

South America's Way with Anarchy

By Colonel J. I. Diaz Barcenas,
Venezuela's Consul at Philadelphia.

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ANARCHY finds short shift in South America. The man with the bomb or the bullet faces an unpleasant alternative—deportation or incarceration. The bars are up, not in a single country, but throughout the entire southern half of the hemisphere.

No better illustration of the sternness of the methods employed against anarchists can be found than in the course of the officials of the Argentine Republic (where there is a large Italian population), following the murder of King Humbert by Bresci. The police, who keep a record of such things, knew that there had been a Bresci in Buenos Ayres several years before the crime was committed. They had no particular reason then for watching him. He did nothing that was illegal and said nothing that could be construed as incendiary. After a time Bresci left Buenos Ayres. He went to the United States. The next heard of him was that he had fired the shot that appalled the world.

Then the republic's watchdogs took to nosing about. The Argentine had no intimate concern in Bresci's act, it would have appeared. But the officials figured it out that, having once lived there, he must have had companions. To them he must have talked; with them, harangued. Where were they now? Sowing like seeds of violence and disorder among that dangerously large and alien army of Italians, Germans, Slavs and Huns? So the watchdogs nosed on, and finally Bresci's friends of seven years before were unearthed. In a few days they were hauled before native judges, examined and cross-examined, threatened, cajoled and persuaded. A hundred oaths and affidavits of peaceful citizenship alone saved them from deportation. Today, under the law's eye, they sue for the light of its approval in a warm espousal of statutory observance and an equally ardent detestation of anarchy in all its forms.

All through South America the anarchist is the object of popular hatred as well as of political repression. If he undertakes to disseminate his creed he is promptly taken into custody and released only upon agreement to leave the country. More than this, his kind is prevented as far as possible from settling there.

In all parts of the world the representatives of the South American governments are constantly on the watch to learn what they can of the movements of the anarchists. Once one is known to have set sail for the forbidden land, the government is notified of the departure by cable. A little surprise is arranged for El Senor, the anarchist.

"This looks like a promising field," he says, as he walks down the gangplank of the steamer or steps off the railroad train. He feels a tap on the shoulder. Two or three suavely courteous gentlemen are at his side.

"The climate here is not suited to such as the senor," they say. "He would best depart by the next boat."

"But I wish to remain," the newcomer says, indignantly. "I know nothing about the climate."

"Ah, that is too bad," says one of the suave strangers, producing something that looks like an official document. "The senor

will have to study the climate in a poor place—the prison."

This usually effects a conversion. The visitor decides that the climate, in fact, would be bad for him, and he carries his bullet and his doctrine elsewhere. The "elsewhere," I am afraid, is too often the United States, for the same barrier at each gateway keeps him out of the south. On the other hand, the free scope which this same man is afforded in the United States would astonish any South American who had not been made familiar with the conditions by long residence here.

Upon assuming the duties of the Venezuelan consul at Philadelphia I found important reasons for following the course of the Reds, and I was continually shocked, not to say scandalized, at the license of speech allowed. The violence of the denunciatory phrases used to characterize men in high public office, as well as those prominent in commercial life, was such that at times I could hardly believe that the authorities were cognizant of what was going on under their very noses. There was indicated absolutely no respect for authority, hatred for the leaders in trade and commerce was the doctrine inculcated, and if murder was not instigated in so many words, destruction and revolution was always the un concealed implication of the speeches. In many cases I saw the police standing by and listening without apparent interest. In the course of last winter I went to many anarchist meetings and heard such well known advocates of the destructive dogma as Herr Most, Emma Goldman and Voltairine de Cleyre. One point that struck me forcibly was the overwhelming proportion of foreigners in the audiences; at least ten to every one American, even in the open air meetings. Most of the few auditors who looked like Americans gave every evidence of being present out of curiosity. It is this foreign element that is the great danger; and I was the more surprised that aliens should be allowed so broad a freedom of speech.

In Venezuela, as in the neighboring countries, summary punishment would have been inflicted upon orators who had dared to use language half as intemperate as much of that I heard at the mildest of the Philadelphia gatherings. At the least they would have been seized and thrown into jail, and if the speakers were foreigners—as was the case in Philadelphia—nothing would have prevented a riot in which they would have been roughly handled.

Here even the publications of the anarchists are under the ban. Not that there are laws actually aimed at suppressing them; under the letter of the law they could be published, so long as their utterances were guarded. But public sentiment constitutes the strongest kind of a prohibition. If the police failed to raid the publication office of an anarchistic sheet, the populace would make short work of it. That South America has gained the unhappy—and largely undeserved distinction—of being rife with the spirit of assassination is not due to the prevalence of anarchistic dogmas. Attempts upon the lives of political rulers in South America have not been made by anarchists, but have been usually the result of the fury of partisanship on the part of some hot-headed individual. Such a case was the attack on



GROUP OF WOMEN WHO ATTENDED THE WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION CONVENTION AT OMAHA—Photo by a Staff Artist.

Julio Roca, which resulted in landing him in the presidential chair of the Argentine Republic. His predecessor, Juarez Celma, had made himself so unpopular that in 1890 he resigned to escape the public indignation arising from accusations of malfeasance in office. His first minister, Roca, was included in the denunciations, and, as he held office after his principal had retired, the denunciation of him was particularly violent. One day several of the oratorical hot-heads of the opposition met and harangued each other in a grocery store. The discussion went beyond the limits of moderation and rash measures were advocated. The speakers knew each other well and felt that there was no danger in expressing opinions which none of them would have carried out in acts. But there was a listener who didn't appreciate this—a 13-year-old grocer's boy. As the men harangued and orated he grew more and more interested. For several days he brooded over what he had heard. Then he went out and bought a revolver, walked to the government house, and when the first minister got into his carriage there was an unsuspected passenger on the springs behind. Presently the passenger lifted the curtains, pressed his pistol into Roca's back and fired. They took the boy to prison—to begin a term of twenty years—and Roca was driven home. Physically the effects of the shot were inconsiderable, politically they were tremendous, for when he appeared in public again, Roca, the erstwhile hated official, was acclaimed a hero, and gained steadily in pub-

lic esteem from that day, finally being elected president.

Even socialism is banned in most South American countries. The people of Venezuela, Ecuador and Colombia in particular are so strong in their opposition to the cult that, without waiting for the police to investigate, they would inform against any individual attempting to propagate the doctrine. Pamphlets or papers inculcating socialistic doctrines are barred from the mails. Persons suspected of writing incendiary matter are closely watched and when a writer of socialistic tendencies comes into the notice of the government he receives a letter with an official seal. In the South American way it is wondrously polite.

"Most respected senor," it begins, "it is with much regret that we beg to direct your attention to certain paragraphs which appeared in an article written by you in such-and-such a paper upon such-and-such a date. No one could find fault with the fluency of your style, or the literary qualities of your composition. But, alas! senor, we fear that it is dangerous to the public weal. The sentiments are incendiary. We

trust we shall not see the like again from you. With great assurances of respect and esteem, we beg to remain, your devoted servants," etc., etc.

If the recipient of this article is wise, he will lay aside the quill he has dipped in gall and take up one sweetened with honey. If he is proud, the spirit of the letter may evade his mental grasp, and he continues to disseminate his dangerous views.

But not for long. There is another letter. "Respected senor," it runs, "once you have been warned. The doctrines you preach are in violation of the law. Must you be warned again? Take heed. We beg to remain, your devoted servants," etc., etc.

Not many instances are on record of a third warning. Such as they are, they comprise entries in the criminal court ledger.

This is South America's way with anarchy. Perhaps it will be North America's way, too, before very long.

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Thommason's Troubles

Indianapolis Sun: When I came home yesterday the maid met me at the door.

"Mr. Thommason," she said, "some one with a bill was here yesterday."

I glanced at the parlor and saw that the room was full of neighbors.

"Some one with a bill?" I queried. "Was it the lawyer?"

"No," answered Marie, with a smile; "it was the stork."

I have since heard that some people say that the dialogue between the maid servant and myself was arranged beforehand, so as to give out the impression in the neighborhood that I was a wit, but that's a lie.

She Understood

Cleveland Plain Dealer: "Excuse me," he said to the applicant for the typewriter's position, "but I would like to know your age?"

The young woman looked astonished.

"May I ask what that has to do with my fitness for the place?" she inquired.

"Nothing," he promptly answered. "You see it's my wife that wants to know."

"In that case," said the applicant, who was pretty as well as young, "tell her I am 47."

And the smile that followed this ingenious statement brought out four delightful dimples.

Alphabetical Courtship

Baltimore American: "Yes," said the fair young girl, "I had a great many alphabetical courtships while I was in the country this summer."

"Indeed?" he murmured, not knowing what else to say, but being anxious to get at the next paragraph.

"Yes," she continued, "you know I would roll my eyes, and then the jays had to follow the eyes, didn't they?"

After repeating the alphabet up to the "I, J" part we came to the conclusion that the fair young thing knew whereof she spake.



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