

better grades in most of the provinces of the islands. The matter of getting it to Manila and exporting it regularly is the principal problem in the situation to be solved, and this problem is viewed from several angles in the report. An agent of the bureau traveling in the Orient has forwarded samples of Philippine rattan and these will be made available for inspection at the offices of the bureau in Washington, and also at its branch offices in New York, Boston, and other points where there are manufacturers interested in Philippine rattan. After they have made the rounds of these offices they will be sent to chambers of commerce and private firms requesting them. The bureau has also prepared a circular outlining its activities in connection with the rattan investigation, and copies can be obtained on request.

## Religious Conditions in Mexico

The following letter is self-explanatory:

Department of State,  
Washington, March 20, 1915.  
Father Francis C. Kelley,  
President of the Catholic Church  
- Extension Society,  
750 McCormick Building, Chicago, Ill.

My dear Father Kelley:

The president has referred to me your important letter of the twenty-third of February concerning the present distressing situation in Mexico, with the request that I tell you very definitely what the attitude and acts of the administration have been in the matter of the protection of the rights of conscience and of worship there, a matter in which the administration is, I need not say, deeply interested as all true Americans must be.

The question which has bulked largest in political discussion in connection with the present revolution in Mexico, and in connection with the revolution which preceded it, is the land question, because upon a people's economic relations to the land everything else, it would seem, that is to determine its institutions and secure its freedom must depend. There can be no permanent pacification in Mexico, no stable settlement of her political troubles, until the land question is justly and wisely settled and the land made the basis of the independence of her citizens, rank and file, and the foundation of her family life.

But of course economic questions are settled, if the matter be thought through to its real heart, only in order to give leave to the deeper things that are spiritual. A democracy must be sustained by education, by the education of the people, and her schools will be as valuable to Mexico as her acres of fertile land. It will be as necessary that she have them as that she break the monopoly that has controlled her land.

And, above and beyond all, the full flower of democracy, lies religious freedom, the principle which builders of our own republic made the crown of the whole structure. To this freedom political liberty has seemed, at many of the most important crises of history, to be only the handmaiden and servant. There can be no doubt in the minds of Americans about these things.

The administration has not felt at liberty to play any part in the internal affairs of Mexico except that of friend and adviser. It realizes that, by reason of geographical proximity and many historical circumstances known to all the world, it is in some peculiar degree charged with the duty of safeguarding, so far as it may within the limits of international privilege, the lives and rights of foreigners in Mexico, and it has again and again made the strongest possible representations with regard to such matters to those who have from time to time assumed responsibility for affairs in Mexico during the troubled months through which that country has been passing. At every turn of affairs there, moreover, and upon every report of persecution, it has advised and warned those who were exercising authority of the fatal effect any disregard for the lives or rights of those who represented religion, or any attack upon liberty of conscience or of worship would have upon the opinion of the people of the United States and of the world.

On the 23rd of July, 1914, for instance, the

following message was sent for presentation to General Villa and to General Carranza:

"Not only the United States, but all the world, will watch with the greatest interest and concern the course now to be pursued by the leaders of the constitutionalist cause in effecting a transfer of power at Mexico City. This government feels that the critical time has come when the choice which is now to be made by the constitutionalist leaders will practically determine the success or failure of the government they mean to set up and the reforms they hope to effect.

"We venture to say this because of our earnest sympathy with the main purposes of the constitutionalists, and our desire to be of permanent service to them in bringing Mexico out of her troubles. We have been forced by circumstances into a position in which we must practically speak for the rest of the world. It is evident that the United States is the only first-class power that can be expected to take the initiative in recognizing the new government. It will in effect act as the representative of the other powers of the world in this matter and will unquestionably be held responsible by them for the consequences. Every step taken by the constitutionalist leaders from this moment on, and everything which indicates the spirit in which they mean to proceed and to consummate their triumph, must of necessity, therefore, play a very important part in determining whether it will be possible for the United States to recognize the government now being planned for.

"In the most earnest spirit of friendship, therefore, this government wishes to call attention to the following matters of critical consequence:

"First, the treatment of foreigners, foreign lives, foreign property, foreign rights, and particularly the delicate matter of the financial obligations, the legitimate financial obligations, of the government now superseded. Unless the utmost care, fairness and liberality are shown in these matters the most dangerous complications may arise.

"Second, the treatment of political and military opponents. Unless there is to be a most generous amnesty it is certain that the sympathy of the whole world, including the people of the United States, now the real friends of the constitutionalists, will be hopelessly alienated and the situation become impossible.

"Third, the treatment of the Roman Catholic church and of those who represent it. Nothing will shock the civilized world more than punitive or vindictive action towards priests or ministers of any church, whether Catholic or Protestant; and the government of the United States ventures most respectfully but most earnestly to caution the leaders of the Mexican people on this delicate and vital matter. The treatment already said to have been accorded priests has had a most unfortunate effect upon opinion outside of Mexico.

"You can not too earnestly urge these matters upon the attention of those now in the counsels of the constitutionalists. It is obvious to us that the whole future of what the constitutionalists are attempting will depend upon the way and the spirit in which they deal with these questions. Nothing ought to be overlooked or dealt with hastily which may result in our being obliged to withhold the recognition of this government from the new government to be created at Mexico City as we withheld it from General Huerta. Our ability or inability to serve them they must now determine."

On the 16th of December, 1914, the following message was sent to the Brazilian minister representing American interests at Mexico City for delivery to General Gutierrez:

"Please convey unofficially to General Gutierrez yourself, or through the proper channel, the following message: 'On the twenty-third of July last this department sent identical messages to General Carranza and to General Villa which are quoted below. In view of the fact that the situation remains unchanged the same representations are made to you in order that you may know the president's earnest desire in the premises. The term constitutionalists was used when the followers of both General Carranza and General Villa called themselves 'constitutionalists.' In referring to those connected with religious orders you will, of course, understand that the language includes both sexes, nuns and sisters as well as priests, and also teachers and preachers of other denominations."

(Here followed the message of July 23, 1914, as above quoted.)

When General Gutierrez left the capital and

General Garza was made provisional president by the conventionists, the same representations were on January 21, 1915, made to him.

When information reached the department that a large number of priests had been imprisoned in the City of Mexico, the following despatch was sent February 20, 1915:

"Department is informed from Mexico City that about one hundred eighty priests have been imprisoned by General Obregon for failure to produce half million pesos. So far as we know no American priest has been included, and we are not sure that any foreign priests have been included. Please see General Carranza at once and secure from him instructions which will prevent the arrest of any American priests who may be in his jurisdiction, and also every possible assurance of protection for any foreign priests. You will then use the good offices of this government with him to secure the release of the native priests. Say to him that the employment of such methods for the collection of money are so unusual and so unjustifiable that they will arouse worldwide disapproval. We are sure that General Carranza will, upon investigation, give the necessary instructions for the protection of all members of religious orders. Present this matter with all possible earnestness, for it is a very grievous mistake and will be sure to arouse resentment in Mexico as well as here and in other countries. It is possible that the necessary instructions have already been given to General Obregon for the release of these priests, but the matter is so serious that we are sending this telegram."

These despatches, selected from those sent, illustrate the spirit in which the president and those associated with him have dealt with the Mexican situation in so far as it affects the subject of religion.

This administration is, of course, the servant of the American people. It seeks to be governed by their convictions and by the principles which have governed their political life. It has felt it to be its duty to urge upon the leaders of Mexico, whenever an opportunity offered, the principles and methods of action which must underlie all real democracies, as they have supported ours. These principles will, in the same way, govern the administration in handling every question that affects its relations with Mexico, including the final question of the recognition of any government that may issue out of the present revolution and give promise of stability and justice. It can not dictate laws or forms of government to Mexico; but it can, and will, bring to bear upon Mexican affairs, wherever it may legitimately do so, the pressure of American opinion and American example. The Mexican leaders will certainly know that in order to command the sympathy and moral support of America, Mexico must have, when her reconstruction comes, just land tenure, free schools, and true freedom of conscience and worship. We know of no other foundation stones upon which to build the economic and spiritual life that makes political freedom a reality and a blessing.

I am, my dear Father Kelley,

Very truly yours,

W. J. BRYAN.

The evidence in the rashly-conceived lawsuit that the Riggs National bank of Washington, a Standard Oil institution, brought against Secretary McAdoo and Comptroller Williams disclosed that under republican administrations it was not uncommon for treasury officials, including even the secretary himself, to borrow money from the bank. Folks who may have been inclined to doubt the oft-made charge that business and government, under republican administrations, were in close alliance are respectfully referred to this disclosure, sworn to in court.

The hearing in the Riggs bank case, as far as it has gone at this writing, has been useful largely in disclosing that the banks no longer run the government, and that Comptroller Williams is not training to take a bank presidency as soon as his term of office expires. One of the pledges of the democratic administration was to place the government back into the hands of the people, and here is some substantial evidence of the way that promise has been kept.

The verdict in the Barnes-Roosevelt case can be fairly taken as proof that Barnes was a boss, but in establishing that fact it failed to exonerate the colonel from very close bargaining and trafficking with a boss at various stages of his upward career.