius, betrayed him by means of a military coup and General Gabriel Valencia retaliated by overturning Paredes y Arrillaga to reinstate Santa Ana, who returned from exile to reassume the power by virtue of the Guadalajara coup executed in his favor. General Ignacio Comonfort, the military genius of the Plan de Ayutla, was loyal to President Juan Alvarez, but General Manuel Doblado, Comonfort's associate, initiated the revolt of San Luis Potosí, and President

Alvarez prudently withdrew to his estates in the south. General Felix Zuluaga, intimate friend of Comonfort, betrayed him through the Tacubaya coup, and General Miguel Miramon, a brilliant military genius, turned against Zuluaga, and overthrew him. If the French had not appeared in 1862, General Gonsalez Ortega would have carried out a revolt against President Benito Juarez. General Porfirio Diaz, the military genius of 1869, launched his Plan de la Noria and would have unquestionably overthrown Juarez had the latter not been called to his final accounting on July 18, 1872. As the military genius of the day, General Porfirio Diaz was able to carry out his coup against President Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada and by this means ultimately became President in 1876. General Bernardo Reyes, converted into the military genius of the day, prepared to revolt against General Diaz, but his courage failed him at the critical moment and he fled, leaving the apostle, Francisco I. Madero, heir to a carefully prepared revolution. Pascual Orozco's flaming sword, or, to be more exact, his flaming rifle, won the victory for Madero, thereby earning him the title of military genius and the subsequent obligation of revolting against Madero. The 'Apostle' was saved by Huerta's sword, and his victories over Orozco proclaimed him the military genius of the day. Huerta following historic precedent, betrayed Madero and permitted the latter's Reyista or Felicista enemies to put him to death. The military genius, Villa, betrayed Carranza, and in the natural order of things Obregon will be obliged to betray his chief."

This, too, has fulfilled itself, and the Mexican ship

of state is putting out on one of its periodic voyages into the political Mare Ignotum, in which, alas, more reefs than Happy Isles are found.

Pascual Orozco, standing, November 6, 1911, on that rear platform in the fast-falling tropical night, was a lineal descendant, unbroken, perfect as to type, of every military genius since the early days of Mexican Independence. Huerta, when his turn came, took up the succession without a differing feature except the essential one of the interference of the United States in Mexican politics, which has occasioned one of the cruelest and longest fratricidal wars of history.

How often Huerta was to say to the American Chargé:

"I did to Madero only what he wanted me to do to Diaz. How is my act worse than his?" . . .

The attention of that great crowd at the station focussed itself finally on the rear-platform of the special train, where, enfolded in the transient and beautiful tropical half-light, stood in high and complete relief, President Madero, on his right ex-President de la Barra, on his left Orozco, the "military genius." Mr. de la Barra, international, suave, smiling, immaculately dressed, showing no evidence of the difficulties of his months of office, was entirely the diplomat departing on a foreign mission, in the enjoyment of a "belle gare." Orozco, in uniform, towered head and shoulders above his two companions. About him was the usual quiet assurance of all successful Mexican revolutionists. He was of the northern ranchero type, prominent nose, high cheek-

bones, and a dark mustache covered a cruel, determined mouth. An American who knew Orozco well described him to me as "a tall, raw-boned man, ignorant and dreamy, but really beloved by the Mexican people of the Northern States." This divergence of opinion shows how difficult is the analysis of any Mexican situation.

Between these two men stood the President of a few hours. His broad, speculative forehead showed very white, and his eyes and beard quite black as the light began to fade. The movements of his head had grown automatic; he had been bowing uninterruptedly since he left his house in the early morning. His smiles was irremovable. He was, with General Orozco, to accompany the ex-President to the next station, Villa de Guadalupe. Several times he raised his arms and attempted to speak a few words, but nothing could be heard for the loud "vivas" of the crowd, sounding from fences and trees and cars on the sidings. I was suddenly overcome with sadness, as in the pale blue night that had fallen the train bearing "el Presidente Blanco" moved slowly out of the station to those hoarse, continued plaudits, leaving the Indian world to darkness and Madero.

PART THREE: FRANCISCO I. MADERO

SAN PEDRO, COAHUILA: OCTOBER 4, 1873 — MEXICO CITY: FEBRUARY 22, 1913

"One man with a dream at pleasure
Shall go forth and conquer a crown."

PART THREE: FRANCISCO I. MADERO

"One man with a dream at pleasure
Shall go forth and conquer a crown."

CHAPTER XIII

Mexico, 1911, in the Process of Redemption. The Entry of the "Messiah" into the Mexican Jerusalem—His First Appearance on the International Stage at a Dinner at the German Legation —The Generation According to the Flesh of the Twentieth Century "Redeemer of Mexico."

Few men are great of themselves alone, mostly they are reckoned so because their qualities have combined successfully with events. Fewer still owe all their greatness to events. Such an exception was Madero.

When I first set foot on Mexican soil, May 5, 1911, it was electrically charged, there was a tingling, a buzzing in the air, something unexplained yet terribly potential seemed at work. All eyes were turned to the "Magnetic North," where a small-statured man of unpicturesque and thrifty antecedents, with bulging forehead, flattened nose, black beard, sallow skin, and burning eyes, was combining in his single undersized person the triple rôle of prophet, Messiah and apostle. Even these rôles did not overtax his powers. Unlike the prophets foretelling the destruction of the Temple, he cried that he had found a quarry from whose shining stones new temples, automatically,

without any sweat of the brow, were to be raised. Unlike the Messiah he did not profess that there must always be humble and great. Unlike the apostles he promised riches in this world to each and every one. It was all more than life-size.

This contagion of fancy spread swiftly, overpoweringly, not confining itself to Mexicans alone. Even the proverbial, cold-eyed foreign investor, who ought, according to the laws of contagion, to have been immune, was seized with it, its first symptoms being a sort of political myopia. From the visible Mexican world, which, like all things human, was composed of both good and ill, was to arise a state composed of good alone. It was all anti-historic, anti-philosophic, against experience, against good sense, against public and private interest, and yet it prevailed. No one looked towards the Maderista glare without being blinded. . . .

Wandering about Vera Cruz in that thick, soft night, scented by unknown flowers, shot by reflections of dim, half-hidden lights, cut here and there by unfamiliar silhouettes who were talking in voluble and strange accents, I had a consciousness of being indeed in a foreign land. To it all was added the thrill of the magnetic potentialities of a nation about to be regenerated; and though the regeneration as far as we newcomers were concerned was manifested by tales of dynamited bridges, cut water-mains, broken telegraph lines, and sudden changes of property unrecorded before the law, it did not dispel the illusion. The Mexican individually and nationally is able to put something mysterious into his most ordinary and indifferent acts, and at this moment

commonplace and stupid destruction was aureoled in redemption. I even thought of the majestic pronouncement that our own state "was conceived in wars, born in battle and sustained in blood" and expectantly, in an imaginative and somewhat hypnotized state, I took as it were "woven paces" up the gorgeous, scented road, from Vera Cruz to Mexico City, where the gifts of Mother Earth, from orchid and coffee to pine and wheat, show themselves ranged as on shelves. At last I found myself enveloped in that glittering, thinly-spun air of the Plateau, magic, suggestive, beautiful.

And enchanted, I entered into that country of illusions where easily "one man, with a dream at pleasure, *could* go forth and conquer a crown."

The first things were disappearing without the last things having taken their place. But neither I nor any one knew it.

In defense or rather excuse of the Maderista movement, we must allow that Providence chooses strangely diverse instruments of salvation for nations. One can never know. France was saved at one time by a young virgin in glittering armor, on horseback, visibly inspired. Another time she was saved by a man of seventy-eight, wearing a gray business suit, gray suède gloves and a slouch hat, a heavy white mustache completely concealing his mouth, which harbors a sharp though golden tongue. And his eyes were extraordinary. . . .

Madero, at the age of thirty-three—the Christ age, as his disciples often pointed out—began his public life and teaching. He spent the first part of it a martyr in prison. Later he was a martyr out on

bail. His "Sucesión Presidencial" was his gospel according to himself. He saw the past, he saw the present; the future, with which he was, unfortunately for Mexico, exclusively concerned, was impenetrably veiled. He was accompanied in all his detentions and on all his journeys by a passionate and resolute consort, like himself small, ineffective in her person, probably of superior will, but not an instrument of destiny. She accompanied him as the "soldadera" accompanies her man in all Mexican campaigns. She was in this quite true to type.

A story which I have at first hand will illustrate something determined and slightly atavistic in her make-up. On being asked if she did not fear to travel in the out-of-the-way places to which her husband's destiny often led her, she pulled a very long and very thick hat-pin from her hat, saying quite simply: "This will suffice."

Of Madero's initial sincerity no one has ever raised a doubt. His honesty was apparent to every one who approached him; his lack of preparation for government was proven immediately he came to power.

He did not have the equanimity of soul necessary for statecraft, nor the energy for the quick decisions imperative for government in Latin-American countries or anywhere in fact. One day when talking with Mr. de la Barra of the difficulties of his ad-interim Presidency he said to me with a look of conviction:

"In my country it is essential that those in power be able to judge swiftly, preserving at the same time some measure of personal serenity."

Madero, on the contrary, was rash in all his prom-

ises, indiscreet in all he said, vacillating in all his acts and passionately unreflecting in all his judgments. On the face of it, had the nation been sane, it would have been known that he was not the man to govern Mexico.

The first time I saw him was on the afternoon of the 7th of June, 1911. In the early morning a tremendous earthquake had shaken Mexico City to its foundations. Many looked upon the heralding of the "Messiah" in this manner as a favoring sign from heaven,—others had doubts. Later, standing in the motor drawn up in front of our house in the Calle Humboldt, after hours of waiting, I caught a glimpse of a ghastly-pale, dark-bearded man in a carriage, bowing continuously to right and to left. His departure from his ancestral home in Parras was one of the most remarkable human experiences ever recorded. Personal ovations such as no Cæsar knew were proffered him. He could have walked over a corduroy road of the faithful from the Rio Grande to the Capital, had it been in the twentieth century note. Every town he entered was as a Jerusalem, and he entered it literally to the waving of palms and the shouting of Hosannas. The sick were brought in on the backs of their families from deep in the country—to be healed by a possible touch of his coat-tails, or a glance of his eye, or they were laid on pavements or roads over which he had passed. The entry into Mexico City was the least of it. He then, being human after all—was suffering from a sick headache brought on by excitement, and loss of voice brought on by promises of everything to every-

body. He went to the house of his parents in the Calle Liverpool and collapsed for twenty-four hours.

The next time I saw him was at our Fourth of July celebration in the very banal setting of the Tivoli Eliseo,—like any picknicking ground anywhere, brass bands, confetti, pink lemonade, besides other more exotic accessories. In corners were cock fights and games of chance. I was just leaving when I heard an approaching, swelling, mob-like cry. It was at last the apostle whom we had been expecting for two hours. The indistinct cries resolved themselves into shouts of "Viva Madero," "Viva el Inmaculado," "Viva el Incorruptible," "Viva el Redentor." I waited on the fringe of the crowd from whence I could see, standing by the table I had just quitted, the man who had but a moment before heard himself called "Redeemer." He almost immediately began to speak. His voice had a magnetic quality, the flow of words was smooth, uninterrupted, his gestures were rhythmic. I was still in a half dream at finding myself in that strange and gorgeous land, and I came away after awhile under the suggestive influences of that crowd and its master, whom I had at last seen at his work of hypnotizing Mexico. I vaguely felt that the hypnotic state was his normal condition; and certainly it was extraordinarily contagious. When I got home—I wondered, but not to any special end. I was in Mexico, in that country where the improbable is separated from the probable by a flimsier curtain than elsewhere, where atavistic qualities are always appearing and giving an unexpected turn to situations.

The next time I saw him was at the German

Legation, von Hintze being the first of the foreign ministers to give a dinner at which he and his wife were present.[1]

He was then at the height of his popularity, the ad interim Presidency of Mr. de la Barra relieving him from the necessity of fulfilling his promises. Later, every promise he had ever made came home to roost, the political chicken coop being full to bursting, and he proved to have a rapacious, relentless, impatient family of singularly large dimensions, some members of which were a good deal cleverer

[1] Diplomatic Days, page 74—— July 10th.

"Last night the German minister gave his first big dinner at which the Maderos making their début in official international life, were the 'clou' . . . I found the large room rather full, with a hitherto unsampled Mexican contingent. . . . Madero seen at close range, is small, dark, with nose somewhat flattened, expressive rather prominent eyes in shallow sockets, and forehead of the impractical shape. But all this commonplaceness is redeemed by expression playing like lightning over the shallow, featureless face and his pleasant, ready smile. He speaks French and some English, preferring the former, but lapses continually into Spanish, his volubility being too great to brook a foreign medium, and he uses many gestures. There was something about him of youth, of hopefulness and personal goodness, but I couldn't help wondering if he were going to begin the national feast by slicing up the family cake.

"Madame Madero might be a dark type of New England woman, with a hint of banked fires in her eyes. There is determination in the cut of her face, which is rather worn, with an expression of dignity. She, too, is small and thin and was dressed in an ordinary, high-necked black and white gown, a narrow 'pin stripe' with the most modest of gold broaches fastening the plain high collar.

"(Later she was to show a fondness for heavy velvets, dark brocades, thick laces and plumed hats, more fitting to something passionate and dominating in her temperament than to her small person). . . . Madero told N. at dinner that no revolution had ever been carried through so cheaply from the standpoint both of men and of money. . . . He seemed very militaristic, considering that he was come to bring peace, and somewhat suspicious of the United States. N. suggested his falling in with the views of the U. S., in the regulating of claims, and he said the following in French: 'You Americans always act on the presumption that we Mexicans are always in the wrong.' . . . This was in answer to N.'s remark: 'Now, Mr. Madero, you are going to be President and I know when your Government gets in you will clear up all matters pending between the two countries.'" . . .

than he—though they had not been singled out by destiny, except as accessories.

His father was a spare, straight-featured, chin-whiskered, dark man, with perhaps some Jewish blood,—who knows? But it was his grandfather, Evaristo Madero, a singularly competent man of affairs, who had laid the basis of the tribal fortunes in Monterrey. It is said that his death was caused by his dismay at finding himself the grandfather of a Messiah. Naturally constructive, acquisitive and prudent, he foresaw ruin and loss of all he had gathered together, though this was not to come about, as logic demanded, by a preliminary distribution of the immense Madero estates among the poor. When he died at Monterrey in the spring of 1911, aged eighty-two, he left to fourteen children, thirty-four grandchildren and fifty-six great-grandchildren, an honest name and a princely inheritance. Madero's father was also a skillful man of affairs, though less gifted. When I saw him, surprise at the stupendous turn in the fortunes of the clan had not disappeared. In his family he was an affectionate autocrat. His children, after the amiable Mexican custom, kissed his hand and called him "papacito" when greeting or taking leave of him.

He had a very Mexican way of looking about him, something strange and concealed lay in his glance, and what has been called "Mexican methods" were well known to him. He, too, was a careful, thrifty man; what he had he intended to keep. Whenever the land should be divided, he would see to it that his own remained intact. The blood of the landlord was in his veins and in the veins of his sons, and neither he

nor they ever made the slightest attempt to put into practice upon their huge estates the principles of the Maderista revolution. They continued, after the custom of their forefathers, to use the half-enslaved labor they controlled in the time-honored manner.

Madero's mother was a woman of more than usual energy, who must have been handsome in her youth, and her bearing showed a very natural pride in being the mother of a saviour, as well as of nine or ten other more or less glorified offspring. Such was the "stem of David," the generation, according to the flesh, of the twentieth-century "redeemer of Mexico," and the appearance of a Messiah in that family was completely unexpected.

There was a patriarchal effect about it all that was not, however, displeasing, the external picture one of dignified provincals not over-given to mirth. Indeed the only one of them who could really laugh was the unfortunate Gustavo, a born "profiteer," an architypal "rasta," with a light in his single eye, and few things human (of a sort) were foreign to him. He repeated to me, on one of the few occasions on which I saw him, his famous remark, that "of a family of clever men the only fool was President," which did honor to his perspicacity, if not to his taste. It has been said by many that Gustavo Madero was the evil genius of his brother, but Madero's evil genius was born from within and nourished by his own qualities, more inexorably, more sequentially than any that could have operated from without. He simply did not have the governmental virtues necessary to his position, though he was essentially honorable, and profoundly respectable in the narrowest sense of the

word. Gustavo was probably neither of these things, and he was very active.

Such figures appearing on the Latin-American political scene are visibly predestined to violent deaths. The hour alone is hid.

Gustavo Madero was completely cynical (all the wise were) about his brother's promises of free land, finding them also stupid and dangerous. He told me, with that same light very bright in his single eye, the pleasure-loving lips of his amiable mouth somewhat tightened, looking more "rasta" than usual in a brown suit and a red necktie and something flashy, I forget what it was, about his cuffs: "The people won't get the land, they never do anywhere. It's not only in Mexico as foreigners seem to believe. And as a cry for developing social unrest, it can't be beaten," he added, somewhat treacherously to the Maderista creed.

He was organizer of the celebrated "Porra," a sort of Mexican political "ring," but which has been less kindly described by one who was not in it, as "an association of demagogues enlisted for the purpose of terrorizing society and the enemies of the government, replacing the fear of bayonets by the terror of mobs."

The operations of this association necessitated the handling of a good deal of money in the big way of promoting business ventures, in the small way of paying the individual ruffians and incipient liberators composing the mobs that shouted about the streets, and there was a quantity of buttered parsnips for intimate friends. Gustavo was also quite active in recomposing political shapes and shades in the

Chamber, and he was periodically harried by opposing parties to give an account of the 700,000 pesos got by him from the Federal Treasury for certain expenses of the Revolution.

His clever and agreeable uncle, Ernesto Madero, who having real gifts was doubtless often anxious as to the final family destinies, at last presented a statement[1] showing that at least nearly one of the seventy-two millions that Don Porfirio left in the Treasury, even at that early date, found its way to the "step-sister Republic" to the north.

[1] Buying of arms, munitions and equipments in the U. S...$154,000.00
Honorariums of lawyers in New York, Washington, San Antonio and El Paso 53,000.00
Confidential agency in N. Y. City 6,000.00
Confidential agency in Washington 5,000.00
Confidential agency in San Antonio, Texas 18,000.00
Confidential agency in El Paso, Texas 15,000.00
Press campaign 12,000.00
Sending envoys, journeys and minor expenses 54,000.00

Total $319,000.00
(American dollars).

CHAPTER XIV

Madero Haranguing an Enchanted Mob—His Reliance on the World of Spirits—Novena at the Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe With Señora Madero—A Hint of Prætorian Guard—The Vice-President, José María Pino Suarez—The Always-Fatal Office.

The house in which the Madero family lived was on the corner of Calle Liverpool and Calle Berlin, entered by a small Bougainvillaea-covered veranda, with a narrow hall opening into a couple of large drawing-rooms, done up very uninterestingly,—not a book anywhere, and the bric-à-brac evidently there because one cannot have étagéres or center tables without them. In the furthest room was a grand piano, Angela, the youngest of the two sisters, having real musical gifts and a charming, naturally-placed voice.

From a window of this same house as I was passing by, one crystal-aired morning, in those days just preceding his inauguration, I saw Madero haranguing an enchanted mob of unshod but generously-hatted expectants. The scene was extraordinary. As he flung down promises in that flowing voice of his, they flung up "vivas," and one woman with a baby at her breast and several, not much older, at her ragged skirts, was crying herself hoarse with "esposo de Mexico," bridegroom of Mexico. The "esposo's" face wore a constant though mobile smile, his eyes were frequently turned upwards, his gestures were

continuous. The trees were brown with Indians, the streets crowded with others bearing banners stamped with his portrait in the hardest of colors, the inky black of the beard especially spotting the blue sky against which they floated, and there were lithographs of like manufacture nailed to sticks.

He presented a general whose name I could not catch, a rather flashy-looking man, stouter than Mexicans usually are (he may possibly have had an early chance at the flesh-pots), wearing a good deal of gold braid and a bandolier full of cartridges. Evidently nobody wanted to see the accessory instrument of regeneration, for the crowd ignored him and continued to shout "Viva Madero." There was all the joy of anticipation on both sides. Within two years, February, 1913, this being October of 1911, the house was burned and sacked by what the newspapers of the moment styled "la furia popular." On returning to Mexico City I was to find it a mass of charred walls, roofless, windowless, swallows flying in and out of it, and, looking at it, very natural thoughts concerning the inconstancy of popular favor awakened within me. Since then I have come to feel (and not without anguish have I sloughed off the more radical convictions of the former woman) that I would rather put my faith in princes than in crowds. There is something formless, elusive, irresponsible and completely destructive about the rabble that defies appeal. There is not even a throne-room to which they can ultimately be tracked and held responsible; you cannot assassinate them, and their judgments are always given in a blind rage of love or hate.

Madero's faith in his own predestination was bolstered up by what he believed to be manifestations of extreme partiality from the spirit world. Years before, as a very young man consulting the planchette with other young men, he had, on asking what profession he should adopt, received the answer that one day he would be President of Mexico. This I have heard confirmed by a member of his family—who found it extremely difficult to deal along the lines of fact and expediency with one who "in addition to being illumined was also predestined." It was in fact a combination impossible to handle.

My husband going once to see Madero at Chapultepec Castle on affairs, found him in bed, ill of a fever. On the little night-table by his side was a planchette of dark wood and many bits of crumpled paper were thrown about. The visit was pursuant to orders from the Ambassador to present a note concerning an urgent frontier matter. The sight of the planchette, though not pertinent to the frontier, was certainly confirmatory of his reliance on the other world, when conducting the affairs of this. As for Señora Madero, who was supposed to serve as her husband's medium and interpreter, I never myself saw her in this rôle, nor heard anything beyond vague, unconfirmed hints of it. I did accompany her on many occasions in the big Benz motor which was part of the presidential paraphernalia, to the Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe—and whatever the spirits to whom she may have lent herself for the conduct of State affairs, she was certainly capable of rapt and ardent supplications to the one Great Spirit. Her passionate solicitude for her husband knew no

bounds, and she was doubtless ready to invoke any aid. Her small, thin figure with its head bowed before the silver altar of the Virgin of Guadalupe in the dim Basilica, in and out of which countless Indians were coming and going, I shall not forget. It is difficult to understand these apparent contradictions. Probably like all playing with great chances she was superstitious and propitiatory. The Madero family in their various ramifications were quite frankly Catholic.

It was at the time of this novena to the Virgin of Guadalupe (March, 1912) that Orozco announced that he would shortly be in Mexico City and would hang Madero to the largest tree in the Plaza Mayor.

Orozco, seeing where promises had led Madero, did not concern himself to make any, but he treated his prisoners so well that they could be counted on to promptly swell the ranks of his followers. He had quite a season at Chihuahua that winter of 1912, when balls were organized in his honor and he danced with the first and fairest in the town, always dominating physically with his great height and broad shoulders any gathering he attended. There were also rumors of Mr. de la Barra's imminent return from Europe. In view of the fact that things had gone steadily from bad to worse, many had begun to sigh for the sincerity, good sense and tact of which "el Presidente Blanco" had given proof.

Madero was always hungry for visible signs of popularity. Unfortunately he went to the extent of mistaking them for signs of national prosperity. His constant smile and his simple and natural manners, so expressive of his innate honesty, were among his

best governmental assets. But he did not know how to punish, neither was he quick to reward. Successful statesmen do both. He was completely, fatally amateurish, and what was needed was technical governmental skill. He had a natural antipathy to militarism in any form, but in the end he was obliged to have recourse to the army to sustain himself. The touching confidence in his people that marked the early days of his incumbency, when unattended he went about his presidential duties, was gradually invaded by a hint of Prætorian Guard. At the time of the revolt of Felix Diaz in Vera Cruz, October, 1912, he must have known what everybody else knew, that the Federal Government was sustained by force of arms rather than by the virtues of its President.

His natural habitat was the clouds, which, when they parted, showed only a few dazzling peaks. The eternal rocks of Mexican political personalism was what he was dashing against, and he had not the slightest instinct as to the whereabouts of the harbor entrance, nor could he use the compass. Unfortunately, instead of some private bark, it was the Ship of State that he was steering.

He was, however, in a prophetic yet obscure way to utter a then unheeded truth, but which in the years since has been testified to in blood and hunger and disease by the peoples of the earth: "The first requisite for a country's prosperity is peace, not liberty." It was in October of 1912, not quite a year after his inauguration, on which auspicious date Liberty had been the magic word, the "open sesame" to the Elysian Fields through which the whole Mexi-

can nation was to pass, that he publicly proclaimed this. He added further, in advocacy of a bill for compulsory military service, "It would seem, if we judge by the past history of Mexico, that it is more difficult to preserve peace when liberty exists than when it does not."

A word concerning the Vice-President, José Maria Pino Suarez, who was to share a few of Madero's honors and all of his misfortunes. He was a tall, slim, good-figured man, dark-haired and mustached, with regular features and sore eyes. He was reckoned of about average intelligence, making a not too showy lining for the Presidential cloak, which Madero was rarely tempted to flap back just to show what it looked like inside. His political gestures seem to have been of the imitative order, and he spent much time with Gustavo. He was, too, after his way, a dreamer of dreams, and had produced several volumes of unimportant poetry.

The only resemblance between the office of Vice-President in Mexico and in the United States is the name. One is as the violet mostly born to blush unseen and unsung. The other, in the arena of Mexican politics, resembles those unexploded bombs picked up for souvenirs on European battlefields. They always go off.

Of Pino Suarez' wife I only vaguely remember an amiable smile, a stoutish silhouette, and some anxiety as a hostess, though this was perhaps only as regards foreign ladies. Her tea-table I well remember, of gilt and marble, under the strong light of a central chandelier of pressed brass. It was laden with an unusual number of painted and beribboned boxes of

bonbons, and there were magenta bows on rather stiff bouquets of loud-colored flowers. She was surrounded by relatives—madre, comadre, madre-política, hermanas, tias and primas. She had, too, many children. In the hallway was a large baby carriage, the kind for twins, or children whose ages vary by but ten months, as often happens in Mexico. They all inhabitated a big and draughty house in the Paseo de la Reforma, furnished throughout in the style of many "Louis" run together. "Epoca de un Luis, pero cual yo no sé."

When this rather colorless person, José Maria Pino Suarez, according to the strange and arbitrary values Fate places on the actors in any State tragedy, became Madero's running mate, he became also one of the elements of his final political unpopularity. At the moment of the elections the streets resounded to cries of "Pino—no—no—no," in cadenced but displeased accents. He had been an obscure editor of an unimportant Yucatan newspaper, and it proved entirely superfluous for Madero to have gone so far to get him. However, insignificant as his rôle was in life, from all time Fate had destined him to be the companion of Madero's last hour, and to lie with him in death. There is little else to be said of José Maria Pino Suarez except, "peace to his soul." He has but gone where all must go.

CHAPTER XV

Madero Dwelling on the Heights—The Terrace of Chapultepec—The Pyramid of the Sun at San Juan Teotihuacan—My Farewell to President Madero.

I have gone into detail concerning Madero's antecedents and character reacting to environment, because without some knowledge of them Mexico's situation to-day is not diagnosable. The actual events of his incumbency, lasting not quite sixteen months and found in any chronological table of the period, are less enlightening. The weakness of the instrument which finally destroyed so strong a thing as the Diaz Government reveals the presence of some essential dissolvent in the nation. The elimination of this very active element, for permanent racial and climatic reasons, will probably never be entirely accomplished, and in any theories (or facts) concerning government in Mexico must always be taken into account.

Madero came and went a sort of Mexican Pied Piper. The nation abandoned every usual occupation, every visible responsibility, every normal activity to follow him, and it was to the abyss. To the very edge of it he preserved his own illusions. His great card was "legality"; it must always win. As the French Minister said, he was "more convinced of his rights than Louis XVI, more persuaded of his legitimacy than Louis XVIII." He played this card till no one knew if it were an ace or a two-spot.

I nearly always saw him on some height, generally on the terrace of the Castle of Chapultepec. The hill of Chapultepec, crowned by the castle, is a small, strangely isolated eminence, so situated that east, west, north or south the iridescent rim of the incomparable valley of Mexico is everywhere visible against a dazzling sky. The valley is so enchanting, so bewitching in the shifting beauty of its light, that as one looks upon it the struggles of the dark and passionate race whose heritage it is can scarcely be taken into account.

Madero, living on those heights, was suspended bodily, as well as spiritually, above the realization of human needs and human means to their alleviation. The vague desires in his breast for general peace and individual happiness for Mexicans seemed already realized as he looked on that encantatory prospect, which was his on awakening, his at night, and completely exorcised realities.

Once I stood with him on the top of the Pyramid of the Sun at San Juan Teotihuacan, where his geographical and atmospheric environment also corresponded perfectly and fatally to his psychology. This was on the 28th of February, 1912. Within the year almost to a day, he was sleeping in the French cemetery of Mexico City.

The solitary eminence on which we stood put everything in a mirage-like, deluding perspective, and we were enfolded in a dazzling ambiance. Formerly on the apex of the pyramid there had been a splendid temple containing a gigantic statue of the Sun, made of a single block of porphyry, ornamented with a heavy breast-plate of gold. There now was Madero,

for a short time, at least a half-god viewing from the great height the kingdom given into his keeping.

His expression was soft and speculative as he gazed about him. He seemed strangely removed from the difficulties of his situation, lifted above them as he was above the shining plain; but in the city, glittering in the distance, intrigues and dissolving forces of all kinds were at work against him. The far and splendid hills towards which he was one day to try to flee, were colored in cobalt and verde antique. It was the world of fancy, not of fact.

With beauty so supreme and so misleading forever throwing its veil over the dark shape of events, how shall Mexican situations present their true forms? And must natural beauty and political disaster forever go hand in hand in a land where Nature is more powerful than man?

Madero would pace the terrace of Chapultepec, his unacquisitive hands behind him, his eyes vague as they rested on the crystalline rose and blue of the valley and hills, his smile gentle as he thought his kindly thoughts. He used to wear a brown suit, with a peacock-blue hand-worked vest, that summer of 1912, and he was doubtless still quite happy, living within the world of his own benignant desires, confident in his "luck."

The last time I ever saw him or his wife[1] was on that terrace.

On October 5th of 1912, a few days before our first

[1] From a letter from Madame Lefaivre, wife of the French Minister to Mexico, picturing another scene:

"April 21, 1916.

"Yesterday I called on Madame Madero. I was told that she lived completely isolated, abandoned by her friends and treated with com-

departure from Mexico, I drove up the winding way in the white morning, flowers were shining softly along the embankments, the trees were feathery, unsubstantial, birds were singing. It might have been the road to Paradise instead of to the abode of care. I found the President standing at the glass doors, before the grand stairway, about to get into his motor to go to the Palace for a cabinet meeting. The Vera Cruz revolt of Feliz Diaz was then brewing, and was declared but a few days later. He looked years older than when I saw him at the German Legation. Lines were about his eyes, he seemed slightly puzzled, but the morning clouds of the dazzling day still enfolded him, and that implacable progression of Mexican events was doubtless still as shadowy as the half remembered figures of the dream of a night.

After making my adieux to him I was shown out on the Pompeian Court, where Madame Madero awaited me, worn too, but still determined. . . . About us were the perfumes of the rare and lovely

plete indifference by the Carrancistas, who however continue to call themselves the 'avengers of the great apostle.'

"She received me very coldly and stiffly, though with dignity. I was somewhat surprised, but thought it was doubtless the proper attitude of the wife of a martyr according to Mexican ceremonial. At last, however, I understood her, when with vibrating voice and raised hand, she cried out to me that the European war was the punishment of God on the peoples who had recognized the traitor Huerta. Probably she held me personally responsible for France! She is greatly to be pitied. She adored the unfortunate madman and now she finds herself alone, abandoned, in her little widow's weeds, she who once, garbed in spangled dresses, shared his triumphs in the castle of Maximilian. She raved for quite a while, complaining in loud tones of the United States, and above all of the American Ambassador. She added, 'Christ found one traitor among his twelve friends; my husband found many.' She seems still to identify him with the Saviour. 'If he had remained in power the universal peace, preached by him would now reign upon earth.' I thought to myself how he had brought about a fratricidal war instead, but it was not the moment to mention it."

shrubs of the patio, the splash of the fountain, the singing of birds, the lustrous hills, the shining volcanoes; a crystal air enfolded us, closer than human touch, but from beneath, from the restless city something disturbing arose, prophetic of the shifting will of the Mexican people.

I never saw either of them again.

CHAPTER XVI

Madero on His White Horse Rides to His Doom—Huerta Takes the Leading Rôle in the Mexican Drama—The Fatal Night of the 22nd of February—The Closing of the Madero Act.

Madero was to believe in what his followers called his "luck," in what he himself thought his divine mission, to the end. He had a brief, transcendent prestige in the Republic at a moment when he seemed to personify all national aspirations. Later there grouped themselves about him men whose passions, ambitions and appetites his high office enabled him unconsciously to gratify, while "the people" had less than before. He seemed to have, as it were, two souls, which were unknown to each other and in no way dependent on each other, but in the void between them Mexico was lost.

It was further borne out by Madero how little practical use there is in a man's good intentions, the only tangible but insufficient merit being the ardor that prompts them. Be this as it may, a nation of 15,000,000 beings became the subjective feature of one man's soul, and not a single fact of national existence had place in it.

The attacks of the Press,[1] magnified and popular-

[1] A detailed drawing of "The Last Supper," showing Madero in the place of Christ, Gustavo as Judas, and eleven other members of the Madero family seated about the table, was typical of many offensive and demolishing cartoons. After their appearance the much-vaunted "Liberty of the Press" disappeared.

ized the ridiculous aspects of his person and his environment, which lent themselves easily to caricature; the inconsistence of his "politique" with the principles he had so loudly enunciated; his complete failure to develop his administrative program equally loudly proclaimed and his unexampled lack of tact in his official and social relations partly explain his ruin. He was, too, a "pathological case," and would have presented in the curious duality of his being, together with his insensibility to facts, a wide opportunity for experiment.

What was, inexorably, to happen to him in the end can be illustrated by two or three tragic and shifting pictures.

On February 9, 1913, without any suitable solicitude for his situation as President, without any prudence concerning his person, he rode on his white horse at the head of a few hundred men, mostly only mounted police and Chapultepec cadets, down the Paseo, through the Avenida San Francisco to the National Palace. The city was then in full revolution. When he passed through the Plaza Mayor, he found it encumbered with hundreds of dead and dying. That same day Huerta was made military commander of the city. The first act of the Decena Tragica had been played.

On Saturday the 15th of February a secret session of the Senate was held, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Don Pedro Lascurain presiding. The Mexican situation was noisy by reason of the bombardment of the city, delicate by reason of the fact that telegrams had been received from Washington revealing the decision of the American Government to send

warships, carrying land-forces, into Mexican waters. For three days the Senators endeavored to procure an audience with Madero, but without success. They had in their pockets the following resolutions:

First: That the President of the Republic be advised, in view of the supreme necessity of saving the National sovereignty and restoring peace, to tender his resignation.

Second: That the Vice-President do the same.

Third: That a commission be appointed to inform President Madero and Vice-President Pino Suarez of the decisions the Senate had arrived at.

The Secretary for Foreign Affairs suggested that all the Senators then present betake themselves to the National Palace, to appraise the President and the Vice-President of their decisions. This was unanimously approved, and the twenty-five Senators, accompanied by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, went immediately to the Palace, where they cooled their honorable heels for nearly an hour. They were then admitted into one of the ante-rooms of the President's office, when after another wait, they were finally informed by Señor Ernesto Madero that the President, only twenty minutes before, had left the Palace, accompanied by General García Pena, to visit the military positions of the Government; all this to the lively sounds of the bombardment of the town by the troops of General Felix Diaz entrenched in the Citadel, and the Government forces scattered throughout the city. They besought Don Ernesto to tell the President of their decisions and to beg him to render this last supreme service to the country, saying that his resignation at that moment could

but redound to his own glory as well as to his country's good. They even pointed out that it would entitle him to the gratitude of posterity, which last notoriously causes few thrills in the human breast, and is but slightly determinative of action. Their more potent and final plea was fear of complications with the United States if peace were not immediately restored; without it, national independence would be jeopardized. This they considered a danger which should influence all personal considerations, and urged that the most legitimate rights be surrendered for the greater safety of the country.

The Honorable Ernesto Madero flanked by the Honorable Manuel Bonilla, Minister of Public Works, and the Honorable Jaime Gurza, Secretary of Communications, having no authority, and probably no desire, to accede to their demands, the Senators and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs finally took their leave.

On Tuesday the 18th, the Senators were still hot on the trail of resignation, or as one of their writers more elegantly puts it, "they did not relinquish their patriotic purpose." They were finally, early on the morning of this day, received by President Madero who was, by that time, under no illusions as to what they wanted. But his reiterated answer to their demands was that he represented "legality," and strangely enough the "Apostle," the "Bridegroom of Mexico," ended by saying that he "would rather be the ruler of a people of corpses, of a nation in ruins, than resign."

The twenty-five withdrew from the interview convinced that there was nothing to be done,—in that

way. They proceeded to the Military Commander—Huerta. It is recorded that he showed no visible eagerness, though he did not "thrice refuse a kingly crown." It was told him, and I have no doubt but the words were pleasant in his ears, that the alternative before him was fidelity to Madero, or fidelity to the interests of the country.

It is recorded that he said very little, and sat very still. He let them, moreover, get as far as the door where it is also recorded that he stopped them saying: "I, too, gentlemen, am greatly exercised over conditions prevailing in the country and in Mexico City. I cannot strike the blow that you suggest, but I could refuse to recognize President Madero, if directed to do so by the legislative and judicial bodies. Confer with the men invested with these powers, and if the two bodies agree, I will consider the advisability of telling President Madero that he must at once resign."

Upon this the Senators withdrew, leaving Huerta in a state better imagined than described. The apples of the Hesperides,—power, fame, activity, authority, consideration, gleaming in their golden beauty were within his reach, the things all men desire, save the sage—and even he cannot deny their value.

The Senators returned shortly, accompanied by an eager majority of the Justices of the Supreme Court. All were worn out by the bombardment of the city, the national infelicities, and the evident incompetence of the chief executive. Huerta thereupon "conferred" with his officers. Two of them did not agree, —General Felipe Angeles and General José Delgado. These he then quite simply excluded from the con-

ference, and later still more simply put under arrest.

But he had what he needed for his new-born purpose—the sanction of the legislative bodies. . . .

Later on this same morning of the 18th of February, as Madero was seated with various members of his cabinet in the Sala de Consejos de Ministros, an ornate room hung with yellow brocade, its ceiling embossed with the Imperial fleur de lys,[1] Lieutenant-Colonel Riveroll appeared before him, and pursuant to orders, asked him on behalf of the Senate and the Army for his immediate resignation. Madero listened to Colonel Riveroll in perfect calm, but as he finished drew his revolver and fired at him. He fell dead. Major Izquierdo, who was waiting at the door, rushed in, and was also shot dead by one of Madero's aides, Captain Garmendía. The President, who was a man of physical courage, then without hesitation presented himself at the main entrance of the Palace. When he saw the armed force standing there he cried, "Here, Señores, is the President of the Republic." There was silence. General Blanquet [2] in an elegant

[1] This room had further magnificent hangings of green broadcloth, held by massive gold cords, and a thick carpet with corner designs, representing the national arms. In the center was a splendid table, surrounded by chairs, that of the President bearing a golden eagle. On the table, besides the leather portfolio in front of each chair, was a great silver inkstand, once the possession of Maximilian, from which the imperial crests had been erased to be replaced by the letters P. N. (Palacio Nacional). Two fine French clocks, once also his property, ticked out this other historic hour.

[2] General Aureliano Blanquet was held in good repute by every chief he served. Diaz found him loyal and competent. Huerta, not over-trustful of men, had full confidence in him. He was of handsome and rather noble presence, in spite of his mixture of blood,—some said he was a Zambo (a mixture of Negro and Indian), others that he was of the usual Mestizo blend. He was contained of speech, with a kind mouth and something brilliant in straight-looking eyes. Legend places him as a young boy among the firing squad at Querétaro, that fatal 19th of June, 1867, when under a sky of faultless beauty, Maximilian, Miramon and Mejía stood against the

black uniform, with much gold braiding that set off his handsome face and dignity of mien, revolver in hand, in front of his battalion, went towards him and having ordered that no shot be fired, took him prisoner with his ministers. They were all incarcerated in the Palace.

A foreigner of long Mexican expérience said that, when the great bells of the Cathedral rang out to announce the fall of Madero, the news was received with undisguised satisfaction by the inhabitants of the capital. It was at noon of February 18th that this took place. Accompanying the sounds of the bells were new cries of "Viva Huerta." That afternoon between five and six, against the richly-colored lining of that first darkness which follows the short crepuscular beauty of the Mexican plateau, Huerta and General Blanquet showed themselves on the balcony of the Palace.

adobe wall half way up the Cerro de las Campanas. I knew him only during the Huerta régime, and the last sight of him remains with me, standing in his general's uniform, his breast ablaze with decorations, in front of Huerta's house in the Calle Alfonzo Herrera. We had come out through the patio after the signing of the marriage contract of Huerta's son, Victor. The morning, diamond-dusted, indescribable in its shining beauty, was that of the 23rd of April, the day of the breaking off of relations between the United States and Mexico. Huerta, clad in the celebrated gray sweater and brown slouch hat, had given me his arm, General Blanquet had given his to the President's wife. Erect, immobile, his face ashine in the brilliant air, he held his hand at his cap as we drove off. In 1918 he started to organize a revolt against the Carranza régime, leaving Cuba in a small skiff with four or five followers. After landing on the beach between Vera Cruz and Tuxpam, and waiting for a few days for Feliz Diaz, who had promised to meet him there, Blanquet and his followers went toward the interior and met a small body of Felicistas. They were attacked by Carrancistas and most of them surrendered. Blanquet tried to escape, plunged into a barranca and met his death from the fall. Carranza ordered his fine old head to be exposed on a pike in Vera Cruz, where it remained till nature had obliterated both its form and likeness.

Huerta, "the military genius," come into his inevitable own, cried to them:

"Mexicans, brothers, there will be no more fighting. Peace is here."

Deafening shouts of "Viva Huerta," and "Viva Mexico," followed this pronouncement.

As these two men stood on the balcony, ex-President Madero and ex-Vice-President Pino Suarez were prisoners in some sparsely furnished rooms, slightly above the level of the palace courtyard, before which constantly changing guards had been placed. And their days were numbered.

Huerta had in the meantime sent out the following manifesto:

"To the Mexican People:

"In view of the difficult circumstances under which the nation, and within the last days the Capital of the Republic have labored, in view of what I may call the state of anarchy due to the incapable government of Señor Madero, I hereby assume the executive power. Until the Chambers can meet and debate upon the present situation, I shall hold Francisco I. Madero and the members of his cabinet, to the end that this point being settled, and every effort being made to unite all minds in this historical moment, we may all work together to reëstablish peace, which for our nation is a matter of life and death.

"Issued in the Executive Palace, February 18, 1913.

"The General Military Commander in charge of the Executive Power:

"V. HUERTA."

He also arranged his status with the foreign missions by sending the following announcement to

the American Ambassador, in his capacity of dean of the diplomatic corps:

"To His Excellency the American Ambassador,
Present:

"The President and Vice-President of the Republic are now in my power at the National Palace as prisoners. I trust that your Excellency will interpret this act of mine as the patriotic manifestation of a man who has no other ambition than to serve his country. I beg your Excellency to accept this act as one which has no further object than to restore peace in the Republic, and to ensure the interests of its children and those of the foreigners who have brought us so many benefits. I offer your Excellency my greetings and with the greatest respect I beg you to bring the contents of this note to the attention of His Excellency President Taft. I also beg you to convey this information to the various diplomatic Missions in this city.

"If your Excellency would honor me by sending this information to the Rebels at the Ciudadela, I would see in this action a further motive of gratitude from the people of this Republic and myself towards you and the always glorious people of the United States.

"With all respect, I am,

"Your Excellency's obedient servant,

"V. HUERTA.

"General in Chief of the Operating Army, and Military Commander of the City of Mexico.
"Mexico, February 18, 1913."

One can feel in these words the conciliatory, cautious procedure of Huerta, at the same time his definite settling down into the creaking Presidential chair.

The American Embassy naturally, automatically,

was the center of activity. The Ambassador had been tireless in his efforts to protect life and preserve what order was possible, the other plenipotentiaries seconding him in every way. The Cuban Minister had the cruiser, *Cuba,* in Vera Cruz harbor in readiness to take away the Ex-President, the Ex-Vice-President and their families.

It was arranged that at ten o'clock on the night of the 19th they should leave for Vera Cruz, accompanied by the Cuban Minister and an official of the Japanese Legation, where the parents of Madero had taken refuge. The arrangement was communicated to General Blanquet, who approved it. It was impossible to see Huerta, who was asleep and had given orders not to be disturbed. When finally informed of the arrangement he appeared over-prudent, even nervous as to the safety of Madero, which he was astute enough to know would involve his own. He was not yet, he said, in a position to guarantee sufficient protection for the trip, nor to be responsible for the temper of the population of Vera Cruz. What he doubtless really feared was that Madero, on his arrival there, would raise a counter-revolution. He decided, fatally, to keep him, for a while at least, in Mexico City.

In the meantime the Ministers of Spain and Cuba obtained permission to see Madero. He greeted them gratefully, hopefully. The Cuban Minister subsequently passed the night with him, as Don Ernesto, his uncle, had said that if he could have the protection of the diplomatic corps for that night, the dead center of danger would be passed. At one o'clock in the morning, Madero, spent with the anxieties and

fatigues of his situation, desired to rest. He prepared, in the gloomy room, two beds made of chairs, one for himself and one for the Cuban Minister, Mr. Marquez Sterling, who recorded that after Madero lay down, he fell immediately into a quiet, child-like sleep. This was the night of the 18th to the 19th of February.

It had first been arranged, for reasons which I ignore, that his resignation should be given into the hands of the Chilian Minister. Subsequently it was put into those of Don Pedro Lascurain, whose appearance at this moment as god of the Mexican machine is disconcerting to reason. He was a man of the strictest probity, of great piety, of unsullied reputation, of calm judgment, of much discretion. Yet he was selected by Fate to carry the resignation of Madero and Pino Suarez in his honest and prudent pocket. Again the reasonabilities, the suitabilities were defied by the working of Mexican magic.

Shortly before noon on Friday the 21st, there was a Cabinet meeting in the Palace, lasting until two o'clock. The legal status of the prisoners, the ex-President and the ex-Vice-President, was very puzzling and unsatisfactory to the jailors as well as to those jailed. Mr. de la Barra on this occasion begged Don Rodolfo Reyes, in his capacity of Minister of Justice, to state on what technical grounds they were incarcerated. He answered that he had not the necessary papers, but considered it of vital importance that definite legal proofs of Madero's incompetency be forthcoming. Don Jorge Vera Estañol was of the same opinion, and Huerta was equally desirous to make the matter sure, at least enough so

to prevent the upsetting of the presidential chair. He said further on this occasion that he did not consider the Palace a safe place in which to keep Madero and Pino Suarez, and then making a gesture as if throwing something up in the air said that a paper had been discovered on Madero that could only have been thrown in at his window. This indication that he could be communicated with and perhaps eventually helped to escape, which was not in Huerta's plan, made him add that he thought it better that very same day to transfer the prisoners to the Penetenciaría.

Mr. de la Barra then asked Huerta:—

"Exactly what has he done?"

Huerta replied with a sweeping, long-armed gesture and an impatient and contemptuous glance:—"Everything. He has ruined the country. Any one of his deeds is sufficient to convict him."

"Yes, that may be, but definite charges must be lodged against him with the Minister of Justice."

The last words, the unanimous decision of all, were that, in the interests of the country, whatever was done must be done according to the strict letter of the law.

When, however, the fatal transfer of the prisoners was made, Huerta took no counsel of his ministers.

The next day, Saturday the twenty-second, the President with his cabinet assisted at the annual ceremony held at the statue of George Washington[1]

[1] This statue which I saw unveiled in the presence of President Madero, his cabinet and the diplomatic corps, in 1912, was to be dragged from its pedestal two years later and placed at the feet of the statue of Juarez, in the Avenue da Juarez, on the night of the 23rd of April, 1914, the date of the breaking off of diplomatic

in the Plaza de Dinamarca, Mr. de la Barra, Minister for Foreign Affairs, making a speech and Mr. Henry Lane Wilson, American Ambassador, responding.

In the afternoon was the reception at the Embassy. Huerta and the Ministers of his cabinet were present and all were very calm, especially Huerta, whose face was inscrutable. Mr. de la Barra on this occasion formally presented to the diplomatic corps the members of the new cabinet.

It was towards midnight of this same day that the murder of Madero and Pino Suarez took place, as they were being transferred from the Palace to the Penitentiaría. There is a man living, Colonel Cardenas, in charge of their escort, who knows how it came about, and he has never spoken. . . . The veil covering the disaster is still, after seven years, impenetrable and was woven as follows:

At eleven-thirty of that same evening, Mr. de la Barra was awakened by the ringing of the telephone. A person calling himself an aide-de-camp of President Huerta asked him to come immediately to the Palace, that a motor had been sent to fetch him.

Given the unquiet state of the town, his wife, hourly awaiting her deliverance, begged him not to go without some further guarantee. He therefore asked to speak with General Blanquet, who immediately came to the telephone. His voice was very agitated; he confirmed the words of the aide-de-camp, begging him to come without delay as the matters

relations. It is only fair to say that Huerta, polite even at that moment, had the statue removed as promptly as possible from this startling and unseemly position.

concerning which he wished to inform him were too grave to be communicated over the telephone.

At that moment Don Alberto García Granados, who lived near by, arrived at his house. He had hastily thrown on a suit over his night garments—his coat collar was turned up and his shoes were not laced. He too had been asked to come to the Palace without a moment's delay.

As they drove in through the great patio they noticed an unusual coming and going of officials at that late hour. They went upstairs by the elevator built in the south corner of the Palace giving on the Plaza de la Constitución.

As they got out they saw Huerta, who was evidently on the watch for them, coming towards them in a state of excitement that he was endeavoring to repress. He was in civilian clothes, and wore the old brown slouch hat of story, the brim well pulled down over his eyes, which were further concealed by his large spectacles. What could be seen of his face was deathly white.

"I have the gravest news to communicate to you," and as he spoke he drew them hastily through the large chamber where the cabinet meetings were held, into the small room known as the "Sala Particular del Presidente."

Once there, he closed the door quickly, saying with a very nervous gesture:—

"Madero and Pino Suarez have been killed."

There was dead silence which García Granados and de la Barra broke to say,

"How is that possible?" "How could it happen?"

"In a skirmish," Huerta answered, becoming more

and more agitated, "between the small armed force that was conducting them, and a group of persons who were endeavoring to liberate them."

"I thought you had transferred them safely last night, as was the intention," Mr. de la Barra cried in consternation.

Huerta made no answer but continued to pace the room, pushing his slouch hat somewhat back, revealing further his alarming pallor and the fixed look in his eyes. There was something in his glance that indicated that he had been drinking, though his step was even and there were no "copitas" in the room which showed, however, other signs of occupation.

General Mondragon, also present, then pointed out the possibly fatal consequences to the government, saying that it was imperative that he immediately produce the proofs, sure to be demanded, that things had taken place as he said.

"What proofs do you need?" Huerta asked, adding, "I will see that you get them."

Mr. de la Barra then told him that a person entirely outside of politics alone could be put in charge of the investigation, some one like Don José Vasquez Tagle, who was President of the Consejo Supremo de Justicia Militar. He was also the brother of the former minister of the Justice of Madero and the public would not consider him biassed in his decisions.

Huerta turning to General Mondragon said with an evident air of relief:

"That is an excellent idea. I beg you to act on Señor de la Barra's suggestion. See that Vasquez Tagle begins his investigation immediately."

Then he suddenly began to thump the table with

his fist, muttering indistinct words. He had kept, during the conversation, one of his favorite, small, black cigarettes in his hand, but would continually let it go out, relight it in a restless manner, or throw it away, and light another. His voice had its drum-like beat, though more muffled than usual; he continually squinted his eyes, with the misleading Sphinx-like look peculiar to him, accompanied by the familiar and frequent gesture of pressing his spectacles closer against his forehead. It was evident that he was highly stimulated in addition to his very natural nervous excitement, and that his Indian soul was the prey of alarm, vexation and perhaps foreboding. . . .

The event still wears the Iron Mask; in which it differs from that of the assassination of Carranza, which is as recognizable as the proverbial palm of one's hand. [1]

It was with the deepest misgivings that García

[1] I once asked Mr. de la Barra, as we sat in his library in Paris evoking these tragic events, long since past, but whose fatal consequences are even more evident now than then:

"What do you really know about it all? It is part of history now, your country's history and mine!"

He answered me slowly with an expression that forced conviction on me:

"I know no more than I have told you, no more than you of the circumstances of the assassinations. I have always been inclined to think it was some terrible mischance, and as disastrous to Huerta himself as to any one. From time to time things would come to my ears, but they were generally confirmatory of Huerta's story. After seven years nothing has ever come to me in concrete form to disprove it." He paused a moment. "I never liked Huerta, though I knew him to be strong and able in many ways."

I thought, as he spoke with an expression of distaste on his face, how very far removed his personality and Huerta's were—as apart as the poles, as heat and cold, height and depth, or other dissimilar things. I was even more understanding of them than they of each other, yet for a time they turned together, or tried to turn the spoked wheels of Mexican government upon whose revolving depended their own fate and the fate of their country.

Granados and de la Barra shortly took their departure, leaving Mondragon and Rodolfo Reyes with the President. On the way back, as they drove through the dark town, they discussed hastily the presenting of their resignations, but came to the conclusion that such an act would be, and very naturally, considered as definite proof of the participation by Huerta in the crime; that it would be impossible to do such an injustice to a man of whose guilt they had no proof, also that further and equally irreparable national catastrophes might follow such action. They separated at one-thirty. That morning, in the unquiet city, Mr. de la Barra's youngest son was born. . . .

The Cruiser, "Cuba," when it finally left Vera Cruz on the 25th of February, took with it the parents, widow, sisters and uncle of the "Redeemer." He himself slept in the Panteón Francés, while in the Spanish cemetery slept Pino Suarez, awaiting both, something kinder than the judgments of men.

The Madero episode was closed. Family and State were ruined.

The death of few public men is as significant to their country as their lives. If they have done well their good deeds remain; if they have done badly their death is a benefit; rarely does their going hence multiply either the good or the evil of their coming.

An honest man was gone, but the words of Porfirio Diaz to Madero on the occasion of their single meeting were written in flaming letters in the Mexican heavens:

"A man must be more than honest to govern Mexico."

PART FOUR: VICTORIANO HUERTA

COLOTLAN, STATE OF JALISCO: DECEMBER 23, 1854—
EL PASO: JANUARY 13, 1916

"Huerta must go"

His rise to power and his use of it, including his ambitions, his cruelties, his expedients to sustain his government in face of the President of the United States, his puerilities, and various other qualities and attributes that combined to make him "unspeakable" — Considerations on Spanish-American Politics—Huerta's relation to his environment—His ruin, involving that of Constitutional Government in Mexico—His seizure, imprisonment without trial, and death at El Paso.

PART FOUR: VICTORIANO HUERTA

"Huerta Must Go"

CHAPTER XVII

First Sight of Huerta—His Antecedents—Diaz Chooses Him to Escort Him on His Exit from Mexican History—The Manner of Huerta's Accession—The Curtain is Rung Up Disclosing the Stage Set for the Tragedy—The "Pale Scholar of the White House" the Hero; the Dark Indian the Villain—Appearance of the Blue-eyed Norseman.

Victoriano Huerta crosses the red background of Mexican history as a somber Indian Cæsar, come to power by the sword, sustained by the sword, succumbing finally to the personal enmity of a super-Cæsar, embarked on the first of his private wars.

Huerta has been rightly called a "unique zoölogical specimen"; as unique as the sea-serpent or the unicorn and, one might add, like the Minotaur he exacted much tribute, and like the Phœnix he often rose from his ashes. He was, in fact, not diagnosable, but I will attempt to describe him and his habits as one might any curiosity of nature, also the sociological conditions under which he was born, came to power and perished.

I first saw him in the chic French restaurant of Mexico City kept by a Gaul, Silvain, who had been a chef in the Czar's household. It was a bemirrored, plush-divaned, brass-chandeliered, not over-clean

establishment, with any number of what the Viennese call "charmants séparés."

I noticed a uniformed man sitting at a little table before one of the since world-advertised "copitas," not eating, with several other men of the same warlike, open-air aspect who were eating, as well as drinking. There was an unmistakably "redemptory" look about the group and I asked, "Who is the bronzed, flat-nosed General with the restless eyes and big glasses?"

It was Huerta at that moment, August, 1911, in Command of the Federal troops operating in Morelos against Zapata. He had waving, long-armed gestures, and broad shoulders, and when he stood he was unexpectedly short. There was a suggestion of "memento mori" in the rather death's head shape of his face, the skull formation in moments of excitement, as I afterwards came to see, being curiously apparent. That he had real military talents no one has ever denied, and doubtless any means were acceptable to his ends. In this he did not differ from more exalted generals of history.

It would appear that Huerta had acquitted himself competently (from the point of view of his superiors) of the various charges committed to him up to the time when he unfortunately became "unspeakable."

His star, seemingly, of no great magnitude, had suffered various eclipses before its full appearance in the Mexican heavens. At one time, when Diaz' army unluckily was on paper, rather than ready for the field, and the calls for gifted and unscrupulous warriors were few, he found himself overseer for building operations in the city of Mexico. It is said

that he got a good amount of work, in his own special way, out of his workmen. But that was not, of course, what he was born for, and was so purely accidental that it is scarcely worth mentioning. He had also been Inspector for the National Railways in another period of peace and was for years the head of the Geodetic Survey. This last necessitated some amount of book-learning and, in the making of his maps, a considerable acquaintance with the racial and physical composition of Mexico, but it also was not what he was born for. He had evidently been of more than average intelligence from the beginning, though his star was not visible till he was nearly sixty.

He was first discovered in his native town of Colotlan, by a passing general who needed some one to do secretarial work, and he was the only one who could easily read and write. He had taken the fullest advantage of the very poor schooling his native town offered and was ready when Fate and General Guerra passed by. Later he was brought to the attention of Diaz who placed him in the Military Academy. I learn from the most accurate of sources that Don Porfirio, who certainly had a neat flair for men's abilities, had an excellent opinion of Huerta, recognizing in him a few rare and elemental qualities. He saw that he was not at all like anybody else, and did not expect him to be. Of complete sobriety himself, he regretted (with the rest of the world) as well as other only too apparent defects, his "copita" habit.

It would seem that the appraisement of that consummate reader of men's hearts and attributes should not be quite set aside. Huerta was then in his

eleventh lustrum and what he would be in the future, he already was.

About a month before the resignation of President Diaz, Huerta, who was commanding troops in Morelos, had been sent for to give an account of his operations against Zapata. He had come alone in an automobile from Cuernavaca, through a country inhabited by a population, the greatest desire of whose males was to take the Porfirista general prisoner. The President who had rather lost sight of him, was very much impressed with the calm and careless manner of his arrival in Mexico City, and because of this accidental happening, selected him as chief of his escort to Vera Cruz on that last tragic journey from the glittering heights to the dark sea of old age, exile and death. He knew he was brave, and he thought he was lucky. As to the last of these attributes, he was, however, mistaken. He was also persuaded of his complete loyalty and said, as he made the choice:—"He will give his life for me, if need be."

By one of those strange gestures of fate, generally quite visible in Mexico, Don Porfirio himself thus gave to Huerta's destiny a definite shape and trend. It was Huerta's first passing across the stage of the vast drama, other than in the chorus. It was Porfirio Diaz' last choice of a man for service.

It was even told me by one of the loveliest of women that when he accompanied the Iron President on that last sorrowful journey to Vera Cruz, he was "divinamente perfecto," and there was doubtless in him, intuitive as he was, something that made him

alive to the high and tragic significance of what was happening.

It was with emotion, and every mark of respect that he received the "Greatest Mexican," broken with physical pain, rejected by his people, at the station, in the small, wee hours of that fatal 26th of May, 1911, and escorted him to the waiting train. The arrangements had been made by the President of the National Railways, Mr. E. N. Brown, who was also present, to receive the illustrious exile. The cortège consisted of a "locomotiva exploradora" that went ahead of the train wherein the great man lay silent in pain and grief, thinking who shall say what thoughts. An escort train with troops brought up the rear. Huerta passed constantly from one to the other, pausing occasionally, doubtless, to "fortify" himself. At one point an attack was announced, he had the order of the trains reversed, and after many anxieties, with tears and an abrazo he embarked his illustrious master safely aboard the historic *Ypiranga.*

There is not the shadow of a doubt in my mind as to what he proceeded to do, and do thoroughly, once his task was accomplished. He is not the only general known to fame and fortune who has so closed an epoch.

From that date according to the turn of military events he was often in the foreground.

He himself said to the American Chargé that he had had various opportunities to overthrow the government much better than that he finally took. He was in command of important bodies of troops during that summer and autumn of 1911, and was among

those who then scented the complete incompetence of Madero for government, despite his unquestioned virtues.

Again during the brilliant campaign he carried out for Madero against Orozco he was in control of the army and he said he could easily have done it then—but he remained faithful to Madero as representing constitutional government, though he had a temperamental contempt for a man who neither rewarded his friends nor punished his enemies.

Later, according to his own statement, he became convinced, in company with about 99 per cent. of the population of Mexico (including even those who could not read and write, and who had no land and never will have), that Madero was not competent to govern and that disaster was imminent. Whatever his involved Aztec reasonings, whatever his crimes, whatever his personal aims, it was he, or another, possessing perhaps more virtue, probably less talent. The iron fist was again indicated by events, as over and against the caresses of a sentimental democracy. It was drawn in fire in the heavens. It was written at every crossways. In the logic of things, the dark, passionate, but alas, loosely-woven fabric of Mexican government, needed once more to be gathered together by some strong hand.

The manner of Huerta's accession was not of his invention. Throughout Latin-America it was sanctioned by precedent and confirmed by usage. He was so innocent of any possibly unpleasant criticism of his very logical procedure, that as one of his compatriots says of him, "Drunk with joy and rum," he sent a telegram cheerfully, openly to Washington in

which he unsuspectingly stated that he had "overthrown the government." There was nothing within his historical radius to cause him to even dream what he was getting into.

Now every government in Mexico since the days of Viceroys has come into being by a revolution, or through a military coup. There is no other way,—except that of evolution, and a people cannot suspend all government during that admittedly slow process.

Some of the South American countries (with here and there sanguinary reversions to pure type) have evolved processes of government that do not always necessitate arms or murder. Not so in Mexico, where the Huerta Government was born and baptized according to the time-honored and only ritual. Naturally no one could convince Huerta of the right or reason of the United States to object to the act in itself. After the recognition of the Benavides government of Peru, which had fairly slopped about in blood, with attendant flight of those whose hour had not yet sounded, he realized completely that it was a purely personal matter. There was no principle involved; it depended, in the usual arbitrary way of human judgments, on whose ox was gored.

In the summer of 1913, his Minister for Foreign Affairs, Señor Federico Gamboa, had drawn up one of the most dignified and masterly appeals a weak nation ever sent to a strong. It lies to the eternal credit of Mexico in general and its author in particular. But like all such appeals its success depended on the appelee. It holds within its few pages the entire case of Mexican sovereignty and is, further, examined in the light of subsequent events, the first

cry registered for "Self-determination," which rather fluid expression was not then showing any signs of crystallization. It has since been worked out (in spots) in Europe, with the result that the Wilsonian Europe resembles that of the Thirty Years' war, though some one has gone so far as to say that *that* was a dove-cote compared to 1920. When formulated, the doctrine of self-determination was seen to be, like all things, even truth, very relative. There were those who could "determine" and those who could not. It depended entirely on who was doing it and where. . . .

When in that August of 1913, the curtain was definitely rung up, it disclosed the stage set fully for the vast Mexican tragedy. It had been cleared of nearly all the accessory characters, when there appeared a man of Viking origin, the pale Northman of Romance, with a blue and agreeable eye, causing the dark drama to develop somewhat along the lines of extravaganza. I refer to a man, whom personally I liked, doubtless because of something similar, or extremely dissimilar, in our beings.

He appeared from that upper left hand corner of the stage, in shirt sleeves, barking his shins, in their unpressed trouser-legs, against the stage settings and running into several of the dark-skinned characters already in full action. In Minnesota Mr. Lind was a pillar of society, an ornament to the legislature, an asset to the State, desirable from every point of view. In Mexico this active and amiable gentleman became grotesque. It was not his fault, but Fate's who, tiring of the senseless tragedy played by human beings, often adds an element of comedy, needing like the

rest of us a good laugh from time to time, and, pardon my Gallicism, in this case, "il y avait de quoi."

He arrived somewhat as Lohengrin,—by water, stepping onto the stage from a barge in the shape of a warship, and like this hero he was not to be asked whence he came, nor why. Incidentally, we can recall that when the questions was really asked,—and in no nuptial chamber either, like his prototype, he disappeared from view. . . .

When Mr. Lind took President Wilson's ultimatum to "go" to President Huerta, stating that even an election would not be accepted as clearing his title, the final clause added that if Mexico would do all these things the matter of her so needed loan "could be easily arranged."

Now nations need money obviously, but also quite as obviously the bread of life, which is respect for themselves. The jangle of the 30 pieces of silver that we offered to Mexico and which she did not take, will forever ring in the ears of one who opens our history at that page.

To return to the play. We find an old Indian atavistic, instinctive, primitive, untutored and completely mysterious when the attributes of his undiagnosable and uncatalogued being were in play. He was flat-faced, dark-skinned, with small velvet-skinned hands, a good deal of movement in the skirts of his badly fitting frock-coat, and his long-armed, waving gestures took up some space. Behind his spectacles was a restless, inductive, deductive look when waiting for his cue, in the intricacies of the Anglo-Saxon plot from the Aztec point of view,—or rather the Aztec plot from that of Anglo-Saxon


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solutions. And his voice had a low, drum-like beat. His stage properties were anarchy, treachery, blood, venality, and even envy among friends, of his high and uncertain office. He was easily the villain of the play. He had every disadvantage; he was even supposed to be illegitimate, being pointed at as on the very left hand branch of the Presidential tree. He had no money, he had few friends, and these he was ready to sacrifice if the country demanded it. Many saw blood dripping from his hands. What chance had he against one adorned with all the virtues, possessed of a then unplummeted erudition, and having alone the combination to the safe wherein were contained the riches of a hundred million people?

One might perhaps halt here long enough to say that though Huerta was everything else that is not nice, he was not of illegitimate birth, his parents in the shape of Mexico and the Constitution having been duly joined in matrimony, the only formality lacking were the banns. (There was not time.) So this was a libel, pure and simple; the old story of the man who had his watch stolen or stole one—nobody remembered which—was all-sufficient for a man's ruin, after the human way.

Now the legal (if not moral) genealogical tree of Huerta was as follows:—

Francisco I. Madero, Constitutional President, José Maria Pino Suarez, Constitutional Vice-President, their resignations, demanded and given three days before their death, were accepted by Pedro Lascurain, Minister for Foreign Affairs, who became President by operation of the law. He was President but some twenty minutes, which allowed him time,

however, to appoint Victoriano Huerta Minister of Gobernación (Interior). After Lascurain's resignation, given, it is understood, with alacrity, automatically by operation of the law, the executive power fell to Huerta with a provisional character and under constitutional promise to call special elections.

This is the technical manner of Huerta's accession to power, and according to the Mexican Constitution by which it must be judged, there are no doubts about its complete legality.

To return to the play. The hero, whose accessories were the lightnings, together with the glory and wealth before mentioned, of a hundred million people, was pale and elegantly clad. He was of virtuous origin; the only blot on his 'scutcheon being the fact that, though he had spent his life among books, he had unfortunately been but a casual reader of Mexican history. The contest looked so uneven that no one could have dreamed that he who was thus armed would need sixteen months of time as well.

Huerta had several peculiarly Indian ways of parrying the erudite thrusts, and they were not in any book of the game. Sometimes he would disappear, drop out of the situation, absent himself from the scene, reappearing only when events with their usual momentum had moved on. Sometimes he was present, but he would not pick up the cue—and he was completely incurious as to the nature and origin of the species called ultimatum. He was also singularly and surprisingly courteous towards his elegant antagonist (who sometimes did not pick *his* words), though doubtless the large choice of ribald

terms offered by the Spanish tongue was at his command and were used copiously when in the wings.

The manner of the pursuance of the unequal fight was a series of blows beneath the belt, and the inconceivable thing about it all is that whenever one was dealt the justice-loving American nation loudly applauded.

The more one considers that unequal contest (Huerta had within his own being further enemies), the more one wonders what would have been the writing of history had he been permitted by Fate and the United States to work out the Mexican situation, in the Mexican way. For as long as Mexico is Mexico, Mexicans alone can do it. They will, moreover, do it according to the idiosyncrasies of the Creole, Mestizo or Indian personality at the moment in domination.

One must always remember that at the time of which we are speaking there was a constitution and that Huerta had his hand on the throttle determining the movements of its most complicated machinery. The period of his presidency, to change the figure too abruptly for art (but this is nature), was chemically more or less disintegrating, even actively destructive. A bold but crafty man who stopped at nothing might, possibly, if left alone, by the infusion of his own qualities into the crucible have produced a reaction that later (a few hundred years later) would have been tolerable to an Anglo-Saxon scholar and gentleman. Huerta was so manifestly, so naïvely iniquitous, in his Stone-age way.

At any rate it is safe to say that a million Mexicans who have been served though not saved, would

have been still living to testify. Many will say:—"Who cares if there are a million fewer Mexicans?" But that is another point of view.

However that may be, this dark, restless-eyed, crafty Indian was a strange opponent for the man then sometimes known as the "pale scholar of the White House." But his very peculiarities were his strength and through those sixteen long months sustained him on his spell-weaving plateau, against the man whose power was more than Cæsar's, whose will was more unquestioned than Peter the Great's, and whose methods have proved to be more involved than those of any Latin-American Dictator.

It was again the meeting of extremes. The most liberty-loving nation in the world, the most tolerant people in the world, installed and suffered a one-man rule, never beaten in the world's record. Kings have ministers who sometimes die,—Republics have regulative bodies called Congresses. We had one, but it became (like any member) inert and inoperative through disuse. Our cabinet, further, proved to have no rights and few privileges. I have come to see that the minority rules and will always rule, and of that minority a few, and of those few, one, but, good God, do not call it "the rule of the people." With us it seems to have been simply the majority rule worked out to its inevitable end to begin again under another form. It has been said, and it appears to be true, that species wear out, after which the grave, resurrection, is the law of the political as well as the natural world. American institutions became so worn out that to one man was allowed unquestioned sway in his own country, and the power of life and

death over a neighboring and presumably independent country. He was furthermore to be allowed later from the recesses of his at one time curtained soul, to determine the degree and kind of American participation (with all attendant obligations) in the affairs of the world. Indeed, our indifference towards our Constitution in 1919 reminded me, with variations of course, of the Mexicans towards theirs. They look on the promises of their redeemers with extreme indifference, when it is not horror. Redeeming them by the Constitution in the shape of a Constitutionalist has come to be like promising them showers of gold at the rainy season; they simply get wet instead, or in another event, showers of bullets are what they get. Either way they prefer not to count on Redemption, or even on Liberty from a Liberator. Anent this last much camouflaged commodity, a large majority of those all over the world who have lately tasted it, would not be averse to a sweetening dash of the good old servitude in the somewhat bitter cup.

As to our Constitution, we seem, for a space, to have had no recordable sensations or thoughts of any kind concerning it.

Now those of us who are honest with ourselves (and it is easier to be honest with our neighbor) know there is no Liberty,[1] and the great principles of authority and discipline by which nations rise to greatness and individuals are made strong are for the time being in eclipse. The greatest lie of the ages is that which tells us that all men are born

[1] A few weeks ago in a conversation with Anatole France I asked: "Master, what is liberty?"
And he answered: "L'amour de notre esclavage." (Love of our slavery.)

free and equal. There is no such thing in nature as equality and nobody is free. Certain governmental forms happily provide, at certain epochs for opportunity, and even then what provides opportunity for one nation and one century brings tyranny to another. . . .

CHAPTER XVIII

The Coup d'état in General and in Particular—Some Analysis of Huerta's Psychology in the Days Preceding His Accession to the Supreme Power, and a Few Pictures.

Two days after my return to Mexico I found Huerta, October 10, 1913, making his second coup d'état and quite in the "grande manière." He had the Chamber of Deputies surrounded whilst the "Honorevoles" were in session, conspiring against their Constitution. He simply had them arrested in the corridors, when, having got wind that something was wrong, they were stampeding from the Chamber.

He got a bag of 110, among them were men like Vera Estañol and General Meixuero, and promptly lodged them in the already rather overcrowded Penetenciaría. The American Chargé was out until two o'clock in the morning in company with the Spanish Minister, trying to obtain their release. After a long wait at the Foreign Office, they went to the Penetenciaría, where they were shown a list of 84, the remaining 26 being unaccounted for.

After the imprisonment of the Deputies, there was a constant stream of their mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, probably even "amies" flowing in and out of the Embassy. These delegations of women are a touching custom of the country. Such went to Querétaro to ask for the life of Maximilian from Juarez, such besought Cortés for the Chichimecs.

Such again in the twentieth century came to the American Embassy to entreat the Chargé d'Affaires to intercede for their captive men. They are mostly black-robed, and they weep, some loudly, some quietly, and they rarely get what they ask.

Now a word here as to the species not only unclassified, but even unknown to the majority of the inhabitants of the United States, the "coup d'état." Of its organic functions and economic uses they know no more than they do of the one-time functions and uses of some fossil of the Tertiary period. Yet it is as frequently found in Latin America as the jaguar, the boa-constrictor, the iguana or the llama, about which every one studied at school. Those who have heard of the coup d'état mostly consider it something wicked, even shameful, involving practices in which no nice nation or individual would indulge. It has been employed, however, and with success throughout the ages and its workings have often proved to be beneficial rather than otherwise. Sometimes it is the only practical method by which order can come out of destructively conflicting opinions and passions. In the United States they know about that quite respectable process, "the cutting of the Gordian knot"; it is done every day in families and in politics and in business, but the coup d'état to which it is own brother—oh, no! It is, further, a phenomenon, that like all phenomena, has its preordained and naturally fostering spheres. It is found in Latin States rather than in Anglo-Saxon communities, though history rates Cromwell among great men. However that may be, Huerta had the extraordinary ill-luck to do something that in a thick, though undeter-

minate way, the great majority of Americans, following their erudite ruler, thought was wicked. They did not like the process, though they did not really know what they had against it. Hence many tears. One brilliant Latin-American writer even goes so far as to call the coup d'état "a hygienic measure against the demagogic rabble when it has seized the powers of government, keeping the population terrified by its excesses or propensity to commit excesses." He further says that "it is a weapon against dreamers and deluded reformers, who as soon as they gather political strength set out to govern an absolutely imaginary population; against fanatics who show themselves more arbitrary, more predatory, more cruel than the demagogues themselves."

As I write these words more nations than I can count on my fingers, after the extraordinary chaos resulting from the casual theories of the Peace Conference applied to a world that never existed, are praying for the strong man. And when he appears he will appear riding on some breed of coup d'état rather than on a Constitution, and he will take small note of the prolonged twitterings of the Peace Conference, nor even of the agreeable and once-safe platitudes of international law—if his army be big enough. We are as sick of mediocrities as the Lady of Shalott of shadows.

A virtuous friend who loves the word "Constitution" almost as much as the Mexicans, says I am quite wrong, and he would still make the world safe for democracy,—by other means than machine guns.

Virtuous friend: No one denies the appearance and possible utility of the coup d'état from time to

time in history, but the murderous methods attendant on it will make it forever objectionable.

I, with the sketch of a smile on my face:

"You overlook the fact that the man making the coup d'état is almost invariably in a hurry and has little time and less chance to choose his methods."

Now a word as to the accompanying circumstances of Huerta's accession to power, and his quite involved character. He was an extraordinary mixture of enthusiasm and cold-bloodedness, of generosity and cruelty, of cleverness and ineptitude, of daring and weakness, all contrasts acted and interacted behind the dusky curtain of his Indian soul. But in those fatal days of February, 1913, when so many were afraid, hesitating or indifferent, he recognized the hour when it came, and had the courage to make it his. Though he doubtless desired power for himself alone in the beginning, he came to have in the end a devouring and obsessing ambition to justify his seizure of the power by the pacification and attendant prosperity of his country.

It is not my intention to rehearse the historically threadbare events of the "Tragic Ten Days." A few pictures will suffice to set in relief the psychology of Huerta during that period.

Late in the afternoon of the 9th of February, Mr. de la Barra went to the Palace, to see Huerta, who had just been made military commander of the city. The Plaza as he passed through it was a horrid sight, slippery with blood, encumbered with débris, though the dead, several hundred, had mostly been removed. He found Huerta sitting in one of the big rooms, a large bottle of brandy on a near table, and in his

hand a telegram from Madero from Cuernavaca, stating that he had both men and arms and was returning immediately to Mexico City. He had found there General Felipe Angeles with artillery. Huerta was pale, but his face wore an expression of tranquillity rather disconcerting to Mr. de la Barra, who was himself dreadfully upset by the condition of the Plaza through which he had just passed. He had expected some answering signs of agitation in the Commander-in-Chief. Not so.

Doubtless this was the moment when Huerta's instincts, as sure as those of the hound on the scent, indicated to him the path that led to the supreme power. He found himself suddenly military commander, and in the classic Mexican position to overthrow his civilian chief. He proceeded along normal historical lines. To the daring always needed in such situations, he was able to add the patience needed in this particular situation. That Huerta's desire for the supreme power was then in process of birth, no one can doubt. And in revolutions the only thing a man can be sure of is what he is doing himself.

What must have been the thoughts of that Indian, sitting in the National Palace, in control of the army, suddenly confronted by the nearly empty presidential chair placed across his path, and he the man nearest to it! If he moved not a moment too soon, nor a moment too late, it was his. It was equally there for Feliz Diaz to take, but he let, once again, his hour pass. What would have been Mexico's history had *he* answered the call of destiny who shall say? He is a type of man that would have been more simpatico to the pale scholar of the White House,

and though Madero would have been murdered in any case, we must not forget that Mexico's history for more than seven years is quite simply the result of the temperamental and unfettered dislike of one man for another.

Huerta's plans were most simple, and later apparent to everybody; in his methods of carrying them out there was the secrecy natural to the Indian, combined with the equally natural indirectness of Latin-American procedure. It has been said of him that he always laid his plans in a rigidly straight line, while the ways and means to his ends showed a series of bold curves. This may be said of any clever policy. He pursued these methods when bent on taking the shortest path to the great result—"pacification"—of which he was persuaded that he was the most capable instrument. That he made a series of curves, that he even "looped the loop" in proceeding to this end cannot be denied. Towards Washington he attempted the classic masterly inactivity.

He knew that Madero, hopelessly amateurish, was a dead failure as President; that a revolution to be justified must replace a poor thing by a better one. He was convinced he was the man to do it. All this time he was in daily, hourly consultation with Madero, who, with his customary lack of intuition, had placed him in charge of the military defense of the government. Any man who has the army behind him can crystallize himself into power at the solvent moment in Latin-America. In control of the army he doubtless went on to survey other forces which if he could not align with him, would be arrayed against him. These were the Feliz Diaz elements, the con-

servative elements represented by de la Barra's prestige both at home and abroad, and the Diplomatic Corps.

The days from the 9th of February to the 18th were strange, determining days for Huerta, whose real genius lay in being able to control his ambitions, since the day on which he realized that it depended upon his sagacity, and above all on his patience, to become President of Mexico. On February 17th an arrangement was arrived at by Huerta and the Diaz-Mondragon contingent. It involved, unintentionally but fatalistically, the lives of the President, the Vice-President, and Gustavo Madero. Huerta judged the abilities of these men accurately; he neither loved nor hated them, especially Madero, of whose governmental qualities, however, he had the poorest opinion. Pino Suarez did not exist for him. It is said that he even rather admired Gustavo, who had what the French call "de la branche." He was astute enough to see that Madero dead by assassination presented also a grave menace to himself. The deaths of the others would cause little stir and be considered but as inevitable, normal incidents in a change of power.

It is recorded at the meeting of February 17th, while the majority were clamoring for the disappearance of Madero, his clairvoyant Indian brain saw that Madero's ghost would be more difficult to lay than any conspiracies of the living man, and he quite frankly stated that he preferred to take the latter risk rather than to incur the enmity and resentment his execution would incur in Mexico, and the burden of very probable foreign disapproval. What he least desired for the furtherance of his own ends was,

however, to happen, in the obscure involutions of the Madero tragedy. No man escapes the results of his actions, nor of his passivity. Huerta, knowing his Mexico, that land of "no le hace," should have seen to it himself that not a hair of Madero's head was touched. Instead, a fatal negligence like to a heavy narcotic sleep attended this pivotal moment. . . .

On awaking his attention was drawn to certain accessories of the situation. He was then immensely interested in the formation of his cabinet, and immensely proud of the solid elements composing it. These were Francisco L. de la Barra, Minister of Foreign Affairs, of international distinction; Manuel Mondragon, Minister of War (whom he afterwards sent out of Mexico in the playful yet determined manner I once recorded); Jorge Vera Estañol, Minister of Public Instruction, a jurist of note, who was among the 110 deputies bagged in the coup d'état of October 10th, and who remained some months in prison till his release was procured by the American Chargé; Alberto García Granados, Minister of the Interior, a great Liberal, experienced and truly patriotic, afterwards executed by Carranza in his 76th year; Toribio Esquivel Obregón, Secretary of the Treasury, of the highest technical ability and entire probity; Rodolfo Reyes, Minister of Justice, whose father had been killed on February 9th by a ball through his head as he was advancing with his troops against the Palace, then held by the Maderistas.

These men, though personally not enamored of Huerta, were men of discernment and experience. They recognized certain strong qualifications in him.

The hour was dark and difficult. They naturally rallied about the only fixed point in the shifting scenery of Mexican politics,—the man in control of the army, and whose abilities, furthermore, had been proved. These facts were more important than private virtues which, as they had just seen, had been inadequate to the keeping of order. Since Mexico has been ruled and ruined by successive bandits, several tentatively favored and one sustained by the United States, one realizes how sure the instincts of these trained men were. Order was the first essential. Democracy was a foreign luxury to be indulged in when Mexico was safe, and in politics situations will always be considered more urgent than theories.

The elimination of Feliz Diaz was a matter of the most elementary sleight of hand. Huerta suggested that he be candidate for the Presidency, in the next general (very "general") elections, which was a "now you see it, and now you don't" arrangement, but which seems to have been satisfactory to everybody, even to Feliz Diaz, a man of naturally candid and generous soul. Mr. Edward I. Bell suggests that those same elections were "doubtless set in the privacy of Huerta's mind for the first Tuesday after the first Monday following the Day of Judgment."

This conference was held in the ministry of Gobernación, a huge, white, elaborately stuccoed house in the Calle General Prim, which many had vainly striven to sell to the United States for an Embassy. It is recorded that during the discussion of the best way to eliminate Madero, Huerta abruptly quitted the room. When he thus left Madero's fate to other men's judgment, he also left his own to them, which

was his irreparable, tactical error, the first step in his ruin.

Huerta knew practically, instinctively, somewhat after the way that Porfirio Diaz, heaven-born dictator, knew, that the people of Mexico could preserve a government, but not a democracy. There a government to live, must be as highly centralized as our own has become, and at that special moment with all forces centrifugal it could only be preserved in some strong hand. His was strong.

It was not until Diaz' eightieth year that there was any dissatisfaction with the strong hand methods, beyond the natural desire of the human heart for a change,—even for the worse. The "people" will always welcome the new man, be he king, president or dictator, one of these three they must have.

As for Mexico she can have but one kind of government,—her own, and it will always bear small resemblance to that above the Rio Grande. Suum cuique.

Patriotic Mexicans will forever prefer, whilst awaiting the illusory golden age of the Anglo-Saxon promise, a Mexican dictatorship to the devastations of a few bandits selected by an American dictator, or a foreign invasion. If Mexico be an independent state, she has undeniably a right to her own kind of rule, and in the end she can do better for herself than we can do for her. We have, as it is, only succeeded in imposing on her temporarily a quintessent but alien form of dictatorship, compounded of our ultimata and her own bandits. The Carranza dictatorship somewhat recalls Anteus touching the ground; every time that the Carrancistas gave the

American government a slap in the face they got new strength. Carranza, to take an example, was recognized the day after he had expelled the American Red Cross from Mexican territory. Why put himself out to please us? It was, quite evidently, unnecessary. If it be true that men hate their benefactors more than their enemies, Carranza's hatred of the United States was fully justified.

CHAPTER XIX

Presidential Messages—The "One-Man" Power—The Chiaroscura of Latin-American Politics—The Way of Death.

On the 13th of October President Wilson sent a message to the Provisional government, breathing the highest morality, entirely disapproving the high-handed manner of dissolving Congress. (He certainly then had every American senator and every American representative to a man behind him, when their own sub-species were threatened, though from such an apparently safe distance. They were none of them prophets.) He further said that any violence offered to any deputy would be considered as an offense against the United States, and terminated by stating in no uncertain terms that he would not recognize any President elected after such proceedings.

Did this change the simple Huertistian methods? Not in the least. The "elections" took place. When Huerta read his speech on the 26th of October, "but one was missing," and that was the American Chargé, whose orders were not to assist at this occasion which smelt of the Cæsarian laurel rather than of the more human polling booth. Later on, when the new Congress was assembled, Huerta addressed that body with complete and engaging frankness, and terminated by the following words:

"Judging the situation calmly, I cannot see that the constitutional order of things was interfered with

through the dissolution of the Chamber, except when the executive power began to invade the sphere of action of the other powers. Even so, it will always be a high and noble duty, or at least a commendable attitude, to save a nation at the cost of all principles. What is the use of preserving, at the cost of the nation's life, rigid and inert theories whose right and usefulness will always remain subject to discussion. The ultimate truth is to be found in Bonaparte's maxim: 'In saving the country one does not violate any law.' "

No statesman will contend that Huerta was wrong in considering that weakness in the Executive, when he has full power, is the greatest calamity of a nation, or that any constitution has remained fixed. Rather it is like everything else, subject to time, circumstance and men.

It was on the 3rd of December that, in a daze, I read President Wilson's message to Congress of the day before. "Little by little Huerta has been carefully isolated. By a little every day his power and prestige are crumbling, and the collapse is not far away. We shall not, I believe, be obliged to alter our policy of watchful waiting." The astonishing thing is, not that an autocrat should have decreed such a thing, but that a people in our advanced stage of political development should have permitted it. Any political man takes any power he can, and appetite comes with eating. Republics are particularly exposed to the one-man danger, where public feeling is entirely unexpectant of it and unprepared. I say public feeling, not public opinion, because this latter is but a phrase, and appraisements of men and situa-

tions are the result of no mental operation of the masses, but of an *état d'âme,* a state of soul; the ideas, the mental operations are supplied as always, in even the most communistic states, by the few. In the Russia of 1920 Lenine and his nearest disciples produce the ideas, and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" resembles all other dictatorships, minus certain accessories that, since centuries, men have classed as desirable. It is grimy and depressing when the other is cultured, and sometimes gay; it is irresponsible where the other *must* make good in order to persist. In fact its outward aspect is highly unattractive. For myself I prefer a dictator in gold braid and lace, riding on a mettlesome steed, prancing to a palace full of works of art, announced by the blare of trumpets, to a man dressed for the moment in a blouse (while awaiting his uniform) who is strongly guarded by other bloused and camouflaged aspirants, as he slips into a large building no longer called a palace, from which the mob has previously removed the works of art by theft or destruction.

One man like unto other men, who is yet raised above them by his own qualities, or still more mysteriously and awesomely by Destiny, will forever stir the naturally torpid public imagination, and command the loyalty of a people in a greater degree than can any conglomeration of individuals forming those necessary but unmagnetic bodies called congresses or cabinets. And when men no longer feel the call to hero-worship, to exalt and revere something like unto themselves, yet seemingly more than themselves, they will be indeed as the beasts of the field.

It is because of all this that the nation we have been wont to consider the most politically free, could see its chief magistrate deliberately setting out to destroy the chief magistrate of a weak nation, though his destruction included that of its constitutional government, without a restraining word. Even in later contemporaneous history, which is black enough, there is nothing to equal it (except the blind destructions of the Peace Conference). It was committed personally and in the name of peace. An indiscriminating public, under the one-man domination, made little or no outcry. That they were ignorant is the explanation, not the excuse. No one is supposed to be ignorant of the Law. Yet that which destroyed resembled, apart from its phraseology, that which was destroyed. The very demand, the very insistence of the President, in the autumn of 1918, that the electors elect along certain lines, was, with the difference of latitude alone, the Latin-American manner, recalling unopened bales of votes, from voters "selected" or "induced." I began, as it were, to smell strangely familiar smells, as of something boiling over. Startled, but rendered attentive, I found it was the President of the United States overflowing the Constitution, as he "earnestly begged that the people return a Democratic majority to both the Senate and the House of Representatives." I saw how scarcely any form of government resists the one-man impulse when it is in full momentum, and one man, with the *manie des grandeurs,* to whose strength fortuitously are added the power, wealth and numbers of a great nation, can destroy, by the very momentum of his power acting on events, anything that

is written on paper, even if it be the Constitution of the United States.

I could not help smiling as I said to myself: "It's all the same everywhere; the pride of man has no limit, except death, nor his folly either."

In democracies of a monarchical form there are restraints, artificial and natural, put on the usurpation of rights. The people are alert, forewarned, forearmed. The system provides against even the temptations of usurpation which are recognized as latently imminent, and inherent to the heart of almost every man attaining supreme power. The few exceptions but prove the rule. In a Republic such as ours when they occur they take the people, secure in the illusion that it is a government by the people, of the people, for the people, completely unawares.

When the message of December 2, 1913, was read, there were but few, vested with a semblance of power, who cried out, "Pause a moment! This policy may mean the collapse of Mexico. Do we wish to ruin the Mexican State, with not so much as a glance at her history, her racial and climatic conditions, which latter, though they enter so largely into the questions confronting us, we can by no possible decree or governmental alchemy change?" Her history, alas! we *did* change, and to-day the 85 per cent, in company with the remaining 15 per cent, are walking barefoot over the broken glass of her fragile constitution, not meant to be handled by unskilled foreigners.

It was the one-man power that unconsciously we bowed before. It always happens so in history, no matter with what names we cover it. For evil or

for good, individuals make their nation's history. To-day the so-called communistic governments are not only dominated by one man, they exist or cease to exist, as that one man exists or ceases to exist. The hero of the hour will be forever worshiped, and over whatever he decrees the people will fling the glamour of their own worship. The knowledge that his power, as in our system, comes from no more holy source than the voting booths, around which there is little mystery and less virtue, as any ward politician in any town, big or little, can tell the searcher after truth, is no deterrent.

And in Republics there is another phenomenon to be observed. I say Republics, because the fluctuating and generally unimaginative will of the people is more apparent and often more disastrous to liberty of thought and action, than under systems where a few skilled men avowedly control the output of ideas. It is this: a recognition of the unavoidable effects of certain causes, implicates the recognizer in the effects; if these be unpleasant, he becomes unpopular. Public opinion has never welcomed prophets except by a preliminary shower of stones, —whatever it may do later.

In the United States a man who has discovered a fact is not distinguishable from a man who has begotten one. If he is not the father of the baby he finds on the doorstep, he is apt to be saddled with it. To go further, to indicate that a thing may happen is equivalent, in the imperfectly formed discriminatory powers of the public, to desiring it to happen, and from thence to endeavoring to bring it about.

If in the United States, where we live under the

greatest constitution ever formed from the minds of men, comparable only to what Minerva produced full-fledged from her brain, operating with the most wonderful harmony till lately when thrown out of gear by the appearance of personalism with all its accessories, public opinion (blessed by all the news fit or unfit to print and everybody able to read) is undiscriminating, why ask of the 85 analphabetic per cent. of an Indian Republic that they suddenly, over night, distinguish cause from effect, liberty from Liberators, friends from foes? We are confronted by the fact in our own country that in proportion as we extend political liberty we have less personal liberty, the system tends to paternalism, so decried. In a state like Mexico the inverse is true. There men still go to heaven or to hell in their own way and political liberty is non-existent. Following on our assumption concerning conditions which Mr. Dooley describes as "slightly but different from Matsachoosetts," in Mexico the result has been that the lettered class, necessarily the upper class and necessarily in the minority in an Indian State, find themselves in the strange political rôle of scapegoat for the misfortunes of Mexico. Yet through knowledge, not ignorance, came her glory and her might.

Any one contemplating governments sanely will, while awaiting the uncertain evolution of the submerged 85 per cent, choose to be governed by those who read and write rather than those who do not. And while we are about it, what had the Indian to fit him to become, according to the Wilsonian theory, suddenly, en bloc, the ruler of his country's destinies? Evolution is slow and Mexico's four hundred years'

act on the historical stage is as a moment compared to the time taken to produce the elements that compose the United States, and to whose pattern and image the Indian was suddenly commanded to fit himself.

Here and there chosen people leaven the world, as did the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, to take some of the oldest. They appear in history, contribute to the world's riches, moral, intellectual and material; from them after a thousand, two thousand years, we find ourselves assimilating all that we are able of their greatness according to our national idiosyncrasies, and, adding our own qualities, embodying another and particular form of greatness. Mexico in an anti-historic, anti-philosophic, anti-common-sense way was supposed to go suddenly from the depths of its 85 per cent to the heights of its 15 per cent. There was a madness in the asking that could only make for disaster. Even in the most elemental matters of procuring food and raiment, the Indian was to try to live under conditions that did not exist. He was supposed to transform himself from an Indian atavistically depending on the rainfall or wind-currents, to one using intensive methods which his very geographical and meteorological conditions do not permit, unless costly irrigation processes are put in force, processes that the Indian unaided is no more able to install than he is to harness the stars.

In this sudden pouring of political wisdom down his throat, which was the only way he could receive it in the short time allowed him, practically only over night, to fit him, not alone to govern himself, but his neighbor, he seems to have choked. The wise man

would have paused. Not so the arbiter of Mexico's destinies.

Somewhat after St. Paul's promises for another world, in the twinkling of an eye, by the flourish of a signature, by the making of a speech in a foreign land, the Indian was expected to be something that he was not, and may prove never to have the ethnological qualities to become, even though his race persists through eons.

This highminded but indiscreet and temporary effort to save him from want (which has been proven to be the unavoidable lot of a large majority of human beings, even of the superior races at various stages in their existence), caused him instead to listen to the confused shouts of "revolutionarios" inciting him to do he knew not what, turn he know not where, until, starving, bewildered, maddened, he died some horrid death or inflicted one.

He might have remained a happy Indian; the husband of various wives, the father of many children, planting his beans as fancy or the rainfall indicated, kneeling for hours with outstretched arms in some still, dim, pink, lovely church before a candle-lit altar, worshiping a doubtless somewhat distorted image of the white man's God, or reeling from some "Souvenir of the Future" or some "Temple of Venus" in the guise of a pulque shop; his days, in any case, spent under a matchless and consoling sun, his nights under near and brilliant stars.

On a return from Mexico I passed through "the dull, red hideousness of Georgia," and when I saw those treeless factory towns, built on that red grassless soil, often without a church spire, and never a

child above a certain age playing before the doors, I did not think so badly of one-time Mexican misery. If pressed I might even have chosen it to that of my native land.

Mr. Wilson unfortunately, during the period when he was interested in the subject, had in his mind a purely mythical Mexico which he endeavored to regulate by subjective sentiments, mostly condemnatory.

Of the real ethical, economical, social, historical Mexico he had as little idea as astronomers of the real ethical, economical, social and historical Mars. The vague theories advanced by scientists concerning the supposed needs of the Martian inhabitants would doubtless, if we could impose them, be as disastrous as Mr. Wilson's theories concerning Mexico, colored further by a virtuous abhorrence for the very depraved personality of the last constitutional President of that unhappy land. Thus to Huerta's other difficulties was added a supremely powerful external enemy into whose hands a mighty people with the unquestioning generosity that distinguishes them where they have given their confidence, placed a blank check drawable against their almost incalculable wealth and power. In the face of this, Huerta's plan, and he showed a strange acumen, was to count on the assistance of time, which carries away alike good and evil. It was his only hope and hence his endless prevarications, sometimes bold, sometimes puerile. Huerta knew his enemy was mortal; he had seen so many men despised or dead, that he was keenly aware of the transitoriness both of glory and of physical life. Also, any man, he

knew, who lives long enough will experience the inconstance of fortune. The only thing left him was a vague hope in chance, which alone could rid him of his chief enemy.

Admittedly Huerta obeyed the dictates of his interest, which doubtless he confounded with those of the State. The old Indian, with the sameness of human nature come to power in difficult times, acted according to Machiavelli, that illustrious teacher of peoples as well as princes. He took his situation as it was, not as it should have been. The interior task was colossal. Like all men come to power by violence, he not only had to take into account the ambitions of those supporting him, but to endeavor to restrain the cruelties and excesses of his army. He had further more to satisfy this last, while at the same time he protected the civil population. One of the natural functions of armies is pillage, loot and rapine. He might, perhaps, and history will give him the benefit of the doubt, have fulfilled his task, for the order-loving elements showed a tendency to group themselves about him, as the only person representing Constitutional government, and with which they were inevitably destined to stand or to fall.

That Huerta was gifted as well as wicked and unfortunate no one will deny. He had something of the lion and much of the fox in his make-up. His instincts were Indian, his methods Latin-American, —the only methods, however, that circumstances had brought to his notice. An unpleasing combination, even a loathly combination, to the virtuous ruler of an Anglo-Saxon Republic. From the repugnance, even detestation, that such a combination awakened,

to trying to change its essential qualities, seems to have been but a step. Instead, however, of allowing these protoplasmic democrats to nourish themselves and evolve along their inevitable lines, President Wilson's desire was to see 85 per cent of them turned into fully developed deserving democrats over night. This being out of Nature's way, history testifies that, in the pressure, these inorganic bits were simply squashed out of any semblance to anything.

But the destinies of Mexico have been, for the last seven years and more, determined by men who, though they are learned in many matters, have been totally ignorant of things Mexican, and have quite frankly wished to remain ignorant. The other arbiters of her destiny are kaleidoscopic bandit chiefs appearing for a brief time to disappear by violent deaths, whose adherents and themselves, forming the famous one-half per cent of one per cent of the population exact, in addition to the inevitable pound of flesh, all the worldly possessions of the remaining Mexicans. These we insist on holding in power, while we keep enlightened, educated Mexicans in exile, the kind of men who correspondingly wield power in the United States. Sometimes they are rich, sometimes they are poor, after the way of good citizens in any country, and the sentimental "democracy" we have installed and sustained can only be enjoyed by them out of their country.

Now the philosophic history of those prismatic, unstable, active manifestations, Latin-American political systems, is one of the most interesting governmental phenomena the world has to show, and Mexico is not to be understood without some study

of it. It abounds in what may be called rather indeterminately "human nature," which gushes out from a few elemental sources quite unmodified by the conventions that screen its governmental uses in other countries, which, however, if studied, would be found to somewhat resemble it. The personal equation is visibly and constantly at work on the national clay, which takes a form and shape from it, easily transformable and transmutable into still something else. There is nothing stereotyped about it, except in so far as its manifestations are generally true to type, and resemble the colors of the spectrum in their variety and the acts of God in their unexpectedness.

Of two determining Latin-American political attributes, I would like to say a word, Envy and Personalism. The first is inherent, omnipresent. Indeed, one whose talents and situation enable him to know his country well, has even said:—"To a Latin-American of the middle-class the greatest offense that can be offered him—greater than taking his wife from him, violating his daughter, or disfiguring his face with sulphuric acid—is to have one of his friends amass a fortune. This is not to be endured. The heart of one to whom this affront has been offered is consumed by a white-heat envy, molten lead coursing through his veins instead of blood.

"If the wealth has been acquired by means of defrauding the public, which in our decadent social system constitutes no stigma, then envy is capable of transforming the injured one from a lamb into a lion, from a weakling into an athlete, from an arrant coward into a legendary hero, from a self-seeking

egotist into a sublime patriot, so long as it gives him an opportunity to take vengeance on his former friend, and at the same time to defraud his country for his own benefit, even to the point of surpassing the rapacity of the first offender."

Accompanying this besetting, omnipresent sin of envy is the equally active and ubiquitous Personalism. Each public man is willing to sustain to the death his theory of government. In the case of a man of genius like Don Porfirio this is an immense advantage; in the usual run, it produces disorder of the most horrid and destructive kind.

Personalism having unfortunately made its appearance in politics in the United States during the past seven years, there are those perhaps at last engaged in the study of it at near quarters, and it will be most useful in future appraisements of the Mexican situation. It is not in our tradition, nor in our natural habit, to destroy a man because of the opinions he holds, nor, if he happens to differ, decree war to the knife, as in Latin-American States. Also in questions of national moment, until the Peace Conference, which, in parenthesis, makes the disdained Congress of Vienna appear as a gathering of angels, philosophers and altruists, both our political parties were supposed to have equal interests and equal rights, as they would inevitably and automatically be called on to make equal sacrifices and bear equal responsibilities.

Even the most casual survey of Latin-American politics, seen in their most accentuated form in Mexico, reveals them as having something deeply, fatally and entirely personal about them. Whatever

principal is in question is not separable from the man holding it. Politics are inevitably irresponsible under these conditions, and completely destructive to the individual, whose end is almost invariably sudden death or exile. The very few exceptions but prove the rule. The great Juarez did die in his bed, but only just in time not to be caught up in the uncertainties, or rather certainties, of the well-advanced revolt of General Gonsalez Ortega.

Under such conditions which present themselves with the inevitability of natural phenomena, the decree "to the end that bloodshed cease in Mexico" might as well have been a decree that there be a uniform rainfall there, and despite the virility and righteousness of these words, who would pretend that they could have an effect on the seasons?

Compared, let us say, with the impersonal methods of English politics, where political opponents will spend week-ends together for 20 years, and play golf in harmony for 40, with scarcely a destructive thought (as regards the life and property, at least, of the opponent), the bitter personalism of Latin-American politics is incomprehensible. Yet it is a fact to be reckoned with in government in those countries, that disagreement in politics almost automatically becomes a matter of burning, personal hate. And further in a country whose sons if they do not know how to live, *do* know how to die, having not only small regard for each other's lives, but for their own, each and every political conception is sustained at the fullest risk to the individual.

In latitudes and longitudes where there is an undue value put on life, this essential idiosyncrasy

is not taken into account. Such nations, however, with all their weaknesses have a certain scorn for those, like ourselves, over-loving of life. For all must die, though we Anglo-Saxons who can make ourselves believe almost anything that is not so, get, for the most part, no further than the general conclusion that though other men will and do die, one's self may possibly escape. In this I except the Celt; he dies for the "idea" or the faith, generously, eagerly, in anticipation and in fact.

One of the things that strikes most deeply him who contemplates with a free eye things Mexican, is the way of death. There is almost invariably a quiet dignity about it. Few public men die in their beds. Rather swiftly, arbitrarily from some position in which their acts and destiny have placed them do they "endure their going hence." A man like Don Alberto García Granados (to speak of some one I knew), at the age of 75, was taken by Carrancista soldiery to the Escuela de Tir and there shot. He was in bed with a mortal illness when seized. Salt injections were given him, and he had further to be bound to a post before the firing squad could get in their work. He died in supreme composure of soul. The death of such a man and that of the most untutored Indian is outwardly the same. I remember once seeing a peon pass down the street between two soldiers, with fingers on their gun-triggers. Not tall, he yet held himself loftily, and the expression of his face was one of complete tranquillity. Behind him weeping, but not very loudly, was his woman. A baby was bound to her heart by a blue reboso and a round-eyed little girl too small to be frightened, was

running by her side, clutching with one hand a bit of her mother's skirt. In her other was an orange, very probably given her by one of the guards. The pace of the group was quick. The morning was dazzling, the beauty of the earth even unto tears. In another hour that man walking under the blue dome would have closed his eyes on it. And it was not even an idea that gave him his courage, it was something within himself, a grouping of qualities, a lack of them some will cry, that made him, poor Indian, high and free in face of it.

I who was not to die was more troubled at the sight of it, than he who was to endure it.

CHAPTER XX

The Diplomatic Corps in Mexico City at the Time of Huerta's Accession to Power.

A glance at the Diplomatic Corps at the time of Madero's assassination, and the general attitude of the countries represented and advised concerning the recognition of the Huerta de facto government, will throw into high relief the extreme personalism of our non-recognition. We furthermore stood to gain what the other nations did by recognition, our only difference being that we were in a geographical and political position to ruin Mexico by non-recognition.

During many months the diplomatic corps had been formulating,—to themselves,—of course, we only got echoes of it, being like the proverbial husband "the last to know,"—their ideas of what we really were about.

The German minister in the politest and most veiled of language, intimated to me in a somewhat protracted conversation that our policy was evidently to weaken the Mexicans by non-recognition, and when they were sufficiently reduced come into Mexico cheaply, thus avoiding armed intervention, which would be much better for the Mexicans though it would be more expensive for us. Indeed, all the colleagues veiled behind unassailably discreet and courteous remarks to our face, what they doubtless called by other names behind our backs.

The diplomatic corps was peculiarly well composed at the time of Madero's assassination, the men representing the great nations having all, with the exception of the German and Belgian ministers, long Latin-American experience, and were hence quite familiar with the phenomena that presented itself. These two gentlemen were both, however, intuitive and trained.

Mr. Stronge, the British Minister, had come to Mexico City from Bogotá. Though an Irishman, he was in his soul a peacemaker, a reconciler of factions, a man who in his heart deplored violence. The drama of the Tragic Ten Days was played out at his very door, whence he could see its every involution, as the actors appeared and disappeared from the stage, which happened to be set in part in an open space, furnished with machine guns and cannon, in front of the Legation. The minister himself often extended the hospitality of his cellar to various stars in the drama, who, if they had been able to make their exits, would come to him begging asylum. It was here, protected by the Lion and the Unicorn, that at nine o'clock on the morning of the 18th of February Robles Gil found Mr. de la Barra, to tell him that he had been designated Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Huerta cabinet.

Though so excellently placed to see it as it really was, not as people who had not seen it thought it ought to be, Mr. Stronge did not counsel his government against recognition. He quite simply realized, as did the other diplomats, that Madero had but paid the normal though high price of political failure in Mexico. Recognition was given, not of course, at the

moment, but with that decent regard for "les convenances" which stamps British diplomacy with such dignity, when the affair was literally cold in its grave, and the protocolic amount of grass and weeds had grown above it,—nicely watered with oil.

Sir Lionel Carden,[1] who succeeded Mr. Stronge, had had thirty years' experience of Latin-America, and was peculiarly able to give his country accurate information. He was not a man to jump to extremes, nor was he one to espouse a cause hastily, in fact, he was somewhat unelastic. Due consideration of facts, and moderation, after the most conscientious scrutiny of them, would mark any decision he made or advised. He had, some 16 years before, been Consul-General to Mexico and was but lately come from Guatemala, where he had been Minister Plenipotentiary. There was nothing he saw in the situation on his arrival in Mexico City, the 10th of October, 1913, to cause him to cable his government advising a

[1] It was in 1882 during the Presidency of Gonzales that Lionel Carden first went to Mexico. He was at the time Vice-Consul to Havana. In pursuance of an idea that it would be an excellent thing both for England and Mexico to renew diplomatic relations, he asked permission of the Foreign Office to go to Mexico to write a commercial report on the condition of the country. He was given leave from Havana for three months. His report was such that a special envoy was shortly after appointed to go to Mexico, and Don Ignacio Mariscal went to London. Subsequently Mr. Carden was made Consul to Mexico City, occupying that post for nearly seventeen years. There being many questions to settle during that period, he was also appointed Commissioner for the settlement of the British Claims. He learnt much about the early revolutions and the prevailing conditions from General Berriozbal, who was the Mexican Commissioner. He was witness to the reconstruction of the country under Porfirio Diaz. He was also to be witness of its destruction under Carranza. Who better than he could have advised his government? He saw from the beginning, with prophecy inspired by experience, the disastrousness of our Mexican policy. Mr. Wilson, however, was even then, "though less than God, somewhat more than mahomet," and Sir Lionel's prophecy as ewll as his experience were fruitless. He died in London in the spring of 1915.

delay in presenting his letters of credence. Neither did his very able secretary, Hohler, who had already spent several enlightening and educative years in Mexico, have anything to reveal to him that could act as a sudden deterrent. Consequently, in conformity with his instructions, he presented his credentials the day after his arrival.

Huerta amid all his sorrows was destined here and there to know brief moments of triumph. This was one of them. Looking appalled and conscience-stricken on the whole disastrous period, I do not grudge it to him.

The presentation by the British envoy of his letters on October 11th, the morning after the coup d'état in the Chamber of Deputies, went to Huerta's head. It opened out to him the splendid, the intoxicating vista of possible recognition by the United States, without which he knew that no government in Mexico can stand. It was his obsession, the passion of his heart, the dream of his nights, the motive force of his days. Incidentally it was, for the United States, the heaven-sent moment to present accounts. Chamizal, Magdalena Bay, the Rio Colorado, could have been literally washed off the slate, the claims against the Mexican government incurred during the revolution, business disputes pending for years, good or bad, vital or trivial, could have been regulated to our satisfaction, and without disaster to Mexico. It might have been a day of judgment with the difference that the judged, both goats and sheep, with their affairs pleasantly regulated, could begin to live again on the new basis. Did we take advantage of this unique occasion? Not for a moment. We simply

proceeded in the most awkward way of the country yokel, slinging the flail for the first time, and getting at everything except the chaff in the radius of the flail, to destroy the man who was mad to please us, to strangle a creditor who was willing and even anxious to pay. It is the most stupid act our history records, defying any comparison. And they call us a nation of hard-headed business men!

It was the spell of the one-man power acting as surely above the Rio Grande as below it.

To return to the Diplomatic Corps. Mr. Stronge, Mr. Hohler and Sir Lionel Carden were all gentlemen in the most general and particular sense of the word. They had the antipathy to violence and villainy natural to their type and kind. Instead, however, of being able to deal with the purely subjective Mexico projected from Washington, they found themselves obliged to take her as she was, and to decide action on the basis of daily facts, where they concerned the life and property of their nationals; also to extend what help decency and good sense prompted in related Mexican matters.

The rôle was difficult. For Sir Lionel it became impossible. Into that beautiful city, where as Consul-General he had dwelt for many years during the Porfirian peace, where he had seen the Huerta government, though bound hard and fast by the "watchful waiting" policy, keeping order and endeavoring not unsuccessfully to proceed with the usual and immediate affairs of government, he was to see the Carranza hordes pour, barefoot, dirty, noisy, bullying, looting, violating, destroying. He was himself to be ordered by Carranza "to get out of the

country in twenty-four hours, or be put out,"—only a short two days after General Obregón's entry at the head of the Constitutional troops.

Before returning to Mexico in April of 1914, Sir Lionel had, while in London, telegraphed to General Diaz, then in Paris, asking for an interview. His question was:—"¿Quién es Huerta?"—"Who and what is Huerta, and what is your estimate of the situation?"

The answer of that reader of men's hearts is on the files in Downing Street. It but confirmed the British policy of recognition of the Huerta de facto government. General and Madame Diaz drove Sir Lionel to Versailles, lunched there, and on their return a conversation took place in the apartment of General Diaz at the Hotel Astoria. General Diaz considered Huerta, in spite of his so evident defects, the "man of the hour," and doubtless thought that he might, if the load of Washington's hate were replaced by Washington's indifference, get out of the mess. The fourth part Indian in Don Porfirio enabled him to understand the total Indian in Huerta. He could be counted on to be resourceful, preserving, patient. He was gifted to an unusual degree with the usual Indian stoicism, and he was proving decidedly skillful in fighting Washington's guerrilla methods of warfare, doubled with the money blockade and unlimited arms and ammunitions for his enemies.

To his Indian qualities Don Porfirio added the imagination of the Latin, which enabled him to completely appraise this complex and faulty personality in the light of his relations to foreign nations, as well

as his potentialities where his own was concerned. His word will doubtless count with history.

M. Lefaivre, the French Minister, was a man of unusual culture, versed in history, philosophy and Belles Lettres. His very agreeable conversation was embellished with illustration and apt quotation, and after the French manner, he easily gave of his best. He had in addition a long Latin-American experience, having had various South American posts, and from Havana, where he had been Minister, he had been appointed to Mexico, which post he had held for some five years. He had been raised to the rank of Special Ambassador representing France at the Centenary, had witnessed the apotheosis of Diaz, had seen the gradual darkening of the Mexican landscape during the Madero régime and the loosening of the threads of government. Curiously enough he had been among those who received the exiled Maker of Modern Mexico on his arrival in Paris, when he stepped from the train at the Gare Saint Lazare that June evening of 1911.[1]

Though in the earliest stage of Huerta's incumbency M. Lefaivre had been besought by Mr. de la Barra, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, to endeavor to hasten the recognition by France of the de facto

[1] Madame Lefaivre gives this picture in a letter: "The night of Tuesday we were at the Gare St. Lazare to receive the dethroned couple. The President seems much older and changed, but his air of serenity and dignity is quite in keeping with his sad rôle of king in exile. Three or four hundred people were on the platform, all very much affected and full of the most respectful sympathy. He clasped both my hands with effusion. It is said that he is very poor. After thirty years of absolute power, he possesses only the most modest of fortunes. I sent to their hotel a magnificent bouquet in the Mexican colors, my usual economy disappearing in face of this drama and this injustice of history."

government, he felt the wisdom of counseling delay, in order to see what elements of power Huerta would be able to group about him; above all what guarantees could be counted on concerning the interests of the very large, and at that time very prosperous, French colony in Mexico.

A few days subsequent to the recognition of the Huerta de facto government by Great Britain, it was also recognized by France.

To Señor Cologan, the Spanish Minister, the situation was trying, not so much in itself, he recognized it as normal, but because of the excesses committed by Villa in particular, and chance bandits in general, against the persons and property of his nationals. Villa, before he had become "a safe man to tie to," had declared that he intended to see to it himself that every Spaniard, with the smallest amount of hand baggage or none, got out of Mexico. When I returned in October, 1913, he had just executed nine Iberians in Torreon who had unwisely demurred at turning over to him their earthly goods. This, however, they were finally obliged to do after the preliminary ceremony of digging their own graves.

Señor Cologan was a tall man, no longer young, of grave and gentle presence, untiringly devoted to duty. He was married to a very handsome Vera Cruzana, and had been, all his life, familiar with Spanish-America.

When, worn and discouraged, having witnessed the ruin of Mexico, and that of his nationals, Señor Cologan asked for his recall, the Minister Plenipotentiary who succeeded him, Señor Caro y Széchényi,

had but a short tenure of office. He was expelled by Carranza in February, 1916. In the billet-doux informing him to depart within twenty-four hours he was addressed quite simply as "cuidadano Caro" ("citizen Caro"), which was so resented by the diplomatic envoys in the Mexican capital as incompatible with their official dignity, that they recommended their own recall by their various governments. Señor Caro was refused escort to Vera Cruz by General Obregón, who left him to arrive or not arrive, as accident might determine. Once in Vera Cruz the Captain of the U. S. warship *Delaware*, protected him and his baggage from the "police" and saw to his safe transfer to the ship *Maria Cristina*, lying outside the harbor. The days of the Huertistian international courtesies were dead along with everything else.

Italy was not at the time represented, her affairs being in the hands of the British. Austria had a Chargé d'Affaires.

The Belgian Minister, M. Paul May, an interesting and agreeable figure among the diplomats, was naturally very astute, as well as schooled in international procedure. He subsequently tried, as did Sir Lionel Carden, in the most cautious and courteous way to enlighten American public opinion as to the screaming, elbowing facts of the situation. They succeeded only in jostling the chip on Washington's shoulder, receiving in turn, both of them, a shower of stones from Washington's fist, in the shape of a press campaign against them.

The Belgian Legation, in the Paseo, was particularly exposed during the bombardment of the Tragic

Ten Days, and M. May had known not only anxiety, but danger. With his wife and two young children he finally took refuge in the German Legation, in the less exposed Calle Liverpool, as did also the family of M. Joseph Simon, whose house, near the Belgian Legation, had received a warning shell through the drawing room walls.

In spite of all that he had seen M. May, recognizing how coy is legality in Mexico, and how wary about returning when once frightened away, counseled his government to follow the other governments in the matter of recognition.

The diplomats, with the exception of von Hintze, spoke Spanish admirably, M. May being almost perfectly polyglot, and the affair had to them only the usual mystery which they had discovered every Mexican is apt to fling about his simplest as well as his most complex act.

M. Joseph Simon, at that time Inspector of Finances of the Banco Nacional, was an important figure in Mexico. Highly gifted, of wide international experience, of reputation so unsullied that neither enemies nor friends could assail it, he went, in the summer following Huerta's accession to power, to France to advise a loan for the de facto government. This was first and very naturally with a view to protecting the enormous French interests, to be safeguarded only if the actual responsible government were safeguarded.

The loan was arranged on his representation, he being in a unique position to know the facts of the situation, and loans are notoriously made, where possible, according to fact rather than fancy. On his

way back to Mexico in October, he learned, to his astonishment, at the first port he touched at, Havana, that while he was on the water his government had been informed by Washington that any loan made by France to the Huerta Government would be considered "an unfriendly act." The French government very naturally called it off. From that moment Huerta's financial fate was sealed, together with that of billions of foreign property in Mexico, it being the first definite step of that unhappy country toward repudiation of her Foreign Debt. The great work of Diaz and Limantour collapsed completely, when France thus renounced as did other European states, her own policy towards Mexico to follow that of "watchful waiting." In due time these same nations, when international war indebtednesses are being reckoned up (in the necessarily unaltruistic attitude that attends final reckonings, where benefits are forgot and future favors not visible enough to inspire a lively sense of gratitude), will present their large Mexican accounts to the United States.

As to the representatives of the Latin-American States to the City of Mexico, they were not at all in the dark as to what had happened. Each had but to turn any chance page of his own history to find enlightening resemblances. Cimmerian darkness prevailed alone in the north.

Mr. Henry Lane Wilson, Ambassador to Mexico since 1908, and dean of the Diplomatic Corps, had spent seven years as Minister to Chili, and was also not surprised by the phenomena that presented itself. He had long been a student of Latin-American political history. He also had witnessed the apotheosis of

the Diaz Adminstration, fitting end to thirty years of prosperity along non-elective lines. He knew, moreover, how delicate was Mexico's governmental machinery, by the skilful workings of which alone her peace was to be maintained. He naturally tried to acquaint his government with facts that could be gauged only by those daily confronted by them in their naked aspect, and conversant with their accessory phenomena.

All other Spanish speaking foreigners were informed as to the situation and able to read the very clear writing on the wall. The Ambassador had been convinced at an early period of the complete incompetence of Madero for government. It was demonstrated to him daily by first-hand facts, not fancies or theories. He knew, furthermore, that it was time wasted for Mexico. Events have proved him right.

He quite aptly described the Madero régime as active and annoying in small matters, and evasive, sluggish and neglectful in big things. He had come to consider that the responsibilities of office, and the disappointments resulting from the intrigues and jealousies all about him had shattered Madero's reason. He likened the last months of his incumbency to a mild reign of terror, marked by exaggerated espionage, a reckless squandering of public money, imprisonments accompanied by other and more final disappearances, and above all by the muzzling of the Press, though its freedom had been one of the brightest jewels in the Maderista crown. What Madero was fitted for really, was the quiet life of a country gentleman nursing benevolent ideals in a blameless and sheltered existence.

When the revolutionary machinery after its secular manner began to turn again, the Ambassador saw its meaning and import. His first idea was to protect the life and property of his nationals, which he did admirably, seconded during all those days of the Decena Tragica by his charming and courageous wife. His second was to try by the weight of his authority as Ambassador and dean of the Diplomatic Corps, to save what was still to be saved for foreign interests in Mexico.

As dean, messages from foreign representatives as a body passed through his hands to the Mexican authorities, who communicated their answers in like manner, the United States Embassy thus becoming the natural focus of events.

The Ambassador proceeded according to the now effete theory that our government has primary duties relating to the protection of the life and property of its own nationals, and secondary duties growing out of proximity and our announced policy to afford protection to foreigners as well, who, because of that policy, cannot use their own means of protection.

When Huerta became military commander of the City of Mexico on the 9th of February, the full light thrown on the center of the stage whereon he had stepped showed him embodying every characteristic, possessing every accessory of the secular "military genius," the typic man with the army at his back, who inevitably appears at such moments in Mexico. He could only act true to type and precedent. Whatever was to be saved out of the situation, was to be saved by him. This the Ambassador and his colleagues realized, and they have, alas, been abun-

dantly justified. Doubtless the testimony of the men comprising the diplomatic corps at that time will be accepted by history (which finally judges men and events in relation to their origin and environment) rather than the preconceptions of an alien mind, working spasmodically, and which in the end detached itself from the matter somewhat as a man detaches himself from a slightly unpleasant, only half-remembered dream. Few history-determining facts are as clear as the hatred of a President of the United States for a President of Mexico. It has been called mere pedantry to put the blame for events on any one man. This exception proves the rule. Had it come about through the implacable force of economic destinies, or the equally implacable encroachments of the strong, one could view it more calmly, saying with Ecclesiastes:

"All things are hard . . . What is it that hath been? The same thing that shall be. What is it that hath been done? The same that shall be done."

Huerta was moreover the choice, free, or imposed by circumstances, is a hair-splitting detail, of the best elements of the country, the elements representing tradition, learning, experience, statecraft. All those things, in fact, that until the incursion into civilization of the "Reds" have been considered governmental assets by the wise men of the ages, were primarily in Mexico to be denied, cast out, called anathema. It sometimes seems to me that first from Washington was wafted to Mexico that fatal seed of disintegration which the civilized world in horror sees grow like the tiny mustard seed into the greatest tree, darkening in its deep shade the bright works

of the ages. If the best elements of Mexico recognized the Huerta dictatorship, it must be that there was some reason for it worthy of consideration. They were faced by facts, which bore little or no resemblance to the subsequent theories on which non-recognition was based. In looking at it now in the light of history, world-history and Mexican history, the only mistake committed was one inherent to the situation. This was that Madero did not take asylum in the American Embassy. And this was due to that strange clouding of events, which takes place in Mexico as inevitably as atmospheric changes take place, after certain pressures. Some mist, atavistic, indispellable, intervenes between men and situations. This brings about a suspension of mental processes; with everything possible and nothing accounted probable, nobody ever foresees the inevitable outcome of a situation, though it will be the outcome of a hundred analogous situations. Certainly the negligence of Huerta himself in those days, incidental doubtless to the excitements and preoccupations of fast-occurring events, was to be fatal to him, and in the end to draw him as well as Madero into the dark Chamber of Death. That Francisco I. Madero would, however, have been assassinated at some later date is certain. His violent going hence was a natural act of the organic political body, but had Huerta delivered him to the American Embassy marked, "valuable," "fragile," "to be handled with care," and got a receipt for him, he might have delayed his death, and saved himself, perhaps. Instead there was some fatal slipping of the cog. It is more than possible that in those repetitive,

historical moments, the death of Madero as a solution, quite logical, presented itself to Huerta. He might even, as better and worse men than he have done, in like hours, consummated it himself without turning a hair, had a perfectly safe and explicit occasion offered itself. That he did so, history has failed completely to prove, and if all the men who desired the death of enemies were hanged, no state, however rich or populous, could provide sufficient rope or enough hangmen.

Of Herr von Hintze, in the light of after events, I can be permitted to speak more at length than of these other gentlemen. His character and subsequent appearance on several world scenes are not without interest.

About him there was an unsolved personal equation: was he a cynic, was he a true-type sentimentalist? I never knew.

There was at times a suggestion of something passionately contained in his being, though his usual outward aspect was calm, even cold.

Looking back on his personality in the light of his later career I see that the leit-motiv of his existence, the root of every thought and act, was love of country and of emperor.

He had been for many years personal and intimate friend of the Kaiser as well as the most devoted of subjects and servitors. During those seven years in St. Petersburg which preceded his appearance in Mexico he had been special Naval Attaché to the Czar, and had kept up, it was rumored, a private correspondence with his master, even over the heads of Ambassadors.

In Mexico he found himself revolving in a strange orbit and the natural splendors of those far heavens were not as consoling to him as they were to some of us. To use a good old word, fast disappearing, I think he was often desperately homesick.

He was entirely devoted to duty, of great industry, hard with his subordinates, very impatient of their mistakes and still more of their weaknesses. But he asked of none of them something he would not have asked of himself. As was inevitable, he had a profound contempt for Latin-American methods of procedure. They were not even intellectually, academically, interesting to him, and he investigated them only in so far as was necessary for the furtherance of the prosperity of his nationals.

Though possessing himself so entirely, there were moments when something was apparent that had no relation to the qualities of hardness and contempt. Sudden tears would come into his eyes and a look of the solitary bird setting out towards some peak. These revelations of personality, infrequent as they were, affected one as one would be affected at suddenly throwing back a curtain and looking out on an unexpected panorama. He was a Prussian, and the Prussians being Orientals, their psychologies are generally inaccessible, or else repellent to us.

I took him for a judge of people, and alas, those who read human nature, unless they be essentially humble-minded, which he was not, are apt to become disdainful. What one sees is so often horrid, or useless, which is worse.

He had much personal dignity, and though not insensible to the little pleasantries that galvanize the

diplomatic body in distant posts, there were few made at his expense. Sentiment was also an essential part of his make-up; "la petite fleur bleue" being more than a mere botanical specimen in his buttonhole.

He had a high-arched nose, a small sensitive-lipped mouth, full-socketed blue eyes under arching brows in a high forehead, and his face was broad between the ears. On the second finger of his right hand he always wore a large amethyst ring. Apart from this revelatory touch, he dressed in English-looking clothes, very carefully put on. He was evidently a man of wealth, his father had been in some sort of trade, he himself having been ennobled by the Kaiser. His numerous dinners over which he presided, often curiously and unnecessarily anxious, were of the best, with vintage wines and costly imported fruits and delicacies.

The Legation was spacious, comfortable and perfectly hideous. His own things having been water-soaked in transit, he had rented an expensive, furnished house with a large garden in the Calle Liverpool. It belonged to a wealthy German, and the great square hall was furnished in hatracks and high jardinières in the form of giant pansies in their own natural colors. If he was ever disturbed by the ugliness of his dwelling, I never heard him say. From the railing of the second story of the high square hall he had hung some ancient and beautiful rugs, the only attempt he made to cover its ugliness.

Since then he has signed pages of history in many parts of the world.

A day or two after our arrival in Berlin, the end of

that fateful September of 1914, at luncheon, at the house of the banker, Paul Schwabach, I heard to my surprise that he was in town, and that this most fastidious of men had just made the voyage in a small Scandinavian boat disguised as steward,—and how he must have hated the dirty dishes and the smells!

We had sailed in the *Mauretania* (en route for Vienna) on the 9th of the month. Dr. Edward Ryan, who has continued during the World War the brilliant career begun in Mexico, said to me when he came to bid us good-by:

"Guess whom I saw yesterday—von Hintze! I was about to speak to him when to my surprise he put his finger to lips and disappeared around the corner of Wall and Nassau streets."

In Berlin the address given me was a small, second-class hotel. I sent a note asking him for luncheon, but received no answer until two days later, when I got a telegram of regret from Rotterdam, to which were added the words: "They rush me to the west." He was then en route to Pekin. How he was able to get out there at that moment of the world's history I know not.

On China's declaration of war, which it was reported he was able to delay for some time (and which since the Shantung adjudgment the Chinese are said to immensely regret), he began another fantastic journey, which he brought to a successful end. After a short period as Minister to Norway, in July, 1918, he reappeared as Minister of Foreign Affairs for the space of a few weeks, to be replaced (he was in an untenable and useless situation and must have known it) by Dr. W. S. Solf.

When I was in Alsace visiting the French Military Mission, those days preceding the Armistice, his name was picked out of the gossipy air one day by Commandant Poulet—as among the Parlementarians. He was not in the final list, however. It would have been another position untenable to one whose pride and devotion are equally boundless.

CHAPTER XXI

January 1, 1914—Pass Christian—The "Humbling" of Mexico City—Some Idiosyncrasies of Huerta.

Seeing how difficult it is, even with unlimited ink and paper and a button-holed public (which, whether it will or not, must read and listen), to throw light on the Mexican scene, we can realize the desperation that Huerta felt at his powerlessness to dispel Washington's ignorance of a situation that it insisted on regulating; and time was passing. His impromptu New Year's speech of 1914 at Chapultepec was, as his public utterances always were, most polite. He stated that he knew Mexico was not the equal of great Powers like England, Spain, France or Germany, genially ignoring both the United States and my expectant eye as I stood but two removes from him at the table in Maximilian's dining room where the New Year's refreshments were served. He said he realized, too, that she had not their many blessings of culture and enlightenment. He then compared Mexico to a minor, an adolescent, but possessing a right to her own development along her own lines. He begged the mercy and the patience of the Powers. I found his speech both tragic and touching, and bearing little resemblance to the arrogant demands of the Carrancista government since so familiar to us.

The next occurrence, the "Conference" at Pass Christian on January 3rd, so eagerly awaited by all,

produced a few thistles, but no fruit. Mr. Lind, borne there on the wings of a battleship to meet the President, was "very satisfied with the progress of the rebels" in general. Mr. Bryan was further to puzzle the nations by stating that Villa was an "idealist," and Mr. Wilson that "he was perhaps the safest man to tie to."

This potentially momentous occasion was found in the end to have resembled a play depending on scenery and general stage setting for effect rather than on the pith of its dialogue, which in this case seems to have turned largely, as Mr. Lind informed both his friends and his enemies, on the sins and offenses of the Catholic Church. This information was the result of certain observations he had made from the rather restricted perspective of that dim back Consulate room in Vera Cruz. That the Church worked in conformity with the laws of race and climate, modifying them where it could, otherwise accepting them, was a fact out of the range of vision of the patio door.

The mysteries of a people's political and economic destiny seem to have occupied but a brief part of the four-hour play at Pass Christian. The villain was certainly doomed, which was all that mattered.

But Mr. Lind was in as unfortunate a position for the reception and giving of information as a tin pan turned upside down, having earned the contempt of those whose plans he was there to further, and the hatred of those whose plans he was there to thwart. So only what these two fairly comprehensive portions of the population did not mind spilling was brought to his attention.

Suggestions for "humbling" the City of Mexico, which Mr. Lind had found "very proud," were also made at Pass Christian, as Mr. Lind further confided to various friends, who in turn confided it to his enemies. The suggestions were largely concerned with aiding the ungrateful Villa to get there, and later the equally thankless Carranza. From the beginning the idea of both the President and Mr. Lind was the elimination of Huerta by domestic rather than by foreign warfare. It looked so much better.

The "humbling" of the proud city has since been thoroughly accomplished. The only difference between that procedure and the ageless methods applied to Carthage and Warsaw, is in the name. It was known as "service," even "human service"; and the hundred million comprising the United States accepted it, at the time, as such. Looking back on it all, it seems incredible.

Mr. Wilson from the first was essentially non-fatalistic concerning Mexico and left nothing to God,[1] which is often the supremest expression of statecraft; for if we will it or not, world forces, time and change, are stronger than separate desires, even of hate.

The facts of the Mexican situation were, however,

[1] I had the other day the following bit of conversation with Turkhan Pasha, the chief of the Albanian mission to the Peace Conference àpropos of whom the winged remark went about Paris that "in proportion as the nations are small the men representing them are great, and in proportion as the nations are great the men representing them are small."

I:—"Bonjour, and how are things going?"

Turkhan Pasha:—"Comme-ci, comme-ça," with a gesture whose expression lay almost entirely in the movements of his fingers. "But I am a fatalist. One must leave something to God,—and that is what no one in the Conference has yet done," he ended with an easy and tolerant smile, though some of the wisdom of the ages lay in his eyes, and much of it in his words.

then to be seen, as they are to-day to be seen, and are as visible as the White House from the south side of Lafayette Square—if you are looking that way. The optical delusion unfortunately persists, but it would seem at last time to let the Mexicans attend to themselves, there is every chance that they will do it better than we. When Huerta asked the American Chargé what was the upshot of the Pass Christian Conference and was told there was no change, his face remained perfectly impassive. He proceeded with an almost sublime self-control and a wisdom that should have had its reward, to regulate several rather large and pressing American claims. How often he said, "I don't ask help from your government, but don't help my enemies, and I will do what I can for you." The situation was almost entirely a personal equation, and the quite pathetic eagerness of Huerta to please the United States increased as time went on, and he more and more understood the imminence of disaster if he were not recognized.

His public mentions of President Wilson were always couched in terms of extreme respect and courtesy, as were they in any private conversation between himself and the American Chargé d'Affaires. It was always, "Su Excelencia el Señor Presidente Wilson"—"El Ilustrado Presidente de Usted," your learned President, etc. This unfailing tact and courtesy was what made the continuance of personal relations between him and the American Chargé d'Affaires possible. Some will say that this was his craftiness and turn it to his discredit, but from whatever motive his politeness proceeded, under any and

every provocation, to the last, when he was desperate, brought to bay, his patience and his self-control permitted him to continue it. What he really thought, or what he said to others, I know not,—though I suspect.

The glance of Huerta, even half concealed behind those big glasses, had something strange and arresting about it, though he might be talking in his usual debonair manner of pleasant and easy promises.

That Mexican pony and saddle for my little boy that he used to terrify me by the playful menace of whenever we met, belonged fortunately to that same incorporeal species as the sheep roasted whole, under the earth, in a certain kind of ashes, that he used periodically to promise to send to the wife of the French Minister.. Both these entirely subjective beings formed, however, easy and engaging subjects of conversation. His entry into matters of greater moment with the men of the Diplomatic Corps, by a grin and the demand, "y las muchachas" ("and the girls"), was also but a short and genial way of getting to matters of national concern. He knew that all men are grass, and a dig of the Presidential fist in a diplomatic rib often accompanied such questions. It was somewhat like an Anglo-Saxon's introductory mention of the weather, and was not peculiar to Huerta. Reports of it, however, gave him a bad name in certain latitudes, where such customs prevail only after dark.

Huerta's true passion was recognition. For it he would have bartered his soul, and his failure to win the favors of that heartless mistress will remain

among the tragedies of Mexican history. His accessory obsession was "pacificación."

If he ever slept, except at hours inconvenient to others, is not recorded. When the request for a train to take ex-President Madero to Vera Cruz was presented, he was asleep, and had given orders not to be disturbed. It recalls the sleep of the conqueror he so admired on the morning of the battle of Waterloo.

The reports of his labors placed them generally very late at night or just before dawn, when, not having eaten for many hours, his Indian brain was highly intuitive, active, suspicious, but without fear, his conscience doubtless also presenting, after the classic manner of men in analogous situations, no obstacles to the consummation of his ends. That an immense personal pride and ambition, a boundless desire for justification in the world's eye accompanied all this, I am also sure. He believed in his Star unto its fatal setting in the dark waters of the Rio Grande. He had, too, that pervading and serene assurance common to all revolutionarios come to power, with which I grew familiar, combined with a special sense of his own worth, old condottiere that he was. Doubtless in the bottled company of those whom his enemies called his "best friends," Hennessy and Martell, he evolved plans and strategies for the "pacification" of Mexico which, though difficult of fulfillment, would not have been impossible, except for the old man of the sea, in the shape of the United States, that he found on his back.

His retreat, spirituous, not spiritual, as it was sometimes called, at Popotla, on the outskirts of

Mexico City was described to me as the last expression of simplicity, though in the American newspapers it was depicted as a gilded haunt of luxury and vice, its Sardanapalian orgies being often recounted in detail. It was really composed of three small rooms, one of which contained a large but cheap table and some cane-seated chairs which were used by such cabinet ministers as could get in. (We have seen like situations since.) Cabinet meetings, one military attaché was wont to say, generally consisted of Huerta himself and advisers in the shape of "copitas." He certainly needed no help to throw the Washington ultimata into the waste-paper basket.

Allusions to Huerta's drinking became a habit, "une idée fixé." No one, however, that I knew, had ever seen him really intoxicated. They had at most seen a peculiar and concentrated steadiness in his eyes, and an increase in courage.

In another room was a small iron bed, over which was flung a sarape, and the most diminutive of washstands and wash-basins. The third room was a sort of kitchen, presided over by a wrinkled old "soldadera," who could be seen fanning the coals of the primitive "brasero" with the traditional turkey-wing, when preparing the more than simple repasts of the President, comprised largely of enchiladas, tortillas, tomales, and other classic Mexican dishes with a good deal of chili, the Indian's salt, thrown in.

Such was the "haunt," really only a place where, away from the palace and his home, he found a somewhat relative quiet. He cared little for personal comfort and less for pomp and luxury. And is it not natural that he, a full-blooded Indian with primi-

tive habits and instincts of abstemiousness, added to the hard training of guerilla and other warfare, should have cared little for them? In this he resembled many generals of history, and he would have betrayed his type had he shown any desire for the rumored Capuan delights.

The Popotla retreat had furthermore a high wall about it, and driving past it one always saw a few Indians lounging or lying about the entrance, bearing little resemblance to any Prætorian guard, nor giving any hint of Cæsarean splendors within.

On leaving the house in the Calle Liverpool where he dwelt with his family in the early months of his incumbency, he removed, not to Chapultepec Castle, which would have been in tradition, and his right, but to a quiet, unpretentious house, though attractive in the Mexican way of large rooms and sunny, flower-planted patio, in the Calle Alfonso Herrera, a quiet and unfashionable quarter, reminding one of F Street in Washington, west of Lafayette Square. There was nothing that indicated the money-lover in Huerta.[1] His aim and his desire were other.

He had a dream, too, and be it said to his credit, he dreamed few at his country's expense, of being in Washington, a man in a black frock coat talking statecraft, practical statecraft, with other men in black frock coats. He knew nothing about "breaking

[1] The statement before the Congressional Committee of Mr. William Bain Mitchell of the Banco de Londres y Mexico is enlightening. On the occasion of the loan demanded by Huerta from the various banks in Mexico City for the purpose of stamping out the Carranza revolt, the witness states that though packages of bank-notes which had been delivered to the Treasury of the Government were returned to the bank of which he was manager for the purpose of buying drafts on Europe for various members of the government, in no case did he ever see a draft bought in favor of Huerta.

the heart of the world," or "making the world safe for democracy," or about "wars to end war," or any of the matters we have so abundantly learned about since. But he knew a spade when he saw it, and he often called it a "bloody shovel," or the Spanish equivalent, which is worse.

"After the country is pacified," he once said to the American Chargé, "I am going to Washington in my best clothes," and here he took off his top hat, looked at it lovingly, smoothing its furry spots with that small bronze hand of his, "just to show them that I am not a blood-smeared savage clad in a breech-clout, with a bottle of aquardiente in one hand and a machete in the other."

The diplomatic receptions were held at the Castle, and as may be imagined, were as many-sided as Huerta himself. His "society" acts were ingenuous and like nothing else that I have ever seen, resembling not at all the cosmopolitan "correction" of the de la Barra receptions, nor the "fade" provinciality of those of Madero. Sometimes they were gay and short, sometimes they were long and sad. Sometimes Huerta talked, and sometimes he didn't. They all, however, bore the stamp of his personality and his mood.

The first was given on the 19th of November, when the hand of the super-flumine Lord was heavy upon him, and he was already busily engaged in getting rid of members of his cabinet, who were more impatient and less optimistic than he of "recognition" and its attendant advantages, and who doubtless got on his nerves. His methods and manners, too, were at times probably unpleasant, and it was beginning to be

apparent that he was unlucky, the greatest of all crimes in a public man. (In getting rid of his cabinet, however, he but presaged the later methods of his illustrious antagonist to the north.)

Villa was running true to type in and about Torreon. Mr. Lind had just taken an impatient departure from Mexico City after what the Belgian minister, M. May, called his second "fausse couche," the first having taken place the previous August.

The convening of Congress, which had been set for the 15th, was delayed.

The American chargé was in possession of one of the periodical ultimata, though for two days he had been unable to find Huerta, to deliver it to him, as he knew for what he was being sought. Garza Aldape, Minister of Interior, had just made one of those forced descents from the Plateau to Vera Cruz and Europe, with which we afterwards became so familiar. The diplomats thought the ultimatum, when delivered, would mean war.

It was under these conditions of what might be called seismic disturbance that the first official reception of the President and his wife took place. Everything was extremely well done on this occasion. To whom this was owing, I know not; there was an abundance about the buffet, a multiplicity of lights and flowers that had not been observed during the more provincial and less picturesque Madero régime. But underneath it all were the same secret hostilities, and the sempiternal Mexican personalism at play.

He came about six o'clock, walking quickly into the Salon of the Ambassadors to the strains of the national anthem, and looking scrutinizingly about

him. The assembly rose. I was presented, which presentation was the "clou," under existing political conditions, of the reception. He was of an extreme courtesy, regretting that "so good a lady" (tan buena Señora) as I should find matters still strained on her return; that he hoped for a way out of the very natural difficulties, and perhaps, with a smile, "now that you have returned, things may take a turn for the better." It was such a welcome as any head of a nation trained in courtesies might have offered under similar circumstances. With Huerta, it was pure instinct.

The next reception, on December 17th, lacked the snap and go of the first. Huerta was silent and preoccupied. The champagne had scarcely been poured when he gave his arm to Madame Lefaivre, who was on his right and, wines and viands untasted, he led the way back into the Salon of the Ambassadors, from which he shortly disappeared. After which the reception fell, as it were, automatically to pieces.

The interior financial situation was then very bad. Enormous runs on the Banco Nacional and the Banco de Londres y Mexico were taking place and many shops were hanging out signs to the effect that notes of certain states in the north like Chihuahua, Coahuila, Querétaro, etc., would not be accepted. Huerta was also faced with the imminence of an act most repugnant to his pride and against his common sense, the repudiation of the Foreign Debt.

Fiat money was making its disturbing appearance on the fiscal scene, and Carranza's voice was first breathed over the Mexican Eden in really

audible accents (with an empty echo of gold and silver) when he began in the north in 1913 to accost the uncorrupted Porfirista-Limantourian currency. He proved himself a sad rake where it was concerned, for it promptly fell from its proud estate, and became the constitutionalista fiat money, a scandal to the country and a stumbling-block unto the nations.

Bills began to appear shamelessly and quite inadequately covered with but one signature, often simply that of the nearest and most interested jefe-político. The charms of these bills were sometimes enhanced, though insufficiently for purchasing purposes, by the picture of a high-busted, floating-haired female. Others had a design of crossed guns and bandolier in one corner, in the oblique lower corner were the volcanoes smoking to heaven, while the bias space between the corners had the untraceable name, "Lopez" (like to Smith or Jones), almost concealed in an unending, labyrinthian flourish. But all this was no more substantial than a dew-sprinkled cobweb, when taken to a real bank, where there was a real receiving-teller. Thrifty men began to get anxious, and they have been anxious ever since.

If the story of the Carrancista finances did not mean ruin to Mexico, and the sealing up of the treasure house of the world to the nations of the earth, since gone bankrupt, it would be comedy pure and simple, and would bring some sort of a sickly smile to the face of him who surveys it, even if he has "invested in Mexico" and is a "liar."

At the reception given on the 18th of March to celebrate the betrothal of Victor, his second son, and

the daughter of General Hernandez (whose head, it is reported, was subsequently given to General Obregón on a platter for a Christmas present), Huerta was in fine feather. The plot was thickening, but the conservative elements were at last out in force. It was Mexico against the United States, rather than Mexican against Mexican, and much was possible. The upper classes in their various iniquitous forms, notably land-owners, financiers, savants, etc., were to the fore. There seemed to be some promise of cohesion, something that Huerta could count on within the country. He had called that morning a meeting which had been attended by various important hacendados, in which he had begged their support in the national crisis. Their attitude had evidently been very satisfactory. His wife, too, was smiling. Her handsome face, generally grave, was lighted by a look of happiness in her fine eyes, noticeably fine in a race in which, whatever else of form and feature may be lacking, the eyes are almost invariably beautiful,—large-socketed, with something deep and dark in brow and lash, and a beautiful smooth oval shadow underneath. All was set off by a really good dress of white silk veiled with fine black lace, the famous big round diamond so much discussed, hanging about her neck. The "tearless old man," electric, magnetic, carried off the occasion in a masterly way. Of his speech on that occasion, I would recall here but one sentence: "Struggle is the essence of life, and those who are not called on to struggle, are forgotten of heaven."

Concerning his own marital relations, he alluded to himself as "a model," adding, after a slight pause,

when one of the diplomats whispered to me that the big diamond was probably the offering of a contrite heart—"but a mediocre one."

He received the felicitations of the guests with a genial and courteous cordiality. It was the last time I saw him in that mood. Events were rolling up with immense momentum.

The next and ultimate reception was on the 15th of April. The "Tampico incident" had happened.

The officials were all more or less uneasy, the few wives and daughters at the reception, silent and embarrassed. It was a Balshazzar's feast. Never had those walls been more scrawled with signs. Within the week Vera Cruz was taken, and the juggernaut disfavor of Washington had started out to crush Mexico and her people. Huerta was then in the last ditch and doubtless knew it. It may have been a relief after the wearing suspense, the endless deferring of hope, the continual acrobatics necessary to preserve his balance. After a long talk with the American Chargé behind the closed doors of the bedroom next the large Salon, the assembly awaiting on the palm-banked terrace, listening to the Rurales clad in their silver embroidered costumes, white felt hats with a heavy cord of scarlet repeating the flaming note of their cravats, he suddenly appeared. Expression was wiped from his face, which was like a mask. He came straight to me, offering his arm. But the Chef du Protocol headed him off, the ministress of Guatemala being his destiny. I was put on his left. He was restless and silent. I quoted him the pacifying but untrue words of Santa Teresa: "La paciencia todo lo alcanza" (patience attains all

things). "Patience,—I am made of it," he said in the course of the conversation that followed, I embarrassed, he desperate; he added, "I keep my mouth shut," and pulled his lips together and frowned deeply. I remember feeling an odious and guilty uneasiness. It is only comfortable to crush the weak at a distance. I felt like both the upper and nether millstone, with Mexico between. I complimented him on his speech of the day before at the barracks, which had really been a masterpiece for a man keeping his balance on the edge of the abyss. His face relaxed for a moment when I said it might have been delivered by the Emperor of Germany to his troops. He thanked me with something grateful yet desperate in his look, but for the rest, as any gentleman anywhere would have acknowledged a compliment. His coat seemed to hang loosely over his shoulders, and there was something shrunken in his body. The next day he discarded the frock coat and top hat which he had told the American Chargé that he intended always to wear, as it "gave more dignity," and was seen in a slouch hat and a thick, formless gray sweater.

During this harassed period, he outlined what to many seemed a practical policy for the solution of the agrarian question in Mexico. He was often heard to say that next in importance to the restoration of order was that of working out some plan by which the people, after due preparation, would have an interest in the land, and therefore some vital reason for desiring and maintaining peace.

After witnessing the fiasco of the Madero plan for the distribution of lands, which was as impossible of

fulfillment as slicing up the moon, he meant to try other means. He saw no reason for holding out to the people the suicidal delusion that they could get it other than by their own efforts and hold it other than by their own labor. The land problem, as far as his struggles with the United States and with the internal enemies of the government permitted, was much in his mind. But during his incumbency the demand unfortunately was on nearly all occasions for the sword rather than the plow.

Indian himself, he knew what land means to the Indian—not a spot that he has paid for and been taxed for. It is more. It is ambience, tradition, environment, deathless group-instinct of the past. From it he draws the breath not alone of his body, but of his spirit. And ignorant as the Indian has been and is and will be, he feels for his land atavistically something that the spry tenant-farmer of northern latitudes and modern times can never feel.

If we look at the facts in the case, as early as the March after Huerta's accession to power, his gifted Secretary of the Treasury, Toribio Esquivel Obregón, introduced before Congress a bill that asked in the President's name for an appropriation of seven millions of pesos to buy lands for the purpose of distributing them among the poor in certain farming districts, *not* dependent for success on non-existent irrigation processes. One of his last public civil acts before the breaking off of diplomatic relations on the 23rd of April, 1914, and at which I was not able to be present, was the distribution of land in person to Indians in the valley of Mexico. It was about this time that he was also preparing to send representa-

tives to the Electro-Technical Congress to be held in Berlin, and that his persecuted government was still finding time to discuss such matters as the subterranean hydrology of the Plateau.

When Congress reopened on the 1st of April, the week before the fatal "Tampico Incident," Huerta showed a rare emotion when the American Chargé d'Affaires told him he could not be present. Probably he then foresaw death and disaster.

He wound up his speech to the Chamber by saying: "Before I leave this hall, I must engrave upon your hearts this my purpose, which on another occasion I communicated to the National Assembly, in the most explicit manner, the peace of the Republic. If in order to secure it the sacrifice of you and me becomes indispensable, we will know how to sacrifice ourselves. This is my purpose, my profession of political faith." . . .

The sight of Huerta at the Café Colon and at "El Globo," sitting before a table with the damning "copita" in front of him, talking sometimes jokingly with those accompanying him, sometimes silent, became familiar to all. In his automobile, going up the Paseo, through the Park gates en route for Popotla, he was also a frequent figure, followed by one or more automobiles filled with ignored cabinet ministers in frock-coats and eager generals, new and old, in decoration-hung uniforms, who had not achieved an audience at his last stopping place, or who had seen Huerta prepare to depart when they were in the middle of a sentence. He let his followers bore him as little as possible.

Even Huerta's fifth or sixth Minister for Foreign

Affairs, Querido Moheno, mutated from a clever but chauvinistic and somewhat turbulent Deputy, and whose ardors Huerta doubtless thought to cool by the responsibilities of a Portfolio, could be seen on the chase.

One of the diplomats told him he looked like Mirabeau and doubtless he wished to save Huerta as his prototype did the Court. Possessing real oratorical gifts, his great head, with its bushy hair, generally thrown back, his small, brilliant eyes lighting his swarthy face, he was perhaps not unlike the great Tribune.

His successor, Portillo y Rojas, thin, pale, well-dressed, anxious, and honest, was less given to the elusive sport of running the President to earth, but even he, as well as the other Ministers, were apt to keep it up as long as breath and strength lasted.

Both pursued and pursuers dashing down the broad avenue remain in my memory as figures with outstretched legs on some antique frieze representing a chase.

All judgments being subjective, the least one can do is to give one's own testimony rather than another's. Some study of Huerta will show him to have been at all moments of his destiny a man standing in high relief against events, imparting color to whatever he touched; something vivid, vigilant, and unafraid continually emanated from his person.

Indeed his dauntless physical courage, in both big and little things, was his greatest natural gift and reacted magnetically upon those about him. It was known that he went by preference to a barber whose brother he had had executed and who had sworn

vengeance against him; yet day after day the Presidential throat was calmly presented to his razor. Another determining attribute was that peculiar, muffled, drum-like cadence of his voice. It was the martial tone and though not loud was as a call to arms. Opinions about what he did and said, as well as what he was, were generally conflicting even at the moment of their occurrence. Time has but further confused instead of clarifying them.

A French diplomat, now safe in what he calls "le port des lettres," said to me the other day, illustrative of divergent opinions as to a happening in the Peace Conference,[1] that during one of the aerial bombardments of Paris, he and a friend, after some hours in a cellar, issued forth to see if the raid was over. It was not, and near the door a man was lying dead. On his return to his cave-dwelling companions he was asked what he had seen. He replied that just outside was a workman in a blue blouse lying dead. His companion, who had looked upon the same spectacle, said: "But no, it was a poilu in his blue tunic." It was the subjective fact, which is as near as blind mortals ever get to the truth, and our only guide as we go feeling our way through life. It will forever be the supreme individual treachery not to hold to it. One may be led into many wrong paths, but they can never be as disastrous as that leading to the abyss of hearsay.

[1] As no minutes were kept of these informal and cloistered meetings, by which the fate of Europe, Asia and Africa was decided, the eminent statesmen attending them could never be pinned down to definite statements. "I didn't say that," or "I didn't mean to give that impression," was the usual remark when reference was made to discussions of the day or the week or the month before. It proved to be neither as simple nor as satisfactory as it seemed at the time.

CHAPTER XXII

The Raising of the Embargo, February, 1914.

Huerta's position at the moment of the raising of the Embargo on arms and ammunition into Mexico from the United States was formidable, from the point of view of "pacificación." He had over 50,000 troops and could get more. He had control of the Federal Revenues, and he saw his way to a substantial interior loan.

The aristocratic classes were behind him, willingly or unwillingly is a detail. The example of Don Luis García Pimental is probably a fair one. In his usual high-handed manner Huerta had exacted contributions, Don Luis having immense sugar plantations. He had replied, "Give me men to harvest and I will give you contributions." Huerta gave the men; Don Luis the contributions.

The clergy were with him, impious as he was, for he represented legality. A large per cent of what we once styled the intellectuals, now more modishly called the "intelligentsia," were with him. So were the rural classes (with the exception of the Morelos Indians, strongly commanded by Zapata), and the lower urban classes, too, wanted peace, peace. Of course the business world wanted it, and was ready to aid in its establishment. Huerta had furthermore been recognized by every great and little

power, whose representatives found themselves treated with courtesy and their demands with consideration. Such was his eagerness to please the United States that he would have decimated a Mexican regiment to give satisfaction for the loss of an American life, had it been asked of him.

Things had not been so promising since the Augustan Period.

His Mexican enemies he could easily have handled. Villa was held anathema by the British. The Benton murder case, with Villa, the murderer, untried, was contrary to all British precedent, which upholds the dignity of its subjects at any cost (which, however, never comes so high as not doing it). The Terrazas ransom matter and the excesses in Durango and in Tamaulipas, the looting of Chihuahua, even at that early date, made all very doubtful if Villa were really "a safe man to tie to."

Carranza himself was at that time quite negligible. He had no soldiers except a few State troops, no arms nor ammunitions, and he had no support from men in the capital who had known him but as a silent and somewhat lethargic senator in the Federal Congress. Señor Rabasa who had sat by him for fifteen years had never even heard the sound of his voice. He was, however, of excellent presence, his face having, indeed, been his fortune. He was nearing the end of middle life. In the warmth of Washington we all know what hatched from that dry old cocoon. Pandora's box is nothing to it. It has been said that President Wilson's horror of Huerta sprang from his own great virtue, but even so he seems, as some one has pointed out, scarcely justified, in the punishment

on circumstantial evidence only of murder, by dragging 15,000,000 human beings into a fratricidal war. As Mr. Wilson's duties at home at that time prevented him from engaging in the affairs of the world, and unfortunately rendered it quite impossible for him to take over the government of Mexico himself,[1] and to carry out his views for the 85 per cent thoroughly in his own way, on the principle that if you want a thing well done, do it yourself, the only reasonable alternative was to let the work be done in *their* way, by a man who happened to be the legal President of his country. According to the constitution of Mexico he was even as legal as Madero, though there were certain superficial differences about his legality that made it less oftener on his tongue.

When therefore on the 3rd of February the Embargo was raised, the Mexicans were committed to a fratricidal war, that still, after seven years, is in full vigor; for only from the blood of brothers could the etiolated being of the Carranza faction gain size and strength to fight the strong central power. The possibility of this hideous nourishment was supplied from abroad. The war that we brought about leading to the triumph of Carranza over the established government of his country is as sanguinary, as anti-social, as destructive of the rights of men and of property as any that was ever waged. It was decreed on the 3rd day of February, 1913, and a free and great and justice-loving people allowed it. On that day there was the usual courtesy, but a gravity in the manner of

[1] The observation of the witty Frenchman was still on the lap of the gods, or rather on that of the Peace Conference, to the effect that though the dictum of Louis XIV had been, "I am the State," Mr. Wilson's was, "I am all the States."

the heads of Missions to whom the American Chargé communicated the fact, in conformity with his orders. In every man's heart lay a great though unspoken reproach. The Spanish Minister, who had been so helpless in face of the cruel disasters that had befallen his nationals, largely as a result of our fancy for Villa, made but a weary gesture of acceptance. It was doubtless to him but one more inexplicable and cruel mistake. The French Secretary was polite, but quite impassive. He was married to the sister of the man, General Rincon Gallardo, who, as Chief of the Rural Guard, was doing admirable work in keeping order. There was indeed nothing to be said.

The German Minister, who was seen later in the day, remarked quietly and very coldly, "Another step to Panama." Later I drove out with Lady Carden, sitting afterwards with her in the parched, new garden of the Legation. Sir Lionel, though perfectly polite, was aghast, realizing the magnitude of the disaster. He was a man of very handsome face and bearing in the traditional, blond English way. Standing at the door, the brilliant light of that February noon-tide revealed the trouble of his spirit. He saw a whole people, by the stroke of an alien pen, being precipitated over the abyss. As a man held in an evil dream, he could make no gesture to warn them from a disaster so avertible.

It was not until evening that the American Chargé was able to track Huerta to the Palace. He drove hastily there to inform him of the decree, in conformity with his orders from Washington. It was about 7:30. The British Minister was with the

President, whose voice could be heard raised in violent protest, the door being half open. The American Chargé thought that Huerta had at last lost patience, and prepared himself for the worst. After a few minutes the interview terminated. The President accompanied Sir Lionel to the door, bade him farewell, and stood courteously waiting while the bearer of the evil news passed in. He was suddenly quite calm, and had never been more polite nor more friendly. He did not mention President Wilson, but said very quietly that the raising of the Embargo would but give a recognized name to the smuggling over the border that had been going on for several years. He repeated many times that the future would justify him and his acts, that the whole attitude of the American government towards him was "una persecución." He never flinched, though his mind must have taken note of the new and probably insurmountable difficulties with which he was faced. On the termination of the interview he ordered the classic "copitas," and said rather pathetically that he greatly appreciated the Chargé's courteous attitude in those difficult days, that he was "muy necessario" to the situation, and that he would still hope for some solution of matters. The interview then terminated, Huerta accompanying the Chargé to the door, as he had done the British Minister. There was no different measure in his courtesy.

Such was the fatal day of February 3rd, 1914.

CHAPTER XXIII

Huerta's Military Ability—His Typical Attitude Toward "Religion" —A Conversation Concerning the Mystical Life of the Indian and the Conversion of Sinners.

Huerta's conduct of the campaign in Morelos against Zapata was marked by energy, decision and considerable finesse, and would have borne early fruit, but for certain mysterious deterrent forces, always handicapping any military plans he made. The Minister of War, Gonsalez Salas, even made the statement, towards the end of Mr. de la Barra's incumbency, that in three days after Madero assumed power the Zapata question would be solved. There naturally followed lively discussions in the Chamber of Deputies as to what that magic word would be, and if it were to be said that it might as well be said quickly.

It was not, however, until to Huerta was entrusted the campaign against Orozco that his military genius became apparent. This miniature campaign, for he never had more than 7,000 men under his command and we are since accustomed to speak of millions of men arrayed against other millions, was, however, a model of generalship; the great military qualities were all shown by him, as well as some foreshadowing the ability he displayed in the greater contest between himself and the President of the United States. His advance from Rellano to

Bachimba in that June and July of 1912 was a series of brilliant victories. He became the "military genius" of the hour, and we have seen how potential is that rôle. His prestige increased from moment to moment. Later the music we all stepped liveliest to in Mexico City was the Bachimba March, where he completely routed Orozco, and the Rellano Waltz, where he had wiped out the stain of General Gonsalez Salas' retreat with the Federal troops, after the crushing blow struck by Orozco. That Huerta and Orozco were one day to lie side by side in the Concordia Cemetery of El Paso was on the lap of the gods.

The curious Fourth of July reception marking Orozco's defeat, that the Maderos held at Chapultepec, had nothing to do with the weighty and august festival of the step-sister Republic to the north. Except by polite and mindful colleagues, we were only incidentally congratulated as we took our departure. The single subject of conversation was the Bachimba battle of the day before, the flight of Orozco towards the American border, and the entry of Huerta at the head of his victorious troops into the Chihuahuan capital. Both the President and Madame Madero were radiant at the rout of the man in whom, not six months before, they had placed the fullest faith. The walls of the Castle of Chapultepec were quite thickly scribbled with writing, yet nobody looked or read.

A strange wind came up as tea was being served on the Pompeian Terrace, designed under Maximilian, bringing with it a short, almost terrifying, darkness. Everything was blown about, vases overturned, there was a great flapping of table-cloths,

a holding on of hats, and it was impossible to follow the President's speech. His last words to me as I made my adieux were, "Order is now complete," and I daresay he believed it, though his astute consort, acting along less psychic lines, must have had misgivings. It was the only Mexican campaign where Huerta had a chance to show his gifts, though he was to manifest generalship of a high order (for which history rather than his contemporaries will give him credit), in keeping, during long months, out of the strategical traps laid for him above the Rio Grande. But no man can escape not simply his fate, but the laws of nature, which work so inexorably that lesser things must be destroyed by greater things and weakness must give way to force. Governmental protection of the enemies of government was his mischance everywhere, from the partiality of Madero for Zapata in the Morelos campaign, to the partiality of the United States for Villa and Carranza in his "American" campaign. And a general must have luck.

A word as to what a somewhat conventional-minded missionary acquaintance called "Huerta's religion." He probably did not "love Jesus," neither would he have called for hymns with "more Jesus" in them had he been at Sunday-school. His true attitude was doubtless uncertainty (not peculiar to himself) as to the essence and shape of the hereafter, mingled with an uneasy feeling that he ought to propitiate whatever gods there be by burnt or other offerings. That he recognized the value of the Catholic church to the Indian, that it clothed in actual form the visions of an Indian race, that he had some instinctive, not theological, knowledge of its supreme

and vital uses in government, also as an element of prosperity and happiness, I have no doubt. He knew, too, that society cannot exist without inequality of fortune, and that this inequality is impossible to support without religion. His enemies, and those of the Church, said he desired to sustain the Catholic party to further his own ends. The Catholic party on the contrary, found that the Huertista cymbals, when struck, were apt to give back a faint and uncertain sound. He was in his usual position, on both horns of the dilemma.

In the night that shrouds his birth, one cannot know if he were baptized in the faith, but he was married in the faith; he had his children baptized in the faith. As the world knows, he died in the faith.

To him the church was as integral a part of Mexico as her seasons, her rainfall and her droughts. He was mostly respectful and conciliatory to the ministers of religion, doubtless recognizing the church as one of the few available rocks on which to build his state; that he was completely uninterested (except politically) by dogma, I also do not doubt. American Missionaries were protected, though not pampered, by him, as a part of his policy towards the United States. He knew their labors would be in the end but as seed sown in the wind. He let them sow.

I myself am often mindful of a conversation I once had on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, one late prodigally beautiful afternoon with an anxious, hard-working, conscientious converter of men's souls, who seemed mystifyingly alien, even superfluous, in that riot of vegetation and human nature which is the

Isthmus. Mr. Smith was small of stature, narrow-shouldered, with a red-rimmed yet righteous eye. There was something arrestingly etiolated about him (though perhaps it was only the background), somewhat as if his Maker at the hour when his being was decreed had rather stingily thrown in the condiments. He didn't like the immemorial way things were done on the Isthmus and he had little solicitude for its beauty.

I (though not especially interested) asked, "What form is your work taking?"

Mr. Smith (authoritatively, determinedly, but somewhat unfortunately): "We're going to teach them, for one thing, habits of cleanliness."

I (surprised): "But haven't you seen them bathing every evening at sunset in the stream that flows through the town?"

I would add for the reader's enlightenment that the entire population, men, women and children, bathe every evening, and without bathing suits either, such is the inherited impulse of the Indian towards water in the Hot Country. All this I indicated, but even more delicately, to Mr. Smith.

He (rigidly): "We want to stop just that sort of thing, and by law, if necessary."

I (feeling brighter than I probably was, and desirous of meeting him on evangelical grounds): "St. Paul says, 'through the law came sin.' Why disturb their innocence?"

He (disregarding this remark, facts not scholastic disputation, were pushing him on): "Another and more important item of our program is to teach them agriculture. Nine-tenths of them (sweepingly) know

nothing about it. We intend to be thoroughly practical in all we do. I've heard they still use forked sticks for plows in many parts of the country, and I've seen them with my own eyes cutting large tracts of grass with pieces of tin."

I glanced at Mr. Smith. His complexion was that of a man who had lived all his life between walls. I further saw that he had pale hands, with narrow-nailed, short fingers, and I couldn't say if his cravat pin were in the shape of a whip or a rather fanciful cross.

"But in Sonora vast stretches are under cultivation, and they even export a huge amount. They'd export everything if nobody were looking," I ended with a smile, but it evoked none from him. He was in earnest. I began to get restless. The theopneustic methods of agriculture, broad as they were, did not really interest me. At that very moment under a dome of aquamarine and lemon, getting indigo and gold at its edges, down by the high, now fire-red, incandescent mud-banks of their stream, women with long, deeply-flounced skirts of white or pink or blue, the end of the flounce caught up at the waist, making an oblique and flowing Tanagra-like line, were hastening to their spectrum-colored bath, accompanied by naked brown boys, long-skirted little girls, and men dressed in white shirts hanging out over their trousers, both of which articles they were ready to discard when in sight of the stream. But Mr. Smith had something insistent about him and I delayed.

He: "To come down to brass tacks, we intend to knock all their superstition on the head."

I: "What are you going to do about the mystical life of the Indian? No one lives by bread alone."

His face hardened.

He: "Mystical life! Do you know I saw an Indian tying a poor little bird to the feet of one of those Madonnas the other day?"

I: "He must have been in pretty bad trouble, and needing help"—(tentatively).

He brushed aside with a single gesture me and the Indian and the bird and the Madonna.

"We intend to foster, it will be slow we know, entirely different standpoints and habits. The Union Publishing houses, the Institutional Churches, the Social Centers will become to them, in time, what the old town hall is to us, places where they will meet and learn to discuss civic and social problems."

In a flash I saw them gathering immemorially, and *not* to the Union Publishing House, not to the Institutional Church, nor to the Social Center, but as for the feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe on a biting, hyemal night (December 12th). Whole families would have come sometimes fifty kilometers, sometimes a hundred, on foot, and many who lived in the outlying villages would have done it on their knees. That crowded, twilight Plaza before the Church resembled little and would continue to resemble little the old town-hall evoked by his words. In that cold dusk they might be their own ancestors, so unchanged were they by four hundred Aryan years. Doubtless Mr. Smith's zeal would have redoubled could he have seen the images in their minds of the "Cause of Causes," for before the Church was built, on the same spot, there was a temple to the Aztec Ceres, Tonant-

zin, their Mother, too. But whatever it all was, it was their own as much as Mr. Smith's own probably non-resemblant idea of the Deity. Again I put out my hand to take leave of him, but still he held me, saying:

"I don't think you quite understand the importance of our work, and the self-sacrifice it entails." (On the *Indians,* I hatefully thought.) "Every American man and woman should take a vital interest in it."

The green fig tree in the garden was become a scarlet-gold. The huacamaia with the red and green head and the blue tail was armored in ruby and emerald and sapphire as it flew out of its burning branches.

It was the strange, synthetic, compensatory hour before the fall of tropical night.

As in a dream and from a great distance his thin voice reached me:

"We are going to make this country over before we finish."

With an effort I answered, for visions of motionless Indians, with outstretched arms, kneeling in dim churches, besought me:

"A country without worship which is the heritage of life and a people whose only treasure it often is——" I was stopped by an invading dismay. He couldn't change the heart of the Indian without breaking it, but he could possibly defeat beauty and love, here on their own ground, and tarnish forever the glory of the "patria chica." I knew then that I was not for Mr. Smith, nor he for me. There was a sure way.

"I'm a papist," I began, but stopped, for startled, he gave me a look such as an uplift worker might give on suddenly discovering a haunt of vice. The edifice of our conversation fell to pieces, like a jostled house of cards.

I contemplated Mr. Smith vaguely, for what I knew was the last time, then forgot him, and went out into the brief twilight, thick and heavy with the scent of an unknown tree in full flower. Sweet, ancient impulses stirred vaguely within me, but they were not for the conversion of sinners.

CHAPTER XXIV

Propaganda as the Finest of Arts and the Most Expensive—Oil—Some of the Blessings of "Carrancismo"—Señor Don Luis Cabrera Shows the Corruptible, It Rises Incorruptible—Oil Again.

Huerta had no propaganda, and in this twentieth century it has shown itself to be the most powerful weapon of offense and defense ever conceived by man. Any one attempting to fight without it is as a man with a sling before heavy artillery. Its operation on the masses is like concealed fire. It awaits but the moment that is its own.

Under Huerta's successful rival it became the finest of arts—though the most expensive. It is a lesson in the way propaganda funds should be handled. Never skimp—after you have taken all you want for yourself.

Carranza was even able for the not over-discriminating American public to create a type. It is the most successful thing he did. At an early day one saw on all sides in Washington and New York respectable Mexicans, rather silent except when speaking of the Constitution, who, as far as nature permitted, became Carrancista in looks as well as deeds. They grew long beards, when they could, were easily thin and dark, and looked old enough to be past the age of follies. When they did open their mouths it was to breathe gently of "Libertad,"

"Fraternidad" and "La Constitución." If they ever raised their voices it was to deplore Don Porfirio's pernicious one-man rule and Huerta's bloodthirsty ways, and above all his horrid, alcoholic tastes, for of course none of them ever drank anything stronger than chocolate. They could get any amount of money, together with consignments of arms and ammunition (which last they generally lost to uncamouflaged bandits prowling along the road between the Rio Grande and Mexico City).

A part of the enlightened press of the country fell before their propaganda. Even the "Nation" showed a tendency to treat Carranza as if he were a saint in a niche, and was ready to sell his relics to the faithful.

The past years have been hard years and we have all sat at school, the school of facts, and the books, alas, have been written in blood; but for all this we still too often mistake black for white, and when we do not happen to be color-blind, fail to distinguish the size or shape of near objects. So convincing indeed was this special propaganda that the "Nation" could print, without a sign of a smile, paragraphs about President Carranza's submitting a law to "clarify" the petroleum situation, when it is already as clear as day to those who are robbed and those who rob, which two categories are fairly inclusive of all who have to do with petroleum. It could also print an interview with the "divine breath of the fatherland," as one of his eulogists called Carranza, concerning the dissemination of knowledge, where he says, among other things, "In the meantime, my government prefers to

give its best efforts to the extension of primary education." The starving, unpaid teachers, the starving, untaught children and the empty school buildings were the facts in the case. However, there was and doubtless continues to be one department of primary (and advanced) education liberally endowed by the government, where the professors are the best to be had for money. This is the education given new followers of Constitutionalism by their private secretaries, and is a more systematic corruption of the green and sometimes well-intentioned, land-distributing bandit from the country than ever was practiced on any crown prince or any plutocrat's son for his moral ruin. He is put up to new and scientific ways of despoiling the people (he used simply to take what he happened to see if it pleased him, and he was not outnumbered). In the white light of Carrancism he discovers a dozen other ways. The secretary furthermore tells him all the naughty and pleasant things there are to do in town. In fact educates him thoroughly for his rôle of Liberator, putting him especially through every tense of the new verb in the Spanish tongue, *carranciar,* to steal like a Carrancista. As to such, however, it has been said since a century that it is impossible to have liberty in Spanish America as long as there are Liberators. These last seven lean Mexican years have amply proven it.

When the "Nation's" interviewer, sitting in a spacious room of the Palace with the First Chief (who had previously given him a "firm hand-clasp, and a pleasant smile," doubtless also waving his benign white beard at him), chirped blithely that he

"would be glad to know what may be expected in the way of irrigation and scientific land-culture as a *result of the impetus, given under your direction, by the Department of Agriculture*"—the italics are mine—the joke was on the 85 per cent, there still was not the ghost of a smile on the "Nation's" face, though it loves this special 85 per cent. Now it is known that one of the results of the impetus given under Carranza's direction was the stripping of the Federal Departments of furniture, books, scientific instruments, records, tapestries, typewriters (animate and inanimate), and that of the School of Mines and the Department of Agriculture, he left but the walls. Neither is what happened to the crops themselves a secret as a "result of this impetus."

But if, according to the propagandists, the situation was so satisfactory, why did so many Mexicans die daily of starvation and disease, to say nothing of bullets? And why could not the First Chief get a penny's loan from any foreign nation on the face of the earth?

Another attractive but cozening cry of the Constitutionalists was that raised about the education of the masses, even in the jolly Pre-constitutional days when the constitution performed any acrobatic feat demanded of it by its owners and exhibitors. It could stand on its head, it could swing by its teeth, and its sleight-of-hand tricks have never been surpassed anywhere or at any time. It was further adorned with the ring of Gyges.

But to return to the matter of dissemination of knowledge under the Constitutionalists: The caption of "a revised system of education, from the

common free schools all over the republic to the national university at the Capital," was what was presented to the American public; and they took it in—not all of them, but enough of them. However, one of Mexico City's own newspapers said: "116,311 children of school age in the Federal District (Mexico City and suburbs) are receiving no instruction at all. This figure, which is all the more significant and discouraging in that it relates to a section which is usually considered the most cultured of the Republic, has been taken from the statistical data just published by the Bureau of Education. There being about a million people in the Federal District, there should be about 200,000 children at school. . . . The school census taken at the beginning of the present year (1918), *which was unquestionably deficient in several respects,* shows an enrollment of 89,689 children who are receiving no education at all. These figures, which offer much food for thought, bring out strikingly the lack of education as compared to former years." This is what appeared after the statement had been seen by the censor.

It is also a fact that Carranza, of naturally sluggish and unreacting temperament where educational progress was concerned, was the only governor who opposed the establishment of schools under the auspices of the Federal Government, when Madero, in the execution of a law initiated in the time of Diaz, was trying to further elementary instruction.

It appears that in spite of the large appropriations for education, which stayed on paper just long enough to permit of the money being got from wher-

ever it was and distributed to the nearest, dearest few within the golden ring, the schools, with such rare exceptions that they but prove the rule, comprised only those kept as national bric-à-brac in the capital to show to the incidental foreign investigator. (This last had replaced in the natural Carrancista evolution the almost extinct species of foreign investor, extinct except in the oil regions, where it still persists in spite of predatory tribes and government fiats, the lowest forms of biological life being notoriously the most persistent.) The facts are that there were thirty-seven fewer schools in the City of Mexico alone than there were in 1910—though the city was never so crowded, for everybody goes to town now, as it is well to be near the seat of the "redemptory rebellion" set in the "crystalline purity of the national ideals."

But in the meantime realities, the "realiora," as Ivanoff calls the eternal absolutes, were that the youth of Mexico City slept in her cold, devitalized night streets, awakened to drink from her filthy gutters, stood about the doors of restaurants, if they had strength to get there, hoping for some scraps from the tables of the "Liberators." It was quite natural that the only ambition of the boys was to become Liberators on the plan they saw so successfully pursued, and of the girls to get to know a little later (not so much later as in northern climes) some of the Liberators. This is what the bright, strong ones, boys and girls, saw as the only way out of misery. The others, and their name still is legion, who are ill and stupid drag out the hungry hours of the day and the cold hours of the night till

they are "redeemed" in another life, or lost in this.

Under Porfirio Diaz 11,000 primary schools were established (and working), and these many schools and the opportunity for education they gave, contributed to the extraordinary prosperity of Mexico during his rule. Now even the past prosperity of the country, by some singular clouding of the perceptions, is held up for anathema and derision.

The two men who succeeded Diaz, Madero and Huerta, also furthered as much as lay in their power and situation the development of public instruction. The past, "the true fatherland," was near enough to fling some of its glory about the uncertain present, and there was in both these men, so divergent in their qualities and their defects, some understanding in one of them, some instinct in the other for the glory of that past, and both had desires, unborn though they were, for the advancement of Mexico. One of these men failed because of his lack of administrative qualities, the other because of blank spaces in his moral being which singled him out for destruction by the virtuous arbiter of the destinies of the United States of America and those of Mexico.

To return once more to the dissemination of knowledge under Carranza. To the suffering of unfed, unoccupied children must be added that of those who in normal times would have taught them. They have been condemned to a misery unknown to their colleagues in any part of the world, even in a world where the most important traditionary act, that of imparting knowledge to the young, is always underpaid. One of the reasons for the depopulation of the schools is the fact that in the majority of cases

the teachers were not paid at all. They had to choose between starvation and the imparting of knowledge to starving children, and some other occupation. The two million and some pesos of the Congressional appropriations for Education could not find their way even to a small number of teachers and schools. Some hand of some Liberator was always waiting to snatch it; for Carranza was feverishly generous in recompensing his friends. Never was any tyrant of ancient or modern times more ready to enrich his upholders than this "everlasting idol of free peoples," as he was called by those he loaded with gifts—they could take anything belonging to anybody throughout the length and breadth of the land.

It has been said by a contemporary Mexican of trained and brilliant mind, now, of course, in exile, concerning the generous habits of the First Chief, that: "If one of his friends wins a battle, he gives him one, two or three million pesos (paper), a fine country house, valued at no less than one million (gold), various town residences in the most fashionable quarter of the town, and a hundred women chosen from the most beautiful and attractive of the Republic. A Convention further expresses its appreciation of his services by a vote of thanks, a medal, a diploma, and a further decree that the victor's name be inscribed in letters of gold upon the tablet in the Convention Hall."

Now, this same man, Señor Bulnes, who knows his country well, having aided in its glories and been witness to its miseries, says further and finally and from the safe distance of the green isle of Cuba: "In

Mexico to steal is to live. Not to steal is to fall into the pit dug for cowards and honest men, the hope of stealing being implanted as deeply in the soul of the revolutionario as the hope of heaven in that of the Christian."

Though over a hundred and fifty millions from taxes came into the hands of the Carranza Government, according to the now known returns of the fiscal year of 1918-1919, the government never, even in words (which are cheap enough), approached the delicate subject of the Foreign debt. Even the shower of gold in the oil districts (where the Biblical quotation to the effect that "the oil hath languished" is not to the point though "the ground *hath* mourned, the corn is wasted and the wine is confounded"), was no incentive to promises. To interestingly illustrate this special propaganda and Article 27 of the new Constitution, why did they not array Carranza as Danaë and put him in the "movies"? The oil wells could have made Jupiter look like the proverbial thirty cents. The god in the guise of an oil well visiting Carranza in languorous Danaësque attitude in the seclusion of the Palace (instead of that of the tower of bronze) would, too, have brought mythology up to date, and incidentally kept interest alive.

Now as to oil: the quite simple facts in the case are that prior to the advent of the foreign oil-devils, the Mexicans either completely ignored their petroleum fields, or had the oozing, horrid indications fenced off so that neither man nor beast, straying, could fall into them and lose his life. As far as the Mexicans

were concerned, that was all there was to what has proved to be the determining factor in 20th Century labor. It was known further to a few pious ones of a studious turn of mind, that it had been used in primal Aztec days to grease the floors of temples. The nation made the strange mistake of considering Madero as the Messiah. He had, on the contrary, been in their midst in the guise of oil, long before Madero was begotten. To-day the wealth of Mexico is measured by her petroleum; together with what a certain syndically-minded "Liberator" has left of the henequen industry in Yucatan, for of the mines one hears little or nothing. Now the only salvation I see, for Mexico, "liberty" and "service," brotherly love and prayer having been unsuccessful, *is* oil, and certainly some consideration is due those who discovered its being and its uses. The oil prophets spent rather a long, dry time crying in the desert. Those timidly following them in the delinquent form of investors had cause during some years to think that the prophets they listened to were false.

Now the oil companies never pretended to be as Cæsar's wife. Mexico, to mix the metaphors and the sexes, was as a difficult mistress, dark, passionate, uncertain and, until they appeared, unknowing of her greatest power. They wooed her in the face of every difficulty, enhancing her charms with such new and splendid gifts that she became the coveted of the nations and, after the immemorial manner, a source of strife. Then peace came to be the great desideratum, the peace at any price so much descried, the joys of love being notoriously enhanced by

relative quiet—if not complete security. The oil men could make Mexico rich, but they found to their sorrow that they could not inflict on her the apparently undesired and undesirable state of peace. They did (and are doing), however, whatever is possible in the way of paying a high enough price to enough "Liberators" and other competitors for her new loveliness, to command it intermittently to grace their fabled orgies in the oil-fields.

These devotees of oil sometimes lost their lives and frequently all their money. They generally worked eighteen hours a day, discovering further that it was no virgin El Dorado they had taken to their bosoms.

Being a liar or a vulture in Mexico is not as uniformly pleasant and profitable as it looks from New York or even San Antonio.

God often chooses strange means to accomplish His ends. The oil companies, slippery with iniquity, not having an "ideal" to bless themselves or Mexico with, and of a natural shamelessness that made them cover themselves confidingly but quite insufficiently with the breech clout of the New Freedom, a drill in one hand, a large bag of backsheesh in the other, yet are the saviors of Mexico.

Nature has a fondness for repairing the ravages of man, returning often good for evil, and rarely forgetting to reward the ill-doer. Her lack of discrimination or even common decency in placing under the Carranza government, at a vital moment in the world's history, the most valuable spot on the face of the earth, thereby enveloping the First Chief's relations to Mexico in mystifying cross-lights, or rather

becoming half-lights, is almost enough to make one lose one's faith in an All-Wise Providence.

Right under the noses of the predatory tribes (in these are included the iniquitous foreign investors, the rainbow-colored brigands, and those preyed on; i. e., the innocent Mexicans and almost as innocent Americans, Frenchmen, Englishmen and Germans) she caused an embarrassing number of oil wells to spout up, more in fact than can be restrained, for the quite exclusive Constitutionalist government. Indeed, it is said that in some places the 85 per cent are even afraid to plant beans, for at the slightest touch of the soil out gushes "el petroleo" and no one wants to die for oil. He prefers to live on it.

But even this was not enough. When Nature really gets going she is always splendid, sometimes terrifyingly generous, and, as before pointed out, she rarely forgets the wicked. The oil flood not being sufficient for the carrying out of her vast ideas, she has called attention to a new and at the same time old source of splendor. In the mountains, in those wondrous, treasure-bearing Cordilleras, fresh veins of ore have been discovered, but mostly lying so deep that only perfected, but, alas, accursed foreign methods can dig them out. It out-Humboldts Humboldt and his treasure house, though he might have changed his simile of "Mexico being like a beggar sitting on a bag of gold," to that of a beggar sitting by a stream of oil, had he written in 1918 instead of 1807.

In spite of all this Carranza's very gifted Minister of Finance used to refer to the money situation strangely enough as "muy delicado," never even

whispering a word concerning Mexico's foreign obligations beyond an indication that the right door is much further north, above the river in fact.

Señor Luis Cabrera has been called the brain of the Carranza Government, and his reason for all things was the quite simple and uncontrovertible one, "La Revolución es la Revolución." He began life as an "educator," in plain words a schoolmaster, after which he studied law and human nature and was, when I met him, among other things, attorney for the Tlahualila Cotton Company, then in straits about its water, which was wanted by the Maderos. We lunched with him at the invitation of Mr. James Brown Potter at the restaurant of Chapultepec, at the foot of the Castle hill, on dazzling, diamond-like noon. He is a small man with dark hair and mustache, and features rather indefinite, after the Mexican way. But there was much life in his eyes, an expression of alertness, indicating an immediate (and doubtless protective) perception of strategic positions and values. He proved later to have a strange, destructive mind, together with the Midas touch, but these were not apparent at the time, at least not to me. He seemed but one of the typical, clever lawyers of exceeding "malicia" [1] (without which the species cannot exist) produced by Mexico in abundance and sometimes called her curse. Long afterwards in New York I

[1] This word, probably the earliest learned by a foreign invester from his indigenous attorney, I would like to explain for those elect having no "interests" in Mexico. It means not only "malice, envy and all uncharitableness" but also shrewdness, cunning and dissimulation. There is even a verb "maliciar" most useful and protective, that goes with it, meaning among other things to "suspect maliciously."

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asked one of his colleagues, whose name I would mention except that it might cost him his house and his life, what were the real qualities of Señor Cabrera. (It was when he had first begun to supply from his own abundant store the deficiencies in the First Chief's gray matter.) He answered immediately:

"Inteligencia mediana, audacia superior, perversidad ilimitada" ("Average intelligence, superior audacity and limitless perversity").

Now the only one of these attributes to whose falseness I can testify is the first. I found him bright, a good deal brighter than the average, so perhaps the other statements are inaccurate too. ¿Pues quién sabe? Though now that I think of it he has since also showed his "superior audacity." From one hour to another he put Mexico on a gold basis. All the precedents which obtain in such cases, even guarantees, were brushed aside with the masterly gesture. . . .

He took no note of the dictum of Huerta's god, Bonaparte, that it "takes many years and skillful ministers to change the financial system of a country." The only difficulty was that everything that had existed before had to be destroyed. The operation was exceedingly painful for about 14,900,000 of the population. I understand, however, that those who lived through are going to recover. . . . And Señor Cabrera himself is as rich as the oft-cited millionaire of antiquity.

There was a hint of the visibly inspired about it all, making one think of St. Paul, for somewhat after the words of the Apostle, "The corruptible was sowed corruptible and it arose incorruptible."

Yet the facts are, according to the American official auditor of the Carranza government, in the somewhat uninventive position of one under oath, that Mexico's debt is 500,000,000 pesos and that a safe maximum of her indebtedness in the future is 550,000,000.

Figures speak and, as in the megaphonic noise of these just quoted, my voice would be unheard, I say no more, except that one cannot call it statecraft, nor even "Liberty," nor yet "human service."

As is evident from these last figures I have been reading in company, I trust, with a large part of the population of the United States, the hearings of the "Sub-Committee of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate." In section one, after reading the testimony of a few ants crawling about and wondering when something would appear that I could see with the naked eye, Mr. Doheny, bearing all the predatory marks, that is, visioned, acute, bold, industrious, inventive, undiscourageable, stepped onto the scene with the free and easy stride of the wicked, and I felt as if I were hearing of deeds like unto those of the first conquerors of Mexico. He, too, came, saw and conquered, not by the sword nor even by fire, and what he, and the very few like him did in Mexico, is comparable only to the achievements of the Spaniards to whom, up to the era of the foreign investor, Mexico owed everything except her loveliness.

He again unlocked her storehouse, turning the key in the fever-ridden, jungle-grown regions of Tampico, in which now flourishes the Rose of the World's Desire, all the nations of the earth beginning and

ending with Mexico having reasons to rejoice. In distant lands those that walked now drive, those that stood all day at machines, or broke their backs shoveling coal, by the gentle pressure of a finger release an incalculable motive power, in a world where everybody and everything are amove. In Mexico itself many that were lean grew fat. When looked at with a free eye, the discovery, or theft, development or exploitation (the fact is so splendid that no epithet can hurt it) of oil is one of the mightiest achievements of man, with the greatest good to the greatest number (though some, of course, get more than others, there being no such thing as equality).

The accounts of the tribute paid to Pelaez, the native Chief of the oil regions, remind one of the tribute paid to the tribes the Conquistadores encountered on their march to Anahuac. Like unto them the oil companies pay not one, but many tribes. There is a slight difference in methods, for nowadays when tribute is to be paid to Pelaez for instance, the oil companies receive a document bearing the ominous, majestic and once happily little-used words: "Reform, Liberty, Justice, Law."

Leaving the fields of fancy, a few limpid facts as to the recent career of the Stars and Stripes in the oil fields may be stated—with charity toward all and malice toward none.

The Carranza government was recognized by the American government after which it was, of course, very rightly upheld by the American government. It even obtained in the United States the arms and ammunition which were used in its campaign against Pelaez, the rebel master of the oil-fields, and paradox-

ically the keeper of order there. Pelaez was compelled to resort to the familiar "aux armes, citoyens" to defend the life and property of himself and neighbors, also of the oil companies. He received the support, which cannot be called platonic, of all shades of complexions and opinions.

The corresponding limpid facts concerning the career of the Carranza government in the oil-fields are: That the Carrancista generals looted the oil camps, stealing provisions and arms, blackmailed the companies, took possession of their boats and automobiles, held up their paymasters and killed their employees. The drillers and pipeline men, unfortunately for consistency, only felt comfortable when in Pelaez' territory. Pelaez exacted tribute from the oil companies of from $30,000 to $40,000 a month, with which to support an army numbering 2000 to 3000 men; doubtless also not forgetting himself and his friends and the friends of his friends. The oil companies seem to have been willing, even eager to pay this amount in return for protection. The fly in the ointment, however, was that they were compelled by fickle circumstance to allege that they were paying it under duress and because of threats by Pelaez to destroy their property, threats which, in fact, were never made. (He knew a good thing when he saw it.) The oil companies approached the American government on this fictitious and somewhat unctuous basis, and the American government, from its uncomfortable perch on both horns of the dilemma, gave its assent to the payment of tribute. That the oil companies have long since lost their

innocence is scarcely a matter for wonderment, though, of course, for regret.

Some of the pipes transmitting the oil would seem to have been run for a time, not only to the sea and to railway stations, but to the rather constricted outlet of the Palacio in Mexico City, where the First Chief and his bright few friends drew it off, unfortunately, into a bottomless pit. This, however, is but a detail.

In Mexico the influence of natural forces (mostly mysterious), rather than those of men, is more potent than elsewhere. In spite of the completely destructive acts of the most predatory of species, Mexico is getting richer every day. Not even the Constitutionalists have been able to restrain the lavish hand of nature.

The motive force of the world is to be determined, as well as many political destinies, by an element found in Mexico in supreme and increasing quantities. It confounds all logic as well as all morality. The just and the unjust will be impartially exalted.

If, on the other hand, to uncover the face of the earth, revealing undreamed magnificences, to bring a fabulous prosperity to its inhabitants, be a crime, to build schools and hospitals and model dwellings (quite after the manner of the Spanish Friars), to cause the land to flow with oil, behind which flow milk and honey, to enrich the nations of the earth, to change the motive power of the world, if all this be a crime, then the oil men are criminals. To one, however, who studies with a free mind the significance of oil in the modern world, it will not be found to be

entirely a record of the unedifying habits of vultures and delinquents.

Of course, Mr. Doheny got rich, and so did his companions and many of his enemies, but so also did Mexico, and never, never did cause and effect, the machinery by which the entire universe, including every act of private life, is regulated, more majestically nor more accurately balance themselves.

CHAPTER XXV

The Tampico Incident—Demand of Huerta That It Be Taken to the Hague—Instead Vera Cruz Is Taken—The Fallacy of Arbitration When It Does Not Endorse the Will of the Strong.

The Huerta-Tampico incident, in the light of the subsequent Carranza Tampico and Mazatlan incidents, appears as a screaming farce. A European who was in Tampico that April of 1914 drew me a diagram of the port, the position of the Federal and rebel forces, and of the dock in the forbidden military zone, approached by a launch from our gunboat in the innocent pursuit of petrol. The story is simple and even artless. Firing was going on at the time between the Federal troops and the Rebels. The Marines, with their petty officer, were arrested by Colonel Hinajosa, acting under general orders to allow no one to approach the dock, and were taken to military headquarters. They were almost immediately released and before the American government could make any demands, General Zaragoza had made his apologies to Admiral Mayo.

But it was the heaven-born opportunity to get rid of Huerta, one of those preordained "accidents" by which just men as well as fools are confounded, the gods having even less regard for the rights of a man than have his fellow-men.

As to the subsequent "serving" of the Mexicans, which followed the Tampico incident, President

Wilson stated, and it has, in the echoing halls of time, a puerile ring not then apparent, "We have gone down to Mexico to serve mankind. We do not want to fight the Mexicans. We want to serve the Mexicans if we can, because we know how we would like to be free, and how we would like to be served if there were friends by ready to serve us."

In this year of 1920, the Reds, knowing we would like to be free, and how we would like to be served, are busily engaged in trying to free us and serve us. We, however, being strong, respond to their friendly efforts by deporting them as fomentors of disorder, overthrowers of our government. The Mexicans were weak and could not deport us, so we finally succeeded in overthrowing constitutional government in Mexico. We can but express the pious hope that, with the help of God, no foreign nation will ever have a chance to serve us to the same extent.

I do not intend to go into the intricacies of the Tampico incident. Anybody can read the official reports of the Congressional Committee on Foreign Relations—Mr. Buckley's for instance—if he is sufficiently interested, or "A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico" (out of which many things were cut on the Pauline principle that "though all things may be true, all things are not expedient").

I only mention the stupid matter because it led to the taking of Vera Cruz in pursuit of the service of the Mexicans. Everybody knows all about it. Mr. Daniels himself has carefully explained that the Huerta-Tampico incident "was different" from all other insults to the flag, notably those offered by Carranza himself at Tampico and Mazatlan, "in that

then the purpose was to force Huerta out of Mexico."

Huerta said to the American Chargé, when he was urging him to give the salutes to the flag:—"This is only one more thing,—what will it avail if I concede the matter? Washington is bent on destroying me."

Later on hearing of the taking of Vera Cruz through the Mexican Sub-Secretary of War, the Chargé d'Affaires was faced with the delicate task of procuring from General Huerta what protection might be possible for American life and property. He went immediately in search of the President and found him sitting in his automobile in the Park of Chapultepec surrounded by several members of the Cabinet and military officers. Huerta wore an austere but not unfriendly expression. The Chargé greeted him with the words, "Señor Presidente, what have you heard from Vera Cruz?" Huerta's look darkened as he replied: "Your Government has taken the port of Vera Cruz. We thought that you were friendly towards Mexicans and would not shed their blood and we further depended upon the Treaty of 1848." The Chargé expressed his personal regrets at the death of any Mexicans and proceeded to talk to him regarding steps to be taken for the immediate protection of his nationals.

Huerta answered that Americans in Mexico were his friends and that the Chargé could rest assured that he would do everything within his power to prevent outbreaks, which might lead to their being injured. He further said that he did not consider that he was at war with the American people, but only with their Chief Executive, who bore him a personal grudge, adding that he did not desire to go down

to history as the President of Mexico under whose administration injury and suffering had come to the friendly citizens of a neighboring state, with which Mexico had been at peace for over 50 years.

He said that he would instruct the press to make no mention of the situation at Vera Cruz in the afternoon editions, that he would give the Military Commander of Mexico City and those of other places within his control, orders to have troops ready to suppress any disturbances. He then gave the Chargé a note to the Governor of the Federal District instructing him to confer with him concerning the protection of American citizens within his jurisdiction. The Governor agreed that the City should be patrolled that night by mounted police and an extra guard was sent to the Embassy and to the American Club. No Americans at that time were assaulted nor killed within the Federal District, nor anywhere in Mexico within the territory controlled by General Huerta's Government.

Any individual crime committed by Huerta, and after the manner of autocrats, in pursuit of their ends,—he would have stuck at none—would have been a thousand times, nay, a hundred thousand times less disastrous than the individual and collective horrors that the service of humanity has entailed on Mexico. That there *are* two moralities, no student of history, or even of ethics, will deny, the private morality which concerns the individual and his Maker, and the public morality which concerns the welfare of the race over which a man is called to rule.

There was a moment when Huerta appeared as the Man of Destiny, preordained in his small, soft hand,

to preserve the legality of the government of Mexico, till one more worthy of esteem should be found. He was quite apparently a man such as appears at times in a country's history to fulfill a certain task, whether he be saint or sinner is not of the slightest importance to the State or to Destiny.

If he be devoured by ambition, sustaining himself by plots or by arms is also a detail; the essential is that he sustain himself and with himself the State.[1] This is particularly true in Latin-America, where once legality destroyed, it is, as we have abundantly seen, the devil's own task to reinstate it. With all its drawbacks, I believe in the rule of the strong (nothing is so disastrous as weakness); it is the only thing that really works out politically, and its application will not destroy what few (if any) illusions the Peace Conference has left me. My only objection is to veiling the application with such words as human service, rights of small nations (*some* small nations), Freedom (new or old), fraternity, or even Democracy, which last has come to have a dull-eyed, been-out-all-night look, most unattractive.

The strong, and quite naturally, have always devoured the weak (the only laws one cannot evade are Nature's laws), and the history, ancient or modern, of every nation that has arisen to greatness proves it. To the victors inexorably belong the spoils, and they always take them, but the process has lately been presented to the public, which is as innocent now as in the period of the Roman wars against the Barbarians, or the Barbarian wars against the

[1] Napoleon to his brother Joseph: "When it is said of a king that he is a good man, the reign is a failure."

Romans, whichever you like, as the "triumph of virtue." No right can dream of existing in visible shape that is not sustained by might. Lovely and eternal truth herself survives but in one way,—by exacting the lives of those who serve her. Touch her ever so humbly, and one dies the death.

Yet her service is more alluring than any other, the death one dies dearer and more beautiful than any life, even as the children of this world rate life and beauty. Her rewards are withheld from her servants, and those who serve her not, are generously, visibly recompensed. Yet she is the greatest of all things, and the heart dilates in the straightness of life, and the soul burns in its cold at thought of her. But only he who giveth his life shall find it, and we all, who have honors or riches to sacrifice, resemble more or less the young man of scripture who was told that to gain the heaven (of truth) he must sell all that he had and give it to the poor, and *"being rich, he was very sad."* Again, why should any of us be proud? . . .

Even before the Huerta mess had been boiled down to the sediment of the "Tampico insult to the Flag," the foreign representatives began to hint about the Hague Tribunal. It was so evidently created for just such things. The Belgian Minister, astute and really desirous of helping clear up an unnecessarily complicated situation, walked about the Embassy drawing-room one day as on air, with an Eureka look upon his face. The German Minister, less mercurial, and not optimistic where things Americo-Mexican were concerned, became, for him, almost enthusiastic, saying:—"Though nothing will come of it, it ought

to be tried." What they said to each other as they descended those honeysuckle, geranium-grown Embassy steps under those dazzling Mexican heavens, I have no means of knowing. Later, when the sword of Damocles fell, in the guise of the Tampico affair, Huerta made a formal offer to submit the matter to the Hague, and abide by its decision. Instead, Vera Cruz was seized. Now I am quite shamelessly on the side of the strong; it is obviously the only side on which to be. Seize anything you want, and hold it if you can, is the framework of international relations. There is at times a little plaster and stucco work done, giving amiable and accomplished gentlemen of various nationalities a chance to dine together in the evening, after they have sat around a green table in comfortable armchairs during the day. But these mild pleasures are only enjoyed when no one of these gentlemen has anything to negotiate that awakens national passion, or threatens commercial policies.

After wars, conquerors do not seek justice, nor any Kingdom of Righteousness, they want, quite elementally, vengeance on the nations they conquer, and who have cost them blood and money. Nations have always committed predatory acts at certain moments of their evolution. Glance at our own history. In the last century, when we were still in an almost sacramental state, the sons and grandsons of the men who were inspired visibly by grace to form the Constitution of the United States, the greatest constructive single work in history, took a piece of territory one-third the size of their own country from Mexico. When the Mexican government, brought to its knees,

tried among other things to make the stipulation that we should not have slavery in Texas when we took it over, Mr. Twist, the man then doing diplomatic business at the old Mexican stand, replied indignantly that he wouldn't even consider submitting such a preposterous proposition to the President.—"Autre temps," but not "autre moeurs." To-day the phrase that we went to war to make the world "safe for democracy" or "went to war to end war" in the name of justice and right is simply comic, with the deep undertone of tragedy that accompanies the hasty though implacable decisions of the strong.

To return to Huerta. If in 1914 we had even conducted ourselves as we did in the war of 1847 which, though General Grant called it an unholy war, *was* a war, and after the immemorial manner of wars resulted in definite conquest, annexation and responsibility on the part of the conquerors, we would have been acting as the strong have always acted and always will act.[1] Our "watchful waiting" methods in 1913 and 1914 unfortunately had all the destructive force of war and none of its manifest advantages, not even its name. We did not assume full responsibility for any part or parts of Mexico, neither did we allow her to be responsible for herself. The reasons for the subsequent disaster are clear. The Treaty of Guadalupe of 1848 was as scrappy a scrap of paper in its small way as was ever seen. Peace, limits, brotherhood, arbitration, were its devices. But when more than half a century later, a President of Mexico was eager to submit the essentially trivial Tampico

[1] In the case of these annexations of 1848, one has seen no trace of "irredentism," which vindicates the act.

matter to the Hague, the most peace-loving of commoners, then Secretary of State, brushed aside the proposal. It did not suit the purposes of our President. It also illustrates in its small but perfectly luminous way the fallacy of arbitration as a measure to peace, when it does not suit the strong; and we might, with advantage to all, bury the League of Nations (which is not even a novelty) quickly and decently and lay a myrtle wreath upon its tomb, rather than keep the corpse unburied, smelling to heaven.

It would seem, furthermore, in the rather bright light of subsequent world-history, that all that personal passion and national greed will permit of control was more than adequately provided for by the Hague Tribunal. Why build a bigger Peace Palace when the rooms of that we once built found no tenants?

However to return to Huerta. He was an Indian from the State of Jalisco, in control of the supreme power, and he acted with his usual fidelity to type. To demand of him that he be something that he was not, of Mexico something that she is not, was quite simply to invite the most evitable political disaster of modern history.

From all time autocratic governments have disposed of their enemies as Huerta was disposed of. A dead enemy *is* more desirable than a live one. Machiavelli recommended it, and it has been practiced since and was before with the minimum of inconvenience and the maximum of result.

Ethical solutions are notoriously irksome in the home and in the state. It is easier to punish a child

because he has not obeyed some arbitrary or foolish command than for his elders to be vigilant and careful as to the kind of command they give, or once given to fit it into an orderly scheme of things.

So in a weak, neighboring state it is a nuisance to find out what is really the matter. Bat them on the head, jail them, sell them arms and ammunition and buy their loot is easier.

Being of pure Anglo-Saxon origin, I have cast off cant with difficulty. A dozen times a day I find myself, even in the curtained alcove of my soul, tempted to call things by names so undescriptive of them that I know the angels weep. Once on the scent of truth, however, it is a pity to stray off.

I have, besides, in company with a few millions of my compatriots, drawn some benefit from the political education received, nearby and far off, at the hands of the chief of my nation. From him I learned of the two measures, and how empty a thing is idealism: there is simply nothing in it. History is a succession of facts, clarified or distorted by the man having most power in any situation. If, as in the case of the United States, complete and undivided power is vested in an individual together with all the billions we can dig from, or grow in, or raise on our national territory to further increase his might, he can pretty well turn the world upside down or change its face. And there was not one out of a hundred million who jumped in front of him when he dashed off with the bit between his teeth, upsetting the European buggy, and running over the American Constitution. As has been aptly said by one of our resigning Cabinet ministers, "Everybody is afraid of

everybody else," and sometimes instead of crying, "What's the matter with Mexico?" one feels like crying, "What's the matter with the United States?"

But at least let us look in the eyes, if we can without laughing, this practical joke that the United States has played on democracy. There is something almost god-like about it.

One of those so-decried limited (or unlimited) monarchies would not make the man looking for freedom laugh quite so hard, nor cause him, at other times, to shed so many tears. In the case of Mexico, Don Porfirio's iron finger pointed to a golden age. The exponents of the new order on the other hand in "their fierce passion for reconstruction" quite simply tore up the railways, flooded the mines, blackmailed the iniquitous but necessary oil companies, sold the crops and the cattle across the border, looted the churches and banks, closed the schools and hospitals, and saw to it that every woman above the age of twelve contributed her mite to the population. In administrative circles of 1920 this sketch of the New Order may appear somewhat breezy, but not so breezy nor nearly so amusing as Mr. Dooley's sketch of our benefactions even in the Golden Age, that I came across the other day. As the sense of humor is the only possession a man cannot be deprived of by Government decrees,—his hope in a future life, his love of his neighbor, together with all his material possessions are easy to take from him,—so easy that it is done every day everywhere, I quote it:

"What's th' throuble in Mexico?" . . . "Mexico, I learn, is a considherable sthrip iv mountain an' homicide or poly-ticks, extindin' fr'm our southern bordher in th' gin'ral shape iv a broken leg. It is

bounded on th' north be th' Rio Grande river, which is navagable be pedesthreens f'r thousands iv miles fr'm it's source an' be th' wishes iv th' people iv Texas, an' on th' south be more throuble f'r th' Monroe docthrine. It's sooil projooces an abundance iv rocks iv all sizes an' it's climate is iv a sandy complexion. It's inhabitants range in color fr'm dark to darker, an' many iv thim ar're iv Indyan exthraction but th' Indyan has not been completely exthracted fr'm all iv thim. In recent years large numbers iv th' young men iv th' land have become pathriotes, or as they ar're called in Mexico, bandits, in preparation f'r a pollytickal career, but many iv thim have failed on account iv bein' too tender hearted whin ilivated to office. Often a succissful Mexican bandit has turned out to be a weak an' sintimental sicretary iv th' threasury.

"Mexicans enjye a republican form iv government, often whin away fr'm home. They have a constituchion which can be found in th' catalogue in th' national Muzeem, in th' departmint iv humor. Th' prisidint is ilicted be th' people on'y he don't let thim know till he informs thim that his predecissor has committed suicide be shootin' himself in th' back. They have no throuble with their ex-prisidints beyond seein' that th' grass is kept cut. In fact, there is no such term as "ex-prisidint" in th' language. Th' former exicutive is ayether spoken iv as "Th' late prisidint," or "Th' remains" or if he survives, he is known as "Th' fugitive fr'm justice." As soon as th' new exicutive has claned up th' office he removes th' rilitives iv his predicissor an' negotyates a loan. Th' Cab'net takes th' oath iv office on Choosday, on Winsday it takes th' cash drawer and on Thursday, whin th' prisidint an his term expires simultaneously, it takes th' boat f'r Paris, persooed to th' coast be th' incomin' administration, who serenade th' ship with gatlin' guns. Thanks to it's nachural aptychood an' our binivilince, civilization is makin' gr'reat sthrides in Mexico, sthridin' in wan day an' sthridin' out th' next. Although niver admittin' thim to th' fam'ly, we long ago adopted thim, an' we have since bin a kin' iv a great brother to thim, offerin' to fight any wan that intherfered with thim fr'm time to time to show thim their place, an' takin' annythin' away fr'm thim that we wanted. . . .

"We flooded their sunny land with th' best flowers iv our civilization, with life insurance agents, an' sewin' macheen canvassers, an' Standard Ile, an' excursions fr'm Ioway to give thim free lectures on th' 'Evils iv th' Bullfight' an' 'Th' Siesta,' their two favorite forms iv athletics. In their domestic throubles we presarved a careful nootrality an' put it on th' shelf in th' panthry. We took no sides on'y askin' cash in advance f'r arms an' ammynition an' insistin' that both parties shud shoot south whin near th' Rio Grande, so as not to disthurb th' Sunday School picnic parties watchin' th' rivolution from th' Texas shoores iv that brawlin' torrent. Natrually they return our affiction f'r them, often unopened. Th' love iv this simple people f'r their gr'reat hearted binifactor is such that Americans who have lived long in that country get th' habit iv walkin' backwards out iv all public places so's not to offind them. Th' prisidint iv Mexico, before th' late prisidint was Gineral Perfurio Diaz. He was a wise ol' red man an' he knew that there's nawthin' so dangerous as an angry binifactor who feels that he ain't gettin'

anny returns on his invistment. So he was always palite to us, d'ye mind, an' he kept us in a good humor be threatinin' his own fellow-citizens, as he often called thim, f'r he was full iv fun, worse than he threated ours. But he grew old, his inimies were all dead, an' public office held no charm f'r him. Wan day he sees a man with whiskers comin' up th' sthreet with a brass band. 'Who's that?' says he, to th' thrusted chief of polis; 'That's th' new prisidint,' sez th' faithful subordinate, reachin' f'r a gun. 'Well, thin,' says Gin'ral Diaz, 'I suppose I'll abdicate,' which he did, out of a window, an' is now in Europe laughin' his head off ivery time he reads a pa-aper.''

CHAPTER XXVI

What Brought Huerta to the American Embassy on the Night of the 22d of April?

What brought Huerta to the American Embassy that night of the 22d of April I shall never know, nor what the thoughts accompanying him as he passed, in his gray sweater and soft hat, through those fatal and implacable doors.

He was a man of much natural hope, and though the passports were lying on a table in the private room of the Chargé d'Affaires, all was not yet consummated. He may still have hoped when there was nothing more to hope, and combinations, cunning and futile, been at work in his brain.

But whatever his sins, were they blacker than the night that awaited him, I must remember him as he was at that moment,—composed of mien, elevated in thought, his heart seemingly ready for what Destiny would be pleased to send him.

He came borne on the flooding of his Fate, and doubtless I saw him not as he was, but as he might have been. After that the tide began to ebb.

I look back on that visit and see it elemental in its simplicity, with something of tribal habit about it.

His external errand was direct as life. From all time rulers have asked foreign envoys to the wedding of a son, bidden the stranger within their gates to

the marriage feast, catching them up in the stitch of the generations.

His errand being spoken, the rest was of equal simplicity,—life, death, and fear, and his words disclaimed rancor toward a mightier people and their master,—his enemy.

Outside was the trampling of horses' hoofs, the Rural Guard, a hundred strong, surrounded the Embassy; there was the clanging of arms and staccato street sounds. The night was sweet-smelling,—of honeysuckle and geranium and heliotrope; a dampness, unusual at that hour and season, hung in the air and distilled doubly the heavy evening scents. Calm as his countenance was and few as were his weaving, undisturbing gestures, I think Huerta was nevertheless invaded by a deep excitement, conscious even to pride, of the huge injustice of man and fate. And though the dark waters were to swiftly bear him into the smaller, less ennobling irritations of defeat and ruin, they had not yet done so. He was still master of his soul, still united to his country's destiny, still stamped with national tragedy. He was without fear and in that moment death, as were birth and life, was but the "fulfilling of the natural law to which we must all submit." His only words to me concerning his enemy were: "He has not understood"—even as they were to be, at the hidden hour of his death, his last words concerning him. . . .

It is no small thing to have seen the ruler of a people at the flooding of his fate and theirs, even though its waters were the dark waters of despair.

And those two pale Aryan silhouettes, my husband and myself, what, in that hour and to that Indian

standing by that life flood, could we have symbolized but the unassailable fact that the weak have no rights when they cross the will of the strong?[1]

[1] "At half past seven an officer appeared in the drawing room, as von Hintze and I were sitting there alone, saying that the President was outside. Von Hintze departed through the dining room, after hastily helping me and McKenna to remove the tea-table. There was no time to ring for servants. I went to the door and waited on the honeysuckle and geranium-scented veranda while the tearless old Indian, not in his top-hat (*'que da mas dignidad'*), but in his gray sweater and soft hat, more suitable to events, came quickly up the steps. It was his first and last visit to the Embassy during our incumbency.

"I led him into the drawing room where, to the accompaniment of stamping hoofs outside, of clanging arms, and footsteps coming and going, we had a strange and moving conversation. I could not, for my country's sake, speak the endless regret that was in my heart for the official part we had been obliged to play in the hateful drama enacted by us to his country's undoing. He greeted me calmly.

"'Señora, how do you do? I fear you have had many annoyances.'

"Then he sat back, quietly, in a big armchair, impersonal and inscrutable. I answered as easily as I could that the times were difficult for all, but that we were most appreciative of what he had done for our personal safety, and that of our nationals, and asked him if there was nothing we could do for him. He gave me a long, piercing look, and after a pause, answered:

"'Nothing, Señora. All that is done I must do myself. The moment has not come for me to go. Nothing but death could remove me now.'

"I felt the tears come hot to my eyes, as I answered—taking refuge in generalities in that difficult moment—'Death is not so terrible a thing.'

"He answered again, very quietly, 'It is the natural law, to which we must all submit. We were born into the world according to the natural law, and must depart according to it—that is all.'

"He has wavy, interlacing, but not disturbing gestures as he speaks. He went on to say that he had come, in his name and that of his señora, to ask N. and myself to attend the wedding of his son, Victor, the next day. And notwithstanding much advice to the contrary by timid ones, we think it expedient to go. The safety of all hangs on his good-will, and it will be wise, as well as decent, to offer him this last public attention. Just then Nelson came in." After greeting the President, he said, rather hastily, 'They have taken the arms away.'

"Huerta answered with a gesture of indifference, 'It must be,' adding 'no le hace' ('it doesn't matter').

"I told him with a smile, which he quite understood, that it wasn't much in the way of an exchange. (As we had taken seventeen million rounds of ammunition, and God knows how many guns

and rifles in Vera Cruz, his haul at the Embassy did seem rather small!) He does not want us to go out by Guadalajara and Manzanillo, and, unless compelled to cut the line, he gives us his train to-morrow night to Vera Cruz, with a full escort, including three officers of high rank.

"'I would go myself,' he said, 'but I cannot leave. I hope to send my son in my place, if he returns from the north, as I expect.'

"I was dreadfully keyed up, as you can imagine; I felt the tears gush to my eyes. He seemed to think it was fear that moved me, for he told me not to be anxious. I said, 'I am not weeping for myself, but for the tragedy of life.'

"And, indeed, since seeing him I have been in a sea of sadness, personal and impersonal—impersonal because of the crushing destiny that can overtake a strong man and a country, and personal, because this many-colored vibrant Mexican experience of mine is drawing to a close. Nothing can ever resemble it.

"As we three stood together he uttered, very quietly, his last word:

"'I hold no rancor toward the American people, nor toward su Excelencia el Señor Presidente Wilson. And, after a slight pause, he added, 'He has not understood.' . . ."

—*"A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico"*

CHAPTER XXVII

Ancient History, Including the Niagara Falls Conference—The Days When Villa's Star Was High—The Carranza Mask—The Clever and Amiable "A. B. C.'s are Asked Into The Administrative Dressing-rooms When the Actors Are Making-up.

Before the appointment of the delegates of the Huerta government to the Niagara Falls Conference, an eye-witness tells me that Huerta entered into a strange, subjective state.

The impasse in his fate was complete. He still had patience and there was an accretion of the natural stoicism of the primitive Indian, but he had little hope. He was paralyzed by inaction and made nervous and "jumpy" by the way the light-hearted, thoughtless boys at Washington continued to prod him in his cage. His eyes, too, were troubling him.

The invitation of Argentina, Brazil and Chili caused hope to revive. It was an improbably possible issue, and he was of a generation still innocent concerning Peace Conferences. After some inevitable cross-purpose workings between himself and his cabinet, three men of standing were appointed to represent Mexico in Washington, Señor Don Emilio Rabasa, Señor Don Luis Elguero, Señor Don Agustin Rodriguez. Emilio Rabasa, tall, dark, thin, disillusioned, is a historian and jurist of international reputation, and was many years in the Senate, where he represented in a scholarly and enlightened way the interests of his country. Luis Elguero had never held public office. Though of the land-owning class,

he was patriotic, cultured, and on his estates continued a system of paternalism that had brought the usual amount of happiness, and furthermore a maximum of security, to those who served him.

Señor Don Agustin Rodriguez I do not know personally. He is a gifted jurist, and no word has ever been spoken against his probity.[1] These three men were, in their country, and after their way, the corresponding type of men that the British Government, the wisest and most powerful that exists, is wont to select for important missions. Neither they nor their fathers before them had been "revolucionarios," probably not even "uplifters." They had lived in the world of visible traditions and responsibilities, once considered worthy of respect. They had never murdered individuals, nor robbed haciendas, nor pillaged the State. They inhabited good houses, adorned with works of art and furnished with libraries. Furthermore, they were conversant with the past history of their country, and familiar with present actualities. The worst that can be said about them is that they were upper-class men.

After their departure, Huerta, though very restless, continually smoking small, black cigarettes, and

[1] A spectrum-colored book could be written on the subject of the practise of the law in Latin-America.

The licenciado, as the lawyer is called, though of a profession which flourishes greenly in all countries, has reached certain typal perfections there, which, however, being climatic and racial, are not to be judged according to the latitude and longitude of Washington. Humboldt, of whom it has been said that he was the only man who ever noted realities concerning Mexico, said:—"Latin-America is one vast law-suit, from Monterey to Buenos Ayres." There was a time when enlightened Viceroys begged that no more men of law be sent out from the Mother Country, and to-day these men, with less responsibility than the administrative classes, much more learning than the lower classes, and often gifted by Nature as well, find themselves in a position of determining influence.

stopping often at the Café Colon, and El Globo for a "copita," entered again into a period of hope. Something was being done. It seemed a heaven-sent opportunity for the American Government to learn something about the ethnological, ethnographical, climatical, economic, political phenomena of that Terra Ignota lying to the south. It was the first chance Huerta had had to send a high-class group to present the case of Mexico to Washington. He and they were willing to do anything, to make any concession, that was consistent with the continued independence of Mexico. It was another occasion when men of good will could have given peace to Mexico.

The whole was complicated by the somewhat hasty invitation to Carranza to be represented at the conference and his equally hasty refusal. But there is nothing perfect, even in Washington.

Before leaving Mexico, the astute gentlemen composing the Huerta delegation, foreseeing that the internal situation, summed up in the "Huerta must go" policy, was what really interested Washington, and that whatever else might be demanded, Huerta's 175 pounds of flesh (or whatever it was) would be exacted, got the promise from de la Lama, his clever Minister of Finance and his closest adviser, that he would resign on the nomination of a neutral candidate. Even more important than the resignation of one man, however, was what was going to happen to 15,000,000 human beings, at the mercy of a wrathful, foreign god.

Villa's star was still high over Washington, but another was rising higher, that bright and evening star, Venustiano Carranza. It put into sharp relief

the blackness of the heavens wherein had been written our promise to Huerta to appoint, on his resignation, a neutral government. Continuing in the light-hearted way, before mentioned, of marauding boys, "cet age est sans pitié," we took no account of the promise we made to these duly accredited envoys of the Huerta government. Even Mr. Bryan is recorded as saying apropos of the matter:—"When you can't keep a promise, you can't, and that is all there is to it." It is indeed all there is to it, as we have since seen, both in war and in peace. It was simply the age-seasoned manner of solving situations between the weak and the strong, and then, as now:—"la raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure."

There seems to have been no idea at any time of appointing a neutral president. It was Carranza, provisional and permanent President, though Carranza's continuous and final attitude to Washington can be summed up in the old saw:—"A wife, a dog and a hickory tree, the more you beat them, the better they be." This method he pursued with complete success.

A word here concerning what I call the "Carranza mask," one of the strangest appearances in the strange history of Mexico. It is nature's cruel joke on the land of the cactus and, one might add, on a regrettable number of Americans, dead and alive.

Huerta's face was dark, flat, cruel, crafty, strong, relentless, and he had a sense of humor, revealed in easy gesture and a sudden brightening up of expression, that sometimes unexpectedly determined situations. Carranza's visage was saintly. All are familiar with it. Benignity breathed from every line.

Could an evil, self-seeking thought find harbor in a soul whose light shone so brightly through the windows of those kind, blue-spectacled eyes? That patient listening ear,—could it ever have taken in the word "politics," still less "graft"? Could not the widow and the orphan have confided their all to him? Would not his word have been better than any other man's bond?

Could this excellent gentleman have cleaned up a town other than with a street sweeper?

Would he have hurt a fly? Much less would he have had the head of General Blanquet severed from its body and exposed on a pike in Vera Cruz. Does he bear any resemblance to Herodias?

That noble stretch of forehead seemed destined for the home of philosophy, in company with philanthropy. Would one have said that the space behind when tapped gave back a hollow sound? That Don Luis Cabrera did his thinking?

He looks, too, naturally voluble. It is recorded, however, that for years his voice was never raised in the Chamber of Deputies. When at last he broke his golden silence, it was in the copper of such words as "if our Constitution forbids us to confiscate, then for a space we will do without our Constitution."

He was, too, made in the large ranchero mold, towering above his compatriots. Would one say that he could climb a balcony with the gayest of Lotharios? Yet, oh yet, if spotless Washington but knew.

In his face and attitude was a general expression of "Suffer little ones to come unto me, together with

the heavy laden." Would you think that he had relieved a large portion of the inhabitants of Mexico of the burden of their earthly goods? He sits with serenity, unacquisitively, slightly leaning back. Could one dream that he was rapacious, tireless? There is absolutely nothing of avidity about his posture; it rather suggests renunciation, refusal:—"*I* take a 'gratificación' for myself or the State? Never!"

Yet no one at the head of any government was ever gifted with such a genius for confiscation. "The greatest amount for the fewest number" has been the motto of Mexico ever since Carranza realized to his wonder and delight that he had found favor in the sight of the administration above the Rio Grande.

Somewhat as Esther before King Ashuarus, that long-bearded old Constitutionalista was found fair, so fair that he could scarcely believe it, until it was proven to him by those first warm embraces of a bewitched administration, over which for a time a chaste veil was drawn. But now the dream is dreamed, the somewhat troubled night is over, a cold, gray dawn has broken and we have to arise and do distasteful things, such as betraying old loves and giving witness that "Might is Right," and that the devil does get the hindmost.

Since 1913 I have got rid of all my politico-sentimental impedimenta, and certainly I have seen nothing since the raising of the embargo on arms and ammunitions in favor of Villa (February 3, 1913) against a government duly installed, to the signing of the so-called Peace Treaty (June 28, 1919) bearing under its heart the seed of fifty wars,

to cause me to restock myself. The garments simply are not cut so that one could be seen out in them. If I am to live in a world of illusions, I would prefer to stay at home, clad in some made-over things of my grandmother's. Those old poke bonnets that she and her generation put on when the sun of reality got a bit hot in the garden of ideals were not unbecoming, and those scarfs were charming that they twisted about their shoulders when they walked in the twilight talking of altruism and humanity (which were still good-form words), plucking mignonette and heliotrope, and somebody would quote from Emerson.

Those were good days when many really believed that "every secret is told" (it was not at all like the tongue-in-the-cheek, open Covenants, openly arrived at), that "every crime is punished, every wrong redressed in silence and certainty." The good gentleman was even able to "put it over" two generations when he stated that "justice is not postponed."

In my early girlhood I kept a copy of the "Essay on Compensation" (large print, wide margins, soft green binding) under my pillow, convinced that it was the Key to Life, temporal and eternal. This was not due to extreme youth, because its dicta were accepted along with numberless analogous things in child-like faith by a great nation, except perhaps by a few political bosses and kings of industry, but they were careful not to tell all they knew. Why, good God, the only things that invariably bring their punishment, and without postponement, are our virtuous acts.

Yet hath my soul seen other things than those

taught by rulers of States and even New England poets: The true "Visio Pacis," swelling the hearts of the elect to bursting; holy enthusiasm, scorching the souls of martyrs; the blessed lamp of sacrifice burning in the dark window of events. Death and love alone are not postponed. . . .

To return to our Mexican muttons. In June, 1914, Villa, the "military genius," acting true to type, when his many differences with Carranza had been, apparently, patched up, suddenly (or slowly) revolted quite openly against his civilian chief, after which the convention of Aguascalientes was convoked (in Villista territory) and the candidate of Villa, Eulalio Gutierrez, was named President. Eulalio Gutierrez' real use in the Mexican political cuisine was to keep the lid from rising off the boiling water till Villa could see his way to holding it down himself. History records a great deal of kissing on this solemn occasion of the Convention, unlimited "abrazos" were exchanged, each one imprinting a further special kiss on the green and white and red flag of the Three Guarantees. When these colors were chosen in 1823 they were meant to symbolize in red, the union of Mexicans and Spaniards in the bonds of brotherly love, in white, religious purity, and green was for independence. One of the usual Mexican bric-à-brac collectors present at conferences is said to have stolen this much bekissed symbol for his private museum.

To return to Villa's star. For reasons that I cannot yet understand, Washington received its rays gratefully, admiringly. "Though a Roman Catholic,

Villa neither smoked nor drank."[1] He "was a safe man to tie to."[2] He was an "idealist."[3] . . .

General Scott was empowered to give him full military honors on various occasions, notably at the famous meeting when American met Mexican on the bridge over the Rio Grande. At a delicate moment he was empowered to gently upbraid him for his indiscreet looting of Chihuahua, Villa having not yet understood, probably had not been able to take in, the measure of the indulgent love felt for him by Washington. When it was whispered to him that he was loved unto death (even unto the death of Americans), and that he was the nearest man to the Presidential Chair at that moment, he is reported to have dashed back to Chihuahua, and had those of his followers executed who had carried out his rash and ill-timed orders.

All these days the tongue was in the cheek of the A. B. C.'s. It must have been great fun; neither they nor the United States stood to lose a penny or their lives. It was to the shrewd and able Latin-Americans an advanced course in North-American procedure, and cheap, very cheap. As a school for statesmen, nothing has been seen like it, except the Paris Peace Conference, where, for the education of the two men forming the omnipotent Anglo-Saxon Diumvirate, in the elementals of geography, ethnology, ethnography, to say nothing of language, vivisection was, by way of easy illustration, practiced on a large part of Europe. The A. B. C. Conference was less costly. Its clever and amiable members doubtless without batting an eye-

[1] Mrs. W. J. Bryan. [2] President Wilson. [3] W. J. Bryan.

lash, even at one another, found they were to be asked to go behind the scenes, even into the dressing rooms of the actors, where they could see how every effect was prepared, how every juggle was made. Their reports to their governments on Washington's procedure must have been epoch-making, and will be useful in twenty-five or a hundred years, when, according to inevitable mathematical progression, the importance of South America in the decisions of the Western Hemisphere will be fully evident.

As all the world knows, the extremely simple results of the Conference were that the Huerta delegates left Niagara Falls, and Huerta left Mexico. The Washington scene-shifters then threw the light of the afore-mentioned bright and evening star over the stage. After that came the World War and we paid little or no attention to what we had done in Mexico.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Presidential Kaleidoscope from Huerta to Carranza.

I

FRANCISCO S. CARVAJAL

Fate, not completely unmindful as to the needs of the "85 per cent" allowed to succeed Huerta, for the short space of 42 days, a man honorable among men where all were not, alas, "honorable, honorable men." This was Licentiate Francisco S. Carvajal, Judge of the Federal Supreme Court, and whose name I first heard when he was made Representative of the Diaz government at the Ciudad Juarez Convention, May 21, 1911. Since then he had, as far as the momentum of circumstances permitted, maintained an independent attitude towards the various factions. The same momentum, however, at last pressed him to the top. He realized soon the impossibility of holding out against the policy of the United States, breaking out always in the most unforeseeable ways and the most unexpected places (the constitutionalists, on the other hand, breaking out exactly where they were expected). Having, too, a decent solicitude for the protection of Mexico City as well as the other populous portions of the Republic from the unparalleled excesses which were characterizing the Constitutional army, Carvajal decided to invite Carranza to take a

pacific possession of the Republic in general and the City of Mexico in particular. To this end he sent General Lauro Villar (a former Maderista General) to parley with the First Chief.

But this "universal heir of the granite-like soul of the sublime Juarez" proved implacable. He insisted on the unconditional surrender of the government, without, however, giving any guarantees himself where that much besmirched goddess, the Mexican Constitution, was concerned. Carvajal, it is told me by one who knew his short incumbency from within, thought at one time of resisting Carranza, rather than deliver over to him without guarantee the sacred person of the Constitution. He still had at his disposition various contingents of the Federal Army, and could have counted also on the sympathy of the "85 per cent," each day visibly less enamoured of Freedom.

At this fatal moment, doubtless decreed from all time for the expiation of Mexico's sins, rather than the uplift of the submerged, he received official notice that the American government demanded his unconditional surrender to Carranza. Not being a madman, nor even a "unique zoölogical specimen," Carvajal saw that resistance would be useless. He was obliged to abandon the city and the Carrancistas entered.

The Carvajal Provisional Presidency was one of the children of the A. B. C. Conference and was born at Niagara Falls. It was almost the only one (and there were many) that lived long enough to draw a breath, and even it was not sure about its father.

It seems unnecessary to go into details as to what

happened when the tribe chosen by Washington, rather than by God, entered the City of Mexico. It was then that the jolly "Pre-constitutional" period was really inaugurated and the demise and burial of the Constitution became an accomplished fact. With the Constitution, side by side in the same grave, after its annihilation, which was almost immediate, lay the legislative bodies, those of the courts, the social and religious life of Mexico and of the country's financial and credit system. The ruin was complete. Not only Huerta had "gone," but for the time being everything else in Mexico except its geographical position, above which the heads of what is still left of the submerged 85 per cent can at times be seen swimming around in the oil. It reminds one of pictures of the flood in family Bibles.

II

EULALIO GUTIERREZ

December 13, 1914, to January 29, 1915.

Eulalio Gutierrez first came to the attention of the upper few as a dynamiter of bold and inventive capacities. In lower circles he had been known as a hanger-on at an American mining plant, doing in a dense and heavy way the least amount of work compatible with his presence on pay-day. From this somewhat obscure, even protoplasmic condition, he evolved rather quickly into the more complex organism of a Carrancista General, his next recorded organic change taking place when, according to Mexican laws of evolution, his species began to

differentiate itself from other types of Constitutionalists. His final mutation was into the Chief Executive of the Mexican nation, in connection with the Presidency of that short-lived body, the Aguascalientes Convention,—while waiting for Villa to mutate in the same way.

He was a broad-shouldered, bull-necked, heavy-paunched, small-headed man, with very long, hanging arms and a dark and terrible eye. He moved heavily, but was expansive both as to wine and women. He dwelt in a fine house in the Paseo de la Reforma, confiscated for the purpose.

Among reforms proposed by him was the use of the Guillotine rather than the firing-squad, the waste of ammunition on individuals having got to be excessive.

The dark chronicles of his rule tell of mysterious disappearances, sudden stifled cries in the streets at night, volleys towards dawn; and "get out that I may get in" was the order of the day.

The Sovereign Convention clipped no wings. Article four expressly and at the same time broadly stated, that the Chief Executive could only be put out if he decided any measure of high political importance without letting the others know. It was a sort of super-constitution. "Liberty, Justice and Progress" was the banner-cry.

On January 29, 1915, Eulalio Gutierrez abandoned Mexico City, Villa being then in sight of it. He was accompanied by his general, Lucio Blanco, young, pale, smartly dressed, uninterruptedly amorous, and ten millions from the National treasury.

III

GENERAL ROQUE GONSALEZ GARZA

January 30, 1915, to May 30, 1915.

The story of this President of Mexico reads somewhat as a fairy tale. He is remembered gratefully alike by Mexicans and foreigners in Mexico City. He was once in the Villista ranks. His mutation from a Villista general into the Chief Executive came about through a union of Villistas and Zapatistas against Carrancistas. On his arrival at the Presidency at the age of thirty-five (Fate having caught him young if not innocent) he discovered that his political parents, who were also his military subordinates, were insisting on exercising their time-hallowed rights to destroy life and property. Furthermore in the Convention then being held in the Capital, a group of Bolshevist theorists, led by Soto y Gama, were busily engaged in weaving a neat but gaudy program to confiscate property, take over all public utilities and establish a socialist state. Roque Gonzalez Garza, with a courage that only those who resided in the city at the time can appreciate, curbed for a while the activities of both the army and of the Convention. He even went so far as to espouse the cause of the people of Mexico. His unpopularity with his party increased, of course, in direct ratio as he showed an interest in the welfare of the people in general and the inhabitants of Mexico City in particular.

The Convention tried to depose him. He was

threatened with assassination, and was even attacked by a Zapatista general and two hundred or three hundred followers, in the early hours of a spring morning, at the Sanz Hotel where he incautiously resided. He was not killed and is now enjoying the rewards of Mexican virtue, exile and poverty, in San Antonio.

In spite of his integrity, his courage enabled him to continue to dominate the situation for several months. The times were not propitious, however, for such a man, and to the regret of the inhabitants of Mexico City, he was finally obliged to wing a hasty flight from his high position.

I give but one incident of his administration, demonstrating his complete unsuitability for office.

The Zapatistas on entering Mexico City had murdered an American by the name of MacManus, who owned a real dairy (not a powder factory) and having cows that gave milk, on the outskirts of Mexico City. Gonzalez Garza unwisely investigated the matter, with the result that he awarded the widow 100,000 pesos, the equivalent at that time of $20,000 American money, and saw that it was paid to her out of the Treasury.

This is the only case of reparation having been made for the murder of an American during the Revolution. Exit, on the run, of Roque Gonzales Garza.

IV

LICENTIATE FRANCISCO LAGOS CHAZARO

July 31, 1915, to October, 1915.

Licentiate Francisco Lagos Chazaro succeeded him, having been decreed President of Mexico by the "Sovereign Revolutionary Convention." He was from the State of Vera Cruz. A compatriot says of him that he was "muy vivo" (very lively, or very cute, as you take the word classically or colloquially), with a bright eye, using many gestures, and the words "Libertad" and "La constitución" were often on his lips. I leave the reader to fill up the gaps in delineation.

These three gentlemen, however, were but chance beads on the long thread the Gray Sisters were busily spinning, for from August 20, 1914, Venustiano Carranza, First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army, was in charge of the full and complete executive powers. The sequence of events alone demanded that they make an appearance till it was quite safe for the First Chief to come to Mexico City.

But the links in the chain are incomplete unless we go back to the fateful date of March 26, 1913. Since that day Carranza and his friends had lived by the light of the Plan of Guadalupe, the light of which lamp, however, would not long have shone before them, had it not been kept trimmed and burning by the super-flumine "Champion of Constitutional Government on this continent."

It begins thus:

"I, Venustiano Carranza, have seen fit to decree the following (there are seven articles but the first is so inclusive, as well as exclusive, that it is the only one we need quote): 'The plan of Guadalupe of March 26, 1913, shall subsist until the complete triumph of the revolution and, therefore, Citizen Venustiano Carranza shall continue in his post as First Chief of the Constitutionalist revolution and as *depository of the executive power of the nation,* until the enemy is overpowered and peace is restored.'" It is extremely elastic, except that phrase which made him the depository of all the powers though, alas, not of all the virtues of Mexico.

CHAPTER XXIX

Huerta's Imprisonment—His Final "Going."

The story of Huerta after he had been arrested in attempting to enter Mexico to head a revolution against Carranza, and charged with breaking the neutrality laws, runs as follows, and is brief and bald and terrible as Destiny in her most careless moments.

It was on the afternoon of a sultry July day in the Federal Court room in El Paso that Mr. Tom Lea, his attorney, first saw the "silent old warrior," as he calls him, advancing with outstretched hand, courteous manner and a long searching gaze.

He had been arrested a few hours before at Newman Station, eighteen miles northeast of El Paso on the Rock Island Road, as he stepped from the train to greet General Pascual Orozco. These two men, once victor and vanquished, at last fatalistically to involve each other in death, were then arrested, together with Huerta's two sons-in-law and General Caus, an octogenarian and inocuous son of Mars, and thrown into the common jail with men of various colors and crimes. A cash bond of $15,000 was made for Huerta, $10,000 for Orozco and smaller sums for the others, after which General Huerta was temporarily released from custody, though kept under the strictest surveillance by United States officials. The next day, however, orders were received from

Washington for them all to be taken again into custody. Orozco escaped shortly after his arrest, forfeiting his bond. An attempt was made by Huerta's attorney to have Huerta freed on a larger bond than the first. He was, however, told by the government authorities that Huerta would under no circumstances be released. Habeas Corpus being the only remedy available, he was advised of his rights, but in that imperious way of his he answered, "Get these other men bonds, and they can keep me, for I will go when I wish." Probably in his Indian way he felt as did Ulysses, when, striking his breast, he chided his heart, saying: "Bear this, too; thou hast supported greater things." He did not know it was the end.

A few days afterward he was removed to Fort Bliss, seven miles from El Paso, and put into the abandoned hospital,—a civilian prisoner, in a military cantonment, with a guard of six civilian secret service men, and furthermore under bond.

His wife and children, his two old Indian sisters and other members of his family, came to El Paso soon after his arrest. Every day towards evening they would go out from the city, with something of tribal dignity about them, to visit the captive chief, and take him little offerings. They never saw him, however, except in the presence of his jailors. The mutual affection and devotion of Huerta and his family was most touching. To the usual Mexican marks of respect for the head of the family, was an added measure of reverence for one so unfortunate and so patient, all realizing that "the things which

before his soul would not touch, now, through anguish, were his meats."

Señora de Huerta had rented a modest, two-story residence on Stanton Street, which is all there is to the legend that Huerta, his pockets full of money, or rather his wife's pockets full of money, had bought, among other valuable real estate in El Paso, a large apartment building.

In the meantime, Huerta remained in the abandoned hospital; it was cold and damp and meagerly furnished. He became ill and was transferred, in company with his guards, to one of the small four-room cottages originally built for officers. His way of life remained unchanged. He took little exercise, eating scantily of the unaccustomed food, and whatever may have been his "copita" practice in the days of his power, it is recorded that during his incarceration he drank no brandy nor spirituous liquors of any kind—neither did he ask for any. All this time he is said to have been the soul of wit and courtesy, showing himself well versed in world-politics, deeply interested in the Great War in general, and in France, the country of Bonaparte, in particular. His stoic Indian fatalism was very much in evidence, though an ironic sense of humor caused him to bewail at times that he had been fool enough to let himself be taken prisoner.

Sometimes, in company with his guards, he was allowed to go to the army tent of Father Joyce, Chaplain of a regiment stationed near. He used to call it "the parsonage." On a mesquite stick for a pedestal was a little statute given to Father Joyce by

Señora de Huerta,—a copy of the Moses of Michael Angelo.

"There," said Huerta, when he first saw it, "is something to laugh at. After they put me out of Mexico, they came up against anarchy and barbarism. Here again may be barbarism in Texas. Moses in marble with the ten commandments on his lap on a mesquite stick in a tent! Look out, Father, the wind may blow against the tent, the tent may fall against Moses and down he may tumble and you will be accused, as I was, of breaking the ten commandments all at once."

He would spend long hours standing on the veranda of the little Fort Bliss cottage, looking towards the Mexican horizon, and he talked much of "mi pais." Sometimes in speaking of his own and Mexico's misfortunes, he would say: "I failed because I was obliged to try the impossible. Mexico cannot live without the favor of the United States, or, at least, without the enjoyment of its indifference. I had neither." Often, too, as he stood looking to the south, he would paraphrase Lerdo's famous remark, saying: "Would that the desert between Mexico and the United States had remained a desert—and that the friars had never brought donkeys from Spain!"

At night his pleasure was to watch the stars shining above the Southern horizon. He was well versed in astronomy, and the great processional of the heavenly bodies, which he would hail by name as the seasons brought them into view, seemed to give him solace. Often he would get up in the small hours of sleepless nights and watch them in silence from the narrow veranda.

Whatever the impatience ravaging his breast, he betrayed little of it, beyond occasionally asking his attorney if he were not soon to come up for trial.

After a few months, however, a great physical change was apparent in him. He grew thin, almost emaciated, became very nervous and ill-at-ease, starting at the slightest sound. It was doubtless at this time that Huerta realized with an intuitive realization that permitted no self-deception, that he was lost, his power vanished, his cause dead. Being thus done with hope, the physical ill that might, in other circumstances, have been held in check, took an unresisted course. The hour of his arrival in El Paso had been again the hour of destiny, his and his country's ringing loudly in the old Indian's ears. They were both caught in that same destiny.

Huerta should have died at Vera Cruz, or even in Mexico City. An assassin's arm or a foreign bullet would have been equally propitious to his renown. But, as in his life events were untoward, so in his death. He was to die as one guilty, before so proven, showing how unescapably each accomplishes his destiny in its intrinsic form to the end.

The continual presence of his jailors wore on him greatly, for he had, like all men of his race, a need of solitude. They had become much attached to him, and rendered his imprisonment as easy as possible, but their orders were never to let him out of their sight, day or night. Though he continued to joke with them in his few words of broken English, it was evident that he was failing. His priest and his attorney, becoming alarmed, advised the au-

thorities of his condition and protested at his further confinement. For some weeks, however, they could get nothing done, and he gradually grew worse, lying on his cot the greater part of the time, with his face turned to the wall.

It was tragedy, grim, antique—the vanquished in the hands of the victor, and as always—woe, woe to him!

Hope, health, desire to live had finally departed from him. We who have seen many men of many countries in captivity can picture well the faded passion of the look that lay upon his face.

No man knew better than Huerta that death is nothing in itself, "for all submit to the natural law," both in their coming and their going, and the manner is the same for all, but to live the daily death of the vanquished, the unconsidered, and the captive—for that he found no fortitude.

Huerta's attorney conferred at last with Judge Crawford, then Assistant District Attorney at El Paso, telling him that the General was so ill that recovery was improbable, that it seemed outrageous that he should die in confinement, every failing breath watched by jailors. Judge Crawford accompanied Mr. Lea to Fort Bliss. It was only too evident that the old Indian was gravely ill. They telegraphed to Judge Camp, the District Attorney at San Antonio, and word was received to release General Huerta on his personal recognizance. The United States Commissioner, the Deputy U. S. District Attorney and Huerta's attorney then repaired to Fort Bliss and this was taken in a further sum of one thousand dollars, after which he was removed to

the little house on Stanton Street where his family received him.

It was here that he made his will, leaving his bond, which amounted in all to $38,000 and was the only thing he possessed, to his wife. This she never recovered, and is living in poverty in Havana. Part of the bond was claimed by counsel, part went to bondsmen for the protection of the bonds of Pascual Orozco (which was, of course, forfeited), and Fuentes and Quiroz, Huerta's sons-in-law, and others. The remainder was lost in favor of the government of the United States.

It was at this house, too, that Fate was to make the most grotesque of all her gestures where Huerta was concerned, reminding one of "grand guignol" performances, of penny dreadfuls. It would have been even indecorously melodramatic, had it not been her way of pointing Huerta from the human stage, the always august act, whatever be its form.

On a bitter January night, a large man with thick, black whiskers, speaking excellent Spanish, knocked late at Huerta's door. He was admitted. He told Señora de Huerta that he was a physician and a great admirer of her gifted and persecuted husband. He asked to examine him, after which he stated that unless an immediate operation was performed, in thirty-six hours he would be among the dead. He so alarmed both Huerta and his wife that they consented to the operation that same night. The black-whiskered stranger then made two abdominal incisions, without anesthetics, and furthermore did not sew up the wounds; after which he returned to the night of mystery from whence he came. Huerta died

three days after the fantastic and fatal occurrence. . . .

So much for his body. The disposition of his soul, too, belongs to history.

During his captivity, he partook frequently of the Sacraments of the Church. He would seem to have known something of that third stage of man's spiritual journey, which is reconciliation, after those others,—innocence and deviation, for he died in the fullness of the faith in which, under the glittering Jaliscan sun, he was born. What its meaning was in his Indian soul who shall say? Nor what the images of repentance and hope it called forth.

He who reads all hearts alone knows if the years of deviation were blotted out.

Huerta was doubtless guilty of many things. Was he a criminal? He was pursued by fate as was the family of the Atridæ, sharing in the crimes, not of the gods, but of his country. Yet he paid his price in full into his enemy's hand, and any man who has so paid takes on again the first dignity of his being.

Mexico, too, has paid in full, and though the evil deeds of the weak are unpardonable, shall we not show some virtue in our own strength? . . .

It was on the night of the thirteenth of January (1916), shortly after eight o'clock, that Huerta's attorney was called by telephone to the house on Stanton Street. It was only too evident that the old Indian lay on his death-bed. His face, which had become very small, was gray with that strange Indian grayness preceding dissolution. His eyes, once vigilant and restless, were dull and quiet.

Kneeling about the narrow bed were his wife and children, and his two old Indian sisters. His wife still beautiful, and beloved by all who knew her for her virtues and pitied for her misfortunes, had not ceased during many hours to recite the sorrowful mysteries of her rosary. His daughter Elena, who kept his hand pressed closely in hers, had a voice of exceeding beauty, and at intervals would sing familiar hymns of the Church and songs of the Patria whose soil he was no more to tread.

A Mexican priest and an American army Chaplain knelt near continuing to absolve him. The final and majestic words of the dismissal: "Go forth, O Christian soul, from this world, in the name of God the Father Almighty who created thee," made of the lowly room a mansion-hall. . . .

Outside, in corridor and vestibule, were friends also fallen from high estate, partakers of his misfortunes and of their country's. In the street were many Indians in prayers and tears, for it is recorded of Huerta that even in his poverty he was never too poor to dispense alms. . . .

Towards the last his wife entreated him to make the famous "statement" that he had so often promised. But he answered her: "No, to what end? I die at peace with God and man. I forgive all who have injured me—most fully the President of the United States, *for he never understood,* and I ask pardon of all whom I have wronged. The rest I leave to God, into whose hands I entrust my poor family." After this he became restless, twitching at his covers, muttering indistinctly, in evident solicitude for his wife and children. Once they caught the words:

"If any money is ever realized on anything I possess, let the poor have a share."

Then raising himself slightly, he begged his daughter to sing again, saying, "Thy voice is like an angel's voice."

Shortly afterwards he entered into the death-agony. He spoke only once more and the words were very simple, "todo por los pobres" (all for the poor).

A few minutes before nine o'clock he passed away, his face turned to the South. . . . Huerta had "gone." . . .

By a curious coincidence it was on this night that a mob, numbering several thousand, surged up and down San Antonio Street, the eighteen dead bodies of the San Isabel Massacre having arrived at six o'clock from Chihuahua. Another massacre, which, as an eye witness said, looked as if it were going to shame that of St. Bartholomew, was averted by City-police Captain Hall and two provost guards, who, with drawn revolvers, held the crowd at bay on Broadway Street, on their way to the Mexican Quarter of the city. This act turned the heads of the mob back towards San Antonio Street, giving time to rush soldiers to the center of the city, who there dispersed the crowd, which had meant to kill and burn in retaliation for the murders at San Isabel by the "idealist" Villa, once considered "the safest man to tie to." . . .

On the second day after his death the mortal remains of ex-President Huerta were carried as quietly as possible to the Concordia Cemetery, east of the city, where they were placed in a stone vault beside

those of Pascual Orozco, who had been shot and killed by the Texas Rangers, a few months before, near Van Horn, ninety miles from El Paso.

Father Joyce, the priest who had anointed him for his last journey, and Mr. Tom Lea, his attorney, were the only Americans in the little gathering that heard the heavy, iron-grated door close upon the form and features of Huerta, crushed at last by what he had been wont to call "el Coloso del Norte." . . .

His end was as the end of many men of history, who at their birth and their beginning have received, with many gifts, many defects.

But in the pitiless Northern light flung about his person and his acts, separating him from the determining virtues and failings of his race, as the spotlight does the single figure, only his defects were visible. Yet he possessed some intrinsic qualities, making him perhaps worthy of his disasters. . . . In the end he was even to outrun the law's delays, leaving his unjudged case to the mercy of history. . . .

What was to be, had been. Huerta "gone,"—and gone with him the last shred of legal government in Mexico. . . .

And who shall restore to Mexico "the years which the locust and the bruchus and the mildew and the palmer-worm have eaten?"

THE END

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