

Regeneration

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Wherein Mexico's True Power Lies

"All we ask is that from this great banquet, spread daily and with unending patience by nature, man no longer be debased. All we ask is that each be given equal opportunity to work, and that none be granted special privilege, for then everyone will receive the full product of his toil. It is a just claim, being that for which the noblest and most intelligent have striven since literature began. It is a sensible claim, inasmuch as it would release mankind's fettered activities, and banish for ever want and the fear of want. Being both just and sensible it should be asserted unflinchingly and enforced without delay." Having written which I went down town, to pass a busy day. When I returned it was with the depressing thought that, for most of those I had seen, I might as well have written Greek.

So far as I can see, the crowd that patrols Broadway daily, staring in at stores which ransack the labor markets of the world, cannot understand the sentiment I have written, and, therefore, cannot be expected to struggle for it. Of work such people know nothing, and if you called on them to organize for the satisfaction of their own wants they would be as helpless as a stranded whale. Among the women "busy" shopping you would find many to whom the loss of an expert maid would be a serious matter and the robbery of a diamond necklace a tragedy. Such people are as far removed from the actual facts of life as if they were living in Jupiter, and you have only to consider their case to comprehend how gigantic is the task an economic revolution has before it.

Running through the business blocks the same conditions face one, although veiled under an illusion of energy that is most deceptive. Indeed the men are very busy; not in the making but in the taking of wealth, which is an entirely different matter. To one of these—an old fishing comrade and now successful lawyer—I deplored the fact that a certain lumber company had stripped a most beautiful district of every stick of timber, and he replied; with some heat, that the company had bought the land and was entitled, if it chose, to dump it in the sea. His reply seemed to me typical of the strenuous crowd which occupies the sky-scrapers on which we boast ourselves. To every one of them business is business; stocks are stocks, no matter how acquired; real estate is real estate, no matter how obtained or utilized; the world is a money ball and individual title deeds the only things entitled to respect.

The ladies shopping on Broadway, and the men struggling to enable them to shop, are paragons of virtue—in their own eyes at any rate. They never figure in the police courts; they never sniff the calm of what we are pleased to call the "noble police." Indeed their conversation runs largely on the vices of the poor, and particularly of that section of the poor which is becoming restive. Their pictures figure largely in our papers, and it is interesting to note the air of self-content, or stern probity, they invariably wear. Contrast them with, for example, a cut representing I. W. W. men who have been guilty of speaking in the public streets, and you will see that newspaper men know who rule the roost. Mighty few of these people are yearning to be put on a footing of equality, and I opine that the men would be about as useless as the women when called on to do their own production. They do not want a co-operative commonwealth of any kind. They live by the sweat of their hands, converted into coin in their pockets, blaze as medals on their chests, or adorn the arms, the necks and cuffs of the haughty and useless women of the bourgeoisie class.

This energetic attitude on the part of the Mexican proletariat is keeping the Madero government on the look-out. Ministerial council meetings for the consideration of the Social Problem succeed one another repeatedly. When the worker humiliates himself to the point of asking, as a kindness or favor, for that which belongs to him in justice, the rich, the politicians and the governments smile and mock at the coward; but when the shout of courage and revolutionary action take the place of groaning supplication, the proud, the powerful, the haughty find themselves compelled to loose their grip of those who for centuries have been their doleful victims—the humble. (From the Spanish of Ricardo Flores Magon.)

got into such a complicated tangle that we cannot organize for action. Each sees only his particular steps in the universal treadmill. It is the old story of Alexander and the knot, which, sooner or later, we shall have to cut.

Turn to the Mexicans and a different picture presents itself, the first noticeable feature being that the people are exceedingly natural and simple. Left to themselves the men would till the soil and get themselves all their comparatively simple wants demand. Left to themselves, the women would attend most assiduously to the rearing of their children, and to those duties which, under the old regime, fell to woman's lot. They do not wish to pass their lives in unceasing toil for others; but they are perfectly willing to work for themselves, and, under normal conditions, they will absorb and utilize for their own good all those mechanical contrivances man has invented in the hope of lightening his toil. No office in this city, for example, can show better and quicker type-writing than is done in connection with "Regeneration," and I have yet to find a Mexican woman who is not eager to acquire and operate a sewing machine. There is no desire to escape work; there is no desire to work with any but the best and latest tools; there is, however, a strong desire to work for themselves and to put in their labor on the real wants of life. Such a people can organize quickly and effectively because the ends for which it organizes are simple and because it knows precisely what it wants. We cannot so organize, because our life is highly artificial, and large sections of our citizens have needs and habits only slavery can satisfy. We can, and we do, make a most hideous uproar; but we cannot make a revolution, because revolution means re-organization, and for this the very complexities of our social structure render us as yet incompetent.

Yucatan is the southernmost State in Mexico; it has been peopled by Yaquis and Mayas, exported there under the Diaz regime. The State has been given over to the growing of hemp, shipped to this country by a few gentlemen most of whom are millionaires. If you or I lived in Yucatan we should have to grow hemp for those gentlemen, on the terms they chose to give us; and the point is that, to our commercial age, such a social arrangement seems entirely legitimate and proper. To those who have writhed beneath the planter's whip, however, it has been most unsatisfactory, and of late they have been setting fire to the plantations, that they may return to the production of what they actually need and become once more masters of themselves. It is a simple idea, and the program by which it is being put into effect is simple. I submit it as a good illustration of the ease with which a natural people can organize for the satisfaction of its natural wants; as the one substantial reason why the Mexicans find action easy while we are compelled to waste our energies in talk. That they have not carried their revolution already to completion is not their fault; but that of alien forces, resolved to force on them a civilization which produces \$900,000,000 Rockefeller and the army of social outcasts that throngs our city slums and clouds our highways.

WM. C. OWEN.

THE GOVERNMENT TREMBLES

Governors, politicians, bourgeois—all of them are on the trot, seeking means of pacifying the Mexican proletariat. They find only one—the repatriation of the lands. All—governors, politicians, bourgeois—have understood, at last, that the disinherited Mexican can no longer be entertained with words. The proletarians have real hunger, physical hunger, and they do not take to talk. The word "liberty" has no meaning for them, when their hearths are fireless, when their women shiver under filthy rags, when their children cry and sob for bread in every corner of their pigsties. The terms "Elective Suffrage," "No Re-election," "Liberty of the Press," "Right of Assembly," etc., etc., have no value for the man who, bent over the furrow, knows that the land he fertilizes with his sweat does not belong to him; nor for him who, trowel in hand, lays the bricks of the building in which he will never dwell; nor for him who, breathing the deadly air of the shoe or factory, has taken stock of the fact that what his hands create is not for him or his; nor for him who, with the mountains above his head, has convinced himself that the ore he tears from the rock will clink, when converted into coin in his pockets, blaze as medals on his chests, or adorn the arms, the necks and cuffs of the haughty and useless women of the bourgeoisie class.

"The enemies of the oppressed always hasten to employ violence, organized and merciless, and it is useless to throw kisses at a gatling gun in action. The whole question of force needs to be discussed carefully, and not in the state of mind of a Parliamentary election contest." ("Freedom.")

While Armies Rest New Storm Is Gathering

When American and other plutocrats bought Mexican land by the hundreds of square miles did they ask what right the vendors had to sell it? Did they ask how it was that a few were able to dispose of principalities? Of course they did not. They took their alleged titles knowing them to be absolutely rotten. They knowingly made themselves partners in one of the most gigantic crimes on record. By every principle of justice they certainly should not be upheld by American bayonets.

Apart from the guerrilla warfare, which goes on throughout Mexico without cessation, the past week has produced little actual fighting. Our latest reports—dated June 4—are to the effect that the federal army has abandoned its projected attack on Chihuahua City and is falling back on Rano, with the certainty that the movement will continue until it reaches Torreon, said to be menaced by a wing of Orozco's army. Accounts have been conflicting, it being declared, on the one hand, that Campa is menacing seriously the federal rear, and, on the other, that Orozco's forces are in danger from a flank movement by Villa and Rabago, who are advancing from Parral, southeast of Chihuahua.

What seems certain is that Orozco, as noted in last week's "Regeneration," is concentrating his forces at Bachimba, forty-six miles south of Chihuahua; a mountainous country in which it will be difficult, if not impossible, to operate artillery. There seems to be no doubt also that he has run short of ammunition, and for this he has blamed the United States government, charging that practically it is intervening on behalf of Madero. A generally prevalent feeling that this is true is credited with being answerable for increased animosity toward Americans. The "Los Angeles Evening Herald" of June 3 puts the situation thus:

"The rebels did not object so seriously to the application of the law against them, but great anti-American sentiment has been worked up among the rebels because the United States has permitted the Maderista forces even to organize on American territory for expeditions against the rebels. 'The rebels are without ammunition to withstand the attack of the federals, and it looks like the beginning of the end of the organized rebel army; the dissipation of the rebels into small guerrilla bands. All foreigners who can get away from Chihuahua are doing so. 'One summed it up this morning as follows: 'Whatever way the situation works out, Chihuahua is no place for us. If Huerta attacks and bombards the town we will be exposed to injury, if not death. In the event of the more probable rioting of Orozco's men we will suffer worse things.'"

May Attack Mexico City

The papers of June 5 report Mexican congressmen, representing a section anxious to treat for peace, as being in conference with Orozco's plenipotentiary. They find only one—the repatriation of the lands. All—governors, politicians, bourgeois—have understood, at last, that the disinherited Mexican can no longer be entertained with words. The proletarians have real hunger, physical hunger, and they do not take to talk. The word "liberty" has no meaning for them, when their hearths are fireless, when their women shiver under filthy rags, when their children cry and sob for bread in every corner of their pigsties. The terms "Elective Suffrage," "No Re-election," "Liberty of the Press," "Right of Assembly," etc., etc., have no value for the man who, bent over the furrow, knows that the land he fertilizes with his sweat does not belong to him; nor for him who, trowel in hand, lays the bricks of the building in which he will never dwell; nor for him who, breathing the deadly air of the shoe or factory, has taken stock of the fact that what his hands create is not for him or his; nor for him who, with the mountains above his head, has convinced himself that the ore he tears from the rock will clink, when converted into coin in his pockets, blaze as medals on their chests, or adorn the arms, the necks and cuffs of the haughty and useless women of the bourgeoisie class.

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Workers Hail Flag Of "Land and Liberty"

The propaganda conducted by the Mexican Liberal Party from this city has been mainly through print, and only occasionally have we held mass meetings, as when we held mass meetings at the execution of Ferrer and the Chicago Anarchists. However, Saturday, June 1, a special meeting was called at Burbank Hall, to explain the exact status of the Mexican Revolution, its aims and methods. It was by all odds the most successful we have had, standing room being at a premium and the most tense feeling being manifested throughout the proceedings. Particularly noticeable was the reception given Ricardo Flores Magon, member of the Junta of the Mexican Liberal Party and now on trial for alleged breach of the neutrality laws. His address was accorded the greatest compliment a speaker can receive, being listened to with rapt attention, interrupted only by irrepressible bursts of applause. He spoke, in part, as follows:

"I do not wish to be a slave," cries the Mexican, and, gun in hand, he presents to the entire world the grand spectacle of a true revolution, a social catastrophe which even now is shaking Authority and Capital to their foundations. "This is no petty revolt made by some ambitious aspirant who hammers for power, riches and command. It is the Revolution of the great bottom; it is the movement of the man, who, in the shadows of the mine, has felt an idea that makes his brain reel and has cried: 'This metal is mine.' It is the movement of the peasant, who, bent over the furrow softened with his sweat and the tears of his misery, has cried: 'This earth is mine, and mine are the fruits I force it to produce.' It is the movement of the workman, who, gazing on the cloth, the garments, the houses, is taking stock of all that comes from his hands and is exclaiming with emotion: 'This is mine.' It is the movement of the proletariat. It is the Social Revolution.

In view of the preceding facts and considering that the natural tendency of these people is against law and order, we hold it to be the moral duty of the United States as a civilized nation and friendly neighbor, to at once take immediate action to prevent this reversion to barbarism. For our part we maintain stoutly, as we have maintained from the first, that if the masses in Mexico were given access to the natural resources of the country they would be as orderly as any people on the face of the globe; that monopoly has made them outcasts and done so with utterly heartless deliberation; that until that monopoly is overthrown they will continue to act as such, showing less and less mercy to those who in the past have shown them none.

Some months ago we called attention in these columns to florid advertisements of land for sale in Mexico, which were prominently displayed in Los Angeles offices. The advertisements asserted that the trouble in Mexico was over, and promised the gullible that what California was forty years ago Mexico would be ten years from date. We now observe advertisements of lands for sale in Mexico at fifty cents per acre, the notices declaring that they are well watered and have every natural advantage. That tells the story of the past few months. The native cultivator has asserted their title to the soil their labor brings to harvest. It can no longer be represented as a desirable investment for absentees.

Junta On Trial

The long-deferred trial of the members of the Mexican Liberal Party Junta, charged with violating the neutrality laws, began in the United States District Court, Tuesday, June 4. The first three sessions of the court were occupied with the selection of a jury after which it was stipulated that there should be admitted as evidence the transcript of the evidence given by Ricardo Flores Magon in the extradition proceedings against C. Rhys Pryce, Sept. 21, 1911. Pete Martin, by occupation a cowboy and active during the military operations in Lower California, was the first witness for the government. He testified to frequent conversations with the defendants relative to ammunition and other supplies alleged to have been furnished and required. In his direct examination he stated that he had been at one time condemned to execution as a spy, and on cross-examination acknowledged that he had been furnishing the Mexican government with information almost from the first. Notwithstanding this, within the last month he had applied to the Junta to be enlisted in its service for active work in Mexico. Cross-examination was finished only just before going to press, and it was then expected that Rhys Pryce, probably the government's most important witness, would be called immediately.

During a recess, June 7, much excitement was occasioned by an alleged attack on Martin, who had acknowledged shortly before that he was a spy. The Mexican women, of whom there were many in the corridor, expressed themselves toward Martin in the bitterest terms, and he claimed that he had been struck and told he would be killed. He named, in particular, Mrs. Lucile Guidero, a stepdaughter of Ricardo Flores Magon, and Mercedes Figueroa, daughter of the defendant of that name. The matter is still under advisement by the court.

At each session a large crowd of Mexicans, besides many of other nationalities, has been in attendance, and an order prohibiting the wearing of party badges created much feeling and dissatisfaction. "Well, nothing and no one will be able to stop the triumphal march of the revolutionary movement. Does the bourgeoisie want peace? Let them take off their frock coats and grasp pick and shovel, plough and spade. For, while there is inequality, will

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FOR THOSE WHO DOUBT

Aristide Pratile, who has been writing a series of well-informed articles on the Mexican question for various papers, contributes one to "Les Temps Nouveaux" of Paris, which sums up admirably the main features of the situation as it still stands today. To our great delight he quotes, not from "Regeneration" but from leading Mexican publications, on which he bases his conclusions. He cites Madero's own proclamations and appeals to patriots; touches on the prominence the government itself is giving to the land question; shows that imports and exports have diminished alarmingly; gives passages from leading papers to prove that communications throughout the country are at the mercy of rebel forces, and says: "It is very far from being a mere economic or social revolution in Mexico."

Furthermore he shows that such a paper as "El Pais" can see no other solution than the terrible one of intervention by the United States, and this he proceeds to discuss; pointing out that Mexico, both by its geographical formation and by the adaptability of its inhabitants for guerrilla warfare, will prove infinitely harder to subjugate than were the Philippines. In this connection he refers to the reports of the United States war office, which state that an army of 300,000, co-operating with the fleet, will be required; that the campaign will be expected to last from twelve to eighteen months, and that the cost will be about \$2,500,000 a day. He thinks the people of this country will do well to heed the advice of the "Los Angeles Tribune" and let the Mexicans fight their own battles.

Our editorial friend, J. Grave, adds an editorial note in which he says: "As I have remarked before, I ask but one thing—to be made clear as to this question of revolution in Mexico. For this reason I shall insert with pleasure the articles of Comrade Pratile, in the hope that they will give precise facts and not mere affirmations." We protest against that note, for it conveys an insinuation that is abominably unjust. Neither the Spanish nor English sections of "Regeneration" have ever dealt in "mere affirmations." On the contrary our pages have abounded with just such facts as those given by Aristide Pratile, but, of course, in vastly greater numbers. Not only have we invariably given our authorities, which have been the very best obtainable, but we have even sent to J. Grave and other radical editors, innumerable marked copies of the originals from which our facts were taken. This has put us to much trouble and expense, but when a certain class in the revolutionary movement clamored us with the declaration that we were manufacturing evidence, we fought with unflinching proofs. All the world now knows that the situation in Mexico has been far more serious than was supposed, and if we erred at all it was on the side of understatement.

The editor of this section puts his own work out of consideration, but he says most emphatically that the good faith of the Magonis has been attacked most libelously and without one particle of justification for the attack. Personally he feels far more bitter against certain allegedly revolutionary editors than he does against bourgeois Socialists of the Berger type. With the latter there may have been honest differences of opinions and ideals. For the former it is not possible to make any such excuse.

TRUE WORK OF ART

Those who keep track of the international labor movement may remember that the noted Spanish artist, Fernin Sagrista, made and published a most remarkable cartoon on the judicial murder of Francisco Ferrer. The government promptly prosecuted him and he was condemned to nine years' imprisonment. The sentence, so obviously brutal, brought from all parts of the world a cry of protest, with the result that at the end of eighteen months he was released.

Sagrista wrote us from his cell that he intended to devote his pencil to the portrayal of Mexico's great struggle for economic freedom, and we are now in receipt of postal cards which are really art of the highest class. In the background the sun of "Land and Liberty" shines on a charming Mexican landscape. In the foreground the stern figure of an Indian is bowing out a usurer who with bent head still clutches fast his money bag. Figures representing the Son and Daughters of the People greet with outstretched hands the dawn of the new day.

In a private letter to Ricardo Flores Magon the artist states that he has had three thousand of these postal cards printed, and is devoting the proceeds to the relief of political prisoners in Barcelona. He adds that after he has finished that work he will send us the original drawing. This we, in our turn, hope to reproduce. "MY COUNTRY 'TIS OF THEE." Reading of the sumptuous feast which was recently tendered a number of dogs in the luxurious Hotel Vanderbilt in New York City reminds one of the feast of Belshazzar, given in the ancient city of Babylon on the eve of its fall. It was an afternoon affair, consisting of a luncheon given by Mrs. Arthur L. Holland in honor of her pet Pekinese spaniel Vi Sin. Several of Vi Sin's intimate friends were invited, properly chaperoned, of course, by their respective mistresses. Covers were laid for 16, each dog occupying a separate chair beside his chaperon. Vi Sin received his guests in the main foyer of the hotel and attracted considerable attention by his costume which consisted of a high ribbon-bow and a beautiful pink carnation. As his guests arrived Vi Sin conducted them to the Chinese room and luncheon was served on a table decorated with Chinese lotus and lilies. ("Chicago Evening World.") "We do not play politics; anti-slavery is no half-way just with us; it is a terribly earnest affair, with life or death, worse than life or death in the issue." (Wendell Phillips.)