Much About Villa and Carranza: Little About the Mexican People.

By Manuel Carpio (The Public).

No one has so much at stake in the present Mexican crisis as the Mexican people. Nevertheless, when a well-meaning observer looks over the records of public discussion about past and present crises in Mexico, he finds that, more from outside than from inside, most of the debates center around the conspicuous figures at the moment. For this the press in the United States more than the press in Mexico is responsible.

As regards the Mexican people themselves, that is to say, not the imaginary cut-throats that support Miss Farrar or Mr. William S. Hart in so many photodramas, but the millions of human beings that have had no chance for the fulfillment of their just aspirations—the men, women, and children who are as valuable an asset to humanity as any other on the face of the earth, but have been the victims of a rotten system of governmental, economic, and religious politics—those millions of people, I say, are hardly mentioned at all in the discussion of Mexican affairs. The concern of journalists and other publicists is for the men of the day. Today it is Villa and Carranza. Or is it Felix Diaz and Angeles? Yesterday it was Madero and Huerta. Or was it Orozco and Zapata? Columns upon columns of clever reading matter have been served to the American readers giving descriptions of the vices, brutalities, inabilities, treacheries, and weaknesses of those men—and nothing about the people.

For it is to be remembered that Mexico, as it is today in its better aspects, in its innate poetry, in its singular beauties, both spiritually and materially, is the result of a great and wearying human experiment carried on by a patient, intelligent, self-denying people. The peculiarly beautiful architecture, the native arts, the native music, the astounding genius of the poets—some of them among the greatest in the Spanish-speaking world of all times—the really patrician sensibility and dignity in taste of the middle classes, the never equaled hospitality of the lower working class,—these are not the characteristics of peoples that are savage or half-savage. They are the characteristics of a people of the first class.

Now it is for us to inquire whether a people of a high order can live through and survive a long and nefarious system of political, economic, and religious oppression. It is to be answered directly that there are no indisputable evidences that any or all first-class peoples are today or were yesterday wholly free from tyrannical oppression.

The Mexican people is a first-class people, not on account of its material accomplishments, but on account of its spiritual dignity.

When you hear of banditry, and bad leadership, and personal feuds, and economic distress, you are looking upon the worst aspects of Mexican sociological facts; you are looking upon faults accumulated by centuries of defective rule and deriving from the traditions of colonial life. Mexico's real struggles are those of a people fighting its way from the violent ,one-sided methods of ancestral conquest toward the new ideals of human association.

Edmundo D'Amicis gave an account of the political situation in Spain, enumerating thirty-two different parties, all of them struggling for power and all of them ready for revolution. The Carlist agitations and the many regional disorders in Spain, ever since the Bourbons came into power, give us a fair illustration of the Spanish people's shortcomings in methods of government. This, however, does not necessarily afford a conclusive judgment that the Spanish people is not a first-class one. Spanish art, Spanish spirituality, Spanish conceptions of the home and the family, and the Spanish sense of poetic worship are unexcelled. And those Spanish conceptions, welded into a new solidarity with the native people of Mexico, through one of the most admirable efforts of exploration and colonization known in history, are today a living thing, despite its faults, its perplexities, and its paradoxes. Its finer forces of instinct and its marks of superiority are current in the great mass that constitutes the Mexican people. This great mass is struggling at present against its many inherited handicaps, and is highly representative of the Latin-American entity. It is mainly chivalrous rather than treacherous. It has endured pain, want, incompetency, exploitation, war, and calamity. It has found itself always at a distressing disadvantage in measuring its standards with those of peoples whose careers have been longer and more uniform, thanks to material development and scientific use of natural resources.

The more advanced peoples whose leaders have brought them in contact with the Mexican people, through war or through enterprise, are not free in their social strata of the very blemishes which, thanks to an insistent campaign of biased publicity, are proclaimed as being among the fundamental characteristics of Mexican sociology. It is not necessary to be an exceptional observer in order to find that all of these advanced nations are afflicted with not an insignificant number of bad men, bandits, nasty politicians, tyrannical profiteers, and a wide variety of criminals. But this scum does not constitute a dominating organized element, because there are within strongly organized forces to check them, and because without there are not strongly organized forces to encourage them in their infamous work. The case with Mexico is quite different. Can it be supposed, for instance—to cite a living example—hat Villa has been left alone in his exploits without assistance from without? Can it be imagined that arms and ammunition go to him by aerial route from England or France or Cochin China? Can it be entertained that most, if indeed not all of the elements with which Villa counts for his trouble making, do not reach him from sources established on this side of the border, in utter violation of all written and unwritten laws of the United States? Can anybody blame Carranza or any other head of the Mexican Government for the support given to such a type of agitator through a criminal traffic that exists, beyond any form of doubt, outside Mexican territory?

Still, when complications come, when the questions of international friction arise, when damages are inflicted by the wrongdoers, resulting in the loss of innocent life and property, thousands of editorials are written, thousands of protests are heard from the pens of men who believe they are voicing the claims of justice against a whole nation, whose liberties and whose destinies are put in jeopardy.

Hardly a voice is heard indicating the real sources of mischief. The men engaged in the unholy traffic grin in satisfaction and keep on in the dark engineering fresh activities to perpetuate the source of irritation. And the campaign of misrepresentation against a well-meaning people goes on, availing itself of press and screen. The whole bulk of actual and imaginary miseries looms into prominence. It astounds readers and spectators with an interminable reel of horror, degradation, and mud. It rings in the accents of indignant Senators and Congressmen.

Then comes to the ear and eye of the people the account of Mexico's deficient leadership. Graphic recitals are forthcoming of governmental blunders, the ineffectiveness of administrative control after five years of feverish upheaval, together with the bluntness of attempted reforms that hurt or may possibly hurt the vested interests. In the thick of this rush of heated opinion the actual endeavors of the Mexican people are never mentioned. No one speaks of the things looking to social betterment that have been evolved. It is the men at the head of movements that occupy attention, as if they really were the main and abiding factor, and not the people.

Carranza may be good, mediocre, or poor as a statesman. The present Mexican Government ,besides its mistakes, has been able to hold things together in the largest part of the national territory, in one of the most difficult periods of Mexican history and without financial help from abroad. It has been able to maintain some of the reforms introduced in the country's legislation with private interests. Ambassador Fletcher has demonstrated to the Mexican people that he is a genuine representative of American good will and American sanity. Mr. Fletcher is enough of a psychologist to understand that Mexican-American relations must be founded in humane understanding of differences and not in forcible submission of the idiosyncrasies of one people to the idiosyncrasies of another.

Those who advocate intervention are willing to kill the child because of its mumps and adenoids, without really knowing the child or knowing only its affliction. But to kill that child is a matter of serious responsibility before the world, for it is not Mexico; it is Latin America. It is not Villa or Carranza, or even the Mexican people itself; it is the national personality of nearly nineteen million people who inhabit half of the American Continent. It is a side of Spanish-Roman civilization grafted in the heart of America with blood and bone, with thought and ideals. It is the human blossoming of the greatest enterprise in history, inlaid with wonderful spiritualism, magnificent efforts, and admirable endurance amid the storms of life.

Mexico must be discussed more intelligently, less commercially; more from the purely human standpoint, less from the side of profit,—for profit after all is not a thing eternal. It passes and crumbles at the blow of time. Mighty civilizations are distinguished by their spiritual mark more than by anything else. Their understanding of beauty, their uplift by human contact carries more to posterity than their material accumulations, their wealth, and their arrogance.

The Mexican people has a destiny. Its way to understand Christianity and disinterestedness goes farther than its poor record in management and economic dexterity. But it is capable of learning and is willing to learn. It has a keen sense of honor, it loves its name, its independence, its traditions, and its heroisms. It has proved to be an honest fighter and an honest debtor, since it does not repudiate its obligations and is not dogmatic about its errors. Give Mexico a chance.

"THE AMERICANS IN PARIS."

Saturday Review Says America Has Become A Grievous Burden In Paris.

The June 28th issue of the "Saturday Review" of London contains an article under the title "The Americans in Paris." The "Review" speaks, among other things, of the dislike with which the French in Paris are said to regard the Americans. The frivolous critical tone, frequently noted in that weekly, must be taken into account somewhat in judging its expression. At the same time, however, one feels instinctively that the coming of peace is partly responsible for the more than frank expression of sympathy for the alleged French coldness or even hatred; —the war is over,—therefore, thinks the Review, one can speak one's mind freely, because the associate-fighter is no longer immediately needed. On the other hand, we dare say, that the feeling between French and Americans is entirely reciprocal. The American boys from the West appear to have as little love or admiration for the French as the latter are said to have for us.

The Saturday Review says in part:

The nation which a year ago was the most popular nation in Europe has become, in Paris, a burden almost too grievous to be borne. The other evening we heard a lady whose profession brings her into rather close contact with the American soldiers and minor diplomatists in Paris proclaim amid general assent that the Americans are at the best children and that at the worst they are brutes. We are not subscribing to this opinion; we are merely recording that it was passed, and suggesting that the passing of such an opinion is at the present moment deplorable, and might with the exercise of tact, forbearance and understanding on both sides have been avoided. It may be of interest to the Englishman who stays at home to know that French people cannot tell the difference between an American and an Englishman by his speech. To the French ear the languages are identical. But the French distinguish the two nations at a glance by their general appearance and behaviour, and they find very little resemblance in their ideas, sentiments and general educational background. The comparisons at present passed upon the two great English-speaking communities (as our press loves to describe Great Britain and the United States) are for the moment extremely flattering to ourselves. But if we are wise, we shall not allow ourselves to be thereby puffed up. The Americans could not avoid being unpopular in Paris. The mere fact that they came late into the war and that the importance of their share in the peace negotiations is out of all proportion to their sacrifices is in any event a difficult fact to discount or to obscure, especially as the French are as notoriously sensitive and impatient in respect of their obligations as M. Perrichon.

Difficult Social Status.

Socially the Americans in Paris are in the position of a man staying in the house of a friend and forced to behave much as though the house were his own. It is even worse than that. We have to consider that the man who thus stays in the house of his friend and behaves as though it were his own has, in effect, a mortgage on the house. We are most of us the debtors of America, and France not least of all. The American army in Paris may almost be described as the man in possession, and there is no possibility of avoiding him. It was an unlucky decision to make Paris an American Military headquarters. The Wild West sprawls in the cafés and patrols the grand boulevards, with the result that a French nobleman may run out of his house one fine evening and find an unoffending French citizen on the pavement, "baigné dans son sang." The American army could no more be popular in Paris than the Canadians could be popular in Epsom. When, on the top of the military invasion of Paris, there came an American Delegation, fourteen hundred strong, filling the air with principles and viewpoints, and amusing itself loudly and continuously, not the most civilized President in the history of the world could quite cover with his professional mantle the nakedness of his countrymen. The Americans were everywhere, and they could not be ignored.

Looking Into the Future.

All this would be of merely passing interest were it not for the peculiar position which America will occupy for the next thirty years. What is happening in Paris will happen on a large scale in Europe as soon as peace is signed. During the war America has become the creditor of the civilized world. Her chief problem will be how to spend the money she has made. She is so rich that she has begun to be alarmed for her foreign trade, for it is impossible for Dives to trade with Lazarus, unless Lazarus can be induced to borrow the necessary capital to set himself up in business. Whatever ultimate arrangements are made, it is fairly clear that America will have more money than she knows what to do with, and that Europe will be, to an extent unknown before, an American playground. Only by the greatest tact and wisdom can America secure in Europe the liking and regard indispensable to a great international power. Perhaps America does not desire to be a great international power. Perhaps the Senators who desire to keep America within her set bounds and traditions are wiser than the President who aspires to rank his country with the older civilizations.

GOING TOO FAR.

From The New York Times.

If it is true that conservative prohibitionists in the House are becoming alarmed over the implacable and intolerant spirit displayed by the majority of their fellows, and fear it will breed a great revulsion of feeling throughout the country, they have warrant for their fears. The cause of prohibition will be needlessly endangered if the radicals continue to outdo each other in their mad rush to make the enforcement bill a measure of such tyranny as has never before been known in this nation. Here, for instance, is Representative Morgan, Republican, of Oklahoma, proposing to treat as a criminal a man who keeps liquor in his own home for his own use. Here are other radicals proposing to make it illegal for the man to "use" it if he has it. Even under the bill as it stands, according to a member of the House Judiciary Committee, a man is in danger if, having liquor in his house, he gives a glass of it to a visiting friend. Senator Sterling proposes to penalize the purchaser as well as the seller of liquor.

But the full measure of the tyranny which the radical prohibitionists seek to set up is to be learned from the statements of Wayne B. Wheeler, counsel for the Anti-Saloon League, before the sub-committee of the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is true that Mr. Wheeler is not a member of Congress, but he speaks with the authority of the Anti-Saloon League, which has been directing all this legislation and to the authority of which all the radical prohibitionists bow. Therefore it will not be surprising if, having heard this clear exposition of the desires of the Anti-Saloon League, the prohibitionists in Congress should grant them and amend the enforcement bill accordingly.

Mr .Wheeler thus gives a foretaste of what is to be expected if the radicals in Congress and out, for whom he speaks, have their way. He demands visit and search without the issuance of a warrant, although he is willing, if that cannot be enacted, to accept a provision authorizing the issuance of warrants without requiring that those asking for the warrants shall produce any testimony. In other words, all that is necessary to obtain a warrant, under the mildest of Mr. Wheeler's proposals, is that any individual make application for it as against any other individual, even though he may not have the slightest evidence. It is obvious that such a provision, or even a provision like that now in the enforcement bill, lays every citizen open to private malice or police oppression, and the bill as it stands therefore contains a provision penalizing a search instigated by "malice" or "without probable cause." Mr. Wheeler demands that this clause be eliminated. The effect would be to install the most sweeping tyranny that could be imagined, with unlimited opportunities for graft besides.

It is a welcome sign that some of the prohibitionists are becoming appalled at the lengths of madness to which their associates are going; but their number may not be great, and it is by no means certain that even worse provisions than these may not become law if the Anti-Saloon League insists upon them. Besides, the number of the conservative prohibitionists may be quickly reduced if the Anti-Saloon League should turn a threatening face toward them. It must be remembered that in electing public officials the league has been just as hostile to temporizers as it has been to open "Wets." It has acted on the principle that he who is not for it is against it. If it really desires that these despotic rules shall be embodied in legislation it is quite capable of turning its guns on the so-called conservatives. How many of them could withstand such a threat? What would it profit such a prohibitionist to have voted for the prohibition amendment and then to find that the league was canvassing his district against him?

If the enforcement bill is passed in such shape as to include these engines of tyranny the question will be no longer one of prohibition or anti-prohibition, for total abstainers would be as much at the mercy of malice, oppression, and graft as the hardest of drinkers could be. It would become a question of the right of the American citizen to protection not by, but from, the law.

DR. JACOBI.

Dr. Abraham Jacobi, whose death was reported last week, was not only a great physician, but he was a great and many-sided American. Germany, after the Revolution of 1848, would have none of him; he was one of the many worth-while men whom she cast out and too late regretted and tried to coax back. It was the Chair of Pediatrics at the University of Berlin that was the lure in his case. But he refused it, saying that he was an American.

So far as public work and duties were concerned, so far as his work as a physician was concerned, he never grew older. In 1892, when he resigned after thirty-two years' active work as Professor of Diseases of Children at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, a newspaper report was headed "Dr. Jacobi's Workdays Now Ended." In 1911 he was elected President of the American Medical Association; and all the time between those years he was constantly receiving new honors and taking on new duties. He never ceased doing either.

He was, too, a warrior for whatever he believed in. He had no hesitation in taking up his sword for unpopular causes, such as that of birth control. He was a formidable opponent of prohibition; and his style was slashing and racy, without being in the least undignified. He had humor in plenty, a sly and gentle humor which could not fail to be effective without leaving scars. He always spoke his mind, and cared not whether his auditors disagreed or not. Invited to address a women's club, he delivered a philippic against their methods of dressing.

It was as the friend of the babies that Dr. Jacobi was best known, and it is said that east side babies whom he tended sixty-five years ago used to bring their grandchildren to him. "There is no page of medicine in "this city on which the name of "Dr. Jacobi is not inscribed," said another physician, but it was the babies who interested him most. He was, in fact, the real founder in this country of the treatment of diseases of ehildren. Yet nothing was out of his province. In the cholera scare of 1892 he declared his views with such effect that for the first time the Health Department worked in co-operation with the medical profession, a committee being regularly appointed for the purpose by the latter. When tuberculosis became a national menace, although he was in Europe, his views were solicited, and he sent back a letter of instructions which was treated as authoritative. In fact, the simplest word from Dr. Jacobi was enough to do the work which speeches and writings without end failed to do. When the United States declared war against Germany, for instance, medical students were not exempted from the draft. Dr. Jacobi wrote a letter to The New York Times protesting against using up the doctors. He concluded with the stirring words: "Where is Gorgas? I "have been waiting all the time "to hear his voice." Gorgas was not to blame; legislation was needed; and the legislation was forthcoming.

He worked and fought to the last, tirelessly and with enjoyment Perhaps that was what kept him young. Even in his last years his hair was not white, but only gray; and his energy and interest in life and work was the thing that most impressed those who met him. One, so meeting him for the first time and setting down his impressions, wrote: "Enthusiasm, "scarcely dimmed, burns in the "deep eyes under the shaggy "brows, and the spare, compact "figure betokens energy and endurance. He is more than up "to date. He can be delightfully "reminiscent, but his face is set "toward the future."

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